

Abu Aida's Beef/Turkey/Chicken/Bean/Squash/Seitan Empanadas

This is how I make mine which is adapted from my Abuela's, you can make them this way and when you are ready, change the recipe so you can make them your own way

I start with these things:

- 2tbsps olive oil
- ½ onion diced small
- 1-2 clove garlic diced small
- 2-3 tablespoons **sofrito** (I make my own but you can buy it frozen)
 - *5 green peppers seeded and chopped*
 - *2 red peppers seeded and chopped*
 - *4 cubanella peppers seeded and chopped*
 - *5 cups Spanish onions chopped*
 - *1 cup of garlic chopped*
 - *1 bunch of recao/culantro chopped*
 - *1 bunch of cilantro chopped*
 - *All the above goes into a blender (you can store it in a refrigerator in a jar)*
- 1lb ground beef /turkey/chicken/bean/squash/kale/seitan
- **adobo** seasoning to taste (I make mine but you can buy it)
 - *1.5 tablespoons garlic powder*
 - *1 tablespoon onion powder*
 - *2 teaspoons salt or to taste*
 - *1.5 teaspoons oregano*
 - *1 teaspoon black pepper*
 - *1 teaspoon cumin*
 - *½ teaspoon thyme leaves*
 - *½ teaspoon turmeric*
 - *1 bay leaf*
 - *All of these seasonings are mixed in a bowl and can be stored in a jar)*
- 5-6 pimiento-stuffed olives (even if you just use the juice...its important for flavor)
- ½ cup water
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 can Petite diced tomatoes (I like fire roasted)

1. Heat skillet at med-high, drizzle with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Sauté onions, garlic, and sofrito until onions are translucent.
2. Drizzle meat with a tablespoon of olive oil and season with dry adobo and salt. Add meat/protein/veggies, olives, water, and tomato paste/tomatoes to the skillet, stir until well combined. Raise heat to bring to a boil.

3. Lower heat to a simmer cover and let cook for 15-20 minutes. Uncover and let simmer for another 15 minutes or until sauce thickens. Set aside.

You can make the dough (which is what I do) or buy it... here is what you would buy for frying:



If you choose to fry, one disc, two tbsps of filling in the middle, wet the edge with water to seal, fold it over, pinch/seal the edge with a fork, then into hot oil for about 2 mins a side.

For baking: If you are feeling adventurous you can make them and here is how I do that: It is similar to pie crust but savory and made with vegetable shortening instead of butter.

4 cups (approx 1lb 5oz) AP flour
2 tsps baking powder
1 cup vegetable shortening
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of cold water
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of milk
2 tsps of salt

1. In a large bowl, combine the flour and baking powder, cut the shortening in small bits work the shortening into the flour mixture working quickly so as not to melt the shortening. I use a pastry cutter but you can use two butter knives. Do this until it resembles course cornmeal.
2. In a separate bowl mix water, milk and salt.
3. Gradually pour the liquid into the flour mixture and stir until it comes together in a ball.
4. Roll the dough into a long snake and divide in into 12, evenly sized sections (golf ball size). Roll each section into a ball.

Once your dough is ready you can make flat disc, spoon one heaping tbsp into the middle, fold it and pinch the edge with a fork...

If you are baking these can go on a cookie sheet, you can brush them with egg or milk, then bake them in a 350degree oven for 25-30 mins.