

OFF THE SHELF from THE GOOD OLIVE



The towns and villages of the southern tip of the Peloponnese in Greece inspired this recipe. It's a delicate and aromatic dish that can be served as part of a mixed platter (as a typical *meze*) or as a starter. It's a bit fiddly but totally worth the effort and is greatly enhanced by the use of The Good Olive's own products. To buy The Good Olive's own mild chilli Kalamata olives or our garlic and fennel marinaded Leccino olives visit our website at www.thegoodolive.com.au, or visit our shop at 97, Bussell Highway, Margaret River, Western Australia, or call us on +61 (0) 8 9758 7877. Come on, be inspired!

Olive Stuffed Onions

¾ cup brown lentils, picked over and rinsed
16 small boiling onions (about 3-4 centimetres in diameter)
8 black olives (try The Good Olive's Kalamatas – the hint of chilli in them adds an extra thrill)
5 tablespoons Margaret River extra virgin olive oil
¼ cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons fresh coarse whole-wheat bread crumbs, toasted

½ tablespoon dried oregano
1/3 cup minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
Coarsely ground black pepper to taste
4 bay leaves
¼ cup pomegranate molasses (available from The Good Olive), diluted with 3 tablespoons water
½ teaspoon The Good Olive's honey
Pinch of ground allspice
Coarse sea salt to taste

Put lentils in a saucepan, add water to cover by 5 cms, and bring to boil over a medium-low heat. Reduce heat to low, cover; simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until just tender. Drain and set aside to cool.

Neatly trim off the onion ends and remove a ½ cm slice from each stem end. In a medium saucepan of boiling water, cook onions for 10 minutes. Drain and set aside to cool. Drain, pit and finely chop the olives.

Preheat oven to 175°C. Remove the onion skins with a paring knife. With the knife tip, pull out each onion centre through its stem end, leaving two outer layers as a shell. Using a large knife, chop the onion centres into small dice and set aside. Stand the shells, root-ends down, in one layer in a heavy, shallow baking dish.

In a medium, heavy skillet over a low heat, heat 1½ tablespoons olive oil and cook the chopped onion, stirring occasionally, for about 8 minutes, or until starting to colour. Add the olives, walnuts, bread crumbs, oregano, half the parsley, and the pepper; stir to mix. With a small spoon carefully fill the onion shells with this mixture. Sprinkle with 1½ tablespoons of the remaining olive oil. Add bay leaves and pomegranate molasses mixture to the dish. Bake uncovered, for 40 minutes, or until the pan juices and syrupy, basting once or twice.

Whisk together 2 tablespoons of the pan juices, the honey, all spice, and remaining olive oil. Stir in more pan juices to taste. Carefully mix this sauce with the lentils and season with salt and pepper. Spread the lentils over a small platter and arrange the onions on top. Sprinkle with remaining parsley. Serve at room temperature. Delicious.

[Someone passed this recipe on to me from one of their favourite cook books, but I can't remember who it was, so I'm afraid I'm unable to provide a correct attribution. My apologies and if anyone knows the recipe's origin please let me know.]