



Yeast Fritters

MAKES 18-20 fritters

Known in Italy as pettole, these little pillows of fried dough became one of my favorite snacks when I first discovered them. They can be either sweet or savory—but I always choose savory. I first made them in Rome with my friend Diane, who calls them yeast fritters. In Rome they are a typical late-night snack using ingredients from the fridge or cupboard, like anchovies and capers.

While visiting friends in the southern village of Surbo in Puglia, I was invited to cook at a cattle farm with three Italian women. As the curious black cows watched us through the fence, we made pettole as an afternoon snack in their outdoor kitchen, pinching bits of dough from a bowl and dropping them into hot oil. Next to us, the farmer grilled steaks as a dozen neighbors arrived to enjoy lunch and meet their American guest.

Like my friends in Italy, I add a few anchovies to my yeast fritters, but if you're not a fan you can leave them out. Sometimes, I add capers and garlic, and sometimes simply onions with lots of cheese. Toss in whatever ingredients you like, as long as they're nice and salty.

They are a perfect appetizer for dinner parties since you can make the dough ahead of time and fry them as your guests arrive. And they pair perfectly with a glass of Prosecco.

INGREDIENTS

2 cups flour	7 ounces Parmesan or Pecorino cheese, grated
2 tablespoons instant yeast	1/4 cup onion, finely chopped
1 cup water	1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
2 anchovy fillets, minced	1 quart canola oil (or light olive oil)
1/4 cup pitted black olives, chopped	
4 sun-dried tomatoes, chopped	



PROCESS:

In a medium bowl, combine the flour, yeast, and enough water to make a thick dough (may require a bit more or less than 1 cup). Stir in the onion, olives, sun-dried tomatoes, anchovies, cheese, and salt. Cover with a towel and let sit for at least 30 minutes. Alternatively, you can cover with plastic wrap and put the bowl in the fridge for up to a day.

When ready to fry, heat the oil in a 2-quart pan to 375 degrees. Gently drop spoonfuls of dough, the size of golf balls, into the oil. Be careful not to crowd too many in the pan. Fry, turning occasionally, until the fritters are golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove one and cut in half to make sure the inside is cooked through. If so, remove fritters to a plate lined with paper towels and repeat with remaining dough. Serve at once.