

Baklava

Ingredients:

- * pastry brush
 - * 1 package 16 oz phyllo dough (can be found in the freezer section of a good grocery store; I've found it at Walmart & at GFS/Gordon Food Service)
 - * 1 pound chopped nuts (I use walnuts, also got @ GFS because they have the best price in my area.)
 - * 3/4 cup butter (use real butter)
 - * 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 - * 1/8 tsp ground cloves (optional)
- For the syrup:
- * 1 cup water
 - * 1 cup white sugar
 - * 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - * 1/2 cup honey
 - * 1/4 tsp cinnamon (optional)
 - * 1 to 2 T Real lemon juice (optional)

Directions:

(I use a 10x13 pan, and don't need to cut the pastry sheets, but here's the original/unadjusted recipe:)

1. Chop nuts. Preheat oven to 350 F/175 C. Mix nuts and 1 tsp cinnamon & cloves well in a separate bowl. Melt butter in microwave safe bowl. Brush butter on bottom & sides of a 9x13 inch pan.
2. Dampen a clean handtowel or cloth. Unroll phyllo dough. Cut whole stack in half to fit pan (I omitted this step because the whole sheet fit in my pan). Cover phyllo with cloth to keep from drying out as you work.
3. Place one sheet of pastry in pan, butter thoroughly. I've found that brushing from right to left or left to right results in less tears in the pastry. Repeat until you have 8 sheets layered. Sprinkle 2 - 3 tablespoons of nut mixture on top. Top with two sheets of dough, butter, nuts, layering as you go. The top layer should be about 6 - 8 sheets deep.
4. Use a sharp knife to cut into diamond or square shapes all the way to the bottom of the pan. Bake for about 50 minutes until baklava is golden and crisp.
5. About 20 minutes into the bake, make the syrup. Pour water & sugar into a pot & add honey. Bring to a boil, and boil until sugar is melted. Add vanilla, and option lemon juice & cinnamon & stir well. Simmer for 10-20 minutes.
6. Remove baklava from oven. Immediately spoon sauce over it. You should hear a sizzling when you first pour the syrup. Let cool. For an added touch, or for adding to cookie tin gifts, serve in cupcake papers. This freezes well. Leave it uncovered, or it may lose its crispness.

Makes approximately 36 squares.

Also, if you like you can sub more honey & less sugar (which I usually do because I like the flavor of the honey.)