

Sigara Böregi (Cheese Cigar Pastries)

Turkish · Appetizer · Medium · 41 min total · Serves 6

Sigara böregi, or cigarette pastries, are crisp, golden rolls of thin pastry wrapped around a salty feta and parsley filling, then fried. A staple of Turkish meze tables, they are served hot as an appetizer.

Ingredients

- 12 phyllo sheets (thawed; about 9 by 14 inches (23 by 36 cm); yufka is the authentic choice if you can find it)
- 8 oz feta cheese (crumbled; Turkish white cheese is traditional)
- 2 oz mozzarella (shredded; stands in for kasar)
- 0.5 cup parsley (finely chopped)
- 1 large egg (beaten)
- 0.25 tsp black pepper (freshly ground)
- 3 tbsp unsalted butter (melted, for brushing the pastry)
- 2 cup neutral oil (for frying, such as sunflower or canola)

Method

1. Thaw the phyllo in the refrigerator overnight or as the package directs, and keep the sheets covered with a damp towel while you work so they do not dry out and crack.
2. Combine the feta, mozzarella, parsley, egg and black pepper in a bowl, mashing lightly with a fork; the feta supplies enough salt, so do not add more.
3. Cut each sheet lengthwise into 2 strips about 4 1/2 inches (11 cm) wide, giving 24 strips, and keep them covered.
4. Brush a strip lightly with melted butter, place about 1 tablespoon of filling across the short end, fold in the sides, and roll it up tightly into a cigar, sealing the final edge with a dab of butter.
5. Heat the oil in a deep, heavy skillet to 350°F (175°C) and fry 6 cigars at a time for 2 to 3 minutes, turning once, until deep golden and crisp, keeping the oil between 340 and 360°F (170 and 180°C).
6. Lift the cigars out with a slotted spoon, drain them on paper towels for a minute, and repeat with the remaining pastries.
7. Serve the sigara böregi hot, as an appetizer or alongside a fresh salad and a bowl of yogurt.

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