Ground Beef & Cucumber Pita

Serves 6-8 | Makes about 4 cups filling

Pita bread can be an edible container for fillings. There is even a mini pita you can use for appetizer portions.

- **1 pound ground beef**
- **½ medium onion, chopped, about 1 cup**
- **2 large cloves garlic, minced,**
- **1 to 1½ teaspoons ground cumin**
- **Olive oil, if needed**
- **¼ cup dry red wine**
- **½ cup tomato sauce**
- **2 to 3 teaspoons minced fresh oregano**
- **2 tablespoons capers, rinsed and minced**
- **1 cup cooked garbanzo beans (canned OK)**
- **Kosher salt and pepper**
- **1 to 2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley**
- **2 large cucumbers, peeled, seeded then diced into cubes about the same size as the garbanzos, about 2 cups**
- **3 to 4 round pita, about 7 inches in diameter, cut in half**
- **Dijon mustard, mayonnaise or sour cream to taste (optional)**
- **Thinly shredded romaine or leaf lettuce (optional)**

Instructions: In a medium skillet over medium heat, brown the ground beef until little pink remains, breaking beef into small pieces with a spatula as it cooks. If the beef is very lean, you may need a little oil in the skillet unless it is non-stick. Remove beef from skillet and drain, placing beef into a small bowl. Discard the fat in the pan but do not wipe.

In the same skillet over medium heat, add the onions and cook until lightly browned and translucent before adding the garlic and then the cumin (you may need to add a little olive oil to the pan to keep it from burning). Just cook a bit longer until the garlic and cumin become fragrant.

Add the red wine to deglaze the pan. Add tomato sauce, oregano, capers, garbanzos and beef to the skillet. Reheat, and then season to taste with kosher salt and pepper.

To serve, warm the pitas by wrapping them in foil and placing in a moderately hot oven – about 375°, or wrap them in a clean towel and quickly microwave on medium setting. Stir parsley into the beef mixture. Mix cucumbers with the beef as you stuff each pita, about 1 cup beef filling to ¼ cup cucumber. If desired, spread Dijon mustard and/or prepared mayonnaise, or a mixture of mayonnaise and sour cream, inside the pitas before stuffing with beef filling, cucumber and lettuce, if using.

Per serving: 265 calories, 17 g protein, 29 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat (3 g saturated), 37 mg cholesterol, 457 mg sodium, 3 g fiber.