

MEDITERRANEAN CUISINE

with Lucy Van Horn for the Jericho Library

ZUCCHINI AND CHEESE FILLING FOR BOEREKS

1 lb of zucchini, coarsely grated
½ teas salt
2 tbls olive oil
¾ cup onion, chopped
6 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
2 tbsp parsley, chopped
2 tsp garlic, finely chopped
3 tbsp dry white wine
½ cup feta cheese, crumbled
½ cup parmesan cheese, grated
6 tbsp pine nuts, toasted
1 egg
1 egg white, for glaze
sesame seeds

Toss zucchini with salt and let stand for 30 minutes. Drain zucchini and squeeze dry in kitchen towel. Heat oil and sauté onion until limp, add zucchini and cook for about 5 minutes. Add basil, parsley, garlic and wine. Cook while stirring until liquids evaporate, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and cool. Add both cheeses, pine nuts and egg. Make triangle shapes with phyllo according to demonstration. Lightly beat egg white, brush the pastries and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes, or until golden brown.

SOUTZOUKAKIA – Greek Meatballs

For the Meatballs

Begin by soaking the bread crumbs (for the meatballs) in ½ cup red wine, stir with a fork and allow to sit. After about 15 minutes squeeze to remove some of the wine.

2 eggs
flour for dredging
2 lbs chopped beef (I use 90% fat free)
2 cups homemade breadcrumbs (do not use white bread - whole wheat or 7 grain is better)
1 cup red wine to soak bread crumbs
1 large Spanish onion chopped fine
¼ cup finely chopped parsley
2 med size tomatoes, chopped
1 teas caraway seeds
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
2 – 3 large cloves of garlic, finely chopped
salt and pepper

Meanwhile prepare the meatballs. In a large bowl add the chopped meat, the breadcrumbs that you have squeezed dry. Add the chopped onions, tomatoes, caraway, vinegar, eggs, garlic, salt and pepper. Gently knead all ingredient together. Form small oval shaped meatballs, about 1 ½". Lightly oil a cookie sheet. Put some flour in a plate and dredge the balls lightly and place on cookie tray. DO NOT over flour. Fry the meatballs in pan to brown them then add to the tomato sauce you have waiting and cook over a moderate heat (do not boil) for an additional 5 to 8 minutes. Serve hot over potatoes or rice.

For the Sauce (Begin after soaking the breadcrumbs)

1 cup tomato juice
½ cup white wine
3 large tomatoes, skinned and chopped
½ cup olive oil
½ teas caraway seeds
1 teas sugar
salt and pepper

In a large pan combine tomatoes and tomato juice a bring to a to a boil. Cook for about 4 minutes, then add olive oil, ½ cup wine, salt and pepper. Lower the flame and allow to cook until it has slightly thickened. This can take about 15 minutes or slightly less. When done allow to stand on the stove until meatballs are ready.

ISRAELI COUSCOUS SALAD with FRUIT

1 ½ cup Israeli couscous
1 ¾ cups broth (vegetable, chicken or water)
2 tbsp butter
½ teas salt
¼ cup dried cranberries
¼ cup raisins
1 small zucchini, chopped
4 green onions, chopped
½ English cucumber, seeds removed, chopped
¼ sweet onion, chopped
1 red pepper {or pepper of your choice}, seeds removed and chopped
¼ cup fresh mint, chopped
½ cup fresh parsley, chopped

For the dressing

1 lemon, juiced
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
salt and pepper to taste
lemon zest

In a medium pot, heat the butter over medium heat until melted. Add the couscous and stir until it begins to brown slightly. Add the broth (vegetable, chicken or water), ½ teaspoon salt and bring to a boil. Cover and turn down the heat to low and simmer until the liquid is gone and the couscous is tender, about 9 minutes. While the couscous is cooking combine the dried cranberries, raisins, zucchini, green onions, English cucumber, sweet onion, red pepper, mint and fresh parsley in a large mixing bowl and set aside.

In a small bowl whisk together the lemon juice, olive oil, minced garlic cloves and salt and pepper to taste and set aside. Once the couscous is done cooking add it to the vegetables and mix until combined. Add the lemon dressing and stir until the couscous is fully covered in the dressing. Refrigerate for an hour before serving and garnish with more fresh parsley and lemon zest (optional).

Notes: The cook time and the amount of liquid may vary depending on the Israeli couscous you buy so make sure to read the package. I like to add the couscous to the vegetables when it is warm because it helps to slightly soften the vegetables and the dried cranberries.

YOGURT DESSERT SAUCE

2 cups good quality yogurt, plain and unsweetened
8 oz mascarpone cheese
2 to 3 tbs honey

Beat yogurt and cheese together until well blended. Beat in honey until blended.
Serve over fruit or cake.