

02/17/12 - Handrajo Borekas for The Sephardic Temple Sisterhood

For several months I have been volunteering to help a group of Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel (Los Angeles) sisterhood members plan a cooking class. Yesterday was the first in what the sisterhood plans to make a series. I taught a boreka class, including potato and cheese Borekas, Kezadas (rice and cheese), Handrajo (eggplant and other vegetables with cheese) and a sweet boreka, Travados. The class was limited to 18 since we were limited by the confines of the sisterhood kitchen. The class was hands on since everyone wanted to learn how to make the dough and form the borekas, especially the repulgo edge. We all had a wonderful



Below is the recipe for Handrajo filled borekas.

Serves 12 to 20

Borekas with Handrajo (Vegetable Filling)

Serves 10 to 18

Filling:

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/ 2 large brown onion, finely diced

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

2 to 3 Japanese eggplants, peeled and diced (small)

1 medium zucchini, washed and diced (small)

1 medium red bell pepper, washed, seeded and stemmed, diced (small)

8 ounces Feta cheese, crumbled

1 cup Parmesano Reggiano, finely grated

2 extra large eggs

Dough:

4 cups of all purpose unbleached flour

2 teaspoons salt

1 cup ice cold water

3/4 cup vegetable oil (I use safflower)

Topping:

1 beaten egg

1/ 2 cup finely grated Parmesano Reggiano cheese



For filling, place 1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large non stick skillet on medium heat. Add onions and sauté until translucent. Season onion with salt and pepper. Next, add zucchini, eggplant, and red bell pepper to sauté pan. Stirring occasionally cook until vegetables are very soft and flavorful with no excess liquid. Remove vegetables from heat and place in a medium bowl. Add cheeses to vegetables and combine. Add eggs and stir to combine. Set filling aside to finish cooling and stiffen. Filling may be made the day ahead and refrigerated. For dough, combine flour and salt in a medium-large mixing bowl. Whisk cold water and oil together in another bowl and then add liquid to flour. Gather dough together in a ball with your hands, making sure all the flour is incorporated. Separate dough into 42 walnut size balls.

Heat oven to 400° F. Roll small balls of dough in the palm of your hands until smooth, tucking the edges under with your thumb and index finger. Smooth balls are easier to roll out into uniform circles for filling. Let balls rest a few moments while you prepare two baking sheets. Line baking sheets with silpats or parchment paper. I find 21 borekas or 3 columns of 7 fit perfectly on half sheets.

Using a wooden rolling pin, roll each ball of dough out to a 3 inch diameter circle. Take care not to roll rolling pin over edges of your circles or edges will be thin and centers thick.

Place a generous tablespoon or so of filling in the center of each dough circle. To form borekas, fold each filled circle in half creating a half moon shape. Pinch edges shut and then, twist edge from left to right (if you are right handed) forming a rope design (repulgo). If you prefer, seal them with a fork. When baking sheet is full, brush each one with beaten egg and then, sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese. Bake for approximately 15 to 20 minutes or until golden. Remove borekas from baking sheets and place on cooling racks, so bottoms stay crisp. I store my borekas air tight in the freezer. Or you may just reheat them and serve. Be sure to serve



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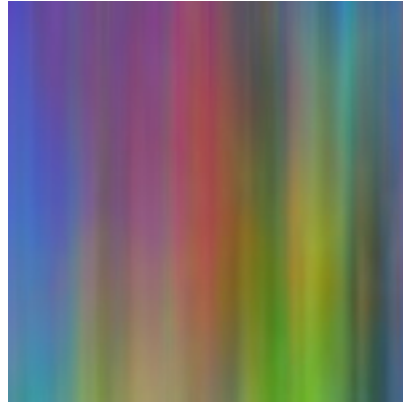
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Borekas de Handrajo

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