

Apple Empanadas

Makes 20 empanadas

FOR THE DOUGH:

2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
1 ½ tsp. salt
2 TBS sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
½ cup unsalted butter – cubed
½ cup water
1 egg
2 TBS milk
1 TBS vodka or white vinegar

Whisk the flour, salt, sugar and cinnamon in a bowl for about a minute and place it in the freezer for 20 minutes.

Place the cubed butter and the water in the freezer for 20 minutes as well.

Lightly beat the egg with the milk and a pinch of salt.

Remove all the ingredients from the freezer and add the butter to the flour. Using your clean hands, a pastry cutter, 2 knives or a food processor, incorporate the butter into the flour until it resembles coarse crumbs. Do not over work the flour and make it warm.

Add 1/3 cup of water and the beaten egg. Reserve the rest of the water in case you need it. Add the vodka or vinegar. Mix it all in with a fork and dump the dough onto a clean, floured counter.

Carefully bring the dough together with the heels of your hands. Do not knead it. If you need to go ahead and add the rest of the water – 1 TBS at a time – until the dough adheres into a ball. Do not worry that you have small pieces of butter in the dough or if it is a little sticky.

Cut the dough in two and form two flat disks. Wrap them in plastic and refrigerate for a minimum of one hour or up to overnight.

FOR THE FILLING:

2 large green apples – peeled and cubed
2 TBS butter
1/3rd cup sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg

Place the cubed apples in a bowl with lemon water to prevent them from getting brown. Drain them when you are ready to prepare them.

Melt the butter in a skillet and add the drained apples. Cook the apples for 3 to 4 minutes until they are softened. Remove the skillet from the heat and cool the apples down completely. If they are piled up spread them out on a cookie sheet. Transfer to a bowl when they are cold. Add the sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg and mix well. Set aside and allow it to render juice.

ASSEMBLE YOUR EMPANADAS:

Some unsalted butter for the filling

1 egg

Splash of cream

Heat your oven to 400 degrees F (200 C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicon liner.

Beat the egg with the cream and set aside

Flour a board and a rolling pin and spread out the dough. Keep the half you are not working on in the fridge. Spread the dough to about 1/8th thickness and start cutting your empanadas with a round cookie cutter or glass. Make them as big as you want but I would stray from making them too small. They will be hard to finish without tearing them.

Stretch out the cut dough a little with the rolling pin. Make sure to use all the dough – get the scraps back together and roll them out again.

Place a spoonful of filling in the middle of your empanada and a very small piece of butter on top. Fold the empanada and seal the edges well by pinching them together. You can finish these now or you can press the edges with a fork or you can roll the edges to form a sort of rope.

Place the empanadas on a lined baking sheet and brush them with the egg wash. Put them in the oven and bake for 15 to 17 minutes until they are nice and browned.

NOTE – You will have enough filling for 20 empanadas but can make about 30 with this dough. You will have to add another apple and the rest of the ingredients if you want to make them all. Otherwise, freeze the remaining dough for future use.