

THE FEARLESS OLIVE
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Fabulous February

As we approach spring, while still enjoying the pleasant weather, here are some recipes to give you a diverse mix of foods that celebrate the changing seasons. From the Philippines and Greece to The Fearless Olive's humble kitchen, these recipes are easy to make; add a dash of love for food, and you have an impressive spread this February.

BIBINGKA

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice flour
- 2½ tsp baking powder
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup coconut milk
- ¼ cup fresh milk
- 1 salted duck egg, hard boiled and sliced
- ½ cup grated cheese (you can use Dhaka poneer or edam if you want)
- 3 raw eggs
- Pre-cut banana leaf
- A pinch of salt

GREEK HALVA WITH SESAME

Ingredients

- 2 cups honey
- ¼ tsp rose water
- 1½ cups pistachios and almonds (both toasted but unsalted)
- 2 cups tahini (stirred until smooth)

Method

For the Tahini —

Take 250gm of sesame and dry roast until it reaches a pinkish-brown hue. Let it cool for about two minutes, and then make a paste of it. Tahini is ready.

For the halva —

Heat the honey in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat until it reaches about 130° C or a stage called the “soft ball” stage. If you have a digital thermometer, hold it just above the pan



- available now, easily peeled)
- 1 broccoli, florets separated
- 5-6 cloves garlic diced
- 1 medium onion, sliced thickly
- ½ cup mushrooms sliced (again, you can keep this with just the vegetables)
- ¼ cup flour
- 2 cups milk
- ½ cup chicken stock (you can keep this purely vegetarian also)
- ¼ tsp of nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup olive oil
- About 1 tbs of grated parmesan

Serve it hot with sprinkle of parsley on top.

ZUCCHINI AND SWEET POTATO SALAD WITH CRUMBLed FETA/DHAKA PONEER, BARLEY AND ROCKET

Ingredients

- 2 medium sized zucchinis
- 1 large sweet potato
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1 cup boiled barley (boiled with some salt and 1 tsp olive oil)
- 100gm of feta cheese or 150g of Dhaka Poneer
- 150-200gm of rocket leaves
- Additional choice of ½ cup pomegranates



Method

Preheat oven to about 180° C then lower it to about 120° for baking. Mix the rice flour, baking powder, salt and set aside. Use a hand whisk or an electric one to slowly cream the butter then gradually add the sugar, followed by the eggs and whisk for about 2 minutes till it is properly mixed.

Gradually, add the mix of rice flour, salt, and baking powder, and continue mixing, but you need not whisk at this point. After about 1 minute, add the coconut milk and fresh milk and whisk these slowly for 1 to 2 minutes. Arrange the pre-cut banana leaf on a cake pan or baking pan. Pour the mixture on the pan and bake for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven, add the sliced egg and grated cheese, and put back in the oven and bake for maximum 15 minutes or until the top browns a bit.

Serve with some grated coconut and eat it piping hot.

and take a measurement or, once the honey is boiling, take 1 tablespoonful out and pour in a bowl of ice-cold water. Then with your hand, guide the honey together and it will eventually form a ball. After you have reached this stage, allow the honey to cool and when it is still warm, add the rose water and nuts. Gently fold in the tahini and stir until the mixture is well blended. Lightly oil a 4-6 inch long cake pan. Pour the mixture into this and cool completely. Wrap the halva in cling foil and refrigerate for 24 to 36 hours. This lets the ingredients gel well and form a fudge like consistency. Serve it like a cake and cut it into slices while it is still cold.

CREAMY ALFREDO POTATOES & BROCCOLI WITH MUSHROOMS

Ingredients

- 250gm potatoes (the medium sized ones

Method

Sauté the mushrooms in half the garlic with a pinch of salt and pepper and set aside. If you are planning on using the chicken stock, then you can add some to the mushroom and simmer it down to a thick sauce. Blanch the broccoli and potatoes and set aside. In a separate pot now sauté the rest of the garlic with the broccoli and pick out the florets with a tong and add the milk to the remaining garlic and boil. Once it is bubbling, slowly add the flour to make it thick, till it reaches the consistency of a thick sauce. Add salt, nutmeg and pepper to taste, and take off the fire once the thickness is fine. Pre-heat the oven at 150° C for 10 minutes, then bring down to 90° C. In an oven dish, lay the broccoli, potatoes and mushrooms out in layers and pour the milk sauce over it. Grate some parmesan on top, add an extra sprinkle of pepper, and let bake for about 10 minutes, at which point the cheese and sauce are simmering.

Half a lemon

- 1 tsp rosemary
- Virgin olive oil

Method

Cut the zucchini and sweet potato in squares. You may pre-boil the potatoes so they are semi cooked. Mix the chopped vegetables with diced garlic, olive oil, salt, pepper, sprinkle of lemon juice and rosemary. Preheat oven at 150° C then bring it down to 120° C and stick the vegetables in a baking tray (cover it) and let it bake for up to 10-15 mins. Keep checking until they are cooked. In a bowl, mix the rocket, boiled barley, cheese and any fruits or pomegranates and add 1-2 tbsp olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper and mix it. Add the baked vegetables and mix well again.

You can serve it cold as the cheese goes well chilled.

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