

TASTING, SAMPLING AND SHARING
with friends

POLENTA PANZEROTTI



Ingredients (serves 6 – 8)

Polenta (Packet dried or Tesco ready cooked block)

Salt and pepper

4 melting cheeses, choose from Fontina (Fontal) 105gm; Taleggio 75gm;
Bel Paese (Block) 75gm; Mozzarella 165gm; Dolcelatte or Gorgonzola 60gm;
Parmesan 50gm

Tomatoe sauce:

1 medium onion
2 tins chopped tomatoes
garlic (optional)
chilli (optional)

Bechamel sauce:

Half pint milk
Knob butter
2 level tbspn cornflour
nutmeg

Method:

Preheat oven 200°C

POLENTA - Prepare a baking tray or lasagne dish with oil. Make the polenta as directed. Boil the water and pour in the polenta flour and start stirring straight away, keep stirring until packet time (i.e. some are 2 mins, some are 5 mins). When the cooking time is up pour evenly onto the baking dish and smooth out. Leave to cool then refrigerate, depending on time

TOMATO SAUCE - Finely slice the onion and fry over medium heat until soft, add finely chopped garlic, chopped tomatoes, salt and pepper and chilli if required. Simmer for 20 mins, stirring occasionally so that it doesn't burn. Remove from heat.

BECHAMEL - Melt the butter and remove from heat stir in the cornflour and make a smooth paste. Return to heat and add milk and continue to stir until thickened. Add salt and pepper, grated nutmeg and a little parmesan. Remove from heat.

PREPARATION – Using an oven proof dish, put a small amount of tomato sauce in the bottom, slice the polenta thinly and place on top of sauce, (I use a cheese wire) add some of the mixed chopped cheeses, then some béchamel, add a sprinkling of grated parmesan. Continue to layer like this to the top of the dish. Finish with a layer of béchamel and top with the remainder of grated parmesan. Place in the oven and cook for 30/40 mins till golden. If you use Pyrex you can see the layers bubbling. Serve on plate as a starter or main dish.

Irene Mellini 29th November 2011

Polenta Tips and Suggestions:

Don't buy organic polenta as you will be stirring for 20 minutes or more.

Tip: cover your arm and hand with a tea towel and reduce heat as it spits!

Tesco also sell a ready cooked polenta which you only have to slice up.

The tomato sauce can be made the previous day and the bechamel ahead of time.

The above cheeses are suggestions, you can buy Fontal at Marco's Deli in Church St. Block Bel Paese is harder to find.

Other suggestions for Polenta

As an appetiser, slice (as medium sliced bread) cut into oblongs or triangles. Fry until crisp.

Serve with the following toppings.

Taleggio – simply melted under the grill

Mushroom – slice and heat chestnut mushroom, oyster mushroom and normal, add some chicken stock and tomato passata, finish with a touch of cream

Tomato sauce as in the polenta dish above

The ideas are endless