

From Eileen Koteris,
Co-host "Plain & Fancy Cooking"



Ingredients:

1 (16 oz.) pkg. phyllo pastry
3 sticks unsalted butter, melted (use only clarified part)

Syrup-

2 cups sugar
2 cups water
juice of 1/2 lemon
1 cinnamon stick

Filling -

1 lb. walnuts (about 3 cups), crushed and toasted
3 T. sugar
1/2 tsp. cinnamon

To Prepare:

First, make the syrup. Combine the sugar, water, lemon juice and cinnamon stick and cook over a low heat until mixture starts to boil. Simmer for 10 min. until syrup coats the back of a spoon. Set aside to cool.

Next, blend the filling ingredients in a bowl and set aside. Then, preheat your oven to 350°. Butter the bottom of a 15 1/2" x 10 1/2" x 1" jelly roll pan (metal pan works the best).

Now, to create your baklava, follow these steps, keeping the phyllo pastry covered with a damp towel as you work so it won't dry out:

Lay 4 sheets of pastry in bottom of pan. Brush on butter.

Lay 4 more sheets. Butter.

Lay 2 more sheets. Butter.

Sprinkle on 1/2 of the nut filling.

Lay 2 more sheets. Butter.

Lay 2 more sheets. Butter.

Sprinkle with remaining nut filling.

Lay 2 more sheets. Butter.

Lay last 4 sheets, butter alternately. Butter top sheet generously.

Fold under any edges. Cut in diamond shapes all the way through so the butter goes in between layers and the pastry cooks better. Bake about 30 min. in 350° oven or until light golden brown, checking after 20 min. Remove from oven and drizzle cool syrup over all. Cool in pan to absorb syrup. Recipe makes about 40 pieces. Enjoy!

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