sharing our Greek culinary heritage

POTATO, OLIVE, AND ROSEMARY PIE WITH VILLAGE PASTRY

Πατατόπιτα με ελιά και δεντρολίβανο με χωριάτικο φύλλο

A recipe generously shared by Ruth Bardis for the Meri Month of May 2022 from her new cookbook Simply More Greek

This recipe is from Metsovo – a town in the northwestern part of Greece prized for its production of cheese. This recipe is a potato pie flavored with cheeses, rosemary, and olives. The fillo pastry for this recipe is a very thin fillo, also known as a village pastry (χωριάτικο). The method we use here to prepare our fillo produces sheets that are even thinner than regular village pastry, and the resulting pita is even crispier and crunchier.

You will need for the...

FILLO DOUGH

350 ml lukewarm water

1 tablespoon vinegar

2 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil (EVOO)

1½ teaspoons salt

600g (21.1 oz.) all-purpose flour

FILLO ROLLING

Corn flour (corn starch)

EVOO

FILLING

800g (28.2 oz., roughly 7–8 medium sized) potatoes, boiled and roughly mashed

Salt and pepper

1 tablespoon oregano, dried

80g (2.8 oz.) Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced

1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped

¼ cup spring onion, chopped finely

½ cup feta cheese, crumbled

½ cup kefalograviera or other yellow hard cheese, grated

Preparing the fillo dough

- Put the water, vinegar, oil, salt and half the flour in a bowl
- Using a wooden spoon, mix together, adding the remaining flour little by little until a soft, pliable dough is formed - you may not require all the flour
- If it is too sticky, keep adding flour - if it is too dry, add 1–2 tablespoons water
- Place the pastry onto a floured workbench and knead by hand for a further 5–10 minutes
- Divide the dough into 8-10 balls weighing roughly 90–100g (3.1 oz.) each
- Dip each ball into corn flour, place on a tray and set aside covered with plastic wrap for 30 minutes
- To prepare the fillo sheets, take one ball at a time and place on a floured workbench
- Using a thin dowel (or rolling pin), gently roll out into a large circle or square, a little larger than the baking dish - this fillo is incredibly soft, so be gentle when pressing down on the fillo with the dowel
- Sprinkle extra corn flour to prevent the fillo from sticking to your work surface or the dowel
- You will use half the balls for the bottom and half for the top

Preparing the filling

- Peel, cut, and boil potatoes in water until very soft
- Drain and place into a bowl - allow to cool completely
- With a fork, break up the potatoes until they are mashed, and then add all the filling ingredients and mix to combine well
- Set aside

Preparing the patatopita

- Preheat oven to 170° C/340° F fan-forced
- Line a baking tray 37cm (14.56 in.) in diameter with parchment paper and lay down the first fillo sheet – allowing excess to overhang the pan
- Drizzle 2 tablespoons olive oil on top, and then repeat with half the sheets, oiling between each one
- Spread the filling evenly into the pan and fold over the overhanging fillo to hold the filling in
- Roll out the next fillo sheet and place it completely in the pan, scrunching all the extra fillo on the top to create a ruffled effect
- Drizzle 2 tablespoons oil on top and repeat with the remaining sheets of dough, oiling each layer
- Drizzle olive oil on top and score with a sharp knife into desired squares or slices.
- Bake for 35 minutes or until golden brown

Serving the patatopita

- Serve warm or at room temperature. Best eaten the day it is made.
- Kali Orexi!
- Makes 16–20 pieces
- Time – 2 hours

Note

- Kefalograviera cheese can be purchased at European grocers - parmesan cheese can be used as a substitute or any other hard yellow cheese