

# Saganaki Halloumi

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Deep fried strips of halloumi cheese

## Ingredients

500gms halloumi cheese  
flour (for dredging)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup olive oil (or less)  
2 lemons, cut into wedges

## Directions

Cut the cheese into strips 2cm wide and 1cm thick.

Place strips one by one under the cold water tap and coat lightly with flour, set aside until you have dredged all the strips.

Heat oil in a heavy skillet and pan fry the cheese, turn once until golden brown on both sides.

Remove dab with paper towels and serve immediately with lemon wedges.

THE  
COOKERY

by The Secret Jozie Chef

The Colony Shopping Centre, 345 Jan Smuts Avenue, Craighall, 2024.

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# Pastitsio

Lasagne the way Greeks do it!!

## Ingredients

Olive oil, to grease  
2 tablespoons dried (packaged) breadcrumbs  
1 x 500g pkt Macherroni elbows pasta  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1kg beef mince  
1 brown onion, coarsely chopped  
3 garlic cloves, crushed  
1 x 400g bottle passata  
1 x can peeled plum tomatoes, chopped  
1tsp dried origanum  
1 tsp fresh chopped origanum  
80ml (1/3 cup) water  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
70g (1 cup) shredded parmesan

## Bechamel sauce

80g butter  
50g (1/3 cup) plain flour  
1L (4 cups) milk  
4 eggs, lightly whisked

## Method

Preheat oven to 180°C. Brush a 6.5cm-deep, 26 x 33cm (base measurement) ovenproof dish with oil to grease. Add the breadcrumbs and shake to coat.

Cook the pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water following packet directions or until al dente. Drain. Return to the pan.

Meanwhile, heat half the oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Add half the mince and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes or until mince changes colour. Transfer to a heatproof bowl. Repeat with remaining mince, reheating the pan between batches.

Heat the remaining oil in the pan. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until onion is soft. Add the mince, passata, water and cinnamon and cook, stirring, for 5-8 minutes or until the sauce thickens slightly.

To make the bechamel sauce, melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat until foaming. Add flour and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until the mixture bubbles. Remove from heat. Gradually add the milk, stirring constantly until smooth. Place the pan over medium heat and cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce thickens. Remove from heat and whisk in the egg. Season with salt and pepper.

Add 310ml (1 1/4 cups) of the bechamel sauce to the pasta and stir until well combined. Place half the pasta mixture in the prepared pan. Spoon over the mince mixture. Top with the remaining pasta mixture. Spread the remaining bechamel sauce over the top. Sprinkle with parmesan. Bake for 45-50 minutes or until golden. Serve.

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# Spanakopita

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1kg. fresh spinach, washed, dried, trimmed, and coarsely chopped

3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil

1 bunch scallions (about 3 oz. or 10 small), white and light-green parts only, trimmed and finely chopped

2 cups crumbled feta cheese (10 oz.)

1/2 cup finely grated Greek kefalotyri cheese or Parmigiano-Reggiano

2 large eggs, lightly beaten

1/2 cup finely chopped fresh dill

1/3 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

1/4 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

Kosher or fine sea salt

For the assembly:

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil for brushing; more as needed

Eighteen 9x14-inch sheets frozen phyllo dough, thawed and at room temperature

2 tsp. milk

**TIP:**  
Phyllo dries out very fast and becomes brittle when exposed to the air. Check out our test kitchen tips for working with it.  
Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F.

**Make the filling:** Heat a 10-inch straight-sided saute pan over medium-high heat. Add a few large handfuls of the spinach and cook, tossing gently with tongs. As the spinach starts to wilt, add the rest a few handfuls at a time. Cook until all the spinach is wilted and bright green, about 4 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the spinach to a colander set in a sink. Let cool slightly and squeeze with your hands to extract as much of the remaining liquid as you can.

Wipe the pan dry with a paper towel. Heat the oil in the pan over medium heat. Add the scallions and cook until soft and fragrant, about 4 minutes. Stir in the spinach, turn off the heat, and let cool for 5 minutes. Then stir in the cheeses, eggs, dill, parsley, nutmeg, and 1/2 tsp. salt and mix thoroughly.

