FLAVORS of CRÈTE
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Wild herb pies

These pies are very common on Crete. We eat them filled with wild herbs, spinach, fresh goat cheese with honey, cinnamon and mint,...

Ingredients

- 1/2 kg flour
- 20 cl water
- One lemon juice
- 10 cl Olive oil
- Salt

Ingredients

- 1 kg of cretan Horta
- Or 500 gr of spinach
- 10 cl Olive oil
- Salt, pepper, lemon cumin

Dough preparing

Put 1/2 kilo flour on a jar. Add the olive oil, some salt and lemon juice and the water. Mix all like a bread dough. It's not necessary to add yeast to the dough but you can add some dry yeast before mixing everything if you need a more light dough.

Dough is ready when it is not sticking to your fingers anymore and make a nice round ball. Keep in fridge in plastic film.

“Horta” preparing

Horta are cretan wild herbs collected during spring or autumn, after heavy rains. They looks like chicory. Once collected, they need to be boiled twice or three times to loose their bitterness. Last cooking is with olive oil, salt, pepper and some lemon juice at the end. Add also some cumin. If you don’t find cretan wild herbs, you can do with others or with spinach.
DOLMADES

Stuffed vine leaves

Ingredients

Classic of Crete. So simple but so yummy. The secret is in the wild herbs and how to roll the vine leaves.

• 1 Onion
• 500gr carolina rice
• 2 spring onions
• 1 tomato
• Persley, dill, fresh mint, pepper, salt
• 1 courgette
• 10 cl olive oil

Blanch the freshly collected vine leaves (or use salted ready one if not possible to have fresh ones).

For the stuffing

Put together in a big jar 1/2kg carolina rice, (this rice is sticking and that's necessary for this recipe).
Mince onion, spring onion, tomato, persley, dill and courgette. Mix them together with rice . Add olive oil and some salt and pepper. Mix well

When you fill up the wine leaves, don’t put to many rice on them or vine leaves will open and break during cooking.

Put the vine leaf in your hand palm., stem side down. Fill with about a tea spoon of rice mix, in the middle of vine leaf. Fold in both sides, left then right, then roll up fairly tightly to enclose filling.

Tightly pack stuffed vine leaves in a deep frying pan. Strain reserved water over pan, then weigh down stuffed leaves with a large plate; this will help to prevent the leaves from unravelling and keep their shape.
Pour enough water around plate to just cover vine leaves, then cook over low heat for 40 minutes or until rice is tender. Put some more wa-ter if there is no more during cooking and you can finish with some lemon juice.

You can keep vine leaves during a few days in the fridge.
“KOLOKITHO KROKETES”

Courgettes fritters

Ingredients

These kind of vegetable fritters are very easy and are usually a must be in cretan mezzes. You can keep them in refrigerator, froze them and are easy to fry.

- 3 courgettes
- 200 gr grated cheese
- Persley, dill, salt, pepper
- 1 tomato
- 10 cl Olive oil
- 1 egg
- 150 gr breadcrumb

Grate 2 or 3 big courgettes, let them loose their natural water for 1/2h. Grate the tomato, mince the herbs. Put all that on a jar, add the grated cheese (Kefalotiri cretan cheese but if you don’t have take some Italian percorino or something similar). Add some salt (if cheese is not too salty) and pepper. Add the egg and breadcrumb on the mix to obtain something more compact, with no more juice on it. Keep in fridge.

Make some small balls with your hand palm. Roll them quickly in flour and deep fry for 5 minutes max in vegetal oil (180°)