

Greek Pita Bread

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 2 hours

Chef's Notes

This pita can easily be made ahead — and in fact, it even taste better as it ferments. To make the bread ahead, prepare the dough through to the first rise and then punch it down. Then keep refrigerated for until the next day. The dough will even last for a few days in the refrigerator. An added bonus it that the bread can be cut, rolled and cooked as needed — meaning you do not need to cook all the pita at once.

Pitas, like most baked goods, are best when eaten immediately after cooking. That being said, any leftover pitas will keep for several days in an airtight bag or they can be frozen. Reheat the pita in the oven and serve warm.

Step 1: Preparing the Dough

- 2 tsp active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm water (no higher than 110°F)
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp sea salt
- 2 cups & 3 tbsp unbleached bread flour

To prepare the dough, pour the water into a large bowl and sprinkle the yeast over top. Let sit for a minute or so without stirring. Once the yeast has dissolved, stir to combine. Let sit for about 10 minutes.

To mix the dough, add the sugar and oil to the yeast mixture and stir to combine. Next, add approximately half of the flour — using a wooden spoon, stir to incorporate.

Next, add the salt, stir to combine and then add the remaining flour and stir again. Once the dough pulls away from the sides of the bowl, transfer it to a lightly floured counter top.

Knead the dough for at least 5 to 8 minutes until it is smooth. Don't be tempted to add too much flour.

Clean out the mixing bowl, if necessary and place the kneaded dough inside. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and let rise, at room temperature, until it doubles in size (approximately 1 to 1 1/2 hours).

Note: At this point, the dough can be refrigerate and left to ferment overnight.

Step 2: Rolling & Cooking the Pita

Once the dough has doubled in size, punch it down to expel the gas. Cover the dough again and let it rest for about 5 minutes.

Next, using a bench scraper, divide the dough into about 8 smaller balls and gently flatten each piece into a thick disk. Sprinkle the pieces with a bit of flour and then cover with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap until ready to shape and bake.

To shape the pita, using a rolling pin, roll each piece of dough out into a round tortilla-like shape. The thickness that you roll it out to will ultimately depend on personal preference and how the pitas are intended to be used — dipping, as a side, for gyros. Try experimenting with different thicknesses to see what you prefer.

If the dough starts to spring back as you roll it, set it aside to rest for a few minutes, then continue rolling. Repeat with the remaining pieces of dough — once you hang of the rhythm, you can be cooking one pita while rolling out the next one.

Next heat a medium-sized fry pan (preferably cast iron) to medium-high. Lightly grease the pan with oil, making sure to wipe away any excess oil using a paper towel.

Once the pan is hot, place a pita into the pan. Let cook for 1 or 2 minutes, or until it starts to bubble and puff up. At this point, flip the pita and let cook for another minute or so. Once cooked, brush the pita with a bit of extra-virgin oil, if desired. Keep the cooked pitas covered with a clean kitchen towel as you cook the remaining pita. Note: The pita is also nice brushed with a mixture of olive oil, vegan butter, garlic granules, onions granules and a pinch or so of salt.

Continue to do this with process with each pita — making sure to lightly oil the pan before cooking each pita.

*Note: The pita bread can also be cooked in the oven. In the oven, the pita will puff up very nicely and you can cook more than one at a time. Just note that you will not get the same nice coloring as you would if you cooked them on the stovetop. If baking in the oven, preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C) — place a baking stone or large baking sheet on the middle rack as the oven heats up.

This pita go particularly well with many of these delicious plant-based Greek recipes: Hummus, Tzatziki, Briam, Baked Beans | Plaki, Dolmades and Lemon Potatoes.