

Ham and Gouda Stuffed Pretzels with Honey Dijon Béchamel Sauce



Ingredients:

Pretzels:

4 cups flour
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 ½ teaspoons salt
1 package active dry yeast
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 ½ cups warm water (approximately 110°F)
10 cups water
2/3 cup baking soda
2 teaspoons coarse salt
1 egg yolk, beaten
2 cups cooked ham, chopped
2 cups smoked gouda cheese, shredded
Cooking spray
Parchment paper

Honey Dijon Béchamel Sauce:

1 cup smoked gouda cheese, shredded
4 tablespoons butter
4 cups milk
1/3 cup flour
3 tablespoons honey dijon mustard
Salt and Pepper

Directions:

Pretzels:

- 1) Combine 2 cups of the flour, sugar, salt and yeast in a bowl.
- 2) Add the warm water and oil to the flour mixture. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed 1 minute, stopping frequently to scrape batter from side and bottom of the bowl. Increase speed to medium and beat an additional 1 minute.
- 3) Mix in remaining flour, 1/2 cup at time, until the dough is soft and sticky, yet easy to handle.
- 4) Lightly sprinkle a counter top or cutting board with flour, remove dough from the bowl and knead it for about 5 minutes until smooth. Lightly spray a sheet of plastic wrap with cooking spray; cover the dough loosely with the plastic wrap, sprayed side down. Let rest 45 minutes until the dough is doubled in size.
- 5) Preheat the oven to 425° and line two baking sheets with the parchment paper, lightly sprayed with cooking spray.

- 6) Divide dough into 8 equal pieces and roll out each piece of dough to a 12 inch rope.
- 7) Create a channel in the middle of each rope leaving ½ inch space at each end, and fill the channel with the chopped ham and shredded gouda cheese. Pinch the sides of the dough closed, encasing the ham and cheese inside the rope, using a small amount of water on your finger along one edge of the dough to help seal the join. Place pretzel on cookie sheet. Repeat with remaining dough.
- 8) Bring the 10 cups of water and the baking soda to a boil in a large pot.
- 9) Place the pretzels into boiling water one at a time, for 30 seconds. Remove them from the water with a flat spatula and return them to the parchment lined baking sheet, shaping the pretzels into twists, if desired.
- 10) Mix the egg yolk with one tablespoon of water in a small bowl and brush each pretzel with the egg wash. Sprinkle each brushed pretzel with the coarse salt.
- 11) Bake pretzels 12 to 15 minutes or until dark golden brown. Remove from oven and transfer them to a cooling rack.

Honey Dijon Béchamel Sauce:

- 1) In a medium-sized saucepan, melt the butter. Add the flour and whisk until it becomes a thick paste.
- 2) Gradually whisk in the milk and bring the mixture to a boil, continuing to whisk until the sauce thickens. Reduce the heat to low and whisk for 7 minutes or until no floury taste remains.
- 3) Stir in the cheese, mustard, salt and pepper. Continue to whisk until cheese has melted. Remove the pan from the stove and allow the sauce to cool, slightly.