



AAUW celebrates Foods from Lebanon

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Lebanese Food

Lebanese Food was always one of the country's principal attractions, and it has now largely passed the borders to become extremely popular in the West. Lebanese cuisine as a whole goes under the heading "health food". It is mostly based on cereals, in the shape of bread, bourghoul (crushed wheat) and rice. A large and varied assortment of vegetables and milk products accompany the above, and meat plays a relatively small part.

Appetizers:

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- Turkish Coffee

Hommos Tahina

- 1 cup cooked or canned chickpeas
- 1/2 tspn salt
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed with a pinch of salt
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 2 tablespoon sesame paste (Tahina)
- 2 tablespoon parsley, finely chopped
- 1/2 tspn ground cumin



Drain warm chickpeas and reserve 1 tablespoon. Beat chickpeas in a food processor. Blend chickpeas with sesame paste, lemon juice, crushed garlic, and salt into a puree. Adjust flavor and consistency with lemon juice and salt if necessary (Hummus should be thick and smooth). Serve in Hommos bowls. Pour a small amount of olive oil in center and garnish with the reserved chickpeas, chopped parsley and cumin. Cut the pita in triangles, heat and serve with Hommos Tahina.

Arabic Bread (Pita)

- 2 1/2 of strong white flour
 - 1 cup of cake flour
 - 1 teaspoon of salt
 - 1 teaspoon of sugar
 - 1 teaspoon of active dried yeast
 - 1 tablespoon of olive oil
 - 1 1/4 cup of lukewarm water (body temperature is best)
- Yield 6 to 8 loaves.



1. Measure the flour. Sift flours and salt together in a bowl. Stir in the sugar. It is important to mix the dry ingredients first.
2. Dissolve the yeast with the water, and then stir in the oil and pour into a large bowl.
3. Gradually beat the flour into yeast mixture, and then knead the mixture to make soft

dough.

4. Tip the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 5 to 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. If you are using a food processor, run the machine for 1 minute. Add the dry ingredients first, then gradually add the liquids, Start at a low speed, and move up slowly. Always stand close to the food processor while is running.
5. Place the dough in a large bowl, dusted with extra flour. You can also use olive oil to grease the bowl. This will prevent the dough from sticking to the surface of the bowl. Cover the bowl with a damp kitchen towel and leave to rise in a warm place free of air drafts for 1 1/2 hour to 2 hours, or until doubled in bulk. I usually place my dough to rice in the cool oven.
6. Punch down the dough. On a floured surface, make a rope-like shape. Pinch off the dough to form 6 to 8 equal pieces, depending on how thin or thick you like your bread to be.
7. Roll out each ball of dough, with a rolling pin, into a circle of about 10 inches (25cm) and a thickness of 1/4 inch (6mm). Set aside covered for ten minutes.
8. Place dough in a preheated oven with temperature of 220 oC (425 oF – Gas mark 7).
9. Cook the bread for 3 to 5 minutes. Your bread is ready when the hollow pocket has formed and the bread is slightly browned on the edges and on the top.
10. Arabic bread is best eaten hot out of the oven because it tends to dry out quickly. If you want to store the bread for later consumption, allow the bread to cool, flatten, then store in plastic bags. You can refrigerate or freeze the bread.

Fatayer Bil Sabanikh (Spinach Pies)

Use dairy department Cressant Rolls or make the dough with the arabic bread recipe. 2 pounds Lebanese Bread dough or any commercial bread dough
Olive or nut oil for baking

Filling:

2 cups finely chopped spinach leaves
1/2 cup finely chopped parsley
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh mint or 1 teaspoon dried mint
1/2 cup finely chopped spring onions
1/4 cup pine nuts, lightly fried in olive oil (optional)
1 1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon mixed spices
1/2 teaspoon Zaatar Mixture or thyme
1/4 cup olive oil
approx 1/4 cup lemon juice



This recipe requires only the leaves of the spinach. Makes: 24 turnovers - Cooking time: 20 minutes.

Place the bread dough in a warm place and allow rising. Mix all the filling ingredients together. When the bread dough has risen, roll out on a floured board to ¼ in thickness and cut into 4 in squares.

Place a tablespoon of filling on each square of dough and fold to form a triangle – shaped pie. Secure edges together by folding them over and pressing firmly down with fork prongs. Place the pies on a well oiled baking tray and brush each one with oil. Bake in a hot oven, 425 degrees F until lightly golden. Serve hot or cold.

Grape Leave Rolls (MAHSHI WARAK AREESH)

1 teaspoon of salt
 1 cup rice
 1 pound of chopped beef or lamb
 1/4 teaspoon of cinnamon
 3 tablespoons of lemon juice
 1/2 teaspoon of allspice
 1 small can of tomato sauce
 Fresh picked tender grabe leaves



Stuffing: Wash rice and mix with cinnamon, allspice, tomato sauce and salt. Then add chopped meat and mix well.

Wash grape leaves and lay flat with dull side up. Place a small amount of meat near stem section of leaf. Curl over the leaf to cover meat, fold in the sides and roll the leaf into a cigar shape.

On the bottom of pan place unstuffed grape leaves in pan and add 2 cups of water. Cook on high until water boils, lower heat and cook for another half hour or until rice is cooked. Place a dish on top of grape leaves while cooking to keep them down. When grape leaves are cooked add 3 tablespoons of lemon juice.

Kousa mihshi (Stuffed Zucchini)

8 medium zucchini
 1.5 pound ground beef or lamb
 1 cup short grain rice
 1 can stewed red tomatoes
 2 teaspoon salt



1 teaspoon of ground allspice
 1/2 teaspoon of black pepper
 1/2 teaspoon of ground cinnamon
 2 cups water
 4 tablespoon lemon juice



Wash zucchini well. Using a knife remove the stems. Cut the zucchini in half across the center. Hollow out each half using an apple corer carefully so the skin does not get punctured.

