

Panisses

Chickpea Frites , Herbes de Provence and Piment d'Ville

Panisses have gained a lot of popularity since I first started cooking them in restaurants over 15 years ago. Cooking panisses is a lot like the process of making fried polenta. You start by making a thick porridge, cool it off, then fry various shapes. Panisses are so yummy to eat, are gluten free and will help you develop great arm muscles if you make them often. Panisses make a wonderful accompaniment to roast chickens, lamb and stews but are best eaten alone. Make a rich dipping sauce like rouille or a spicy harissa flavored aioli to kick it up a notch.

Chickpea Frites

- 2 cups chickpea flour
- 4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon herbes de Provence
- 1 teaspoon piment d'ville

To Finish

- 10 cups peanut oil, for frying
- 2 ounces Parmesan, grated
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

***Chef's Note:** Experiment with the flavors. Try adding chopped olives and sun dried tomatoes to the panisse mixture. Try different spice combinations. Let your imagination be your guide.*

Chickpea Frites

Whisk chickpea flour, water, sea salt, black pepper, cumin, herbes de Provence and piment d'ville together thoroughly.

Cook mixture on moderate heat in a heavy bottomed pan constantly stirring to prevent lumps. After cooking for four minutes the mixture will start to thicken to the consistency of a pancake batter. Keep stirring away. By six minutes the mixture is thick and spurting like a mini volcano. Keep stirring and dodge panisse lava shooting in the air. After ten minutes it will be very thick and prone to scorching the bottom. Continue cooking, stirring even more furiously till mixture is super thick and bubbling like a volcano, about 20 minutes in total. Immediately pour onto a pre-oiled baking sheet. Oil the bottom of another sheet and place on top gently pressing down. The panisse mixture should be about 1/2 inch thick. If you want rustic panisses just pour mixture on oiled dinner plates. The shapes will be less precise but equally delicious.

To Finish

Refrigerate for a few hours or overnight. Cut into finger shaped fries and deep fry at 350 degrees till brown and crispy, about five minutes. Toss in a bowl with Parmesan and parsley and eat right away!

Harissa Aioli

Harissa Aioli is quickly made by mixing 1/2 cup of mayonnaise with as much harissa paste or powder as you like. Adjust seasonings with a touch of sea salt. Or use rouille as a dipping sauce, see page 39.