



RECIPE OF THE WEEK: 20/05/2020

SFOUGATO (FROM RHODES) (COURGETTE AND MINCED MEAT OMELETTE)

This is a fragrant dish of courgette or other vegetables, minced meat mixed with plenty of eggs and flavoured with grated hard cheese such as kefalotyri, kaseri or parmesan. Sfougato is the equivalent of the Italian frittata which is a cake made of eggs and lightly cooked vegetables. The Italians cut it like a cake and eat it hot, cold or warm and is fairly solid with a golden crust on top. Sfougato may be likened to tortilla, the Spanish version which contains a mixture of fried sliced onions and potatoes. It can also contain green and red peppers, garlic and slices of hot paprika sausage, served hot or cold in tapas bars. The Greeks cook the sfougato in rectangular or round trays cut into squares or diamond shapes like in baklava before serving. Although courgette is a favourite choice of vegetable in this dish, some people use aubergines, onions, leeks, potatoes, green beans or tomatoes. The inclusion of tomatoes will result in a soft and creamy texture.

Ingredients

Serves 6

5tbsp olive oil plus extra for greasing
2 shallots, finely sliced
1 clove garlic, crushed
700g minced beef or lamb
450g courgette, washed, rinsed and cubed
300ml stock or water
Juice of ½ a lemon
Seas salt and freshly ground black pepper
Small handful of flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
Small handful of dill, finely chopped
4 free-range eggs
50g toasted breadcrumbs
85g kefalotyri, kaseri or parmesan
To garnish a small handful of flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped.

Method

1. Heat the oven to 180°C (170°C fan, gas mark 4)
2. Heat the olive oil in a large heavy frying pan and sauté the onion and garlic over a medium heat until soft but not browned. Add the meat and sauté, stirring continuously for 4-5 minutes or until light golden brown. Add the courgette, lemon juice, liquid, salt and pepper, parsley and dill and cook over a low heat for 20 minutes or until the meat is tender and the sauce thickens.
3. Beat the eggs until light and fluffy. When the meat and courgette mixture cools down slightly fold into this the beaten eggs.
4. Grease a medium-sized round 28cm baking dish or a 25x25cm roasting tin and sprinkle half of the toasted breadcrumbs all over the base. Pour in the meat and courgette mixture spreading it evenly, sprinkle the remaining breadcrumbs and the grated cheese on the top evenly.
5. Bake in a pre-heated oven for 20-25 minutes or until firm and golden brown on top.
6. Cut into diamond or square shapes, sprinkle with parsley and serve with juicy black olives and wild green leaves.

Note if you put the baking dish in a larger pan with boiling water or a bain-marie and put it in the oven the sfougato will cook more slowly and will set better.