

## Clean Out the Fridge Empanadas

### Crust

1-2 pie crusts

*If you use one of my recommended pie crust recipes, one crust will yield eight good sized empanadas. If you purchase a crust from the store, it will make fewer so I recommend purchasing at least two crusts.*

Divide crust into eight equal pieces. Roll out each piece into a circle, roughly ½ cm thick. It is helpful to use flour on your surface, rolling pin, and hands.

### Leftovers

Each empanada needs a scant ¼ c. of filling. If you are making eight empanadas, you will need two cups of filling.\*

½ c. leftover beans

½ c. leftover rice

½ c. leftover sweet potatoes and kale, finely chopped

½ c. leftover pork tenderloin, finely chopped

2 T. spicy mustard sauce

½ c. finely grated cheese\*\*

Mix all leftovers together until thoroughly combined.

### Assembly

Place a scant quarter cup of filling onto one side of each circle. Cover with the other half of the dough to form a half-moon shape. Use a fork to press down the edges, assuring each is completely sealed. It's helpful to dip your fork in flour to keep it from sticking to the crust. Cut 2-3 small slits on the top of each empanada for venting.

Place empanadas on a lined baking sheet. Using a pastry brush, apply egg wash (one egg beaten well with 1 T. milk) to each empanada.

Bake at 375 degrees for 18-25 minutes, or until lightly browned and the pastry is completely cooked through. Baking time may vary depending on how thick you rolled your crust and how full you filled your empanadas.

You can easily freeze these for future quick meals. Just bake for 12-15 minutes, cool, wrap in waxed paper, place in a freezer tight container, and freeze lying flat. When you are ready to eat, place empanadas on a lined baking sheet and cook for 12-15 minutes. For best results, use within three months of freezing.

*\*You can use almost anything for filling. Please consider this just a guide. You need to balance dry and wet ingredients and use a binder, such as cheese, egg, or gravy. Ensure all ingredients in your filling have previously been cooked and are finely chopped. Experiment! Some of my best empanadas started out as far-fetched ideas.*

*\*\*While I like a finely grated Mexican cheese blend for these, you can use cheddar, jack, or a similar cheese you have on hand. I just wouldn't recommend hard cheeses like parmesan or blue cheese like gorgonzola.*