

Perfect ...Melomakarona: Traditional, Step by Step pictures



Greek Melomakarona: mellow sweet bites full of Christmas aromas soaked in light honey syrup. Cinnamon, cloves, orange and cognac, sprinkled with crushed walnuts. There is no festive days without a plate full of these sweets on the table.

The recipe is below is for 50 pieces.



Ingredients

Dough

1/2 liter sweet corn oil

150 gr white sugar

1/2 tablespoon ground cinnamon

1/2 tablespoon ground cloves

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1+1/2 teaspoon Baking powder

100 ml fresh Orange juice

Finely grated zest from 1+1/2 orange

35-40 ml Cognac (metaxa 3* or 5*) or Brandy

1 kg all purpose flour (you may need some 100-200 gr more...)

Decoration: walnuts crushed

Syrup

400 gr honey

200 ml water

1 cinnamon stick

2-3 large pieces of lemon peel

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Alternative:

200 gr sugar, 175 ml water, 1 tablespoon Honey, cinnamon, lemon juice and peel

Baking:

preheated oven 180° Celsius – first tray 30 minutes, 2nd tray 20-25 minutes

How to get half a tea or tablespoon of cinnamon or anything... 😊 👍 👍



Instructions for Dough

- 👉 It is important to have all ingredients ready at your side, it saves time and nerves.
- 👉 So start with measuring the ingredients, press the orange juice and grade the orange zest.







In a large bowl mix well oil and sugar, until a soft liquid mass. It would take some 6-7 minutes.



Add one by one cinnamon, cloves, orange juice and zest as well as baking power.

Mix the baking soda with the Cognac and add it to the bowl.

I use an electric hand mixer at medium speed.

Start adding the flour portion-wise. the formula is add flour, mix well, add flour, mix well...



When all four is used, work the dough with your hands for some minutes.



By 1 kg flour you get a rather soft dough. Note: the dough has to be soft. If you think it is **too soft** – possible because of the kind of flour or ..whatever, you can add little by little more flour **but no more than maybe 100 gr in total**.

Before adding more flour, **make a test and see if you can form** a melomakarono (see below).



Cover the trays with baking sheet.

To roll out the cookies, pinch a portion of dough about the size of a very big walnut. Shape it with your palms into a smooth oblong shape, something like a small flatten egg.



You soft press the cookie on a grater in order to get the “design” which is characteristic for Melomakarona. You can also create a design with a fork.



Of course, all traditional households had and still have small, glass dishes where they used to serve the “spoon sweets.” And all these tiny, cute dishes had a “design” underneath. All Greek housewives who respect themselves had these dishes.

During the Melomakarona preparation, one of these dishes would be turned upside down and the cookies would be pressed on it for the necessary design.

As I do not have such set of old fashioned dishes ... I found out that the grater would do too. Somewhere, I've read that melomakarona are called also “Finikia” – Φοινίκια – because the grater gives them a design resembling that of the bark of a palm tree.

Place the dough Melomakarona on the tray next to each other, but at a decent distance because they grow bigger with the heat.



While the first tray is baking in the oven, I quickly fill the second one.

Note: 30 minutes for the 1st tray, 20-25 for the 2nd.

Melomakarona **must be light brown and firm to the touch**. They get more brown after they are soaked in syrup. If you bake them full, like biscuits, they will not absorb the syrup.



My oven needs 40 minutes for the 1st tray and 30 for the 2nd one.

Syrup

Note: Melomakarona have to be cold and the syrup hot!

Bring honey, water, cinnamon stick, lemon peel and juice to boil, stir well. Reduce heat and let it **simmer** for some 5 minutes. As the syrup tends to foam, remove it from heat for a second before it goes all over the place.

I place batches of baked melomakarona (one layer) in a deep tray or saucepan and pour the syrup over them with a serving soup spoon. Let them for 5 minutes, slip them over and add more syrup, if necessary.



Remove the first batch, place them on a plate and sprinkle with crushed walnuts.



Repeat the procedure until all are nicely soaked.

For the **sugar version** you have to **let it boil until it turns a bit thick**. In this version, you place the melomakarona in the boiling syrup.



The whole procedure is in fact easy but it can take quite some time. Many people break this procedure into two, bake them one day and soak them in syrup the next day.