



Savory Tomato "Empadão do Brasil" Pies

By Dylan Sabuco

Prep Time 15 / **Cook Time** 20 / **Serves** 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

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

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

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

sauté: to cook or brown food in a pan containing a small quantity of butter, oil, or other fat.

simmer: to cook a food gently, usually in a liquid, until softened.

Equipment

- Oven
- Large sauté pan
- Muffin pan
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Dry measuring cups
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon
- Can opener
- Fork

- Rubber spatula

Ingredients

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- 1 pkg pre-made frozen pie crust ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free pre-made frozen pie crust; check ingredients for DAIRY AND SOY allergies)******
- 2 medium Roma tomatoes ******(for NIGHTSHADE/TOMATO ALLERGY sub 1 C chopped mushrooms)******
- 1 4-oz can or 8 T tomato purée sauce ******(for NIGHTSHADE/TOMATO ALLERGY sub 1 4-oz can or 8 T pumpkin purée)******
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/2 large yellow onion
- 3/4 C frozen mixed vegetables (peas, corn, carrots)
- 1/4 C apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/4 tsp mild chili powder ******(for NIGHTSHADE ALLERGY sub ground cumin)******
- 1 vegetable bouillon cube (or 1 tsp bouillon powder/paste) ******(Check label for possible allergens, like gluten, soy, or nightshade, and omit if necessary)******
- 1/2 C green olives
- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 tsp cornstarch

Food Allergen Substitutions

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Gluten: Substitute gluten-free/nut-free pre-made frozen pie crust.

Dairy/Soy: Check ingredients listed on label of pre-made pie crust for possible dairy or soy allergens.

Nightshade: For 3 medium Roma tomatoes, substitute 1 C chopped mushrooms. For 1 4-oz can or 8 T of tomato purée/sauce, substitute 1 4-oz can or 8 T of pumpkin purée. Substitute ground cumin for mild chili powder.

Gluten/Soy/Nightshade: Check vegetable bouillon cube ingredients listed on label and, if necessary,

omit from recipe.

Instructions

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intro

"Bem-vindo" or "Welcome" in Portuguese! "Empadão (Em-pah-doh) do Brasil" is a delicious variation of the classic Chicken Pot Pie. It is made by simmering a savory tomato sauce with shredded chicken and veggies, then using that mixture as a filling in a buttery, crusty pie shell. Our Sticky Finger Cooking version will have you replace the chicken with extra veggies for an equally delicious outcome.

scrumptious science

When chopping onions, a compound in the onion called syn-Propanethial-S-oxide is released into the air, which results in your eyes tearing up. To help counteract that, you can store your onions in the refrigerator or freezer before chopping, reducing the amount of the compound released into the air. Also, onions can have an intense flavor, especially for younger chefs. Place your chopped onions in a bowl of ice water before using them in your recipe. This step will reduce the strong taste and make the onions much more palatable.

chop + sauté

Start by roughly chopping **1/2 cup green olives, 2 garlic cloves, 2 Roma tomatoes,** and **1/2 yellow onion**. Place all the ingredients in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Measure and add **3/4 cup frozen mixed vegetables, 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar, 1 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, 1/4 teaspoon chili powder, 1 vegetable bouillon cube,** and **1 teaspoon sugar** and simmer. Stir the mixture with a wooden spoon while it simmers.

measure + stir

After simmering the vegetables for 5 minutes, add **1 teaspoon cornstarch** and **1 can or 8 tablespoons tomato sauce**. Stir all the ingredients thoroughly and simmer for 5 more minutes. Turn the heat off and reserve the mixture to fill your pie crusts.

scrumptious science

In the above step, you will use the gelling power of cornstarch. Cornstarch is a powder derived from the cellulose present in all plant cells. In its natural form, cellulose is like microscopic gelatin. It protects plant cells by cushioning them and filling in all the empty spaces in a cell. In this recipe, we use a powder version with all the liquid removed. When we add this dry cornstarch to a wet mixture (like tomato sauce), the cornstarch will absorb the liquid, and the cellulose will start to thicken our tomato sauce into a pie-filling consistency.

preheat + shape + bake

Preheat your oven to 350 F. Next, divide the pie crust evenly among each well of a muffin pan. Make small cups with the dough by pressing it directly into the muffin pan wells. Once all the dough is in cup shapes, add a heaping tablespoon of the filling to each pie crust. Then, using all the leftover dough, make top crusts by rolling out your extra dough to make thin discs. You will need one for each small pie. Then, completely cover the pies in the muffin pan with the top crusts and pinch the pie crusts together using a fork to press and seal the edges together. Slide the muffin pan into the oven and bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown.

cool + serve

Remove the pies carefully with a rubber spatula. Cool for 2 minutes and serve! "Bom appetite" or "Enjoy" in Portuguese!

