

BAKLAWA – WALNUT SQUARES

Yield: about 48 squares

Baklava

Rendered butter (ghee), warmed

2 lbs of filo dough (2 boxes)

5 cups finely chopped nuts (mixed with about 1 cup sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon, if desired)

4 cups prepared cold syrup

- BRUSH sides and bottom of a baking tray (10 x 13) with rendered butter or ghee.
- OPEN a whole package of filo dough, unroll it completely and place it on a plastic sheet and cover it with another plastic sheet and then a damp towel. Layer two filo sheets at a time inside the tray, brushing each sheet with rendered butter. Repeat layers until you complete 1 box of dough.
- TAKE the 5 cups nut mixture and spread evenly over the top layer of dough.
- OPEN a second box of filo and spread out on plastic sheet, etc., as for the first box. Layer two sheets at a time again, brushing each top sheet with rendered butter. When starting the first sheet over the nut layer, brush it with butter, then turn it over so it faces the nut layer, then proceed layering.
- AFTER completing layers, place a full size sheet of parchment paper over dough in tray and use wooden rulers, etc., to cut the dough evenly into 48 squares (8 x 6 rows). Or place trays in freezer for about 20-30 minutes before attempting to cut squares in trays. It will be slightly easier to cut when it is colder. Carefully brush the top of the prepared baklava tray with rendered butter.
- Bake at 350° for 20 minutes, then lower heat to 300° and bake for approx. 1hr. 40 min. until nicely golden and baked fully through to bottom layer. Check a center piece by carefully cutting it and lifting it up a little till you see if the bottom layers of dough are fully baked. Remove tray from the oven, let it sit for about 2 minutes, then evenly pour 4 cups of cold prepared syrup over the tray. Allow the tray to absorb the syrup fully.

Simple Syrup

12 cups sugar

6 cups water

2 Tbsp. lemon juice

(optional: 1 tsp. orange blossom water)

Dissolve sugar in water and mix thoroughly. Heat till boiling. Boil for about 5 minutes. Add lemon juice, mix thoroughly in syrup, and boil for another 3 minutes. Take off heat and let cool. When cool put in jar or container. Do not refrigerate.