

Sweet Potato Empanadas

For Filling:

1 pound sweet potatoes, scrubbed (2 potatoes)
Good olive oil
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons unsalted butter, diced
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons pure maple syrup
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons chipotle chile powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon orange zest
2 Tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice
Salt and pepper, to taste

For Dough:

3 cups all-purpose flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ sticks ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) unsalted butter
1 egg
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk, adjust as needed to obtain a soft and smooth dough

Making homemade empanada dough:

Mix the flour and salt in a food processor. Add the butter and pulse.

Add the egg and the water or milk (in small increments) and continue pulsing until a clumpy dough forms.

Split the dough into 2 large balls, flatten slightly into the shape of disks. The dough can be used immediately or refrigerated until ready to use (1-2 days max).

Roll out the dough into a thin sheet and cut out round disc shapes for empanadas (use round molds or a small plate). You can also make small individual balls with the dough and roll out each individual ball to a round shape (doesn't need to be perfectly round) - if you have a tortilla press you can use it to flatten the dough balls.

Use immediately, or store in the refrigerator/freezer to use later.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Line one sheet pan with aluminum foil and another with parchment paper.

Rub the sweet potatoes with olive oil and prick them all over with the tines of a fork. Place the potatoes on the foil-lined sheet pan. Bake for about 1 hour, until very tender when pierced with a knife. Lower the oven to 375 degrees.

Allow the potatoes to cool enough to handle, then peel and discard the skins, placing the potatoes in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the sour cream, butter, maple syrup, chile powder, orange zest, orange juice, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt, and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper and mix well. Set aside.

Unfold one sheet of the cold puff pastry on a floured cutting board. Roll the sheet into a 12-inch square with a rolling pin. With a sharp paring knife, cut four 5-inch circles from the pastry, using a dish as a guide and discarding the scraps. Place a heaping soup spoon of filling on each circle, leaving a 1-inch border. Brush the edges of the circles with the egg wash and fold over, making half circles. Crimp the edges together with the tines of a fork.

Repeat with the second sheet of puff pastry. Place on the parchment-lined sheet pan. Chill for 15 minutes.

Brush with the egg wash and sprinkle with the sea salt and pepper. Make 2 small slits in each empanada to allow steam to escape. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until puffed and browned. Serve hot.

Profiteroles (Cream Puffs) with Pastry Cream and Chocolate Icing

Pate a Choux Dough:

1/2 cup butter
1 cup water
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 eggs

Pastry Cream:

1 ½ cups half and half
4 egg yolks
6 Tablespoons sugar
1 ½ Tablespoons cornstarch
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Chocolate Icing:

2 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 tablespoons hot water

For Pate a Choux: Preheat oven to 450°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a medium saucepan, combine 1/2 cup butter and 1 cup water. Bring to a boil, stirring until butter melts completely. Reduce heat to low, and add flour and salt. Stir vigorously until mixture leaves the sides of the pan and begins to form a stiff ball. Remove from heat. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well to incorporate completely after each addition. With a spoon or a pastry bag fitted with a large plain tip. Spoon or pipe dough onto cookie sheet in 3-inch rounds.

Bake 15 minutes in the preheated oven, then reduce heat to 325° and bake 15 minutes more, until hollow sounding when lightly tapped on the bottom. Cool completely on a wire rack.

For the pastry cream: Pour the half and half and sugar in a medium saucepan and bring just to a boil. Place egg yolks and cornstarch in a bowl and whisk until combined. When half and half is hot, whisk some into the eggs, then add the eggs to the saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon, until very thick, about 5 minutes. Stir in vanilla extract. Spread pastry cream in a rimmed cookie sheet and place a sheet of plastic wrap directly over the pastry cream. Allow to cool.

For the icing: melt the chocolate and 2 tablespoons butter in a medium saucepan over low heat. Stir in 1 cup confectioners' sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Stir in hot water, one tablespoon at a time, until icing is smooth and has reached desired consistency. Remove from heat, cool slightly, and drizzle over filled profiteroles. Refrigerate until serving.

