

IMERETIAN KHACHAPURI – GEORGIAN BREAD WITH CHEESE

Ingredients:

Difficulty: Medium
(makes 2 khachapuris, each 25 cm in diameter)
(in this recipe, 1 cup = 2.4 dl)

For dough:

1/2 cup + 2 tbsp / 1.5 dl very warm water (the original recipe calls for water at 35C. I didn't measure mine, I just used the hottest water running from tap. Alternatively, you can use half this measure as water, half of it as milk)

1 tsp dry yeast

400 + 50 gr flour (first use 400 gr, if it is not enough, then add 50 gr more)

1 egg

1 tbsp vegetable oil (I used canola oil)

For filling:

500 gr. cheese (equal amounts of mozzarella & feta)

2 eggs

30 gr. butter, in room temperature

about 1 tbsp of butter per khachapuri to spread on the pan for cooking

Instructions:

1. In a mixing bowl, put water and yeast and mix a little. Let it sit for 10 minutes to activate the yeast.
2. Add flour and start kneading.
3. While the mixer is kneading (or while you are kneading with your hand), add egg and oil and continue kneading until the dough starts to come together.
4. If you were using mixer as I did up to this point, then just continue kneading with your hand on a well-floured surface, until you get a soft and smooth dough. Shape it into a ball.
5. Put the dough in a floured bowl and cover with a stretch film. Let the dough rise and double in size in a warm spot in your kitchen. The time varies according to your kitchen conditions and how well you could activate the yeast. For me it took 1 hour.
6. While the dough is rising, prepare the filling: put all the filling ingredients in a bowl and mix well.
7. When the dough is ready, put it on a well-floured surface and divide in two.
8. Roll each piece up to a diameter of 20 cm.

9. Put half of the filling in the centre of each dough, leaving about 5 cm from the edge without the filling.

10. Close the dough by bringing the 5 cm empty sides up and sealing it well.

11. Turn the dough upside down and gently roll again, up to a diameter of 25 cm. If you have air trapped in dough, it's ok. I had some air bubbles in the dough but I didn't do anything about them.

12. Prepare your pan by spreading about 1 tbsp of butter on it, on medium heat.

13. When your pan is covered with butter and it is warm, put the dough with the sealed side looking up. After about 5-7 minutes, turn it to the other side and continue cooking. Do this again and again until the whole bread is cooked and you get nice golden brown sides (be careful, don't burn it).

14. Let the bread cool for about 10-15 minutes. Then divide into 8 pieces (or more if you like) and eat warm (but the remaining slices taste great next day too!). Enjoy!