



Butternut Squash Gnocchi

By Erin Fletter

Prep Time 10 / **Cook Time** 12 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

boil: to cook a food in liquid heated to the point of gas bubbles and steam forming (boiling point is 212 F at sea level).

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

mix: to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

roll: to use a rolling pin to flatten dough; use your hands to form a roll or ball shape; or move a round food, like a grape or a meatball, through another food, like sugar or breadcrumbs, to coat it.

toss: to lightly lift and drop food items together or coat food items with flour, or a sauce or dressing, as in a salad.

Equipment

- Large pot
- Large mixing bowl
- Dry measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Metal fork (optional)
- Slotted spoon

Ingredients

Butternut Squash Gnocchi

- salted water for boiling gnocchi
- 1 pkg frozen butternut squash, thawed
- 1/2 C grated Parmesan cheese + extra for sprinkling ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free grated Parmesan OR nutritional yeast)******
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 to 2 C all-purpose flour ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour)******
- 1 egg ******(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 T ground flaxseeds mixed with 3 T water—more info below)******
- 1 T salt

Food Allergen Substitutions

Butternut Squash Gnocchi

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free shredded Parmesan OR nutritional yeast for shredded Parmesan cheese.

Gluten/Wheat: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free all-purpose flour.

Egg: For 1 egg, soak 1 T ground flaxseeds mixed with 3 T water for 5 minutes or until fully absorbed and thickened.

Instructions

Butternut Squash Gnocchi

intro

Gnocchi (NYOH-kee) is an Italian variety of dumpling. The dough typically consists of flour, potato, egg, and salt. Other ingredients may include semolina flour, cornmeal, bread crumbs, and cheese. We're making ours with butternut squash instead of potato!

pour + boil

Adults set a large pot of **salted water** to boil on your stovetop before you start making the gnocchi.

measure + mix

Then, kids can measure **1 1/2 cup flour**, **1 tablespoon salt**, **1 egg**, **1/4 teaspoon nutmeg**, **1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese**, and **1 package of thawed frozen butternut squash** into a large bowl. Using clean hands, mix everything together to form a dough. If it is too sticky, add a bit more flour.

roll + cut + press

Break off pieces of the dough for kids to roll out into long, even ropes or "snakes." Then, they can cut their "snakes" into inch-long chunks with a kid-safe knife and press a thumb or the back of a fork down into the back of each gnocchi. These dents will help hold the sauce on the gnocchi.

sprinkle + cook

Sprinkle the gnocchi with flour to prevent them from sticking together. Then, adults cook the gnocchi in the boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes or until they begin to float to the top. When they float, it means they are done!

toss + sprinkle

Toss the warm gnocchi with marinara or pesto, like our **Mint Kale Pesto**, and sprinkle with some extra Parmesan cheese before serving! "Buon appetito" (Bwohn ap-peh-TEE-toe) or "Enjoy your meal" in Italian!

Featured Ingredient: Butternut Squash!

Hi! I'm Butternut Squash!

"I've got a long neck with a rather bulbous end—like a bell or bottle! I'm related to the pumpkin, and in Australia, they call me a butternut pumpkin!"

History & Etymology

Squash are one of the oldest known crops—10,000 years by some estimates of sites in Mexico. All squash is native to North America, but the butternut variety didn't exist until the 1940s, when Charles Leggett, a Massachusetts man, crossed a pumpkin with a gooseneck squash.

"Squash" comes from the mid-17th century Narragansett word "askutasquash"), which means "eaten raw or uncooked." This squash is called "butternut" because of its nutty flavor.

Anatomy

Botanically, butternut squash is a fruit and belongs to the Cucurbitaceae family that includes cucumbers, honeydew melons, pumpkins, watermelons, and zucchini. However, as food, it is used as a vegetable. Butternut squash is a type of winter squash that grows on a vine, and when ready for harvest, they have a hard tan skin that you can't pierce with a fingernail, yellow-orange flesh that gets more orange when ripe, and a hollow seed cavity with edible seeds.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

Winter squash are cured for the best flavor, as their natural sugars have a chance to concentrate. They are picked with part of their stem left on, then left in the sun, and kept dry for about 7 to 14 days. (Although, they can also be cured indoors.) Their skin hardens as they sit, allowing them to last longer in storage. Butternut squash is seasonal, and in the US, the best time to buy ripe local squash is September through October.

Look for butternut squash with a solid beige color without deep cuts or bruises. A little surface scratching and marks from where it sat on the ground are acceptable. Select one that feels heavy for its size and leave any with brown spots or punctures, as bacteria and mold could develop.

Store butternut squash in a cool, dark place in your kitchen, and it will keep for 2 to 3 months—it does not need to be refrigerated.

Its unique flavor can be used in both savory and sweet dishes. You can cook it in various ways: roasted, grilled, steamed, or puréed. It is a side dish or an ingredient for soup, pasta, dips, salads, desserts, and more.

In South Africa, cooks use butternut squash to make soup, or they grill it whole, seasoned with cinnamon and nutmeg or stuffed with spinach and feta and wrapped in foil.

The skin is edible if softened during roasting. Roasted butternut squash seeds can be eaten as a nutritious snack, just like pumpkin seeds, or their oil can be pressed for cooking or salad dressings.

Nutrition

Butternut squash is a good source of soluble fiber, beta-carotene, vitamins A, C, and E, manganese, magnesium, and potassium. It has more vitamin A than that of a pumpkin. It is high in water content and very low in calories: one serving is just 45 calories!

Butternut squash has natural antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties and is good for your skin and eyesight.