

Low FODMAP Empanada Taco Salad **Brunch, Bring A Dish, and Definitely for the Holidays!**

LOW FODMAP GLUTEN-FREE DAIRY-FREE IBS FRIENDLY

Let's FODify It!

The holidays and special occasions are not complete without a platter (or two) of empanadas. This version takes it to another level by nesting these small hand pies into a garden fresh taco salad. The empanadas are filled with taco seasoned beef filling, making each bite exactly what you'd expect from a taco salad, but with a warm, gluten-free empanada in place of taco shells. We serve these on our holiday buffet as an appetizer or side dish.

The challenge was to create a gluten-free empanada with vegan butter alternative in place of conventional cow's milk butter, and use swaps for the salad such as; green parts of scallions in place of white onion, low FODMAP garlic-infused oil in place of garlic cloves, low FODMAP dairy-free yogurt instead of cow's milk yogurt or sour cream, and to thicken the beef filling with masa harina instead of wheat flour.

Be sure to read through the entire recipe first, including the Tips where you will find suggested low FODMAP ingredient brands to use, and conventional dairy options per your personal tolerance.

Makes: 20- 24 Empanadas (depending on how thick or thin you roll the dough); about 11 servings; 2 empanadas per serving

INGREDIENTS:

DRESSING INGREDIENTS:

3/4 cup (210 g) plain, low FODMAP dairy-free coconut-based yogurt

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1/2 teaspoon pure mild red chile powder, containing no onion or garlic, the ingredients should list only: red chile

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

1/6 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
1 medium-size plastic baggie

FILLING INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons canola oil
1 small garlic clove, sliced into 4 pieces
1-pound (454 g) 80/20 ground beef, grass fed if available
1 teaspoon (5 g) fine sea salt
1 teaspoon pure mild red chile powder, containing no onion or garlic, the ingredients should list only: red chile
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
2 tablespoons water
1 tablespoon (15 g) tomato paste, containing no high fructose corn syrup or other high FODMAP ingredients
2 teaspoons gluten-free masa harina
1/2 cup (25 g) thin sliced scallions, green parts only

DOUGH INGREDIENTS:

3 cups (445 g) low FODMAP gluten-free all-purpose baking flour (see tips), containing xanthan gum, plus more for dusting your work surface and rolling pin
2 teaspoons baking powder; use gluten-free if following a gluten-free diet
2 teaspoons xanthan gum
1 teaspoon (5 g) fine sea salt
8-ounces (230 g) cold butter alternative, such as Earth Balance Vegan Buttery Sticks, cut into small pieces

3/4 cup (177 ml) very cold water, plus more as needed
1 large egg
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
Cooking oil spray
4-inch (10 cm) round cookie cutter or empanada press (I prefer to use a press for a more consistent presentation)

2 large egg yolks for the egg wash, room temperature
1 teaspoon water for the egg wash

SALAD INGREDIENTS:

6 cups (approx. 560 g) finely shredded iceberg lettuce
2 medium (180 g total) fresh plum tomatoes, cored and small diced
2 medium (140 g total) carrots, peeled and grated
15 (60 g) canned pitted black olives, sliced
7 (70 g) small red radishes, sliced thin
1/2 cup (25 g) thin sliced scallions, green parts only
2 limes, sliced into wedges

METHOD:

Dressing: Whisk the ingredients in a small mixing bowl. Spoon into a medium-sized plastic baggie, towards one end or tip. Seal and place in a glass, tip side down. Place in the fridge until ready to assemble your empanada taco salad platter.

Filling: Pour the canola oil into a large nonstick skillet over medium low heat. Add the garlic pieces. Stir with a spatula to slowly infuse the garlic flavor into the oil. When the garlic is just golden, remove all pieces from the skillet and discard. This leaves you with low FODMAP garlic-infused oil as the fructans in garlic are not oil soluble.

Increase the heat to medium high and add the ground beef. Use a wooden spatula to cook and break up the meat until it is completely browned. Evenly sprinkle the salt, red chile powder, paprika, oregano, and black pepper over the meat. Give it a good stir and add the water, tomato paste and masa harina. Stir and cook for 3 minutes until the mixture has thickened a bit. Sprinkle the scallion greens evenly over the beef filling and fold in to incorporate. Remove from heat, cover and set aside.