Featured Ingredient: Tomato!

Hi! I'm Tomato!

"I'm a beautiful, juicy red Tomato. Do you pronounce my name: "tuh-may-tow" or "tuh-mah-tow?" Either way you slice it (or say it), we tomatoes are wonderfully adaptable. You'll find us fresh or cooked on sandwiches, in salads, tacos, soups, stews, sauces, and much more."

History & Etymology

The tomatoes we have now descended from the pea-size fruit of wild plants that grew in western South America. Mesoamericans were the first to domesticate the tomato plant sometime before 500 BCE. Hernán Cortés, a Spanish conquistador, may have brought tomatoes back to Europe in the 16th century after conquering the Aztec city, Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City).

Tomatoes cultivated in North American colonies in the early 1700s may have been introduced from the Caribbean. Thomas Jefferson also brought tomato seeds back from France. Before tomatoes were used in cooking, the plants were used ornamentally due to some people's beliefs that they were poisonous. One reason for this error was that tomatoes come from the nightshade family, including the belladonna plant (or deadly nightshade), which has highly toxic leaves and berries. Another reason may be that the pewter plates they used back then adversely reacted to the acid in tomato juice.

China is by far the largest producer of tomatoes in the world. In the United States, California and Florida produce the most tomatoes.

The American and British pronunciations of "tomato" were made famous by an Ira and George Gershwin song from 1937 called "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off." Americans pronounce the word "tuh-may-tow," and the British say "tuh-mah-tow."

The word "tomato" comes from the Spanish, French, or Portuguese "tomate," from the Nahuatl "tomatl."

Anatomy

The tomato is a berry from the tomato plant (*Solanum Lycopersicum*), a perennial vine. It is part of the Solanaceae family, like the potato, pepper, eggplant, and petunia. Since it is a berry, it is a fruit, although mainly used as a vegetable.

A tomato's color is usually red but can also be yellow, orange, green, or purple. Tomatoes can be spherical, oval, or pear-shaped. Their flesh is pulpy with cavities, called locules, that hold the seeds.

There are more than 10,000 tomato varieties. Some are hybrids, and some are heirlooms. An heirloom tomato is a variety that has been grown for generations on a family farm rather than commercially.

Unfortunately, in the past 40 years, many heirloom varieties have been lost, along with the smaller family farms that grew them. However, hundreds of heirloom tomato varieties are still available.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

If you are growing your own tomatoes, pick them from the vine while still firm, with a slight give, and before their ripe color (usually red) deepens too much. While holding the fruit, twist it off the stem until it snaps off. The leaf on top of the tomato (the calyx) and part of the stem will come with it. You can also snip it off using garden scissors.

When you choose tomatoes at the store, pick fruit that has smooth, brightly colored skin with no cracks or bruises, is firm but gives with slight pressure, is heavy for its size, and has a pleasant, aromatic smell.

Avoid tomatoes with pale or dark spots.

Store tomatoes at room temperature, as their flavor will decrease in a refrigerator's cold temperature. Wait to wash them until you are ready to use them.

If you plan to make a tomato sauce or soup using fresh, raw tomatoes, you will want to peel them first. This can be difficult without some preparation: First, put a pot of water on the stove to boil and fill a large bowl with cold or icy water. Next, after washing the tomatoes, use your knife to cut a shallow 'X' through the skin at the top or bottom of each one. Then use a slotted spoon to place the tomatoes into the boiling water until the skin begins to loosen and peel back at the incision, about 30 to 60 seconds. Finally, immediately dunk them into the ice water. The skin should peel easily now. You can also remove the seeds by cutting the peeled tomatoes in half and scooping the seeds out with a spoon.

Tomatoes are versatile vegetables for cooking. Ripe tomatoes can be prepared fresh, stuffed, baked, boiled, or stewed, and they are the base for many sauces. You can also pickle green, unripe tomatoes, add them to salsa or bread and fry them.

Nutrition

Tomatoes are a moderate source of vitamin C, and cooked tomatoes are high in lycopene, an antioxidant, which may help protect your body's cells from damage, strengthen your immune system, and prevent

some diseases.