**Assemble the pie:** With a pastry brush, lightly coat the bottom and sides of a 9x13x2-inch baking pan with some of the oil. Working quickly, lightly oil one side of a phyllo sheet and lay it in the pan oiled side up and off center so that it partially covers the bottom and reaches halfway up one long side of the pan (the edge on the bottom of the pan will be about 1 inch from the side). Lightly oil the top of another phyllo sheet and lay it oiled side up and off center so it reaches halfway up the other long side of the pan. (If your pan has sloped sides, the sheets may be slightly longer than the bottom of the pan; if so, let the excess go up one short side of the pan and then alternate with subsequent sheets.) Repeat this pattern with 4 more phyllo sheets.

Next, lightly oil the tops of 3 phyllo sheets and layer them oiled side up and centered in the pan. Spread the filling evenly over the last layer.

Repeat the oiling and layering of the remaining 9 phyllo sheets over the filling in the same way you layered the previous 9. With the oiled bristles of the pastry brush, push the edges of the phyllo down around the sides of the pan to enclose the filling completely.

With a sharp knife, score the top phyllo layer into 24 rectangles, being careful not to cut all the way through to the filling. Using the same pastry brush, brush the milk along all the score marks (this will keep the phyllo from flaking up along the edges of the squares). Bake the spanakopita until the top crust is golden brown, 35 to 45 minutes. Let cool until just warm. Cut out the rectangles carefully along the score marks and serve.

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# Tzatziki

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1 medium cucumber, peeled, sliced in half and seeded, and finely chopped  
1/8 teaspoon plus 1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 cup plain yogurt  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice or white wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon minced fresh dill or oregano leaves  
1 teaspoon minced garlic

**Directions:**

Put the cucumber in a strainer set over a bowl. Sprinkle with 1/8 teaspoon salt and allow to drain for 20-minutes. Now wrap it in a clean tea towel and carefully wrap the cucumber tightly to squeeze out the water. Put the yogurt in another strainer set over a bowl and drain for 1 hour. Combine the cucumber and yogurt in a bowl with the remaining ingredients and stir well. Cover and chill for at least 30-minutes before serving.

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# Keftedes

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500g ground beef  
200g ground pork  
1 large red onion, grated  
1 clove of garlic, minced  
1 cup breadcrumbs  
1 egg  
1/4 of a cup chopped fresh parsley  
6-7 leaves fresh mint (chopped)  
2 tbsps olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon oregano  
salt and pepper  
oil for frying  
flour for dredging

## Directions:

To prepare this traditional Greek meatballs recipe (keftedes), add all the ingredients into a large bowl and mix well (for about 5-10 minutes), squeezing with your hands, to allow the flavours to blend. (If the mixture isn't firm enough, add some more breadcrumbs). Cover the bowl with some plastic wrap and let it rest in the fridge for 1 hour.

Turn the mixture for the keftedes out of the fridge and roll into meatballs the size of a walnut (or bigger if you prefer). Dredge the rolled meatballs lightly in flour making sure to shake off any excess. Fry until nicely browned on all sides.

The traditional way of cooking Greek meatballs (keftedes) is frying them. Fry the keftedes in batches of 10-15 at a time, until nicely browned on all sides.

Instead of frying you can bake / grill the keftedes in the oven. Preheat the oven at 200C, place the keftedes on greased baking sheet about an inch apart. Bake for about 20 minutes, turning the meatballs upside down midway through cooking time. The grilled version is much lighter than the fried so theres not excuse to not trying it now!

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# Grilled Lemon & Chicken Skewers

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## Ingredients

800gms, skinless deboned chicken thighs, trimmed of excess fat  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 Tbsp plain yogurt  
2 cloves garlic, minced (about 2 teaspoons)  
1 Tbsp minced fresh oregano  
1/2 teaspoons dried oregano  
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
1 Tbsp olive oil plus more for the grill  
2 lemons, thinly sliced

## Method

### Step 1:

If using bamboo or wooden skewers, place them in water to soak while you prepare the recipe. You'll need either 4 flat skewers or 8 regular round skewers.

