KALI OREXI

sharing our Greek culinary heritage

Theia Evdokia's Bougatsa

Shared by Ros Kazakos

Theia Evdokia shared her recipe with her neice Ros Kazakos some 40 years ago. Ros has made it ever since and has converted all the ingredients to millilitres and grams weights. This is a recipe that honours Theia Evdokia's loving relationships and her lasting legacy!

You will need...

1700ml milk

420g caster sugar

350g fine semolina

30ml vanilla extract

300ml thickened cream

½ - ¾ packet fillo pastry (13 fillo sheets)

150g unsalted butter, melted

Cinnamon and icing sugar for dusting

Preparing the custard

- Pour the milk into a medium sized pot and place on medium heat. Stir the milk continuously as it warms. Warm the milk until you can touch the outside of the pot without burning your hand
- Add the sugar, semolina & vanilla extract
- Reduce the heat slightly and continue to stir until quite thickened (30 minutes or so)
- Take the pot off the heat and allow the custard to cool for a few minutes before whisking through the cream

Preparing the bougatsa

• Baste your baking dish (32cm x 26cm) with the melted butter

• Line the bottom of the baking dish with 7 sheets of fillo, basting each one lightly with melted butter. The fillo sheets are laid down in an alternating horizontal and vertical orientation. Allow any excess fillo to hang over the edges of the baking dish

• Whisk the custard well again before pouring the custard into the baking dish and fold any overhanging fillo onto the custard

• Baste the fillo sheet edges that you have folded onto the custard with the melted butter

• Lay 6 fillo sheets on top of the baking dish and trim them to the dimensions of the baking dish

• Baste each trimmed fillo sheet with butter and lay one on top of the other on top of the custard

• Using the buttered pasty brush, gently push the edges of the upper fillo sheets downwards between the baking dish and the bougatsa

• Bake at 180°C for about 1 - 1 ½ hours, until the fillo is golden-brown and the bougatsa puffs up

Serving the bougatsa

• Allow the bougatsa to cool until warm – about 1 – 2 hours depending on the room temperature (it will cut better and you won't risk scolding your mouth with blisteringly hot custard when eating it)

• Dust the top of the bougatsa liberally with icing sugar and cinnamon

• Cut into squares and enjoy a piece or two with a nice frappe! Kali Orexi!

Recipe Notes

• When heating the milk, stir it continuously; otherwise the milk will brown at the base of the pot, resulting in brown fragments in your custard

• The bougatsa can be made up to 3 days in advance, kept in the fridge and cooked on the day!

• Recipe makes 1 large 32cm x 26cm bougatsa or 2 small 20cm x 20cm bougatses