

VEGAN CHARD KEBBEH // PANJAROV BAHKI GOLOLAG, KEUFTEH

filling:

14 oz Swiss chard, chopped
8 oz red onion, finely diced
1 1/2 teaspoons sumac
1 teaspoon ground coriander seeds
1/3 teaspoon red Aleppo pepper
3/4-to-1 teaspoon salt
pinch of black pepper
1/4 teaspoon allspice
2 teaspoons olive oil
a pinch or more citric acid

herbed walnut sauce:
3 tablespoons olive oil
pinch of salt
2-to-3 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons red pepper paste
1/2-to-1 teaspoon pomegranate molasses
1/4 teaspoon red Aleppo pepper
2 tablespoons dried mint
1/4 cup fresh parsley
1/3-to-1/2 cup walnuts
1 tablespoon water

shell dough:

1 cup extra fine No.1 bulgur
3/4 cup water, plus more
1 1/4 cups coarse semolina
1 1/2-to-2 teaspoons fine salt
1/2 teaspoon red Aleppo pepper
1 teaspoon ground coriander seeds
1 teaspoon red pepper paste
1 tablespoon wheat flour, optional

garlic sauce:
3 tablespoons sunflower oil
1-to-1 1/2 cups onion, sliced
pinch of salt
7-to-10 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon ground coriander seeds
1 tablespoon red pepper paste
1-to-2 tablespoons water, if needed

Prepare filling. Blanch chard leaves in a pot of salted water set to a gentle boil. Remove, transfer into a colander and squeeze out as much water as possible; you will have to repeat this step several times. Spread between two layers of paper towel and press down until completely dry. Allow to cool to room temperature.

To a bowl, add onions, sprinkle with coarse salt and let stand for 15 minutes. Rub onions against each other, squeezing with your hands to do so, to release onion water (which is bitter) and wilt onions (do not cook). Rinse in cold water, drain well, and squeeze all water out; you will have to repeat this step several times. Once again, spread between two layers of paper towel and press down until dry.

Combine prepared chard, onion and remaining filling ingredients. Set aside.

Prepare shell dough. Mix bulgur with 1/2 cup of water and let stand for 15 minutes. Knead until mass starts to form a paste, adding an additional 1/4 cup of water as you do so. Add semolina and remaining shell ingredients. Knead to a soft, pliable, sticky but not wet dough-like consistency; this will take time, be patient and add more water if necessary as needed. Cover with a damp cloth and rest for an hour. Divide kebbeh shell dough into 40 equally-sized balls.

Assemble kebbeh. Have ready a bowl of cold water; to wet hands as and if needed when working. Working with one ball at a time, make an indentation on one side using your index finger. Keep gently rolling around to enlarge and thin shell walls. Spoon some filling inside, push down, and slowly pinch ends together to seal and shape. Place onto a sheet pan and repeat; keep everything covered with a plastic wrap to prevent excess drying as you work.

Cook kebbeh. Bring a pot of salted and oiled water to a boil. Drop assembled kebbeh into the pot one at a time. Bring to a gentle boil on low-heat and cook until soft but not disintegrated; about 20-30 minutes. Remove to a platter with a slotted spoon. Bring pot back to a boil, lower heat and proceed with the rest. Gently toss in herbed walnut sauce or garlic sauce. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Prepare herbed walnut sauce. Combine all ingredients together. Prepare garlic sauce. Add onions and a pinch of salt and sauté until translucent. Add garlic, coriander and pepper paste. Sauté for a couple minutes; adding water if necessary.