

Plum Dumplings: A Sweet & Tender European Treat

There's a special category of comfort food reserved for sweet dumplings, and these



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20 min

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INGREDIENTS

450 g starchy potatoes (like Russet or Idaho), about 3-4 medium potatoes
130 g all-purpose flour (about 1 cup + 2 tablespoons)
2 tbsp sugar (for the dough)
30 g semolina (fine semolina, about 2 tablespoons)
1 tsp lemon peel (finely grated zest of one lemon)
Oil for shaping the dumplings (a neutral oil like vegetable or canola)
130 g margarine (divided: 30g for potatoes, 100g for breadcrumbs; or use unsalted butter for richer flavor)
100 g breadcrumbs (about 1 cup; plain, fine breadcrumbs are best)
7 Italian plums (or other firm, small plums), fresh
7 pieces rock candy or sugar cubes (one for each plum)

Swaps and Notes:

Potatoes: Starchy potatoes are essential for the right dough consistency. Avoid waxy potatoes.

Margarine: While margarine is traditional in some regions, unsalted butter is an excellent substitute for a richer flavor, especially for melting with the breadcrumbs.

Semolina: Semolina adds a slight chewiness and helps with the dough texture. If you don't have it, you can use a bit more flour, but the texture might be slightly less tender.

Plums: Italian plums (prune plums) are ideal as they hold their shape well when cooked and have a perfect sweet-tart balance. If unavailable, use firm, small plums. Make sure they are ripe but not overly soft.

Rock Candy/Sugar Cubes: These are traditional for a concentrated burst of sweetness inside the plum. If you don't have them, you can put ½ teaspoon of granulated sugar inside each plum.

Lemon Peel: Freshly grated lemon zest adds a wonderful fragrant brightness that cuts through the richness. Don't skip it!

Breadcrumbs: Plain, fine breadcrumbs are best. Panko might be too coarse for the traditional texture. You can make your own from stale bread if preferred.

Directions:

Prepare the Plums: Start by thoroughly washing your Italian plums. Using a small, sharp knife, carefully cut each plum halfway around its circumference, following the natural seam, and gently twist to remove the pit. Set the pitted plums aside for now.

Boil Potatoes: Place your starchy potatoes in a large pot. Cover them generously with cold water and bring to a boil over high heat. Boil the potatoes for about 20 minutes, or until they are completely tender when pierced with a fork.

Mash Potatoes: Once the potatoes are cooked, drain them immediately. While they are still hot (this is crucial for a smooth dough), peel them. Transfer the hot, peeled potatoes to a large bowl and mash them thoroughly until they are completely smooth and free of any lumps. A potato ricer is ideal for this, but a potato masher or even a fork will work with enough effort.

Add Margarine to Potatoes: Add 30 g of margarine (or butter) to the hot mashed potatoes. Mix vigorously until the margarine is completely melted and smoothly incorporated into the potatoes, creating a creamy texture.

Form the Dough: Now, add the semolina, all-purpose flour, 2 tablespoons of sugar (for the dough), and the grated lemon peel to the mashed potato mixture. Get your hands in there and mix everything together. Knead gently until it forms a soft, slightly sticky but manageable dough. Avoid overworking the dough.

Boil Water for Dumplings: Fill a large pot with about 2 liters (roughly 8 cups) of water and bring it to a rolling boil over high heat.

Shape the Dumplings: While the water heats, divide your potato dough into 7 equal pieces. To prevent the dough from sticking to your hands during shaping, rub a little neutral oil on your palms.

Stuff the Plums: Take each pitted plum and insert one piece of rock candy or a sugar cube into the cavity where the pit was.

Enclose the Plums: Flatten one piece of potato dough into a disk in your oiled hand. Carefully place a stuffed plum in the center of the dough disk. Gently fold the dough around the plum, ensuring it is completely enclosed and well sealed. Roll it lightly between your palms to form a smooth, round dumpling. Repeat with the remaining dough and plums.

Simmer the Dumplings: Gently drop the shaped dumplings, one by one, into the boiling water. Once all dumplings are in, lower the temperature to a gentle simmer. Let them simmer for about 10 minutes. The dumplings will float to the top when they are cooked through.

Toast Breadcrumbs: In a separate large pan or skillet, melt the remaining 100 g of margarine (or butter) over medium heat. Add the bread crumbs to the melted margarine and toast them for a few minutes, stirring continuously, until they are beautifully golden brown and fragrant.

Coat and Serve: Using a slotted spoon, carefully remove the cooked dumplings from the simmering water. Immediately roll each hot dumpling in the toasted breadcrumb mixture, ensuring they are fully coated. Serve warm, ideally with a sprinkle of powdered sugar on top for an extra touch of sweetness and presentation.

Tips for Success:

Hot Potatoes are Key: Mashing and mixing the margarine into hot potatoes helps create a smooth, pliable dough. Cold mashed potatoes will be lumpy and harder to work with.

Don't Overwork Dough: Overworking the potato dough can make it tough. Mix just until combined.

Oil Your Hands: This simple trick makes shaping the sticky dough around the plums much easier.

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16. Gentle : Simmer: Once the dumplings are in the water, reduce to a gentle simmer, not a rolling boil. A furious boil can cause the dumplings to break apart.
17. Good : Quality Plums: Ripe, firm Italian plums are crucial. Overly soft plums will become mushy inside the dumpling.
18. Toast : Breadcrumbs Evenly: Keep stirring the breadcrumbs in the melted margarine to prevent burning and ensure even browning.
19. Serving Suggestions and Pairings: These Plum Dumplings are a delightful dessert on their own, often served simply with a dusting of powdered sugar. For an even more indulgent experience, consider a dollop of whipped cream, a scoop of vanilla ice cream, or a side of fruit compote (like apricot or cherry). They also make a fantastic, unique offering for a brunch or breakfast spread. A warm cup of coffee or tea would be a perfect accompaniment.
20. Storage and Leftover Tips: Plum dumplings are best

enjoyed freshly made. However, if you have leftovers, store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2-3 days. To reheat, you can gently warm them in a pan with a little butter until heated through and the breadcrumbs re-crisp, or briefly steam them. They can also be microwaved, but the breadcrumbs won't be as crispy.

21. More Recipes You Will Love: If you enjoyed the unique sweetness and comforting nature of these Plum Dumplings, you might also like these other dessert and baked goods recipes:
22. For a fun and whimsical treat, check out my : [How This Unicorn Poke Cake Became My Favorite Party Trick](#).
23. Indulge your chocolate cravings with : [These Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Brownie Bombs Are My Favorite Sweet Obsession](#).
24. If you're a brownie lover, you simply must try [The Best Peanut Butter Brownies I've Ever Made \(And I've Made a Lot!\)](#).
25. For a festive and delightful cookie, see : [The Easter Cookies Everyone Will Be Talking About \(And Asking the Recipe For!\)](#).

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