

I haven't tried making this recipe. Normally I do, particularly with recipes found on the internet, but not this one, not yet. We're visiting Turkey at the moment, and surrounded by "the real thing." But when I get home, and maybe lose a few pounds...

Turkish baklava uses sugar syrup instead of honey. This makes it a bit lighter. You'll like it. If you don't, though, go back to using honey. I've edited the recipe a bit, mostly to cut down on the verbiage, but it's intact and usable. I think you'll like it.

Lambert, November 2015

Homemade Turkish Pistachio Baklava

Making Turkish-style Baklava At Home Is Easy With Ready Phyllo
<http://turkishfood.about.com/od/DessertsSweets/a/Homemade-Pistachio-Baklava.htm>

When you think of baklava, does Turkey come to mind? Did you know that some of the world's finest baklava comes not from Greece or the Middle East, but from Turkey?

Most baklava fans are familiar with Greek-style baklava which often features honey as the main sweetening ingredient. Turkish baklava is sweetened with "şerbet" (share-BET'), a light syrup made from sugar, water and lemon juice. This makes Turkish baklava much lighter and crispier than most Greek or Middle Eastern-style varieties.

In every Turkish pastry shop, supermarket and household, you'll find endless varieties of baklava made with walnuts, hazelnuts, pistachios and more, all in shapes and sizes you'd never dream of. Squares, diamonds, rolls and spirals. It's a baklava-lovers paradise.

The most coveted baklava of them all is pistachio baklava made with bright green, raw pistachio nuts. The recipe for this simple, square-cut baklava is below. If you wish, you can substitute the pistachios with ground walnuts or hazelnuts for a more economical version of this recipe. Go ahead and experiment with different nuts to give you different flavors.



Baklava is actually very easy to make at home with ready-made, pre-packaged "baklava yufkası" (bahk-lah-VAH' yoof-kah-SU'), better known as phyllo pastry. You can find phyllo dough in the frozen food section of your grocery store, or in Middle Eastern and Greek grocers.

Ingredients For Syrup:

- 4 cups water
- 3 cups sugar
- Juice of ½ lemon



For The Baklava:

- 36 leaves fresh or frozen packaged phyllo dough (14 x 18 inch size)
- ½ pound/300 grams unsalted butter, clarified
- ½ pound/300 grams raw, hulled pistachio nuts, chopped finely
- 2 tbsp. sugar



Materials:

- 14 x 18 inch shallow metal baking pan
- pastry brush
- pastry cutter or sharp knife



Directions:

1. Begin by making the syrup which you'll pour over the hot baklava later on. Combine the water , sugar and lemon juice in a small saucepan, bring the mixture to a boil and let it simmer slowly uncovered while you prepare the rest of the baklava.
2. The next important step is preparing your clarified butter. If you need to see how, check a good cookbook or the internet.
3. Mix the ground pistachio nuts with 2 tablespoons of sugar. Brush the bottom of your baking pan with butter and sprinkle a few pinches of the ground pistachio nuts over the butter.
4. Thaw a package of frozen phyllo dough. (See the internet for advice if needed.)
5. Set your first layer of phyllo and set it in place. Working quickly, brush the entire piece of phyllo with the butter. Repeat in the same manner with 18 leaves of phyllo.
6. Once you've buttered the 18th layer, use all of the ground pistachio mixture to make an even layer going all the way to the edges of the pan.
7. Place another layer of phyllo over the nuts and butter it. Repeat until you finish the last layer. If you have extra butter left, set it aside.
8. Using a sharp knife or a pastry cutter, gently cut the baklava into even squares or diamond shapes. If you're using a round pan, you can cut it into large, narrow slivers, if you wish.
9. Drizzle the leftover butter over the top. Place the pan in a preheated 395° F/200° C oven and set the timer for 45 minutes.
10. Once the baklava is in the oven, remove the syrup from the heat and leave it to cool down.
11. Bake the baklava for about 45 minutes, or until the layers puff up high and the top layers are golden, crispy and translucent.
12. When ready, remove the tray from the oven. While it's still piping hot, immediately pour the cold syrup evenly over the baklava. Let it bubble up then settle. Generously sprinkle more ground pistachios over the top. Leave your baklava to cool down to room temperature before serving.