

KITCHEN DESIGN SPECIAL: GLOBAL STYLE IDEAS THAT REALLY WORK P.68

# SAVEUR

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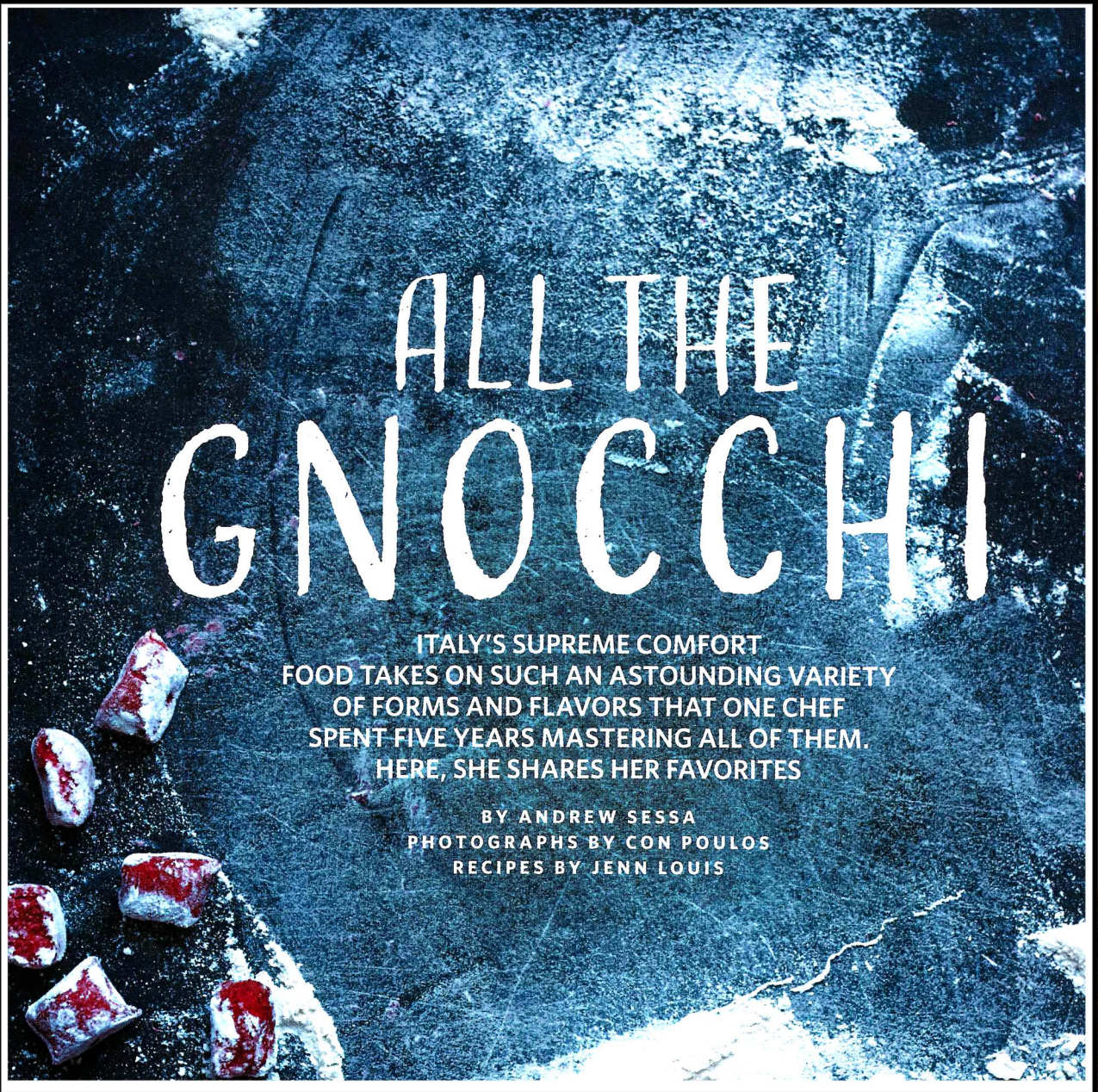
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## ALL THE GNOCCHI

