WORLD TABLE BOOKS

Georgian Table

A taste of the Georgian kitchen.



100 RECIPES / FULLY ILLUSTRATED EDITION

A PLACE AT THE TABLE

The pleasure of Georgian cooking

Warm cheese bread. Dumplings full of broth. Fresh herbs, fragrant walnuts and something sweet to share.



Georgian cooking brings generous flavors to the table: tart plums, fresh herbs, walnuts and warm bread. These one hundred recipes explore regional favorites alongside clearly named home variations, with practical methods for an everyday kitchen.

Explore ten chapters, from pkhali and salads to bread, dumplings, beans and dessert. Every recipe gives you measured ingredients, a clear method, estimated nutrition, storage advice and four preparation photographs. Choose a dish for its flavor, then use the numbers as useful context.

Cook with care. Share with pleasure. Make room at the table.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Make the recipe work for you

Read once, then cook

Read the full ingredient list and method before starting. Gather the equipment and prepare ingredients in the stated form. Steps are arranged so you can work while a grain simmers or a dish bakes.

Know your portion

Serves means equal portions of the complete measured batch. For individual pastries, croquettes and breadsticks, divide the stated yield into those servings. Divide all listed sauces, toppings and side dishes between those portions.

Use cues alongside the clock

Times are estimates. Pan width, food thickness, oven behavior and batch size affect them. Check tenderness, texture and internal temperature. Chilling and resting are listed separately and need extra time.

Follow the written quantities

Photographs show preparation and serving ideas; they do not establish exact weights, portion counts or doneness. Use the ingredient list and written method when cooking.

Make a thoughtful substitution

Each recipe includes a practical swap. A substitution can change texture, cooking time, allergens and nutrition. Use a product label when you need brand-specific nutrition.

Find your next recipe

Click a chapter in the contents, a recipe on its chapter page or a title in the alphabetical finder. Use Contents in the footer to return to the main list.

MEASURE WITH CONFIDENCE

A useful kind of precision

Metric amounts are the reference. US weights and spoon measures are rounded guides; a kitchen scale gives the most consistent result.

1 US teaspoon	5 ml
1 US tablespoon	15 ml
1 US cup	240 ml, rounded for cooking
1 US fluid ounce	29.57 ml
1 ounce, weight	28.35 g
1 pound, weight	454 g, rounded

Weigh in the listed state

Weigh meat and seafood raw unless stated otherwise. Drain canned beans and seafood; retain tomato juices when listed. Follow the stated fruit weight: whole plums and quince include stones or cores that you remove later. Flour, grains and cornmeal are dry unless explicitly labeled cooked.

Measure small amounts sensibly

Use level spoons for fine salt, baking powder and ground spices. Salt grain size changes its volume: the spoon guide assumes fine table salt. Oil and spice spoon values are approximate. Weigh when precision matters.

A cup is not a universal weight

A cup of flour weighs much less than a cup of yogurt. Flour cup guides depend on the type and how loosely the cup is filled. Do not pack flour. For batter and bread recipes, use the gram amount.

COOK WITH CARE

Temperature, time and texture

Use a clean food thermometer in the thickest part, avoiding bone and the pan. Color and a browned surface cannot tell you whether the center is ready.

Chicken and turkey	74°C / 165°F
Ground beef, pork or lamb	71°C / 160°F
Whole-cut beef, pork and lamb	63°C / 145°F + 3-minute rest
Fish and shrimp	63°C / 145°F
Egg dishes	71°C / 160°F
Reheated cooked leftovers	74°C / 165°F

Cool and store promptly

Refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours, or within 1 hour if the room is hotter than 32°C / 90°F. Divide large batches into shallow containers. Keep the refrigerator at 4°C / 40°F or below; do not wait for a large pot to become completely cold on the counter.

Take extra care with cooked rice

Cool rice promptly, ideally within 1 hour, and refrigerate in shallow portions. Use within 24 hours and reheat only once, until steaming throughout. Reheating does not undo poor storage.

Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods apart

Use separate clean tools for raw meat and cold sauces. Do not rinse raw poultry. Wash produce and use pasteurized dairy. Soft-yolk Adjarian khachapuri requires eggs explicitly labeled pasteurized; cook to 71°C / 160°F for a fully set egg. Follow seafood supplier instructions. Charcoal grilling belongs outdoors.

GOOD INGREDIENTS

A pantry with Georgian character



Cheese with a purpose

Sulguni is a stretching brined cheese; Imeretian cheese gives a softer, tangy filling. For accessible home versions, use the listed low-moisture mozzarella and feta blend. Nadughi is a whey curd; drained ricotta is a different but useful substitute. Choose pasteurized dairy.

Walnuts, herbs and Georgian spices

Use fresh shelled walnuts, not oily or rancid nuts. Grind briefly and scrape the bowl. Coriander leaf means cilantro; ground coriander is the seed. Blue fenugreek is distinct from ordinary fenugreek. Use only food-grade marigold; omit unavailable spices rather than decorative flowers.

Tart plums and pepper pastes

Tkemali brings sour plum flavor, while ajika gives concentrated pepper and garlic seasoning. Commercial products vary in heat and salt: taste before adjusting. Fresh home sauces belong in the refrigerator and are not shelf-stable preserves.

Beans, cornmeal and flour

Canned kidney beans are weighed drained; dried kidney beans need soaking and a full 30-minute boil before simmering. Cornmeal is ground maize, not cornstarch. Use the specified grind for gomi, elarji and skillet cornbreads; weigh flour for filled doughs.

A LITTLE PLANNING

Cook once, enjoy it well

Build a short plan around food you want to eat. A well-stored batch saves time; a refrigerator full of forgotten containers does not.

Choose two anchors

Pick one walnut sauce or soup and one bread or braise. Scale ingredient quantities by the same factor, then use a larger pan or work in batches. Cooking times do not scale in the same way.

Work in a useful order

Start a braise, dough rise or the oven first. Wash and cut vegetables while it heats. Mix cold sauces with clean tools before handling raw meat or seafood, and refrigerate them while the hot food cooks.

Portion the complete batch

Divide the finished components evenly before storing. Keep dairy sauces, crisp toppings and toast separate. Mark containers with the recipe and preparation date; follow the shorter storage limit if combining dishes.