Position 2 oven racks in upper and lower third of oven. Preheat the oven to 400 F / 200 C

Dough: Whisk together the flour, baking powder, xanthan gum and salt in a medium mixing bowl. Add the cold butter alternative and use

your hands to press and mix the dough until you have a coarse meal texture with no large pieces of butter. Scooping up handfuls, pressing them tightly, then crumbling back into the dough also helps to incorporate the butter.

Whisk together the cold water, egg and vinegar in a small bowl until the egg is beaten. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients and pour the egg mixture in. Using your hands, mix and knead the dough for 4 to 5 minutes until you have a ball with the consistency of soft cookie dough that is slightly sticky. If the dough is too crumbly to hold together into a ball, add 2 teaspoons cold water and knead for 2 to 3 more minutes.

Empanada Assembly: Generously flour a work surface and rolling pin. Take 1/3 of the dough and center it on your work surface. Keep the bowl of dough covered with a damp, clean kitchen towel as you work.

Roll the dough to between 1/8 to 1/4-inch (.3 to .6 cm) thickness, erring to 1/4-inch. Use a 4-inch (10 cm) round cookie cutter or the cutting side of a 4-inch empanada press to cut circles into the dough. Pull away the surrounding dough and place it into a separate bowl. This will let you know which dough is the original and which has been rolled and accumulated excess flour. Keep all dough covered with a damp kitchen towel when not actively working with it.

Coat two rimmed baking sheets with cooking spray oil.

Hand Filled Method: Using a spatula, lift a dough circle and place it near you on the work surface. Dip your fingers in water and wet the edges of the circle. Scoop 1 heaping, tightly pressed tablespoon of filling just off-center and fold the circle over into a half moon shape. Use a fork to crimp and seal the edge. Place the empanada on a baking sheet, spray the top very lightly with cooking oil spray, and cover with plastic wrap to keep from drying out. Repeat for the remaining empanadas.

If you feel the dough is becoming dry or cracking as you roll it out, place it back in the bowl and add 1 tablespoon cold water. Knead the dough back to a sticky cookie dough consistency. Add 1 more

tablespoon water if needed. You will definitely need to add water to the previously rolled dough with excess flour before rolling it out again.

If you notice any dry or cracked areas once the empanada is folded over and crimped, wet your fingers with water and smooth the dough to seal.

Just as it is with making homemade tortillas, you will begin to feel the right dough consistency as you work. Also, adding additional water will depend on if you are working in an arid or humid climate.

Empanada Pressed Method: When using an empanada press, spray the press surface lightly with cooking spray oil. Place a dough circle in the press. Use your fingers to wet the edges with water, all around.

Place the filling just off-center and gently bring the press sides upwards and almost together, leaving at least 1/8-inch (3 mm) gap so you can see the dough edge as it seals. Pressing too hard may cause a break in the dough.

When you open it, your perfectly crimped empanada will turn out easily into your hand. Spray oil the press as needed, after every 4 or 5 pressings. Repeat for the remaining empanadas.

Make the egg wash by beating 2 egg yolks with 1 teaspoon water in a small bowl. Coat the empanada tops with a pastry brush dipped in the egg wash. Using a sharp knife, cut two small slits on top of each empanada. This will allow the steam to release and keep them from bursting open while baking.

Bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until they are golden brown on top.

Salad Assembly: This recipe is bountiful enough to plate on two serving platters.

For one platter, evenly spread half of the shredded lettuce to cover the surface. Hold the baggie of dressing in one hand and use scissors to cut off the tip end to create a hole the size of a small pea.

Using back and forth motions, squeeze and drizzle half of the dressing over the lettuce for a striped effect. Place 10 to 12 empanadas over the lettuce. Sprinkle with half of the chopped tomatoes, carrot, olives, radish and scallion greens over all, placing the lime wedges around the edge of the platter. Serve immediately with a spatula on the side. Repeat for second platter.

TIPS:

The flour I use is: Bob's Red Mill 1 to 1 Gluten-Free Baking Flour (in the blue package)

Per your tolerance, use lactose-free sour cream for the dressing in place of the dairy-free yogurt.

Also if tolerated, add 1 teaspoon (2.5 g) grated Monterey Jack cheese to each empanada before closing and crimping. Then sprinkle 1/2 cup (50 g) more over the finished salad once plated; 1/4 cup (25 g) per platter.

Please refer to our previous article listing flour, butter alternative and other food brands we use in our everyday cooking.

This recipe was assessed and edited by Dede Wilson of FODMAP Everyday.