Filling: Mix meat with rice and spices. Stuff zucchini, shake each after filling it so that the filling is well distributed (do not over stuff). Arrange in a pot. Invert a plate on top.

Add 2 cups of water with tomatoes, and a dash of salt with the stuffed zucchini in a pot over medium heat. Cook for 1/2 hour or until squash is tender. Add crushed garlic and lemon juice. Cook for 5 minutes. Serve zucchini and sauce hot together in a large bowl.

Cucumber Yoghurt (Leban) Sauce



Either make the yoghurt or purchase plain yoghurt (a good non-fat

plain is Daisy brand). Mix it with one thinly sliced armenian cucumber (don't peel), 2 gloves mashed garlic, and 2 tablespoon fresh chopped dill. Please remember to bring as much plain yoghurt to serve with the Kibbee - the main course.

Yoghurt (Leban)

(For 8 cups of yoghurt or 1 cup yoghurt cheese (Lebnee))

8 cups milk
 1/2 cup yoghurt
 1 tspn salt

Bring milk to a boil. Place aside until tepid. (About 120 degrees) Stir in yoghurt. Cover pot with lid. Wrap pot with a wool cover. Place in a warm place for 6 hours. Remove lid. Stir in salt. Cool in refrigerator for 3 hours.

For Yoghurt Cheese:

Pour the cold yoghurt into a cheese cloth bag or a coffee filter inside a colander. Let drain for 12 hours. Note: You should double the time of straining the yoghurt when you double the quantity of

yoghurt.

Tabbouleh Libanaise

- 1 cup bulghur, fine cracked wheat
- 2 - 3 cups finely chopped parsley (about 2 large bunches)
- 3 firm red tomatoes, washed and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup finely chopped fresh mint leaves
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
- 2 lemons squeeed - need all the juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil



Wash all vegetables and drain well. Wash the bulghur several times and drain. Soak bulghur in lemon juice and olive oil for 20 minutes. Add chopped tomatoes, salt, pepper, mint, and parsley and mix all ingredients well. Serve Tabbouleh with crisp romain lettuce leaves as scoopers.

Kibbi bil sanieh(Baked Kibbi)

- 2 1/2 pounds ground lean beef or lamb
- 1 cup washed bulghur (fine cracked wheat)
- 2 teaspoons ground allspice (as desired)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon pepper

- Filing: 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
 - 1/2 pound ground meat
 - 1 cup butter
 - 1 tspn salt
 - 1/2 tspn ground allspice
 - a dash of black pepper
 - 1 cup fried pine nuts



Filling: Saute onion with oil over medium heat. Stir in 1/2 pound meat, salt, and spices. Cook for 15 minutes till tender. Remove from heat. Mix in pine nuts.

Kibbi: Drain Bulghur using a sieve, then press to remove excess water as much as possible. Run the 2 1/2 pounds meat and onion through a food processor two times. Remove meat mixture. Add

bulghur to meat and add salt and spices and knead with your hands.

Divide meat mixture into two parts, and divide each half into 4 balls. Flatten each ball between your wet palms (use cold water). Place the 4 flattened balls in a greased oven tray (usually 9 x 13). Spread the 4 balls evenly using your wet palms (about 3 cm thick).

Spread the filling over meat. Cover filling with the rest of the meat mixture repeating the same procedure as before. You may need to wet your hands to spread the meat evenly.

Run a knife blade around edge of tray, then score deeply into diamond shapes. Spread pats of butter out over top until you have used 1/2 cube.

Bake in a moderate heat oven (350 degrees) for 30 minutes. Serve hot with plain youghurt.

Lubya(Green Beans)

2 pounds green beans, string and snip off the ends, snip each bean into two and wash

1 pound tomatoes, washed, peeled and chopped or 1 can stewed tomatoes

1 1/2 chopped onion

1/4 cup olive oil

1/2 tspn salt

a dash of ground allspice

a dash of sugar

2 heads garlic, peeled and chopped

1/2 cup water



Fry onion and garlic in oil over high heat, stir for 5 minutes. Add beans, cook for 10 minutes, stir occasionally. Add tomato, salt, sugar, allspice, and water. Cover. Bring to a boil. Cook over low heat for 15 minutes or till tender. Option: Brown small pieces of chunk cuts of lamb and mix with above.

Baklava

1 (16 ounce) package phyllo dough

1 pound chopped nuts

1 cup butter

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 cup water

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 cup white sugar



1 cup honey

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter the bottoms and sides of a 9x13 inch pan. Chop nuts and toss with cinnamon. Set aside. Unroll phyllo dough. Cut whole stack in half to fit pan. Cover phyllo with a dampened cloth to keep from drying out as you work. Place two sheets of dough in pan, butter thoroughly. Repeat dough and butter until you have 8 sheets layered. Sprinkle nut mixture on top. Top with sheets of dough and butter, layering as you go until you have 8 sheets deep on top.

Using a sharp knife cut into diamond shapes all the way to the bottom of the pan. You may cut into 4 long rows the make diagonal cuts. Bake for about 45 minutes until baklava is golden and crisp.

Make honey mixture while baklava is baking. Boil sugar and water until sugar is melted. Add vanilla and honey. Simmer for about 20 minutes. Remove baklava from oven and immediately spoon sauce over it evenly. Let cool. This freezes well. Leave it uncovered as it gets soggy if it is wrapped up.

Find more great Lebanese recipes at <http://www.discoverlebanon.com/en/recipes/> and at <http://www.habeeb.com>