

Homemade Pasta for Ravioli

Submitted by Elizabeth Mandel

Courtesy of Cook's Illustrated ("The Cook's Bible")

Setting number 7 on the pasta machine will yield 48-60 ravioli, using a ravioli form.

Ingredients

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1½ cups filling

Directions

1. In the work bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade, pulse flour 3 times. With the machine running, add the oil and beaten eggs until flour forms a dough. If dough is too wet, add more flour 1 Tbsp at a time; if too dry, add water 1 tsp at a time. The dough should hold together in a ball but not feel sticky.
2. Place dough on a lightly floured board or work surface. Form into a ball. If you plan to use setting 7 on the pasta machine, cut the dough into thirds, press both halves flat, and then wrap two thirds in plastic wrap to keep it from drying out while you work with the other third.
3. Using a hand-cranked pasta machine, feed the dough into the machine on the thickest setting (1). Crank it through. Working on a floured surface, fold the ends toward the middle (the ends will overlap) so the dough is slightly shorter than the width of the machine. Turn over to flour underside of dough. Press either of the unfolded, open edges of the dough together so it is thin enough to fit between the rollers and feed this edge into the machine, cranking the dough all the way through. Repeat the process of folding and feeding through the rollers until the dough has been run through on setting 1 a total of four times. Notch up the machine one increment (to setting 2) and crank dough through. Lightly flour dough on both sides but do not fold up ends. Turn machine to the next setting and run the dough through once; repeat until the dough has passed once through each setting, ending with the highest setting you intend to use. Flour dough only if it becomes too sticky to handle easily.

Note: in order not to waste pasta, roll so final sheets are about 4½ inches wide. This will be wide enough for the ravioli form.

4. Square off ends of sheet of dough and cut it in half crosswise; each piece will measure about 4½ x 14 inches. **Work with one piece of dough at a time, reserving the other under a damp kitchen towel.**
5. NOTE: If making noodles, run through cutter or cut wider strips by hand. Noodles can be put on lightly floured cloth or hung on pasta drying rack until ready to store or cook. Noodles will cook very quickly. Skip steps 6-8.
6. **Flour ravioli form first.** Place 14" length sheet of dough over form. Press plastic form onto dough to make depressions for the filling. Add filling in teaspoons. Place the second piece of dough over the first. Use a rolling pin to press the two sheets of dough together, placing additional pressure on the raised serrated strips of metal between the ravioli and around the perimeter. Turn over onto a lightly floured surface. Ravioli should fall out of the form. If they do not separate completely into individual ravioli, use a knife or dough scraper to separate them. **If extra length, cover with damp towel while rolling next sheet... it will split if it dries out.**
7. Place finished ravioli on a cookie sheet that has been covered with a lightly floured dishtowel and put in the freezer. (Ravioli left at room temperature or in the refrigerator will become gluey and unpleasant.)
8. Repeat the rolling and filling process with the remaining portions of dough.
9. Just before serving time, drop ravioli a few at a time into a large pot of salted, boiling water. Cook the ravioli in batches so as not to overcrowd the pot. Cook until they have risen to the top of the water and then cook for an additional 45 seconds (or for about 2 ½ minutes total). Check 1 ravioli by removing it from the water with a slotted spoon. Cut in half and taste—the filling should be hot. As ravioli are cooked remove and place in a bowl with some of the hot cooking water to keep them warm until all are done.
10. Serve with just a bit of water from the pot to keep ravioli from sticking together, or toss immediately with a sauce, browned butter or warm stock. A small amount of cooking liquid is a good way to thin and heat a sauce.