

STAVROS

TAVERNA

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How to make Moussaka (Stavros Style)

While cooking is seen a mundane daily chore intended only to keep the family quiet, creating food for Stavros is therapy and does involve a considerable amount of social interaction with wine, beer or, if things get really hot, Ouzo ! So, for your entertainment and, hopefully, gastronomic pleasure detailed below is a slimmed down version of the mammoth moussaka made for Gidding Goes Greek.

Ingredients to serve 6 people.

4 large Aubergines
500g Minced Lamb
300g Onion
3 garlic cloves
3 tb spoon Tomato Puree
100ml Red Wine
1 heaped Tsp Ground Cinnamon
Hand full of parsley chopped
Salt and freshly milled Black Pepper
400gs Waxy Potatoes Par Boiled & Sliced

For the Topping

75gs Butter
75gs Flour (plain)
570 ml Whole Milk
50 gs of Grated Cheese
2 medium Eggs
Freshly grated Nutmeg

At least 4 x 500ml can / bottles of good beer

Slice the Aubergine around 1cm thick and sprinkle with salt, stack in a colander and allow to stand for around 30 minutes. Remember to place where the liquid from the colander can drain away (in a sink or on a draining board is fine)

Open first beer

Thinly slice the onions and fry in some olive oil with the chopped garlic for around 5 minutes. Add the minced lamb, stir and ensure all lumps are broken down, allow to brown.

In a separate bowl mix the Tomato puree, wine, cinnamon and parsley, salt and pepper and pour over the meat and onions. Stir well and leave to gently simmer for around 20-30 minutes until cooked through.

Open Second Beer

Now for the real beer soaking task, you may wish to send Mrs Stavros to see Mrs Patel for a re-stock.

Dry the aubergine using kitchen roll and fry in a little olive oil on both sides until slightly golden, alternatively if the weather is good (and this is what I do) heat a Barbecue and quickly turn each slice to give both the caramelised stripes and a nice smokey flavour. As you remove each slice set aside in a single layer, do not stack until cooled.

For the topping, using a large saucepan gently melt the butter and stir in the flour until smooth keep moving and cook for a couple of minutes, gently add the milk stirring to form a smooth but thick white sauce. Add the grated cheese, nutmeg and correct the seasoning. Set aside and allow the sauce to cool.

Pre-heat Oven to 180 C or 350 F , gas mark 4.

While the sauce cools to room temperature, start to build the Moussaka,

Open Third Beer

A dish around 5 cm deep, 20 cm wide and 30 cm long should be adequate. Now place a layer of the sliced potatoes on the base of the dish, followed by aubergines. Now add a layer of the meat sauce followed by a further layer of aubergines. Repeat until all the sauce and aubergines are used but ensuring your last layer is aubergine.

Whisk the two eggs and stir fully into the cooled sauce, pour over the meat and aubergine layers, ensuring you allow at least around 1 cm gap from the top edge of the dish to allow for expansion.

Sit the dish on a large baking tray. Place in the centre of the pre-heated oven and bake for 60 minutes uncovered.

Seek more Beer and company

Remove and enjoy.

Stavros Top-Tips. Minced Lamb can for some people be too greasy and as it is cooked more will surface. To reduce excess fat remove any which rises to the surface when the sauce is resting, before you assemble the dish. Alternatively, use lean minced beef.....but Stavros thinks the flavour is not the same nor as authentic as lamb. Plus it allows you to drink more beer.