Match the meal to the day

Rice dishes belong early in the plan because of their 24-hour refrigerator limit. Cold salads and dairy dishes often have shorter keeping times. Follow the individual recipe. Freeze suitable soups promptly in individual portions if you need them later.

Reheat with care

Reheat only the portion needed. Stir microwave-heated food and check the center, not just the edges. Add cold sauce after reheating. Thaw frozen portions in the refrigerator and use promptly.

NUMBERS WITH CONTEXT

Useful estimates, honest portions

A small plate of pkhali, a generous braise and a honey-walnut diamond serve different purposes. Read the portion alongside the numbers and choose the dish for its flavor.

What the numbers include

Calories, protein, carbohydrate and fat are estimated per serving of the complete listed recipe. Sauces, grains, fruit and measured toppings are included. Extra oil, bread and unlisted garnishes are not.

Why your result may differ

Food composition varies with the brand, cut, fat level, draining and portion size. Sulguni, Imeretian cheese, nadughi, smoked ham and bottled sauces can differ substantially. Use the label on the product you buy when the figures need to be more specific.

What carbohydrate means here

Carbohydrate is total carbohydrate, not net carbohydrate. Values are rounded. Calories may not exactly equal protein x 4 + carbohydrate x 4 + fat x 9 because food data use more detailed energy factors and fiber contributes differently.

Edible weights and frying fat

Bones, shells and discarded trimmings are excluded using estimated yields. Draining, retained glaze, discarded softening milk and surplus churchkhela coating are estimated. These assumptions affect the figures; actual yields can differ.

Wine and optional additions

The estimate counts the listed wine; cooking does not guarantee that all alcohol disappears. Unlisted bread, extra cheese and optional garnishes change the meal. Check the allergen note and packaged ingredients.

CLICK TO EXPLORE

Ten chapters. A complete kitchen.

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CHAPTER 01

Small Plates & Pkhali



Colorful pkhali and walnut-filled vegetables begin a generous table with small, flavorful bites.

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001 / TENDER GREENS, FRAGRANT WALNUTS AND A BRIGHT FINISH

Spinach pkhali

Pkhali turns cooked vegetables into a compact, seasoned walnut mixture. This spinach version is served as a small plate; the key is removing excess water before adding the nuts. Regional and household seasonings vary.

Serves 6 as a starter / Prep 25 min / Cook 3-5 min / Chill 1 h

174 kcal	6 g	9 g	15 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Fresh spinach, trimmed
600 g / 21.2 oz

Walnuts, shelled
130 g / 4.6 oz

Red onion, very finely diced
40 g / 1.4 oz

Garlic
1 small clove (about 2 g / 0.07 oz)

Fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped
15 g / 0.5 oz

White wine vinegar
20 ml / 0.7 US fl oz

Ground coriander seed
1/2 tsp / about 1 g

Ground blue fenugreek, optional
1/4 tsp / about 0.93 g

Food-grade ground marigold, optional
1/4 tsp / about 0.25 g

Fine salt
1/2 tsp, then adjust / about 3 g

Chili flakes
1/8 tsp, or to taste / about 0.125 g

Pomegranate arils, to finish
30 g / 1.1 oz

Equipment: Large pot, sieve, clean cloth, knife, processor or mortar, bowl.

THE METHOD

Spinach pkhali

01 **Wash and wilt the spinach**

Rinse the leaves in several changes of cold water, lifting them out so grit stays behind. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the spinach in two batches and cook each for 1-2 minutes, just until fully wilted. Drain immediately in a sieve.

02 **Remove the hidden water**

Spread the spinach on a clean plate until cool enough to handle. Squeeze small handfuls firmly, then squeeze again in a clean cloth. Chop finely with a knife. A wet pile will dilute the seasoning and prevent the finished mixture from holding its shape.

03 **Grind the walnuts carefully**

Pulse the walnuts in a processor until finely ground but still loose, stopping to scrape the bowl. Add garlic, ground coriander, optional fenugreek and marigold, salt and chili. Pulse briefly. Stop before the nuts turn oily; a mortar also works.

04 **Combine and taste**

Mix chopped spinach, walnut mixture, onion, fresh coriander and vinegar in a bowl. Work together with a spoon until evenly green and cohesive. Taste a small spoonful. Add a few drops of vinegar or a pinch of salt if needed; do not add water automatically.

05 **Chill and shape**

Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour so the onion and spices mellow. With clean, lightly damp hands, shape 12 small ovals or balls. If it crumbles, add cold water only 1 teaspoon at a time; if loose, chill longer rather than adding a large quantity of nuts.

06 **Serve in small portions**

Arrange on a shallow plate and press a small well into each piece. Add pomegranate arils. Serve cool alongside bread and other starters. Keep extra portions refrigerated and replenish the plate during a long meal.

COOK'S NOTE

Squeeze greens twice: dry spinach makes a cohesive pkhali with clearer walnut flavor.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Spinach pkhali



01 / Wilt spinach until tender, then drain.



02 / Squeeze thoroughly and chop finely.



03 / Combine with finely ground seasoned walnuts.



04 / Shape small green ovals and add pomegranate.

Make it your own: Frozen chopped spinach can replace fresh: use 300 g / 10.6 oz thawed, then squeeze thoroughly. The yield after draining matters more than the starting weight. Omit unavailable blue fenugreek or marigold rather than using decorative flowers.

Storage: Refrigerate promptly in a shallow covered container at 4°C / 40°F or colder; use within 3 days.

Allergens: Contains walnuts (tree nuts).

CHAPTER 02

Salads & Seasonal Vegetables



Ripe tomatoes, crisp cucumbers, tender beans and fresh herbs make bright companions to warm dishes.

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011 / CRISP VEGETABLES WITH A LIGHT WALNUT DRESSING

Tomato and cucumber salad with walnuts

Tomatoes, cucumbers, onion and fragrant herbs are a familiar Georgian salad combination. This walnut-dressed version keeps the vegetables in generous pieces. Dress just before serving so the bowl stays fresh rather than becoming watery.

