

History of Empanadas

An **empanada** is a stuffed bread or pastry baked or fried in many countries of Latin America and the south of Europe. The name comes from the verb ***empanar***, meaning to wrap or coat in bread. Empanada is made by folding a dough or bread patty around the stuffing. The stuffing can consist of a variety of meats, vegetables, or even fruits.



Empanadas have their origins in Galicia (Spain) and Portugal. They first appeared in Medieval Iberia during the time of the Moorish invasions. A cookbook published in Catalan in 1520 mentions empanadas filled with seafood among its recipes of Catalan, Italian, French, and Arabian food. It is believed that empanadas and the very similar calzones are both derived from the Arabic meat-filled pies, samosas.

In Galicia and Portugal, an empanada is prepared similarly to a large pie which is cut in pieces, making it a portable and hearty meal for working people. The filling of a Galician and Portuguese empanada usually includes tuna, sardines or chorizo, but can contain codfish or pork loin. The meat or fish is commonly in a tomato, garlic and onion sauce inside the bread or pastry casing. Due to the large number of Galician immigrants in Latin America, the empanada gallega has also become popular in that region.

The dish was carried to Latin America and the Philippines by Spanish colonists, where they remain very popular to this day.