

Salvadoran Pupusas

Stuffed masa cakes with cheese and beans - makes 10

Makes 10 • Prep 30 min • Cook 25 min • El Salvador

INGREDIENTS

The masa

- 2 cups masa harina (instant corn flour)
- 1.5 to 2 cups warm water
- 0.5 tsp salt
- A small bowl of water for wet hands

The filling

- 1 cup shredded quesillo or mozzarella
- 0.5 cup refried beans
- Optional: 0.5 cup cooked seasoned chicharron (ground pork), or loroco buds

METHOD

1. Mix masa harina and salt, then stir in warm water gradually until you have a soft, smooth dough like play-dough. Rest 10 minutes. If it cracks at the edges when pressed, add more water.
2. Wet your hands. Roll a golf-ball of masa, press into a cup in your palm.
3. Add a tablespoon of cheese (plus beans and/or chicharron), then pinch the dough closed over the filling and roll back into a ball.
4. Gently pat and press the ball flat into a disc about 4 inches wide and a bit under half an inch thick, keeping the filling sealed inside. Wet hands stop sticking.
5. Cook on a dry, medium-hot griddle or comal 3 to 4 minutes per side, until golden brown with charred spots. Some cheese leaking out is normal and delicious.
6. Serve hot with curtido (the fermented cabbage slaw) piled on top and warm tomato salsa spooned over.

Tip • A crack that leaks a little cheese onto the griddle makes the prized crispy cheese frilly edge - do not panic when it happens. Keep hands wet, filling modest, and the seal will hold for the rest.