

## **MELOMAKARONA**

Traditional Greek Christmas cookies with walnuts and honey

Yield:40-50 cookies

### **FOR THE DOUGH:**

1 1/2 cups olive oil  
1/2 cup margarine or butter, softened  
1 cup sugar  
3/4 cup orange juice  
1/4 cup brandy or cognac  
2 tsps orange zest  
8 cups all-purpose flour (approximately)  
2 tsps baking powder  
1 tsp baking soda

### **FOR THE SYRUP:**

2 cups honey  
2 cups sugar  
2 cups water

### **GARNISH WITH:**

1 1/2 cups chopped walnuts  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground cloves

### **TO PREPARE THE DOUGH:**

In a mixer bowl, beat olive oil, margarine or butter-softened-sugar, orange juice, brandy or cognac and orange zest at high speed for 4 minutes.

Sift the flour, baking powder and baking soda in a large bowl. Make a well in the flour and add the beaten ingredients. Slowly blend the liquids into the flour and then knead lightly. The dough should be soft and oily.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F /180 C/ gas 4

Form into an oblong shape about 3 inches long and place on the parchment paper lined cookie sheet.



Bake at 350 degrees F (175 C) until golden brown on the bottom and top, about 30 minutes.

#### **TO PREPARE THE SYRUP:**

Meanwhile, boil the honey, sugar, and water for 5 minutes to make the syrup, skimming off the foam as it forms.

Place the hot baked cookies in a shallow pan and pour the syrup over them. Let them set for an hour or so and then flip them over to soak the other way for another 1/2 hour or so.

Layer the cookies on a platter and sprinkle with the mixed walnuts, cinnamon, and cloves. You can pile them into a pyramid shape on the platter if you like, sprinkling every layer with the walnuts. Any leftover soaking syrup may be drizzled over the cookies.

Cover with plastic wrap and store at room temperature.



**If you are a chocoholic**, they can be even greater dipped in a bit of chocolate! Dip half of the cookies in white coating; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper. Repeat with remaining cookies in dark chocolate coating.



Enjoy!!!