KALI OREXI

sharing our Greek culinary heritage

Georgia's Ladopita

(Ladopita – Oil Pie – is the traditional Vasilopta of Lefkada)

You will need...

740g sugar

1.8L water

1 teaspoon cinnamon

3 tablespoons honey

825ml EVOO

450g plain flour

450g self-raising flour

Sesame seeds

Blanched almonds

Preparing the syrup

- Mix together the water and sugar in a large pot until the sugar dissolves
- Bring it to the boil and add the cinnamon and honey, mixing them in well
- Gently boil on medium-high heat for 10-15 minutes before commencing the next stage of the recipe
- The syrup will continue to boil gently while you make the EVOO-flour batter

Preparing the ladopita

- Mix together the plain and self-raising flour well
- Heat the EVOO on medium-high until it just reaches the smoking point
- Add the flour in small batches to the EVOO, mixing it in well and dissolving any lumps of flour
- This stage needs time and patience
- Once all the flour has been added and well combined, the syrup should be ready to add

- If the syrup isn't ready to be added take the pot of batter off heat until it is – return the pot with the batter to medium heat, when the syrup is ready to be added
- The syrup is ready when you ***lightly touch*** the syrup with your index finger (***do not immerse your finger in the syrup***), rub the syrup between your index finger and thumb and the syrup feels thick and sticky – when the syrup is ready take it off heat
- Keeping the pot of batter on medium heat, add one ladleful of syrup at a time to the batter – beware this is quite a bubbly situation
- When all the syrup has been added, keep stirring the batter until it thickens and it comes away from the edges of the pot when you stir it – it will have the texture of soft halva
- Transfer the batter to a 34cm diameter round pan and smooth the top with a wooden spoon
- Sprinkle the ladopita evenly with sesame seeds
- Lay a piece of baking paper on top of the ladopita and press down on the ladopita, so the sesame seeds embed in the batter and the top of the ladopita is flat and smooth
- Using a flat-edged knife cut the ladopita into 4cm wide strips. Rotate the baking-dish and cut the ladopita again into 4cm strips – to create diamond-shaped pieces
- Place a blanched almond in the centre of each piece.

Baking the ladopita

- Bake at 160°C fan-forced for 1 hour or until a deep golden-brown colour is achieved

Serving the ladopita

- Allow the ladopita to cool for a few hours before serving!
- Enjoy! Kali Orexi!

Key points

- ***Getting the syrup right is the most important step***. It needs to be thickened, so that when it is added to the EVOO-flour batter and baked it makes the ladopita caramelise!
- The ladopita will have a cake-like crust on the top, bottom and sides and a soft halva filling
- When left out, it will dry out - you may choose to cover it with foil to keep it moist