Serves 4 / Prep 20 min / No cooking

142 kcal	4 g	12 g	10 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Ripe tomatoes
500 g / 17.6 oz

Cucumbers
300 g / 10.6 oz

Red onion, thinly sliced
60 g / 2.1 oz

Walnuts, shelled
60 g / 2.1 oz

Garlic
1 small clove (about 2 g / 0.07 oz)

White wine vinegar
20 ml / 0.7 US fl oz

Cold water
30 ml, plus more as needed / 1.0 US fl oz

Fresh coriander (cilantro)
15 g / 0.5 oz

Fresh purple or green basil
10 g / 0.3 oz

Ground coriander seed
1/4 tsp / about 0.5 g

Food-grade ground marigold, optional
1/8 tsp / about 0.125 g

Fine salt
1/2 tsp, then adjust / about 3 g

Chili flakes, optional
1/8 tsp / about 0.125 g

Equipment: Knife, board, small processor or mortar, mixing bowl.

THE METHOD

Tomato and cucumber salad with walnuts

01 **Prepare the vegetables**

Wash and dry the produce. Core the tomatoes and cut into bite-size wedges. Slice cucumbers into 1 cm / 3/8 in half-moons. Peel only if the skin is tough. If a cucumber has large watery seeds, scrape those out before slicing.

02 **Soften the onion bite**

Place onion slices in cold water for 5 minutes if sharply flavored, then drain and dry thoroughly. This is optional. Avoid soaking tomatoes or cucumbers: water clinging to the produce will dilute the walnut dressing.

03 **Make a fine walnut base**

Grind walnuts, garlic, coriander seed, optional marigold, salt and chili in a small processor or mortar. Aim for a fine, slightly grainy paste rather than an oily nut butter. Scrape the sides before adding the liquid.

04 **Loosen the dressing**

Stir in vinegar and the measured water. It should fall from a spoon in a thick ribbon. Add extra water by the teaspoon if needed. Taste for acidity and salt; the dressing should be a little assertive because the vegetables will soften its flavor.

05 **Dress at the last moment**

Tear the basil and chop the fresh coriander. Combine vegetables, onion and herbs in a broad bowl. Spoon over the dressing and fold gently a few times, preserving the tomato wedges. Do not leave a salted salad sitting for an hour before serving.

06 **Bring to the table**

Serve immediately in a shallow bowl so the dressing is distributed through the vegetables. If preparing ahead, keep the dry cut vegetables and dressing in separate covered containers in the refrigerator, then combine shortly before eating.

COOK'S NOTE

For a nut-free variation, omit the walnut dressing and use 15 ml / 1 tbsp oil with 15 ml / 1 tbsp wine vinegar. This produces a different, simpler salad rather than a substitute walnut sauce.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Tomato and cucumber salad with walnuts



01 / Cut tomatoes into wedges and cucumbers into half-moons.



02 / Grind walnuts with garlic and spices.



03 / Stir in vinegar and water to make a thick dressing.



04 / Fold dressing and herbs through the fresh vegetables.

Make it your own: For a nut-free variation, omit the walnut dressing and use 15 ml / 1 tbsp oil with 15 ml / 1 tbsp wine vinegar. This produces a different, simpler salad rather than a substitute walnut sauce.

Storage: Best freshly dressed. Refrigerate leftovers promptly and use within 1 day. Keep undressed vegetables and dressing separately for up to 1 day.

Allergens: Contains walnuts (tree nuts).

CHAPTER 03

Soups & Broths



A gentle simmer, a tart finish and careful seasoning build soups with clear Georgian character.

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021 / A GENEROUS BEEF SOUP WITH RICE AND A TART EDGE

Beef kharcho with rice and sour plum

Kharcho has both soup and thicker regional forms. This home-kitchen soup uses tender beef, rice and sour plum sauce; a modest walnut addition gives body. Tkemali varies in salt, sweetness and heat, so taste before adding the full amount.

Serves 6 / Prep 25 min / Cook 1 h 55 min-2 h 45 min / Rest 10 min

377 kcal	26 g	18 g	23 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Beef chuck, trimmed, in 3 cm cubes
700 g / 24.7 oz

Onion, finely diced
200 g / 7.0 oz

Neutral oil
20 ml / 0.7 US fl oz

Tomato paste
25 g / 0.9 oz

Water
1800 ml, plus more as needed / 60.9 US fl oz

Long-grain white rice, dry
80 g / 2.8 oz

Walnuts, finely ground
60 g / 2.1 oz

Tkemali sour plum sauce
40 ml, then adjust / 1.4 US fl oz

Garlic, finely chopped
3 cloves (about 9 g / 0.32 oz)

Ground coriander seed
1 tsp / about 2 g

Ground blue fenugreek, optional
1/2 tsp / about 1.85 g

Bay leaves
2

Fine salt
1 tsp, then adjust / about 6 g

Chili flakes
1/4 tsp, or to taste / about 0.25 g

Fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped
20 g / 0.7 oz

Equipment: Heavy 4-5 L / 4-5 qt pot, sieve, ladle, bowl, knife.

THE METHOD

Beef kharcho with rice and sour plum

01 **Brown the beef in batches**

Pat the cubes dry. Heat oil in a heavy 4-5 L / 4-5 qt pot over medium-high heat. Brown beef in two batches for about 6-8 minutes per batch, turning to color two sides. Transfer to a plate. Lower the heat if the browned residue begins to blacken.

02 **Build the soup base**

Add onion to the same pot and cook over medium heat for 7-9 minutes, stirring. Add tomato paste and ground coriander; stir for 1 minute. Pour in a little of the measured water and scrape up the brown residue, leaving any burnt patches behind.

03 **Make the beef tender first**

Return beef and its juices. Add remaining water, bay leaves and salt. Bring to a gentle simmer, skim if needed, and partially cover. Cook for 75-110 minutes, until a cube yields easily to a fork. Add hot water if the beef stops being submerged.

04 **Cook the rice without over-thickening**

Rinse the rice, drain and stir into the tender beef soup. Simmer uncovered for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. The grains should be cooked but separate. If the soup becomes too thick, add hot water in 100 ml / 3.4 fl oz increments.

