Jeanne Fratello - Jolly Tomato Blog Post – **Authentic Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce**

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Authentic Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce

by Jeanne on September 20, 2021 in Recipes, Travel

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One of our favorite experiences on our tomato tour of Italy was learning to make real **Italian gnocchi with tomato sauce**.

Authentic Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce

Gnocchi isn’t hard to make, and it’s extremely delicious, but it’s somehow still intimidating. Is it because it’s hard to pronounce? (You really have to lean into the “Gn” like “NYOH-kee.”) Or is it because it’s not clear exactly what it is? (It’s little potato-y dough balls served similarly to pasta.) Or is it because it’s just a tad more complicated than pasta, which is just *there* and all you have to do is throw it in boiling water? (It’s truly not that much harder!)

To get some expert guidance, we visited the MedEATerranea Academia Enogastronomica as a guest of ANICAV and the Greatest Tomatoes From Europe. There, we took a lesson from Chef Carlo Riccio, who is an expert on all Italian cuisine, especially gnocchi.
Chef Riccio shared some interesting tidbits with us about gnocchi. First of all, it’s an Italian original, dating back to a recipe from the 1300s. Interestingly, the first gnocchi were not prepared with boiled potatoes. (The first potatoes were imported only after the discovery of America.) The original gnocchi were made with stale bread, to which cooks added dried fruit (!) and milk.

However, this recipe, thankfully, is the perfect savory version of gnocchi as we know and love it. (No dried fruit to be found!)

Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce Recipe

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Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce

An authentic Italian gnocchi with tomato sauce recipe as taught by Chef Carlo Riccio at MedEATerranea Accademia Enogastronomica.

Course Main Dish/Side Dish

Cuisine Italian

Keyword gnocchi, San Marzano DOP tomatoes

Prep Time 50 minutes

Cook Time 10 minutes

Total Time 1 hour

Servings 4

Ingredients

For the Gnocchi

- 250 g red potatoes (just over 1/2 pound)
- 100 g 00 flour (rounded 3/4 cup) (see note)
- 1 egg white
- 30 g grated Grana Padano cheese (similar to Parmesan) (2 1/2 to 3 tablespoons)
- salt and pepper to taste
- dash ground nutmeg

For the Tomato Sauce

- 10 cl extra virgin olive oil (1/3 cup)
- 20 g white onion, peeled and finely chopped (rounded 1/4 cup)
- 600 g tomato puree (3 cups)
- 70 g fresh buffalo mozzarella, cubed (1/2 cup)
- basil leaves

Instructions

For the Gnocchi

1. Boil the potatoes in a large pot of water until soft, about 30 to 40 minutes. Peel and mash the potatoes (gently, by hand).
2. Sift the flour out onto a counter or workspace and arrange it in a mound. Add the potatoes to the top of the mound, then add the egg white and a dash of salt. Knead the dough with your hands until you get a soft and pliable dough.
3. Split the dough in half. Take each half and roll it out with your hands into a long "snake" about 2 centimeters in diameter. Cut the rolls of dough into 1-inch pieces, then roll them with a fork (or simply roll them on your thumb) to get the classic gnocchi shape.

4. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add the gnocchi and boil until they float to the top - two to three minutes. Drain the gnocchi and prepare to serve immediately with the tomato sauce.

For the Tomato Sauce

1. In a medium saucepan, heat the extra virgin olive oil. Add the minced onions and saute briefly, just until softened. Stir in the tomato puree, bring to a boil, and simmer for 15-20 minutes, adding water as necessary to keep the sauce to the consistency of a thick gravy.
2. Add the cooked, drained gnocchi to the tomato sauce, along with a few basil leaves, and stir, allowing the gnocchi to simmer for two to three minutes.
3. Divide the gnocchi evenly into four small ovenproof ramekins. Distribute the cheese evenly over the gnocchi. Bake at 400 degrees for five minutes or until the cheese is melted and bubbly. Top with remaining basil and serve.

Recipe Notes

Note: 00 flour is a specific kind of flour milled for pasta making. It is the finest ground of flour and it feels very soft and silky. You should be able to find 00 flour at a well-stocked grocery store. Otherwise, you can use pastry flour.

Steps for Making Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce

Let’s take a closer look at some of these steps:

You’ve made a little mound of dough with flour and mashed potatoes; now sprinkle in some salt:

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Next you're going to carefully knead that into a dough that's soft and pliable:

Video Player

After that you will roll it out into ropes and cut it into 1-inch pieces:

From here, you can go one of several ways to shape the 1-inch pieces. One, you can use a specific gnocchi shaper such as a ridged board that will give you a more traditional look. Two, you can roll it down a fork to give it a set of lines. Or three, you can simply roll it over your thumb and give it a little indented shape. It doesn't have to be fancy! What you want is to wind up with little ear-shaped pieces:

Meanwhile you prepare the sauce by lightly sauteeing minced onions along with olive oil, then adding the tomato puree:

After you combine your cooked gnocchi and prepared tomato sauce, you put them in ramekins. Top them with cheese and they're ready to bake:

And last but not least, you pop it in the oven to melt the cheese.

And there you have it! So delicious… You'd think it came straight from an Italian restaurant, but in fact you made it!

Here’s our whole group giving a cheer for this incredible food:

Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce Pin

If you enjoyed this recipe, or if you want to save it for future use, go ahead and pin it on Pinterest here:

Italian Gnocchi with Tomato Sauce – Make your own at home!

Blogger disclosure: I took the cooking class as a part of my tour of Italy as a guest of ANICAV and the Greatest Tomatoes from Europe. I did not otherwise receive compensation for this post. All opinions expressed are my own. This post contains affiliate links to products on Amazon. If you purchase a product through these links, you help support Jolly Tomato at no cost to you.