

OLIVE OIL SEMOLINA COOKIES

MELOMAKARONA

Yield: 45 cookies

Ingredients	Amounts
Olive oil, light, mellow ripe fruitiness	1 ½ cups
Sugar	1/3 cup
Fine semolina	1 cup
Oranges grated zest of	2 ea.
Orange juice	2/3 cup
Salt	½ tsp.
Cloves, ground	1 tsp.
Cinnamon, ground	2 tsp.
Baking soda	½ tsp.
Baking powder	1½ tsp.
Brandy	½ cup
Walnuts, almonds or a combination, ground	1 cup
Cake flour, sifted	3 ½ cups + more as needed
 <i>Honey Syrup</i>	
Sugar	½ cup
Honey, Greek, thyme-scented*	1 cup
Water	1 ½ cups
 Walnuts and almonds, coarsely chopped, to sprinkle the cookies	 2 cups

Method

1. Add the oil and sugar in the bowl of a mixer and blend for 2 minutes on medium. Add the semolina, the orange zest and juice, salt, cloves, and cinnamon. Blend another 3 minutes.
2. In a small bowl dilute the baking soda and the baking powder in the brandy and add them to the mixer together with the ground nuts. Blend for 2 minutes more.
3. In a big bowl add the flour and toss with a spatula to sift. Pour in the mixture from the blender and with a large spatula or with your hands draw flour into the wet ingredients to mix, creating a soft, oily dough.
4. Turn the dough out onto a working surface, adding a little more flour (1-2 tablespoons) if it is too soft and difficult to shape. Knead for 2-3 minutes, then cover with plastic wrap and let the dough stand for 20-30 minutes.
5. Preheat the oven to 375°F (200 C).
6. Shape a large tablespoon of the dough into ovals. Press the tines of a fork on the surface to create ridges that will hold the topping.
7. Place the cookies about 1 inch apart, on baking sheets lined with parchment paper.

8. Bake for about 20 minutes, or until they start to color. Let cool slightly on a rack.
9. Meanwhile, make the syrup: In a medium saucepan, simmer the sugar, honey and water for 5 minutes and remove from the heat. Let cool to just warm.
10. Drop 6-8 cold cookies at the time in the honey syrup and let them soak about 2 minute or a bit longer, depending how soft or crunchy you like your melomakarona. Sprinkle a few nuts on a plate or container and make a layer of syrup-drenched cookies. Sprinkle generously with nuts and make more layers, sprinkling each with nuts.
11. Alternatively, you can place the cookies in a large, deep dish or baking pan that holds them snugly, and pour the syrup over them. Let stand for 15 minutes. Flip the cookies to moisten the other side and let them stand until they have absorbed most of the syrup.
12. Sprinkle with nuts and arrange on plates or airtight containers.
13. Better let stand for 1 day before serving. Store for up to 1 month.

NOTE: Use a strongly flavored honey for melomakarona. Our local thyme-scented honey is ideal, but pine honey works well too. If you have a light honey simmer 3-4 thyme branches in the syrup. Remove after it cools.

Source: Aglaia Kremezi

<https://www.aglaiakremezi.com/melomakarona-honey-infused-olive-oil-orange-and-spice-cookies/>