

Lokma (Turkish Syrup Doughnuts)

Turkish · Dessert · Medium · 45 min total · Serves 6

Lokma are small, soft yeasted dough balls fried golden and tossed in cool lemon syrup, the classic Turkish syrup doughnut. Best eaten warm within an hour, they are a familiar sweet at gatherings and celebrations.

Ingredients

- 2 cup all-purpose flour (about 250 g)
- 2 tsp active dry yeast (one packet)
- 1 tbsp sugar (for the dough)
- 0.5 tsp fine salt
- 1 cup warm water (about 110°F (43°C))
- 3 cup neutral oil (for frying; most of it is discarded)
- 1.5 cup sugar (for the syrup)
- 1 cup water (for the syrup)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice (for the syrup)
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon (optional, for dusting)

Method

1. Make the syrup first: combine 1.5 cups sugar, 1 cup water and the lemon juice in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, simmer for 5 minutes, then cool to room temperature.
2. Dissolve the yeast and the 1 tbsp sugar in the warm water and let it stand for 5 minutes, until foamy.
3. Whisk the flour and salt in a large bowl, pour in the yeast mixture and stir to a thick, sticky batter that holds a soft shape on a spoon. Add a splash more water or flour only if needed.
4. Cover the bowl and let it rise in a warm spot (about 75 to 80°F / 24 to 27°C) for about 1 hour, until doubled and bubbly.
5. Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan to 350°F (175°C). A drop of batter should sizzle and rise to the surface right away.
6. Oil a spoon lightly, then drop about 1 tablespoon of batter at a time into the hot oil, frying 10 to 12 at once. Turn them occasionally with a slotted spoon for 2 to 3 minutes, until deep golden brown and cooked through.
7. Lift each lokma out with the slotted spoon, drain briefly, then drop it straight into the cool syrup. Toss for 20 to 30 seconds so it soaks up the syrup, then move it to a rack or tray.
8. Dust with cinnamon if using and serve within an hour while still soft. Repeat in batches, letting the oil return to 350°F (175°C) between batches.