05 **Add the tart and aromatic finish**

Mix walnuts with a ladle of hot broth in a bowl, then stir back into the pot. Add garlic, tkemali, optional fenugreek and chili. Simmer gently for 5 minutes. Taste before adding more sauce; a sweet supermarket sauce will give a different result from tart tkemali.

06 **Rest, adjust and serve**

Discard bay leaves and fold in fresh coriander. Rest off the heat for 10 minutes. Taste for salt and acidity, then serve in warm bowls. Rice absorbs liquid during storage; loosen leftovers with water before reheating thoroughly.

COOK'S NOTE

If tkemali is unavailable, add 15 ml / 1 tbsp lemon juice at the end, then adjust in small additions. It supplies acidity but cannot reproduce the plum flavor. This is an adaptation, not an identical replacement.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Beef kharcho with rice and sour plum



01 / Brown evenly cut beef cubes in a heavy pot.



02 / Simmer beef with onion until fork-tender.



03 / Add rinsed white rice to the broth.



04 / Finish the reddish-brown soup with walnuts and herbs.

Make it your own: If tkemali is unavailable, add 15 ml / 1 tbsp lemon juice at the end, then adjust in small additions. It supplies acidity but cannot reproduce the plum flavor. This is an adaptation, not an identical replacement.

Storage: Cool promptly in shallow portions, ideally within 1 hour. Refrigerate at 4°C / 40°F or below; use within 24 hours. Reheat only once to 74°C / 165°F throughout, stirring or checking the center as appropriate.

Allergens: Contains walnuts (tree nuts); check purchased sauce labels.

CHAPTER 04

Breads & Savory Baking



Cheese-filled breads, beans, meat and sweet spice invite you to knead, shape and share.

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031 / GOLDEN BREAD BOATS, BUBBLING CHEESE AND A SOFT EGG FINISH

Adjarian khachapuri

The open cheese boat is associated with Adjara on Georgia's Black Sea coast. This recipe makes two generous individual breads in a conventional home oven. The dough is soft, and the filling combines a melting cheese with a tangy brined cheese.

Makes 2 boats / Serves 4 (1/2 boat each) / Prep 30 min / Rise 60-90 min / Rest 10 min / Bake 17-23 min

602 kcal	27 g	60 g	28 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

All-purpose flour, plus a little for dusting
300 g / 10.6 oz

Water, lukewarm (about 35°C / 95°F)
190 ml / 6.4 US fl oz

Instant yeast
4 g / about 1 1/4 tsp

Fine salt, for dough
5 g / 0.2 oz

Granulated sugar
5 g / 0.2 oz

Neutral oil
15 ml / 0.5 US fl oz

Sulguni, grated
200 g / 7.0 oz

Imeretian cheese, crumbled
100 g / 3.5 oz

Milk, for filling
30 ml / 1.0 US fl oz

Large pasteurized eggs, for topping
2 (about 100 g / 3.5 oz without shells)

Unsalted butter, for finishing
20 g / 0.7 oz

Equipment: Scale, bowl, rolling pin, parchment rated for 240°C / 465°F, heavy baking sheet.

THE METHOD

Adjarian khachapuri

01 Knead a soft dough

Mix flour, yeast, salt and sugar. Add water and oil, stirring until no dry flour remains. Knead for 8-10 minutes by hand or 5-7 minutes in a mixer on low. The dough should be supple and slightly tacky. Add dusting flour sparingly; a dry dough makes a tough rim.

02 Allow a full first rise

Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover and leave in a warm, draft-free spot for 60-90 minutes until roughly doubled. Temperature affects this more than the clock. During the last 30 minutes, heat the oven to 240°C / 465°F with a heavy baking sheet on the middle rack.

03 Prepare cheese and divide

Combine grated and crumbled cheeses with milk. Taste the cheeses before adding any extra salt. Divide the risen dough into two equal pieces, shape gently into balls and rest covered for 10 minutes. Prepare two sheets of baking parchment rated for the oven temperature.

04 Shape the open boats

Roll each piece into an oval about 25 x 18 cm / 10 x 7 in. Roll each long edge inward twice, making sturdy rims; pinch both short ends firmly to points. Ease the middle open and divide the filling between the boats. Keep filling inside the rim. Transfer on parchment to the hot tray.

05 Bake, then add eggs

Bake 14-18 minutes until the rims are deeply golden and the cheese bubbles. Make a shallow well in each filling. Crack one pasteurized egg into each well and bake another 3-5 minutes until the white is set. A softly set yolk is the traditional-style finish; cook longer for a firmer result.

06 Finish and eat warm

Add 10 g / 0.35 oz butter to each hot boat and serve immediately. Stir egg, cheese and butter together in the center, then tear off the rim to scoop the filling. For people who need fully cooked eggs, continue baking until the egg center reaches 71°C / 160°F, rather than keeping a runny yolk.

COOK'S NOTE

Outside Georgia, replace the 300 g / 10.6 oz cheese with 200 g / 7.0 oz low-moisture mozzarella and 100 g / 3.5 oz feta. Avoid wet fresh mozzarella. The flavor differs, but the blend gives a useful melting-and-tangy balance.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Adjarian khachapuri



01 / Knead the soft yeast dough and let it rise.



02 / Roll rims inward and pinch the oval into an open boat.



03 / Bake cheese-filled boats until the rims turn golden.



04 / Add one egg per boat, set the white, then finish with butter.

Make it your own: Outside Georgia, replace the 300 g / 10.6 oz cheese with 200 g / 7.0 oz low-moisture mozzarella and 100 g / 3.5 oz feta. Avoid wet fresh mozzarella. The flavor differs, but the blend gives a useful melting-and-tangy balance.

Storage: Best straight from the oven. Refrigerate leftovers promptly for up to 2 days; reheat to 74°C / 165°F. The egg will become firm. Use pasteurized eggs if serving a soft yolk.

Allergens: Contains wheat (gluten), milk and eggs.

CHAPTER 05

Dumplings & Filled Dishes



Firm wrappers, carefully prepared fillings and secure folds make generous dumplings and filled vegetables.

