



Salvadorian Stuffed Corn Patties

Pupusas

As Erika Lopez and Herson Peraza from La Palma, El Salvador, taught Lindsay Sterling in Portland, ME. Photos and video by Lindsay Sterling.

Note: Pupusas come stuffed with various fillings in El Salvador: cheese, pork, beans, and loroco flower. This recipe is for beans and cheese. Pupusas are served with [Salvadorian slaw](#) and [sauce](#). Make the pupusa dough first. While that's resting, make the slaw and sauce. Then form and cook the pupusas.

Cooking time: 1 hour

Makes: 9

Ingredients

- 3 cups masa flour
- 1 3/4-2 cups cups water
- 8 oz. refried beans
- 1 cup shredded Monterey jack cheese
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- 2 Tbsp + 2 Tbsp vegetable oil

Instructions

1. In large bowl mix 3 cups masa flour and 1 3/4 cups water with your hands and knead for 5 minutes. The dough will be extremely sticky at first. As you knead it, the dough sucks in the water. Keep kneading until the dough is soft, pliable, holding together as one mass, and not clinging to the sides of the bowl or sticking substantially to your hands, but almost. You can adjust the softness or stickiness by kneading in more water or more masa flour so that the dough ends up just right. A sign of the right texture is that you should be able to press your hand print easily in the top of the mass of dough. Once you have that, let the dough rest covered with a towel while you prepare the filling (keep reading) and toppings (see [Salvadorian slaw](#) and [sauce](#)).

2. In a large saute pan, saute the garlic in 2 Tbsp oil. Once that is fragrant and soft, add the refried beans, stirring occasionally. Once refried beans are hot and smooth, add the shredded cheese. Stir until cheese is incorporated and completely melted. Set aside to let cool.



3. Once beans are cool enough to touch, get a side dish of 1-2 Tbsp oil ready next to the stovetop, along with your bowl of dough and your refried beans. Heat a griddle or a skillet on medium heat.
4. Watch video above to see how to pat the pupusas into shape. Take a lime-sized chunk of dough, roll it into a ball between your hands and pat it into a 1/4-inch-thick disc. Put a heaping tablespoon of the beans in the middle. Close the dough around the beans so that the beans are sealed inside a dough-ball. Pat the dough-ball between your hands into a 1/2-inch disc. If the dough is sticking to our hands, wipe the dough with oil on both sides with your fingers before patting it into a disc.
5. Put the pupusa on the hot griddle, preferably cast iron or nonstick. (If you're using a stainless steel pan, you'll need to oil the pupusas or pan to prevent sticking.) After you put one pupusa on the pan, then make another. Continue making pupusas until your griddle or pan is full. Cook each about 2 minutes per side on medium heat until masa dough turns from raw to caky has some golden toasty parts. Stack up pupusas in a tower as they become done - they keep each other warm while the others cook.
6. Serve pupusas with Salvadorian cabbage slaw, and a red sauce called *salsa de tomate*. Tell guests to pile the cabbage slaw on top of the pupusas, pour sauce on top of the slaw, and then eat pupusas with their hands.