

Potato and Salame Pierogies with Caramelized Onions

These little guys have survived the test of time since their birth in 13th-century Poland and have a place as one of the great stuffed dumplings of the world. And no wonder. Tender discs of dough filled with just about anything tasty, fried in butter (our favorite way) and served with caramelized onions, they are the best kind of addiction.

See Cook's Notes for freezing instructions and a tasty way to use up any extra filling.

Ingredients

caramelized onions

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large onion, sliced (about 3 cups)
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

filling

8 ounces russet potato (about 1 medium), peeled and cut into chunks
4 ounces parmesan cheese salame, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
2 tablespoons half-and-half
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

dough

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pats
2 cups all-purpose flour, spooned in and leveled, plus more for rolling
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 cup sour cream
1 large egg, lightly beaten

1 large egg beaten with a splash of water
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, for frying
Sour cream, for serving

special equipment

potato ricer; 3-inch round metal cutter

Directions

for the onions

Melt the butter in a medium nonstick skillet over medium heat until sizzling, about 3 minutes. Stir in the onions and salt and cook without browning to soften a little, stirring occasionally, about 8 minutes. Turn the heat to low and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the onions take on a rich brown color and turn jammy and super soft, about 1 hour 15 minutes more. Adjust heat as needed, alternating between low and medium-low settings, to keep onions cooking ever-so-

slowly. If they begin to dry out, add 1/4 cup of water to the pan and continue cooking. (Onions may be prepared ahead, covered and refrigerated when cooled, then reheated before serving.)

for the filling

Cover the potato chunks with cold water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat and then simmer until potatoes are soft and a sharp knife pierces the flesh easily, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain, and then press through a ricer into a medium mixing bowl. Stir in the salame, half-and-half and salt and combine. Taste for additional salt if needed. (Makes a generous 2 cups.)

for the dough

Melt the butter in a heatproof bowl or glass measuring cup in the microwave in 30-second intervals until melted. Let cool.

Whisk the flour and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the melted butter, sour cream and egg until combined, but don't overmix. Use your hands to bring together if needed. Cover the bowl with a kitchen towel and let the dough rest for 15 minutes.

forming and cooking the pierogies

Divide the dough in half, keeping one half covered. Lightly dust the counter and rolling pin with flour. Roll the dough out 1/8-inch thick. Cut 3-inch circles with a metal cutter, keeping them close; you should get 12. (Even though it seems wasteful, don't re-roll the scraps, or the pierogis will not be the tender little dumplings they deserve to be.) Mound about a heaping teaspoon worth of filling in the center of each disc and form it into a little log. Use a brush or your finger to dab a small amount of egg wash around the edges, just to moisten. Fold the top of the disc over the filling and press to seal. Put the finished pierogies on a flour-dusted baking sheet or plate, keeping them loosely covered with a towel or plastic wrap while you finish the remaining pierogies. (You may have extra filling; see Cook's Notes for ideas.) Pierogies may be refrigerated, loosely covered with plastic wrap, for up to 3 hours before continuing.

Heat a medium nonstick skillet over medium heat and melt 1 tablespoon butter. Working in batches, fry the pierogies about 4 at a time, flipping them over after about 2 minutes, until they are nice and brown on the outside, about 4 minutes total. (You may need to lower the heat for the second side or when you get to the later batches to prevent the butter from burning.) Transfer finished pierogies to a serving platter. Wipe out the pan after each batch and repeat with remaining pierogies, using a tablespoon of butter to fry each batch.

Serve with dollops of sour cream and caramelized onions.

Cook's Notes: Pierogies freeze quite well and are handy to have around for an emergency dinner or late-night craving. Freeze uncooked pierogies on a baking sheet, then transfer to

plastic freezer bags. They can be cooked right from the freezer: either boil them for about 5 minutes until they float to the top, or deep fry them at 350 degrees for about 5 minutes.

And that extra filling? It makes an incredible potato cake the next day. Form into patties and bread as you would a chicken cutlet (flour, egg, breadcrumbs) and shallow fry in a pan with 2 tablespoons of oil over medium high heat until golden brown. Then flip, cook and serve.

total time: 3 hours

active prep: 1 hour 30 minutes

serves: makes 20-24 pierogies, about 4 servings

difficulty: medium