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041 / PLEATED DUMPLINGS WITH A JUICY BEEF-AND-PORK FILLING

Kalakuri khinkali: beef and pork

Kalakuri is a city-style khinkali with herbs in the meat filling. The dough must be firm enough to contain the broth, and every pleat must be sealed. This batch makes 20 medium-large dumplings; cook in several batches rather than crowding the pot.

Makes 20 dumplings / Serves 4 / Prep and shape 60-75 min / Rest 45 min / Boil 12-15 min per batch

768 kcal	36 g	99 g	24 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

All-purpose flour, plus a little for dusting
500 g / 17.6 oz

Water, room temperature, for dough
240 ml / 8.1 US fl oz

Fine salt, for dough
7 g / 0.2 oz

Ground beef, about 15% fat
250 g / 8.8 oz

Ground pork, about 15-20% fat
250 g / 8.8 oz

Onion, very finely minced
120 g / 4.2 oz

Cold water, for filling
250 ml / 8.4 US fl oz

Fresh coriander (cilantro), finely chopped
15 g / 0.5 oz

Fine salt, for filling
8 g / 0.3 oz

Ground black pepper
1/2 tsp, plus more to serve / about 0.9 g

Ground cumin, optional
1/4 tsp / about 0.53 g

Water and salt for boiling
4 L / 4.2 qt water + 20 g / 0.7 oz salt

Equipment: Scale, rolling pin, covered bowl, wide 6 L / 6 qt pot, slotted spoon, food thermometer.

THE METHOD

Kalakuri khinkali: beef and pork

01 Knead and rest the firm dough

Mix flour and dough salt. Add the measured dough water gradually, combining into a firm shaggy mass. Knead 10-12 minutes until smooth; cover airtight and rest 45 minutes. Do not pour in extra water simply because the dough initially feels stiff: resting lets the flour hydrate.

02 Mix a cold, juicy filling

Combine beef, pork, onion, coriander, filling salt, pepper and optional cumin. Work in cold filling water in several additions until absorbed; the mixture should be loose but cohesive, not meat floating in free water. Cover and refrigerate while rolling. Keep raw meat separate from ready-to-eat foods.

03 Roll 20 individual wrappers

Divide dough into 20 equal pieces, about 37 g / 1.3 oz each. Keep the pieces covered. Roll each into a 14-15 cm / 5 1/2-6 in circle, around 2 mm / 1/16 in thick, leaving the center slightly thicker. Dust lightly and brush away excess flour from the edges.

04 Pleat and seal without trapping air

Place roughly 44 g / 1.6 oz filling in the center. Lift the edge and gather small overlapping pleats around the filling, supporting the pouch from below. Bring all pleats together, squeeze firmly and twist into a compact top knot. Keep the rim free from filling; do not chase a particular pleat count.

05 Boil gently in uncrowded batches

Bring the measured cooking water and salt to a boil in a wide 6 L / 6 qt pot. Lower in 5-6 dumplings, stir the water gently to prevent sticking, and maintain a steady gentle boil. Cook 12-15 minutes after the water returns to a boil. Floating alone does not prove the meat is cooked.

06 Check, lift and serve

Lift one dumpling and probe its filling from the side with a clean thermometer; it must reach 71°C / 160°F. Cook longer if needed. Remove the batch with a slotted spoon and drain briefly. Serve with black pepper. Let the broth cool slightly, take a small bite and sip it carefully before eating the pouch.

COOK'S NOTE

Cook one test dumpling before shaping the whole batch. A leaking seam needs cleaner, drier edges and a stronger pinch. Roll scrap dough for separate noodles rather than repeatedly reworking it into tough wrappers.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Kalakuri khinkali: beef and pork



01 / Mix the firm dough and rest it covered.



02 / Roll thin individual circles and add cold meat filling.



03 / Gather overlapping pleats and pinch the top knot tightly.



04 / Boil sealed dumplings and serve with black pepper.

Make it your own: Cook one test dumpling before shaping the whole batch. A leaking seam needs cleaner, drier edges and a stronger pinch. Roll scrap dough for separate noodles rather than repeatedly reworking it into tough wrappers.

Storage: Keep raw meat filling refrigerated and use the same day. Freeze uncooked dumplings in a single layer, then bag for up to 1 month; boil from frozen and verify 71°C / 160°F. Cooked leftovers: refrigerate promptly for up to 2 days; reheat to 74°C / 165°F.

Allergens: Contains wheat (gluten).

CHAPTER 06

Pots, Pans & Braises



Chicken, lamb and beef meet walnuts, tomatoes, garlic and a bright finish of fresh herbs.

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051 / CHICKEN SIMMERED IN A GENEROUS TOMATO-AND-HERB SAUCE

Chakhokhbili: chicken with tomatoes

Chakhokhbili is now commonly made with chicken, although its name recalls pheasant. This home-kitchen version uses bone-in thighs for a forgiving, flavorful braise. The sauce comes mainly from tomatoes and onions, with herbs added at the end.

Serves 4 / Prep 20 min / Cook 50-65 min / Rest 5 min

540 kcal	36 g	15 g	37 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Chicken thighs, bone-in and skin-on
1000 g / 35.3 oz

Ripe tomatoes, finely chopped
700 g / 24.7 oz

Onions, thinly sliced
300 g / 10.6 oz

Neutral oil
15 ml / 0.5 US fl oz

Garlic, finely chopped
3 cloves (about 9 g / 0.32 oz)

White wine vinegar
15 ml / 0.5 US fl oz

Fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped
20 g / 0.7 oz

Fresh basil, chopped
10 g / 0.3 oz

Bay leaves
2

Chili flakes
1/4 tsp, or to taste / about 0.25 g

Fine salt
1 tsp, then adjust / about 6 g

Ground black pepper
1/4 tsp / about 0.45 g

Water, only if needed
60 ml / 2.0 US fl oz

Equipment: Broad heavy lidded pan, tongs, wooden spoon, food thermometer.

THE METHOD

Chakhokhbili: chicken with tomatoes

01 Prepare the chicken safely

Pat chicken dry with paper towels; do not rinse it. Remove any large loose fat deposits. Season with half the salt and the pepper. Wash hands and clean surfaces after handling raw poultry. Use a broad, heavy lidded pan that holds the thighs in one layer.