Bacon and Cheddar Gougeres

1 cup water
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, diced
3/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup unbleached all purpose flour
4 large eggs, chilled
1 cup (packed) coarsely grated cheddar cheese (about 4 ounces)
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
4 ounces cooked bacon, chopped

Preheat to 375°F. Line 2 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.

Bring 1 cup water, butter, and salt to simmer in heavy medium saucepan over medium heat, whisking until butter melts. Add flour; stir rapidly with wooden spoon until flour absorbs liquid and forms ball, pulling away from sides of pan. Stir vigorously until film forms on bottom of pan and dough is no longer sticky, 1 to 2 minutes longer. Remove pan from heat; cool dough 2 to 3 minutes. Using electric mixer, beat in eggs 1 at a time. Stir in cheese, bacon and pepper.

Using a large plain tip, pipe about 1 Tablespoon of dough onto baking sheets, spacing about 3 inches apart. Using damp fingertip, press down any peaks of dough.

Bake gougères until golden brown, about 20-25 minutes, reversing position of pans halfway through baking. Using small sharp knife, pry open 1 gougère to check for doneness (center should be slightly eggy and moist). Serve hot or warm. Transfer to racks; cool. Makes about 2 dozen 1-inch puffs.

Swedish Cardamom Rolls

For dough

1 1/4 cups warm water (105°F.)
3/4 stick (6 tablespoons) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly
6 tablespoons granulated sugar
two 1/4-ounce packages active dry yeast (about 4 1/2 teaspoons total)
3 large eggs beaten lightly
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/4 cup powdered nonfat dry milk
5 to 6 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 stick (1/4 cup) unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons ground cinnamon
3 tablespoons cardamom seeds, ground in a mortar with a pestle, or in an electric spice/coffee grinder
an egg wash made by beating 1 large egg with 2 tablespoons water
2 tablespoons water

Make dough:

In a large bowl combine water, butter, and sugar. Sprinkle yeast over mixture and let stand 5 minutes, or until foamy. Stir in eggs, salt and dry milk until combined. With a wooden spoon stir in 5 cups flour, 1 cup at a time, and stir mixture until a dough is formed.

On a floured surface, knead dough about 10 minutes, adding enough of the remaining 1 cup flour to make dough smooth and elastic. Put dough in a lightly oiled bowl, turning to coat, and let rise, covered with plastic wrap, in a warm place until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour.

Punch down dough and on floured surface with a floured rolling pin roll into a 15- by 20-inch rectangle. Spread butter over dough and sprinkle with granulated sugar, cinnamon and cardamom.

With a long side facing you, roll up dough jelly-roll fashion and cut crosswise into approximately 1 1/2-inch-thick slices with a cut side down. Working with 1 slice at a time gently twist opposite ends of slice around twice to form a figure eight. Crimp ends together. Arrange rolls, a swirled side up, on a buttered baking sheet about 2 inches apart and let rise in a warm place until increased 1 1/2 times in bulk, about 1 hour. While rolls are rising, preheat oven to 350F. Brush tops of rolls with egg wash and sprinkle with sugar. Bake rolls in middle of oven until tops are pale golden, about 25 minutes. Makes about 15 rolls.

Buttermilk Beignets

6 Tablespoons whole milk
3/4 cup buttermilk
2 teaspoons active dry yeast
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ Tablespoons sugar
2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups flour plus extra for flouring work surface
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
1/8 teaspoon salt
Vegetable oil for frying
1 cup confectioners' sugar for serving

Heat the milk in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until small bubbles form at the surface. Remove from the heat, add the buttermilk, and then pour into a stand mixer bowl. Whisk in the yeast and the sugar and set aside for 5 minutes. Add the flour, baking soda, and salt, and mix on low speed, using a dough hook, until the dry ingredients are moistened, 3 to 4 minutes. Increase the mixer speed to medium and continue mixing until the dough forms a loose ball and is still quite wet and tacky, 1 to 2 minutes longer. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and set the dough aside in a draft-free spot for 1 hour.

Pour enough oil into a large pot to fill it to a depth of 3 inches and bring to a temperature of 375°F over medium heat (this will take about 20 minutes). Line a plate with paper towels and set aside.

