Maria’s Baklava

INGREDIENTS

**Pastry**

2 pounds coarsely ground walnuts

1 cup granulated sugar

1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon

1 tsp. ground cloves

2 pounds *filo* pastry (defrosted according to box directions)

1 pound melted butter

(whole cloves)

**Honey Syrup**

3 cups granulated sugar

1 ¾ cup water

1 ¼ cup honey

DIRECTIONS

Mix nuts with sugar and spices in a large bowl. Brush bottom of a 10 ½ by 14 ½ by 2-inch deep baking pan with melted butter. Then, brushing each with melted butter, place six sheets of *filo* in the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle a thin layer of the nut mixture. Continue alternating *filo*, butter and the nut mixture until all the nuts are used. Again, buttering between each layer, add six more *filo* sheets to the stack in the pan. Butter the top with melted butter.

With a sharp serrated knife, cut the baklava into vertical strips a full 1-inch wide. Be sure to cut to the bottom of the pan. Then cut these strips diagonally 1-inch wide to form the small traditional diamond shaped pieces. (It’s important that the width of the diagonal be the same as that of the vertical cut.) Stick a whole clove in the center of each piece.

Bake in 300 degree oven for approximately 1 hr. and 10 minutes until evenly done (until evenly browned.)

During the last 30 minutes of baking, prepare the honey syrup by combining the sugar, water and honey. Slow boil this syrup for 25 minutes.

Remove the Baklava from the oven and immediately, but carefully, pour the syrup over the entire pastry. Let cool before removing each piece from the pan.