

Cleo Coyle's Italian Easter Pie Palmiers

Recipe text and photos (c) 2010 by Alice Alfonsi who writes the Coffeehouse Mysteries as Cleo Coyle with her husband, Marc Cerasini

Makes 10 savory palmiers

Based on my beloved aunt Mary's annual Easter pie, these treats can be served as an appetizer or snack. The taste can be compared to a quiche. Eat with joy! ~ Cleo

Ingredients

1 cup ricotta cheese (*whole milk*)
2 tablespoons grated Pecorino Romano cheese
1/2 cup flat leaf Italian parsley (*fresh!*), finely chopped
1 sheet of Pepperidge Farm puff pastry (*or 10 x 10-inch homemade*)
1 egg, lightly beaten
5 thin slices of good quality ham (*I use Black Forest*) or prosciutto

Directions

Step 1: Mix the filling – In a small bowl, mix the ricotta, grated Romano, and finely chopped fresh parsley. (I just use a good handful, which is about 1/2 cup. When you chop it finely, the volume measure goes down to 1/4 cup.) This filling should be very well mixed—be sure to work in all of the grated cheese and parsley. Set aside in the fridge to keep it cold.

Step 2: Prepare the pastry – Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. The paper is mandatory. Not only will it help prevent your palmiers from scorching on your pan's hot spots, it will help you fold the puff pastry when the time comes. Lay the puff pastry out on the parchment paper. Use your favorite recipe or go with the Pepperidge Farm frozen puff pastry sheets. You'll find two folded sheets in one package. Take out one sheet and allow it to thaw about 30 minutes (or you can cheat and microwave it on low for no more than 10 seconds to thaw it slightly). Now unfold the dough. If there are any cracks, wet your finger and press the dough together to mend it. **WARNING:** Handle dough as little as possible and keep it cold during assembly process by returning it to fridge to re-chill.

Step 3: Brush and layer – Lightly beat the egg and brush it over the entire sheet of puff pastry. Mound the ricotta cheese mixture onto the egg-washed pastry. Use a rubber spatula or back of a spoon to smooth the filling into an even layer. Now lay your thin slices of ham (or prosciutto) over the top layer of ricotta and fold.



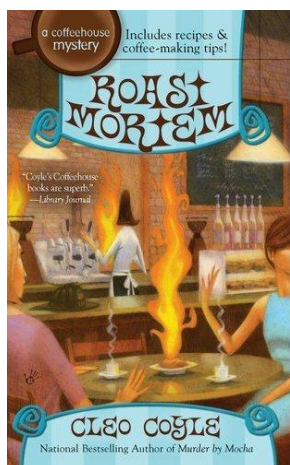
Step 4: Fold – You want to fold this 10 x 10-inch sheet like a letter, into thirds and then a final time so that the two folded layers are stacked. As much as possible, I like to use the parchment paper to lift and fold, which prevents my hands from warming the puff pastry.



Step 5: Chill and slice – **CHILL THE DOUGH** for at least 20 minutes and then cut into 1-inch slices. The chilling is necessary for the best result. If the dough is warm, it will begin to give and bend as you cut it, and your palmiers will not hold their pretty shapes. Set the slices on their sides, leaving room between each to allow space for expansion while baking.

Step 6: Bake and cool – Bake 15 to 20 minutes in an oven that is well pre-heated to

400° Fahrenheit. The Easter Pie Palmiers are done when the pastry has puffed and turned golden brown. Remove the pan from the oven and allow the palmiers to cool a bit before carefully transferring to a rack. Allow these savory goodies to cool to room temperature before eating. If you want to experience the true taste of a traditional Italian Easter Pie, then chill these in the fridge, take them out, and...



*Eat with Joy! ~ Cleo Coyle,
author of the Coffeehouse Mysteries*

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