

Baklava with Sweet Cheese

Ingredients

For the baklava

- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 3 1/2 cups milk, divided
- 3 Tbsp sugar
- 16 oz cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 [kashta](#) or heavy cream
- 1 Tbsp rose water or 1 tsp orange blossom water
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1 package phyllo dough, defrosted

For the syrup

- 2 cups water
- 1 cups sugar
- 1 lemon slice
- 2 tsp honey
- 1 tsp rosewater

Directions

Heat oven to 400°F.

In a small bowl, dissolve the cornstarch in 1 cup of milk. Set aside.

Heat remaining milk over medium heat in a medium saucepan. Add the sugar and bring to a boil. Turn heat to medium-low. Whisk in the dissolved cornstarch and continue cooking, whisking briskly, until it thickens. Continue cooking for five minutes. Add the cream cheese and mix until dissolved. Mix in the cream and rose water. Set aside.

Grease a 13" x 9" baking dish with the melted butter.

Divide the phyllo dough into two and keep one half covered so it doesn't dry out. Place a sheet of phyllo dough on the baking pan and brush with the melted

butter Repeat with the rest of the first half of the phyllo dough, one sheet at the time.

Pour the custard on top of the prepared phyllo dough and smooth with a knife. Carefully place a sheet from the remaining phyllo dough half on top of the custard and brush with the melted butter. Repeat with the rest of the phyllo dough, one sheet at the time.

Score the baklava into diamond shapes, being careful not to cut through the bottom phyllo sheets. Place in the oven and bake until golden brown, around 15 to 20 minutes. Let baklava cool

Meanwhile, prepare the syrup

Place water, sugar and lemon slice in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir until the sugar is dissolved and continue cooking for 5 more minutes. Add the honey and rosewater and turn off the heat.

Once the baklava is cooled, pour the syrup on the baklava. Allow to rest for 8 hours before serving.