

Heather's Bison Pasties

FILLING:

3 medium potatoes peeled and diced into ¼ inch cubes
2 medium carrots peeled and diced into 1/8 inch cubes
½ medium rutabaga peeled and diced into ¼ inch cubes
1 medium yellow onion, cut into ¼ inch pieces
2 Tablespoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 lb. ground bison meat, uncooked
1 lb. ground, mild Italian sausage, also uncooked
¼ cup butter at room temperature

Directions:

Please note that vegetables need to be chopped into cubes that are not too big, otherwise they will remain crunchy even after cooking! So chop vegetables according to the size mentioned above. Thoroughly combine the vegetables and spices together in a large bowl so that you don't end up with a spice "bomb" in the middle of a pasty. In another large bowl, combine the bison and mild Italian sausage by breaking the meat up with your hands and gently blending together, without overworking. Add the meat to the vegetables and spices. Again, try to mix thoroughly without overdoing it. Divide into 12 big meat balls and refrigerate in saran wrap or baggies. If you want more manageable portion sizes, then you might try dividing the mixture into 14 or 15 meatballs. Size them according to your family's eating habits!

CRUST:

8 ½ cups flour
3 cups shortening
1 tablespoon salt
4 eggs
2 ½ Tablespoons white vinegar
1 cup ice water, plus more as needed
1 Tablespoon water

Directions:

Whisk flour and salt together in a very large bowl. Cut the shortening into 1 inch cubes. Using a pastry cutter, work shortening into the flour and salt until the flour is drawn into the shortening and begins to form large, pea size crumbles. To avoid a tough crust, try not to overwork the dough.

Combine 3 eggs, the white vinegar and the 1 cup of ice water. Whisk together. Mix completely and then add this liquid to the flour / shortening mixture. Use a cake batter spatula to incorporate the flour into the liquid. Please note that you may need to use more ice water than is specified in the list of ingredients. Sometimes, depending on the weather, there's not as much moisture in the air and so this process involves a little bit of experimentation. You just want the dry ingredients to bond with the wet ingredients so that they form pliable dough that hangs together enough to roll out and form a pasty. There's a certain feel to it...so if the dough doesn't seem to be coming together for you and you've already added 1 cup of ice water, then just add a little more, 1 Tablespoon at a time until it seems to come together. If you only add 1 Tablespoon at a time, then hopefully you won't overshoot and end up with a gummy mess!

Divide the dough into 12 to 15 balls, depending on how many pasties you plan on making. On a floured surface, roll out one pasty at a time. Place one meat ball in the center of the dough. Gently flatten the meat out a little over onto one side of the pasty. Pasties should look like half-moons (see picture on website). Using the butter at room temperature, place ½ teaspoon of butter on top of the meat filling. Flip the other side of the dough over the meat and use a fork to crimp both sides together.

Use a metal spatula to lift the pasty and place it on an insulated air bake tray. Once all the pasties are complete, then put together an egg wash. Whisk the last egg with one Tablespoon of water. Using a brush, sweep egg wash gently over each pasty. The egg wash will turn your pasty golden brown in the oven.

Bake your pasties for an hour at 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Using a meat thermometer, make sure the temperature in the middle of the pasty reaches 165 degrees.

Gerry's serving suggestion: Smother them with your favorite meat gravy...and I mean smother!