ITALY'S SUPREME COMFORT  
FOOD TAKES ON SUCH AN ASTOUNDING VARIETY  
OF FORMS AND FLAVORS THAT ONE CHEF  
SPENT FIVE YEARS MASTERING ALL OF THEM.  
HERE, SHE SHARES HER FAVORITES

BY ANDREW SESSA  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CON POULOS  
RECIPES BY JENN LOUIS

Issue 173

April 2011





**Beet and Ricotta Gnocchi  
with Wilted Beet  
Greens and Aged Balsamic**

Moist from the ricotta and subtly vegetal from the beets, this vibrant pasta gets a few drizzles of aged balsamic from Modena (in neighboring Emilia-Romagna) to balance the slight sweetness of the dish (see page 64 for recipe).



### Bread Crumb Dumplings and Bean Stew with Parsley-Speck Pesto

In Emilia-Romagna, chef Carla Rebecchi taught Louis to make this borlotti bean stew with shell-like gnocchi called *pisarei* (see page 64 for recipe). It hails from the town of Piacenza, where, legend has it, mothers would look at the hands of a son's intended bride to make sure she had the callouses that come from dragging the dumpling dough across a wooden board to make the pasta.

**"This is the best,"  
Louis says. "I want to  
climb in there and  
swim around."**



### Buckwheat and Ricotta Gnocchi with Cream, Peas, and Spinach

Just miles from the Austrian border, at the knotty pine-paneled Ristorante Cianzia in Borca di Cadore, chef Bruna Montesel explained to Louis why she uses buckwheat flour in her gnocchi: Incorporating it gives the pasta a certain weightiness—not all gnocchi have to be light as clouds, Louis is quick to remind people—and an earthy flavor that pairs perfectly with a spring mix of peas and spinach (see page 67 for recipe).



**TIP:** SIMMER GNOCCHI, INSTEAD OF BOILING THEM, SO THEY HOLD THEIR SHAPE AND DON'T ABSORB TOO MUCH WATER.



**TIP:** FREEZE EXTRA GNOCCHI IN A SINGLE LAYER ON A BAKING SHEET AND TRANSFER THEM TO A SEALABLE BAG FOR STORAGE UP TO THREE MONTHS.



### **Ricotta and Egg Gnocchi with Olives, Capers, and Tomato Sauce**

These soft gnocchi from Tuscany (see page 67 for recipe) are the ultimate version of the kind most commonly served at Italian-American restaurants. The dish is amped up with briny chopped capers and green olives.

“Most Americans don’t think of gnocchi as anything other than a potato dumpling,”

says Jenn Louis, chef-owner of Lincoln and Sunshine Tavern in Portland, Oregon. But they’re actually a huge category of pasta, Louis explains, incorporating an incredible variety of textures, shapes, and flavors. They have scores of different names and come from nearly every corner of Italy. Some are made with potato, others with buckwheat, beets, or spinach, and some don’t look at all like what we’d think of as traditional gnocchi—take the spinach spätzli, for instance (page 65). These regional differences of opinion—a product of the country’s former city-states having remained largely independent until the middle of the 19th century—captivate Louis, so much so that she’s spent much of her free time during the past five years on a true passion project: the comprehensive, just-released *Pasta by Hand* (Chronicle), which is entirely devoted to these dumpling dollops. To compile her cookbook, Louis and her husband, David Welch, went on several gnocchi fact-finding missions around Italy, discovering a beet and ricotta version in Piedmont tossed with beer greens and aged balsamic (see page 64 for recipe) and a rustic farro gnocchi with hearty pork ragù (see page 67 for recipe) in Umbria. On these pages, you’ll find some of the exciting, delicious, and often surprising gnocchi dishes Louis and Welch encountered on their trip: “They’re usually made by hand,” Louis says of these authentic recipes. “They are simple peasant dishes that people prepared because they were filling. And I want to preserve all of that. I don’t want it to get lost.”

