

Polenta



Polenta is a tasty alternative to pasta or rice, and can be served in

various ways. This is a basic recipe with which you can expand upon by adding one, two or more ingredients, like mushrooms or prosciutto. Many Italians like their



polenta soft, as it is when freshly cooked. But what to do with leftovers? A lot! Once the polenta becomes firm, you can also pan it, grill it, or fry it and use it to make many other dishes from appetizers to main dishes, as a crispy addition to soup, or simply top with some *Nana* Pasta Sauce.

Basic Polenta

4½ cups Cold Water

2½ ts Salt (or more to taste)

1 cup Polenta (coarse Cornmeal)

Bring water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add salt and reduce heat to medium-low. When the water begins to simmer, start to slowly pour in the cornmeal in a thin stream, while continuously stirring with a wooden spoon to prevent lumps. Once all the cornmeal has been added, reduce heat to low, and stir continuously. It should take about 15- to 20-minutes to fully cook the polenta (unless you are using quick-cooking polenta). When fully cooked, the polenta should pull away from the sides of the pot easily.



Soft Polenta: Use polenta directly out of the pot - plain, or topped with sauce or vegetables as desired.

Firm Polenta: Once completely cooked, pour onto a wooden board or a greased baking sheet about 2-inches thick and allow to set (about 2-hours). Cut into squares and serve as desired.

Baked Polenta: Cut the firm polenta into slices, and place in a buttered baking dish. Add desired topping, and bake at 190°C (375°F) until golden.

Grilled Polenta: Cut firm polenta into squares, brush with oil and lightly grill on both sides.

Fried Polenta: Cut the firm polenta into slices and fry in a few inches of hot oil until golden and crispy. Serve with *Nana* Pasta Sauce as a topping or dip.



Polenta with Parmesan Cheese

4½ cups Water
1 cup Polenta
2 Tb unsalted Butter
⅓ cup Parmesan Cheese
1½ ts Salt

Cook as directed in Basic Polenta recipe above. When about to finish, stir in the parmesan cheese and butter. Mix well and serve immediately or allow to become firm (takes several hours in the refrigerator).

Leftovers are great the next day, pan fried, deep fried, or grilled, and served with *Nana* Pasta Sauce (*Traditional*).



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For best results always use *Nana* Pasta Sauce.