

## filo cigars filled with feta, parsley, mint and dill

These classic cigar-shaped pastries, *sigara böreği*, are popular snack and *meze* food, and they are also good as nibbles with drinks.

Here they are filled them with cheese and herbs, but other popular fillings include aromatic minced meat, baked aubergine and cheese, or mashed pumpkin, cheese and dill. The filo pastry can be folded into triangles, but cigars are the most traditional shape. They can be prepared in advance and kept under a damp dish towel in the refrigerator until you are ready to fry them.

225g/8oz feta cheese

1 large (US extra large) egg, lightly beaten

1 small bunch each of fresh flat leaf parsley, mint and dill, finely chopped

4–5 sheets of filo pastry

sunflower oil, for deep-frying

dill fronds, to garnish (optional)

SERVES 3–4

**1** In a bowl, mash the feta with a fork. Beat in the egg and fold in the herbs.

**2** Place the sheets of filo on a flat surface and cover with a damp dish towel to keep them moist. Working with one sheet at a time, cut the filo into strips about 10–13cm/4–5in wide, and pile them on top of each other. Keep the strips covered with another damp dish towel.

**making a puff pastry log** Use the same filling for a pastry log, *kol böreği*. Roll out a 400g/14oz packet puff pastry and spoon on the filling. Roll into a log, tucking in the ends as you go, and place on an oiled baking tray. Cut diagonally into portions, keeping it intact at the base. Brush with a mixture of egg yolk and sunflower oil and bake in a preheated oven at 180°C/350°F/Gas 4 for 30 minutes, or until crisp. Cut into portions as soon as it is out of the oven.

**3** Lay one filo strip on the surface in front of you and place a heaped teaspoon of the cheese filling along one of the short ends. Roll the end over the filling, quite tightly to keep it in place, then tuck in the sides to seal in the filling and continue to roll until you get to the other end.

**4** As you reach the end, brush the tip with a little water – this will help seal the filo and prevent it unravelling during cooking. Place the filled cigar, join-side down, on a plate and cover with another damp dish towel to keep it moist. Continue with the remaining sheets of filo and filling.

**5** Heat enough oil for deep-frying in a wok or other deep-sided pan, and deep-fry the filo cigars in batches for 5–6 minutes until crisp and golden brown. Lift out of the oil with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper.

**6** Serve immediately, garnished with dill fronds if you like.



**per portion** Energy 311Kcal/1291kJ; Protein 12.4g; Carbohydrate 11.2g, of which sugars 1.6g; Fat 24.4g, of which saturates 9.5g; Cholesterol 92mg; Calcium 278mg; Fibre 1.6g; Sodium 838mg.