



Spinach and Ricotta Cannelloni

Recipe Adapted from Chef Nick Stellino

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Crepes are easy and satisfying to make at home. But if you don't have time, you can find pre-made Crepes in a re-sealable plastic bag in the produce aisle. Look for the savory kind, as the ones with added sugar are usually better for deserts.

Total Time: 1 hour 25 minutes (store bought crepes) 2 hours (making crepes)

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Inactive Time: 10 minutes

Level: Intermediate

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 cup chopped onions

1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes packed in olive oil, drained, and chopped

6 cloves garlic, chopped

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 pound fresh spinach leaves, cleaned and dried (about 16 cups, loosely packed)

3 Tablespoons butter

2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 cups 2% milk

1 bay leaf

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg

1-15 ounce container part skim ricotta cheese

1 egg, lightly beaten

1 1/2 cups plus 1 Tablespoon freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1/2 cup freshly grated Romano cheese

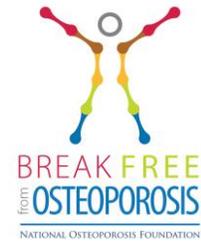
1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian parsley

2 cups tomato sauce or 1-14.5 ounce can stewed Italian style tomatoes, pureed

1 recipe savory crepes, recipe follows or 1 package of store bought crepes



Directions:

Make Spinach Filling:

Heat olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onions, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic and red pepper flakes and sauté until the onions are tender, about 6 minutes. Add the spinach by handfuls and cook until it is wilted and dry, 6-8 minutes. Let cool.

Make Parmesan Béchamel sauce:

In a medium sized saucepan melt the butter. Sprinkle in the flour, and stir with a wooden spoon until well blended. Cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes until it is a golden brown. This thin paste is called a roux. Remove the roux from the heat.

In separate medium saucepan heat the milk, bay leaf, salt, pepper and nutmeg until milk is steaming. Remove the bay leaf.

Return the roux to the heat. Slowly pour the steaming milk into the roux, whisking constantly to prevent lumps. Continue stirring over medium heat for 3 to 6 minutes. When the mixture thickens, take it off the heat and stir in 1 cup Parmesan cheese until it is melted. Season with additional salt and pepper to taste.

If you would like to make the béchamel in advance, dot the surface with additional butter or place a piece of buttered waxed paper directly on the surface of the sauce to prevent a skin from forming. Gently re-heat the sauce before using (don't cook).

Continue Spinach Filling:

In a large bowl, blend the ricotta, egg, and 3/4 cup of the Parmesan béchamel sauce. Add the spinach mixture, 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, 1/2 cup Romano cheese, salt and pepper. Stir to combine and set aside.

Make the Crepes.

To make the Cannelloni:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

Lightly grease a large lasagna pan and pour the tomato sauce in the bottom of the pan. Place 1/2 cup of the spinach mixture in the middle of a crepe and roll it up like a fat cigar, repeat. Place the filled cannelloni on top of the tomato sauce. Pour the remaining béchamel sauce onto the cannelloni. Sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan and chopped parsley.

Bake in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes until the cannelloni is warmed through and the sauce is lightly brown and bubbly.

Let cool for 10 minutes before serving.



Savory Crepe Batter

Yield: 14-16 8-inch crepes

Ingredients

1 cup all purpose flour
3/4 cup cold water
1/2 cup cold 2 % milk
2 eggs
3 tablespoons butter, melted
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons olive oil for cooking crepes

Instructions

Measure the flour, water, milk, eggs, butter and salt into a blender or a mixing bowl. Blend or whisk until smooth. Cover and refrigerate the batter for 15-30 minutes. When ready to cook the crepes, add about 1/4 cup more cold water to thin the batter to the consistency of heavy cream.

Select a very well seasoned skillet or a 10" non-stick fry pan for best results. Heat the pan over medium-high heat and add a few drops of olive oil. Lift the pan from the heat and ladle about 1/4 cup of batter into the center of your pan. Quickly tilt the pan in all directions so the batter forms a thin, lacy pancake. Cook the crepe for 30-40 seconds until the edges curl and brown slightly. Flip the crepe over with a flexible spatula or nimble fingers and cook the second side about 15 seconds, until spotted with brown and dry. Remove from the pan. Stack crepes on top of each other as you cook to keep them warm.

If, towards the bottom of the bowl, the batter becomes thick and the crepes do not have tiny, lacy bubbles around the outside rim, add another teaspoon of water and continue cooking.

Chef's Tip:

When making the crepes ahead or to freeze, stack them with a sheet of film wrap or paper towels in between. You may store crepes in a re-sealable plastic bag overnight. The finished crepes can be frozen for several weeks when wrapped well.



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***Nutrition Analysis and Facts**

Per Serving

Nutrient	Rounded Nutritional Value	FDA Daily Values
Calories	720	0
Total Fat	47 g	72%
Saturated Fat	22 g	111%
Polyunsaturated Fat	3.0 g	0 g
Monounsaturated Fat	18 g	0 g
Trans Fat	1 g	0 g
Cholesterol	195 mg	65%
Potassium	1180 mg	34%
Sodium	1970 mg	82%
Carbohydrate	41 g	14%
Fiber	4 g	18%
Sugar	11 g	0 g
Protein	37 g	74%
Vitamin A	8736 IU	170%
Vitamin C	37 mg	60%
Calcium	919 mg	90%
Iron	5 mg	25%
Vitamin E	5 mg	15%
Vitamin K	388 mcg	480%
Vitamin B 6	0 mg	25%
Folate	200 mcg	50%
Vitamin B 12	2 mcg	30%
Phosphorus	707 mg	70%
Zinc	4 mg	25%
Vitamin D	1 mcg	0%

**via FoodCare, Inc.*