

Churston Traditional

FARM SHOP

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CHURSTON FARM SHOP RECIPES FEBRUARY 2017

Frozen food has come a long way since one Clarence Birdseye invented the fish finger – as an inspection of our frozen food section will reveal. If you aren't tempted by the frozen croissants – which will give you the freshest continental breakfast this side of the Channel – then perhaps you will be by the extensive range of fruit and vegetables, all sold loose so you can buy precisely the amount you need and eliminate costly waste. Most leading chefs now advocate using frozen, rather than fresh peas because they are out of the ground and into frozen storage before any of their natural sugars have a chance to turn to starch. And anyone who can recall the days when shrimps and prawns could only be bought fresh from a fishmonger will doubtless bless the fact that they now come frozen – and taste none the worse for the experience. Prawns make ideal fillings for rolls and sandwiches and are even better stuffed into pittas. And they're even better than that when those pittas are home-made – and a far cry from the stale, lumpy versions the supermarkets sell. Here's how to make your own: once you've mastered it you'll never go back to shop-bought versions.

PITTA BREADS

Ingredients for eight to ten. 500g strong white bread flour, one seven-gram sachet dried yeast, 10g salt, 75g olive or sunflower oil, 250g hand-hot water – be sure to weight these last two.

Method. Place the flour in a bowl and stir in the salt and the yeast. Add the oil and water and bring the lot together with a plastic scraper or your hand. Turn onto a lightly-floured work surface and start to knead: stretch out the dough then fold it back on itself, turn and stretch again. The dough will become smooth and elastic after a few minutes. When it forms easily into a ball, clean out and flour the bowl, place the dough in it and leave, covered with a cloth, in a warm place for two hours. Alternatively if you are planning to bake later then cover the surface of the dough in the bowl completely and tightly with cling film and leave on the top shelf of the fridge until needed. Once the dough has proved break off pieces weighing 60g each, form into balls by folding them in on themselves, using well-floured hands, then flatten out and roll into nine-inch circles. Moisten half the diameter of each then fold them over and roll the seam to seal well. Heat the oven to 220C gas mark 8 and place a baking stone or an upturned baking tray on the centre shelf. Use another floured, upturned baking tray to slide the loaves in and bake for about five minutes or until lightly browned. Remove and place on a wire rack until cool enough to handle. Split along the rolled seam using a serrated knife before filling. From cold, place the loaves under a hot grill for a minute or so to allow them to puff up again. Freeze any unused loaves in batches of three or four making sure they are not going to be crushed or damaged in the freezer.

PITTAS WITH PRAWNS AND AVOCADO

Ingredients for four. 250g peeled, frozen prawns, two tablespoons mayonnaise, one tablespoon tomato ketchup, juice of one lemon, two teaspoons Tabasco, 12 grindings of black pepper, two ripe avocados, handful of shredded lettuce, four pittas.

Method. Thoroughly defrost the prawns and squeeze out any residual moisture by rolling them in kitchen paper and applying light pressure. Whisk together the mayonnaise, ketchup, half the lemon juice, the Tabasco and black pepper in a large bowl, add the prawns and turn well to coat. Peel and slice the avocados and turn in the remaining lemon juice. Split the pittas, place a layer of avocados on one side, top with the prawns, add a little lettuce garnish and serve.

THAI POTATO AND PRAWN SALAD

Ingredients for two. 450g new potatoes, peeled and cubed, 350g pack cooked peeled, 150g beansprouts, one orange pepper, sliced, one peeled and finely chopped garlic clove, one small red chilli, de-seeded and finely chopped two teaspoons each light soy sauce and fish sauce, one lime, tablespoon each chopped coriander and mayonnaise.

Method. Boil the potatoes for about eight minutes until tender, drain and cool. Plunge the beansprouts into boiling salted water for two minutes, refresh under cold water and drain thoroughly. Place in a bowl with the potatoes, prawns and pepper. Mix together the zest from half the lime and the juice of the whole lime, the garlic, chilli, soy sauce, fish sauce and mayonnaise and fold into the mixture, garnish with coriander and serve immediately.

SPICY PRAWN PATTIES

Ingredients. 450g peeled, cooked prawns, thawed and drained, 225g potatoes, boiled and mashed with a little butter, one large shallot, finely-chopped, two tablespoons chopped coriander leaves, one egg, three crushed garlic cloves, one-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated, two green chillies, finely-chopped, teaspoon each chilli powder, turmeric and salt, one and a half teaspoons each ground cumin and ground coriander.

Method. Coarsely chop the prawns, beat the egg and place in a bowl with all the other ingredients, mixing well to bind together. Form small patties with the mixture, refrigerate for an hour, then fry in sunflower oil until golden brown.

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