

Italian American Society of Peoria Foods of Northern Italy Cooking Class

Methods for Gnocchi, Polenta, and Risotto

Demonstrators Methods June 13, 2009

Clara Taus - Gnocchi

4 medium-large Idaho baking potatoes

1 ¼ - 1 ½ cups of flour

2 eggs

Wash, peel, and cut potatoes into quarters. Put into a pot with cold water just to cover and a pinch of salt. Put on medium high heat, and cook at a low boil. When fork tender, drain water.

Put potatoes through a ricer or mash gently with a fork or masher (do not use an electric beater).

Turn onto a bread board dusted with a little bit of flour.

Add ½ cup of flour and mix in with your hands, kneading like when making bread.

Add 1 egg, and continue kneading.

Add ½ cup flour and continue kneading.

Add the second egg and continue kneading.

Add the rest of the flour and knead until a soft, airy, slightly sticky dough forms.

Let rest 10 minutes, covered with plastic wrap so it doesn't dry out.

Cut off small pieces, enough to roll out into a tube the length of your board. Roll out, dust with flour as necessary.

Cut the gnocchi pieces with a knife. Prick the center with your thumbnail.

Put onto a floured baking sheet to dry out a little bit before cooking or freeze. Boil in salted water until they float, about 3 minutes. Taste for doneness (when no longer have a floury taste).

Drain and put layers of gnocchi alternating with layers of tomato sauce and grated cheese in a large serving dish.

Kathy Facker - Easy Gnocchi

Please see enclosed sheet provided.

Kathy uses an onion holder or a gnocchi board and rolls the gnocchi over the tines in order to create ridges. This will help to hold the sauce on the gnocchi.

Cook in boiling, salted water until they float, and then an additional 3 minutes. Test for doneness.

Top with grated cheese and enjoy.

Gorgonzola Sauce for Gnocchi - Please see enclosed sheet

Pesto Sauce for Gnocchi - Please see enclosed sheet

From: *Marcella*
Gorgonzola Sauce

THE ONLY COMPLICATION attendant on this sauce is finding the right *gorgonzola*. If you have a good, conscientious cheese dealer, ask to be notified when a fresh wheel of *gorgonzola* arrives from Italy. Once cut, the cheese does not improve, it becomes dry, crumbly, and yellowish. When it is at its peak, it is a warm white color, creamily soft and even runny.

Do not use *gorgonzola* straight out of the refrigerator, because the cold stunts its flavor and aroma. If you are going to use it the same day you've bought it, do not refrigerate it at all. If you have had it a day or two, take it out of the refrigerator at least 6 hours before using it. *For 6 servings*

¼ pound *gorgonzola* (see
prefatory remarks above),
kept at room temperature
for 6 hours
⅓ cup milk
3 tablespoons butter
Salt

½ cup heavy whipping cream
1¼ pounds pasta
⅓ cup freshly grated *parmi-
giano-reggiano* cheese, plus
additional cheese at the
table

Recommended pasta ❖ Although it is excellent over such factory-made pasta shapes as *rigatoni* and *penne*, *gorgonzola* sauce is at its best with homemade pasta—*fettucine*, page 134, or *garganelli*, page 141, and with Potato Gnocchi, page 260.

1. Choose flameproof serving ware that can subsequently accommodate all the pasta. Put in the *gorgonzola*, milk, butter, and one or two pinches of salt, and turn on the heat to low. Stir with a wooden spoon, mashing the cheese with the back of the spoon and, as it begins to dissolve, incorporating it with the milk and butter. Cook for a minute or two until the sauce has a dense, creamy consistency. Take off the heat until the moment you are nearly ready to drain the pasta. Bear in mind that if you are using freshly made pasta, it will cook in just a few seconds and the sauce needs to be reheated for about 1 minute.

2. Shortly before the pasta is cooked, add the heavy cream to the sauce and stir over medium-low heat until it is partly reduced. Add the cooked drained pasta (if you are doing *gnocchi*, add sauce to the *gnocchi* as each batch is retrieved from the pot and transferred to a warm platter; see page 262), and toss with the sauce. Add the ⅓ cup grated Parmesan and toss thoroughly to melt it. Serve immediately, directly from the pan, with additional grated cheese on the side.

Italian American Society of Peoria
Filled Pasta Cooking Class
July 17, 2010

Meat Tortellini in Chicken Broth
Roasted Chicken Dinner

Meat Filling

3 Tb butter
½ lb ground beef
½ lb ground chicken breast
zest of 1 lemon
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 egg

Melt the butter in a skillet, and brown the ground beef and ground chicken breast, but do not cook through.

Put meat with juices into a bowl, and let cool.

Add the cheese and egg, and mix gently.

Chicken Broth

½ onion, chopped
½ celery stalk, chopped
½ carrot, chopped
1 whole chicken
1 chicken bullion cube

Put the vegetables and the whole chicken in a large stock pot and add enough water to cover by about 2 inches.

Bring to the boil, and then lower heat and simmer, uncovered for 20 – 30 minutes.

Remove chicken and drain vegetables from the broth.

Add salt to taste, and bullion cube, if necessary.

Chicken Dinner

1 par-boiled chicken
1 onion, halved
2-3 cloves garlic

Roasting potatoes, washed and cubed

Take the partially cooked chicken, and salt and pepper the outside. Rub with olive oil.

In the center of the chicken, put the onion and and garlic cloves.

Put the chicken into a roasting pan, and surround with potatoes (Potatoes can also be cooked separately).

