

# CHEF'S CORNER

## *Purim pastry can be savory instead of sweet* by Lisa Glickman

When Purim approaches, it is time to forget your troubles and let the fun begin!

For young children Purim carnivals are the highlight with games, costumes and prizes. The tradition of costumes is based upon the way Esther concealed her Jewish identity from the king while living in the palace. Costumes of King Achashverosh, Queen Esther, Mordechai or Haman are traditional, but now pirates, clowns, Harry Potter and the occasional small-child-size hamantaschen costumes are often the norm.

Jews everywhere celebrate Esther's discovery of Haman's wicked plot to destroy all the Jews; "young and old, women and children." The holiday is called Purim because the villain of the story, Haman, cast the "pur" (the lot) against the Jews, yet failed to destroy them. According to the book of Esther, this happened on the 13th day of Adar. "And on the 14th day the Jews rested and made it a day of feasting and joy" (Esther 9:18).

I found it quite clever when I read that during her time living in the palace, Esther became a vegetarian in order to avoid eating foods that were not kosher. Because they were rich in protein and nutrients, she ate nuts, seeds and legumes to sustain her.

Seeds and nuts are very common fillings for hamantaschen, which are often shared during Purim or put into food baskets called *mishloach manot*, or *shalach manos* in Yiddish. Two items of ready-to-eat food are placed in a basket and shared with at least one person to ensure that everyone has something great to eat on Purim.

This tasty ground beef strudel conatians a savory meat filling surrounded by crispy puff pastry and sprinkled with poppyseeds. Folded with three corners, it resembles a delicious hamantaschen pastry. It is simple to make, can be made well in advance and will keep unbaked in the freezer for up to two months. Paired with a simple salad or a green vegetable, it makes an easy and delicious meal that's perfect after a long day at the Purim carnival. 



Folded with three corners instead of four, this beef strudel sprinkled with poppyseeds resembles a delicious Purim pastry.  
Photo by Lisa Glickman

## Savory Ground Beef Strudel

*makes 2 strudels*

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 pound ground sirloin
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- A few grinds of freshly ground pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons sweet soy sauce (Kecap Manis) or regular soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup toasted pine nuts
- 1 cup pesto sauce
- 8 ounces sliced mozzarella cheese (optional)
- 2 sheets puff pastry, thawed but still very cold
- 1 tablespoon poppyseeds or sesame seeds
- 1 large egg, beaten

Put the oil in a sauté pan and heat pan to medium heat. Add onion and pepper and sauté until softened, about 3 minutes. Add ground sirloin to pan and brown meat. Add the tomato paste, seasonings, soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Allow mixture to cool. Heat oven to 375 degrees. On a lightly floured surface, roll out pastry to a square. Spread pastry with pesto sauce leaving about a 2-inch border. Top with meat mixture. Sprinkle pine nuts over meat and lay cheese on top if using. Gather corners of pastry to the center and twist corners gently to seal. Brush top of pastry with beaten egg and sprinkle with seeds. Place pastry on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake pastry for 20-25 minutes until deep golden brown. Allow to cool slightly before slicing.



Lisa Glickman is a private chef and lives in Bend. She is a contributing writer and teacher and also does a weekly cooking segment for COTV's "Good Morning Central Oregon." She can be reached via email through her website at [lisa@lisaglickman.com](mailto:lisa@lisaglickman.com).