

Fiocchetti with Pears and Parmesan Cream

For the pasta

12 ounces (about 2 3/4 cups) all-purpose flour, plus extra for dusting
2 teaspoons kosher salt
4 large eggs
1 tablespoon olive oil

For the filling

1 pear, peeled, cored, and cut in small dice
8 ounces (1 cup) whole milk ricotta, at room temperature
4 ounces (1/2 cup) mascarpone, room temperature
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
Kosher salt and white pepper, to taste

For the sauce

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 cup heavy cream, at room temperature

1 cup whole milk, at room temperature
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese, plus additional for grating
Whole nutmeg, for grating
Kosher salt and white pepper, to taste
10-12 asparagus spears, blanched and cut into 3/4-inch pieces



As an adaptation, roast the pear, and combine robiola, grana padano, ricotta, and talleggio cheeses.

For the pasta, combine the flour and salt in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a blade attachment and pulse a few times to mix. Add the eggs and olive oil through the feeding tube and process until the dough forms a smooth ball and there are no crumbs at the bottom of the bowl, about 1 minute.

Gather the dough into a ball, dusting with flour if it is sticky. Press the ball into a disc and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Allow the dough to rest at room temperature for a minimum of 30 minutes and up to 4 hours (or overnight and brought to room temperature before using).

Lightly dust a rimmed baking sheet with flour. Roll out the pasta, trying to make each sheet as wide as you can. Place pasta sheets on the baking sheet and dust with additional flour to keep from sticking.

Lightly dust a work surface with flour. Using the largest biscuit round you can find, 5-inches in diameter if possible, and cut out large discs from the dough. Place the cutouts on another lightly-floured rimmed baking sheet or large piece of parchment paper.

To make the filling, combine the pears, ricotta, mascarpone, and Parmesan together in a mixing bowl and season with salt and pepper. Place a heaping teaspoon of filling in the center of a pasta round. Gather all of the sides and gently pull up and together to form a "pouch." Pinch the dough together tightly at the neck and continue with remaining rounds.

To cook the pasta, bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil. In a medium skillet or sauté pan, melt the butter over medium-low to medium heat. Add the flour and stir for a minute or so to cook out the raw flour taste. Add the milk and cream, and whisk until thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. Turn heat to low. Stir in Parmesan and season with a pinch of fresh nutmeg, salt, and pepper.

Add pasta to the boiling water and cook for 2 minutes. Use a spider or slotted spoon to transfer the pouches to a wire cooling rack set over paper towels to drain for a minute or so. At this point, you can either gently toss the cooked pouches and asparagus directly in the sauce, or individually plate the pouches and asparagus followed by a drizzle of sauce. Garnish with additional grated Parmesan.

Adapted from Trattoria 4Leoni