## BEET AND RICOTTA GNOCCHI WITH WILTED BEET GREENS AND AGED BALSAMIC

SERVES 6-8; PHOTO ON PAGE 61  
For this Piedmontese dish, a drizzle of aged balsamic vinegar adds a tangy complexity. Chef Jenn Louis likes La Vecchia Dispensa "Cleopatra" from the Modena region ([isolaimports.com](http://isolaimports.com)).

- 1 1/4 lb. small red beets with greens, greens separated, stems cut into 1/2" pieces, leaves torn into 2" pieces, and beets scrubbed
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup homemade ricotta (see page 85 for recipe) or store-bought whole-milk ricotta
- 1/2 cup finely grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 1 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 egg
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
Semolina flour, for dusting
- 2 cups unsalted butter  
Aged balsamic vinegar, for drizzling

**1** Heat oven to 350°. Toss beets, 2 tbsp. oil, salt, pepper, and 1/4 cup water in a 9" x 13" baking dish and cover with foil; roast until tender, about 1 hour. Peel beets and transfer to a food processor. Add ricotta, parmesan, nutmeg, egg, and salt; purée until smooth and transfer to a

bowl. Add 1 1/2 cups flour and, using your hands, mix until a sticky dough forms. Sprinkle 1/2 cup flour on a work surface. Place dough on top. Sprinkle remaining flour over dough and cover loosely with plastic wrap; let sit 30 minutes.

**2** Cut dough into 6 pieces. Working with one piece at a time, and using your hands, roll dough into a 1/2"-thick rope. Cut rope crosswise into 1/2" gnocchi; transfer to a semolina-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking.

**3** Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Cook gnocchi, all at once, until they float, 2-3 minutes. Meanwhile, heat remaining oil and the butter in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook beet green stems until soft, 2-3 minutes. Add beet leaves; cook until wilted, 1-2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer gnocchi to skillet; season with salt and pepper and toss to combine. Transfer gnocchi to a serving platter; drizzle with balsamic and sprinkle with parmesan.

## BREAD CRUMB DUMPLINGS AND BEAN STEW WITH PARSLEY-SPECK PESTO

*Pisarei e Faso*

SERVES 6; PHOTO ON PAGE 62  
A fresh herb sauce laced with speck—a dry-cured smoked ham—tops this thick bean stew from Emilia-Romagna.

For the gnocchi:

- 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 cup dried bread crumbs
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup boiling water, plus more as needed

For the pesto:

- 1 1/3 cups packed parsley leaves
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 oz. speck, minced
- 1/4 cup finely grated parmesan  
Kosher salt, to taste

For the soup:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. rosemary leaves
- 1 4-oz. piece lardo or pancetta, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 carrot, minced
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 8 cups beef or vegetable stock
- 1 1/4 cups dried borlotti or cranberry beans, soaked overnight and drained
- 2 tbsp. minced parsley
- 1/2 cup finely grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 16-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes, puréed

**1** Make the gnocchi: Pulse flour, bread crumbs, and salt in a food processor until combined. With the motor run-

ning, slowly add boiling water; mix until dough forms. If dough is dry, add more boiling water, 1 tbsp. at a time, until a firm dough forms. Transfer dough to an unfloured surface; knead briefly until dough is smooth. Quarter dough and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Working with one-quarter dough at a time, use your hands to roll dough into a 1/2"-thick rope. Cut dough crosswise into 1/2" pieces. Working with one piece at a time, and with the side of your thumb, press down on the dough while rolling and flicking up to create gnocchi. For a step-by-step, see page 85. Transfer gnocchi to a flour-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking and cover with plastic wrap; chill until ready to use.

**2** Make the pesto: Purée parsley, oil, chile flakes, and garlic in a food processor until smooth; transfer to a bowl. Stir in speck, parmesan, and salt; set aside.

