

AREPAS

VENEZUELAN-STYLE

SERVES 10

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups masarepa
(see note #1 above)

1 1/2 cups water, plus
more as necessary

1 teaspoon
vegetable oil

Kosher salt

2 teaspoons butter

Fillings as desired,
such as cheese,
beans, shredded
chicken, or Pulled
Pork.

PREPARATION

Adjust oven rack to middle position and preheat oven to 325°F. Combine masarepa, cheese (if using), 1 cup water, and 1 teaspoon vegetable oil in a medium bowl and knead with hands until a dough is formed.

Divide dough into four even pieces and roll into balls. Working on a wooden cutting board or a regular cutting board with a sheet of plastic wrap or parchment paper on top of it, flatten each ball down to a disk about 4-inches in diameter and 1/2-inch thick.

Melt butter in a 12-inch cast iron over medium-low heat. Add arepas and cook until first side is charred in spots and a dry crust has formed, about five minutes. Flip arepas and cook on second side until a dry crust has formed, about five minutes longer. Transfer to a baking sheet and bake until cooked through, about 10 minutes longer. Remove from oven, let rest 5 minutes, split, fill, and serve.

NOTES

Masarepa is dehydrated cooked corn meal. It is available in the Latin section of most supermarkets in white or yellow varieties. This recipe calls for white, but they can be freely substituted. Popular brands include Goya and P.A.N.

Crumbled cheese can be added if desired. Depending on the moisture level of the cheese, you may not need all the water. Colombian-style queso fresco is ideal. If you can't find it, substitute cotija, ricotta salata, or feta.