

Savoury Sweet Squash Ravioli

In every doorway of every corner grocery in Naples around this time of the year there will be an ENORMOUS gourd that acts as a doorstop. Ordered by the kilo, the shopkeeper will invariably produce a fairly intimidating machete to hack off your desired portion. The closest I have found stateside is the the Hubbard Squash which (thankfully) is grown just blocks away from the front door of CIAO by Sherman Farms.

We prefer to use one large ravioli as an appetizer (Primi – or first course) or you can make yours smaller and serve 3-5 ravioli as a side or main dish.

INGREDIENTS

The Delivery System

- One half-sheet of fresh Pasta or one package of 3"x3³/₄"x4" WonTon Skins
- One beaten egg (for sealing)

The Filling

- 120 grams of Ricotta Cheese
- 85 ml of baked and cooled Hubbard Squash (Acorn squash if you can't find Hubbard)
- 60 grams of grated Romano or Parmesan Cheese
- 85 ml of thickened cream
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- Dash Nutmeg

The Sauce

- 115 grams Butter
- Two or three Sage leaves
- ½ small finely diced shallot
- 240 ml (or so) thickened cream
- 15 – 30 ml of white wine

INSTRUCTIONS

The Filling

In a food processor, place ricotta, Romano, and baked squash. Pulse after adding nutmeg, then salt and pepper to taste. Lastly, add a small egg and pulse until incorporated.

The Delivery System

You will be creating little pillows, and the pillowcase is pasta. If you make your own, by all means do so! If this is not your groove, you can easily find wonton skins in almost any market.

Crack an egg into a little cup or bowl and whip it up. You will “paint” your bottom sheet with this to seal the pillowcase.

Place your piece of pasta on the counter, and use a spoon to set some filling in the center of the pasta. Square. With a pastry brush, “paint” the edges of your pasta and place another sheet on top. Lightly press the edges together to create a seal. Make

certain to not trap air inside of your pillow (or it will burst when cooked). Repeat as needed.

The Sauce

After you have completed assembling your pillows, it is time to make the bed. Set your water to boil, and place another saucepan on the stove to low-medium heat. Place the butter in the pan with your sage leaves, add very finely diced shallot and a pinch of salt. Stir occasionally until the shallot is translucent. Add your cream, and raise the heat ever so slightly until it gently boils and begins to thicken. Lastly, add the wine and reduce. When it looks and feels like a sauce (coats the back of a spoon) turn the heat down to it's lowest setting.

Gently drop your pillows into boiling water four or five at a time. Just as they float to the top, remove them with a slotted spoon, and set them reverently in your sauce. Toss gently before serving to coat.

Serve and eat them immediately.

Author: Mark Laska, chef and owner of Ciao Restaurant



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