

Savory Pastry Bites Are A Perfect Party Dish



In a perfect world (at least my perfect world), meals would consist of appetizers and desserts. Obviously, it is not practical to eat appetizers and desserts at every meal—I mean it would be a little time-consuming coming up with all that mini-food—but we can certainly entertain that way. In fact that is my very favorite way to entertain, cocktail parties with small bites, some savory, some sweet.

When I am the one hosting a party, I get to choose all the foods I personally adore. This is one of the many reasons I really like entertaining!

I love Greek food, but being gluten-intolerant I often can't indulge in some of my favorites from before. However, that doesn't mean that I can't reinvent them to be gluten free. These Spanakopita Bites are a perfect example.

Traditionally, spanakopita is a spinach-cheese filling folded into triangles with layers of filo dough, brushed with butter. I have yet to master (or to be perfectly honest, ever even tried to make) gluten free filo dough so I improvised and baked a traditional spanakopita filling into little cups made with gluten-free focaccia mix. Doing so makes them not only gluten-free but grain-free as well.

This recipe makes a lot of little bites, perfect for a party. If you have too many (and I seriously doubt that) you can always freeze them. Just wrap them up well after being baked and cooled, then freeze for up to a month. Defrost and then re-heat at 350 for a few minutes until hot.

Spanakopita Bites

Gluten-free, non-stick cooking spray

2 Tbsp pine nuts

2 (7.5 ounce) boxes gluten-free focaccia mix

6 Tbsp olive oil, divided use

4 large eggs

½ cup water

1½ cups grated Parmesan cheese, divided use

1 small white onion, chopped

2 scallions, minced

1 (10 oz.) box frozen spinach, thawed

4 oz. feta cheese, crumbled

½ cup ricotta cheese

¾ tsp salt



**SIMPLY
GLUTEN FREE**

Carol Kicinski

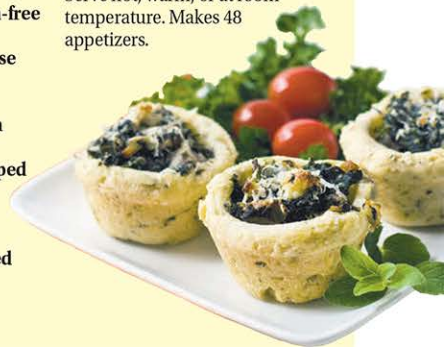
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Spray two (24 each) mini-muffin tins with cooking spray. Put pine nuts in a dry skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until lightly browned, 4 minutes. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl combine the focaccia mix, 4 tablespoons olive oil, four eggs, water, and 1 cup Parmesan cheese. Dump the mixture out onto a clean work surface and knead until a smooth dough forms, about 2 minutes. Divide into 48 equal sized balls. Place the balls in the muffin tins and make an indentation with your thumb into each ball forming a cup.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until soft and translucent, about five minutes. Add the scallions and cook for 1 minute. Squeeze all the moisture from the spinach and add to the onions. Cook, stirring, until the spinach is totally dry. Put in a mixing bowl; add the reserved pine nuts, feta, ricotta, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Stir to combine. Spoon the filling into the cups. Sprinkle the remaining ½ cup Parmesan on top of the cups and bake for 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature. Makes 48 appetizers.



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