**3** Make the soup and serve: Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium. Cook rosemary, lardo, bay leaf, carrot, and onion until vegetables are soft, 4-6 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and add wine; cook until reduced by half, 1-2 minutes. Add stock, beans, parsley, and 2 cups water; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, covered, until beans are tender, 1 1/2-2 hours. Add reserved gnocchi, the parmesan, butter, and tomato purée; simmer until gnocchi are cooked through, about 15 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Ladle soup into bowls; garnish with reserved pesto and more parmesan.

## Spinach Spätzli with Brown Butter, Crispy Speck, and Pangrattato

SERVES 6-8

Louis' spiced, citrus-laced *pangrattato*, or bread crumbs, provide a welcome crunch and bright pop of flavor to this German-influenced dish. Store extra *pangrattato* in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

For the pangrattato:

- 1/3 cup schmaltz (rendered chicken fat) or olive oil
- 1 1-lb. loaf country bread, crust removed and cubed
- 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 10 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 2" piece ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 medium jalapeño, chopped  
Finely grated zest of 1/2 each lemon, lime, and orange

For the spätzli:

- 2 lb. fresh spinach, stemmed
- 1/2 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups all-purpose flour  
Olive oil, for greasing

For serving:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 oz. thinly sliced speck or pancetta
- 5 tbsp. unsalted butter

**1** Make the pangrattato: Heat oven to 275°. Melt schmaltz in a 12" skillet over medium. Add bread and season with salt and pepper; cook until lightly toasted, 6-8 minutes. Transfer bread to a baking sheet; bake until slightly dry, 18-20 minutes. Add gar-

lic, ginger, and jalapeño; bake until everything is dry and crisp, about 45 minutes, and let cool. Transfer to a food processor; pulse into coarse crumbs. Stir in citrus zests.

**2** Make the spätzli: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook spinach until wilted, 1-2 minutes. Transfer spinach to an ice bath until chilled. Drain spinach and transfer to a clean kitchen towel; squeeze until mostly dry. Transfer spinach to a food processor. Add nutmeg, salt, and eggs; purée until spinach is minced. Add flour; purée, scraping down sides of processor as needed, until a smooth, thick batter forms, about 4 minutes. Transfer batter to a lightly greased bowl and cover with plastic wrap; let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes.

**3** Bring a fresh pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Working in batches, and using a spätzle maker or a colander with large holes, press batter into the simmering water. Cook until spätzli float, about 1 minute. Stir and cook until tender, about 1 minute more. Using a slotted spoon, transfer spätzli to a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.

**4** Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook speck until crisp, 1-2 minutes; transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Wipe skillet clean and add butter; cook over medium until butter turns a deep golden brown, 6-8 minutes. Add reserved spätzli and toss to combine; divide between plates. Crumble speck over the top and sprinkle with some reserved pangrattato.

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For this Piedmontese dish, a drizzle of aged balsamic vinegar adds a tangy complexity. Chef Jenn Louis likes La Vecchia Dispensa "Cleopatra" from the Modena region (isolaimports.com).

- 1 1/4 lb. small red beets with greens, greens separated, stems cut into 1/2" pieces, leaves torn into 2" pieces, and beets scrubbed
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup homemade ricotta (see page 85 for recipe) or store-bought whole-milk ricotta
- 1/2 cup finely grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 1 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 egg
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
Semolina flour, for dusting
- 2 cups unsalted butter  
Aged balsamic vinegar, for drizzling

**1** Heat oven to 350°. Toss beets, 2 tbsp. oil, salt, pepper, and 1/4 cup water in a 9" x 13" baking dish and cover with foil; roast until tender, about 1 hour. Peel beets and transfer to a food processor. Add ricotta, parmesan, nutmeg, egg, and salt; purée until smooth and transfer to a

bowl. Add 1 1/2 cups flour and, using your hands, mix until a sticky dough forms. Sprinkle 1/2 cup flour on a work surface. Place dough on top. Sprinkle remaining flour over dough and cover loosely with plastic wrap; let sit 30 minutes.

**2** Cut dough into 6 pieces. Working with one piece at a time, and using your hands, roll dough into a 1/2"-thick rope. Cut rope crosswise into 1/2" gnocchi; transfer to a semolina-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking.

