

Pissaladière – three ways, with roasted red pepper puree

Each tart serves 6 as a starter

Ingredients:

Bread dough

250 g of plain or bread flour
10 g / 2 tsp of easy blend (dried) yeast
5 g / 1 tsp of salt
3 tbs of olive oil plus more to drizzle
125 ml hand hot water
(or whey from our brousse recipe – see website)

Traditional topping

50 ml olive oil
600 g of onions, halved & thinly sliced
(you need about 300 g of cooked onions per tart)
2 bay leaves, sprigs of fresh thyme, parsley, rosemary and/or oregano (all optional, use whatever you have!)
8 anchovy fillets in oil, drained & halved lengthways
10 small black olives, stoned in halves
2 teaspoons of anchovy paste (optional)

Confit tomato and pepper topping

Onions as above
10 cherry tomatoes, halved
1 large or 2 small yellow pepper
Fresh thyme

Goat's cheese & fresh tomato topping

150 g fresh goat's cheese
200 g fresh mixed colour tomatoes
Salt, pepper and herbs of your choice
(eg. basil, oregano, tarragon, thyme)

Pepper puree recipe is at the bottom of the page



***Pissaladière** hails from Nice in the south of France but has been adopted by the rest of the country. Its' delicious combination of caramelised onions with salty anchovies and olives is one of our favourite dishes. We use the famous anchovies from Collioure on the coast near Spain along with black olives from our neighbour Fabi.*

As not everyone likes anchovies we have developed a colourful and tasty alternative using slow cooked cherry tomatoes and bright yellow sweet peppers.

We have also added in another variation without onions – really the toppings are up to your imagination!

The dough is a traditional fougasse dough (a French style bread dough made with olive oil rather like Italian focaccia)

Leftover dough can be used in a variety of ways, see the fougasse recipe for more ideas!

Method:

Heat oven as high as you can, 220C is ideal – remember you have a couple of hours of “proving” before you need it!

Mix the flour and salt and in a large bowl (a wire whisk is good for mixing dry ingredients)

Whisk the warm water (or whey) and yeast together leave to stand for 5 minutes.

Wait until the mix is frothy (if it doesn't froth slightly the yeast may be dead in which case get some more and start over!)

Add the olive oil to the yeast. Using your fingers, mix with the flour until the dough clumps together and leaves the sides of the bowl clean. It should be soft but not sticky (you may need a little more liquid depending on the humidity at the time).

Gently knead the ball of dough on a lightly floured surface for about 5-10 minutes using the heel of your hand and turning the dough as you go, finish by folding it over so that the creases are on the bottom. It should be smooth and springy. (We tend to knead for just about 5-8 minutes and not overwork the gluten for a lighter result).

Rub the inside of the bowl with olive oil, and cover the dough with a film of oil and a tea towel or cling film and prove in a warm place for 60-90 minutes or until doubled in size.

While the dough is proving you can prepare the vegetables

Peppers: Rub peppers with a little oil and bake whole until skins blacken and blister, around 15-20 mins. Put aside in a bowl and cover with plastic wrap and allow to cool. When cool, gently pull out the stalk and core and remove any pips and then skin the pepper thoroughly

Tomatoes: Halve the tomatoes, season and sprinkle with thyme. Roast for 5 minutes in a hot oven making sure they keep their shape OR slow roast at 100C for a couple of hours for a more concentrated flavour, but do not use oil as you want the moisture to evaporate.

Onions: Heat the olive oil over a low heat and gently cook the onions with the herbs, salt and pepper for about 45 minutes – keep the lid on until they have softened. Remove the lid and cook for a further 20 minutes until they are thick and golden brown – try to evaporate as much liquid as possible by turning up the heat if needed

Turn out and “knock back” the dough by using the same kneading process for 2-3 minutes.

Roll out the dough to a rectangle roughly 30 x 20 cms and place on a baking sheet lined with baking paper. Leave somewhere warm to rise for about 15 minutes

Traditional topping

Spread with the anchovy paste if using and then top with the onion mixture leaving a border of about 2.5 cms around the edge

For a traditional Pissaladière, criss-cross the top with the halved anchovy fillets. Stone the olives by pressing down on them with the heel of your hand and pulling out the stones. Cut in half and dot them between the fillets

Confit tomato and pepper topping

Omit the anchovy paste and add the onion mixture in the same way, criss-cross with strips of red pepper and dot with the cooked tomatoes.

Bake for 15-20 minutes, until the crust has browned, be careful not to brown the peppers or overcook the tomatoes. Serve warm or at room temperature, cut into rectangles.

Goat's cheese & fresh tomato topping

Spread the goat's cheese evenly over the base, leaving a margin around the edge. Top with the tomato slices arranged higgledy-piggledy and sprinkle with salt and herbs

Bake at 210C for 15 to 20 minutes

Pepper puree

Blend the roasted red pepper with 1tbs of red wine vinegar and salt to taste. Slowly add the flavourless oil in a stream while blending until you get an emulsion and the puree is thick enough not to run off the plate. (Around 60 mls of oil is enough for one large pepper).

Serve the puree with the tarts at room temperature – the puree cannot be heated but can be frozen and whizzed with a blender to re-emulsify it)