### Step 2

Cut the chicken thigh into even chunks, then place in a bowl and sprinkle with salt. Add the yogurt, minced garlic, oregano, pepper, lemon juice, and olive oil to the bowl with the chicken, stir to combine. Marinate for 30 minutes to an hour - the longer the better.

### Step 3

Thread skewers with chicken and lemon slices: Prepare your grill for direct high heat. While the grill is heating, prepare the skewers. Use either flat bamboo or metal skewers or double up regular bamboo skewers so that the chicken is easier to turn on the grill. Thread the chicken pieces onto the skewers with a lemon slice folded over like a taco between each piece of chicken.

### Step 4

When the grill is ready brush the grill grates with a little olive oil (use a paper towel folded over several times and dipped in olive oil, hold with tongs). Brush some olive oil over the chicken skewers as well. Place the chicken skewers directly over the hottest part of the grill and cover the grill.

### Step 5

Allow to sear on one side (about 2 to 3 minutes), then turn the chicken skewers over to the other side, cover and cook 2 to 3 minutes more, until the chicken is browned and just cooked through.

### Step 6

Remove from grill and serve immediately with tzatziki sauce.



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# SOFT FLATBREADS

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## INGREDIENTS

600gms cake flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
2 tsp fine salt  
140ml extra virgin olive oil  
200ml yoghurt  
170ml water  
2 tsp zaatar / finely chopped rosemary / oregano (optional)  
Oil to cook

## METHOD

### STEP 1:

Add your flour and baking powder to a large bowl, to it add the salt and if you are adding any herbs add them now and mix with a whisk to distribute.

### STEP 2:

In a small pot over medium high heat, add the oil and water. As soon as it begins to bubble switch it off and add the yoghurt and stir to combine.

### STEP 3:

Add this mixture to the flour and mix with a spoon until it begins to form a dough, then take over with your hands. Move the dough to the counter and knead for a few minutes until you have a nice smooth dough. Add the dough back to a bowl and cover with clingwrap and let the dough rest on the counter for 30-minutes to an hour.

### STEP 4:

Now divide the dough into 8 equal parts (approx 130gms each), roll into a ball, and then with a rolling pin, roll until about 2mm thick. Turn 45 each time your roll to help you achieve a round shape.

### STEP 5:

Now heat a heavy based frying over medium high heat until hot, then brush each wrap with some oil and cook in the pan for about 2-minutes a side until dotted with brown spots and cooked through, flip and repeat on the opposite side. Keep warm between two plates lined with a clean dishcloth – the steam will help keep them nice and soft.

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# GREEK ZUCCHINI & FETA SALAD

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## INGREDIENTS

4-5 cups diced zucchini from 1.5 lbs whole zucchini  
4 oz crumbled feta cheese  
15 ounce can chickpeas drained and rinsed  
1/3 cup chopped kalamata olives  
1/4 cup chopped shallot or red onion  
1/2 cup chopped parsley  
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp pepper or to taste

## METHOD

Step 1  
Mix together all ingredients.  
Step 2  
Adjust seasoning as desired. Enjoy!

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# Kolokithokeftedes

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## Ingredients

500 g zucchini, grated  
2 spring onions, only the green part, thinly sliced  
1 bunch of mint, only the leaves, finely chopped  
1/3 bunch of dill, finely chopped  
1 bunch of basil, finely chopped  
grated zest of 2 limes  
1 levelled teaspoon ground cumin  
2 pinches chili flakes  
200 g feta cheese, crumbled  
2 eggs  
80 g all-purpose flour  
2-3 tablespoons olive oil

For Frying: 1/2 inch sunflower oil (or canola oil)

## Method

### Step 1:

Line a large bowl with a thin kitchen towel. Grate the zucchini on to the towel in the bowl, using the large blades of the grater.