**3** Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Cook gnocchi, all at once, until they float, 2-3 minutes. Meanwhile, heat remaining oil and the butter in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook beet green stems until soft, 2-3 minutes. Add beet leaves; cook until wilted, 1-2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer gnocchi to skillet; season with salt and pepper and toss to combine. Transfer gnocchi to a serving platter; drizzle with balsamic and sprinkle with parmesan.

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*Pisarei e Faso*

SERVES 6; PHOTO ON PAGE 62  
A fresh herb sauce laced with speck—a dry-cured smoked ham—tops this thick bean stew from Emilia-Romagna.

For the gnocchi:

- 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 cup dried bread crumbs
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup boiling water, plus more as needed

For the pesto:

- 1 1/3 cups packed parsley leaves
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 oz. speck, minced
- 1/4 cup finely grated parmesan  
Kosher salt, to taste

For the soup:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. rosemary leaves
- 1 4-oz. piece lardo or pancetta, cut into 1/4" pieces
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 carrot, minced
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 8 cups beef or vegetable stock
- 1 1/4 cups dried borlotti or cranberry beans, soaked overnight and drained
- 2 tbsp. minced parsley
- 1/2 cup finely grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 16-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes, puréed

**1** Make the gnocchi: Pulse flour, bread crumbs, and salt in a food processor until combined. With the motor run-

ning, slowly add boiling water; mix until dough forms. If dough is dry, add more boiling water, 1 tbsp. at a time, until a firm dough forms. Transfer dough to an unfloured surface; knead briefly until dough is smooth. Quarter dough and cover loosely with plastic wrap. Working with one-quarter dough at a time, use your hands to roll dough into a 1/2"-thick rope. Cut dough crosswise into 1/2" pieces. Working with one piece at a time, and with the side of your thumb, press down on the dough while rolling and flicking up to create gnocchi. For a step-by-step, see page 85. Transfer gnocchi to a flour-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking and cover with plastic wrap; chill until ready to use.

**2** Make the pesto: Purée parsley, oil, chile flakes, and garlic in a food processor until smooth; transfer to a bowl. Stir in speck, parmesan, and salt; set aside.

**3** Make the soup and serve: Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium. Cook rosemary, lardo, bay leaf, carrot, and onion until vegetables are soft, 4-6 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and add wine; cook until reduced by half, 1-2 minutes. Add stock, beans, parsley, and 2 cups water; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, covered, until beans are tender, 1 1/2-2 hours. Add reserved gnocchi, the parmesan, butter, and tomato purée; simmer until gnocchi are cooked through, about 15 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Ladle soup into bowls; garnish with reserved pesto and more parmesan.

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SERVES 6-8

Louis' spiced, citrus-laced *pangrattato*, or bread crumbs, provide a welcome crunch and bright pop of flavor to this German-influenced dish. Store extra *pangrattato* in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

For the pangrattato:

- 1/3 cup schmaltz (rendered chicken fat) or olive oil
- 1 1-lb. loaf country bread, crust removed and cubed
- 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 10 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 2" piece ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 medium jalapeño, chopped  
Finely grated zest of 1/2 each lemon, lime, and orange

For the spätzli:

- 2 lb. fresh spinach, stemmed
- 1/2 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups all-purpose flour  
Olive oil, for greasing

For serving:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 oz. thinly sliced speck or pancetta
- 5 tbsp. unsalted butter

**1** Make the pangrattato: Heat oven to 275°. Melt schmaltz in a 12" skillet over medium. Add bread and season with salt and pepper; cook until lightly toasted, 6-8 minutes. Transfer bread to a baking sheet; bake until slightly dry, 18-20 minutes. Add gar-

lic, ginger, and jalapeño; bake until everything is dry and crisp, about 45 minutes, and let cool. Transfer to a food processor; pulse into coarse crumbs. Stir in citrus zests.

