

Greek Baklava

1 lbs. walnuts (add a couple handfuls more if you want it nuttier)
1.5 heaping tsp. cinnamon
1/4 - 1/2 tsp. ground cloves (I tend to go toward the higher end, but it's about what you want)
1 (16 oz.) package phyllo dough, thawed
1 cup unsalted butter, melted

Syrup

1 cup water
1 cup sugar
1 cup honey
1 cinnamon stick (optional)
strip of lemon peel, or a couple tsp. fresh lemon juice

Toast the walnuts, either in a dry skillet or a 300 degree oven, until fragrant. Place in a food processor along with the cinnamon and cloves, and buzz until walnuts are pretty finely crushed (obviously you don't want a powder, but no huge chunks, either).

Preheat the oven to 350.

Grease a 9x13 pan, and place one layer of phyllo at the bottom. Brush the phyllo with the melted butter, and then add another layer of phyllo, and brush with more butter. Continue this process until you have layered about 7 sheets of phyllo.

Spoon 1/4 of the nut mixture evenly over the top. Repeat the process of the phyllo/butter layering again, but this time only use about 5 sheets of phyllo. Continue the layering of the 5 sheets of phyllo and 1/4 of the mixture of walnuts. Finish off with 7 layers of buttered phyllo (and don't forget to brush butter on the top layer, too).

Using a sharp knife, cut your baklava into diamonds or triangles. I used to do diamonds but mine were always a little funky shaped so now I just do triangles. Place in the oven, and bake for about 50 minutes, until golden brown.

To make your syrup, combine all the ingredients and bring to a low boil. Turn the heat to simmer and simmer about 10-15 minutes. Allow the syrup to cool before pouring over the hot-from-the-oven-baklava. Alternatively, you can pour hot syrup over a cooled baklava. It's your choice, just remember one has to be hot and the other shouldn't be.