

# Prelude to the Turkey

**M**any Italian families enjoy a pasta course before the traditional Thanksgiving meal of turkey and sides. When I was growing up, the pasta of choice was typically ricotta gnocchi in a red sauce. While gnocchi is one of my all-time favorites, I would opt for a more seasonal selection — a wild mushroom ravioli — to make the most of fungi at their peak. The quantities in this recipe make eight servings. 



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the dough enough so that you can lift it from the board, then re-flour the cutting board. Knead the dough, which will be slightly sticky, for five minutes. Wrap it in plastic and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Melt the butter in a large nonstick sauté pan over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook until almost soft, about three minutes. Then add the mushrooms, stirring often, and cook until tender, about five minutes. Drain off any excess butter if necessary as you do not want the filling to be too wet when you fill the ravioli. Season with salt and pepper to taste and set aside.

Cut the pasta dough into four equal pieces. Using a pasta machine, roll out one piece as thin as possible. Place one teaspoon mounds of filling one inch apart along the rolled-out pasta. Moisten the spaces around the filling mounds with a pastry brush dipped in water. Roll out another piece of dough to the same thickness. Carefully place this piece on top of the piece with the mounds. Using your thumb, press the dough together around the mounds to create a seal. Cut out the ravioli with a fluted cutter. Place the ravioli on a kitchen towel on top of a baking sheet, and cover with another towel. Repeat with the other two pieces of pasta dough.

When ready to serve, bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil and add a pinch of salt. Also, add one stick of butter to a nonstick skillet and cook over medium heat until beginning to brown. Cook ravioli for three minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and add to pan with browned butter. Place four ravioli on each plate and drizzle with the brown butter. Sprinkle with toasted pine nuts and parsley. Serve immediately with Parmesan cheese and fresh ground pepper. 

## Susan Says, Mommom Muses

**Question:** What should I do if I'm a guest in someone's home and am served something I don't like?

- Carping Counselor

**Susan:** Dear Carping Counselor, if your aversion is intense, try to at least taste a bite or two. Otherwise, eat as much as you can. It would be rude to avoid the item completely. If your hosts offer seconds, you may decline more of the item you dislike; however, request more of another dish so they don't think you dislike their cooking in general.

**Mommom:** Move the food around on your plate so it looks like you're enjoying some of everything.

## MUSHROOM RAVIOLI

### For the Pasta

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 extra large eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon olive oil
- Small pinch sea salt

### For the Mushroom Filling

- 6 tablespoons salted butter
- 2 pounds fresh wild mushrooms (chanterelles, oyster, enoki, crimini) washed, drained and chopped
- 2 shallots, minced
- Sea salt
- Fresh ground pepper

### For the Sauce

- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 3/4 cup toasted pine nuts
- 1 bunch flat leaf parsley
- Parmesan cheese
- Fresh ground pepper

Mound three and a half cups of the flour on a large wooden cutting board. Make a well in the flour and add the eggs and the olive oil. Beat the eggs and olive oil with a fork, and slowly incorporate the flour from the sides of the well. The dough will come together when about half the flour has been blended. Knead



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