

12/02/10 - Pandericas

A vivid childhood memory has spurred me to hunt down, bake, and test various recipes in an intense endeavor to recreate pandericas. Pandericas are a Sephardic snack, shaped like a pretzel with a crisp bite and texture. Perfect for eating out of your pocket, dunking in Turkish coffee, or on the table accompanied with shards of sharp flavored Kashkaval or Kasseri cheese, olives, and some fruit.

My auntie Susie Oziel Chiprut, of blessed memory, made the best I ever tasted. She kept them in a covered tipsin (baking dish) under the kitchen sink, where my cousin Louise and I would find them on long afternoons. If we were lucky, there would be borekas under the sink as well.



2 envelopes rapid rise yeast

2 cups warm water

2 eggs

½ cup oil

½ cup sugar

3 teaspoons salt

8 cups of flour

Sesame seeds and 1 egg to decorate tops

Not bad but more like Nona's parmakes (cinnamon toasts) except pretzel shaped. The dough was a little too soft to roll out thin enough and being so thick they really hardened up after toasting. Delicious but hard to bite through. Good for coffee dunking.

Second attempt, I reasoned that since the dough was too soft to really roll thin, I would add more flour and make it stiffer. Results this time, easier to roll into thin



Third attempt is the charm!! My sister Carole had the forethought to write down Auntie Susie's (my dad's sister) recipe many years ago. She found it and emailed it to me. Wow! A secret ingredient and eliminate another one and ?just like that' pandericas, the flavor, the texture and the right amount of crisp.

To make 100-120 wonderful pandericas measure:

3 cups warm water

1 envelope instant yeast

1 teaspoon sugar

12 cups flour

3 teaspoons baking powder

2 teaspoons salt

½ cup sugar

1 cup oil

Egg

Sesame seeds

Or make ½ half the recipe for a smaller amount. Pandericas stay for a long time in an airtight tin.

Pour 3 cups of warm water on the yeast and sugar. Set it aside to proof. Measure 4 cups of the flour, plus the baking powder, salt, and sugar in the bowl of a large food processor or mixer. Pour in the proofed yeast and oil. Process or beat until smooth. Add in the next 7 cups of flour and beat or process until the dough is smooth. On the last cup of flour add as much as you need so the dough is smooth, medium firm, and not sticky.

Set the dough aside in its bowl with a loose towel to cover. Let the dough rise for about 45 minutes. Divide the dough into 4 pieces. Divide each piece into around 20-30 pieces. Roll each piece into a long thin rope. Form a pretzel. Place on a baking sheet. I use ½ sheet size with rims and cover them with silpats so I don't have to grease the pan.

Paint or dip the pandericas in beaten egg and top with sesame seeds. Bake the pandericas in a preheated 400° oven until light golden (around 15 minutes), then reduce the heat to 200°. I open the oven door to let out the really hot air and let the temperature drop when I turned the temperature down to 200. Leave the pandericas to toast for an hour or more. Store pandericas in an air tight container.

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