

Greek Cooking Class - April 16, 2009
Margarita Nafpaktitis

Many thanks to Margarita for these great recipes!



DOLMATHES (VEGETARIAN STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES)

2-3 medium onions,
chopped

3 c. rice

3 tbsp. parsley
(or more, to taste)

2/3 c. olive oil

4 ½ c. water

2 tbsp. dried dill
(or fresh dill, to taste)
salt and fresh ground
pepper,
to taste

3 lemons

1 large jar of grape leaves



In a medium saucepan, saute the onions in the olive oil until translucent.

Add rice, water, parsley, dill, salt and pepper to onion and stir.

Simmer until rice mixture is dry (rice will not be completely cooked through).

While rice mixture cooks, thoroughly rinse grape leaves, remove any tough stems, and put leaves in large bowl, covered with water.

Squeeze ½ lemon over cooked rice.

Place approx. one tablespoon of rice mixture in center of grape leaf (depends on size of leaf). Fold bottom of leaf over mixture, then sides of leaf, then roll all the way up toward top.

Arrange rolled leaves in large pot.

Squeeze 2 ½ lemons over rolled grape leaves in pot, add water to the point where you can just begin to see it in the gaps between the top layer of leaves (don't cover them all the way with water). Spread any remaining grape leaves over the top of the rolls.

Simmer grape leaves until done, usually 20-30 min. (choose a grape leaf from a layer below the surface to test whether done).

Usually served at room temperature.



TYROPITES (PHYLLO-CHEESE PIES)

1 c. crumbled feta
1 c. cottage cheese
2 sticks of butter, melted

1 lb. pkg. phyllo, defrosted
1 egg, beaten



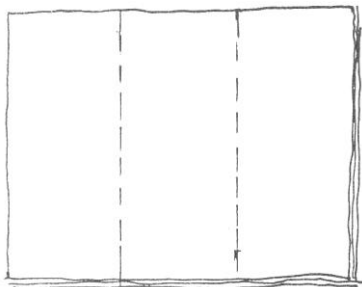
To defrost phyllo, leave unopened package in refrigerator overnight and the phyllo will be ready to use the next day. Don't thaw at room temperature, because the sheets tend to stick to each other.

Preheat oven to 425°.

Combine feta and cottage cheese in a bowl and mix well.

Add beaten egg and mix well.

Unroll the phyllo, cut into thirds with a sharp knife or kitchen scissors (see illustration below).



Work with one piece of phyllo at a time, keeping the rest covered with plastic wrap to keep them from drying out.

Use a pastry brush to evenly spread generous amount of butter on piece of phyllo you are working with, beginning at the edges and working inward. Use broad strokes and work fast to prevent the sheets from drying out.

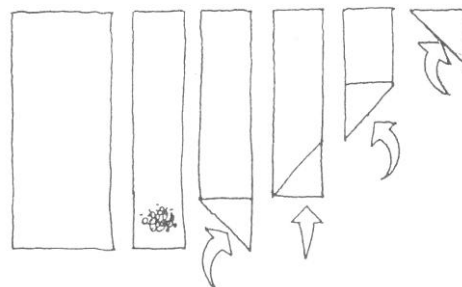
Place 1 tsp. of cheese filling on the piece of phyllo and fold into triangle (see illustration below).

Put finished triangles on ungreased baking sheets.

Brush tops with melted butter.

Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until golden.
Let cool about 5 minutes before serving.

Serve warm.



BAKLAVA (PHYLLO-WALNUT PASTRY)

1 lb. shelled walnuts (approx. 4 c.)
1 c. sugar
1 ½ tsp. cinnamon

1 lb. phyllo
2 sticks butter

2 ½ c. sugar
¼ c. honey
1 ¾ c. water



Note: total amount of sugar required is 3 ½ c. (some is in filling, some is in syrup)

Preheat oven to 325°.

Pulse walnuts in food processor until they look like large cookie crumbs.

Mix walnuts, 1 c. sugar, and cinnamon.

Butter a large baking pan and line with 5 sheets of phyllo, buttering each.

Thinly spread with nut mixture.

Add 2 more buttered phyllo sheets and thinly spread with nut mixture.

Continue until all of nut mixture is used, saving at least 5 sheets of phyllo for the top layer.

Cut baklava into diamond-shaped pieces with a sharp knife.

Bake on middle shelf of oven for 30 min.

While baklava is baking, combine remaining sugar, honey and water in saucepan.

Bring syrup to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 15 min.

Move baklava to top shelf of oven and bake 30 more min.

Remove from oven and pour hot syrup over hot baklava.

Served at room temperature.

SPANAKOPITA (SPINACH-PHYLLO PIE)

1 medium onion, finely
chopped
¼ c. olive oil
1 lb. spinach

½ lb. feta cheese
6 oz. ricotta cheese
3 eggs

1 lb. phyllo
1 stick butter, melted



Preheat oven to 425°.

Saute onion in olive oil until translucent.

Add spinach (washed and dried) and sauté with onion until all moisture has been evaporated.

Crumble feta, beat eggs, and mix both together with ricotta.

Combine cheese mixture with spinach.

Layer half of phyllo in bottom of baking pan, buttering each leaf using a pastry brush.

Spread spinach mixture over phyllo.

Top with remaining phyllo, buttering each leaf.

Cut top layer of phyllo into squares or diamonds with a sharp knife.

Bake at 425° until golden brown (35-40 min.).

TZATZIKI (CUCUMBER-YOGURT APPETIZER)

2 c. plain yogurt
2 large cucumbers
3 cloves garlic, minced

1 tbsp. white vinegar, or more, to taste
2 tbsp. olive oil
salt and pepper to taste



Put yogurt in a cheesecloth-lined sieve over a bowl. Drain several hours or overnight in the refrigerator.

Peel, seed, and coarsely grate cucumbers. Drain well in a colander and transfer to bowl.

Add garlic, vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper to cucumbers and mix well.

Add drained yogurt and mix well.

MELITZANOSALATA (EGGPLANT APPETIZER)

2 medium eggplants, approx. 1 lb. each
¼ c. olive oil
1 med. onion, minced
1 med. ripe tomato, peeled, seeded, and
chopped

3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste
8 pitted black Kalamata olives
3 tbsp. chopped parsley



Preheat oven to 450°.

Prick eggplants in several places with a fork and bake on a foil-covered pan for about 40 min., or until soft. Let cool.

While eggplant bakes, sauté onion in olive oil until translucent. Add tomato and sauté until all moisture has evaporated

Remove stems and peel eggplants, scraping flesh from skin. Remove any excess seeds, discard skin, and roughly chop eggplant.

Put chopped eggplant in a bowl and stir in onion-tomato mixture and 5 of the olives.

Pulse mixture in food processor until blended but still a little chunky.

Season with lemon juice, salt, pepper, and 2 tbsp. parsley and mix well.

Refrigerate, preferably overnight.

Garnish with remaining olives, sliced, and chopped parsley.