



RECIPE OF THE WEEK: 05/12/2022

Karythopita Athinaiki (Athenian Walnut Cake)

Undoubtedly this is one of the most popular Greek desserts. The cake has delicious aromas of cloves and cinnamon and is soaked with honey-flavoured syrup. It has a light and fluffy texture.

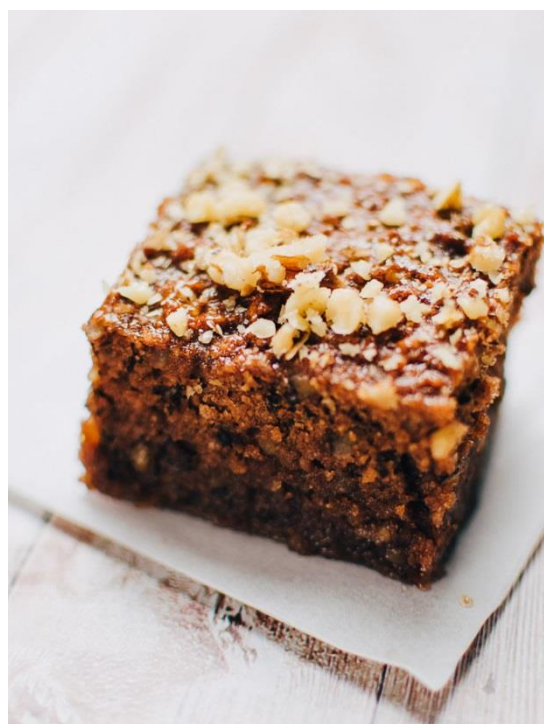
Ingredients (10-12 pieces)

For the syrup

400g sugar
400ml water
2 tbsp Greek thyme-honey
1 cinnamon stick
3-4 cloves
Peel of 1 orange or lemon
2 tbsp brandy

For the cake batter

4 large free-range eggs at room temperature
150g unsalted butter at room temperature
150g caster sugar
1 tbsp vanilla essence or seeds from 1 vanilla pod
350g plain flour
1 level tsp baking powder
a pinch of salt
1 tbsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground cloves
¼ tsp nutmeg
4 tbsp brandy
zest of 1 lemon or orange
350g walnuts, finely chopped, some extra for sprinkling



For greasing the tray

some butter and flour

Method

1. Put the sugar, water and rest of the ingredients into a saucepan. Now make the syrup by bringing the mixture to the boil and stir over a medium-heat. Turn the heat down and simmer for 5 minutes until the sugar dissolves and the syrup thickens slightly. Set aside to cool.
2. Pre-heat the oven to 190°C/ 170°C fan/gas 5.
3. Separate the egg yolks from the whites and beat the latter with a fork for 5 minutes until stiff. Alternatively, you can beat the whites in a mixer for 3-4 minutes.
4. Cream the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add the vanilla essence and egg yolks one by one, beating continuously.

5. Fold in half the beaten egg whites using a metal spoon. Sift the flour with the baking powder and gradually add to the mixture with the cinnamon and cloves, beating all the time. Add the brandy, orange or lemon zest and walnuts to the butter mixture and mix well with a spoon. Gently fold in the remaining egg whites.
6. Pour the karythopita mixture into a 23cm round cake tin or a baking tray measuring 30x23x5cm lined with greaseproof paper. Grease the baking sheet with some melted butter and sprinkle lightly with flour.
7. Bake in the oven for about 40 to 45 minutes. Do not open the oven whilst baking.
8. When the cake is baked take it out of the oven and let it cool lightly. Take the orange or lemon peel and cinnamon stick out of the syrup and with a ladle, pour it slowly over the cake. Let it soak for at least 20 minutes. Cut the cake into square or diamond-shaped pieces. Sprinkle some walnuts onto the cake and serve with ice-cream.

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