CHRISTMAS EVE (WIGILIA) · DECEMBER 24

Potato and cheese pierogi for Wigilia

Prep 1 hr 15 min **Cook** 35 min **Rest** 30 min **Total** 2 hr 20 min **Makes** About 36 pierogi **Level** Medium

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED

Cooking is for children and grown-ups together. An adult should supervise at all times and handle the oven, stovetop, knives, and anything hot. Boiling water and hot butter can burn. A grown-up drops the pierogi into the pot and lifts them out. The filling stays hot inside, so cut pierogi open and let them cool for young children.

ALLERGY INFORMATION

Contains wheat (gluten), milk, and egg. Always read ingredient labels, since brands vary, and ask about food allergies before you cook or share.

INGREDIENTS

Dough

- 3 cups (375 g) all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 large egg
- 2 tbsp (30 g) butter, melted
- ⅔ to ¾ cup (160 to 180 ml) warm water

Filling

- 1 lb (450 g) russet potatoes (about 2 large), peeled and cut in chunks
- 8 oz (225 g) farmer’s cheese (twaróg), crumbled
- 1 small onion, finely chopped, cooked in 2 tbsp (30 g) butter
- ½ tsp salt and ¼ tsp black pepper

To serve

- 3 tbsp (45 g) butter
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- Sour cream

METHOD

1. Boil the potatoes in salted water until very tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and mash until smooth. Meanwhile, cook the chopped onion in 2 tablespoons of butter over medium heat until soft and golden, about 10 minutes.
2. Mix the potatoes, onion, cheese, salt, and pepper. Taste, then let the filling cool completely.
3. For the dough, mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Add the egg, melted butter, and ⅔ cup of warm water and mix, adding more water a spoonful at a time, until a soft dough forms. Knead 5 minutes until smooth, cover, and rest 30 minutes.
4. Roll half the dough very thin, about ⅛ inch (3 mm), on a floured surface. Cut 3-inch (7.5 cm) circles.
5. Put a rounded tablespoon of filling on each circle. Fold into a half-moon and pinch the edges firmly to seal. Set on a floured towel and cover while you make the rest.
6. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pierogi about 10 at a time, stirring gently once. When they float, cook 2 minutes more, then lift them out with a slotted spoon.
7. Cook the sliced onion in 3 tablespoons of butter until golden, about 10 minutes. Toss the pierogi in it, or pan-fry them until golden, about 2 minutes per side. Serve with sour cream.

LITTLE HELPERS CAN (WITH A GROWN-UP)

- Mash the potatoes once they have cooled a little
- Cut circles with a glass or round cutter
- Spoon in the filling and pinch the edges shut
- Watch at the window for the first star

GOOD TO KNOW

- Freeze uncooked pierogi on a floured tray, then bag them. Boil them straight from frozen, adding 2 to 3 minutes.
- Farmer’s cheese (twaróg) is a dry, crumbly fresh cheese sold in Polish shops and many grocery stores. Well-drained cottage cheese works in a pinch.

A BLESSING BEFORE WE EAT

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Lord Jesus, as we share our bread tonight, help us forgive one another and welcome every guest as we would welcome you.