

PAUL HOLLYWOOD'S MA'AMOUL



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Stuffed with date paste, or chopped walnuts, and dusted with powdered sugar, these short, buttery pastries originate from the Levantine region of the Middle East.

Serves:	Difficulty:	Hands-On Time:	Baking Time:
12	Easy	45 mins, plus chilling	15 mins

INGREDIENTS

For the dough:

pinch of mastic

20g caster sugar

175g fine semolina

20g plain flour

½ tsp ground mahleb

90g chilled ghee

2 tsp orange blossom water

2 tsp rose water

icing sugar, to dust

For the date filling:

75g medjool dates, stoned

1 tbsp rose water

¼ tsp ground cinnamon

¼ tsp ground mahleb

For the walnut filling:

25g walnuts

25g golden raisins

1 tbsp orange blossom honey

¼ tsp ground cardamom

EQUIPMENT

You will also need:

ma'amoul mould

Baking sheet lined with baking paper

ma'amoul tongs

METHOD

Step 1

Put the mastic in a mortar with 1 teaspoon of the sugar and grind to a powder. Tip into a bowl and add the remaining sugar, along with the semolina, flour and mahleb. Mix together.

Step 2

Add the ghee and rub in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add the orange blossom and rose waters and bring the dough together with your hands. Tip out onto a floured worktop. Knead for 5 minutes, until smooth, then wrap in cling film and chill for 30 minutes, to rest.

Step 3

For the date filling, place the dates in the bowl of a mini food processor with the rose water, cinnamon and mahleb and blitz to a paste. Divide the mixture into 6 and roll into balls (wet hands will prevent the paste sticking).

Step 4

For the walnut filling, place the walnuts in the bowl of a mini food processor with the raisins, honey and cardamom and blitz to a paste. Divide the mixture into 6 and roll into balls.

Step 5

Heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F/Gas 6. Divide the dough into 12 pieces, each of about 25g. Roll each piece into a ball and cover with a damp tea towel.

Step 6

With damp hands, flatten each ball of dough in the palm of one hand, turning it around as you go and lifting the edges to form a little cup. The cups should be about 3mm thick and the sides about 3cm high.

Step 7

Fill 6 of the pastry cups with a ball of date filling and the remaining 6 pastry cups with a ball of walnut filling. Pinch the dough over the filling to seal and roll each into a ball.

Step 8

Lightly flour the ma'amoul mould and press one of the walnut-filled balls into the mould. Turn it out onto the lined baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining 5 walnut-filled balls.

Step 9

With the 6 date-filled balls, use the ma'amoul tongs and pinch the pastry to create a decorative design. Place on the lined baking sheet.

Step 10

Bake all the ma'amoul for 12–14 minutes, until golden on the bottom, but pale or very lightly golden around the edges. Remove from the oven, leave to cool on the sheet for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Dust the walnut ma'amoul with icing sugar before serving.