02 Brown the skin

Heat oil over medium heat. Lay the thighs skin-side down and cook 7-9 minutes until golden and easily released, then turn for 2 minutes. Work in batches if necessary. Move chicken to a plate; pour off excess rendered fat, leaving about 1 tablespoon in the pan.

03 Soften the onions

Add onions to the pan and cook over medium-low heat for 10-12 minutes, stirring until soft and lightly golden. Scrape the browned residue with a wooden spoon. Stir garlic and chili through the onions for 30 seconds, keeping the garlic from burning.

04 Simmer with tomatoes

Add tomatoes, vinegar, bay leaves and remaining salt. Return chicken with its juices, nestling it into the sauce. Bring to a simmer, cover and cook on low for 25-35 minutes. Check halfway and add the measured water only if the sauce catches or becomes unusually dry.

05 Check doneness and reduce

Measure the thickest part of several thighs, avoiding the bone: each must reach 74°C / 165°F. Continue cooking if needed. If the sauce is thin, remove cooked chicken briefly and simmer uncovered 5-10 minutes until it lightly coats a spoon, then return the pieces.

06 Finish with fresh herbs

Discard bay leaves. Fold in coriander and basil, reserving a little for the surface. Rest 5 minutes off the heat and taste for salt. Serve chicken with ample sauce and bread or a plain side. The braised skin will be soft rather than crisp.

COOK'S NOTE

Out of tomato season, use 700 g / 24.7 oz canned chopped tomatoes with their juice. If sharply acidic, let the sauce simmer fully before considering a small pinch of sugar. Browning and herb freshness matter more than extra spice.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Chakhokhbili: chicken with tomatoes



01 / Brown chicken thighs skin-side down in a broad pan.



02 / Soften sliced onions and add chopped tomatoes.



03 / Cover and simmer the chicken gently in the red sauce.



04 / Finish the cooked chicken with fresh coriander and basil.

Make it your own: Out of tomato season, use 700 g / 24.7 oz canned chopped tomatoes with their juice. If sharply acidic, let the sauce simmer fully before considering a small pinch of sugar. Browning and herb freshness matter more than extra spice.

Storage: Refrigerate promptly in a shallow covered container at 4°C / 40°F or colder; use within 3 days.

Allergens: None of the major allergens as written.

CHAPTER 07

Vegetables, Oven & Clay-Pot Cooking



Tender vegetables and oven dishes reward gentle heat, good cookware and a little patience.

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061 / SOFT EGGPLANT, TENDER POTATOES AND BRIGHT SUMMER HERBS

Ajapsandali: eggplant and vegetable stew

Ajapsandali is a vegetable dish with many household variations across Georgia and neighboring cuisines. This version includes potatoes and sweet peppers. Separate browning gives the eggplant flavor while a short covered finish brings the vegetables together.

Serves 6 as a side / Prep 25 min / Cook 50-65 min / Rest 10 min

209 kcal	4 g	28 g	10 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Eggplant, in 2.5 cm cubes
600 g / 21.2 oz

Potatoes, peeled, in 2 cm cubes
400 g / 14.1 oz

Ripe tomatoes, chopped
600 g / 21.2 oz

Sweet red bell peppers, sliced
300 g / 10.6 oz

Onion, sliced
200 g / 7.0 oz

Neutral oil
60 ml / 2.0 US fl oz

Garlic, minced
3 cloves (about 9 g / 0.32 oz)

Ground coriander seed
1/2 tsp / about 1 g

Fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped
20 g / 0.7 oz

Fresh basil, chopped
10 g / 0.3 oz

Fine salt
1 tsp, then adjust / about 6 g

Ground black pepper
1/4 tsp / about 0.45 g

Chili flakes, optional
1/4 tsp / about 0.25 g

Water, for the pan
100 ml, plus more if needed / 3.4 US fl oz

Equipment: Saucepan, sieve, broad heavy lidded pan, wooden spoon.

THE METHOD

Ajapsandali: eggplant and vegetable stew

01 Cut consistently and pre-cook potatoes

Prepare all vegetables before heating the pan. Put potato cubes in a saucepan, cover with cold water and bring to a simmer. Cook 8-10 minutes until almost tender, then drain. Keep cubes intact; completely soft potatoes will break up during the final simmer.

02 Brown the eggplant in batches

Heat half the oil in a broad heavy pan over medium-high heat. Pat eggplant dry and cook in two batches, using more of the measured oil if the surface dries. Turn occasionally for 8-10 minutes per batch until browned and nearly soft. Transfer to a plate.

03 Cook the onion and pepper

Add remaining oil, onion and pepper to the same pan. Cook over medium heat 8-10 minutes until softened. Stir in garlic, ground coriander and optional chili for 30 seconds. The vegetables should smell sweet; reduce heat if the garlic colors rapidly.

04 Make a loose tomato base

Add tomatoes, measured pan water, salt and black pepper. Simmer uncovered 8-10 minutes until the tomatoes break down. Stir from the bottom to prevent catching. The sauce should be loose enough to coat the vegetables rather than form a dry paste.

05 Bring everything together

Fold in eggplant and drained potatoes. Cover and simmer gently for 10-15 minutes, stirring carefully once or twice. A knife should slide through both vegetables with no resistance. Add hot water a tablespoon at a time if the pan dries before they become tender.

06 Finish without crushing

Remove from heat and fold in fresh coriander and basil. Rest 10 minutes to settle the flavors. Taste for salt, then serve warm with bread. A chilled portion is also enjoyable; cool it in a shallow container and refrigerate promptly rather than leaving the whole pot out.

COOK'S NOTE

This is a tender vegetable dish, not a crisp stir-fry. If eggplant is browned outside but spongy within, extend the covered simmer with a little water. Do not keep adding oil to compensate for undercooking.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Ajapsandali: eggplant and vegetable stew



01 / Cut eggplant, potatoes, pepper and tomatoes evenly.



02 / Brown eggplant cubes in batches.



03 / Simmer softened peppers and onions with tomatoes.



04 / Combine tender vegetables and finish with fresh herbs.

Make it your own: This is a tender vegetable dish, not a crisp stir-fry. If eggplant is browned outside but spongy within, extend the covered simmer with a little water. Do not keep adding oil to compensate for undercooking.

