



## Brazilian "Pão de Queijo" Puffs

By Erin Fletter

**Prep Time** 10 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

### Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

**bake:** to cook food with dry heat, as in an oven.

**blend:** to stir together two or more ingredients until just combined; blending is a gentler process than mixing.

**crack:** to break open or apart a food to get what's inside, like an egg or a coconut.

**grease:** to spread a small amount of cooking oil or fat, like butter, around a pan or dish to prevent food from sticking when it's cooked.

**measure:** to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

**mix:** to thoroughly combine two or more ingredients until uniform in texture.

### Equipment

- Oven
- Muffin pan
- Large mixing bowl
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Dry measuring cups
- Hand mixer or immersion blender

### Ingredients

## Brazilian "Pão de Queijo" Puffs

- 1/2 C vegetable oil \*\* + more to brush on the pan
- 1 C milk \*\*(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free milk)\*\*
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 C tapioca flour (found at natural grocery stores, Asian markets, and larger grocery stores)
- 2 eggs \*\*(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1 T baking powder)\*\*
- 1/2 to 1 C grated Parmesan cheese \*\*(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub 3 to 4 T nutritional yeast)\*\*

## Food Allergen Substitutions

### Brazilian "Pão de Queijo" Puffs

**Soy:** Substitute canola oil or other nut-free high-smoking point oil for vegetable oil.

**Dairy:** Substitute dairy-free/nut-free milk. For 1/2 to 1 C grated Parmesan cheese, substitute 3 to 4 T nutritional yeast.

**Egg:** For 2 eggs, substitute 1 T baking powder.

## Instructions

### Brazilian "Pão de Queijo" Puffs

#### intro

"Pão de Queijo" (Pown deh kay-zho) or cheese bread, is a traditional snack or side dish from the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. It is traditionally made with naturally gluten-free tapioca flour and Minas cheese. The tapioca flour gives these baked cheese puffs a chewy interior and crunchy exterior, similar to Japanese mochi.

#### grease + preheat

Spread a little vegetable oil around the wells of your muffin pan. Preheat the oven to 425 F.

#### measure + crack

Measure **1 cup milk**, **1/2 cup vegetable oil**, **1/2 teaspoon salt**, **2 cups tapioca flour**, and **1/2 to 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese** in a large bowl. Crack **2 eggs** into the bowl.

#### blend + count

Use a hand mixer or immersion blender to blend until smooth while counting to 5 in Portuguese: 1 um (oohm), 2 dois (doyss), 3 três (trehss), 4 quatro (KWAH-troh), 5 cinco (SEEN-coh). You may need to use a

spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl so everything is well blended.

### fill + bake

Fill your prepared muffin pan wells with batter, about 2 tablespoons for each puff. Bake in the preheated oven for about 20 minutes, until puffy and just lightly browned. Remove from the oven and let cool for a few minutes. Eat while warm and enjoy with **Brazilian Collard Greens with Beans!** "Delicioso" (Day-lees-eeh-oh-soh)!

## Featured Ingredient: Cassava!

Hi! I'm Cassava!

"My ancestors originally came from South America and Portuguese traders brought some to Africa. Cassava root is popular in South American and West African cuisine. You can find "casabe" or cassava bread in South America and Caribbean islands and in Columbia and Cuba, they make their "buñuelos" (doughnuts) with cassava flour. In Ghana and some other West African countries, they use cassava to make "fufu," a spongy dough that is dipped into soups and stews. And, did you know those boba or tapioca pearls in your bubble tea are made from cassava root?!"

### History & Etymology

Cassava (*M. esculenta*), also known as manioc, tapioca, or yuca, is a woody shrub from the spurge family. It originated in South America and is native to Brazil and certain areas of the Andes Mountains. The first to grow cassava may have been the Maya on the Yucatán Peninsula. Cassava was brought to Africa in the 16th century, immediately becoming one of the most important crops.

Cassava can be found in tropical regions around the world today. It grows on fertile, well-drained, moist soil in frost-free areas. Cassava is cultivated because of its edible root (tuber). Cassava roots are also used in animal feed and many laundry starches.

Cassava root can be used to produce non-grain ethanol as a biofuel. China is the largest producer of cassava-based biofuel.

The word "cassava" comes from the mid-16th century French "cassave," Spanish "casabe," or Portuguese "cassave," from a Taino (Arawakan) word, "caçabi."

### Anatomy

Cassava grows as a shrub that is about 12 feet high. It produces multiple light-green or reddish branches. The roots grow in clusters; each root is long and tapered, 6 to 12 inches long, like a slender sweet potato. The clusters can weigh 15 to 30 pounds.

Cassava root has naturally occurring cyanide compounds, similar to almonds, bamboo shoots, lima beans, soy, and spinach, and the stones or seeds of stone fruit, like apricots and peaches. Thoroughly boiling the

cassava in water successfully reduces the level of toxicity.

Some cassava species are bitter, and others are sweet. Sweet cassava contains much less of the toxins than the bitter varieties, but the bitter ones attract less pests. While African and South American cuisine uses both, the sweet varieties are found more often in the United States.

## How to Buy & Use

The sweet variety is what you typically find in stores. Fresh cassava or yuca is sometimes seen in larger grocery stores and is often available in African, Asian, and Latin markets. Look for firm roots without bruises or cuts on the skin. It has a waxy coating to preserve it. You may also be able to purchase it peeled and frozen.

Store cassava in a cool, dry place for no longer than two weeks. You can peel it, cut it into pieces, put it in water, and store it in the refrigerator for about a week, changing the water daily. You can also put the peeled, cut-up cassava in the freezer.

The skin resembles bark and contains most of the cyanogenic glycoside, linamarin, so you must remove the peel and the thin white layer just underneath it before cooking and eating. If there are a few brown streaks in the flesh, cut those out, as they are signs of spoiling. If there are too many streaks throughout, it is not fresh enough to eat and should be thrown out.

Soak the cassava in water for about 20 minutes before cooking, then discard the water. Since raw cassava is not edible, it has to be properly cooked before it can be eaten. Thoroughly boiling it is the typical method.

You can also find cassava root in the form of flour. "Farinha de mandioca" is Brazilian cassava flour. It comes in two forms, "branca" (or white) and "torrada" (or toasted).

Cassava flour can be used to prepare breads, chips, flakes or as an ingredient in soups, stews, or meat dishes.

Tapioca is the powdery or pearl-like extract of the dried cassava root. It is used to make sweet puddings or baby food due to its neutral taste. Pearl tapioca is added to Asian desserts and drinks, like bubble or boba tea.

## Nutrition

Cassava root is higher in energy-producing carbohydrates but lower in protein, vitamins, and minerals than corn and rice.