

European Dinner Parties

Greece

Krista Manickas' Greek menu

- Salata Xoriatico (Greek village salad)
- Pastichio (Greek Baked Macaroni)
- Koulourakia (Greek cookies)

Ingredients and cooking tips

Salad: Salata Xoriatico (serves 6)

Ingredients:

One large cucumber
3-4 medium tomatoes
One red onion

Slice vegetables and place in large bowl.

Drizzle with olive oil and vinegar.

Sprinkle with salt, pepper and plenty of oregano.

Serve in middle of table many time eaten "family style".

Always serve with a plate of feta cheese and Kalamata olives and loaf of bread (for dipping in olive oil dressing)

Main course: Pastichio (serves 6)

Ingredients:

One pound pasta Pastene Regine 10 (wide tubular type spaghetti).
2 pounds ground meat (Beef or combination of veal, pork, beef)
½ lb freshly grated sharp cheese (Kefalotiri or sharp cheddar)
½ can tomato paste
½ cup red wine
2 small onions chopped
½ lb butter (2 sticks)
3 eggs
Dash sugar, salt to taste, dash of garlic salt, white pepper

Boil macaroni in large pot, drain, rinse with cold water and return to pot.

Saute onions in olive oil, add meat and separate with fork while browning meat.
Add tomato paste, wine, seasonings.
Cook and simmer for at least 20 minutes.
(Cinnamon is what gives the Patichio its unique taste—taste and add if necessary).

While the meat is simmering, melt one stick of butter and pour over macaroni.
Add half the grated cheese and 3 eggs (beaten) and mix in the macaroni and cheese.
Spread half the macaroni on bottom of 9 x13 pan. (arrange macaroni in straight even lines).
Cover this with meat sauce. Spread remaining macaroni on top.
Cover the pastiche with a cream (Bechamel) sauce which is prepared as follows.

Bechamel Sauce:

1 quart whole milk
5 Tbsp cornstarch
1 stick butter melted
2 eggs, beaten

Place melted butter in saucepan and add milk (save about one cup of milk to add later if needed to dilute mix).
Using a wire whisk, blend in cornstarch and cook over medium heat until sauce is thickened. (Be patient and take your time with this!)
Add dash of salt if desired.
When sauce has thickened, remove from heat, add beaten eggs, mix, and spread over entire top of Pastichio.
Sprinkle remaining half of grated cheese and bake at 350° for approximately 40 minutes or until top is golden.

Serve warm with a bottle of Greek Red Wine on table—Demestica is Krista's favorite.

Dessert: Koulourakia

Most Greek meals end with family and friends lingering around the table enjoying good conversation and sharing stories. Many times a large plate of fruit is served—Karpousi (watermelon) is a favorite. In addition a plate of cookies may be offered. Krista's Yiayia (grandmother) always had a jar of Koulouria ready to be eaten!

Ingredients:

½ lb butter
1 ½ cups sugar
3 tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla
5 ½ cups pre-sifted flour
½ cup vegetable oil
½ cup orange juice
¼ tsp salt
1 jigger whiskey
Sesame seeds and 1 beaten egg for glaze

Melt butter and place in a large bowl and add oil, orange juice, and sugar.
Measure 1 cup flour add baking powder to this and slowly add to mixture.
Add remaining flour mixing well and add whiskey, vanilla and salt.
Work dough with hands and shape into braids, round circle and coils.
Place on baking sheet and glaze with pastry brush and sprinkle with sesame seed.
Bake at 425 for 12-15 minutes.

Yields 40-50 cookies.

Kali Orexi!