

Moroccan Cigars

These are called *briouats* in Morocco, where they are made with paper-thin pancakes called *ouarka*, but *fila* makes an easy and perfect substitute. They are elegant party fare that you can make by the hundred (perhaps with the help of your children) and keep uncooked in the freezer. In Morocco they are fried but it is much easier and just as good to bake them.

The most useful filling is meat. For 500 g (1 lb) *fila*, prepare the following minced meat filling:

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| 1 medium onion, finely chopped | Pinch of cayenne or, more |
| 4 tablespoons oil | optionally, a bunch of parsley, |
| 750 g (1½ lb) lean minced beef or | finely chopped, or a bunch of |
| lamb | fresh coriander, finely chopped |
| 2 teaspoons cinnamon | (or both) |
| ½ teaspoon allspice | 5 eggs |
| ¼ teaspoon ginger | 180 g (6 oz) butter, melted |
| Salt and pepper | |

Soften the onion in the oil. Add the meat and crush it with a fork. Add seasonings and spices and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, for 10 to 15 minutes until the meat is done. Add the herbs. Lightly beat the eggs in a bowl and pour them over the meat. Cook gently, stirring all the time, for a minute or so until the eggs have set to a creamy consistency. Let the filling cool. Add more spices and pepper if you like.

To roll the cigars: cut each sheet of *fila* into three rectangles and put them together in a pile so that they do not dry out.

Brush very lightly with melted butter.

Put a tablespoon of filling along one of the short edges, roll the *fila* over it, tuck the ends in to stop the filling falling out, then continue to roll up like a cigar. Place side by side on a greased tray, brush with melted butter and bake in a preheated slow oven (150°C/300°F/Mark 2) oven for ½ hour or until golden. Serve very hot.