

Banitsa with white/feta cheese

Ingredients:

Dough -
600 gr. flour
gr. Salt
1 gr. yeast
1 egg

Directions:

Divide the dough into 6 balls (100 gr.)
Leave the balls aside for 30 minutes.
Mix cheese and egg.
Roll out the balls and spread cheese & egg mixture on the pastry sheet.
Form them just like the picture above.
Bake the banitsa for about 30 minutes.



Banitsa is a Bulgarian breakfast and dessert pastry which appears in both sweet and savory forms: one sweet type is particularly popular at Christmas. A homemade *banitsa* can look rather like a large souffle. There, though, the resemblance stops, since *banitsas* are built up using layers of buttered phyllo dough. The filling of the savory type can involve eggs, feta or other white cheese, and sometimes yogurt. The soft filling ingredients are layered alternately with the phyllo dough, and the whole business is then baked (although sometimes, in its fast-food form, it's fried: and you'll sometimes hear people in Bulgaria complaining about the presence of too much oil in the finished product).

Banitsa bears some slight resemblance to strudel, and this is probably the cause of the pastry being referred to rather bizarrely as "sheep's cheese strudel" in the English-speaking media during the celebrations of the EU's 50th birthday, where this pastry was one of the 27 national desserts served. Both the sweet and savory versions are likely to appear as a dessert.

Savory forms of *banitsa* can include spinach, herbs, milk, or pumpkin. When the pastry becomes part of the holiday celebration, the *banitsa* may contain small charms, coins or sayings written on paper meant to bring luck to the one who finds the token in the piece they're served.