**2** Make the spätzli: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook spinach until wilted, 1-2 minutes. Transfer spinach to an ice bath until chilled. Drain spinach and transfer to a clean kitchen towel; squeeze until mostly dry. Transfer spinach to a food processor. Add nutmeg, salt, and eggs; purée until spinach is minced. Add flour; purée, scraping down sides of processor as needed, until a smooth, thick batter forms, about 4 minutes. Transfer batter to a lightly greased bowl and cover with plastic wrap; let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes.

**3** Bring a fresh pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Working in batches, and using a spätzle maker or a colander with large holes, press batter into the simmering water. Cook until spätzli float, about 1 minute. Stir and cook until tender, about 1 minute more. Using a slotted spoon, transfer spätzli to a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.

**4** Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook speck until crisp, 1-2 minutes; transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Wipe skillet clean and add butter; cook over medium until butter turns a deep golden brown, 6-8 minutes. Add reserved spätzli and toss to combine; divide between plates. Crumble speck over the top and sprinkle with some reserved pangrattato.

**Extra pangrattato is also delicious sprinkled on roasted vegetables, salads, or a simple spaghetti with garlic and olive oil**



Louis learned this recipe from home cook Gianna Messina in the Trentino-Alto Adige town of Trento. There, near Italy's border with Austria, the food takes on a distinctly Teutonic bent, not least of all when it comes to *spätzli*, a close Italian cousin of German *spätzle* (see page 64 for recipe).

**FYI:** ADDING FARRO FLOUR  
TO THIS DOUGH YIELDS  
A DENSER DUMPLING THAT CAN  
HOLD ITS OWN AGAINST  
A THICK RAGÙ.



This farro gnocchi dish from Umbria (see page 67 for recipe) has a rich, cheesy sauce. The meaty combo of ground pork and bacon makes it satisfyingly filling.



UMBRIA



## Farro Gnocchi with Pork Ragù

SERVES 6

In this Umbrian ragù, fennel pollen adds a sweet aroma and a flavor similar to that of the fennel-laced sausages found in Italian butcher shops.

For the ragù and serving:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. ground pork
- 2 1/2 oz. bacon, minced
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 1/2 tsp. fennel pollen (kalustyans.com)
- 1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 1/3 cup dry red wine
- 5 cups chicken stock
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 cup finely grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

For the gnocchi:

- 1 3/4 lb. medium Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 3/4 cup farro flour (bluebirdgrainfarms.com)
- 1 cup plus 1 tbsp. finely grated parmesan
- 2 eggs
- Semolina flour, for dusting

**1** Make the ragù: Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high. Cook pork and bacon until browned, 4–5 minutes. Add chile flakes, fennel pollen, and garlic; cook until garlic is golden, 2–3 minutes. Stir in tomato paste; cook 2 minutes. Add wine; cook until evaporated, about 30 seconds.

Add 4 cups stock and season with salt; boil. Reduce heat to medium; simmer until thickened, about 1 hour.

**2** Make the gnocchi: Boil potatoes in a 4-qt. saucepan of water. Reduce heat to medium-high; simmer until potatoes are tender, 25–30 minutes, and drain. When cool enough to handle, peel and pass the potatoes through a potato ricer into a bowl. Add flours, parmesan, and eggs; using your hands, mix until a soft dough forms. Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface; knead briefly until dough is smooth. Cover dough with plastic wrap; let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes.

**3** Quarter dough and, working with one quarter at a time, use your hands to roll dough into a 1/2"-thick rope. Cut rope crosswise into 1" gnocchi; transfer gnocchi to a semolina-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking.

**4** Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Cook gnocchi, all at once, until they float, 2–3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer gnocchi to a parchment paper-lined baking sheet; keep warm. Return ragù to medium. Add remaining stock and the butter; simmer until sauce is thickened, 6–8 minutes. Add cooked gnocchi and the parmesan; cook until warmed through, 1–2 minutes. Divide gnocchi and sauce between shallow bowls; garnish with more parmesan and the parsley.

