

## ***Cheese and Potato Tartlets*** ***gizadas de patata i kezo***

These dainty, cupcake-like tartlets (*gizadas* - derived from the Spanish *quesadilla* for cheese turnovers) are a speciality of the Greek Islands. Made with a pleated, star-shaped pastry, encasing a luscious potato and cheese filling, handcrafted *gizadas* make elegant savoury nibbles for a party or gathering.

### ***For the filling:***

½ cup grated or crumbled ricotta

½ cup grated kefalotiri or Parmesan cheese

3-4 eggs, lightly beaten

3 large potatoes (about 500g/1lb 2oz), boiled, skinned and mashed

salt and finely ground white pepper

### ***For the pastry:***

3 cups plain (all-purpose) flour, sifted

½ tsp baking powder

½ tsp salt

¼ cup olive oil

¼ cup vegetable oil, plus extra for brushing

¾ cup iced water

### ***For the egg wash:***

1 egg yolk mixed with 1 tbsp milk

### ***For the topping:***

2 tbsp finely grated kefalotiri or Parmesan cheese

**Prepare** the filling: Combine the cheeses and the eggs in a large bowl. Then add the potato and season with salt and pepper. Mix well.

**Prepare** the pastry: Put the flour, baking powder and salt in a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Add the oils and water and incorporate gradually until the dough begins to hold together and makes a smooth, elastic dough. If the pastry is too soft to retain its shape, add a little more flour.

**Make** the tartlets: Divide the dough into four portions. Take one portion and roll the pastry very thinly. If you have a pasta machine you can put the dough through it. Keep the remaining portions covered with plastic wrap until required. Cut circles out of the rolled pastry using a 7cm (2¾in) biscuit cutter. Place a teaspoon of filling in the centre of each circle, leaving a 1.25cm (½in) margin. Carefully work around the edges of the pastry circles using your thumb and forefinger to pinch upright pleats around the filling, leaving the cheese filling exposed. The closer and tighter the pleats are pinched together the better the filling will be held. Repeat this process with the remaining pastry.

**Preheat** the oven to 190°C (375°F). Lightly brush two large baking trays with oil.

**Arrange** filled shells on the baking trays. Brush the tops with the egg wash and sprinkle with grated cheese. Bake for about 30 minutes or until the pastry is crisp and lightly golden. Transfer to wire racks. Serve hot or at room temperature.

***Stella's Hint:***

- To freeze baked tartlets: Place the tartlets between layers of baking paper in an airtight container and freeze for up to 1 month. To serve, defrost in the container for 1-2 hours. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F) and reheat the tartlets on a baking tray for 10 minutes.