

CHOCOLATE BAKLAVA (24 pieces)

Source: WINE SPECTATOR March 31, 2003 (Chef Michael Moorhouse)

Cook/Prep Time: less than 2 hours

INGREDIENTS:

1 C unsalted pistachios, chopped
1/2 lb bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
2 TBS sugar
1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp ground cloves
14 sheets phyllo dough (about 1/2 lb, 16x12" sheets), at room temperature
1/2 C unsalted butter, melted
Syrup (recipe below)

DIRECTIONS:

Syrup: In medium-sized, heavy bottomed saucepan, combine 2/3 C sugar, 1/2 C water, 3 TBS honey & 2 TBS orange juice - bring to boil - turn heat down & simmer 5 minutes - remove from heat & let cool.

Baklava: In medium-sized bowl, mix together nuts, chocolate, sugar, cinnamon & cloves. Lay phyllo sheets flat on work surface & cut them in half crosswise so you have roughly 8x12" rectangles. Cover surface with damp cloth so sheets don't dry out while you work.

Using a pastry brush, butter bottom & sides of 8" square baking dish - lay 2 sheets of phyllo in bottom of pan, letting excess go up sides - brush phyllo with melted butter - repeat process till there are 10 sheets in pan.

Sprinkle 1/3 of chocolate mixture evenly over surface of dough - place 4 sheets of phyllo atop mixture, buttering 2/time - sprinkle another third of chocolate mixture evenly over dough & top with 4 more phyllo sheets, buttering 2 at a time - sprinkle remaining third of chocolate mixture evenly over dough - lay remaining 10 phyllo sheets on top, buttering 2 at a time + buttering top sheet. Trim any excess phyllo dough from sides of pan so the pastry is level & neat. Cover with plastic wrap & chill in refrigerator 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350° F - remove baklava from refrigerator & cut into 24 pieces with sharp knife - bake 50 minutes till golden. Remove from oven & pour syrup even over top - allow baklava to stand & absorb syrup for at least 2 hours before serving. Store, covered, at room temperature.