**1** Stir ricotta, pecorino, 2 tsp. salt, 1/4 tsp. nutmeg, 1/4 tsp. pepper, and yolks in a bowl until smooth. Add flours and, using your hands, mix until a slightly firm dough forms. Quarter dough and cover loosely with plastic wrap. On a lightly floured surface, and working with one-quarter dough at a time, use your hands to roll dough into a 1/2"-thick rope. Cut rope crosswise into 1/4" gnocchi. Transfer gnocchi to a semolina-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking.

**2** Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Cook gnocchi, all at once, until they float, 2–3 minutes. About halfway through cooking gnocchi, add peas. Meanwhile, bring cream to a simmer in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Stir in remaining nutmeg. Using a slotted spoon, transfer gnocchi and peas to skillet with cream. Stir in spinach, 1/2 cup parmesan, the lemon juice, salt, and pepper. If sauce is too thick, add 1/2 cup water from cooking gnocchi. Divide gnocchi between plates; garnish with remaining parmesan.

## RICOTTA AND EGG GNOCCHI WITH OLIVES, CAPERS, AND TOMATO SAUCE

SERVES 6; PHOTO ON PAGE 63

When making these gnocchi, use a potato ricer (oxo.com) instead of mashing the potatoes to produce a smooth, pillowy dough.

For the gnocchi:

- 2 lb. medium Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed
- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 7 tbsp. homemade ricotta (see page 85 for recipe) or store-bought whole-milk ricotta
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 eggs

For the sauce:

- 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 28-oz. cans whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand

- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3/4 cup pitted green Castelvetrano or Gaeta olives, pitted and halved
- 1/3 cup finely grated Pecorino Romano, plus more for serving
- 1/4 cup capers, rinsed and roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped wild or regular oregano

**1** Make the gnocchi: Boil potatoes in a 4-qt. saucepan of water. Reduce heat to medium-high; simmer until potatoes are tender, 25–30 minutes, and drain. When cool enough to handle, peel and pass the potatoes through a potato ricer into a bowl. Add flour, ricotta, salt, and eggs; using your hands, mix until a smooth dough forms. If dough is sticky, add more flour, 1 tbsp. at a time, as needed.

**2** Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface; quarter dough. Working with one-quarter dough at a time, use your hands to roll dough into a 3/4"-thick rope. Cut rope crosswise into 1" gnocchi; transfer to a flour-dusted, parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Separate gnocchi to prevent sticking. Cover with plastic wrap; chill until ready to cook.

**3** Make the sauce and serve: Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium. Cook chile flakes, garlic, bay leaf, onion, and rosemary until vegetables are soft, 6–8 minutes. Add butter, tomatoes, and salt; simmer until thickened, about 1 1/2 hours. Discard bay leaf and rosemary; keep sauce warm. Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a simmer over medium-high. Cook gnocchi, all at once, until they float, 2–3 minutes. Stir olives, pecorino, capers, and oregano into sauce. Using a slotted spoon, transfer gnocchi to sauce; season with salt and pepper and stir to combine. Divide gnocchi between serving bowls; drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with pecorino.

**“Gnocchi is why I came to Italy,” Louis says.**

## BUCKWHEAT AND RICOTTA GNOCCHI WITH CREAM, PEAS, AND SPINACH

SERVES 6–8; PHOTO ON PAGE 62  
Buckwheat, plentiful in the Trentino–Alto Adige region of Italy, makes for dense, slightly sweet gnocchi. As the seasons change, swap out the vegetables; try zucchini and squash in the summer and roasted butternut squash in the fall.

- 1 3/4 cups plus 2 tbsp. homemade ricotta (see page 85 for recipe) or store-bought whole-milk ricotta

- 1/2 cup finely grated Pecorino Romano
- 2 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/2 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- 4 egg yolks
- 1 cup plus 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 3/4 cup plus 2 tbsp. buckwheat flour (bobsredmill.com)
- Semolina flour, for dusting
- 1 cup fresh or frozen peas
- 1 1/3 cups heavy cream
- 4 oz. baby spinach
- 3/4 cup finely grated parmesan
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice