

Lobster Morel Agnolotti

<http://userealbutter.com/2018/05/14/lobster-morel-agnolotti-recipe/>

pasta dough

3 cups unbleached all-purpose flour (or “00” flour)
3 whole eggs
3/4 tsp olive oil
scant 1/2 tsp sea salt

filling

8 oz. fresh morels (cleaned) and 1 tbsp unsalted butter, or 2 oz. butter-sautéed morels*
1 tbsp unsalted butter
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
2 oz. asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces (I use the stalks and reserve sautéed tips for garnish)
4 oz. raw lobster meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
sea salt
black pepper, freshly ground
1 oz Parmesan, grated

sauce

2 tbsps unsalted butter
8 oz. fresh morels, cleaned and sliced 1/2-inch thick
2 cloves garlic, minced
8-12 oz. lobster meat, raw and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup white wine
1-2 cups cream
sea salt
black pepper, freshly ground
1 lemon, zest of
Parmesan, grated
parsley, minced

* These morels go into the filling. If you don't have fresh morels, you can use dried morels by rehydrating in hot (boiling hot) water for 30 minutes and squeezing them out before tossing into a hot sauté pan with a nub of butter. Or if you have frozen morels, thaw them out and sauté with a pat of butter. I tend to sauté my fresh seasonal morels in butter and freeze them for up to a year. These get thawed and tossed into the pan with the lobster and asparagus.

Make the pasta dough: Pile the flour on a clean work surface or in a large wide and deep bowl and make a well in the center of the flour. Place the eggs, olive oil, and salt in the well. Use a fork to incorporate the flour into the eggs until it is too thick to mix. Use your hand to mix in more flour until the ball of dough cannot accommodate any more flour. Set the ball of dough aside. Sift all of the remaining flour (about 1+ cups) and discard the hard bits that remain. Keep the sifted flour nearby as you work the dough.

On a lightly floured surface, knead the dough for about 5 minutes until it is smooth, consistent in texture throughout, firm, and just slightly tacky (but not sticky). If the dough is too sticky, work in more flour. The dough is ready when you poke it with your finger and it bounces back. Wrap the dough loosely in plastic wrap and refrigerate for an hour or up to 8 hours. Makes 12 ounces of dough.

Make the filling: If using fresh morels, make sure they are cleaned. [To clean morels: I like to swish in a bowl of cold water, fill the hole with water and shake each one out. I remove any difficult debris with a knife (or if the mushroom is wormed out, I chuck it into my yard under the aspens). I lay the mushrooms out in a single layer on paper towels on a cooling rack to let them dry out for 30 minutes or more before cooking.] Heat a tablespoon of butter in a hot sauté pan and sauté the morels until wilted and lightly browned. Remove the mushrooms to a bowl. Add another tablespoon of butter and the garlic to same pan over medium high heat. When the garlic becomes fragrant, add the asparagus and sauté until bright green. Add the lobster to the pan and stir-fry until the meat is just cooked. Stir in the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper. Remove from heat. Place the contents of the pan into a food processor and pulse to desired consistency. It happens quickly, so if you like it chunky, keep a light finger on the button. Scrape the filling into a bowl and stir in the grated Parmesan. Cover and place in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Make the agnolotti: Cut the dough into quarters. Loosely cover three of the quarters with the plastic wrap while you work the first quarter. On a lightly floured work surface, flatten the dough with the palm of your hand. You can run the dough through a pasta machine start on the thickest setting and then gradually work down to the desired thickness – about 1/32-inch or 8 mm or setting 8 on an Atlas Marcato pasta machine. If rolling by hand, use a rolling pin and roll away from you, turn 90 degrees and roll away from you, and repeat. Keep doing this until the dough is about 1/32-inch thick or thin enough to read newsprint through it.

Cut the pasta into 12-inch sections. Starting with the first section of pasta, place half-teaspoon dollops (or smaller) of filling an inch apart along the long edge of the dough. Grab the long edge of the dough and fold it over the filling blobs so that there is enough pasta margin to enclose the filling and seal the long edge. Now pinch the pasta between the blobs of filling, creating little pillows. Using a pasta cutter or knife, trim the long edge of the pasta just outside of the filling, but along the double layer margin. Use your pasta cutter to cut the agnolotti starting from the folded side and cutting across the pinched space to the cut edge. Repeat until all of the agnolotti have been cut. Repeat for the rest of the pasta until you run out of filling. Don't pile the finished agnolotti on top of each other lest they stick. Lay them out in a single layer on a sheet pan dusted with flour for 30 minutes as they wait to be cooked. You can also lay them in a single layer on a sheet pan and store them uncovered in the refrigerator for up to a day or freeze them until firm, then bag them and freeze for later use.

Get the water boiling: Bring a large pot of salted water to a full boil. While you wait for the water to boil, you can get started on the sauce.

Cook the sauce: Melt a tablespoon of butter in a sauté pan over medium high heat. Add the morels and sauté until lightly browned. Remove from pan (reserve any nice pieces for garnish). Add a tablespoon of butter to the same pan with the garlic. When the garlic begins to sizzle, stir in the lobster meat and sauté until just cooked through. Remove the lobster meat from the pan (reserve any nice pieces for garnish). Return the morels to the hot pan and pour in the white wine. Let the wine boil down to about two tablespoons (an ounce) and add the cream. When the cream begins to simmer, stir in the lobster meat, season with salt and pepper, and add the lemon zest. Reduce the heat to low and keep warm, stirring occasionally.

Prepare the pasta: When the water has come to a boil, add the agnolotti and cook for a couple of minutes or until tender. Drain the pasta and toss with the warm cream sauce. Divvy the pasta into bowls and top with grated Parmesan, chopped parsley, salt, and pepper. Garnish with pieces of reserved morels, lobster, and asparagus tips. Serves 4-6.