

Gli Gnocchi di Patate/Potato Gnocchi

This is adapted from a recipe of my *zia* (aunt) Mariolina, who emigrated to the USA many years before me. She is now fully American, but remains fully Italian. *Grazie zia!*

Ingredients per 4 person

- 1 kg Idaho or Russet potatoes (big starchy potatoes), also called *patate farinose* (literally "floury potatoes"). 1 kg corresponds to 4–5 large *patate*.
- 1 *uovo* (egg) *grande* (large)
- About 70 g=1/2 *tazza* (cup) *di* (of) *farina* (flour)
- *sale* (salt)

Directions

1. Place the potatoes in a large stockpot. Add water to cover them by a few centimeters (yes, we do not use inches). Bring the water to a boil, add salt (about a couple of teaspoons, but it depends on how much water you use).
2. Lower the heat and cook until the potatoes are done (approx. 40 minutes, try poking the potatoes with a fork, when you feel little resistance they are ready).
3. Drain the water and when the potatoes are tepid/cold peel them and put them through a ricer or mash them with a fork.
4. Beat the egg and add it to the mashed potatoes.
5. Slowly add the flour a bit at a time. The amount of flour is dictated by the quality and size of the potatoes. You want to have smooth and elastic dough. Too much flour will lead to hard *gnocchi*.
6. Turn the dough on a floured surface, shape it as a long rope, and cut into narrow and long pieces. Roll these pieces with the palms of your hands until they become finger-sized rolls, about the size of ordinary breadsticks (*grissini*).
7. *Taglia* (cut) the rolls into 1–2 cm lengths. Shake each piece in your hand, as you would dice for "craps", and cast them on the lightly floured surface. The pieces are now *gnocchi* waiting for a finishing optional touch.
8. OPTIONAL: Press the center of each *gnocco* with your finger, making a single dent or two or roll each *gnocco* over the surface of a grater or on the back of a fork so that it's covered with many tiny indentations.
9. Once the *gnocchi* are rolled and dented, let them rest while you put water to boil.
10. When the water boils, add salt (as much you would do with *pasta*). Once it reaches a second rolling boil, add the *gnocchi* a few at a time.
11. They are cooked as soon as they surface, and should be scooped out with a slotted spoon. Drain well, and put in a warm serving dish. Continue the operation until all are cooked.
12. Serve immediately with your favorite sauce, such as tomato sauce and basil, *gorgonzola* sauce (melt *gorgonzola* crumbs with milk, at low heat) or just with a few leaves of fresh sage fried in butter and grated *parmigiano*.

Note: If you made too many *gnocchi*, you can freeze them before cooking them. Freeze the *gnocchi* in a Ziploc: place them flat to freeze, so that they do not stick all together. To cook them, throw the frozen *gnocchi* directly into the boiling salted water without thawing or they will stick together. Their cooking time will be slightly longer than unfrozen.

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