

121: World Cuisine

Wild Mushroom and Potato Pierogies

Sue Zemanick, Zasu

Pierogi Dough

1/3 cup butter

12.4 ounces flour (generous 1 1/2 cups)

1 teaspoon kosher salt

2 eggs

1/3 cup water

Add the butter and 1/3 cup water to a small saucepan. Cook over low heat until the butter has melted, then set aside.

Combine the flour and salt in a bowl. Make a well in the flour with a fork. Lightly beat the eggs, then pour them into the center of the well, along with the butter-water mixture. Stir gently with a fork, slowly incorporating the flour into the liquid to create a soft dough. Do not overwork the dough. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour.

Filling

2 cups peeled and diced potatoes

1 tablespoon butter

1/4 cup heavy cream

1 cup chopped assorted mushrooms, such as shiitake, oyster or cremini

3 tablespoons clarified butter

1 teaspoon chopped shallot

1 teaspoon chopped garlic

1/2 teaspoon chopped thyme

1 teaspoon sliced chives

Salt and pepper to taste

1/4 cup canola oil (clarified butter can be used instead)

Crème fraiche (recipe follows)

Caramelized onions (recipe follows)

Cook the potatoes in simmering water and a pinch of salt until fork tender. In a small pan, heat 1 tablespoon butter and the heavy cream. Press the potatoes through a potato ricer or strainer into the hot cream. Stir briskly to mash the potatoes. Season to taste with salt, then set aside.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat, sauté the mushrooms in the clarified butter until brown. Add the shallot, garlic, thyme and chives.

Combine the mashed potatoes and sautéed mushrooms. Set aside to cool.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Remove the dough from the refrigerator at least 10 minutes before rolling. Cut the dough in half. On a floured surface roll out half of the pierogi dough to the thickness of a nickel, then cut out circles using a 2 1/2 or 3-inch round cutter.

Place approximately 1 tablespoon of filling in the center of each circle (don't over fill, the amount depends on the size cutter you use). Using your fingertips or a pastry brush, lightly moisten half the dough circle with water. Fold the dough over the filling, then pinch the edges together to seal the dough. Continue making dumplings with the rest of the dough and filling.

Once all the pierogies are filled, drop them into the boiling water. Don't overcrowd the pierogies or they will stick. Cook each batch 3 to 4 minutes, then remove from the water and drain on a sheet pan lined with a clean towel.

Heat the oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Place a single layer of pierogies in the pan and brown on both sides. Fry in batches.

Serve the pierogies with crème fraiche and caramelized onions
Makes about 20 pierogies.

Onion Crème Fraiche

1 cup crème fraiche

2 teaspoons Vidalia onion juice (1/4 of a Vidalia onion put through a vegetable juicer)

Pinch of salt

Combine the ingredients in a bowl and adjust the seasoning to taste. Store in the refrigerator until use.

Caramelized Onions

2 tablespoons butter

2 Vidalia onions, julienned

Salt and pepper

Melt the butter in a sauté pan over low heat. Cook the onions for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally until golden brown. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve when the desired colored is achieved.