

Salt and Serenity

Spiced Lamb Hand Pies

Makes 6 mini pies

Pastry Dough

2 cups all-purpose flour

½ cup cornmeal

2 teaspoons sugar

¾ teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup (8 ounces), unsalted butter or coconut oil, chilled, cut into ½ inch pieces

½ cup ice water

Lamb Filling

½ teaspoon whole cumin seeds

1½ teaspoons whole coriander seeds

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon kosher salt

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

½ large onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons vegetable oil

½ pound ground lamb

1 cup frozen green peas

1 cup frozen corn

⅓ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

1 egg, beaten (for brushing on pastry)

1. In a food processor, pulse the flour, cornmeal, sugar, and salt, a few times. Add the cold butter or chilled butter or coconut oil and pulse 8 times. The fat should be the size of peas in the mixture. Slowly add the ice water, a tablespoon or two at a time, pulsing after each addition, until the dough just begins to clump. You may not need all the water.
2. Turn out onto a clean surface. Use your clean hands to form into a disc. Do not over-knead. Work the dough only enough to bring it barely together into a disk. Divide dough into 2 pieces.
3. Place each piece between 2 sheets of parchment paper and roll out dough, 1/8 inch thick into a 13 x 9 inch rectangle. Transfer dough, still between sheets of parchment paper, to the fridge and chill. Repeat with second piece of dough.

4. While dough is chilling, prepare filling: Heat small skillet over medium heat. Add cumin and coriander seeds and cook, shaking skillet, for 1-2 minutes until seeds are fragrant. Let seeds cool. Finely grind seeds in spice or coffee grinder. Mix ground cumin and coriander with cinnamon, salt and pepper. Set aside.
5. Sauté onion in vegetable oil over medium heat until lightly golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add spice mixture and cook for an additional 2 minutes. Add ground lamb and cook, breaking up with a spoon, until browned and cooked through, about 3 minutes. Add frozen peas and corn and cook for an additional 2 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in chopped parsley and set aside to cool.
6. Preheat oven to 375°F. Remove 1 sheet of dough from fridge. Peel off top parchment sheet and gently lay it back in place. Flip the dough over; peel off and discard second parchment layer. Using a ruler and sharp knife, cut dough into 6 equal rectangles (each one will measure 3 x 6½ inches). Repeat with second sheet of dough. You will now have 12 rectangles – 6 will be the top of your pies, 6 will be the bottom of your pies.
7. Cut some decorative holes in the top 6 pieces so that the steam will be able to vent out and the pies will not split during baking.
8. Brush a border of egg wash on the bottom 6 pieces. Spoon filling onto the bottom pieces, leaving a ½ inch border. Cover each pie with top piece. Use a fork to crimp edges. Brush pies with egg wash. Bake for 30-35 minutes until golden brown. Let cool slightly before serving.

Lamb filling can be made 2 days ahead of time and chilled in fridge before using.