

Damascus Dessert

Traditional Damascus dessert with semolina, yogurt and sweet sherbet. This Middle Eastern treat is golden, moist and absolutely delicious.

15 min

PREP

35 min

COOK

50 min

TOTAL

6

SERVINGS

Medium

DIFFICULTY

Damascus Dessert

Ingredients

- 4 cup semolina
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup tahini
- 1 pack baking powder
- 3 cup water
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Instructions

- 1 Make the syrup**

Combine 3 cups water and 2 cups sugar in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce heat to medium and simmer for 10-15 minutes until the mixture turns golden and coats the back of a spoon. Stir in 2 tablespoons lemon juice and remove from heat. Set aside to cool completely while you prepare the cake.
- 2 Prepare the semolina mixture**

In a large bowl, whisk together 1 cup yogurt and 1 cup sugar until smooth. Add 1 cup semolina and mix until well combined with no lumps. Cover the bowl and let stand at room temperature for exactly 2 hours - this allows the semolina to absorb moisture and soften.
- 3 Prepare for baking**

Preheat your oven to 180°C (356°F). Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with butter or cooking spray.
- 4 Finish the batter**

After 2 hours, add 1 pack baking powder to the semolina mixture and beat vigorously until the batter is smooth and well combined. The mixture should be thick but pourable.
- 5 Assemble and bake**

Pour the batter into the prepared baking dish and spread evenly with a spatula. Bake for 30-35 minutes until the top is golden brown and springs back when lightly touched, and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
- 6 Add syrup and cool**

Immediately pour the cooled syrup evenly over the hot cake - it will sizzle and bubble. Allow the dessert to cool completely at room temperature for at least 2 hours so the syrup can fully absorb.
- 7** Cut into squares or diamond shapes with a sharp knife. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Tips

Allow the semolina mixture to rest for the full 2 hours - this ensures the semolina fully hydrates and creates the proper texture.

Make your sherbet first and let it cool completely while preparing the dessert base to save time and ensure proper temperature.

Use a light hand when spreading tahini on top - you want swirls and patterns, not a solid layer that might prevent even baking.

Pour the sherbet over the hot dessert immediately after removing from the oven for maximum absorption.

Cut the dessert while it's still slightly warm for cleaner slices, but serve at room temperature for the best flavor.

Toast your nuts lightly before adding them on top for enhanced flavor and crunch.

Test a small corner first when adding sherbet - if it seems to absorb too quickly, pour more slowly to avoid oversaturation.

Line your baking dish with parchment paper for easier removal and serving, especially if making individual portions.