



FIGS POACHED IN MAVRODAPHNE and SERVED WITH MANOURI CHEESE

(Sika me Krasi Mavrodaphne)

There is probably no fruit whose flavor evokes Greece more than the beautiful, plump fig. In the summer, the lush ripe fruit flourishes all over the country. This combination of figs, sweet wine and delicate manouri cheese is among the greatest trios in the Greek kitchen.

12 ounces dried Greek figs
2/3 cup Mavrodaphne wine
1 cinnamon stick
3-4 whole cloves
1-2 pounds Krinos Manouri Cheese
Fresh mint for garnish

Place the figs in a wide saucepan and cover with hot water. Steep them for 1 hour. Pour in the Mavrodaphne and the spices. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for about 30 minutes, until the figs are very plump and tender.

Remove the fruit with a slotted spoon, and strain the poaching liquid, discarding the spices and any seeds that may have leaked out from the figs. Return the poaching liquid to the pot, add sugar, and boil until reduced and thick and the consistency of syrup.

Slice the manouri cheese into 1/2-inch rounds or crescents, carefully so as to keep the pieces intact. Place the cheese slices in one overlapping row on a large platter. Place the poached figs evenly over them and pour over the syrup. Serve immediately, garnish with mint, if desired.

Yield: 6 servings