



EMPANADAS



Pastry – either a purchased pie crust or make your own – quantity depends on how many you are making. I like to make enough for 2 per person depending on the size of the empanada.

To make pastry from scratch:

Ingredients

2 cups All-Purpose flour

1 teaspoon salt

2/3-3/4 cup Crisco shortening (CRISCO is MY preference. I've tried other brands but for the most tender crust, for me, I use Crisco. I sometimes use 2/3 Crisco and 1/3 of the amounts butter.)

Ice water (very cold) – enough to bring it all together. Maybe 3-5 Tablespoons

Instructions

1. Combine the flour and salt. Blend in the shortening, either by hand, with a fork, or 2 dinner knives, or a pastry blender. It needs to get the shortening to smaller than pea sized.
2. Add water 1 Tablespoon at a time blending by fork or hand until it comes together. Pastry should be very tender. SO, do NOT over work the dough/pastry. Once it comes together, not wet, not dry, place on lightly floured board and roll to about 1/8" thickness – 1/4" – cut the size you want empanada to be remembering you'll fill it and fold it in half.

To make filling:

Today we will make meat empanadas.

Ingredients

Use ½-1 pound ground meat, beef, pork, chicken, or a vegetarian product

Seasonings, your preference, I like to use salt/pepper, garlic at the minimum

Carrot, diced small

Potato, diced small

Onion, diced small

Instructions

1. Cook the meat just until done. Add the vegetables and cook until tender. If the meat is not fatty, add a little olive oil or vegetable oil so they do not burn.
2. Taste and adjust seasonings.
3. Let cool.
4. When cool, put 1-2 heaping Tablespoons of filling in center of pastry. It all depends on the size of your empanadas. Dampen the edges with water (use your clean fingers).
5. Bring top half of pastry over filled half, seal with your fingers, use a fork to seal more to eliminate leakage when frying or baking. Use a sharp knife to make slits in top for steam to escape and eliminate bursting while cooking.
6. Bake at 350-375 degrees F until browned lightly.
7. Serve – either plain or with a sauce of your choice. A spicy Asian sauce? Ranch dressing? Ketchup? Mustard?

CHEF'S NOTES:

If you have left over vegetables, use them, but diced or small – cauliflower, broccoli, peppers, corn, peas, beans, anything you like to eat.

Add herbs of your choice if you enjoy them and have on hand. Thyme, Asian spices/herbs, hot spicy, savory, cinnamon, it changes the flavors.

I prefer baking, healthier than frying, but they are equally delicious fried.

Sweet can be anything you'd use in a pie – fruits, puddings, nuts, fun to get creative.

These are great for lunches, some are good hot, warm, or even cold.

Great for sports events, snacks, meals, appetizers if made small.

Most important is to enjoy making and enjoy eating these. These are fun for kids to make as long as they aren't too involved in the cooking process. Stay safe!

These do freeze well, before cooking or after. Enjoy often!

Recipe by: Granni K