

Baklava of Tabriz; A Sweet Iranian Dessert

Written by Pouya Asghari

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Baklava is made in different forms in various parts of Iran, but the ones made in the north-western city of Tabriz these days are prepared with special, very thin layers of filo dough, and filled with chopped nuts—typically walnuts or pistachios impregnated with melted butter.

However, the most important part is the syrup that makes Baklava very delicious. Although its preparation seems easy at first, one must be very experienced to make a tasty and sweet syrup.

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Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Butter a 23×33 cm baking dish. Unroll the filo and cut the whole stack in half to fit the dish. Cover the filo with a damp cloth to keep it from drying out.

Place a sheet of filo at the bottom of the prepared dish. Brush it with butter. Sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons of the nut mixture on top. Repeat layers until all ingredients are used, ending with about 4 sheets of filo. Using a sharp knife, cut baklava into long rows of diamond shapes.

Then, bake in preheated oven until it turns golden brown and crispy.

While baklava is baking, combine sugar and water in a small saucepan over medium heat and bring to a boil. Stir in steamed saffron and powdered cardamom; reduce the heat and let it simmer for 15 minutes. Finally, add the rosewater and lemon juice and leave it aside.

Remove the baklava from the oven and immediately spoon the syrup over it. Garnish with pistachio or coconut powder. Let it cool completely before serving. Store uncovered. Now it's time to serve Baklava.

- Make the syrup when Baklava is getting cool.
- When the syrup is ready, pour it over the Baklava before it is cooled.