

Pao de Queijo (Brazilian Cheese Bread)

Pao de Queijo are gougere-like little buns, ubiquitous in Brazil, where they're sold as snacks. Crisp and light on the outside and cheesy and chewy on the inside, they can be found in a variety of addictive flavors. These are studded with minced Volpi Salame, parsley and Parmigiano cheese. Made with sour manioc starch and tapioca flour, which give them their characteristic chew, they're ideal for those who are gluten-intolerant. Even better: they're easy. Which is good, because you're not going to stop eating them.

Ingredients

- 1 cup povilho azeda (sour manioc starch)
- 1 cup povilho doce (sweet manioc starch, a.k.a. tapioca flour)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, sliced into pats
- 2 cloves garlic, minced or grated
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano or Piave, about 2 ounces
- 1/2 cup very finely diced Volpi Salame
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- vegetable oil (for oiling hands)

special equipment

- stand mixer with paddle attachment
- 2 half-sheet pans, each lined with foil, parchment or silpat
- 1-inch cookie scoop or 2 spoons
- Box grater
- Microplane grater

Directions

Put both starches and the salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Mix on lowest speed until combined.

Combine the milk, water, butter and garlic in a small saucepan over medium-high heat and bring to a boil (about 5 minutes), giving it a stir to make sure butter is melted.

Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, mix the eggs and cheese with a fork and set aside.

When the milk mixture boils, pour it over the flour mixture and mix on lowest speed for 2 minutes. The mixture should gather into a ball and be smooth and sticky. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and the paddle, then add the egg mixture. Mix on lowest speed for 10 minutes. Stop the mixer a couple of times to scrape the sides of the bowl and paddle. At this point, the dough will be very smooth, slick and sticky.

Scrape down the bowl and paddle and sprinkle the Volpi Salame and parsley in. Mix on low speed just until incorporated, about 30 seconds.

Scrape down the bowl and paddle, cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate the dough for 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Lightly coat your hands with oil and scoop out the dough, using a small cookie scoop (or 2 small spoons). It's helpful to oil the scoop, too. Roll between your hands into balls about 1-inch to 1¼ - inch in diameter. Set the balls on the lined baking sheets, leaving about an inch in between them.

Bake, rotating pans halfway through, until the cheese rolls are puffed and lightly browned, 22 to 25 minutes. Serve while still warm.

total time: 3 hours

active prep: 40 minutes

serves: about 40

difficulty: *medium*