

Olive-Stuffed Cheddar Balls

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Adapted from the blog “A Well-Seasoned Kitchen.” I substitute Spanish smoked pimentón for the paprika in Roper’s recipe. I also find it easier to make the dough in a food processor instead of a stand mixer

Ingredients

- 2 dozen small (Manzanilla variety) pimiento-stuffed green olives
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon Spanish smoked pimentón (mild or hot) or paprika
- Pinch cayenne pepper (if pimentón is mild)
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher or sea salt
- 1/4 pound sharp Cheddar, coarsely grated
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened



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Directions

Lift the olives from their brine and pat thoroughly dry on paper towels.

In a small mixing bowl, whisk together 1/2 cup flour, pimentón or paprika, cayenne (if using) and salt.

In a food processor, combine the flour mixture, Cheddar and butter. Pulse until the mixture holds together as a dough, but don’t overblend. The dough should be a bit crumbly; if it seems wet, add another 1 to 2 tablespoons flour. If the dough is too moist, the balls will spread when baked.

Pinch off a piece of dough about twice the size of the olives. Flatten the dough with your fingers and wrap it around an olive, encasing the olive completely. Roll into a ball about 1 inch in diameter. After doing a couple of these, you’ll get a feel for the right amount of dough.

Place the balls on a baking sheet. You should have enough dough to make about 2 dozen. Cover and refrigerate the balls until very cold, several hours or overnight. You can also freeze them in a plastic storage bag.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place refrigerated or frozen balls on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Bake until lightly browned and fragrant, 16 to 18 minutes for refrigerated balls, 20 minutes or a bit longer if the balls were frozen. Remove from the oven and let rest on the baking sheet for about 10 minutes, then serve warm or transfer to a rack to finish cooling.

Makes about 2 dozen