

Recipe to make 32 Pita Breads using Anderson Champion TLU Wood Stove (Gasifier)

Ingredients:

3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups whole wheat flour
3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups white flour
2 teaspoons salt
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups warm water (twice)
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons bread yeast
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons canola oil
3 tablespoons sunflower oil

In a large mixing bowl, put 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups whole wheat flour, and 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups general purpose white flour (or bread flour if you have it).

Stir in 2 teaspoons salt. Mix well.

Set out two containers with 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups warm water in each one. In first cup put two tablespoons sugar, then sprinkle with 2 tablespoons bread yeast. In second one, put several tablespoons honey, and 2 tablespoons Canola Oil, and 3 tablespoons SunFlower oil, then stir it well.

Wait about 15 minutes, until yeast is frothing, then make a large depression in the bowl of flour, and pour it in..and stir it a bit (it should be like pancake batter.) After the yeast grows some more, and this is frothy, add the other container of water with the honey and oil, and mix the whole thing well. Cover and let rise.

If the weather is cold, put the large mixing bowl over a large stock pot full of hot water to encourage the dough to rise (Heated on a gasifier, of course.)



After the dough has risen, take a large plastic board or cutting mat, and spread a tablespoon of canola oil over the whole thing, and knead the mass of dough so it is very well mixed. (I used to “flour” the board, but that makes the dough too dry. If you want really good pockets, use the canola oil!)

At this point, I turn the (well mixed/ elastic and not sticky) dough over to Donna to make the 32 pitas..

With a good dough this part is easy. If your dough is sticky you will have to mix in more flour to keep the dough from sticking to your hands and the rolling pin.

Turn the dough out of the bowl onto a clean, dry, lightly (white) floured board. Use a large knife to cut the lump into 2 pieces, take one of the new lumps and cut it in half, and then once more to give you a piece that will make 4 pitas. Cut this piece into 4 equal sections, and then take one of these sections to work with. Form this pie-shaped section into a ball by bringing as much as possible the dry edges together, pinching them, and then placing them with the pinched sides down in a separate area to rise. Continue with the rest of the dough and by the time you finish with the last one the first one you did will be ready to roll out. (about 30 minutes)

Place the slightly larger ball onto the lightly floured board, flatten it with your fingers a little, and then roll it out to about 1/16" thick. It should end up about 6" in diameter when you are done. Turn it around and over as necessary to get an even thickness. Use the flour as necessary to keep the dough from being sticky. We keep the pita rounds separate by putting them on paper plates, which we will reuse afterward. Don't stack them or they will stick together.

By the time the last of the pitas have been rolled out the first ones are ready to be cooked.

Cooking/baking the Pita Breads is my specialty. Each one must have a perfect pocket formed by steam.

Load the stove with wood, and ignite. Preheat two large cast iron frying pans. (We have a 12" round pan, and a 10" square pan.) When they are warm, spray flip the one on the stove, and repeat the process. This is called "multi-tasking"! You are running two pans at once, and in between pan swaps, you are tossing small hunks of wood into the top of the stove. Flames must be continuously coming out of the chimney/riser of the Anderson Stove. If not, the pan won't be hot enough, and the pitas will not rise up. Often, a small hand-cranked BBQ blower will encourage the flames. Too much flames with burn the breads, creating a blackened hard spot which will let the steam escape before it forces the bread to balloon. (These are called "rejects", and make good crackers for soup, or afternoon snacks, etc, if you don't mind the flavor of burnt bread! They are not good enough to offer to guests as "the perfect pita".) Each pita bread takes about three minutes to cook, so it will take 96 minutes to bake 32 of them. Once a good bed of glowing charcoal is formed in the stove, you can add larger hunks of wood, as long as they pass through the restriction at the bottom of the chimney riser.



These pitas are so good, it is well worth the effort! Put all but six of them in freezer bags, and they should last you for a couple of weeks.

As soon as you finish cooking, empty the contents of the stove into a bucket of water, to stop the combustion, and to recover the char. Once dry, use the larger hunks for other cooking chores, and put the fines into the compost bucket, and then into the compost file. If you bring the cast iron pans into the house, be sure to put them on cardboard so the soot and possibly tar won't leave black marks. They also add a unique smell to the kitchen! (Mesquite BBQ)