



sharing our Greek culinary heritage

Vasiliki's Galatopita

For the dough you will need...

3 cups plain flour

1 teaspoon salt

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

1 - 1 1/4 cups warm tap water

Extra flour to dust work surface

Cling wrap

How to make the dough...

- Combine the flour and salt in a large bowl. Add the olive oil and rub it into the flour
- Slowly add one cup of warm water and completely combine it with the flour mixture, so that it forms a soft, workable dough that doesn't stick to your hands or the bowl
- Depending on the type of flour you use, you may need to add extra water to make the dough soft
- Turn the dough onto a floured bench and knead it for 1-2 minutes
- Place the dough in a bowl, cover it with cling wrap and leave it to rest at room temperature for 1-2 hours

For the fillo pastry you will need...

Rested dough

Extra flour for dusting the fillo and work surface

Traditional rolling pin and fillo-pastry rolling pin

Extra virgin olive oil

1 heaped soup spoon of sugar

Cinnamon

Baking dish - approximately 38cm in diameter

How to make the fillo pastry...

- After the dough has rested, divide it into 5 portions and roll each portion into a ball. Dust each ball of dough with flour and set the balls aside
- Take one of the balls of dough, place it on a floured work surface and roll it out with a regular rolling pin, so it forms a disc of approximately 20cm in diameter. Set aside. Repeat with the remaining balls of dough
- Take one of the discs of dough and wrap it around the fillo-pastry rolling pin. Then, starting with both hands in the middle of the fillo-pastry rolling pin, press the fillo lightly while moving your hands away from each other. Repeat this pressing/drawing action 3-4 times
- Unravel the fillo sheet and rotate it 90 degrees on your work surface
- If the fillo becomes sticky, dust it with a little flour
- Wrap the fillo onto the rolling pin again
- Again, starting with both hands in the middle of the fillo-pastry rolling pin, press the fillo lightly while moving your hands away from each other - repeating this pressing/drawing action 3-4 times
- Again, unravel the fillo sheet and rotate it 90 degrees on your work surface
- If the fillo becomes sticky, dust it with a little flour again
- You continue to do this until your fillo is about 60cm in diameter
- Generously oil the base of a 38cm pan and drape the fillo sheet across the pan and over the edge of the pan. Drizzle the sheet with olive oil
- Roll out a second fillo sheet. Drape that over the pan too, again draping some of the fillo over the edge of the pan. Drizzle some oil on top of the second fillo sheet
- Roll out a third fillo sheet and place it completely inside the pan. Draw this fillo sheet up the sides of the pan and press it against the fillo sheets below, to hold it there. Drizzle the fillo sheet with a little oil and then sprinkle it with cinnamon and one heaped soup spoon of sugar
- Roll out a fourth sheet of fillo, place it completely within the pan and drizzle it with oil
- Roll out a fifth fillo sheet and place it completely inside the pan. Draw this fillo sheet up the sides of the pan and press it against the fillo sheets below, to hold it there. Drizzle it with a little oil
- Place a tea towel over the pan to stop the fillo from drying out and set aside

For the custard you will need...

Large pot
2 litres extra creamy milk
200g sifted plain flour
2 large eggs
1/8 teaspoon salt
125g of butter
2 1/4 cups white sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanillin sugar
Cinnamon

How to prepare the custard...

- Place a large pot on high heat and add the milk, flour, eggs and salt to the pot. Whisk the ingredients until all the flour has dissolved and the eggs have completely mixed through
- Once the flour has dissolved in the milk, use a wooden spoon to stir the mixture
- Add the butter and continue to stir the mixture
- If lumps form, don't worry, just continue stirring until it thickens evenly
- Once the mixture has thickened evenly, add the sugar and vanillin sugar and stir these through thoroughly
- The custard is ready when it begins to form bubbles

For the basting you will need...

1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon milk
20 grams butter, melted
2 basting brushes

How to add the custard filling and baste the galatopita...

- Pour the custard into the baking tray and where required, smooth it out with a wooden spoon so that it forms a thick, even layer
- Drizzle the fillo that is overhanging the pan with olive oil. Then twist it to form a braid and lay it down on the custard
- Beat one egg yolk with a teaspoon of milk and baste the custard with this mixture
- Using a second basting brush, draw up some of the oil at the edge of the pan and baste the fillo braid with this
- Finally, using the latter brush, baste the fillo braid with 20g of melted butter too

How to bake the galatopita...

- Place the galatopita in an oven preheated to 200°C and bake it for approximately one hour (not less)
- Check the galatopita after 10 minutes or so and place foil over any glazed areas that have browned
- Continue to check every 10 minutes or so throughout the baking process and add more foil to the browned sections of custard, but not on top of the fillo braid

How to serve the galatopita...

- Once the galatopita has baked for an hour and the fillo pastry has browned, remove the galatopita from the oven
- Allow the galatopita to cool so that the custard can set properly - approximately 2 hours
- Sprinkle a thin, even layer of cinnamon over the baked custard
- Slice the galatopita and serve
- Enjoy!

Key points

- The fillo-pastry rolling pin is curtain dowel, which can be purchased from most timber/hardware stores - it is 12mm in diameter and 85cm long
- You must let the dough rest for 1-2 hours, as this will help make it easier to roll the dough into fillo
- If this is your first time making fillo pastry, make some extra dough and allow some extra time to practice making it. The key point is the amount of pressure you place on the fillo, as you press down and out with your hands. You need to press enough so the fillo is drawn out and enlarges, but not so much that the dough sticks to itself and doesn't unravel easily
- If the fillo tears a little, don't worry, there'll be many layers, one upon the other, and you won't notice any of these holes in the finished dish
- It is very important not to skimp on the oil in this recipe, otherwise your fillo won't bake or brown properly!
- For my 38cm diameter pan I actually use less of the fillo dough. I divide the dough into 7 equal balls (using a weighing scale) and use 5 of them. I pop the other 2 balls into a lidded pyrex and into the fridge to use another day
- I use smaller dough balls to make the fillo sheets. Smaller dough balls means smaller fillo sheets, means less fillo folds in the pan. You want some fillo folds, but not too many. If you have lots of fillo folds, then you need LOTS of oil to bake and crisp up the fillo (something that won't work in a sweet pita)... So in this pita too many fillo folds won't bake and crisp up properly and you end up with 'doughy' areas in your pita. Making smaller fillo sheets avoids this problem!
- I make the custard, by putting **all** the custard ingredients in the pot from the beginning, and then heating the pot on a medium heat and stirring constantly till the custard thickens and begins to bubble. It works perfectly!
- I also used 1/4 cup less of the sugar originally specified