Roast in the oven, basting as needed, until chicken is cooked through.

-Clara Taus

Bolognese Pasta Sauce

(Serves 6)

- 1 medium red onion, peeled 1/2 cup dry white wine
 - 1 medium carrot, scraped salt, pepper, nutmeg
 - 1 large stalk celery 3/4 cup lukewarm beef broth
 - 3 oz. pancetta or Prosciutto, 1/2 tsp basil
cut into cubes 1/2 tsp thyme
 - 6 oz. lean boneless beef, cubed 1/2 tsp oregano
 - 6 oz. boneless pork, cubed 1/2 tsp garlic powder
 - 4 Tb sweet butter 2 bay leaves
 - 2 Tb extra virgin olive oil 1 jar (26 oz.) Classico tomato
and basil pasta sauce
 - 1 lb. fresh or canned tomatoes 3/4 cup heavy cream
- Finely chop the onion, carrot and celery.
Coarsely grind the pancetta or Prosciutto, beef and pork all together in a meat grinder.
- Heat the butter and oil in a heavy lined copper or enameled pot over medium heat.
Add the chopped vegetables and the ground meats and sauté for 10 minutes, stirring every so often with a wooden spoon.
- If using fresh tomatoes, prepare by cutting into pieces. Pass fresh or canned tomatoes through a food mill, using the disc with the smallest holes.
- Add the wine to the casserole and let it evaporate for 5 minutes.
- Add the strained tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes.
- Season to taste with salt, pepper, nutmeg, basil, thyme, oregano, garlic powder and bay leaves.
- Add tomato sauce and the beef broth.
- Cover the casserole and simmer for 2 to 3 hours, stirring every so often.
- When done, add the cream; mix very well.
- Lower the heat and reduce for 20 minutes; for the last 5 minutes, remove the lid from the casserole. Serve over your favorite pasta.

-Anna Venzon

Bolognese Meat Ragu

(Serves 4)

- 1 medium onion, minced 3/4 cup dry white wine
 - 1 carrot, peeled and minced 1 1/2 cups beef stock
 - 1 stalk of celery, minced 4 tsp tomato paste
 - 4Tb butter (plus more to finish) 1/4 cup cream
 - 3 Tb olive oil 1/4 lb. mushrooms
 - 1/2 cup chopped bacon or pancetta
 - 3/4 cup ground beef
 - 3/4 cup ground pork
 - 1/4 cup ground Italian sausage (about 1 sausage without casing)
- Heat 3 Tb of butter with 2 Tb of the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
Add the onion, carrot, and celery and cook until vegetables have softened.
Add chopped bacon and cook to render out the fat. Remove meaty parts of bacon.
Add the ground beef, ground pork, and Italian sausage meat, and brown.
Add dry white wine and boil off.
- Mix a little of the beef stock with the tomato paste to make it thinner, and then add to the skillet with the other ingredients. Mix together.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Add 1/4 cup of the beef stock and cover the skillet.
- Cook over medium-low heat for an additional 1 to 1 1/2 hours, stirring intermittently and adding more stock gradually to keep the meat moist. All the ingredients should come together to form a gravy-like sauce, or "ragu."
- While the meat ragu is cooking, quarter and sauté the mushrooms in a special small frying pan in 1 Tb butter and 1 Tb olive oil, and reserve.
- To complete the sauce, off heat stir in the mushrooms and their juices, and 1/4 cup of cream. Add additional tablespoons of cream and 1—2 Tb additional butter, as desired.
- Serve immediately, with just a little sauce in the center of a plate of egg noodles. (To reheat any left-over sauce, use low heat and add additional water or cream).

-Kathy Occhipinti

Italian American Society of Peoria
Pasta Cooking Class

Methods for Pasta Noodles and Ravioli

Demonstrators Methods April 18, 2009

Anna Venzon - Basic Egg Pasta

6 extra large eggs
½ egg shell water
2 ½ cups flour to start

Anna uses a bowl and has not found a difference between the bowl and well method. She starts with 6 extra large eggs and always adds a bit of water, which will slightly soften the dough.

She adds about one cup of flour at a time and mixes the flour into the eggs gently with a fork and then, when a dough begins to form, with her hands.

The dough ball is then turned out onto a well-floured board, and flour is added to the top of the dough.

She kneads the dough, gradually adding more flour when it becomes sticky, for at least 15 minutes. The kneading not only mixes in the flour but gives it a smooth texture and will make a tender dough. During this process, at least 2 more cups of flour are added. More may be needed if the day is humid, less if the day is dry.

The dough then rests 15 minutes.

A slice is cut off the dough and run through the pasta roller at the thickest setting. If the dough sticks to the machine, more flour is added and the dough kneaded again until it is ready.

A stiffer dough is needed for noodles, and a softer dough for ravioli.

She runs the dough through her machine from the thickest to the middle setting, which is 5, and then either uses the strip to make ravioli or runs it through the cutter to make fettucini/linguini, etc.

Kathy Bartolo - Semolina Flour Pasta

Kathy Bartolo suggests adding 1 Tb oil and 1 Tb water for each egg to make a softer ravioli dough when using flour.

1 lb semolina wheat flour
4 eggs

For her semolina flour pasta, Kathy mixes the above ingredients together on a board.

The dough is then kneaded for about 5 minutes. It will be fairly stiff.

Kathy puts her dough through the pasta rollers at the thickest setting several times to soften a bit, and then runs through the machine from the thick to thin settings.

Semolina pasta is used when drying pasta as it will keep longer than regular flour.