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Melomakarona recipe (Greek Christmas Honey Cookies)

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A traditional melomakarona recipe! These Greek Christmas honey cookies (melomakarona) are super quick to bake, so much fun to make and highly addictive!

For the melomakarona

150g thin semolina (5.3 ounces)

500g flour (soft) (17.6 ounces)

1/2 tbsp baking powder
100g orange juice (3.5 ounces)
3 tsbps cognac
100g sugar (3.5 ounces)
1 flat tbsp powdered cinnamon
1/3 tsp nutmeg (powder)
1/3 tsp clove (powder)
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 tbsp baking soda
90g water (3.2 ounces)
125g olive oil (4.4 ounces)
125g vegetable oil (4.4 ounces)
50g honey (1.8 ounces)
zest of 2 oranges

For the syrup

300g water (10 ounces)
600g sugar (20 ounces)
2 cinnamon sticks
3 whole cloves
1 orange, cut in half
180g honey (7 ounces)

To garnish

200g chopped walnuts (7 ounces)
powdered cinnamon (optional)
powdered clove (optional)

Instructions

To prepare this melomakarona recipe start by making the syrup first. In a pot add all the ingredients for the syrup, except the honey and bring to the boil. Boil for 3-4 minutes, until the sugar has dissolved and remove from the stove. Stir in the honey and set aside to cool completely.

Prepare the dough for the melomakarona. In a bowl add the semolina, flour and baking powder and blend with a whisk to combine.

In another large bowl add the orange juice, the cognac, the sugar and spices (nutmeg, cinnamon, clove, vanilla). At the end add the baking soda and whisk immediately the ingredients for 5-10 seconds, until the ingredients combine and the baking soda dissolves and starts to foam. Pour in the bowl the water, the oil, the orange zest and honey and whisk to combine.

Now it's time to combine the two mixtures. Add the mixed flour, semolina and

baking powder (from step 2) in the bowl with the rest of the ingredients from step 3 and start kneading the dough for the melomakarona. Knead the dough for the melomakarona using your hands, until the ingredients combine and the dough is smooth and soft. Careful not to overwork the dough as they will become tough.

Preheat the oven at 180C. Layer the bottom of 2 baking trays with parchment paper and start shaping the melomakarona. Pinch a portion of dough about the size of a walnut/ 30g (or bigger, if you prefer) and shape with your palms into a smooth oblong shape, like a small egg. Place on the baking tray, push lightly the top with a fork and make some holes on top (not all the way down). Continue with the rest of the dough.

Place the baking trays with the melomakarona in the oven and bake for approx. 20 minutes, until the melomakarona are lightly browned and cooked through. If you've made them bigger, you'll need to bump up the cooking time!!

When the melomakarona come out of the oven, place them in the cold syrup, flipping them with a slotted spoon to absorb the syrup for approx. 10-20 seconds, depending on how syrupy you like them. (When adding syrup to the melomakarona it's best do so in 2-3 batches). Remove the cookies using a slotted spoon, place on a platter and sprinkle with chopped walnuts.

Store the melomakarona at room temperature in an airtight container. They will last for all your Christmas Holidays!

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