
COSTA RICAN SNACKS

WITH ELENA AND PETER

EMPANADAS



Ingredients

Tita's Dough:

- 4 cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 cup margarine
- 260 grams cream cheese

Marielo's Dough:

- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- ¾ cup margarine
- 2 egg yolks, lightly beaten with 5 spoons sour cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Pineapple Filling:

- 1 pineapple
- 1 cinnamon stick
- Sugar (quantity depends on pineapple's acidity level)

Chicken Filling:

- 1.25 pounds chicken breast
- 1 bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 celery stalks, finely chopped
- ½ onion, finely chopped

- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 large tomato, chopped
- ½ cup water
- Cilantro, chopped
- Olive oil
- 1 chicken bouillon cube (optional)

Final touch:

- 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten

Directions

Making the dough:

- 1) In a mixing bowl, combine the ingredients.
- 2) Knead the dough by hand or in a food processor until it looks and feel homogeneous.
- 3) Wrap in plastic and chill dough in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes.

Making the pineapple filling:

- 1) Cut the pineapple into small pieces and boil all the pieces with a cinnamon stick and sugar for 30 minutes. Taste the pineapple first in order to evaluate its acidity. If the pineapple tastes very acidic, add more sugar to it. If the pineapple tastes sweet and not too acidic, there is no need to add much sugar to it.
- 2) Strain the pineapple in a colander to remove the juice.
- 3) Mash the pineapple well into threads or small pieces by hand or in a food processor.
- 4) In a skillet, cook the mashed pineapple over medium heat with ¼ cup of sugar (depending on the sweet flavor, you may add more sugar), stirring, until the mixture thickens and becomes caramelized. Make sure to continue stirring the mixture so it does not stick to the pan.

Making the chicken filling:

- 1) In a large pot, cook the chicken breast for 30 minutes with ½ bell pepper, 1 garlic clove, ½ celery stalk, ½ tomato, 1 chicken bouillon cube, a handful of cilantro and water.
- 2) Strain the chicken in a colander over a medium bowl to catch all of the liquid.
- 3) Blend the liquid with all of the spices used to cook the chicken.
- 4) Let the chicken cool and crumble or tear it up into small thread-like pieces by hand.
- 5) In a skillet, sauté ½ onion, ½ bell pepper, 1 garlic clove, and ½ celery stalk with olive oil. Add the chicken, ½ tomato and a handful of cilantro and cook the mixture. One by one, add tablespoons of the blended liquid with spices until the chicken appears juicy but not too wet.

Forming the small empanadas:

- 1) Knead dough, roll out it to a thin layer and use a biscuit or cookie cutter to cut round circles.
- 2) Place approximately ½ teaspoon of the filling in each cut shape.
- 3) Fold and crimp edges together with a fork. Pierce small holes on the top of each empanada with the fork to allow steam to escape while baking.
- 4) Brush the surface of each empanada with lightly beaten egg yolk for color.
- 5) If filling is sweet, sprinkle each empanada with sugar.
- 6) Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees F until golden, about 20 minutes.

STUFFED PLANTAINS



Ingredients: (Approximately 3 rolls per plantain)

- Ripe plantains (yellow skin with some black patches)

Original Beans:

- 500 grams black beans
- 1 large onion, cut into large pieces
- 1 large celery stalk, cut into large pieces
- 4 or 5 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 bell pepper, cut into large pieces
- 1 sprig of fresh thyme
- 2 or 3 leaves of cilantro coyote (one with long leaves)
- Salt to taste

Refried beans:

- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- ½ large celery stalk, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 large tomato or two medium ones, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons Ketchup
- 1 tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 2 tablespoons Salsa Lizano
- 1 or 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 1 sprig of fresh oregano, without the stick and finely chopped
- 1 bay leaf, whole (remove after making refried beans)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil

Directions

Cooking the beans:

- 1) Let beans stand in 3 to 4 cups of water overnight. Add all of the ingredients and cook, preferably in a pressure cooker for 50 minutes or until tender if in a regular large pot.
- 2) Let beans cool, strain them in a colander over a medium bowl, and save some of the liquid for a later step.
- 3) Mash the beans with all of the ingredients used to cook the beans in a food processor until the mixture becomes homogenous.

Making the refried beans:

- 1) In a skillet, sauté the onion and garlic cloves with olive oil. Allow them to crystallize without burning. Add the bell pepper and the celery and cook mixture for 1 minute. Add the chopped tomato.
- 2) Once the mixture begins to boil, add the mashed beans. Add the rest of the ingredients. Stir constantly for bubbles of hot air that explode may start to form and produce burns. Lower the heat to low. If the mixture is too thick, add some of the liquid saved previously. Make sure not to add too much liquid. Cover and stir mixture occasionally for 5 more minutes.

Preparing the plantain rolls:

- 1) Cut the ends of each plantain and cut each plantain into 3 equivalent parts.
- 2) Boil or steam plantains for 15 to 20 minutes with a small amount of water. Peel the plantains and mash them while still hot.
- 3) Form a ball of mashed plantains on top of plastic wrap or parchment paper and flatten it out with your hands to make a rectangular shape.
- 4) Place a row of mashed beans in the center of the flattened ball of plantain paste and fold the paste to make a roll.
- 5) Sprinkle each plantain roll with confectioner sugar.
- 6) Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees F until golden, about 20 minutes.