

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de calabaza (Pumpkin Empanadas)

Makes: 16

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

1/3 cup water
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 (1/4 oz) packages dry yeast (4 1/2 teaspoons)
1/8 teaspoon baking powder
2 generous pinches cinnamon
3 cups flour, divided in half
generous 3/4 cup vegetable shortening

Filling

1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, optional
1/4 teaspoon ginger, optional
1/8 teaspoon cloves, optional

INSTRUCTIONS

For filling: Mix ingredients together and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine water, sugar, salt, yeast, baking powder, and cinnamon. Using an electric mixer, gradually blend in half of the flour. Add shortening and thoroughly mix, then gradually blend in remaining flour.

Divide dough into 4 equal parts, then shape each part into 4 dough balls (so you have 16 balls of dough). Slap the dough balls between the palms of your well-floured hands until somewhat flattened, then roll on a floured surface until circles approximately 4 inches in diameter and 1/8 inch thick.

Put about 1 1/2 tablespoons of filling in the center of each circle, fold over, and seal edges by pressing lightly with a fork on both sides.

Bake on greased cookie sheet until golden brown, 18 to 20 minutes (watch carefully; they can burn quickly).

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de carne (Meat/Beef Empanadas)

Makes: 18-20

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

3 c all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp salt
6 tbsp margarine
6 tbsp vegetable shortening
1 c. cold water (may be less)

Glaze

1 egg yolk
1 tsp Water
2 tsp Milk
Salt
1 tsp oil

Filling

8 oz ground beef
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 green pepper, seeded and chopped
1 1/2 tsp olive oil
1 tsp cocoa powder
1 tbsp flour
1/2 tsp ground cumin
1/2 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp dried oregano, crushed
salt and pepper
2 chili peppers, seeded and chopped
4 tbsp canned crushed tomatoes

INSTRUCTIONS

Sift the flour with a pinch of salt into a mixing bowl. Cut in the margarine and shortening until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Mix in the liquid gradually (2 tbsp at a time), adding enough to bring the pastry together into a ball. Wrap the pastry well, and chill for 20 to 30 minutes.

Brown the ground meat well, and drain away as much of the fat as possible. Brown the onion, garlic and green pepper in the olive oil until the onion is soft. Add to the meat. Then add the cocoa, flour, spices, oregano, and seasonings. Stir well and cook briefly before adding the chilies and the tomatoes. Cook slowly for 10-15 minutes.

Roll out the pastry on a floured surface. Cut the dough into 4 inch rounds. Place about 1 1/2 tablespoons of filling on the dough circle. Fold over, and press to seal. If the dough is a little dry, moisten the edges with a little warm water (with your finger) before pressing the edges together. Crimp the edges with a fork. With a toothpick, prick several holes on the top of the empanada to allow the steam to escape.

Mix the glaze ingredients together. Place empanadas on a baking sheet, and brush with the egg glaze. Bake at 425 for 15-20 minutes, or until golden brown.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de pollo (Chicken Empanadas)

Makes: 36

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

2 cups flour
6 oz cream cheese, softened
2 sticks (8 oz) butter, softened

1 egg, beaten

Filling

2/3 cup minced onion
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 pound finely diced raw chicken (about 2 large skinless, boneless chicken breast halves)
3 tablespoons toasted pine nuts (pignoli)
1 1/4 teaspoons salt
3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon crushed hot red pepper
Pinch of cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine flour, cream cheese and butter in a food processor. Process until the mixture forms a ball. Wrap in plastic and chill at least an hour or as long as three days.

Cook onion in oil in a large skillet over medium heat for 5-7 minutes until softened, not browned. Stir in chicken (make sure it is diced very finely, almost like ground beef), pine nuts, salt, cumin, hot pepper, and cinnamon. Cook, stirring often, until chicken is no longer pink (about five minutes). Remove from heat and let cool.

Preheat oven to 350°.

