

Gnocchi

Recipe adapted from 101cookbooks.com
Makes 6 portions

2 large russets, (or about 2 pounds) scrubbed
1/4 cup egg, lightly beaten
3/4 cup of unbleached all-purpose flour,
plus more as needed
fine grain sea salt

Tools needed:

Large pot
Slotted spoon
Cutting board
Fork
Small bowl
Bench Scraper

Fill a large pot with cold water. Salt the water (it should taste like the ocean). Bring the water to a boil and cook the potatoes until tender throughout, about 40-50 minutes.

Remove the potatoes from the water. Have adults to this step: Place each potato piece on a large cutting board and peel it before moving on to the next potato. Also, peel each potato as soon as possible after removing from the water (without burning yourself). Be mindful that you want to work relatively quickly so you can mash the potatoes when they are hot. Don't over-mash - you are simply after an even consistency with no noticeable lumps.

Save the potato water.

Let the potatoes cool spread out across the cutting board - ten or fifteen minutes.

When you are ready, pull the potatoes into a soft mound - drizzle with the beaten egg and sprinkle 3/4 cup of the flour across the top. I've found that a metal spatula or large pastry scraper are both great utensils to use to incorporate the flour and eggs into the potatoes with the egg incorporated throughout - you can see the hint of yellow from the yolk. Scrape underneath and fold, scrape and fold until the mixture is a light crumble. Very gently, with a feathery touch knead the dough. This is also the point you can add more flour (a sprinkle at a time) if the dough is too tacky

The dough should be moist but not sticky. It should feel almost billowy. Cut it

into 8 pieces. Now gently roll each 1/8th of dough into a snake-shaped log, roughly the thickness of your thumb. Use a knife to cut pieces every 3/4-inch. Dust with a bit more flour.

To shape the gnocchi hold a fork in one hand and place a gnocchi against the tines of the fork, cut ends out. With confidence and an assertive (but light) touch, use your thumb and press in and down the length of the fork. The gnocchi should curl into a slight "C" shape, their backs will capture the impression of the tines as tiny ridges (good for catching sauce later). Set each gnocchi aside, dust with a bit more flour if needed, until you are ready to boil them. This step takes some practice, don't get discouraged, once you get the hang of it it's easy.

To cook the gnocchi, either reheat your potato water or start with a fresh pot (salted), and bring to a boil. Cook the gnocchi in batches by dropping them into the boiling water roughly twenty at a time. They are finished when they float to the top. Fish them out of the water a few at a time with a slotted spoon ten seconds or so after they've surfaced. Have a large platter ready with a generous swirl of whatever sauce or favorite pesto you'll be serving on the gnocchi. Place the gnocchi on the platter. Continue cooking in batches until all the gnocchi are done. Gently toss with more sauce or pesto (don't overdo it, it should be a light dressing), and serve immediately, family-style with a drizzle of olive oil and parmesan on top.