

Polenta-Stuffed Chard with Bubbly Parmesan

These gorgeous green parcels, best eaten on a Sunday night in front of a fire, are both dramatic and comforting (think lasagna, but without the pasta, ricotta, or mozzarella). Buy the largest Swiss chard leaves you can find, and keep in mind that the polenta takes an hour to chill.

Serves 4

Kosher salt
3/4 cup (112g) dry polenta (coarse cornmeal)
1 tablespoon butter
1 cup (80g) packed grated Parmesan cheese, divided
Pepper
1¼ cups (300ml) your favorite marinara or tomato sauce, divided
8 very large leaves Swiss chard, swished in cool water

Coat a 9½-inch (24-cm) square pan with cooking spray and line the bottom with parchment. In a medium saucepan, bring 3 cups (725 ml) water and 1 teaspoon salt to a boil. Whisk in the polenta and reduce the heat to a gentle gurgle. Cook until thick and porridgelike, 10 to 15 minutes, whisking occasionally. Remove from the heat and stir in the butter, half the cheese, and a generous pinch of black pepper.

Scrape the polenta into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Cool for 15 minutes at room temperature, then refrigerate until cold, at least 1 hour. (After 1 hour, cover with plastic wrap.) Unmold and cut into eight 4 x 2-inch (8 x 5-cm) rectangles. Wipe the baking pan dry and spread 1/2 cup (118 ml) of the marinara along the bottom. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and bring a kettle of water to a boil. Have several layers of paper towels on hand.

Make a narrow, upside down v-shaped cut about halfway down each chard leaf to remove the thick central stem. Place the leaves in a large bowl and cover with boiling water. Let soften for 6 minutes. Remove to the paper towels and pat very dry.

To form the rolls, lay 1 chard leaf on a cutting board. Lay 1 polenta rectangle horizontally along the bottom of the leaf and spoon 1 teaspoon of marinara on top. Roll the leaf upwards burritolike, encasing the polenta, and transfer to the baking pan seam side down. Repeat, nestling the rolls next to one other. Spoon the remaining sauce on top and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.

Bake for 10 minutes, then slip under the broiler for 1 to 2 minutes to brown the cheese. Serve hot.

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