

Gli Gnudi with Oven Roasted Tomatoes

Serves 4

This is my favorite pasta because it is easy, beautiful, and healthier than most pastas. *Gli gnudi*, which means “the nudes,” is essentially ravioli without the pasta jackets, hence “nudes.” With a sauce of oven roasted tomatoes and dusting of grated Parmesan, *gli gnudi* are green, red and white — the colors of the Italian flag.

1 1/2 cups, 500 grams of whole milk ricotta cheese, well drained
1 1/2 cups cooked spinach, chopped and squeezed as dry as possible
2/3 cup finely shredded Parmesan, plus extra for serving
1 whole egg
1 egg yolk (use the white to make Little Lark Cocktails)
3/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg (more to taste)
1 Tbsp. flour
Dash cayenne pepper
Black pepper to taste
More flour for rolling

The trick to perfect *gnudi* is to have the cheese and spinach as dry as possible. Mix the drained ricotta and hard-squeezed spinach together. Add all other ingredients and stir until well-mixed. Make golf-ball size dumplings and roll in flour. Heat salted water to boiling. Gently slide dumplings into boiling water with a slotted spoon. The *gli gnudi* will float to the surface after a few minutes. After they are all floating, let them boil for about one minute longer, then remove with a slotted spoon and place on a plate to allow excess water to evaporate. To serve, put 3-4 *gli gnudi* in a heated shallow bowl for each serving, drizzle generously with roasted tomatoes sauce, and sprinkle with grated Parmesan.

Note: The spinach-ricotta mixture can be made the day before and stored in the refrigerator. Some recipes say the dumplings can be made, even cooked, in advance, but I think the flavor and texture changes. It's very easy to do just before you cook them.