

Spinach, Artichoke and Cheese Calzone with Roasted Garlic Dipping Sauce

Makes 4 large or 6 medium calzone

Ingredients:

- 1 recipe Calzone Bread Dough (below)
- 1 recipe Spinach, Artichoke and Cheese Filling (below)
- 1 recipe Roasted Garlic Dipping Sauce (below)
- 1 egg, beaten with 2 tsp. water for egg wash
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan (or Pecorino, or Asiago)

Directions:

- (1) PREPARE the bread dough and sauce recipes as noted below.
- (2) FORM the calzone by dividing the dough into four equal pieces. STRETCH or roll the dough into a circle approximately 10-inches in diameter. (If the dough contracts and is difficult to roll out, let it rest a couple of minutes, then continue stretching and rolling.)
- (3) SPREAD a very light layer of the Roasted Garlic Sauce on one-half of each dough circle leaving a 3/4-inch perimeter in the clear.
- (4) PLACE one-fourth of the filling onto half of the dough circle maintaining the 3/4-inch clearance.
- (5) MOISTEN the edge of each dough circle with the egg wash using a brush.
- (6) FOLD the dough circles in half, and press the edges together. Bring the bottom dough edge over the top pinching and folding the dough over to form a sealed edge.
- (7) BRUSH the top of each calzone with the egg wash.
- (8) SPRINKLE one-fourth of the grated cheese on top of each calzone.
- (9) CUT a few slits in the top of the calzone for venting during baking with a knife or scissors.
- (10) BAKE in a pre-heated 400°F oven for 20-25 minutes on a lined baking sheet or pizza stone until the calzone are golden brown.

Spinach, Artichoke and Cheese Filling

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 10 oz. spinach, washed and dried, or 10 oz. frozen, chopped spinach
- 1 can (15 oz.) artichoke hearts, well-drained
- 1-1/2 cups (15 oz.) ricotta cheese
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese, finely grated
- 1 cup mozzarella, low fat, low moisture, shredded
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon of Kosher salt, or more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 eggs, beaten for filling

- (1) MIX the filling by sautéing the minced garlic in olive oil in a large skillet for 30 seconds. ADD the washed and dried fresh spinach and STIR until the leaves are wilted and any excess moisture has evaporated. (If using frozen, chopped spinach, defrost and squeeze dry. ADD to the skillet and STIR until the garlic and spinach are combined.

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(2) STIR together in a large bowl, the spinach-garlic mixture, chopped artichoke hearts, ricotta, grated Parmesan, shredded mozzarella, cayenne, salt, and pepper. Taste and adjust seasonings (before adding the eggs).

(3) ADD the beaten eggs to the filling mixture and STIR to evenly combine.

Roasted Garlic Dipping Sauce - for filling and dipping

Makes 1.25 cups

3 bulbs of garlic, left whole for roasting

1/4 cup olive oil

2 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons flour

1 cup whole milk

1/2 teaspoon salt, more to taste

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1/2 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded

Directions:

(1) ROAST 3 whole bulbs of garlic. BEGIN by removing some of the outer, papery layers, but leave the bulb intact. CUT the top off each bulb exposing the tips of the cloves. PLACE the bulbs in a garlic roaster, or a large square of aluminum foil. DRIZZLE the olive oil over the cut tops of each bulb. COVER or WRAP the bulbs and place in a 375°F oven for 45-50 minutes, or until the cloves are tender when pierced with a knife tip. ALLOW the bulbs to cool enough to handle. SQUEEZE the bulb gently; the softened cloves will pop out. With the knife blade flat, smear the cloves into a paste.

(2) COOK the sauce base by melting the butter in a medium saucepan, ADD the flour and WHISK until smooth. COOK the butter-flour roux for 2-3 minutes to remove any raw flour taste. ADD 1/3 cup of the milk to the roux, and STIR until smooth.

(3) POUR in the remaining milk gradually. CONTINUE whisking until smooth and slightly thickened. ADD the salt and pepper.

(4) ADD the garlic paste stirring to incorporate. The sauce may be a bit textured due to the garlic paste, but that's ok. (If you prefer a super smooth sauce, BLEND the sauce at this point with an immersion blender, or SPIN in a food processor or blender.)

(5) ADD the shredded mozzarella to the sauce while it is still hot. WHISK until the cheese is melted and integrated into the sauce.

(6) ALLOW to cool. SPREAD some of the sauce on the calzone as directed above. SERVE the remainder at room temperature as a dipping sauce.

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Calzone Bread Dough

3 cups bread flour (plus extra for kneading)
2 tsp. Kosher salt (1 tsp table salt)
2-1/4 tsp. active dry yeast (1 pkg.)
1 tsp. sugar
1 cup warm water (110 – 115°F)
2 tbsp. olive oil
Plus 1 tsp oil for greasing bowl

Directions:

1. STIR the flour and salt together in medium mixing bowl until evenly distributed.
2. PLACE in another, larger mixing bowl, (or the bowl of a stand mixer outfitted with the paddle attachment), the yeast, sugar, and warm water. Allow the mixture to stand until the surface begins to bubble, about 5 minutes.
3. POUR 2 tablespoons of olive oil into the yeast-water mixture.
4. ADD 1 cup of the flour and stir until well mixed. CONTINUE to add flour a cup at a time stirring after each addition until a sticky dough ball is formed.

If mixing by hand:

(5a) TURN the dough out onto a lightly floured surface. KNEAD for 5 minutes or until the dough forms an elastic character. Use a very light dusting of flour to keep the dough from sticking to the work surface; avoid adding too much flour.

If mixing with a stand mixer:

(5b) CHANGE the mixer attachment from paddle to dough hook after the last of the flour is added. An elastic dough ball will form. KNEAD the dough with the dough hook on a low speed for 3-4 minutes.

To use immediately:

(6a) PLACE the dough into a lightly oiled bowl, COVER and allow the dough to rise for 1 to 1-1/2 hours, or until doubled.

(7a) PUNCH down the dough, divide into 4 smaller, equal pieces, and continue to assemble the calzone (as above) dusting with a small amount of flour to keep things workable, and not too sticky. However, avoid adding too much flour.

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If using later:

(6b) PLACE the dough into a lightly oiled bowl, COVER and place in the refrigerator for 4 hours, or up to 3 days. PUNCH the dough down if needed during chilling to keep it contained in the bowl.

(7b) REMOVE the chilled dough from the refrigerator and allow it to reach room temperature – about 1 hour. Continue as above to form the calzone.

If freezing for later use:

(6c) OIL lightly the inside of a freezer-grade plastic zipper bag. Divide dough into desired portions. PLACE in the oiled bag and place flat in the freezer.

(7c) REMOVE the frozen dough from the freezer when ready to use and allow it to defrost and rise, about 1-2 hours depending on the amount of dough and the shape of the dough. Continue as above with the calzone assembly.