

Baklava

Serves 25+

Syrup:

1½ cups honey

3 cups sugar

1 ½ tablespoon grated lemon rind

3 1" cinnamon sticks

Pastry & Filling:

1 pound phyllo pastry sheets

2 pounds almonds

1 teaspoon cinnamon

½ teaspoon cloves

¾ pound sweet butter, melted

Make syrup several hours ahead & refrigerate. Mix all ingredients & heat slowly until sugar has dissolved. Then bring to boil & boil 5 minutes (add water if overly thick but should be quite thick). Strain into large jar & refrigerate.

Chop almonds in blender, not too fine, though some will be ground to meal (chop only a handful at a time). Combine with spices.

Divide phyllo sheets into 2 parts, keeping both parts covered with a wrung out dish towel at all times. Brush bottom of 10½ x 15½" pan with butter & lay on one pastry sheet.

Butter top of sheet & fold over the overhanging half; butter new top (alternate the side of the fold on succeeding layers). Repeat with 2 more sheets. Continue, but now sprinkle ¼ cup almonds over each buttered layer. Repeat until all nuts are used, but reserve 3 pastry sheets for the top, laying them on the same as the bottom layers & amply buttering the top. Cut through as in diagram. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes, then at 400° for 15 minutes. Pour cold syrup over hot pastry & let stand overnight at least, to absorb (keeps 1 week).