



Sugar Apple

Posts From The Caribbean

Pumpkin Ravioli with Sage and Butter Sauce

Pumpkin Filling

This amount of pumpkin should fill make enough to fill about 600 grams of pasta, definitely enough to feed 6 hungry people. Amaretti are crunchy little almond cookies popular in Northern Italy.

1 1/2 pounds of pumpkin or butternut squash, seeded and cut into wedges
10-12 amaretti cookies, crushed
dried unseasoned breadcrumbs, as needed
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 cup of freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Roast the pumpkin or squash in a moderate oven (350° to 400°) until soft. Let the pumpkin cool and then scoop it out of the skin and into a bowl. Mash the pumpkin well, then add the crushed cookies, the cheese and the egg. Mix together well. The filling should be quite dry and firm; if it seems wet, add a few tablespoons of breadcrumbs. Add salt and pepper to taste, then taste the mixture for balance and adjust if necessary. Reserve until needed to fill the ravioli.

Sage and Butter Sauce

1 stick of unsalted butter
a handful of fresh sage leaves

Pasta Dough

In Italy, they use a highly refined flour called tipo 00 or doppio zero (double zero). It's a very high protein flour milled to a talcum powder softness. Regular all-purpose flour is a perfectly fine substitute and what we used on Wednesday. You'll need a pasta machine for this one, unless you think you can roll the dough to a very, very thin even sheet.

Two sets of hands are a godsend when rolling the pasta. With one person turning the rollers, the other person can use one hand to feed the pasta through the machine and the

other hand to catch it when it comes out the other side. I've found when rolling it out myself, with one hand for cranking and one to guide the pasta, the dough tends to start bunching up as it comes out. The longer the pasta sheet gets, the more difficult it is to manage the pasta sheet and keep it from piling up and sticking to itself.

100 grams of flour per serving of pasta

1 egg per 100 grams of flour

extra virgin olive oil as needed (we made 500 grams of pasta and used about 3 tablespoons of oil)

Put all the ingredients into a food processor. Pulse until the mixture comes together in a ball, adding olive oil as needed to bind the dough. Process for about 2 minutes, until the dough has a texture something like playdoh. It will feel slightly oily and should not be too sticky to the touch.

Remove the dough from the processor and knead on a floured board or counter for about 15 minutes. Cover the pasta dough with a tea towel or some plastic wrap and let it rest for 15 minutes before proceeding to roll it out.

Cut off a piece of dough and flatten it into a rectangle about the size of your palm and about the thickness of your index finger (or the size of mine anyway, this is a rectangle about five inches long, slightly less wide than the pasta machine and about 1/3 of an inch thick). Set the rollers of the pasta machine to their widest setting and dust the rollers liberally with flour. Turn the handle of the machine and feed the dough through the machine, catching it gently when it comes out so it doesn't tear. Run it through at the widest setting once more.

Adjust the rollers to the next thinnest setting and run the pasta through twice. Keep adjusting the rollers to a thinner setting and running it through twice until you reach the thinnest setting (we only went to the next-to-the-thinnest setting but I would keep going to the thinnest next time). You may need to re-flour the rollers occasionally to keep the dough from sticking. Don't pull the dough through the rollers - instead support it from underneath lightly as it comes through the rollers.

Putting together the
Pumpkin Ravioli

Lay the sheets out on a floured counter and cut them in half crosswise. Look over your pasta sheets and try to match each sheet a in pair with another sheet about the same shape and size. To make the ravioli, place scant tablespoons of filling on the pasta sheet a few inches apart.

Place another sheet of pasta on top of the sheet with the filling. Starting at one short end, press the top sheet down around the filling so that the sheets are stuck together firmly. Make sure you press closely around the filling so there are no air pockets left (which could make the ravioli come apart when boiling).

Using a pasta wheel or pastry wheel (or a sharp knife if you have no wheel), cut the pasta into individual ravioli squares.

Place the finished ravioli on a try covered with a floured paper towel or tea towel. At this point, you can either cook the ravioli immediately or freeze them for later use.

When you're ready to cook the pasta, bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Salt the water very well and add the ravioli. Cook until tender, about 2-3 minutes. While the water is coming to a boil, melt the butter in a large skillet until it foams, add the sage leaves and turn the heat to very low.

Drain the pasta, add it to the skillet with the sauce and toss gently to coat. Add a little of the pasta cooking water if the sauce looks too dry. Transfer the pasta to a serving platter and sprinkle with more freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano. Serve immediately.

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