Roll out dough about 1/8 inch thick. Cut into three inch circles. Divide filling among pastry rounds (about 2 teaspoons each) and brush edges with water. Fold rounds in half, forming crescents, and crimp edges with a fork to seal.

Arrange empanadas on a greased baking sheet and brush with beaten egg. Bake until golden brown, about 30 minutes.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de espinaca (Spinach Empanadas)

Makes: 30

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

1 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened

3/8 cup butter, softened

1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1/4 tsp salt

1 egg, beaten

Filling

1/4 cup onion, finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled

1 1/2 tsp bacon drippings

1 5-ounce package frozen spinach, thawed & drained

1/2 cup cottage cheese

1/8 tsp pepper

1/8 tsp ground nutmeg

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and butter till smooth. (Use a stand mixer, since the mixture is heavy.) Gradually add in the flour and salt. Lightly knead the dough by hand. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 3 hours.

In a medium skillet, cook the onion and garlic in the bacon drippings until the onion is tender but not brown. Mix in the bacon, spinach, cottage cheese, pepper, and nutmeg; let the mixture cool.

Preheat the oven to 450°. Roll out the pastry on a floured surface to a thickness of 1/8 inch. Cut 3-inch circles in the pastry and place 1 teaspoon of the filling in each circle, just to one side of the center. Moisten the edge of the circle with the egg, fold the dough in half over the filling to make a semicircular empanada. Seal the edges with fork tines, and poke the top of each pastry with a fork to make a vent. Put the empanadas on an ungreased cookie sheet, brush the tops with egg, and bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until golden.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de manzana (Apple Empanadas)

Makes: 30

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

1 cup butter, softened
1 (6 ounce) package cream cheese
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour

2/3 cup white sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Filling

8 c. apple, cut into small pieces
2 c. sugar
2 c. water
1 1/2 tsp. apples spice
3 tsp. cornstarch
2 tbsp. butter

INSTRUCTIONS

Day before: Cream butter and cream cheese together until smoothly blended. Beat in the flour. Shape dough into a smooth ball, wrap in foil or cling wrap, and refrigerate overnight or up to a week.

At baking time: Remove dough from refrigerator 30 minutes before using. Start heating oven to 375°.

Filling: Bring first four ingredients to boil for 45 minutes until apples are soft. Add cornstarch in 1/2 cup water to thicken. Add butter and cool before making empanadas.

Roll chilled dough thin. Cut with 4 or 5 inch round cookie cutter. Place spoonful of apple filling in center of each round, moisten edges with water.

Fold round over and press edges together. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet 15 to 20 minutes. Immediately roll in sugar mixed with cinnamon (traditional) OR in confectioners' sugar (powdered sugar) if preferred.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de queso dulce (Sweet Cheese Empanadas)

Makes: ?

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

1 1/2 cups all-purpose wheat flour - not sifted
1/2 cup butter (one stick)
1 egg yolk
1/3 cup whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon salt

Filling

1/2 lb. fresh unsalted or lightly salted white cheese, crumbled ("queso fresco" in the Mexican section of cheeses)
1 cup and 2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
3 eggs
1/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the oven to 325°.

In a bowl mix flour, butter, egg yolk, cream, and salt. Work all ingredients lightly with your hands until a pastry ball is formed. Let it rest covered with a cloth while you prepare the filling.

In a medium size saucepan, put the sugar, crumbled cheese, eggs, and cinnamon to cook over low heat while you stir the mixture with a wooden spoon until it becomes thick or pudding-like. A moment before taking the saucepan from the heat, add the grated lemon rind. Let cool before using.

Roll pastry to a thickness of less than 1/8 inch and cut in 4-inch circles (or close to that size). Place some of the filling in the center of the pastry circle and fold in half. Press the half moon formed borders with a fork.

Place the empanadas on a buttered cookie sheet and paint them with a mixture of egg yolk and some milk, or the leftover white from the egg you used for the pastry.

