

Ricotta Gnocchi

Steve Lindsay November 2020

Recipe closely modeled on *Gjelina: Cooking from Venice, California*. A book I love.

Serves 4 to 6 as a primo



Ingredients (excluding sauce – see end note)

500 g ricotta drained in sieve for half an hour

3 x ½ cup all-purpose flour

1 egg beaten in a small bowl

½ tsp salt

Freshly grated nutmeg

Method

Spread ½ cup flour on a work surface in a circle 8" in diameter.

Crumble the ricotta more/less evenly on top of the flour.

Sprinkle ½ cup flour on top of the ricotta.

Sprinkle salt and grate nutmeg on top of floured ricotta

With light, quick, cool-fingered motions, gently intermingle ricotta with other ingredients to form a ragged mass.

Gently manipulate that mass to form a shallow volcano, pour the beaten egg into the mouth of the volcano, and then use a regular fork, a bench scraper or facsimile, and your fingers to gently intermingle the egg with the other ingredients, adding up to another ½ cup of flour (a little sprinkle here, a little sprinkle there), kneading as lightly and as little as you can to get a smooth, uniform mass. Your aim is to minimize activation of gluten so the gnocchi will be light and fluffy.

Seal tightly in cling film and let rest on counter for at least 20 minutes (up to an hour or two).

Unwrap dough and place on very lightly floured board and gently flatten into a square about 1" thick. Cut a 1"-wide slice from the square. Gently roll that into a long sausage a bit more than ½" thick. Cut into logs about an 1¼" long. Repeat.

Holding a dinner fork in your nondominant hand, place a gnocchi on the tines with the thumb or forefinger of your dominant hand and roll the gnocchi along the tines, pushing so that our digit makes a dent on one side and the tines make grooves on the other. These irregularities are crucial for holding the sauce. Place groovy gnocchi on a lightly flour-dusted board or cookie sheet.

Turn on oven to 225F. If you have prepared a sauce, put that in a heat-proof bowl and put it in the oven.

Bring large pot of water to boil. Then add 1 to 2 tbs of salt. Add about a third of the gnocchi to vigorously boiling water, being careful to avoid them sticking together. Boil for 2 or 3 minutes until gnocchi are floating. Fish out with slotted spoon and put in warmed bowl. Repeat until done. Eat asap.

Sauce

The photo shows gnocchi adorned with a tomato sauce from the Gjelina book. Put ¼ cup olive oil in a stout saucepan and add a litre or so of cherry tomatoes and cook at medium for half hour or so, stirring every now and then, until tomatoes burst and soften. Put through mill or such to get rid of seeds and thick skin. Return to heat. Add some salt and pepper and maybe some herbs. Simmer to desired thickness. Add gnocchi and serve with fresh basil and parm.

Or just slather the gnocchi with some nice butter and a gently stir in a bunch of grated parm, maybe some herbs, and S&P to taste. Or whatever sauce hits your fancy, but keep it simple and scant.