

Pita Bread

Makes 8 loaves



The bread in the picture has $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole wheat flour replacing $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour

Ingredients

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 package active dry yeast (or 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons)
- 1 cup warm water (110° F)

Then...

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour (or 1 cup all-purpose flour plus $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole wheat flour)

For the bowl...

- 1 teaspoon olive oil

Steps

1. Place one cup all-purpose flour, yeast and warm water into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook. Gently stir together. Let that activate for about 15 minutes It should bubble.
 2. Now with the dough hook stirring, add in the olive oil, salt and sugar and most of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour. Let it knead for 5 minutes before adding the rest of the flour. *It may not need all the flour. You want the dough tacky (so that it sticks to your finger but then retracts). Knead dough for 3 more minutes. The dough should be pulled away from the sides of the bowl and close to the dough hook. Remove dough and work with it on a clean counter until it is a smooth ball.
 3. Rub the teaspoon of olive oil in the same mixing bowl. Put the ball of dough in and roll it around so as to coat it with the oil. Plastic wrap the bowl and let dough rest for 2 hours or until it has doubled in size.
 4. Punch down the dough and remove it from the bowl and place onto a clean counter top. Roll it into a log and cut 8 equal portions. Then roll each portion into a ball. Lightly sprinkle flour onto a baking sheet pan and transfer the balls to the pan. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap that has been sprayed with oil (so that the oily side is touching the balls of dough). Let the balls rest for another 30 minutes.
 5. Heat a cast iron skillet on medium-high heat. On a lightly-floured surface, roll out each ball of dough to a flat round no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick. Let these rest for a few minutes on the counter before transferring a dough disk to the hot pan. Let one side cook for 2 - 3 minutes before flipping it over to cook the other side. If all goes well, before you flip it over, bubbles will start to form (creating the pita pocket). Try not to pop the bubbles. Once you have flipped the bread over cook for another 2 minutes. Then return the pita to the side you started with for another 30 seconds before removing from the pan and placing on a clean towel (covering them after a few minutes so they don't steam). Once ready to serve, cut pita in half and separate the pocket inside for stuffing.
- **Alternatively, if you're super discouraged because your pita isn't bubbling (and creating the pocket) you can bake these in a super-hot oven (500°F). Use a pizza stone on the bottom rack (clearing out the other racks), and put each dough disk on a pizza peel sprinkled with a little flour and slide onto the hot stone. With the oven door closed, watch as the bread puffs up. Then after a couple of minutes, carefully flip the bread over to cook the other side - another 1 - 2 minutes. Using the peel, remove the bread from the oven and repeat process with rest of the loaves.