

Get Squashed

Winter Squash Gnocchi with Pumpkin Seed Pesto

By Cody Castiglia

Yield: Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

1 1-pound winter squash

1 tablespoon garlic-infused grapeseed oil or olive oil

1 12-to 14-ounce russet potato, peeled, quartered

3/4 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese or Judy's Parm, divided

1 large egg, beaten to blend

1 1/2 teaspoons freshly grated nutmeg

1 teaspoon salt

1 3/4 cups (or more) all purpose flour or local "Hard White" flour

2 squash blossoms. Lightly torn (optional)

4 ounces chevre or fromage blanc, preferably Cherry Valley herbed fromage blanc

Preparation

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut squash lengthwise in half; discard seeds. Place squash halves, cut side up, on baking sheet and brush with oil. Roast until squash is very tender when pierced with skewer and lightly browned, about 1 1/2 hours.

Cool to room temperature. Scoop flesh from squash into processor; puree until smooth. Transfer to medium saucepan; stir constantly over medium heat until juices evaporate and puree thickens, about 5 minutes. Cool. Measure 1 cup (packed) squash puree (reserve remaining squash for another use).

Meanwhile, cook potato in medium saucepan of boiling salted water until very tender, about 20 minutes. Drain. While potato is warm, press through food mill into medium bowl; cool completely. Measure 2 cups (loosely packed) riced potato (reserve remaining potato for another use).

Mix squash, potato, 1/2 cup Parmesan, egg, nutmeg, and salt in large bowl.

Gradually add 1 3/4 cups flour, kneading gently into mixture in bowl until dough holds together and is almost smooth. If dough is very sticky, add more flour by tablespoonfuls. Turn dough out onto floured surface; knead gently but briefly just until smooth. Divide dough into 8 equal pieces.

Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment. Sprinkle parchment lightly with flour. Working with 1 dough piece at a time, roll dough out on floured surface to about 1/2-inch-thick rope. Cut rope crosswise into 3/4-inch pieces. Transfer gnocchi to baking sheets. Repeat with remaining dough. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and chill at least 1 hour.

Working in 2 batches, cook gnocchi in large pot of boiling salted water until very tender, 15 to 17 minutes (gnocchi will float to surface but may come to surface before being fully cooked). Using slotted spoon, transfer gnocchi to same parchment-lined baking sheets.

Toss the warm gnocchi with the pumpkin seed pesto and transfer to individual bowls. Garnish with a dollop of the fromage blanc and the torn squash blossoms.

Pumpkin Seed Pesto

Ingredients:

1/2 cup pumpkin seeds (shelled, roasted)

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan or Judy's Parm

2 cloves garlic

3/4 cup basil leaves

3/4 cup fresh parsley leaves

2 tablespoons local honey

1/2 cups sunflower oil or olive oil

Instructions:

Blend Until Smooth, Season to Taste with Salt and Pepper