Bake the empanadas until golden brown.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas picantes de chorizo (Spicy Sausage Empanadas)

Makes: 46

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

2 (8 oz.) pkgs. cream cheese (room temperature)
2 cups butter (room temperature)
4 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon cumin
4 cups flour

Filling

12 ounces (or $\frac{3}{4}$ pound) spicy sausage
1 (4 oz.) can chopped green chilies, drained
1 (6 oz.) can chopped black olives
1/3 cup finely chopped green onions
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped **
2 cups grated Cheddar cheese
2 tablespoons butter, melted

INSTRUCTIONS

For pastry

Beat cream cheese, butter, chili powder, and cumin in a large bowl with electric mixer until smooth. Stir in flour until well blended. Divide dough in half. Form each half into a ball and flatten to a 1 inch thick circle. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 2 hours.

For filling

Crumble sausage into a large skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring often until browned. Drain well. Transfer sausage to a large bowl. Stir in remaining filling ingredients, adding cheese last. Refrigerate 30 minutes.

To make empanadas

Place one oven rack in top third and another in middle of oven. Heat oven to 375°. Have 2 large cookie sheets ready. On a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll one piece of dough to 1/8 inch thickness. (Keep remaining dough refrigerated.) Cut dough into 4 inch circles. Place 1 generous tablespoon of filling in middle of each circle. Fold in half over filling. Place on a cookie sheet. Press edge with tines of a fork to seal. Chill and reroll pastry scraps. Repeat with other half of dough. Brush empanadas lightly with melted butter. Bake 10 minutes. Reverse position of pans on oven rack. Bake 10 minutes longer or until golden brown. Serve hot or remove to racks to cool.

To make these empanadas not so spicy

Use a regular, non-spicy sausage. Omit the jalapeño pepper.

** When handling the jalapeño, use rubber/plastic gloves, especially if there are any cuts or scrapes on your hands. If not using gloves, wash your hands extremely thoroughly when finished. While handling, avoid touching eyes, mouth, or nose.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas de vegetales y queso (Cheese and Vegetable Empanadas)

Makes: 24

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

3 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup shortening
1 egg

1 egg for folding and glazing

Filling

1 cup finely chopped onion
2 tablespoons Italian Dressing
2 cups fresh spinach, cooked, drained and finely chopped
1 cup finely chopped cooked carrots
2 cups shredded Colby & Monterey Jack Cheese

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat oven to 375°.

Mix flour and salt in large bowl. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add 1 of the eggs; mix well. Gradually add 2/3 cup water, stirring until mixture forms a ball. Wrap tightly; refrigerate while preparing the filling.

Cook and stir onions in dressing in large skillet on medium-high heat until tender. Add spinach and carrots; cook and stir 5 minutes. Remove from heat; cool. Stir in cheese.

Roll out half of the dough on a lightly floured surface to 1/16-inch thickness. Cut into 4-inch circles. Repeat with the remaining dough. Spoon 1 1/2 tablespoons of the spinach mixture onto the center of each dough circle. Beat the remaining egg. Brush the egg onto outer parts of circles. Fold the dough in half to cover the filling and press the edges together to seal. Make a small cut in the top of each empanada. Place on baking sheet. Brush with any remaining egg.

Bake at 375° for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

Empanada Recipes

Empanadas simples (Easy Empanadas)

Makes: ?

INGREDIENTS

Pastry

3 oz. cream cheese

1 stick butter

1 cup flour

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the oven to 375°.

Cream the cheese and butter together. Mix in flour. Chill dough for several hours. Roll dough out thinly (1/16 to 1/8 inch). Cut into 3-4 inch circles, using a round cookie cutter, or the rim of a glass. Place 1/2 teaspoon of jam in the center of each cut circle. Wet the edge of 1/2 the circle. Fold over and press lightly. Crimp folded edge with a fork dipped in flour. Bake 12 to 15 minutes at 375° on ungreased cookie sheets.