

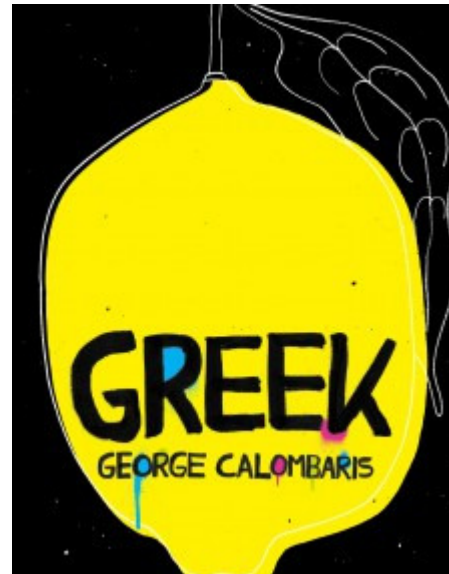
Greek

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Hellenic Mess

FREE RECIPE FROM GREEK BY GEORGE CALOMBARIS, HELLENIC MESS, PAGE 245.

This dish pays homage to the financial situation in Greece. We all know it's a mess. In saying that, there are two things that no one can take away from the Greeks: their pride and their passion. I say this to young cooks all the time: if you don't have pride and passion then don't become a chef.



Serves 8



1 1/2 cups (375 ml) thickened cream
1 vanilla bean, split, seeds scraped
1/2 cup (40 g) flaked almonds, toasted

Meringue

240 g caster sugar
4 egg whites
1 teaspoon rosewater

Orange blossom jelly

200 ml orange blossom water
100 g caster sugar
5 gelatine leaves (gold strength)

Strawberry sauce

250 g strawberries, washed and hulled
1/2 cup (110 g) caster sugar
1 1/2 tablespoons ouzo

To make the meringue, preheat the oven to 200°C (fan-forced) and line a large baking tray with baking paper. Spread the sugar evenly over the prepared tray and place in the oven for 8 minutes or until the sugar starts to dissolve around the edges. When the sugar is nearly ready, start to whisk the egg whites in an electric mixer until the whites begin to froth. Carefully add the hot sugar and the rosewater and whisk for a further 10 minutes.

Reduce the oven temperature to 100°C (fan-forced) and line a baking tray with baking paper. Spread the meringue over the prepared tray, then transfer to the oven and bake for 3 hours. Remove and allow to cool completely, then break into bite-sized chunks.

Meanwhile, to make the jelly, place all the ingredients and 200 ml water in a small saucepan and allow to sit for 2 minutes so the gelatine leaves soften. Stir over medium heat until the sugar and gelatine have dissolved, then pour into a suitable container and place in the fridge to set. This will take at least 2–3 hours.

For the strawberry sauce, blitz the strawberries in a food processor, then pass through a fine-mesh sieve. Place in a saucepan with the sugar and ouzo, stir over medium heat until the sugar has dissolved. Store in the fridge until needed.

Shortly before you are ready to serve, whip the cream and vanilla seeds until firm peaks form.

Layer the chunks of meringue, jelly and dollops of whipped cream in a serving dish. At the last minute, drizzle over the strawberry sauce and finish with a sprinkling of flaked almonds.