



Calzones (kal'tson-eh)



Ingredients:

- 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons warm water (110°)
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons active dry yeast
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 5 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- Sprinkle of cornmeal, for baking sheet
- 1 egg, whisked for egg wash
- 1 clove garlic, pressed through garlic press
- Grated parmesan, as garnish

Filling Ingredients:

- Pepperoni
- Salami (optional)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped (optional)
- 4 ounces sliced, shiitake mushrooms (or your choice of mushroom)
- 2 cups baby spinach, roughly chopped (optional)
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of black pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed through garlic press
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk ricotta cheese (Calebro)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups grated, whole milk mozzarella cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup marinara sauce, plus extra on the side for dipping

Method:

1. To prepare the calzone dough: in a bowl, combine the lukewarm water with the honey, and stir to dissolve. Sprinkle the yeast over top, and using a fork, gently mix the yeast into the honey water just until it begins to dissolve; set aside to allow the yeast to become foamy, about 8-10 minutes.



2. In the meantime, in another larger bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and Italian seasoning; once the yeast is active and foamy, pour the mixture into the flour, along with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, and using a wooden spoon, mix together until a shaggy dough forms.
3. Turn the shaggy dough out onto a work surface, and knead for about 5-6 minutes, until smooth and elastic; then, add 2 tablespoons of the olive oil into a large, clean bowl, add the kneaded calzone dough into it, and turn it to coat in the oil. Wrap with plastic wrap and allow the dough to double for 1 hour, in a draft-free and warm area.
4. While the dough proofs, gather up and prep your filling ingredients to have organized and ready to make your filling.
5. To prepare your calzone filling, place a large pan or skillet over medium-high heat, and add 2 tablespoons of olive oil; once hot, add in the diced onion and sauté for about 5-7 minutes, or until beginning to soften.
6. Add in the sliced mushrooms and the baby spinach, plus some salt and pepper, and sauté together with the onion for about 7-8 minutes until the mushrooms and spinach are cooked and there is no longer any water/liquid left in the pan. Add the garlic and stir that in just until aromatic.
7. Spoon this mixture out onto a large plate and allow it to cool to room temp (use the fridge to expedite the process if needed); then, add the mixture into a bowl along with the ricotta and mozzarella cheese, and mix to combine well (check to see if additional salt and pepper are needed); set aside.
8. Once the calzone dough has doubled, punch it down and portion it out into four equal portions of dough (roughly 6 ½ ounces). Form the dough into four round balls, place them onto a parchment-lined baking sheet, and cover with plastic wrap. Allow the dough balls to proof, once again, this time for 30 minutes.
9. While the dough proofs, preheat your oven to 450° degrees, and prepare a large baking sheet with parchment paper and a generous sprinkle of cornmeal (helps the calzones to not stick).
10. Once proofed, roll each dough ball into a circle that is roughly 8 inches; then, spoon a small amount of marinara sauce (about 2 tablespoons) onto the center of the dough, and add about ½ cup of the filling over the marinara, pressing gently to flatten it a bit. Fold the dough over top of the filling to create a semi-circle shape, pressing to seal and crimping the edges with your fingers, (you can use a tiny amount of water along the edge to help seal the calzone).
11. Place the filled calzones onto the parchment lined and cornmeal dusted baking sheet, brush each with a touch of egg wash, and cut three, small slits into the tops of each calzone with a paring knife or kitchen scissors to allow steam to escape. Place into the oven (middle rack) to bake for about 18 minutes, or until golden-brown and the baked through.
12. While the calzones bake, combine the 1 clove of pressed garlic with remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil; once the calzones are baked, brush each liberally with this delicious and aromatic garlic oil and sprinkle with a touch of grated parmesan as a garnish; allow to rest for about 5 minutes before serving