

Persian (Iranian) Baklava

1 pkg. Fillo Pastry (found in the freezer section) thawed
2 sticks unsalted butter (do not substitute)
3 ½ - 4 cups finely chopped walnuts and pistachios
2 tsp. ground cardamom
½ cup sugar

Syrup

1 ½ cups sugar dissolved in ¾ cup water
4 Tablespoons Rosewater
½ cup honey
¼ cup lemon juice

Melt butter in microwave safe bowl. Brush 12 x 15 pan with butter. Unwrap thawed fillo pastry and gently lay one sheet onto pan. Brush with butter and repeat with about half of the pastry, one sheet at a time and brushing with butter between each layer. In food processor, chop nuts until desired consistency. Add in ground cardamom and ½ cup sugar. Mix well and pour evenly over pastry. Even out the nuts and begin layering remaining fillo pastry, one sheet at a time, brushing each with butter. Brush final (top) layer well with butter. **Using a very sharp knife, cut pastry all the way through to the bottom layer in diamond shapes.** This MUST be done BEFORE pastry is baked!!!!

Bake at 350 degrees F for about 25-30 minutes, then increase heat to 450 degrees F for a few minutes until baklava is browned to your liking.

While baklava is cooking, mix all syrup ingredients together in a sauce pan and cook over medium-high heat. Mixture should boil gently for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

As soon as baklava is removed from the oven, immediately pour cooled syrup evenly over the pastry. It should sizzle and suck up most of the syrup. Allow the baklava to cool at room temperature for an hour or so, then cover lightly with parchment paper and refrigerate until ready to serve.

To serve, remove from refrigerator and let it warm up at room temperature for about 20 minutes. Cut again along same lines and gently remove one piece at a time to serving plate.