

A Taste of the World

CAL POLY

INTERNATIONAL *recipes*

Dolmas Stuffed Grape Leaves

Yield: 50 dolmas

Dolmas form part of the meze or hors d'oeuvres menu of the eastern Mediterranean.

Dolmas are very versatile; they can be eaten cold or warm. Traditionally dolmas containing meat are eaten warm with a yogurt sauce that is lightly flavored with garlic.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 jar grape leaves about 60–70 in brine
- 2 cups short grain rice, cooked
- 1 large tomato finely chopped (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
- 1 bunch parsley finely chopped (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- 1 bunch green onions finely chopped (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch dill finely chopped (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- 1 tbsp crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- Salt and pepper to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup
- 1 large tomato sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup lemon juice

DIRECTIONS

GRAPE LEAVES AND FILLING PREP

1. Remove the grape leaves from the jar, and soak them in a large pot of boiling hot water for 4 minutes.
2. Drain the grape leaves in a colander and stack them on a plate.
3. It is best to cover them with a damp cloth so they don't dry out, until you are ready to start rolling them.
4. Combine the rice, tomatoes, parsley, green onions, dill, crushed red pepper, cinnamon and garlic.
5. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the olive oil over the mixture. Toss to combine well.

GRAPE LEAVES WRAPPING

1. Lay a grape leaf flat on a cutting board, scoop out a heaping teaspoon of the rice mixture into the center of the grape leaf, and carefully fold in the sides and roll it like you would when making a wrap.
2. The trick is to roll it tightly enough so that it doesn't unravel while cooking, but not too tightly since the rice needs room to expand as it cooks. Repeat until all the stuffing has been used.

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DIRECTIONS (CONT.)

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Place all the wrapped grape leaves in a tray.
2. Line the bottom of a large pot with extra grape leaves, which will be used to buffer the grape leaves from burning at the bottom while the stuffing/filling cooks.
3. Neatly arrange the stuffed and rolled grape leaves in rows, alternating directions, to completely cover the circumference of the pot. Make sure to tightly pack them in the pot to prevent them from floating up and unwrapping during cooking.
4. Drizzle each layer with the remaining 1/2 cup of olive oil and season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Add enough boiling water to completely cover the grape leaves and the plate. I use 5 cups of water for 2 cups of rice. Then cover the pot and cook on medium heat for 30 minutes, until most of the water is absorbed and the rice is cooked.
6. Add the lemon juice on top of the grape leaves, then cook on low heat for an additional 45 minutes. Cooking time may vary depending on the type of pot used and the stovetop heating. You can remove a grape leaf and check if the rice is cooked and the leaf soft.
7. Remove from heat and let cool uncovered. Transfer to a dish and enjoy warm or at room temperature.