

Mixed Nut Baklava

Adapted from a Whole Foods Market recipe

1 cup finely chopped nuts (can be all walnuts, or a combination of walnuts, pistachios, hazelnuts and pecans)

1/4 cup sugar

1/2 tsp cinnamon

10 sheets frozen phyllo sheets, thawed, and sliced in half vertically, so that you have 20 sheets approximately 9 inches by 7 inches

4 tbsp unsalted butter, melted

1/2 cup honey

1/3 cup water

1 tsp lemon juice

1 small cinnamon stick (or a larger stick, broken in half — just use one of the halves)

2 green cardamom pods



Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a jelly roll pan or rimmed baking sheet. Mix the nuts, sugar and cinnamon in a bowl and set aside. Alternatively, process the larger nuts pieces, cinnamon and sugar in a food processor, then set aside.

Lay the phyllo sheets out on a counter top and cover with a slightly damp towel to prevent them from drying out. Working quickly, place a sheet of phyllo in the prepared pan, brush with melted butter and then place another sheet on top. Continue with sheets, brushing each with melted butter until you have used 8 sheets.

Evenly spread half of the nut-sugar mixture over the stack of phyllo. Repeat the process of layering two more sheets, one by one, brushing melted butter over each sheet. Next, spread the remaining half of the nut-sugar mixture over the stack of phyllo.

Again, repeat the process of layering the rest of the sheets, one by one, brushing melted butter over each sheet.

Using a sharp knife, cut the pastry through to the bottom into serving pieces. I made a horizontal cut across the phyllo, then cut vertically five times so I had ten pieces of baklava.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes in the middle of your oven or until the baklava is golden brown. Remove baklava from oven and let cool for 10 minutes. Here, I removed the baklava from the baking sheet and placed it on a plate, pieces pushed together, to keep cooling. I wanted to apply the honey syrup on a surface that I could easily stick in the fridge (ant season!) for storage.

Meanwhile, make honey syrup by stirring honey with water, lemon juice, cinnamon and cardamom in a saucepan. Bring to a boil and simmer for 25 minutes. Cool.

Ladle the warm honey evenly over the baklava. Let cool completely before serving. Now, when you first pour the honey, you will think, wow, there's so much, maybe I shouldn't use it all. Don't worry! The baklava will totally absorb it. Really!

