



IT'S
GREEK
TO ME



Appetizers

Hummus
Greek Salad
Spanakopita

Entrees

Moussaka
Grilled Pork Kebabs with Cucumber Tzatziki

Desserts

Baklava
Halva

Drinks

Hummus

Vegetarian Cooking, Linda Fraser

Serve with pita bread and fresh or grilled Mediterranean vegetables

Variation: For a stronger nutty flavor, substitute smooth peanut butter for the tahini paste.

Ingredients:

8 oz can chickpeas

2 garlic cloves, coarsely crushed

6 tbsp lemon juice

4 tbsp tahini

3 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp ground cumin

Salt and pepper

Paprika to garnish

Directions:

1. Drain the chickpeas, reserving the liquid from the can, and put them in a blender or food processor. Blend to a smooth paste, adding a small amount of the reserved liquid, if necessary.
2. Mix the garlic, lemon juice and tahini together and add to the blender or food processor. Process until smooth. With the machine running, gradually add 3 tablespoons of olive oil through the feeder tube or lid.
3. Add the cumin. Season with salt and pepper. Process to mix. Scrape the hummus into a bowl. Cover and chill until required.

Greek Salad

2009, Ina Garten, All Rights Reserved

Ingredients:

- 1 hothouse cucumber, unpeeled, seeded, and sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1 red bell pepper, large-diced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, large-diced
- 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 red onion, sliced in half-rounds
- 1/2 pound feta cheese, 1/2-inch diced (not crumbled)
- 1/2 cup calamata olives, pitted

For the vinaigrette:

- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup good red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup good olive oil

Directions:

Place the cucumber, peppers, tomatoes and red onion in a large bowl.

For the vinaigrette, whisk together the garlic, oregano, mustard, vinegar, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Still whisking, slowly add the olive oil to make an emulsion. Pour the vinaigrette over the vegetables. Add the feta and olives and toss lightly. Set aside for 30 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Serve at room temperature.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/greek-salad-recipe/index.html>

Spanakopita (Greek Spinach Pie)

Recipe courtesy Cat Cora

Ingredients:

For the dough: (some people in the reviews just used phyllo dough to make it simpler)

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup shortening, plus more for the baking pan
- 1/3 cup ice water
- Dried beans, for pie weights

For the spinach filling:

- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus additional for greasing the baking pan
- 6 cups chopped onion (about 3 medium onions)
- 3/4 cup uncooked long-grain white rice
- 4 1/2 pounds fresh spinach (about 3 bunches), stemmed
- 2 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3/4 cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh dill
- 3 scallions (white and green), chopped
- 1 1/2 cups crumbled feta
- 1 egg beaten with 1 teaspoon water, for egg wash

Directions:

In a food processor, pulse the flour and salt until combined. Add the shortening and pulse until the mixture resembles cornmeal mixed with pea-sized bits, about 10 times. While the motor is running, drizzle in the water until a dough forms.

Form the dough into a disk, wrap it in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled, at least 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Grease a 9 by 13-inch baking pan. Divide the dough in half; press half the dough up and around the inside of the pan. Set the remaining dough aside covered with plastic wrap.

Line the pan with foil and fill with dried beans. Bake the dough for 20 minutes and remove the beans and foil. Continue baking the crust until golden brown, about 10 minutes more. Let the pan cool on a rack.

Meanwhile, make the spinach filling: Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onions and cook, stirring, until lightly browned, about 6 minutes. Add the rice and cook, stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes. Add the spinach, little by little (adding more as the previous batch wilts), and cook, stirring, until completely wilted. Season with the salt and pepper and stir in the parsley, dill, and scallions.

Drain the spinach mixture in a colander in the sink and let cool.

Once the spinach is cool, stir in the feta and spread the mixture into the crust. Roll the remaining dough out on a well-floured surface, into a rectangle large enough to cover the baking pan. Top the spinach with the dough and pinch around the sides to seal. Score the top of the pie in the center, brush the surface of the dough with egg wash, and bake until golden brown, about 40 minutes.

Remove the pie from the oven, let cool, cut into squares and serve.

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/cat-cora/spanakopitagreek-spinach-pie-recipe/index.html>

Moussaka

From Food Network Kitchens

Ingredients

- EGGPLANT
- 2 large eggplants (about 2 3/4 pounds), unpeeled and cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch slices
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- MEAT SAUCE
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
- Pinch of ground cloves
- 1 cinnamon stick, broken in half
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus to taste
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1 1/2 cups whole, peeled, canned tomatoes (with puree), roughly chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- CUSTARD SAUCE
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 cups whole milk, room temperature
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- 1 large egg
- 2 large egg yolks
-
- 1/2 cup dried breadcrumbs

- 3 tablespoons Pecorino Romano

Directions

Bake the eggplant: Preheat the oven to 475 degrees F. Brush the eggplant slices on both sides with the oil and lay on 2 small or 1 large foil-lined baking sheet. Season with salt and pepper. Cover with foil and bake until the eggplant is soft, about 25 minutes. Set aside covered.