Sprinkle with a generous amount of salt to help the zucchini release more moisture. Mix and squeeze the mixture with your hands. Wrap in the towel and squeeze very tightly in your hands to release as much liquid as possible. The less moisture the zucchini mixture has, the crunchier your fritters will become! Transfer from towel to a clean, dry bowl.

### Step 2:

Finely chop the green part of the spring onions. Finely chop the mint leaves, dill and basil and add them all to the bowl. Add the lime zest, cumin, chili flakes, crumbled feta and 2 eggs. Mix until all of the ingredients are completely combined.

### Step 3:

Add the flour and mix just to combine. Do not overmix.

### Step 4:

Place a nonstick pan over medium to high heat. Add 2-3 tablespoons of olive oil. Pick up spoonfuls of the mixture and carefully add them to the hot oil. Do not crowd your pan. Gently press down on the patties to spread them out a little.

### Step 5:

Fry on both sides until nice and golden, just like pancakes! When ready, transfer to a plate lined with paper towels so they can drain from excess oil. Repeat the same process until all of your mixture has turned in to crunchy fritters.



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# Melitzanosalata

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## Ingredients

1 large eggplant  
1/4 cup tahini, plus more as needed  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice, plus more as needed  
1 pinch ground cumin  
salt, to taste  
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley  
1/4 cup brine-cured black olives, such as kalamata, stones removed

## STEP 1:

Prick the eggplant with a fork in several places and bake in a hot oven for 25-40 minutes until the aubergine is blistered and soft

## STEP 2:

Remove from the oven, let cool slightly, and peel off and discard the skin.

## STEP 3:

Place the eggplant flesh in a bowl. Using a fork, mash the eggplant to a paste. Add the 1/4 cup tahini, the garlic, the 1/4 cup lemon juice and the cumin and mix well.

## STEP 4:

Season with salt, then taste and add more tahini and/or lemon juice, if desired.

## STEP 5:

Transfer the mixture to a serving bowl and spread with the back of a spoon to form a shallow well.

Drizzle the olive oil over the top and sprinkle with the paprika.

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# HUMMUS

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## INGREDIENTS

1 can chick peas  
2tbsp Tahini  
4 cloves garlic, crushed  
2 tsp ground cumin  
1/4 cup lemon juice  
3 tbsp olive oil  
Large pinch cayenne pepper  
**Vegetable stock**  
Extra lemon juice, olive oil, paprika and flat leaf to garnish

## METHOD

**STEP 1:**  
Place all the ingredients, except the vegetable stock, into a food processor and process until smooth  
**STEP 2:**  
With the motor running, slowly add vegetable stock until the desired consistency is achieved  
**STEP 3:**  
Check and adjust seasoning  
**STEP 4:**  
Serve in a bowl, topped with a sprinkle of paprika, drizzle of olive oil and a splash of lemon juice

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# PANTZAROSALATA

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## INGREDIENTS

400g strained yogurt  
2 medium raw or pre-cooked beets  
2-4 sheets minced garlic (depending on how strong you want it)  
Salt to taste  
1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts  
1 tbsp chopped dill  
2-3 tbsp. vinegar  
5-6 tbsp. olive oil

## METHOD

STEP 1:  
Using gloves grate the beet on the fine side of a grater.  
STEP 2:  
In a bowl add your yoghurt, finely minced or grated garlic, salt, vinegar, finely chopped dill and olive oil. Whisk to combine.  
STEP 3:  
Add the finely grated beet to the dressing and stir will to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning.  
STEP 4:  
Top with the roasted walnut pieces and some extra dill, serve as a dip or as a salad besides roasted meats.

