

Myerberg Center
Delightfully Turkish with Chef Alba



Ravani Cake

1 cup granulated sugar
8 ounces unsalted butter, room temp
6 eggs, lightly beaten
2/3 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
1 cup + 2 tablespoons fine semolina
1 ¼ tablespoons baking powder
3/4 cup blanched almonds, finely chopped
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 tablespoons brandy, *optional*

Syrup

1 ½ cups granulated sugar
2 ½ cups water
1 cinnamon stick
Zest 1 orange
Optional Toppings:
extra almonds
whipping cream

1. **Syrup:** Combine the sugar with the water in a saucepan and simmer over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Then, add the cinnamon stick and orange zest; simmer about 15 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and allow it to cool.
2. **Cake:** Preheat the oven to 350F. Butter a 9 X 12-inch rectangular pan.
3. Place the butter and sugar in a bowl and beat until soft and light with an electric mixer. Slowly add the eggs one at a time, beating thoroughly after each addition.
4. In another bowl, sift flour, semolina, and baking powder together. Add the chopped almonds and mix well.
5. Gradually add this mixture to the egg batter, mixing continuously. Finally, add the vanilla and brandy to the mixture and pour into the buttered pan. Bake about 30 minutes to golden.
6. Remove from the oven and score the cake into diamond shapes (like baklava) with a sharp knife. Drizzle the syrup over the cake; allow it to cool. Decorate with extra almonds on top and whip cream if desired.

Sweet Pan-Fried Feta in Sesame Seed and Honey

8-ounce piece Greek feta cheese
1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground paprika
3-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Flour for dredging
¼ - 1/3 cup sesame seeds
3 tablespoons honey, warmed

1. Cut the feta into even chunks about 2" X 1". Place in the freezer for 15 minutes before cooking.
2. Combine the egg, pepper and paprika in a bowl and beat well. Place the flour on a flat plate.
3. Roll each piece of chilled feta in the egg mixture first, then roll in the flour. Once you have done all of them, roll each piece in the egg for a second time, then roll in the sesame seeds.
4. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan; cook the feta on each side until golden. In the meantime, warm the honey in a saucepan until it is very liquid.
5. Remove the feta pieces from the frying pan, drizzle with a little honey, and serve warm.

Turkish Pizza with Spiced Beef

1 homemade or ready-made pizza dough
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, coarsely grated
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1/2 pound extra lean minced beef
5 tablespoons tomato purée, *divided*
6 tablespoons pomegranate molasses or thick balsamic, *divided*
2-3 tablespoons of pine nuts or walnuts, crumbled
½ cup pickled cherry peppers, roughly chopped (substitute: Pepperoncini in jar, or Giardiniera)

Spices:

1-2 teaspoons ground cumin
1-2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
½-1 tablespoon red pepper flakes
Salt and black pepper

1. Allow the pizza dough to rise about 1 ½ to 2 hours before baking.
2. Preheat oven to 425F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Heat oil in a large frying pan, add onions and garlic; cook for a few minutes until soft and slightly golden.
4. Add the beef and let it brown for about 5-8 mins, breaking it up to a mince as it cooks. Be sure the meat is fully cooked, *no pink*. Add the spices, 2 tablespoons of tomato purée, 5 tbsp of pomegranate molasses and salt and pepper. Cook for 1-2 minutes, then remove from the heat.
5. Divide the dough into 4 pieces. Sprinkle flour over a work surface and roll out the dough, each to about 6-8 inches long to create oval shaped pizza. Place the pizza bases on a baking sheet.
6. Spread the remaining tomato purée on each base. Top and spread the meat mixture, pickled cherry peppers, and nuts. Bake 10 mins or until the bases are cooked through and golden around the edges.
7. Drizzle over the remaining pomegranate molasses or balsamic and serve.

Lentil salad

1 ½ cups Puy lentils (small lentils, French Lentils)
2 bay leaves
6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Juice of 2 oranges
Salt and ground black pepper
1 medium-sized red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
1 orange, peeled and cut into segments

1. Place the lentils, bay leaves and 2 tbsp of olive oil in a saucepan. Cover with water and bring to a boil, then simmer for 20 minutes or until the lentils are cooked.
2. Drain in a colander and allow to cool. Place in a serving bowl. Add the orange juice and remaining 4 tablespoons of olive oil: season with salt and pepper. Stir the mixture well and marinate for about 30 minutes in the refrigerator.
3. Just before serving, mix in the sliced onion and orange segments.