Make the meat sauce. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, until lightly browned, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the beef, oregano, allspice, cloves, and cinnamon. Break the meat up into small pieces and season with the 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 2 minutes. Lower the heat to medium and cook, stirring, until just cooked but still slightly pink inside, about 1 minute more. Add the tomato and bay leaf and bring to a simmer. Cover, and cook until the sauce is thickened and fragrant, about 20 minutes.

Make the custard sauce. Melt the butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in the flour until smooth. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat and add the milk, salt, and nutmeg. Return to the heat and while whisking constantly, bring to a boil. Simmer 2 minutes. Transfer the sauce to a bowl and stir to cool. When the sauce is cool, whisk in the egg and yolks.

Assemble the [moussaka](#). Lower the oven to 350 degrees F. Brush a 9 x 13 x 2-inch casserole dish with the oil. Scatter the breadcrumbs over the bottom of the pan. Lay half of the eggplant in the pan, overlapping the slices if needed. Cover with half of the meat sauce and smooth with a rubber spatula. Repeat with the remaining eggplant and meat sauce. Pour the custard sauce over the layered mixture and smooth with a rubber spatula. Sprinkle with the Pecorino Romano and bake, uncovered, until lightly browned and the custard is set, about 1 hour.

Remove the moussaka from the oven and let rest for 10 minutes. Use a slotted spoon or spatula to serve.

- Copyright 2001 Television Food Network, G.P. All rights reserved
- <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchens/moussaka-recipe/index.html>

Grilled Pork Kebabs with Cucumber Tzatziki

May 2010 Everyday with Rachael Ray

Ingredients

Tips: Season the tortillas with dried oregano after brushing with extra-virgin olive oil. Add boiled new potatoes, cherry tomatoes or zucchini chunks to the skewers before grilling. Use any leftover tzatziki as a burger condiment.

- 4 burrito-size flour tortillas, halved
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 1 pound pork loin, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 onions, cut lengthwise into 8 wedges each
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 cup plain greek-style yogurt
- 3 tablespoons chopped mint
- 1/2 english cucumber, grated

Directions

1. Preheat a grill to medium- high. Brush the tortillas with 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Toast on the grill until browned, about 5 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, toss the pork and onions with 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil and season with the oregano, salt and pepper; thread onto 4 skewers.
3. Meanwhile, on a cutting board and using the flat side of a knife, mash the garlic and 1/2 teaspoon salt into a paste. Transfer to a small bowl and whisk in the yogurt, mint, remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Press the cucumber in a sieve to remove excess liquid, then stir the cucumber into the yogurt mixture.
4. Grill the skewers, turning occasionally, until lightly charred and cooked through, 8 to 10 minutes. Serve with the tzatziki and tortillas.

Baklava

Published March 1, 2004. Cooks Illustrated

Why this recipe works:

We wanted our baklava recipe to produce crisp, flaky, buttery lozenges, light yet rich, filled with fragrant nuts and spices, and sweetened just assertively enough to pair with a Turkish coffee. To achieve this goal, we sprinkled store-bought phyllo dough with three separate layers of nuts (a combination of almonds and walnuts) flavored with cinnamon and cloves. We clarified the butter for even browning. We found that cutting the baklava rather than just scoring it before baking helped it absorb the sugar syrup. Finally, allowing the baklava to sit overnight before serving improved its the flavor of our baklava recipe and was worth the wait. ([less](#))

Makes 32 to 40 pieces

A straight-sided traditional (not nonstick) metal baking pan works best for making baklava; the straight sides ensure that the pieces will have nicely shaped edges, and the surface of a traditional pan will not be marred by the knife during cutting, as would a nonstick surface. If you don't have this type of pan, a glass baking dish will work. Make sure that the phyllo is fully thawed before use; leave it in the refrigerator overnight or on the countertop for four to five hours. When assembling, use the nicest, most intact phyllo sheets for the bottom and top layers; use sheets with tears or ones that are smaller than the size of the pan in the middle layers, where their imperfections will go unnoticed. If, after assembly, you have remaining clarified butter, store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator; it can be used for sautéing.

Ingredients

- Sugar Syrup
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice from 1 lemon
- 3 strips lemon zest, removed in large strips with vegetable peeler
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 5 whole cloves
- 1/8 teaspoon table salt
- Nut Filling
- 8 ounces blanched slivered almonds
- 4 ounces walnuts
- 1 1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon

- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon table salt
- Pastry and Butter
- 1 1/2 cups unsalted butter (3 sticks), clarified per instructions below, melted, and cooled slightly (about 1 cup)
- 1 pound frozen phyllo, thawed (see note)