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# KREATOPITA

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## For the pastry

500g #4 phyllo, thawed and at room temperature  
340g unsalted butter, melted  
3-4 roasted red peppers, diced  
150g feta cheese  
150g grated mozzarella cheese  
1/2 cup or more Panko breadcrumbs

## For the Meat Sauce:

500g ground beef  
1 large onion, finely chopped  
1/4 cup olive oil  
5-6 garlic cloves, grated  
450g crushed tomatoes  
1 teaspoon salt or more  
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper or to taste  
1 teaspoon ground sweet paprika  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional)  
  
1 teaspoon crushed dried oregano or thyme

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Preheat the oven to 200 °C.

**Step 2:** Make the Meat Sauce: In a large pot over medium heat, add the onion with the olive oil and a pinch of salt. Cook the onions until soft and golden. Add the garlic and warm through. Add the ground meat, the seasonings (except for the thyme/oregano) and tomatoes. Mix together and cook over medium-high heat for about 25 minutes or until thickened. Remove from heat and add the oregano. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Add double the crushed tomatoes if you prefer a thicker sauce.

**Step 1:** In a large baking pan (half-sheet pan will work or a roasting pan) add the breadcrumbs in an even layer.

**Step 2:** Divide the phyllo into 2 equal stacks. Layer the first stack in the pan and drizzle butter in between the phyllo layers (see video).

**Step 3:** Crumble some feta cheese into the center of the phyllo. Add the meat sauce on top. Spread the diced roasted peppers over the meat sauce. Top with shredded cheese. Fold the phyllo that is hanging outside of the pan over the filling. Drizzle butter between those layers as well.

**Step 4:** Gather each of the remaining sheets of phyllo and create an accordion. Place them on top of the pie for a decorative, crunchy top layer. Brush and pour the remaining butter over the phyllo.

**Step 5:** Bake on the center rack for about 45 minutes or until golden. Allow the pie to rest for 25-30 minutes and serve. Kali Orexi!

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# Avgolemeno

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## Ingredients

Extra Virgin Olive Oil (I used Private Reserve Greek olive oil)  
½ to 1 cup finely chopped carrots  
½ to 1 cup finely chopped celery  
½ to 1 cup finely chopped green onions  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
8 cups low-sodium chicken broth  
2 bay leaves  
1 cup rice  
Salt and pepper  
2 cooked boneless chicken breast pieces, shredded (about 6 to 8 oz store-bought rotisserie chicken will work)  
½ cup freshly-squeezed lemon juice  
2 large eggs  
Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

## Method

### Step 1:

In a large Dutch oven or heavy pot, heat 1 tbsp olive oil on medium-high. Add the carrots, celery and green onions, toss together to sauté briefly then stir in the garlic.

### Step 2:

Add the chicken broth and bay leaves then raise the heat to high. Once the liquid has come to a rolling boil, add the rice, salt and pepper.

### Step 3:

Turn the heat to medium-low and simmer for 20 minutes or until the rice is tender. Now stir in the cooked chicken.

### Step 4:

To prepare the egg-lemon sauce, in a medium bowl, whisk together the lemon juice and eggs. While whisking add 2 ladles-full of the broth from the cooking pot (this helps temper the eggs). Once fully combined, add the sauce to the chicken soup and stir. Remove from the heat immediately.

### Step 5:

Garnish with fresh parsley, if you like. Serve hot with your favorite bread. Enjoy!



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# KARYDOPITA

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## For the syrup

500 ml water  
300 g sugar  
5 ml freshly squeezed lemon juice  
1 slice lemon  
1 cinnamon stick

## For the cake:

350 g coarsely crushed walnuts  
6 large eggs  
1/2 tsp ground cloves optional  
5 ml ground cinnamon  
10 ml baking powder  
300 ml milk  
400 g granulated white sugar  
250 ml vegetable oil  
375 g all-purpose flour

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Prepare your syrup by combining all of the ingredients in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil and when the sugar has dissolved, reduce heat to medium. Allow to cook for approximately 5 minutes and then remove syrup from heat. Allow to cool. Note: this produces a cake that is not overly syrupy, however, if you do prefer a syrupy cake, please feel free to increase the quantities for the syrup above.

