

MANTABOUT // ARMENIAN YOGURT AND DUMPLING SOUP

for dough:

- 3 1/2 cups Tipo '00' flour, sifted
- 3/4 teaspoons salt
- 1 tablespoon sunflower oil
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted, cooled
- 1 jumbo egg, slightly beaten
- 2/3-to-1 cup water

for filling:

- 12 oz minced beef
- 1 large onion, minced or grated
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon red Aleppo pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice

for soup:

- 24 oz strained yogurt
- 1 jumbo egg
- 4-to-5 cups chicken or beef broth
- 1/4 -to- 1/2 cup cooked wheat berries or white rice; optional
- shredded chicken breast, cooked; optional
- 1/4 cup sunflower oil
- 3 tablespoons dried mint
- 8 cloves garlic, minced

Prepare dough. Using a stand-mixer with the paddle attachment, combine flour and salt on low, setting #1, then add in oil and butter. Mix on medium-low, setting #3, until mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Slowly add in egg. With the mixer still running, gradually add water until dough comes together. Once you use 2/3 cups of the water, switch to the dough hook and continue to mix on low, setting #2, as you add more water. Work dough until translucent and pliable enough, keeping it medium-firm so it is easy to roll yet strong to hold its finished shape. Cover with a damp towel and set aside for 2 hours.

Prepare filling. Combine all the ingredients and set aside in the fridge.

Have ready a couple of sheet pans, cover with plastic wrap and generously dust with flour.

Assemble dumplings. Roll out dough, to which is ideally 1/16"-1/8" thick. Since the dumplings in this recipe are not baked, the dough is rolled thick like egg noodles, so use #2 or #3 setting on a KitchenAid pasta roller (as a comparison, you would use setting #5 for ravioli and tortellini).

Cut circles, or squares if you do not want to re-roll dough. For medium dumplings, about 100, cut 2 1/4" diameter circles. For smaller dumplings, about 200, cut 1 1/2" circles. If you decide to roll the dough thin you should have extra minced beef filling prepared.

Place filling on cut-out rounds and fold over one end to form a crescent (semi-circle); sealing edges as you do so. Take the two ends, from the straight side, and pinch them together around your finger, then turn the bottoms up as you arrange them on the floured pan. Repeat.

Prepare soup. Bring broth to a boil. In another heavy-bottomed nonstick pan, whisk together Labne and egg. Cook on med-low heat, whisking constantly, until it reaches room temperature, then slowly temper in the broth. Cook on low, stirring occasionally, until thoroughly heated, but do not bring to a fast boil or soup will curdle. Add in chicken and/or wheat berries or rice if using.

In a small saucepan, heat oil, mint and garlic for about a minute. Add to soup and cook another 10 minutes.

Cook dumplings. Add a tablespoon of oil to a large pot of broth or salted water and bring to a gentle boil. Drop dumplings a few at a time as you stir and continue to do so for about 2 minutes to prevent dough from sticking together. Lower heat to an almost simmer and cook for about 20 minutes; until done and morsels start floating to the top. Remove with a slotted spoon and add to soup. Continue to cook remaining dumplings.

Alternatively, place dumplings on a greased pan and bake in a 350F oven for 10 minutes until slightly golden, then simmer them in the soup for 20-to-25 minutes; stirring for the first 5 minutes to prevent clumping. This makes a thicker, stew-like soup.

Serve warm sprinkled with red Aleppo pepper flakes.