

SPINACH, CURRANT AND MANCHEGO PUFF PASTRY EMPANADAS WITH QUINCE DIPPING SAUCE

Inspired by the flavors of Spain, this is an excellent dish for cocktail parties. Serve with a dry Spanish sherry or Rioja! Don't let the length of the recipe fool you, this super easy...and can be made ahead!

- 1/4 cup currants
- 1/8 cup dry sherry
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 red onion -- finely diced
- 10 ounces spinach -- roughly chopped
- 1 1/2 cups Manchego cheese -- shredded
- Salt and pepper -- to taste
- 1 package puff pastry
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tablespoon water
- 3 tablespoons quince jelly

To Make Filling:

- o Place currants and sherry in small microwave-safe bowl and heat on high for 30 seconds. Set aside to cool.
- o Heat olive oil in a large skillet, add onions and cook over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until caramelized.
- o Remove currants from sherry (reserve sherry for dipping sauce) and add currants to the skillet with the onions.
- o Add spinach to onions and currants; cook over low heat for approximately 2 minutes, or until spinach has wilted.
- o Remove to bowl and cool.
- o Once cooled, add Manchego cheese and stir to combine.

To Make Empanadas:

- o Roll one sheet of puff pastry out on a lightly floured surface to 1/16 inch thick. Cut into 2 1/2-inch squares to make approximately 24 squares. In a small bowl, combine egg yolk and water to make an egg wash.
- o Take about one teaspoon of filling and roll into a firm ball and place on each square. Brush edges of each square with egg wash. Fold each square in half and press edges with the tines of a fork to seal. **BE SURE NOT TO OVERSTUFF** the squares, or you will have a hard time sealing the edges.
- o Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, silpat or lightly sprayed with cooking spray.

- o Cover with plastic wrap and repeat with second sheet of puff pastry to make a total of 48 squares.
NOTE: At this point, the empanadas can be refrigerated or frozen, covered with plastic wrap, until ready to use.
- o When ready to bake, brush each empanada with egg wash and bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes, or until golden brown (12 minutes if frozen).

To Serve:

- o While empanadas are baking, make dipping sauce by adding the quince jelly to the reserved sherry and stir. Add additional sherry if needed to make the sauce thin enough for dipping.
- o Serve the empanadas warm with the Quince Dipping Sauce.

Yield: 48 empanadas