



Spaetzle is a traditional German egg noodle, often referred to as a type of dumpling, though its texture and preparation are distinct. Unlike typical pasta, spaetzle has a soft, almost fluffy consistency created by a simple dough made of eggs, flour, and water or milk. These noodles originate from the Swabian region of Germany and remain a staple in Central European cuisine.

Traveling through Germany, you'll find spaetzle served with a variety of dishes—classic cheese-laden “Käsespätzle,” rich stews, or even as a side dish to schnitzel. True to its rustic roots, spaetzle epitomizes comfort food.

Fun fact for the curious foodies out there: the word “spaetzle” translates to “little sparrows,” which some say refers to the shape of the noodles that resemble tiny birdlike spots or drops.

How to Make Spaetzle: A Step-by-Step Recipe

Making spaetzle at home might sound intimidating, but don't worry—it's easier than you think.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs
- ½ cup milk or water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- A pinch of nutmeg (optional, for added flavor)

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Dough:

Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. Whisk the eggs, milk (or water), and nutmeg in another bowl. Combine the wet and dry ingredients, mixing until the dough is thick yet slightly sticky.

2. Boil Water:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil.



3. Shape the Spaetzle:

To form the noodles, you'll need a spaetzle board, spaetzle press, or colander with large holes. Push the dough through the tool directly into the boiling water.

4. Cook the Spaetzle:

Once the noodles float to the surface (about 2-3 minutes), they're ready! Scoop them out with a slotted spoon and transfer them to an ice bath to stop the cooking process.

5. Serve:

Toss the spaetzle in a bit of butter or olive oil for a glossy finish, or pair with your favorite sauce or dish.

The Best Spaetzle Maker: Choosing the Right Tool for Perfect Noodles

There are several tools you can use to create spaetzle, and the right one depends on the texture and ease you're looking for:

- **Spaetzle Maker (or Press)** - Ideal for achieving uniform, noodle-like shapes. Easy to use and a great investment for spaetzle enthusiasts.
- **Colander with Large Holes** - A budget alternative that works well. Just press the dough through with a spatula.
- **Spaetzle Board and Scraper** - Go old-school and traditional with this tool for creating irregularly-shaped noodles (a favorite among purists).

Choose what works best for you, but if you cook spaetzle regularly, a dedicated spaetzle maker makes the process quicker.

What to Serve with Spaetzle: Tasty Side Dishes and Pairings

Wondering what goes well with spaetzle? Here are some classic and creative pairings:

- **Käsespätzle** - Spaetzle tossed in [melted cheese](#) with fried onions on top. Think of it as Germany's ultimate comfort food.



- **Beef Goulash** – This Hungarian-inspired stew’s rich, saucy base beautifully complements spaetzle’s neutral flavor.
- **Schnitzel** – A crispy breaded pork or veal cut paired with buttery spaetzle is a match made in culinary heaven.
- **Sauteed Vegetables** – For a lighter option, pair spaetzle with seasonal veggies like spinach, mushrooms, or zucchini.

Don’t forget a glass of dry Riesling or a cold German lager to complete your meal.

The Perfect Spaetzle Sauce: Recipes for Every Flavor

Spaetzle soaks up sauces like a dream. Try these recipes for an elevated dining experience:

- **Creamy Mushroom Sauce** – Earthy and creamy, made with sautéed mushrooms, garlic, and heavy cream.
- **Herbed Butter Sauce** – Simple yet flavorful. Melt butter, add fresh herbs (like parsley or thyme), and toss it with spaetzle.
- **Tomato-based Sauce** – A Mediterranean twist! Combine roasted tomatoes, garlic, and basil with olive oil.

For the cheese lovers, top your spaetzle and sauce with shredded Gruyère or Parmesan.

Where to Buy Spaetzle: Finding Fresh and Packaged Options Near You

If you’re not up for making spaetzle from scratch, many grocery stores and specialty markets offer packaged spaetzle.

- **Online Retailers** – Websites like Amazon and European specialty food stores ship dried spaetzle directly to your door.
- **German Markets** – Check your local European delicatessen for fresh, handmade spaetzle.
- **Supermarkets** – Some supermarkets now carry pre-packaged options in the pasta or frozen foods aisle.



How to Cook Packaged Spaetzle? A Quick and Easy Cooking Guide

Cooking packaged spaetzle is a breeze! Follow these steps for delicious results:

1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Add the packaged noodles and cook per the instructions (usually 2-5 minutes).
3. Drain and toss the noodles with your favorite sauce or side.

Easy Spaetzle Recipe for Busy Days

Ingredients

- 1 package of pre-cooked spaetzle (store-bought)
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup of grated cheese (such as Gruyère or Emmental)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh parsley, chopped (optional)

Instructions

1. Prepare the Spaetzle

- Heat the packaged spaetzle in salted boiling water for 2-3 minutes, as instructed on the packaging. Drain well.

2. Sauté the Onion

- Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onions and sauté until golden and fragrant.

3. Combine Ingredients

- Add the cooked spaetzle into the skillet and toss to coat it evenly in the buttery onions. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

4. Add the Cheese

- Sprinkle the grated cheese over the spaetzle and stir until melted and fully combined.



5. Garnish and Serve

- Remove from heat, garnish with fresh parsley if desired, and serve immediately.

This recipe is perfect for a quick, hearty meal or a side dish on busy days!

How to Store and Reheat Leftover Spaetzle

1. Storing:

Place leftover spaetzle in an airtight container in the refrigerator. It should stay fresh for up to 3 days.

2. Reheating Options:

- **Stovetop** - Heat the noodles in a pan with a bit of butter to prevent sticking.
- **Microwave** - Add a splash of water or broth to keep them from drying out.

Pro Tip: Toss reheated spaetzle with fresh herbs or cheese for a quick flavor boost.

Final Thoughts

Spaetzle is a versatile and comforting dish that fits seamlessly into both quick weeknight dinners and hearty family meals. Its ease of preparation and adaptability make it a go-to choice for any occasion. Whether served as a side dish or a main course, spaetzle brings a touch of traditional charm to the table. Experiment with different [sauces](#), toppings, and pairings to discover your favorite way to enjoy this timeless classic!

FAQ

Q: Can I make spaetzle ahead of time?

A: Yes! Cooked spaetzle can be made ahead and stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Simply reheat using the stovetop or microwave with a bit of butter or liquid to restore its texture and flavor.

Q: Can I freeze spaetzle?

A: Absolutely. Once cooled, spread the spaetzle on a baking sheet to freeze individually



before transferring to a freezer-safe container. It can be stored for up to 3 months. Thaw in the refrigerator and reheat as needed.

Q: What can I serve with spaetzle?

A: Spaetzle pairs wonderfully with rich sauces like mushroom cream, browned butter, or gravy. It also complements roasted meats, sausages, or even a light vegetable stir-fry.

Q: Do I need special equipment to make spaetzle?

A: While a dedicated spaetzle maker or press is ideal, you can use a colander or grater with large holes in a pinch. Simply press the dough through the holes directly into boiling water.

Q: Is spaetzle gluten-free?

A: Traditional spaetzle is made with wheat flour, but it can be adapted using gluten-free flour blends. Ensure the consistency of the batter is similar to the original recipe for best results.