

# Adjaruli Khachapuri

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In Georgia, khachapuri is traditionally made with sulguni a brined pasta filata-type cow's milk cheese that some compare to mozzarella. It melts well and is often described as salty and tangy. I used a blend of cheeses: mozzarella for stretchy melt, Gruyère for flavor and melt, ricotta for creaminess and feta for briny tang. I'm happy with how the blend behaved but adapt as you like.



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## Ingredients

### Dough:

- 200 grams (1-1/2 cups) bread flour, plus more for kneading
- 1/2 teaspoon instant dry yeast
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher or sea salt
- 125 ml (1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon) warm water (105°F to 110°F)
- 1/2 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil

### Filling:

- 75 grams (2.5 oz/1 cup) grated Gruyère
- 50 grams (2 oz/1/2 cup) low-moisture mozzarella
- 50 grams (2 oz/1/4 cup) whole-milk ricotta
- 50 grams (2 oz/1/3 cup crumbled) Greek or French feta
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten, plus 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon melted unsalted butter plus 1 tablespoon cold unsalted butter
- Dried mint, preferably Turkish mint
- Aleppo pepper or other medium-hot coarse red pepper

## Directions

### Make the dough:

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, yeast, sugar and salt. Add the water and stir until it forms a sticky dough. Turn it out onto a work surface and knead until the dough is smooth, about 3 minutes. You should not need additional flour but add a sprinkle if needed to prevent sticking. Shape the dough into a ball. Put the olive oil in a clean bowl, add the dough and turn to coat with oil. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1-1/2

hours. Punch down and reshape into a ball. Cover again and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour.

**Make the filling:**

Put the four cheeses in a bowl and toss with a fork to blend. Add the beaten egg and flour and mix well. Crack the remaining egg into a bowl but leave it whole.

Put a baking stone on a rack in the oven and preheat the oven to 450°F at least 45 minutes before baking.

Stretch the dough on a lightly floured surface with your hands or a rolling pin into an oval about 14 inches long and 10 inches wide at the widest part. Beginning on one of the long sides, roll the edge of the dough toward the center to form a rope-like rim about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch wide. Repeat on the other long side. Twist the ends to seal them. Your “boat” of dough should be 13 to 14 inches long and 9 to 10 inches wide before filling so stretch it with your hands as needed. Transfer the boat to a sheet of parchment, then slide onto a rimless baking sheet or pizza peel. Stretch again if needed to preserve the shape.

Put the cheese filling in the center and spread it to an even thickness. Slide the boat (still on the parchment) onto the baking stone and bake 15 minutes. It should look slightly underdone but the filling should be bubbling and have some nice brown spots. Using the rimless baking sheet or peel, remove the khachapuri from the oven and, working quickly, use the rounded side of a spoon to make a well in the filling large enough for the egg yolk. Slide the egg into the indentation and return to the oven for about 3 minutes--- just until the egg white is barely set. The yolk should still be runny.

Remove from the oven. Brush the rim with the melted butter and put the slice of butter on the filling next to the egg. Let the butter soften slightly, then stir the filling with a fork until it is creamy and the egg is cooked. Sprinkle with mint and chile and serve immediately.

**Makes 1 khachapuri, to serve 2 to 3**