

Pao de Queijo

Brazilian tapioca cheese bread - makes 24 small rolls

Makes 24 • Prep 10 min • Bake 20 min • Brazil

INGREDIENTS

The base

- 2 cups (250 g) sour or sweet tapioca starch (polvilho azedo or doce)
- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp fine sea salt

The cheese & eggs

- 1 cup (100 g) finely grated Parmesan or hard aged cheese
- 1 cup (100 g) finely grated Minas cheese, mozzarella, or mild white cheese
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F (200 C) and line two baking sheets with parchment.
2. In a saucepan, combine the milk, water, oil, and salt and bring to a simmer.
3. Put the tapioca starch in a large bowl and pour the hot liquid over it. Stir with a wooden spoon - it will look lumpy and stringy at first. That is right.
4. Let the mixture cool 5 to 10 minutes until warm but not hot to the touch.
5. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then work in both cheeses. The dough will be sticky, wet, and stretchy - not like normal bread dough.
6. Grease your hands with a little oil and roll the dough into 24 balls the size of golf balls, arranging them on the baking sheets with some space between.
7. Bake 18 to 22 minutes, until golden and puffed. Eat warm - they are best straight from the oven.

Tip • Tapioca starch is non-negotiable - regular flour will not work. Look for 'polvilho' at a Brazilian or Latin market, or 'tapioca flour' at most supermarkets and health-food stores. The dough is meant to be sticky.
