

Sweet
treat



A taste of Greece

Maria Bernadis wants us all to know there's more to Greek cooking than souvlaki and moussaka. She proves it at her Greekalicious cooking school (greekalicious.com.au), where she divulges family recipes and those she's hunted down while travelling through Greece, home of the world's first cookbook writer, the poet Archestratus (circa 350 BC). These ricotta cakes are one of the treasures on Maria's menus, and are good either warm from the oven, or chilled and served the next day.

Ricotta sweet cakes with cherries poached in port

■ Serves 4

RICOTTA CAKES

- 1/2 cup toasted almonds
- 1 1/2-2 cups fresh ricotta
- 1/2 cup currants
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2-3 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1-2 tbsp semolina

POACHED CHERRIES

- 500g cherries
- 1 cup port
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 4 cloves
- 1/4 cup caster sugar
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh mint, to garnish
- 1 tsp cinnamon, to garnish

HEAT the oven to 180°C.
GRIND almonds roughly in a

mortar and pestle: do not pound into powder form.
COMBINE all the ingredients for the ricotta cakes and gently mix well. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

PLACE cherries in a saucepan, with sugar, port, cinnamon stick and cloves, and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer on low for about 20 minutes.

PLACE ricotta cake mixture on a non-stick baking tray to form four portions. Place tray in oven and bake for about 15-20 minutes, until tops are a light golden brown.

WHEN cooked, take out of the oven and allow to cool for 2-3 minutes before serving.

ARRANGE a ricotta sweet cake and some of the poached cherries on a plate. Garnish with mint and cinnamon and drizzle some of the poaching liquid around the plate.



Maria Bernadis
GREEKALICIOUS

In place of poached cherries in this recipe, try grilled in-season figs.

Buy of the week

LOGAN WEEMALA PINOT 2005

The traditional Burgundian way of making pinot involves *pigeage*, treading on the grapes in bare feet. The stomp is considered a gentle and loving way of squeezing the juice from grapes, but because winemaking has mostly undergone a post-industrial revolution, it doesn't always happen anymore. However, the Logans from Orange have gone with the feet and delivered a well-structured pinot at an affordable price.



CHRISTINE MANFIELD Spice queen

Christine Manfield was dubbed the Spice Queen for her use of exotic and fragrant flavours at Sydney's Paramount restaurant in the 1990s. She has decided to make the most of her culinary coronation, turning it into a book and a range of products.

"The title was well-deserved and no-one's managed to take the crown

away yet," says Christine, back in Sydney after pioneering modern Asian food in London at East@West.

Her range of spice pastes, launched eight years ago, has grown to range of 18. She says they're essentially flavour boosters.

Try the sambal bajak from the recipe on the previous page in a stir-fry or tossed through noodles or green vegetables.



Christine Manfield