

# Khinkali

Khinkali is a very popular Georgian dumpling made of twisted knobs of dough, stuffed with meat and spices. It is considered to be one of the national dishes of Georgia.

Different regions of Georgia make khinkali with different fillings. The most popular filling is a pork/beef mix. In the mountains, khinkali is often made with a lamb filling. Fillings can also include Imeretian cheese mixed with cottage cheese; mushrooms; and mashed potato. City versions include kalakuri khinkali (with thinly chopped parsley) and khevsuruli khinkali (without parsley).

This is how to make them:

Ingredients for 30 Khinkali: Dough – 1.4 kilo of flour (1.1 kilo for the dough and .3 kilo for dusting and kneading) , 2 eggs, 450 ml of warm water; Filling – 700 grams of ground beef and pork mix, salt, half tsp of dried red pepper, quarter tsp ground caraway seed, 2 small onions (optional) and 500 ml of water. Cooking – water and salt for the cooking pot. Preparation: Add 1.1 kilo of flour to a mixing bowl. Make a depression in the middle of the flour and add the eggs. Add 450 ml of warm water.



Mix the ingredients from the middle of the bowl until all of the flour is mixed. The dough should be formed into a ball. Divide the dough into two pieces. Sprinkle a work surface and one of the balls of dough with flour and knead (very firmly) and fold the dough. Continue kneading and folding until the dough is very firm. Roll out the dough until it is about 1/3 of an inch thick. Cut out circles of about 2.5 inches in diameter with a drinking glass. Carefully remove the excess dough. Use a rolling pin to roll each circle into a thin eight inch round. These rounds will be filled with a meat and spice mixture to make khinkali.

NOTE: Repeat the whole process of kneading, folding and cutting and rolling of rounds with the remaining ball of dough. You will then have enough rounds to make about 30 khinkali.

Preparation (the khinkali filling): Add the meat, spices, 2 finely chopped onions (optional – we didn't use onions) and salt to a mixing bowl.



Mix the ingredients by hand and then add 25 ml of water and squash and squash the mixture. Repeat this process 20 times until you have mixed at least 500 ml of water with the meat. This will ensure that your khinkali have lots of 'juice'. The meat should look like this at the end of the process. Preparation (making the khinkali): Take one round of dough from your pile of rounds. Add 1 heaped tbs of the meat mixture to the center of the round. Use your thumbs and index fingers to make an accordion type fold all around the outside. It will become easier with practice! 19 folds are considered to be ideal. When all pleats have been formed the khinkali should look like the one in the picture below. Roll the nubbin of the dumpling between your finger and thumb and pinch off extra dough. The khinkali should look like this.



Put each khinkali on a board or work surface that has been dusted with flour. Carefully place the dumplings into a deep pan of boiling salty water, about 10-15 at a time (depending on the size of your pan). Boil for 12 to 14 minutes. If the dough has been made properly the dumplings will not burst. Serving: Khinkali are served hot with no garnish other than black pepper.

Eating khinkali: There is an art to eating Khinkali. The doughy top, where the pleats all meet, is never eaten, but used as a handle for holding the hot dumplings and is left on the plate to show how many have been eaten. In Georgia, this top is called the “kudi” (Georgian ქუდი, hat) or “kuchi” (Georgian კუჭი, belly button).



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