Tomato and Spinach Gnocchi

2 soft gnocchi portions, each with half the tomato and spinach and 20 g/3/4 oz mozzarella | Active 18 min | Cook 21 min | Total 40 min

Ingredients

• 250 g (9 oz) shelf-stable commercially made potato gnocchi, with label boiling time about 2-3 minutes, not frozen gnocchi

• 250 g (9 oz) plain tomato passata

• 100 ml water (about 1/3 cup plus 1 tbsp plus 2 tsp), divided

• Up to 30 ml water (2 tbsp), only if the sauce thickens before the gnocchi centers finish cooking

• 40 g (1 1/2 oz) peeled onion, finely chopped

• 3 g peeled garlic (about 1 small clove), minced

• 5 ml olive oil (1 tsp)

• 80 g (2 3/4 oz) fresh spinach, washed, drained and roughly chopped, divided into two 40 g portions

• 40 g low-moisture mozzarella (1 1/2 oz; about 1/3 cup grated)

• 0.5 g dried oregano (about 1/2 tsp)

• 0.3 g ground black pepper (about 1/8 tsp)

Set out

1000 W microwave with turntable, Kitchen scale and measuring jug, Knife and board, Spoon, Oven mitts, Two serving bowls, Microwave-safe bowl, at least 2.5 L/about 2 2/3 US qt measured capacity, about 21 cm/8 1/4 in inside diameter and 10 cm/4 in deep, Microwave-safe vented cover, Small knife for center check, Cheese grater, Food thermometer for leftover reheating checks

Allergens

Wheat, Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Put the onion, garlic, oil and 20 ml/1 tbsp plus 1 tsp of the measured water in the 2.5 L bowl. Cover with a vent and microwave at 1000 W full power for 3 minutes, stirring halfway, until the onion softens.

2. Add all the passata, remaining 80 ml water, oregano and pepper. Stir, cover with a vent and heat at full power for 4-5 minutes, stirring after 3 minutes, until bubbling. Add all the shelf-stable gnocchi and fold gently through the hot sauce.

3. Cover with a vent and cook at 70% power for 6-8 minutes, stirring every 2 minutes to move gnocchi through the sauce. Keep gentle bubbling. Cut the largest piece with the small knife: the center must be soft and fully cooked, without a firm floury seam. Do not taste a partly cooked center to decide. Continue in 1-minute bursts if necessary, adding 15 ml/1 tbsp of the reserve water at a time, up to 30 ml total, only if the sauce becomes too thick to stir; additional heating extends the time.

4. Fold in 40 g spinach, cover with a vent and heat at full power for 1-2 minutes. Add the remaining 40 g, fold down and cook 1-2 minutes more until tender and fully wilted. Scatter all 40 g mozzarella over the mixture and heat at 50% power for 30-60 seconds until melted and pale. Stand covered for 2 minutes, stir gently and divide the complete batch equally between two bowls.

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Keep a sauce around the pieces

The measured water and passata should coat the gnocchi generously. A dry layer of sauce on the bottom is a reason to stop and stir, not to increase power.

A pale melted finish

The cheese is soft and melted. Browning would require a different appliance and is not promised here.

Ingredient labels

Most potato gnocchi contain wheat and may contain egg; check the exact product. Mozzarella contains milk. Frozen or raw handmade gnocchi are outside this timing route.

A useful detail

The 40-minute plan allows 10 minutes of preparation, up to 21 minutes of sequential heating, the 2-minute stand and 7 minutes for folding, center checks and serving. The baseline is 1000 W. Use the specified short-boiling shelf-stable product and still check its actual center; thicker or different gnocchi can extend the time. There is no oven finish.

Another way

Use 40 g/1 1/2 oz grated cheddar instead of mozzarella. The flavor changes but the last stage still melts the cheese without browning.

Replace 80 g/2 3/4 oz spinach with 80 g/2 3/4 oz finely chopped fresh chard leaves without stems. Extend the leaf stages until fully tender.

Keep it well

Refrigerate shallow portions within 2 hours, or within 1 hour above 90°F/32°C, at 40°F/4°C or colder. Use within 2 days for the soft gnocchi texture or an earlier opened-passata deadline. Add 15 ml/1 tbsp water to a chilled portion, cover with a vent and reheat in short gentle bursts, stirring carefully; stand 2 minutes and verify 165°F/74°C throughout. Do not leave the finished bowl on the counter for later.