

STUFFED APPETIZER BREAD WITH HOMEMADE DOUGH, CHEESE FATAYER

Dough

1 1/2 cups strong bread flour
1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
1/2-to-3/4 teaspoons salt
1 1/2 teaspoons granulated white sugar
2 1/2 teaspoons instant yeast
1/4 cup olive oil
1/2 cup warm milk, 110F
1/2 cup warm water, 110F

Filling

a high-melting point semi-soft white cheese, grated or finely diced
white onion, minced or finely diced
fresh parsley leaves, chopped
a sprinkling of flour
salt, if needed, and white pepper

Topping

olive oil and milk wash
roasted sesame seeds

Prepare fatayer dough. In a small bowl, whisk together 1/4 cup of the warm water, yeast and sugar until dissolved. Cover and set aside until bubbly; about 15 minutes.

Add the two flours and salt into your mixer bowl. Mix to combine, using the paddle attachment. With the motor still running drizzle in olive oil. Add in previously proofed yeast and mix once more. Gradually incorporate remaining warm water and milk.

Switch to the dough hook and knead to a non-sticky, medium-soft dough. Form into a ball, grease with a little bit of oil and cover with a damp cloth. Set aside 60-to-90 minutes until doubled in size.

Prepare filling. Process cheese in a food processor, grate, crumble or finely dice. Transfer to a bowl and mix in onion, parsley, salt if using, white pepper and a sprinkling of flour. Set aside until ready to use.

Prepare wash. Whisk together olive oil and milk.

Assemble fatayer loaf. Transfer rested and risen dough onto a flour dusted parchment paper set on a clean working surface. Use a lightly floured rolling pin and flatten out to a 20" long oval. Place the long side of the oval facing towards you and spoon cheese filling down the middle horizontally. Starting at the center, grab the top and bottom edges and press together towards the middle to seal, fold and flatten. Continue doing so towards both ends as you crimp and fold down dough as shown in picture. Use a pastry brush to dust off excess flour.

With the help of the parchment paper place shaped loaf diagonally onto a half-sheet pan; do not remove parchment. Re-shape into a 20"-to-22" long oval and flatten a little if necessary. Cut away excess paper so they don't stick to the loaf during baking.

Lightly brush top and sides with the olive oil and milk wash. Loosely cover with plastic wrap and set aside in a draft free area for 30-to-90 minutes until puffy.

Bake fatayer loaf. Gently remove plastic wrap cover without disturbing loaf and generously sprinkle with roasted sesame seeds. Bake in a preheated 385F oven, preferably convection, for about 25-to-35 minutes until slightly golden.

Let rest for 12 minutes before slicing into individual pieces. Crust will be firm at first but will soften eventually. Serve warm or at room temperature. Can be frozen.