

Turkish Bread Dish Papara

Traditional Turkish Papara transforms stale bread into comfort food with rich tomato sauce, butter, and spices. Easy weeknight dinner recipe.

10 min

PREP

20 min

COOK

30 min

TOTAL

4

SERVINGS

Easy

DIFFICULTY

Turkish Bread Dish Papara

Ingredients

- 4 cup bread
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 onion
- 2 clove garlic
- 3 tomato
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

Instructions

1 Prepare the bread

Preheat oven to 175°C (350°F). Cut 4 cups of stale bread into 2-inch chunks and spread on a baking sheet. Toast for 8-10 minutes until lightly golden and crispy on the outside but still tender inside.

2 Start the base

Heat 2 tablespoons of butter in a large skillet over medium heat until melted and foaming. Add 1 diced onion and cook for 4-5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft and translucent.

3 Add 2 cloves of minced garlic and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant. Stir in 2 tablespoons of tomato paste and cook for 1 minute until darkened.

4 Build the sauce

Add 3 grated tomatoes to the skillet and stir well. Season with 1 teaspoon each of paprika, cumin, salt, and black pepper. Cook for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes break down and release their juices.

- 5 Pour in 1 cup of water or broth and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook for 3-4 minutes until the sauce thickens slightly and coats the back of a spoon.
- 6 **Combine bread and sauce**
Add the toasted bread pieces to the skillet and gently fold them into the sauce using a wooden spoon. Cook for 2-3 minutes until the bread absorbs the flavors but still maintains some texture.
- 7 **Prepare the finish**
In a small pan, melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter over low heat. Add 1 teaspoon of red pepper flakes and heat for 30 seconds until fragrant, then remove from heat immediately.
- 8 Serve immediately in bowls topped with dollops of 1 cup yogurt, a drizzle of the spiced butter, and chopped fresh parsley.

Tips

Toast bread pieces lightly before adding sauce to prevent them from becoming too soggy and maintain better texture.

Use day-old bread with a firm crust—avoid soft sandwich bread which will disintegrate in the sauce.

Adjust liquid amounts based on your bread's absorbency; denser breads need more sauce while lighter ones need less.

Add protein like ground meat, shredded chicken, or Turkish sucuk during the sauce-making stage for a heartier meal.

Garnish with a dollop of thick yogurt and a drizzle of spiced butter for authentic Turkish flavors.

Make the dish vegan by substituting olive oil for butter and using plant-based yogurt for garnish.

Serve immediately for best texture—Papara becomes softer the longer it sits in the sauce.