(500 ml water, 300 g sugar, 5 ml freshly squeezed lemon juice, 1 slice lemon, 1 cinnamon stick)

**Step 2:** Preheat your oven to 180C.

**Step 3:** In a large bowl combine all of the cake ingredients. The order is not particularly important. Stir until very well combined with a rubber spatula or large plastic or wooden spoon. Mix very well until the entire batter is uniform.

**Step 4:** Grease your baking pan (we used a 25cm round cake pan) with vegetable oil, being sure to cover the bottom and sides.

**Step 5:** Pour in your batter. Spread it around so that it is evenly distributed. Bake in center of oven for approximately 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean.

**Step 6:** When your cake is done, remove it from the oven and gently poke holes in it, using a skewer or a sharp knife. Pour the cooled syrup all over the cake, about 1/2 cup (125 ml) at a time. The syrup will be absorbed by the cake.

**Step 7:** Allow your cake to cool and serve it directly from your baking pan.

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# POLITIKO THESSALONIKIS

## FOR THE CAKE BASE

300 g semolina, coarse  
180 g granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon(s) baking powder  
1 teaspoon(s) baking soda  
250 g whole milk  
1/2 teaspoon(s) mastic , powder  
1 level teaspoon(s) mahlab, powder

## For the syrup

350 g water  
350 g granulated sugar  
1 stick(s) cinnamon

## For the cream

500 g whole milk  
130 g granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon(s) vanilla extract  
3 egg yolks, from medium eggs  
50 g corn starch  
50 g butter  
200 g whipped cream

## To serve

cinnamon, powder

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Preheat the oven to 180 C set to fan.

**Step 2:** In a bowl add the semolina, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, milk, mastic, mahlab, and whisk well.

**Step 3:** Grease a 32x25 cm baking pan and spread the mixture evenly. Bake for 20 minutes.

Remove and set aside to completely cool.

## For the syrup

**Step 1:** In a pot add the water, sugar, cinnamon, and transfer it over medium-high heat until it comes to a boil and the sugar dissolves.

**Step 2:** Using a ladle, pour the hot syrup over the cold base.

## For the cream

**Step 1:** In a pot add 450 g of the milk, half of the sugar, the vanilla extract, and transfer it over medium heat. Allow to heat without stirring.

**Step 2:** In a bowl, add the yolks, the rest of the sugar and whisk.

**Step 3:** Add the rest of the milk, the corn starch and whisk.

**Step 4:** When the milk comes to a boil, slowly transfer it to the yolk mixture whisking continuously.

**Step 5:** Transfer the whole mixture back to the pot and place it over medium heat. Whisk continuously until the cream thickens.

**Step 6:** Remove from the heat, add the butter, and whisk until it melts.

**Step 7:** Transfer to a bowl and cover with plastic wrap, making sure that the wrap directly touches the surface of the cream. Refrigerate for 30-60 minutes until completely chilled.

## To assemble

**Step 1:** Add the pastry cream into a bowl and whisk it well until fluffy.

**Step 2:** Add the whipped cream and fold gently with a silicone spatula until homogenized and you have a fluffy cream.

**Step 3:** Spread the cream over the base using a spatula.

**Step 4:** Refrigerate for 1 hour until completely chilled.

**Step 5:** Sprinkle with cinnamon and serve.

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# PRASOPITA

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## For the leek pie

12–15 phyllo sheets, thawed  
800–900 g leeks, sliced  
3–4 spring onions, finely chopped  
1/2 a glass white wine  
1 egg yolk  
250ml milk or milk cream  
150g feta cheese, crumbled  
100g Graviera cheese, or hard yellow cheese  
salt and freshly ground pepper  
olive oil or butter for brushing the pan  
1 egg and 1 tsp water to brush the top

## Instructions

**Step 1:** It is important to thaw your phyllo completely by putting it in the fridge the previous day.

**Step 2:** Start by making the filling. Wash the leeks and trim them, keeping only the white part and cut in slices about 2cm wide

**Step 3:** Heat a saucepan, add olive oil, the leeks and scallions and season with salt and pepper. Sauté, whilst stirring, until tender. Once the leeks are tender deglaze with the white wine and wait for it to evaporate. Remove the pan from the stove and allow the leeks to cool down.

