

EASIER CHAMORRO EMPANÁDA ON THE FLY

Using up leftovers is a plus for cooking at the last minute. I had frozen cooked chicken, broth, and m \ddot{a} sa dough; and days old rice in the fridge. I didn't want to thaw a package of bacon so I used frozen bacon drippings. Fyi, I fried the empanáda in coconut oil, but there was no coconut aroma nor was there a coconut taste to them.

You do need to make the chalakiles soup filling ahead of time so it can get cold and thick. Pour the soup into the largest baking pan that can fit in your fridge. After it cools down a bit on the counter, put the pan in the fridge then stir every now and then. Once cold, make the crust, fill, and seal. The empanáda will need to freeze solid before you fry it.

Shout out to my niece Jessica at TheChamorroCookingChannel.com. She had questions about making empanáda and made me malagu'/crave for some, thus this easier empanáda recipe was born.

FILLING = CHALAKILES SOUP

Makes 20 to 25 depending on size and how much you eat as soup

Set 1

2 tablespoons or 30 milliliters bacon drippings or fresh lard

½ cup or 80 grams diced yellow onions

4 cloves of garlic, minced

Set 2

3 ½ cups or 700 grams cooked leftover short-grain white rice

8 cups or 1.9 liters of chicken stock

Set 3

2 tablespoons or 30 mils melted lard

2 – 10 grams packets or 2 tablespoons achote/annatto powder

1 cup or 237 mils water, optional

Set 4

1 ½ tablespoons or 15 grams garlic powder

1 ½ teaspoons or 3 ½ grams of ground black pepper

Salt to taste

Set 5

2 cups or about 300 grams cooked cubed or shredded chicken

Tools: *large pot, rubber spatula*

DIRECTIONS

Place bacon drippings in the pot then heat on stove at medium heat.

Sautee onions till browned and somewhat caramelized (a little bit of caramelized flavor since we are using leftover rice instead of toasted rice). Add garlic and sautee for one minute. Add leftover rice and stir to break apart. Add all the chicken stock and bring to a gentle boil. Stir occasionally and cook until you can see that the rice kernels are breaking apart.

In the meantime, mix the achote powder and the melted lard to form a thick but pourable paste. Set aside.

Check the rice. When it's very thick but still a stew-like consistency, add the chicken. Stir well to combine, but don't stir too much if you like chunks of chicken; a lot of stirring will break the chicken into smaller strands. Add another cup of water if you want to thin out the chalakiles. Stir.

Cool down somewhat then place in fridge to get cold and thick.

CRUST WITH RED MÅSA

The empanãda with red corn mÅsa, holy cow, out of this world!

Sazon Goya has MSG, or ajinomoto/aji, in it and I suspect my joints don't like MSG. I don't normally add aji as a single ingredient to my cooking anyways – and I was not happy Sazon Goya contained it. Seasoning salt also has some unnecessary stuff. Thus, of late, I've been trying to sub out Goya and seasoning salt from my cooking. If you read the Goya ingredients, it includes salt, coriander, and garlic. Goya ingredients looks similar to seasoning salt as well, but seasoning salt also has paprika and onion.

For this empanãda on the fly, I subbed out the seasoning salt and Goya in the red corn masa. This recipe may be doubled. You may also use the Maseca mÅsa from the store instead of the red corn mÅsa. Finally, you may use the exact traditional empanãda crust recipe from my website PaulaQ.com>Remember Guam.

Makes 12

Set 1

2 cups Masienda red corn masa, or your favorite masa

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon sugar

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon onion powder

¼ teaspoon coriander

½ teaspoon paprika

1 packet achote

Set 2

2 to 2 ½ cups water

Set 3

Oil for frying

Tools: medium bowl, empanáda press, wax paper, ¼ cup measuring cup

DIRECTIONS

Cut the wax paper to the size of your empanáda press. You'll need about 15 for this amount of m^åsa.

In a medium bowl, mix the m^åsa, salt, sugar, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, and achote together. Slowly add the water while combining with one hand. Continue to add a little bit of water and knead to form a moist but not too sticky dough. Portion golf size balls of dough or about ¼ cup of dough and shape each into a ball. Cover and set aside if you are making another type of crust.

If not, open the empanáda press, lie one piece of wax paper down, place one ball of dough in the center, top with another wax paper, press the dough gently, open the press, turn the sandwiched dough 180 degrees and softly press again. The thickness should be just under ¼ of an inch. Carefully peel the top piece of paper away and save for the next one. Place about 1 ½ adult size spoons of filling in a columnar direction the center; too much filling and you will have a hard time sealing the empanáda without the filling oozing out. Bring together the edges of the crust that run parallel to the filling. Press the edges with your fingers to seal.

Place empanáda on a tray and repeat with remaining. Store tray in the freezer till the empanádas are frozen solid.

CRUST WITH THAWED M^ÅSA DOUGH

Makes 6

I hoped this m^åsa dough I made from field corn had a chance at working/frying up well. I forced myself to use the Goya so that at least I kept it closer to my original crust recipe that I knew worked. As wet as I accidentally made the crust, it turned out delicious, but with a slightly chewy crust (because I kneaded and froze it then kneaded it again...too much kneading).

Set 1

About a cup of m^åsa dough

Some water

1 packet achote

1 teaspoon seasoning salt

1 packet Goya

Set 2

Oil for frying

Tools: medium bowl, wax paper, empanáda press

DIRECTIONS

Place the thawed masa dough in a medium bowl. Break it apart with one hand to see how wet the dough is. Add all the dry ingredients and mix with one hand. Add a splash of water at a time and knead to form a moist but not too sticky dough. Portion about ¼ cup dough balls. If you accidentally make the dough too wet, use less than ¼ cup or the dough will spread outside your press.

Open the empanáda press, lie one piece of wax paper down, place one ball of dough in the center, top with another wax paper, press the dough gently, open the press, turn the sandwiched dough 180 degrees and softly press again. The thickness should be just under ¼ of an inch. Carefully peel the top piece of paper away and save for the next one. Place about 1 ½ adult size spoons of filling in a columnar direction the center; too much filling and you will have a hard time sealing the empanáda without the filling oozing out. Bring together the edges of the crust that run parallel to the filling. Press the edges with your fingers to seal.

Place empanáda on a tray and repeat with remaining. Store tray in the freezer till the empanádas are frozen solid.

FRY IT UP

Tools: napkin-lined tray, colander, slotted spoon or spider spoon, wooden spoon or skewer

When ready to cook, heat enough oil in a pot on medium heat to submerge the empanáda. When you put a wooden spoon in the oil, it should sizzle, or about 340 to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

In the meantime, line a tray with napkins and get your colander ready.

Once the oil is at temp, peel the wax paper off the empanáda, set the empanáda on the spider and place in oil. These fresh masa crusts above hold up well in the oil so after 5 minutes of frying, flip the empanáda over. Fry another 5 to 7 minutes till crisp on the outside.

If using my original crust with Maseca masa, don't flip till about 10 minutes or they might start to break apart; fry another 2 to 5 minutes.

Remove with spider to the colander. Add more empanáda to the oil. Transfer cooked empanáda to the napkin-lined tray. Once all are done frying, remove the napkins so the empanáda don't get too dry.

Leftover empanáda may be fridged then retoasted in a toaster or air fryer.

Recipe courtesy Paula Quinene of PaulaQ.com.