

MEGHLI

AN ALMIGHTY TREAT

Lebanon's traditions and customs reflect the richness and generosity of a sophisticated HOMELand often linked to community festivities, values of hospitality, intercultural heritage and a culinary ritual celebrated on every occasion.

Festive recipes play a vital role in cultural identity. The smell of the food alone is sometimes enough to conjure joyful memories. The continuity of festive cuisine should be maintained, safeguarded, practiced and passed from generation to generation.

Traditional food not only involves pleasures for the palate but also moments of communication and social exchange. Who doesn't enjoy watching a group of women gathered to bake batches of maamool, laughing together and sharing stories?

Similar rituals have been enjoyed for decades or centuries and should never go out of style. They add excitement to almost any special occasion.

Meghli is one of Lebanon's culinary specialties full of flavor sensations that you must try once in your life. And visiting new parents to congratulate

them on the birth of their baby can highly increase your chances of tasting this delicious dessert.

In Lebanon, meghli is made and served to celebrate the birth of a newborn. It is also served on Christmas to celebrate the glorious nativity of Jesus Christ. The dish was traditionally offered at the birth of a male heir but is now offered at the birth of any new child.

Meghli is a brown, powdered-rice-based sweet, symbolic of fertile soil or indicative of birth. It is spiced with cinnamon, aniseed powder and caraway. The caraway is thought to promote breastfeeding and reduce bloating.

This nutritious recipe is simple and delicious. After it is garnished with desiccated coconut and topped with various nuts like pistachios, almonds, walnuts and pine nuts, the outcome is a feast for the gods.

Ingredients

- 125g (1 cup) rice flour
- 150g (1¼ cups) sugar
- 2l (8 cups) cold water
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon powder
- 1 tablespoon aniseed powder
- 1 tablespoon caraway powder

To garnish

- Coconut powder or desiccated coconut
- Walnuts (soaked)
- Almonds (soaked and peeled)
- Pine nuts (soaked and peeled)
- Pistachios (soaked and peeled)

Preparation

1. In a large saucepan, dissolve rice flour, sugar and spices in water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon until mixture thickens, or about 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Remove from the heat, and directly spoon the mixture evenly into serving cups.
3. Serve cold, covered with desiccated coconut and nuts. (It's best to garnish just before serving.)



Maya Oryan is a food stylist. She moved back from Dubai to Beirut in 2008 and soon after launched her blog, Maya's Ingredients, where she shares her Lebanese and international recipes.



Photo by Serge Oryan

HOMIE

THE SOUL OF LEBANON

THE BRAND MASTER
**ALEXIS
NASARD**

FEATURED FAMILY
THE OSSEIRANS

**ADA
ABOU FARHAT**
ACTRESS OF DEFIANCE & ARTISTRY

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EDWARD GABRIEL
AMERICAN TASK FORCE FOR LEBANON PRESIDENT
AT THE FOREFRONT OF DIPLOMACY

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