Lightly flour your work surface and turn the dough out on it. Sprinkle the top of the dough with flour, gently press to flatten, fold it in half, and gently tuck the ends under to create a rough-shaped round. Dust again and roll the dough out into a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch- to $\frac{1}{3}$ -inch-thick circle. Let the dough rest for 1 minute before using a chef's knife, a bench knife, or a pizza wheel to cut the dough into 1 1/2-inch squares (you should get about 24).

Gently stretch a beignet lengthwise and carefully drop it into the oil. Add a few beignets (don't overcrowd them, otherwise the oil will cool down and the beignets will soak up oil and be greasy) and fry until puffed and golden brown, turning them often with a slotted spoon, for 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to the prepared plate to drain while you cook the rest. Serve while still warm, buried under a mound of confectioners' sugar, with hot coffee on the side.
Makes 2 dz.

Gingerbread Macarons with Baileys Ganache

For the cookie:

2 egg whites, room temperature
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon nutmeg
1-2 drops brown food coloring, as needed
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup almond flour
1 cup powdered sugar

Tools Needed: Electric mixer with whisk attachment or hand mixer with whisk attachment, 3-4 Piping bags, Rubber Spatula, Whisk, Sifter, Oven, Parchment paper or Silpat baking mat, mixing bowls, small saucepan, paddle attachment for mixer or beaters for hand mixer

Preheat oven to 300°F. In an electric mixer with a whisk attachment, whip egg whites until soft peaks form. Slowly add granulated sugar. Add in food coloring. Whip until stiff peaks form. Sift ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, almond flour and powdered sugar together in a medium bowl, then fold into egg whites with a rubber spatula. Do not over mix. Mix until the batter ribbons off of the spatula like lava. Lightly push the batter off of the sides of the bowl to get rid of the air bubbles. Add batter to piping bag. Pipe a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch drop of batter on a parchment-lined or silpat-lined baking sheet. Tap the pan on the counter to flatten and to get rid of more air bubbles. Let dry out for about 20-30 minutes, then bake for 19 minutes or more, depending on macaron size and oven type. Allow to cool before frosting. Makes about 1 dozen cookies.

Baileys Irish Cream Chocolate Ganache

1 cup semi-sweet chocolate couverture
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Baileys Irish Cream liqueur
6 Tablespoons heavy cream
3 Tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp vanilla extract

Bring butter to room temperature.

Chop up chocolate into little chunks and place in a heat proof bowl.

In a small sauce pan heat the Baileys Cream and the heavy cream together on medium heat.

Once you see steam and some bubbles form on the sides, immediately take off the heat.

Pour the hot cream onto the chocolate and wait for one minute.

Stir the mixture with a spatula to incorporate.

Add room temperature butter and stir to incorporate.

Add vanilla extract and stir to incorporate.

Place in the fridge to set before putting into a piping bag. (Approx. 30 min. to an hour)

Makes about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen.

Eggs Benedict

6 slices Canadian Bacon
3 English muffins, split
1 Tablespoon butter

Hollandaise Sauce:

1 Tablespoon shallots
1 ounce cider vinegar
2 ounces water
4 grinds of the pepper grinder
4-6 egg yolks
1 pint butter
1 Tablespoon lemon juice
Salt, to taste

Combine shallots, vinegar, water and pepper in a small sauce pan. Over medium low heat, reduce by $\frac{1}{2}$. Add this reduction to a stainless steel bowl set over a water bath in a larger saucepan. Do not let the bowl touch the water. Add egg yolks. Over gentle heat, whisk eggs until thick and lemony, or until ribbons form when whisked. Remove from heat; slowly whisk in butter. Add lemon juice, adjust seasonings; strain. Keep warm until service, but watch carefully so hollandaise doesn't curdle.

Poached Eggs:

1 egg
1 Tablespoon vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
1 quart water

Heat water to 149° in a large stockpot. Add vinegar. Break egg into small bowl. Pour egg into side of stockpot. Let "set" until white and remove if stuck with a slotted spoon. Remove and trim. Blot dry with a paper towel.

Split English muffin into two. Place flat on a cookie sheet or broiler pan. Brush with butter and broil at 450° for 2-3 minutes, or until golden brown. Add Canadian bacon to the cookie sheet also to heat through.