

Galaktoboureko - Γαλακτομπούρεκο (galaktoboureko)



Custard-filled phyllo pastry, soaked in syrup or honey.

SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	CUISINE
Serves 10	45 minutes	1 hour	2 hours 15 minutes	Greek

Ingredients

- 250 ml (9 fl oz) full-fat milk
- 250 ml (9 fl oz) double cream
- 150 g (5 1/2 oz) caster sugar
- 1 strip lemon peel
- 1 strip orange peel
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 4 large eggs
- 2 large egg yolks
- 100 g (3 1/2 oz) fine semolina
- 60 g (2 1/4 oz) unsalted butter



- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 pinch fine sea salt
- 12 sheets phyllo pastry, thawed if frozen
- 200 g (7 oz) unsalted butter, melted, plus extra for the tin
- For the syrup: 300 g (10 1/2 oz) caster sugar
- For the syrup: 250 ml (9 fl oz) water
- For the syrup: 1 lemon, peeled into strips
- For the syrup: 1 cinnamon stick
- For the syrup: 1 tbsp honey

Method

1. Make the syrup first: put the sugar, water, lemon peel, cinnamon stick and honey into a small saucepan and bring to the boil over medium-high heat, then reduce to medium and simmer for 8–10 minutes until slightly syrupy but still pourable.
2. Remove the syrup from the heat and leave it to cool completely; it should be cool or just warm when you use it, so it soaks in without making the pastry collapse.
3. For the custard, put the milk, cream, lemon peel, orange peel and cinnamon stick into a medium saucepan and warm over medium heat for 5–6 minutes until steaming and just below the boil, then remove from the heat and discard the peels and cinnamon.
4. In a bowl, whisk the eggs, yolks and caster sugar for 1–2 minutes until pale and smooth, then whisk in the semolina, vanilla and salt until fully combined.
5. Pour the hot milk mixture gradually into the egg mixture, whisking constantly to temper it and prevent scrambling.
6. Return the mixture to a clean saucepan and cook over medium heat for 6–8 minutes, whisking continuously, until it thickens to a glossy custard that coats the back of a spoon and just begins to bubble.
7. Take the pan off the heat and whisk in the butter until melted and smooth, then cover the surface directly with baking paper and leave to cool for 15 minutes so it does not form a skin.
8. Preheat the oven to 180°C fan (200°C, 400°F, gas mark 6). Brush a 23 x 33 cm (9 x 13 in) baking dish with a little melted butter.
9. Lay 6 sheets of phyllo in the dish, one at a time, brushing each sheet generously with melted butter and letting the edges overhang the sides of the dish.



10. Spoon in the custard and spread it into an even layer, taking care not to tear the pastry underneath.
11. Fold the overhanging phyllo over the custard, then layer the remaining 6 sheets on top, brushing each one with butter and tucking the edges neatly into the dish to enclose the filling.
12. With a sharp knife, score the top lightly into squares or diamonds, cutting only through the pastry layers and not down into the custard.
13. Bake for 45–50 minutes over medium oven heat until the pastry is deep golden, crisp and visibly puffed.
14. As soon as the galaktoboureko comes out of the oven, slowly pour the cooled syrup evenly over the hot pastry, letting it absorb gradually.
15. Leave to rest for at least 1 hour before cutting fully through the scored lines and serving so the custard sets and the syrup settles into the layers.

To serve

Serve at room temperature or slightly warm in neat squares, dusted lightly with icing sugar if you like. It needs little alongside it beyond strong coffee or a glass of sweet dessert wine; a few toasted nuts over the top are a fine finish.