Storage: Refrigerate promptly in a shallow covered container at 4°C / 40°F or colder; use within 3 days.

Allergens: None of the major allergens as written.

CHAPTER 08

Fire & Grill



Cook over settled heat, turn with care and use temperature and tenderness to guide the fire.

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071 / SIMPLE PORK SKEWERS, STEADY EMBERS AND FRESH ONION

Pork mtsvadi

Mtsvadi is a Georgian fire-cooked meat tradition. Marinades differ from household to household; this restrained version uses well-marbled pork, salt and pepper, with onion dressed separately. A two-zone fire gives control when the fat begins to flare.

Serves 4 / Prep 20 min / Chill 1-4 h / Grill 15-22 min / Rest at least 3 min

617 kcal	44 g	6 g	45 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Boneless pork collar (neck), in 3 cm cubes
1000 g / 35.3 oz

Fine salt, for pork
10 g / 0.3 oz

Ground black pepper
1/2 tsp / about 0.9 g

Red onion, thinly sliced
150 g / 5.3 oz

Red wine vinegar
20 ml / 0.7 US fl oz

Water, for onion dressing
20 ml / 0.7 US fl oz

Fine salt, for onion
1/4 tsp / about 1.5 g

Fresh coriander (cilantro), optional
10 g / 0.3 oz

Tkemali, to serve, optional
60 ml / 2.0 US fl oz

Equipment: Outdoor charcoal or gas grill, flat metal skewers, tongs, insulated gloves, food thermometer.

THE METHOD

Pork mtsvadi

01 **Cut, season and refrigerate**

Trim tough silver skin but keep thin seams of fat. Use a tender, well-marbled collar cut. Cut pork into even 3 cm / 1 1/4 in cubes; very large chunks take longer to soften. Toss with the measured meat salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate 1-4 hours. Use a clean board and keep raw pork juices away from the onion garnish.

02 **Prepare the cool garnish**

Mix sliced red onion with vinegar, water and onion salt in a separate bowl. Toss and refrigerate while cooking. It should become slightly softened but remain crisp. Add fresh coriander only just before serving, if using. Do not use this bowl for raw meat.

03 **Build two heat zones**

Light charcoal outdoors and let the coals become glowing with a light ash coating; avoid tall flames. Bank more coals on one side and leave a cooler area on the other. With a gas grill, heat one side to medium-high and keep the other lower. Clean the grate and keep tongs ready.

04 **Thread stable skewers**

Thread pork onto flat metal skewers with the pieces just touching, without packing tightly. Aim for 4-6 cubes per skewer. Keep uncooked skewers refrigerated until the grill is ready. Metal conducts heat and becomes very hot; use insulated gloves and keep handles away from direct fire.

05 **Turn often and control flare-ups**

Grill over the hotter zone, turning every 2-3 minutes, for roughly 15-22 minutes. Move skewers to the cooler side whenever dripping fat ignites. Do not char one face while leaving the center cold. Cooking time depends on cube size and the fire; a thermometer decides readiness.

06 **Measure, rest and serve**

Probe the center of several pieces from the side, avoiding the skewer: pork must reach at least 63°C / 145°F. Rest at least 3 minutes before sliding onto a clean platter; Cook longer if preferred, but do not use surface color as the safety test. Drain onion lightly and scatter alongside. Serve optional tkemali separately.

COOK'S NOTE

A shoulder cube should have a little marbling. Very lean loin cooks faster but is less forgiving. Never operate a charcoal grill indoors, and never reuse a raw-meat plate for cooked skewers without washing it.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Pork mtsvadi



01 / Cut pork into even cubes and season.



02 / Thread cubes onto flat metal skewers.



03 / Grill over glowing coals, moving away from flare-ups.



04 / Rest cooked skewers and serve with dressed red onion.

Make it your own: A shoulder cube should have a little marbling. Very lean loin cooks faster but is less forgiving. Never operate a charcoal grill indoors, and never reuse a raw-meat plate for cooked skewers without washing it.

Storage: Refrigerate promptly in a shallow covered container at 4°C / 40°F or colder; use within 3 days.

Allergens: None of the major allergens as written; check tkemali labels.

CHAPTER 09

Beans, Cornmeal & Pantry Sauces



Creamy beans, cornmeal and bright pantry sauces offer warmth, texture and everyday flavor.

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081 / A WARM BEAN POT WITH CORIANDER, GARLIC AND GENTLE SPICE

Lobio: warm spiced red beans

Lobio means beans, and the dish has many regional expressions. Here dried red kidney beans become a thick, partly mashed warm pot. A proper initial boil is essential; the later gentle simmer develops tenderness and a creamy cooking liquid.

Serves 4 / Prep 20 min / Soak 8-12 h / Cook 1 h 30 min-2 h 30 min / Rest 5 min

336 kcal	18 g	51 g	8 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Dried red kidney beans
300 g / 10.6 oz

Water, for cooking
1500 ml, plus more as needed / 50.7 US fl oz

Onion, finely diced
150 g / 5.3 oz

Neutral oil
30 ml / 1.0 US fl oz

Garlic, minced
2 cloves (about 6 g / 0.21 oz)

Bay leaves
2

Ground coriander seed
1 tsp / about 2 g

Ground blue fenugreek, optional
1/2 tsp / about 1.85 g

Dried summer savory, optional
1/2 tsp / about 0.25 g

Fine salt
1 tsp, then adjust / about 6 g

Chili flakes
1/4 tsp, or to taste / about 0.25 g

Red wine vinegar
15 ml, then adjust / 0.5 US fl oz

Fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped
20 g / 0.7 oz

Equipment: Large pot, sieve, skillet, wooden spoon, ladle.

THE METHOD

Lobio: warm spiced red beans

01 **Soak and discard the water**

Pick over the dry beans, rinse and cover with plenty of cold water in a large bowl. Soak 8-12 hours in the refrigerator. Drain and rinse well. Do not cook in the soaking water, taste uncooked beans or use a slow cooker for the initial cooking of raw kidney beans.

