

Turkish Delight (Lokum)

Turkish · Dessert · Hard · 70 min total · Serves 12

Lokum is a soft, chewy Turkish confection of starch and sugar gel, scented with rosewater and dusted with powdered sugar. Served with coffee or tea, it keeps well in an airtight tin for about two weeks.

Ingredients

- 2 cup sugar (for the syrup)
- 1 cup water (for the syrup)
- 0.125 tsp cream of tartar (keeps the syrup from crystallizing)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice (for the syrup)
- 1 cup cornstarch (for the starch gel)
- 2 cup cold water (for the starch gel)
- 1 tbsp rosewater (food-grade)
- 0.5 cup powdered sugar (for dusting)
- 0.25 cup cornstarch (for dusting)
- 1 tbsp neutral oil (for greasing the pan)

Method

1. Lightly oil an 8-inch (20 cm) square pan. Mix the 1/2 cup powdered sugar with the 1/4 cup cornstarch for dusting, and coat the pan with some of it, tapping out the excess.
2. In a heavy saucepan, whisk 1 cup cornstarch into 2 cups cold water until completely smooth. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly, and cook until it thickens into a translucent paste, about 5 minutes.
3. In a separate saucepan, combine 2 cups sugar, 1 cup water, the cream of tartar and the lemon juice. Stir over medium heat until the sugar dissolves, then boil without stirring until the syrup reaches 240°F (116°C) on a candy thermometer, about 10 minutes.
4. Pour the hot syrup slowly into the starch paste while stirring vigorously. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 40 to 50 minutes, stirring steadily and scraping the bottom so it does not scorch, until the mixture is translucent, very thick and glossy and pulls away from the sides in a ribbon.
5. Off the heat, stir in the rosewater. Pour the gel into the prepared pan, smooth the top and let it set uncovered at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours, until firm and no longer sticky to the touch.
6. Dust a clean board with the remaining dusting mix. Lift the set lokum out of the pan, cut it into 1-inch (2.5 cm) cubes with an oiled knife, and toss each piece in the dusting mix to coat.
7. Store in an airtight tin with a light dusting of powdered sugar between layers. It keeps well for about two weeks.