

Preparing Ancient Greek food for guests

Important background information

The Greek diet consisted of foods that were easily grown in the rocky terrain of Greece's landscape. Breakfast was eaten just after sunrise and was bread dipped in wine. Lunch was again bread dipped in wine along with some olives, figs, cheese or dried fish. Supper was the main meal of each day. It was eaten near sunset. It consisted of vegetables, fruit, fish, and possibly honey cakes. Sugar was unknown to ancient Greeks, so natural honey was used as a sweetener.

Wine was the main drink in ancient Greece. It was watered down; to drink it straight was considered common. Just water was another possible choice as a drink. Serve your guests with water or grape juice (watered down if you prefer)

The Greeks did not have any eating utensils, so they ate with their hands. Ask your guests to use their hands. Bread was often used to scoop out thick soups. Bread was also used as a napkin to clean hands.

Serve your guests with these foods, as well as slices of bread and olive. Insist that your guests eat in the traditional Ancient Greek way – with their hands and using bread to eat the soup (by dipping it in). They can wash the whole lot down with a refreshing grape juice!



Ancient Greek recipe 1: Lentil Soup

Ingredients

- 1 cup dry lentils
- 2 small leeks sliced
- 1 bunch coriander
- 1 ½ tsp dry mint
- Fresh ground black pepper
- Olive Oil



Boil on low heat 1 cup of dry lentils over low heat with enough water to cover them and 1 inch above.

Add the leeks and the fresh coriander.

In a small bowl mix the mint, dry coriander and the black pepper, add to the soup.

Let it simmer until the lentils are soft, add vinegar and olive oil to taste

Ancient Greek recipe 2: Fried Pancakes with Honey and Sesame Seeds

Ingredients

1 cup flour
1 cup water
2 tbsp honey
Olive oil
1 tbsp sesame seeds



Mix the flour, water and 1 tbsp honey to form the batter.
Heat some olive oil in a pan and add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the batter to the pan.
When the mixture thickens, turn it 2 or 3 times until it is golden on both sides.
Make 3 more pancakes with the rest of the batter.
Serve with honey and sprinkle sesame seeds.

Ancient Greek recipe 3: Nut Cake

Ingredients

1 cup shelled almonds
1 cup hazelnuts
2 tablespoons poppy seeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sesame seeds
7 tbsp honey
1 tsp fresh ground pepper
Olive Oil



You will need a blender for this recipe.

Preheat the oven at 350 F. Mix all the nuts except the sesame seeds and bake them for a few minutes in the oven. Do the same for the sesame seeds and then let them cool down.
In a small pot let 3 tablespoons of honey simmer for about 7 minutes, add the sesame seeds, mix well. Let it cool enough so that you can handle it, pour it on an oily surface and knead into a ball. Separate it into 2 pieces, roll 1 piece out with a rolling pin into a thin sheet that will fit in a shallow pan. Place the sheet on the bottom of the pan. Put all the nuts with the pepper in a blender or mixer and mix well for about 1 to 2 minutes. Boil the rest of the honey for 7 minutes and then add all the nuts and mix well. While it is still hot pour the nut and honey mixture in the pan on top of the sesame layer. Spread evenly. Roll the other piece of sesame seed dough into a sheet and cover the nut mixture. Let it cool off for 1 hour and then cut it small pieces.

Ancient Greek food and recipes

Sesame Honey Candy (*pasteli*)

In Greek: παστέλι, pronounced pah-STEh-lee

You will need: 1/3 cups of honey
3 cups of hulled white sesame seeds
1 strip of lemon peel
Baking paper

In a saucepan, bring honey and lemon peel to a boil.

Add sesame seeds stirring continuously and continue to cook while stirring to mix completely and thoroughly.

When the seeds are fully mixed in and the mixture has boiled again, remove from heat.

Remove and discard lemon peel.

Spread a piece of baking sheet on a cool work surface and spread out the hot mixture thinly and evenly, on the paper

When the *pasteli* cools to room temperature, refrigerate, as is, on the parchment paper (it doesn't need to be covered). Chill for at least 2-3 hours.

With kitchen scissors, cut the *pasteli* into small pieces, together with the baking paper on the bottom, and serve. To eat, peel off the parchment paper.



Baked Apples

It is very easy to make baked apples in the microwave. Just cut an apple into bite-size pieces and throw away the pips and the core. Put the pieces in a bowl and add a couple of pats of butter.

Now sprinkle a little cinnamon and sugar on top of the apple pieces, and put the bowl in the microwave on full power for about three minutes. The apple should be soft and hot and delicious! A good healthy dessert.



Why not try a pomegranate?

Pomegranates are still eaten in Greece. Cut it open and have a look at the seeds, covered in purple jelly.

You can eat these. Scoop them out and eat them or sprinkle in your Greek salad?



Greek nibbles and pitta bread

For your Greek salad, you could cut feta cheese into cubes and dice a tomato. Why not add green or black olives? Or keep these on the side?



Drizzle some olive oil over the salad. You may want to add a few herbs or leave it plain.



Why not chop up a fig and eat it on its own or with some Greek yogurt?



Enjoy your Greek meal!