

Spinach and Ricotta Gnudi with Fresh Cherry Tomato Sauce

Serves 4 as main course

Note: Do not skip the draining steps for the ricotta and spinach or else the gnudi will be too wet to hold its shape.

For Gnudi:

- 1 pound whole milk ricotta
- 10 ounces frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- 2 large egg whites, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese, about 1 ounce, plus more for serving
- 1 tablespoon Panko bread crumbs
- 1.5 teaspoons Kosher salt, plus more for boiling
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

For Sauce:

- 1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly smashed
- 2 pints cherry tomatoes
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 large sprigs of basil, plus 1 cup basil leaves, cut into ribbons
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

For Gnudi:

1. Place three full size paper towels on a baking tray. Spread ricotta into a 1/2 inch thick layer across paper towels. Place two more paper towels on top and press gently to meet ricotta. The paper towels will absorb excess moisture in the next few minutes.
2. Place thawed spinach into fine mesh strainer and using a flexible spatula, press to release as much liquid as possible.
3. In a large mixing bowl, combine egg whites, flour, Parmesan, Panko, salt and pepper, drained spinach and drained ricotta. Set mixture aside in the refrigerator while you make the sauce or for up to 2 hours.
4. Bring a large stock pot of water to a boil and season with salt to taste.

5. Meanwhile, prepare sauce by adding olive oil to a wok or dutch oven over medium low heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring often until softened and fragrant, but not browned, about 2 minutes. Increase heat to medium and add tomatoes, red pepper flakes, basil springs, and salt. Cook, stirring and lightly smashing until tomatoes burst and some break down into a sauce, approximately 10 minutes. Turn heat to low while you proceed to step 6.
6. Using 2 soup spoons, scoop ping pong ball sized gnudi dough directly into boiling water. When gnudi are done, they will float. Transfer cooked gnudi to sauce using a slotted spoon.
7. When all the gnudi are added to the sauce, adjust the consistency with spoonfuls of pasta cooking liquid and season to taste.
8. Serve immediately with cut basil and additional Parmesan.

Tools:

- Baking Tray
- Paper towels
- Off set spatula for spreading
- Flexible spatula
- Fine mesh strainer
- Mixing bowls
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Two spoons (soup spoons)
- Wok or Dutch oven
- Stock pot
- Bench scraper
- Wooden spoon
- Slotted spoon
- Herb cutter
- Microplane grater for parmesan

