

Empanadas

slightly adapted from Saveur May/June 1999 #35 via use real butter

for the dough:

1 cup water
3/4 cup butter
2 3/4 cups flour
2 tsp salt
pinch paprika

for the filling:

3 tbsp olive oil
1 small yellow onion, peeled and minced
1/2 small red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and finely diced
1/2 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
1/2 tsp ground white pepper
1/2 tsp ground cumin
3/4 lb ground beef
salt
1 small russet potato, peeled, finely diced, and boiled
8 green Spanish olives, pitted and chopped
3 scallions, trimmed and chopped
1 hard-boiled egg, peeled and chopped

For the dough: Heat water and butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat until butter has melted. Mix flour and salt in a large mixing bowl and make a well in the center and sprinkle a pinch of paprika in the well. Pour a little of the warm liquid in and stir with fingertips to make a wet paste. Pour in remaining liquid and work the flour into the dough with your hand until you get a wet, oily dough. Wrap the dough in plastic and refrigerate for at least 2 hours (I put it in the freezer for 1-1.5 hours and it worked just fine).

For the filling: Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat and cook the onions, bell peppers, paprika, red pepper flakes, white pepper, and cumin, and cook until onions are soft. Add beef, season to taste with salt, and cook until beef is browned. Place filling in a large bowl and when cooled, add potatoes, olives, scallions, and egg. Mix.

Preheat oven to 400F. Tear off pieces of dough to roll about 12 golf-sized balls. Using a rolling pin, roll out dough balls on lightly floured surface into 5" circles. Place 3 tbsp of filling in the center of each dough circle (I used three heaping large spoonfuls and it was the perfect amount to use all the filling). Fold over and press edges firmly to seal. Rope pinch the edges tightly. Place empanadas on cookie sheet and bake until golden brown, 15-25 minutes.

(Servings: 12, Prep time: 2.5-4 hrs., Cook time: 25 min., Difficulty: Intermediate)