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 cubanelle 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...it’s 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
⅔ cup of cold water
½ 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. Grasdually 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 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.