

Sirnica: Bosnian Cheese Pie

January 3rd, 2025

This recipe serves: 8

Prep Time: 01:00

Cook Time: 01:00

Burek (pronounced /boo-ec/) is a traditional meal, where an unleavened dough, similar to phyllo, is filled with meat, potatoes, spinach, cheese, or other fillings. Burek is common throughout the region previously controlled by the Ottoman empire. In the Baltics, Burek is rolled into a large spiral pastry and baked. It is often cut into pie wedge sections for serving. A Bosnian cheese-filled Burek is called "Sirnica" (pronounced /Seer'-nitz-a/), meaning "cheesecake" or "cheese pie". Sirnica is filled with a Bosnian soft cheese, "Sitnog sira", which is similar to cottage cheese. I like the nice "soft, tangy" flavor profile caused by using a mixture of cottage cheese, feta cheese, and neufchatel cheese. Make this into a tasty Sirnica dessert by adding Homemade Raspberry Syrup into the cheese filling.

Ingredients:

Dough:

4 Cups (500 Grams) All Purpose Flour

1 Teaspoon Salt

1.25 Cups (10 Ounces) Warm Water (100° to 115° F)

Cheese Filling:

2 Eggs

1 Teaspoon Salt

12 Ounces Small Curd Cottage Cheese

8 Ounces Feta Cheese

4 Ounces Neufchatel Cheese

Additional Ingredients:

Vegetable Oil

Sea Salt

Directions:

Prepare the Dough.

Mix the Flour and the Salt until fully integrated.

Add the water and mix for about 5 minutes, until the dough cleans the sides of the bowl.

Separate the dough into 6 equal portions (about 132 grams each).

Stretch and form each dough ball into a large flat disc, about 1 inch thick.

Coat each side of each Dough disc, generously, with Vegetable Oil.

Stack the Dough Discs in a large bowl and cover with a clean tea towel.

Rest the dough about 30 minutes for autolyse. DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP.

Make the Cheese Filling.

In a small bowl, break the eggs and add the Salt. Whisk until well mixed.

Warm the Neufchatel Cheese in the microwave for about 30 seconds.

Add the Cottage Cheese, the Feta Cheese, and the Neufchatel Cheese.

Mix well until fully integrated.

Roll out and Stretch the Dough.

Roll out each Dough disc until it is so thin that it is nearly translucent. Traditionally, this is done on a well-floured tablecloth. I prefer to use a large non-stick sheet, but you could also use a large sheet of parchment paper.

Use a rolling pin and roll the Dough as thinly as possible. Then stretch the Dough by hand to form a large 11" x 24" rectangle. Stretch slowly so that you don't tear the Dough.

Stuff and Roll the Dough.

Add a stripe of Cheese Filling across the long side of the Dough rectangle.

Fold the Dough tightly to cover the Cheese Filling. Carefully roll it into a long snake or noodle, with the Cheese filling on the inside.

Repeat with the remaining Dough Disks, to form 6 filled Dough Noodles.

Preheat Oven

Add a pizza stone to a cold oven.

Preheat oven to 400° F.

Heat for another 30 minutes, to ensure that the stone is thoroughly heated.

Form the Sirnica.

Roll the first Dough Noodle into a tight spiral shape. Continue to wrap the next Dough Noodle around the outside of the Sirnica spiral shape. Wrap each of the remaining Dough Noodles to form a large spiral, about 10 to 12 inches across.

Lightly Oil the top of a large sheet of parchment paper.

Move the Sirnica onto the parchment paper.

Lightly Oil the top of Sirnica.

Move the parchment paper and the Sirnica, into the oven, centering it on the pizza stone.

Bake for 35 minutes.

Set the Broiler on high and Broil for another 3 minutes

, until the top is a nice golden brown color and a small amount of leoparding begins to form on the Sirnica.

Remove from the oven and rest for 10 minutes.

Cut into 8 pie-shaped wedges and serve.