



Let's Learn About Brazilian Cheese Bread!

Teachers, please review this insightful background info on Brazilian cheese bread, otherwise known as Pao de Queijo (pronounced “pow-du-kay-jo”) and share with your students in an age-appropriate way before eating the snack. Use the guiding questions to inspire discussion while your students enjoy the snack.

What is Brazilian Carnival? Carnival is one of the largest cultural and religious celebrations in Brazil that takes place every year before Lent and can be celebrated for up to a month. It originated from a fusion of Indigenous, African, and European traditions, evolving into a vibrant celebration that showcases the country's cultural diversity and collective spirit. Carnival is rooted in the desire to celebrate and preserve the history, culture, and traditions of the people in Brazil. It is known for its beautiful parades, costumes, music, dance, and concerts. Every region in Brazil celebrates Carnival differently and has its own set of unique traditions, styles, and cultural influences that shape the way it is celebrated. This year, Carnival will be held on February 9th to February 17th.



Food Memories: This delightful recipe has been shared with us by Marcelo Brago and Wallace Franca, the owners of a local Brazilian business *Fritos & Co.*, (@frittosnco). Originating from Marceio and Bahia in Brazil, Marcelo and Wallace have fond memories of this recipe. Marcelo grew up eating pao de queijo at his grandmother's house who made them fresh and Wallace's mother would sell them to schools. *Fritos & Co.* specializes in delicious Brazilian croquettes that are ready to heat up and enjoy. *Fritos & Co.* have found a home in the incubator kitchen at The Grove in London, Ontario where they have been making their mark for over a year.

Brazilian Cheese Bread/Pao de queijo: Pao de queijo is a popular Brazilian recipe commonly eaten in the morning. We have adapted this recipe to use the ingredients that are available in Canada. We are using mozzarella cheese, whereas traditionally this recipe would use minas cheese. As a result of using a different type of cheese, we are using two different types of tapioca flour - one that is sour and one that is sweet, instead of only using sour tapioca. We need the sweet tapioca to make the bread soft enough. The tapioca flour can also be used to make stuffed tapioca or polvilho biscuits, which are gluten-free Brazilian snacks. Pao de queijo can be enjoyed with sweet or savoury accompaniments and makes a great breakfast or snack!

We hope you enjoy this snack as much as Marcelo, Wallace, and we do!



Guiding Questions

Junior/Intermediate/Senior:

1. Have you tasted Brazilian cheese bread before? How was it different? (if no one has, skip this question)
2. Have you tasted any foods that originate from Brazilian cultures? Discuss the flavours and the ingredients.

Examples: Açaí bowl, Brazilian barbecue, Portuguese custard tarts.

3. Does your family have any special holiday traditions or holiday foods? What are they?
4. Do you have any special meals or foods that bring back good food memories when you smell or eat them? Share your food memories!

Primary:

Sensory exploration encourages the use of descriptive language instead of just saying “yum” or “yuck”.

1. What are our five senses?
2. How does it smell?
3. How does it look?
4. How does it feel? Is it soft, crunchy, etc.?
5. Take a bite and focus on the taste. How would you describe the flavour?
6. Is anyone nervous to try new foods? Explain that’s okay. Why is it good to try new foods? Discuss the benefits.
7. Do you have any special meals or foods that bring back good food memories when you smell or eat them? Share your food memories!



Brazilian Cheese Bread (Pao de Queijo)

This recipe is enjoyed by many for breakfast or for a snack during Carnival, but also all throughout the year in Brazil. It is a unique bread because it is gluten free and made from tapioca flour. Our friends at Fritos & Co. have shared their favourite recipe with us. One of the things that we love most about this bread is that it is baked right from the freezer. You can pull them out and cook them at your convenience!

Sour tapioca starch can be difficult to find; try searching at a Brazillian grocery store or alternatively substitute for all regular tapioca flour.

Yield: 15 balls

Difficulty: Intermediate

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup sour tapioca flour
- 1 cup sweet tapioca flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup mozzarella, grated
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup parmesan, grated
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup olive oil
- 1 egg
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt

EQUIPMENT

Baking sheet
Parchment paper
Kitchen scale
Grater
Measuring spoons
Stand mixer with paddle attachment
Spatula
Medium pot
Wooden spoon
Bowls of various sizes
Dish towel

DIRECTIONS

Get Organized!

Gather your mise en place; get together all of the equipment needed for the recipe and gather your ingredients.

Get Prepped!

- Measure out water, oil, and milk into a medium pot.
- Measure tapioca flour and salt into the bowl of a stand mixer.
- Crack the egg into a bowl.
- Grate the cheese and set aside in a separate bowl.

Get Cooking!

1. Bring the milk mixture to a boil over medium high heat. Turn off immediately when boiling, and add the wet mixture into the flour in the stand mixer.
2. Turn the mixer on low and mix until just combined. Add egg and mix until just combined.
3. Add all of the cheese, and you should have a sticky but workable dough.
4. Using a portion scoop or your hands, make balls of dough about the size of golfballs. Place the balls on a parchment paper lined baking sheet and freeze the balls until frozen solid, approximately 3 hours.
5. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Bake the balls 15 - 20 minutes, until they are golden brown and cooked through. Let them cool slightly before serving, but serve shortly after baking for the best taste!