



Recipes from the Plaza Family's Cookbook

Cheese Empanadas

(Makes 30 empanadas)

Ingredients:

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| 1 lb. wheat flour | 2 cups grated cheese |
| 2 tsp. baking powder | 2 sprigs of scallions (optional) |
| 1 tsp. salt | Achiote (annatto) oil (for color) |
| 1/4 lb. butter | Sunflower or vegetable oil (for frying) |
| 3/4 cup ice water | |

Instructions:

1. Prepare the dough by blending flour, baking powder, salt and butter. Slowly add the water and knead lightly to keep the dough soft.
2. Let the dough rest for 30 minutes.
3. Dice onions and sauté in the achiote oil with some salt. After onions cool, add grated cheese and mix.
4. Use a rolling pin on a floured surface to roll and extend dough.
5. Cut the dough into circles and add a tablespoon of the filling in the center of each circle. Then, fold the dough into a semicircle and press the edges together with your fingertips.
6. Fry in (very hot) sunflower oil a deep pan until golden brown.
7. Sprinkle with sugar to taste, or serve with hot sauce, as a snack.

Note: Achiote oil is made from the small, red annatto seed and is a common ingredient in Latin American and Caribbean cooking. In Ecuador, achiote oil is used to add a reddish color and delicate nutty flavor to many dishes, such as soups, rice, and the popular dish 'Carne Colorada,' which means 'red meat.'

