

[Instant Mashed Potato Gnocchi al Forno](#)

“Cook’ Country Magazine,” December/January 2022
Cook’s Country TV, Season 15: Saucy Italian-Inspired Diners

Serves: 4

Time: 1-3/4 hours

Ingredients

Gnocchi:

2 cups (4 ounces) plain instant mashed potato flakes
1 cup (5 ounces) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons table salt, plus salt for cooking gnocchi
1½ cups water
1 large egg

Sauce:

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon dried oregano
½ cup fresh basil leaves, torn into ½-inch pieces
½ cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
1 ½ cups shredded whole-milk mozzarella cheese
Grated Parmesan cheese

All-Purpose Whisks

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

For this recipe we used Idahoan Original Mashed Potatoes. Do not use flavored instant mashed potato flakes. It is important to knead the dough to the texture of Play-Doh in step 2, or it will be too tender and difficult to roll into ropes. In step 3, be sure to very lightly dust the counter with flour before rolling the dough into ropes to keep them from sticking. A good-quality jarred marinara, such as Rao's, can be substituted for the canned tomato sauce. Be sure to use a broiler-safe skillet.

1. In a bowl combine, potato flakes, all-purpose flour and salt. In a measuring cup, add water and egg and whisk together just to break egg; add to dry ingredients. Let rest for 15 minutes to fully hydrate ingredients.
2. On a lightly floured countertop, knead the dough to help develop gluten and structure of the dough. When it gives a bit of resistance, dough is done. Sprinkle with a bit of flour and let it rest for five minutes.

3. Cut dough into six equal pieces, then cut in half, then cut each half into thirds. Set pieces aside and work with one piece at a time. Roll out into a rope that is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch in diameter. Using a bench scraper, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pieces.
4. To form gnocchi, you could just be a dimple in the center, but you can use a fork to make a more traditional look with ridges. To shape with fork, take the cut side and put it on the backside of the fork and using your thumb, roll the dough off the fork creating ridges. Place gnocchi on a well-dusted baking sheet until ready to cook.
5. To cook, boil water in a four-quart pot. When water comes to a boil, add 1 tablespoon of table salt. Cook half the gnocchi at a time. To transfer to pot, a bench scraper works best. The gnocchi cook for approximately one and a half minutes or they're done when they float. Using a spider, place in tomato sauce. To make sure the water returns to a boil before putting the last batch in. With the second batch, the water will get foamy due to the extra starch in the water. Gently mix with the sauce. Place dollops of ricotta cheese around the gnocchi and shredded mozzarella. Place under broiler, about 8-inches from the heat, bake for about 3 minutes. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.
6. To freeze gnocchi, place tray of gnocchi in freezer; when firm transfer to a plastic bag or container for up to a month.

To make sauce:

1. Add oil to a broiler safe skillet. Add two cloves of minced garlic and set heat to medium heat and let cook for two minutes or until garlic is golden. Add tomato sauce, sugar, oregano and black pepper. Bring sauce to a simmer, turn off heat, rip basil leaves into sauce and stir. Cover and set aside until gnocchi is.