



## Pita

**MAKES 8-10**

There is nothing like fresh pita hot out of a piping hot oven! I watched a woman in Nazareth quickly roll and bake the soft dough into pillowy mounds of the best bread I'd ever eaten. She let me try to make it myself, and she kindly showed me I was rolling the dough too thinly. She explained that leaving the discs of dough about 1/4" thick allowed it to form the airy hollow pocket inside. When I got home it took me a few times to get it right, and I still get excited watching the dough through the oven window as it puffs up like a balloon. Don't get discouraged if your pita doesn't come out perfect the first time. It's still delicious to scoop into a cool bowl of yogurt or hummus.

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### INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups water

2 teaspoons salt

2 teaspoons instant dry yeast

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoon sugar

3 1/2 cups flour (bread flour is best)

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### PROCESS:

In a large bowl, combine the water, sugar, yeast, salt, and olive oil. Mix well. Add the flour, 1 cup at a time, and mix until the dough comes together. You may need to add a little more flour if it is too sticky to handle. The dough should be soft and able to form into a ball.

On a floured surface, knead the dough for 5 minutes, adding flour if necessary. It's important the dough is not too firm, but a bit sticky. (Alternately, you can mix and knead the dough in a standing mixer with the dough hook.) Place the dough in a greased bowl, turning to coat all sides, and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise for 1 hour, or until doubled in size. You can refrigerate it overnight, but let it rest at room temperature for 30 minutes before you work with it.

Place a pizza stone in the bottom third of the oven and preheat the oven at 500 degrees for 30 minutes. Turn out the dough onto a floured surface and divide into eight or ten balls. Roll out each ball into an approximate 6-inch round, just under 1/4 inch thick, being careful not to use too much flour when rolling. Place two of the rounds on the hot stone and bake for 2 to 3 minutes, until they are puffed and slightly browned. Remove the pitas from oven and place in a bowl. Cover immediately with cloth towel to keep pita soft. Repeat with remaining dough. Serve warm or at room temperature.