**Step 4:** In a bowl add 1 egg yolk and the milk cream and whisk. Stir in the leeks mixture, feta cheese, graviera cheese, season with pepper and blend to combine.

**Step 5:** Brush a medium sized baking tray with olive oil and lay one sheet of phyllo dough, allowing it to exceed the pan. Brush the phyllo sheet with olive oil or melted butter and continue with 5-6 more phyllo sheets (brushing each one with olive oil or melted butter). Tip in the filling and even out using a spatula. With a knife trim some of the excessive phyllo, and fold the excess phyllo sheets flaps over the mixture. Add 5-6 more phyllo sheets, making sure to oil or butter each one, before adding the other. Trim some of the excessive phyllo and roll the rest on the edges.

**Step 6:** In a bowl whisk the egg and the water, brush the top of the leek pie and carefully score into pieces. Bake in preheated oven at 180C for about 50 minutes, until nicely coloured. Allow to cool slightly and serve.

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# HTIPITI

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## For the leek pie

2 red peppers, cleaned and sliced in half white membranes removed  
200 g feta cheese  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil, extra virgin  
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon chilli flakes, dried  
1 pinch salt  
1 pinch pepper

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Preheat your oven to 200 deg C / 180 deg C fan-forced. Clean your peppers and slice them in half. Place on a lined baking tray and roast for 20 minutes until the skin blisters and is dark.

**Step 2:** Place the roasted red peppers in a small bowl and cover with a plate. Make sure the plate provides a seal. We want to sweat the peppers and make it easier to peel the blistered skin.

**Step 3:** Remove the plate after ten minutes and clean the peppers by peeling the charred bits.

**Step 4:** Place the roasted red peppers, feta cheese, olive oil, chilli and seasonings in the food processor. Blend until the mixture comes together and forms a paste.

**Step 5:** Serve immediately or refrigerate for a few hours and serve later.

THE  
COOKERY

by The Secret Jozi Chef

# PSARI PLAKI

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## For the sauce

2 tablespoons Extra virgin olive oil  
1 large yellow onion, halved and thinly sliced (half moons)  
2 large garlic cloves, minced  
2 cans whole peeled tomatoes  
2 teaspoons dried oregano  
Black pepper  
2 pounds white fish filet, such as halibut or cod  
Kosher salt and black pepper

## For The Fish:

Kosher salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon dried oregano  
1 teaspoon sweet paprika  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground cumin  
2 lemons, divided  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh parsley, chopped

## Instructions

**Step 1:** Heat the oven. Preheat the oven to 200C and position a rack in the middle.

**Step 2:** Make the sauce. In a large oven-safe pan or skillet, heat 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the sliced onions and season with a big pinch of kosher salt. Cook, tossing regularly, until the onions have softened and gained a slight golden-brown color (about 7 minutes). Add the garlic toss briefly, then add the canned tomatoes with their juices. Using a wooden spoon, break the tomatoes up. Season with a dash more salt. Add the oregano and a big dash of black pepper. Bring the sauce to a boil, then lower the heat and let it simmer for 10 to 15 minutes or so.

**Step 3:** Season the fish. Pat the fish dry and season on both sides with kosher salt, the oregano, paprika and cumin. Cut and squeeze one lemon over the fish (leave the other lemon for later).

**Step 4:** Combine the sauce and the fish. When the sauce is ready, nestle the fish in the sauce and scoop up some of the sauce to cover the top of the fish well.

**Step 5:** Bake. Place the fish on the center rack of the heated oven and bake until the fish turns opaque white and flakes easily at the touch of a fork (15 to 25 minutes, but because ovens do vary, it is a good idea to check occasionally to make sure the fish does not overcook or dry out).

**Step 6:** Serve. Slice the remaining lemon into wedges. Finish the fish with the fresh parsley and serve with the lemon wedges to the side.

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