

How to Make Pocket Sandwiches & Turnovers

How to Make Piroshki

Piroshki are Russian-style pocket sandwiches. They can be filled with a variety of foods and are great for snacks, lunches, and appetizers. They are easy to make with this little dough press. And of course, you can use your dough press for turnovers, calzones, and dumplings.



Here's how to make piroshki:

1. **Make the Dough:** Piroshki can be made with either a baking powder or yeast dough. The dough recipe that we use is egg rich and good enough to rival yeast doughs.
2. **Cook the Filling:** The filling can be made with meat and cheese, vegetables, or even scrambled eggs. Let your imagination be your guide.
3. **Assemble and Bake:** Roll the dough, cut into 6-inch circles, add filling, fold the dough over and seal the edges, and bake.

They are very simple to make. As we experimented with different fillings and recipes, we learned some lessons:

- Cheese will leak out if the dough is not carefully sealed. Dampen the edges of the circle with a pastry brush and water before sealing. (We didn't find that necessary with the other recipes.) Reduce the baking time by five minutes.
- The dough will absorb some liquid from the filling. Add an extra half-cup of water to the filling for moister piroshki.
- New, waxy potatoes work well in piroshki. Russet potatoes are too starchy to match up with the starch in the crust.

How to Make Turnovers

There are four easy steps to making your pies: roll out the dough, add the filling, bake the pies, and glaze them. It's easy and it doesn't take long.

1. **Roll and cut the dough:** Roll the dough out until it is no thicker than 1/4 inch—a little thinner is perfect. Using your dough press or a lid from a pan, cut the dough into six-inch circles.
2. **Add the filling:** For the filling, use either a fruit filling—a commercially canned one works fine—or pudding for a cream filling. We used Jell-O® brand pudding mixes in both instant and cooked varieties. Both worked. The cooked pudding seemed to set up a little more. The pudding is less likely to leak during baking if you cool it for an hour before using it. We made lemon turnovers, banana cream turnovers, and chocolate turnovers as well as fruit-filled turnovers. Place a dough circle on the dough press. The dough will follow the bowl-shaped contour of the press. Place 1/4 cup filling in the formed bowl. Brush the edges of the dough with a little water to help create a seal. Using the dough press, fold the dough over to make a turnover and press firmly to seal. (A good seal is necessary so that the filling does not leak out.) Repeat with the other circles.
3. **Bake the pies:** Place the turnovers on a lightly greased baking sheet and bake in your preheated oven at 375 degrees for 15 minutes or until lightly golden. Remove the pan from the oven and remove the turnovers to a wire rack to cool for 15 minutes.
4. **Glaze the pies:** Make a glaze from powdered sugar and water. One cup powdered sugar is about right for this size recipe. Add enough water, about 1 1/2 tablespoons, to reach drizzling consistency and brush the glaze on the tops of the turnovers while still warm.

Fruit filled turnovers can be served warm. Cream filled turnovers should be cooled to let the filling become firmer. Most cream filled turnovers should be refrigerated.

How to Make Calzones

Calzones are closely related to pizzas, sort of a folded over pizza. Somehow though, cutting into the crisp, golden crust of a calzone to reveal a luscious filling is a different experience than eating a pizza. But if you can make a pizza, you can make a calzone. In this article, we'll tell you how and give you a recipe.

You can use nearly any pizza crust recipe to make calzones. The fillings are usually different than the toppings on a pizza; use ricotta instead of hard cheese for the filling base. (Although you can make calzones without any cheese in the filling.)

Keep the following principles in mind as you build your calzones:

1. For the filling, simple combinations really do work best. Less is truly better.
2. Calzones take longer to cook than pizza and require a lower temperature in order to crisp the crust and to penetrate the filling. They generally take 15 to 20 minutes to bake at 400 degrees.
3. Smaller is better. Make calzones that are 6 to 12 inches long.

Here are the steps to making a perfect calzone:

5. Mix the dough according to the package or recipe instructions. Cover and let the dough rise until doubled.
6. Roll out a small dough ball (about 8 ounces) into a round 1/4 inch thick. The gluten in the dough may try to make the dough spring back into shape. It's often easier to roll the dough partially, let it sit for a few minutes to relax, and then roll the dough again. Try to roll the dough uniformly. Thin spots lead to leaks.
7. Place a small handful of mozzarella on the lower half of the circle. On top of the cheese, place about three quarters of a cup of filling materials. On top of the filling, add 1/2 to 2/3 cup ricotta. Thick, creamy ricotta—not low-fat—works best. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with parmesan. (Of course, you can vary the filling ingredients greatly. Often an egg is mixed with the ricotta to make the filling less runny.)
8. Fold the top of the calzone crust over the bottom into the traditional half-moon shape. Seal the edges by crimping them with a fork. Be sure to press firmly enough to seal the edges and keep the fillings from leaking. Use the edge of a knife or fork to shape the crust edge into a uniform border.
9. Just before baking, brush the crust with an egg white wash or olive oil. An egg white wash will give the calzones a satiny finish. Olive oil will make the crust browner and crisper. If you brush with olive oil before baking, brush the crust again with olive oil immediately after coming from the oven. The second brushing will add sheen and flavor to the crust.
10. Bake the calzones on a dark pan on the lowest shelf of the oven to provide enough bottom heat to bake the bottom crust. Better yet, place the pan directly on a preheated baking stone. (If you are using a rectangular pan, a rectangular baking stone works best.)

Sour Cream Crust Recipe

Ingredients

- 3 1/2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup cold butter
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup sour cream

Directions

1. Sift the flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar into a bowl. Cut the butter into 1/2-inch cubes and add it to the flour. Cut the butter into the flour with a pastry knife until it is the consistency of oatmeal.
2. In another bowl, whisk the eggs and sour cream together until it is smooth.
3. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture and stir into a mass. Remove the dough ball to a floured counter and knead just until smooth and no longer so as not to develop the gluten in the flour. Cover the dough ball and chill it in the refrigerator for an hour.