

Eucharistic Bread Pita

Ingredients:

2 Packages active dry yeast	1 ½ teaspoon salt
Good pinch of brown sugar	3 Tablespoons vegetable oil
1 Cup whole wheat flour (King Arthur works best)	2 Tablespoons baking powder
5 Cups unbleached flour (all purpose)	2 ½ Cups warm water

- ❖ Add yeast and sugar to some of the warm water in a bowl. Stir to mix and let rest for 5 minutes until dissolved.
- ❖ In a large bowl, combine 1 Cup whole-wheat flour and 2 Cups white flour.
- ❖ Make a well in the center and add the yeast/water mixture. Hold back a little of the water until you see how the bread looks while kneading. Only add the last 3 to 4 Tablespoons if some of the flour is not getting incorporated. (A stand mixer such as Kitchenaid works well, but you can use a wooden spoon too.)
- ❖ Mix until there are no lumps.
- ❖ Stir in salt, oil, baking powder and remaining 3 Cups of flour.
- ❖ Knead on a floured surface 10-12 minutes, or until dough is elastic and no longer sticks to fingers. (Again, a mixer with a dough hook can be used.)
- ❖ Put in an oiled bowl, rolling it around a little so that the top gets oiled also.
- ❖ Cover and let rise in a warm place for 1 ½ hours or until doubled in bulk.
- ❖ Punch down and knead on a lightly floured surface to press out air bubbles.
- ❖ Cut into 12 equal portions.
- ❖ Roll out each piece until it's exactly 3/16 inches thick. You can use foil or parchment (not waxed paper) as plates for each pita while they rise in a draft free area at least 70-75 degrees.
- ❖ Let rise until doubled in height. If you have several cookie sheets in a warm spot to accommodate them, then place the pitas directly on them.
- ❖ Bake on a floured cookie sheet in a 500 degree oven (accuracy is important)
- ❖ Bake for 3 minutes
- ❖ Turn pan 180 degrees, and then bake another 3 minutes. The pita should be puffed and a pale biscuit brown.
- ❖ You will need to watch it carefully so it does not burn.
- ❖ Depending on the size of your oven, only bake 4 or 6 at a time.
- ❖ Cool on a rack or preferably in a large paper bag to retain moisture.
- ❖ Store in a well-sealed plastic bag.

Over for adaptation for bread machines

Eucharistic Bread Adaptation for Bread Machines

- ❖ Set the machine to dough so you can remove it before baking.
- ❖ Reduce the recipe by half
- ❖ Replace the ‘all purpose unbleached flour’ with Bread Machine flour
- ❖ Hold back a little water as above.
- ❖ Once the machine cycle is finished, punch down the bread and turn onto a floured board for a good bit of kneading.
- ❖ Cut into 8 equal pieces.
- ❖ Have floured cookie sheets ready.
- ❖ The bread will be very puffy in the oven. You can flip a pita or 2 over if it browns faster than the others.
- ❖ Cooling in a bag is much better than a rack because the bread can lose a lot of moisture during cooling.
- ❖ Store each piece in it’s own sandwich baggie (squeeze out the excess air.
- ❖ Place several sandwich bagged pitas in one gallon ‘zip lock’ and write the date (you can write the service you made it for also) on the outside. This guarantees they will store well in the freezer for several weeks.

One last note. Don’t skimp on the salt or it may be too bland. We expect real bread – even Eucharistic bread to have flavor. If you have it, a tablespoon of honey can also be added to the liquids.

Enjoy.

Dear St. Paul’s baker: this recipe for Eucharistic bread has come to us by way of Christ Church, Three Bridges. This bread has an evolving history, even at St. Paul’s and which you are now a part of.

Originally, Lilly Altimira’s mother brought this recipe from Mesopotamia. IN fact it was the city of Nineveh, which you can find in the book of Jonah. Lilly’s mother also was a long time member of St. Paul’s celebrating 50 years here. In time, Lilly became a long standing of St. Paul’s so of course, she could probably share memories of St. Paul’s in addition to this wonderful recipe. Lilly is currently a member of Christ Church, Three Bridges if you’re ever in the neighborhood.

There are changes Lilly has made. For the yeast, Lilly uses one large one-point size of Fleischmann’s dry yeast. Reynolds aluminum sandwich pop up wraps works well for the foil liners if you like that step. You want to check the real temperature of your oven because this bakes so quickly. If not properly wrapped, they will pick up a funny taste from the freezer.