02 **Boil properly before simmering**

Put beans and the measured fresh cooking water in a large pot. Bring to a full rolling boil and keep boiling for at least 30 minutes, adding boiling water if needed to keep the beans submerged. Then reduce to a simmer and add bay leaves. This initial boil is a safety step, not optional.

03 **Cook until creamy inside**

Partially cover and simmer another 45-90 minutes, or longer for older beans. Test several beans: their centers must crush smoothly, with no chalky core. Add salt once nearly tender. Keep a little water above the beans; do not let the pot boil dry. Remove bay leaves.

04 **Soften onion and bloom spices**

In a skillet, heat oil and cook onion over medium-low heat for 10-12 minutes until soft. Add garlic, ground coriander, optional fenugreek, optional savory and chili. Stir for 30 seconds, then remove from heat. Garlic should smell fragrant without turning dark.

05 **Mash part of the beans**

Reserve 400 ml / 13.5 fl oz cooking liquid, then drain only if the pot contains much more liquid. Return beans to the pot and mash about one-third against the side with a spoon. Add cooked onion and spices. Stir in enough reserved liquid to make a thick but spoonable mixture.

06 **Simmer and finish**

Simmer gently 8-10 minutes, stirring along the bottom. Add vinegar and fresh coriander; taste for salt. Rest 5 minutes, adjusting with a little reserved liquid if it has thickened. Serve hot, ideally with cornbread and a fresh or pickled vegetable side.

COOK'S NOTE

For a faster version, use 750 g / 26.5 oz drained canned kidney beans. Begin with the onion step, add 300 ml / 10.1 fl oz water and simmer 15–20 minutes before mashing. Canned beans are already cooked.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Lobio: warm spiced red beans



01 / Soak dry beans, then discard the soaking water.



02 / Boil in fresh water before the long gentle simmer.



03 / Cook diced onion with garlic and spices.



04 / Partly mash tender beans and finish with coriander.

Make it your own: For a faster version, use 750 g / 26.5 oz drained canned kidney beans. Start with the onion step, add 300 ml / 10.1 fl oz fresh water and simmer 15-20 minutes before mashing. Canned beans are already cooked; they do not require the raw-bean safety boil.

Storage: Refrigerate promptly in a shallow covered container at 4°C / 40°F or colder; use within 3 days.

Allergens: None of the major allergens as written.

CHAPTER 10

Sweets, Pastry & Fruit



Honey, walnuts, grape juice, pastry and fruit bring a Georgian-inspired meal to a sweet close.

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091 / A FESTIVE HONEY-AND-WALNUT CONFECTION CUT INTO DIAMONDS

Gozinaki: honey and walnut diamonds

Gozinaki is closely associated with the Georgian New Year table. The essential pairing is honey and walnuts. This small home batch uses a measured syrup endpoint for a sliceable, chewy-crisp result; honey variety and room humidity affect the final firmness.

Makes 20 diamonds / Serves 20 / Prep 20 min / Cook 20-30 min / Cool 1 h

130 kcal	2 g	10 g	10 g
CALORIES	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT

ESTIMATED PER SERVING



Ingredients

Walnuts, shelled
300 g / 10.6 oz

Mild honey
180 g / 6.3 oz

Granulated sugar
20 g / 0.7 oz

Neutral oil, for parchment and utensils
5 ml / 0.2 US fl oz

Equipment: Heavy saucepan, candy thermometer, baking tray, heatproof spatula, parchment, rolling pin, knife.

THE METHOD

Gozinaki: honey and walnut diamonds

01 Set up before heating syrup

Line a small tray with parchment, lightly oil it and prepare another oiled sheet for flattening. Keep a heatproof spatula, rolling pin and a cup of cold water nearby. Hot honey sticks to skin and burns; use tools throughout, keeping children away from the pan.

02 Toast and slice the walnuts

Heat the oven to 160°C / 320°F. Spread walnuts in one layer and toast 8-10 minutes until lightly fragrant, without darkening excessively. Cool just enough to handle, then slice or chop into small flat pieces, roughly 3-5 mm / 1/8-3/16 in. Keep the pieces warm.

03 Cook the honey mixture carefully

Combine honey and sugar in a heavy medium saucepan with room for bubbling. Heat over medium-low, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Cook gently to approximately 120-122°C / 248-252°F, measuring without touching the pan base. Time varies; reduce the heat if the edges darken before the center reaches temperature.

04 Check a small cooled drop

Take the pan off the heat. Drop a little syrup into cold water with a spoon and allow it to cool completely. It should gather into a firm, pliable piece rather than disperse. If still thin, reheat briefly and retest. Never touch or taste the hot syrup directly.

05 Fold, spread and flatten

Stir the warm walnuts into the syrup until every piece is coated. Immediately scrape onto prepared parchment. Cover with the second oiled sheet and press or roll to an even 8-10 mm / 1/3-3/8 in layer. Use an insulated glove to steady the tray; do not flatten the hot mixture with bare hands.

06 Cut warm, then cool fully

After 5-10 minutes, when warm and holding together, remove the upper parchment and cut a diamond pattern with a lightly oiled sharp knife. If still too soft, wait a few minutes. Leave to cool about 1 hour, then separate carefully along the cuts. Serve small portions; the honey coating can be firm and sticky.

COOK'S NOTE

This home-kitchen method heats the honey once. Use a thermometer and a cooled-drop test to judge the syrup. Humidity softens gozinaki; keep the pieces sealed, separated with parchment.

ILLUSTRATED PREPARATION

Gozinaki: honey and walnut diamonds



01 / Toast walnuts lightly, then cut into small flat pieces.



02 / Heat honey and sugar in a heavy saucepan.



03 / Fold walnuts into thick honey syrup.



04 / Flatten between parchment sheets and cut into diamonds.

Make it your own: Use a mild floral honey if a Georgian variety is unavailable. Keep the walnut quantity unchanged; dark bitter honey gives a noticeably different confection.

Storage: Cool fully before packing. Store airtight with parchment between layers in a cool, dry place; use within 1 week for best texture. In humid weather, refrigerate and bring a small portion to room temperature before serving.

Allergens: Contains walnuts (tree nuts). Honey is unsuitable for infants under 12 months.

Sample recipe finder

Ten complete recipes, one from every chapter. Click a title to open it.

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