

PREPARING THE POTATO GNOCCHI

SERVES 4

4 LB. LARGE RUSSET POTATOES

4 EGG YOLKS

1 1/2 CUPS ALL PURPOSE FLOUR , SIFTED

WHITE PEPPER

SALT

METHOD:

PREHEAT OVEN TO 375 DEGREES. WASH POTATOES, SPACE THE POTATOES OUT ON A SHEET PAN, AND PRICK THE POTATOES WITH A FORK. BAKE THE POTATOES FOR APPROXIMATELY 1 1/2 HOURS, ROTATING THE SHEET PAN EVERY 20 MINUTES. REMOVE THE POTATOES FROM THE OVEN ONCE THEY ARE COOKED THROUGH AND VERY SOFT TO THE TOUCH. SCORE THE TOPS OF THE POTATOES AND PRESS TO OPEN, ALLOWING THE POTATOES TO RELEASE ANY STEAM. SCOOP THE FLESH OF THE POTATOES INTO A FOOD MILL, AND PROCESS THE POTATOES ONTO A FLOURED SURFACE.

SPRINKLE THE POTATO MOUND WITH 1/4 CUP FLOUR. GENTLY CUT THE FLOUR INTO THE POTATOES USING A SPATULA. THE GOAL IS TO INCORPORATE THE FLOUR JUST TO THE POINT THAT THE MASS HAS A UNIFORM APPEARANCE THROUGHOUT. REPEAT THIS PROCESS TWICE MORE, WITH 1/4 CUP FLOUR EACH TIME. POUR 2 EGG YOLKS OVER THE POTATO MIXTURE. CUT THE EGGS INTO THE POTATO USING A SPATULA. WHEN THE EGGS ARE PROPERLY INCORPORATED, THE MIXTURE WILL APPEAR BLOTCHY WITH YELLOW SPOTS OF EGG. SPRINKLE THE POTATO MIXTURE WITH ANOTHER 1/4 CUP FLOUR, INCORPORATE, AND REPEAT. INCORPORATE THE REMAINING 2 EGG YOLKS. SEASON THE POTATO MIXTURE WITH SALT AND WHITE PEPPER. NOTE: IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THE GNOCCHI DOUGH LOOKS STRIATED WITH EGG YOLK AT THIS POINT — YOU DON'T WANT FULLY EMULSIFIED DOUGH. KNEAD THE DOUGH INTO A BALL AND ROLL INTO A LARGE LOG. COVER THE DOUGH WITH A CLEAN TOWEL AND ALLOW THE DOUGH TO REST FOR 5 MINUTES. WHILE THE DOUGH IS RESTING, USE A BENCH SCRAPER TO CLEAN YOUR WORK SURFACE.

DUST THE WORK SURFACE WITH FLOUR AND REMOVE A SMALL PORTION OF THE GNOCCHI DOUGH. USING YOUR HANDS, ROLL THE DOUGH INTO A THIN ROPE. USING A SPATULA, CUT THE GNOCCHI INTO 1 INCH LONG PIECES. TRANSFER THE GNOCCHI TO A SHEET PAN LINED WITH PARCHMENT PAPER AND FLOUR. ONCE ONE SHEET PAN IS COVERED WITH A SINGLE LAYER OF GNOCCHI, PLACE THE SHEET PAN IN THE FREEZER, UNCOVERED.

ONCE THE GNOCCHI ARE FROZEN, THEY CAN BE TRANSFERRED INTO PLASTIC BAGGIES AND HELD FROZEN.

GNOCCHI WITH HEN OF THE WOODS MUSHROOMS AND PARMESAN CREAM

SERVES 4

40 EACH GNOCCHI, FROZEN

2 T BUTTER

2/3 CUP CREAM

1/3 CUP CHICKEN BROTH

1 T SHALLOTS, FINELY MINCED

1/2 CUP SAUTEED HEN OF THE WOODS MUSHROOMS

1 T ITALIAN PARSLEY, CHOPPED FINE

1 T PARMESAN CHEESE, GRATED FINE

SALT

METHOD:

BRING A LARGE POT OF SALTED WATER TO A BOIL. REDUCE THE HEAT TO A SIMMER.

HEAT A LARGE SAUTÉ PAN OVER MEDIUM HEAT. MELT THE BUTTER AND ADD THE SHALLOTS TO THE PAN.

SEASON THE SHALLOTS WITH SALT AND SAUTÉ UNTIL TRANSLUCENT AND COOKED THROUGH. ADD THE MUSHROOMS TO THE PAN, AND STIR. ONCE THE MUSHROOMS ARE HOT, ADD THE CREAM. ALLOW THE CREAM TO SIMMER AND REDUCE TO A SAUCE CONSISTENCY (CREAM SHOULD REDUCE TO APPROXIMATELY 1/2 ITS ORIGINAL VOLUME). ADD THE CHICKEN BROTH AND REDUCE BACK TO SAUCE CONSISTENCY. AT THIS POINT, TURN THE HEAT OFF AND COOK THE GNOCCHI.

DROP THE GNOCCHI INTO THE SIMMERING WATER. MAKE SURE THE WATER IS AT A GENTLE SIMMER. A RAPID BOIL WILL DESTROY THESE DELICATE PILLOWS. GNOCCHI TELL YOU WHEN THEY'RE READY; THEY FLOAT ONCE COOKED. ONCE THE GNOCCHI FLOAT TO THE TOP, SKIM THEM OUT OF THE POT WITH A SLOTTED SPOON, AND PLACE THE GNOCCHI INTO THE SAUTÉ PAN WITH THE CREAM SAUCE.

PLACE THE SAUTÉ PAN BACK OVER THE HEAT. STIR TO COAT THE GNOCCHI WITH THE SAUCE. TASTE THE SAUCE AND ADD ANY ADDITIONAL SALT. FINISH THE DISH WITH THE CHOPPED PARSLEY AND GRATED PARMESAN.

SPOON, AND PLACE THE GNOCCHI INTO THE SAUTÉ PAN WITH THE CREAM SAUCE.

PLACE THE SAUTÉ PAN BACK OVER THE HEAT. STIR TO COAT THE GNOCCHI WITH THE SAUCE. TASTE THE SAUCE AND ADD ANY ADDITIONAL SALT. SERVE HOT.

NOTE: A LARGE POT WILL GIVE THE GNOCCHI PLENTY OF ROOM TO SWIM AND THUS WILL KEEP THEM FROM STICKING TO ONE ANOTHER. IN ADDITION, THE FROZEN GNOCCHI WILL NOT DEPRESS THE TEMPERATURE OF THE SIMMERING WATER; THIS ENSURES THE GNOCCHI WILL COOK QUICKLY, MAINTAINING THEIR INTEGRITY.