Bread & baking / Poland

Pierogi

Poland's answer to the dumpling: a thin, yielding dough pocket sealed around a filling of farmer's cheese and potato so creamy it collapses on the tongue, finished in brown butter with onions that have cooked into sweetness.

Time 90 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- [ ] 100 parts All-purpose flour
- [ ] 45 parts Warm water
- [ ] 60 parts Farmer's cheese (twaróg) or ricotta
- [ ] 60 parts Russet potatoes, boiled and riced
- [ ] 15 parts Yellow onion, finely diced
- [ ] 10 parts Unsalted butter
- [ ] 2 parts Salt and white pepper

Let's make it.

01 Combine the flour and a pinch of salt in a bowl. Add warm water gradually, mixing with a fork until shaggy. Turn out and knead by hand for 8–10 minutes until the dough is completely smooth, supple, and slightly tacky but not sticky. The dough should have the elasticity of an earlobe. Wrap tightly in cling film and rest for 30 minutes at room temperature — resting is non-negotiable, as it relaxes the gluten so the dough can be rolled paper-thin.

02 Sauté half the diced onion in butter until golden, then set aside to cool. In a bowl, combine the riced potatoes, farmer's cheese, and sautéed onion. Season aggressively with salt and white pepper — the filling will be encased in unseasoned dough, so it must carry all the flavor. Mix until just combined; do not overwork or the potato becomes gluey. Taste and adjust salt until the filling tastes pleasantly salty on its own.

03 On a lightly floured surface, roll the rested dough to 2–3mm thickness — thin enough to see the shadow of your hand through it. Cut circles using a 8–9cm cutter or glass. Place a generous teaspoon of filling in the center of each circle. Fold the dough over the filling and press the edges firmly together, crimping with a fork or a tight finger-pinch. Sealed edges must be completely airtight — any opening will burst during boiling.

04 Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a rolling boil. Add pierogi in batches — do not crowd. They will sink, then float to the surface after 2 minutes. After they float, cook 2 minutes more for a total of 4–5 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon. For the classic finish, melt butter in a wide pan over medium heat, add the remaining diced onion and cook until golden. Toss the boiled pierogi in the browned butter for 2 minutes until lightly crisped on one side.

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