

Baklava

This popular Middle Eastern dish comes in many forms, shapes and sizes and we love this version! Layers of flaky filo pastry encase cinnamon spiced crushed walnuts, sweetened with a delicious lemon syrup.



1 hour



Makes approx. 45 baklava



Ingredients

- 450g fresh walnuts, finely chopped in food processor
- 1 packet traditional chilled filo pastry (i.e. Antonioufilo.com.au) or frozen filo pastry
- 1 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 300g ghee (preferably vegetable)
- 100g unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup crushed pistachios (garnish)
- For the syrup:
 - 2 cups caster sugar
 - 1½ cups water
 - Juice of ½ a lemon

Method

1. Remove chilled filo pastry from refrigerator 30 minutes prior to use. If using a frozen packet, defrost in the refrigerator for 1 day, then remove from refrigerator 30 minutes prior to use.
2. To prepare the syrup, combine the sugar, water and lemon juice in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Leave to cool.
3. In a food processor, pulse walnuts just until fine but not powdered and place in mixing bowl. Large pieces of walnut will break the filo pastry, so remove larger pieces or pulse separately until fine. Add cinnamon and stir through chopped walnuts.
4. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Grease a large baking tray with butter.
5. Heat the ghee and butter together in a saucepan over low to medium heat, then set aside to cool a little.

Recipe continued overleaf...

Method (continued)

6. On a clean bench top, place one sheet of filo pastry and drizzle with 1 tsp of ghee and butter mixture. Place a second pastry sheet on top of the first, aligning the top edge of the new sheet approx 5cm down from the top edge of the base pastry sheet. Drizzle the top filo sheet with 1 tsp of ghee and butter mix.
7. At the halfway point of the top layer pastry sheet, create a line of crushed nuts along the full width of the pastry sheet (approx 1 heaped tbsp of nuts). Fold the bottom edge of the top layer pastry sheet to just cover the crushed nuts. Take the base sheet of filo pastry (approx 5cm) and fold on top of the new folded edge of the top filo sheet. Place a wooden skewer along the width of the pastry, approx 1cm from the bottom edge. Holding the pastry and skewer together, roll the pastry forward creating a pastry log around the skewer.
8. With the skewer still inside the pastry log, using your finger tips push the edge of the pastry towards the center, creating a concertina effect. Place the concertina pastry log on the prepared tray. Holding one end of the pastry log, gently remove the skewer. Repeat the process to create a new log and place on the prepared tray next to the previous log. Repeat until all pastry sheets (and nut mixture) have been used.
9. With a sharp knife cut the tray of pastry logs approx 5cm in width, creating the individual baklava logs. Spoon the ghee and butter mix over the baking tray of cut baklava logs, ensuring they are well covered (but not swimming in the ghee and butter mix). Place the tray in the fridge for 1 hour to allow the pastry to dry out a little then remove and bake in the oven for 25 minutes until crispy and golden. Remove from the oven and allow to cool down then cover with cool syrup and garnish with crushed pistachio. Store in airtight container at room temperature.