Bread & baking / India

Plain Paratha

A whole-wheat pan-fried flatbread with a shatteringly crisp outer crust and a tender, layered interior built by folding ghee into rolled dough — the flaky, golden staple of every Punjabi breakfast table, eaten hot off the tawa.

Time 50 min **Servings** 4

What you'll need.

- [ ] 4 parts Whole-wheat flour (atta), plus extra for dusting
- [ ] 2 parts Warm water
- [ ] 1 parts Ghee (for dough and layering)
- [ ] 0.1 parts Fine salt
- [ ] 0.5 parts Ghee (for cooking on tawa)

Let's make it.

01 Combine atta and salt in a large bowl. Add a small amount of ghee and rub into the flour until it resembles fine breadcrumbs. Gradually add warm water, mixing as you go, until a shaggy dough forms. Knead vigorously for 8–10 minutes on an unfloured surface until the dough is smooth, soft, and slightly tacky — it should feel like a soft earlobe, not stiff or sticky. Cover with a damp cloth and rest for 20 minutes.

02 Divide the dough into golf-ball portions. On a lightly floured surface, roll one ball into a 15 cm disc. Spread a thin smear of ghee across the surface. Fold the disc in half to a semicircle, then fold again to a triangle. Roll the triangle out again to a thin, even disc, about 18–20 cm across. The ghee between the folds creates the layers. Repeat for each portion.

03 Heat a tawa or cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until a drop of water skitters and evaporates immediately. Place the rolled paratha on the dry pan. Cook for 60–90 seconds until the surface turns from matte to slightly dry and small bubbles begin to appear. Flip. Cook the second side for 60 seconds, then add a generous smear of ghee to the top surface while pressing gently with a folded cloth (or spatula). Flip once more, add ghee to this side too, and cook until both surfaces have golden-brown blisters and the paratha has puffed slightly in places. Total time: 3–4 minutes per paratha.

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Servings are an estimate; check quantities in the source recipe.
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