

Gnocchi

Some Italians would consider gnocchi (pronounced no-kee) to be comfort food. I do too! Tonight these delicate dumplings are served with a sage/gorgonzola cream sauce.

The process of making gnocchi is easy, but they'll take a little time to prepare. You'll start by baking and mashing some potatoes followed by rolling and shaping the gnocchi. Shaping gnocchi offers an excellent opportunity to draft the services of a child or partner.

Preparation time: **1 hour and 40 minutes** - **Servings: 4**

Organize Your Ingredients!

Notes on Organizing

Plan to prep and organize the ingredients before you start cooking. It just makes things easy when everything's ready to go. You'll need a ricer or a large grater to make gnocchi.

Potatoes

2-1/2 lbs. russet potatoes
1 tsp. olive oil

Gnocchi

6 quarts water plus 1 tsp. salt

baked and mashed potatoes (from above)
3 egg yolks

1-1/2 C. flour
(unbleached all-purpose or 00 grind)
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. nutmeg

Spinach Nest

one 6 oz. bag baby spinach leaves (washed and dried)
2 T. olive oil
1 T. balsamic vinegar
2 T. low-sodium vegetable broth

2 Roma tomatoes (diced)
2 T. Parmesan cheese
3 T. sliced almonds (toasted)

Sage/Gorgonzola Sauce

Bouillon Broth for Sauce:

1 Not Chick'n bouillon cube
dissolved in
2 C. boiling water

Sauce:

1 tsp. olive oil
2 cloves garlic (smashed and chopped)
2 sprigs fresh sage leaves

1/3 C. yellow onion (finely-chopped)
1 C. bouillon broth (from above)
1/2 C. white wine

2 T. cornstarch
dissolved in
1/2 C. nonfat milk

3 T. crumbled Gorgonzola or blue cheese
a dash of Tabasco sauce

1/2 C. plain, nonfat yogurt (stirred smooth)

Preheat oven to
400°

Let's Prepare, Cook, and Plate This!

Basic Assembly Instructions

Start by scrubbing potatoes and rubbing them with oil. Place whole potatoes on a tray to bake in a preheated 400° oven. Set a timer for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven when tender. While the potatoes bake, make the Sage/Gorgonzola sauce.

Sage/Gorgonzola Sauce

1. Boil some water and make bouillon broth.
2. Place oil, garlic and sage leaves in a large saute pan and toss until garlic begins to sizzle.
3. Add onion, broth and wine and bring to a boil. Cook 5 minutes over low heat.
4. Return to a boil and slowly stir in cornstarch mixture. Reduce heat to low and continue stirring until boil settles down (about 1 minute), then cook over low heat for 5-minutes.
5. Add Gorgonzola or blue cheese and Tabasco. Stir well for a couple of minutes to melt cheese. Cover and turn off heat. Leave pan on burner. Stir occasionally until ready to dine.
6. Reheat sauce and add yogurt just before serving.

Gnocchi

Place salted water on to boil in a large kettle and reset oven to 300° after potatoes are baked.

1. Halve potatoes and scoop potato from skins. Discard skins. Use a potato ricer or grate skinless halved potatoes. Place riced or grated potatoes in a large bowl.
2. Lightly whisk egg yolks and pour over potatoes. Place 3/4 C. of flour in a fine sieve and shake over potato mixture. Add salt and nutmeg. Blend thoroughly with your hands until you have a dough ball similar to bread dough.
3. Sprinkle a little flour on your bread board or counter top. Pinch off a golf ball sized piece of the dough ball and roll out into a long skinny rope about 1/2" thick. Cut the rope into 1" pieces. Press 1" pieces with the tongs of a fork to create a pattern and flatten slightly. Set aside on a tray. Continue until you've used up the dough.
4. Drop about 15 pieces at a time into boiling water. When the pieces rise to the top, lift out of the water with a perforated spoon and place on a cookie sheet lined with a piece of parchment paper. Once all pieces are cooked, place in a 300°oven for about 5 minutes.

Spinach Nest/Serve

Place washed spinach leaves in a large bowl. Toss spinach with mixture of oil, vinegar and broth. Divide dressed spinach covering 1/2 of each serving plate. Top with chopped tomato and toasted almonds.

Ladle about 1/3 C. sauce onto open portion of each plate and place 15-20 gnocchi over sauce. Drizzle gnocchi with a little more sauce and sprinkle with a bit of Parmesan before serving.

What I've Learned from this Recipe

This version of Italian comfort food will take a little more time the first time you make it. Once you've gotten the hang of it, you'll be able to make this dish with little effort.

Let us know what you think, and ask any questions you may have! chezdon@plate6.com