**Melomakarona – Traditional Greek Honey Cookies**

*Ingredients - Cookie Dough:*

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

½ teaspoon of baker’s ammonia

2 cups olive oil

5 cups AP flour

½ teaspoon of ground cloves

1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon of baking soda

2 cups of fine semolina flour

1 cup of confectioner’s sugar

1/3 cup of cognac

2 tablespoons of orange zest

Pinch of salt

Ground walnuts, for garnish

*Ingredients - Syrup:*

4 cups water

4 cups white sugar

2 cups honey

2 cinnamon sticks

5 whole cloves

peel of one orange

*Method:*

1. Add all the syrup ingredients to a medium saucepan, stir to combine, and cook over high heat until the sugar dissolves and it comes to a boil. Remove from the heat, allow to cool, reserve.
2. Add the orange juice, baker’s ammonia, and olive oil to a large mixing bowl, and mix to fully combine.
3. In another large mixing bowl, sift the flour, cloves, cinnamon, baking soda, semolina flour, and sugar; add orange zest and salt, and mix to fully combine.
4. Form a hole in the middle of the dry ingredients bowl, and slowly alternate adding the cognac and the orange juice-olive oil mixture. While adding the liquids, gradually incorporate the dry ingredients, lightly kneading to combine into a soft dough.
5. Portion out the dough using a tablespoon, and form them into cookies. Bake at 360o F for about 20-25 minutes.

*Optional: If you feel so inclined before baking, lightly press one of the sides of the cookie on the side of a box grater with the small holes, or a mesh strainer, to create a design on the surface.*

1. Remove the Melomakarona from the oven; while hot, dip a few of the cookies at a time in the reserved syrup - allow them to absorb the syrup, then remove with a slotted spoon onto a pastry rack.
2. Place cookies on a platter, sprinkle with ground walnuts, serve and enjoy!