Instructions

1. **1. For the sugar syrup:** Combine syrup ingredients in small saucepan and bring to full boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally to ensure that sugar dissolves. Transfer to 2-cup measuring cup and set aside to cool while making and baking baklava; when syrup is cool, discard spices and lemon zest. (Cooled syrup can be refrigerated in airtight container up to 4 days.)
2. **2. For the nut filling:** Pulse almonds in food processor until very finely chopped, about twenty 1-second pulses; transfer to medium bowl. Pulse walnuts in food processor until very finely chopped, about fifteen 1-second pulses; transfer to bowl with almonds and toss to combine. Measure out 1 tablespoon nuts and set aside for garnish. Add cinnamon, cloves, sugar, and salt; toss well to combine.
3. **3. To assemble and bake:** Brush 13- by 9-inch traditional (not nonstick) baking pan with butter. Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Unwrap and unfold phyllo on large cutting board; carefully smooth with hands to flatten. Following illustration 1 below, and using baking pan as guide, cut sheets crosswise with chef's knife, yielding two roughly evenly sized stacks of phyllo (one may be narrower than other). Cover with plastic wrap, then damp kitchen towel to prevent drying.
4. **4.** Following illustration 3, place one phyllo sheet (from wider stack) in bottom of baking pan and brush until completely coated with butter. Repeat with 7 more phyllo sheets (from wider stack), brushing each with butter.
5. **5.** Following illustration 4, evenly distribute about 1 cup nuts over phyllo. Cover nuts with phyllo sheet (from narrower stack) and dab with butter (phyllo will slip if butter is brushed on). Repeat with 5 more phyllo sheets (from narrower stack), staggering sheets slightly if necessary to cover nuts, and brushing each with butter. Repeat layering with additional 1 cup nuts, 6 sheets phyllo, and remaining 1 cup nuts. Finish with 8 to 10 sheets phyllo (from wider stack), using nicest and most intact sheets for uppermost layers and brushing each except final sheet with butter. Following illustration 6, use palms of hands to compress layers, working from center outward to press out any air pockets. Spoon 4 tablespoons butter on top layer and brush to cover all surfaces. Following illustration 7, use bread knife or other serrated knife with pointed tip in gentle sawing motion to cut baklava into diamonds, rotating pan as necessary to complete cuts. (Cut on bias into eighths on both diagonals.)
6. **6.** Bake until golden and crisped, about 1 1/2 hours, rotating baking pan halfway through baking. Immediately after removing baklava from oven, pour cooled syrup over cut lines until about 2 tablespoons remain (syrup will sizzle when it hits hot pan); drizzle remaining syrup over surface. Garnish center of each piece with pinch of reserved ground nuts. Cool to room temperature on wire rack, about 3 hours, then cover with foil and let stand at least 8 hours before serving. (Once cooled, baklava can be served, but flavor and texture improve if left to stand at least 8 hours. Baklava can be wrapped tightly in foil and kept at room temperature up to 10 days.)

Step-by-Step
Assembling Baklava



• 1. Cover phyllo to keep moist.



• 2. Butter phyllo to fit in pan.



• 3. Butter bottom layers.



Step-by-Step
Clarifying Butter

4. Spread nut Filling.



• 5. Butter more layers.



• 6. Compress layers.



• 7. Cut into diamonds, then bake.



• 8. Pour syrup over cut lines and garnish each piece with nuts.



- 1. Let melted butter settle for 10 minutes. With soup spoon, carefully skim off foam from surface.



- 2. Spoon butterfat into small cup, tipping saucepan gently and only when it becomes necessary.



- 3. Make sure to leave water and milk solids behind in saucepan so they can be discarded.

<http://www.cooksillustrated.com/recipes/detail.asp?docid=6047>

Halva (A Greek Sweet Using Semolina)

evelyn/athens's Note:

“This is a type of pudding, very popular here in Greece. Economical to make and tasty.”

Ingredients:

1 cup best quality olive oil (or you can use a combo of 1/2 cup olive oil and 1/2 cup corn oil or butter, anything totalling 1 cup)
2 cups fine ground semolina
1 cup chopped walnuts or 1/2 cup pine nuts
2 cups sugar
2 cups water

2 cups milk

Garnish:

coarsely ground walnuts or pine nuts, toasted
sesame seed, toasted (optional)
cinnamon

Directions:

- 1 . Dissolve the sugar in the water and milk and bring it to a bare simmer.
- 2 . Boil for 5 minutes and remove from heat.
- 3 . At the same time, brown the semolina in the oil on medium-high heat, stirring continuously.
- 4 . This should take 4-5 minutes. Add the nutmeats for the last 2-3 minutes to toast them slightly.
- 5 . When the semolina has taken a golden brown colour, add the syrup to it (taking care not to burn your hands, as this bubbles and steams up excessively- be prepared!), turn down the heat and keep stirring until you get a kind of thick porridge. Continue cooking until the mixture is very thick and pulls away from the sides of the pan as you stir.
- 6 . Spoon into a buttered or oiled bundt pan and pack down with the back of a spoon. Let it cool. (I use a silicone bundt pan for this - eliminates the need to grease, and my halvah comes out in a pretty pattern).
- 7 . Unmold onto a platter and sprinkle with more walnuts, toasted sesame (optional) and cinnamon.
- 8 . You should not put this dessert in the refrigerator.
- 9 . It can keep for a few days outside the refrigerator, assuming you can gather enough will power not to eat it all at once.
- 10 . Some oil may start to drain off after a day or so, but this is to be expected, just dab it away with some kitchen paper.

Read more at: <http://greek.food.com/recipe/halva-a-greek-sweet-using-semolina-83998?oc=linkback>