Main dishes / Italy

Potato Gnocchi

Cloud-light pillow-dumplings made from still-warm baked potato, just enough flour, and a single egg — the Italian grandmother's paradox: the less you work the dough, the better the gnocchi. One extra gram of flour is the difference between a dumpling and a torpedo.

Time 90 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- ☐ 1000 g Russet or Yukon Gold potatoes (floury variety)
- ☐ 200 g All-purpose flour (plus extra for bench)
- ☐ 1 whole Egg (large), beaten
- ☐ 8 g Fine sea salt
- ☐ 30 g Parmigiano-Reggiano, grated (optional finish)
- ☐ 40 g Unsalted butter, for pan sauce

Let's make it.

01 Preheat oven to 200 C (400 F). Scrub potatoes, prick all over with a fork, and place directly on the oven rack (not wrapped in foil — you want moisture to escape). Bake for 55–70 minutes until completely tender through the center when pierced with a skewer and the skin is papery and tight. Do not boil the potatoes — boiling adds water, which demands more flour, which makes heavy gnocchi.

02 While potatoes are still steaming hot, halve them and scoop the flesh directly through a ricer or food mill onto a clean board or baking sheet. Spread the riced potato in a thin layer and let the steam escape for 3–4 minutes. Do not mash with a masher — it crushes the cells and creates a gluey paste. Cool just until you can handle it, but no more.

03 Make a well in the riced potato. Add the beaten egg and salt into the well. Scatter the flour over the top. Using a bench scraper or your fingertips, cut and fold the mixture together — do not knead. Work until just combined: a shaggy dough forms and no dry flour remains. The moment you see a cohesive mass, stop. Over-working develops gluten and makes gnocchi tough.

04 Flour your work surface lightly. Tear off a golf-ball portion of dough and roll it into a rope about 1.5 cm in diameter, applying even pressure from the center outward. Cut the rope into 2 cm pillows with a bench scraper. Optional: roll each piece over a fork or gnocchi board, pressing gently with your thumb to create ridges that hold sauce. Place on a lightly floured baking sheet in a single layer.

05 Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a vigorous boil. Cook gnocchi in batches of 20–25 pieces. They are done the moment they bob to the surface and have stayed there for 30 seconds — no longer. Remove with a slotted spoon directly into a waiting skillet of browned butter over medium heat. Toss to coat and finish in the butter for 60 seconds until lightly golden.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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