

## Greek dolmas

Little cabbage parcels topped with a famous Mediterranean sauce. If you're slimming, avoid the Béchamel – the lemony *avgolemono* is splendid on its own

**MAIN MEAL** Makes 16–20

**Overall timing** 1½ hours

**Equipment** Large saucepan, frying pan, flameproof casserole, 2 small saucepans, bowl

**Freezing** Not recommended

### INGREDIENTS

1	Medium-size white cabbage	1
3oz	Long grain rice	75g
1	Small onion	1
6 tbsp	Oil	6×15ml
8oz	Minced beef	225g
½ tsp	Salt	2.5ml
¼ tsp	Pepper	1.25ml
¼ tsp	Nutmeg	1.25ml
1 tsp	Oregano	5ml
8fl oz	Stock	220ml
<b>Béchamel sauce</b>		
2oz	Butter	50g
2oz	Plain flour	50g
	Pinch of salt	
¾ pint	Milk	400ml
<b>Avgolemono sauce</b>		
1oz	Butter	25g
1 tbsp	Plain flour	15ml
1	Egg	1
2	Egg yolks	2
6 tbsp	Lemon juice	6×15ml

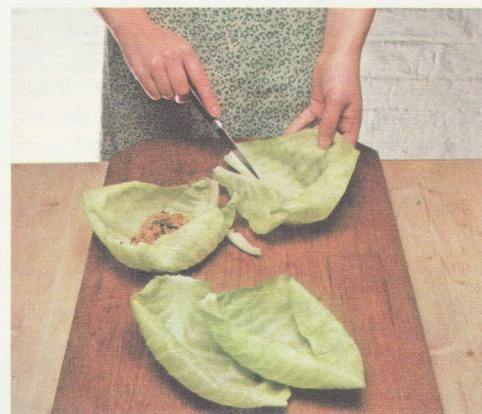
### METHOD

- 1 Make a cone shaped cut in base of cabbage and remove core. Place whole cabbage, base down, in pan of boiling water and cook for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, cool under cold running water, then dry on kitchen paper. Carefully peel away 16–20 leaves. Cut any extra large ones in half, but leave smaller ones whole.
- 2 Add rice to same pan of boiling water and cook for about 10 minutes (the rice should be *al dente*). Drain.
- 3 Peel and chop onion. Heat 4 tbsp (4×15ml) oil in a frying pan and cook onion till transparent. Add mince, salt, pepper, nutmeg and oregano. Cook for 5–8 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Cool, then mix in rice.
- 4 Place a little stuffing on each leaf. Fold in sides and roll into tight parcels.



Above: Greek dolmas – deliciously filled

- 5 Heat 2 tbsp (2×15ml) oil in casserole. Pack stuffed cabbage leaves tightly in rows in casserole and pour in stock. Cut leftover cabbage heart in two and place on top (it acts as a weight). Cover and simmer gently for 40 minutes.
- 6 Meanwhile, make the Béchamel sauce. Melt the butter in a saucepan over a gentle heat, add flour and salt and mix well with a whisk. Gradually add cold milk, stirring and heating after each addition. Cook sauce till thick, then keep warm, to prevent skin forming.
- 7 Lift stuffed cabbage leaves from casserole with a draining spoon and place on serving dish. Keep warm. Pour cooking liquor into a measuring jug and make up to 8fl oz (220ml) with water if necessary. Taste and season.
- 8 To make avgolemono sauce, heat butter in small saucepan, then stir in flour and cooking liquor, whisking constantly. Cook gently for 10 minutes.
- 9 In a bowl, beat egg and egg yolks with the lemon juice till foamy. Add to pan off the heat. Return to a gentle heat and stir with a wooden spoon. Don't allow the sauce to boil. Blend avgolemono sauce into Béchamel and reheat for a few minutes till smooth. Remove from heat and stir. Serve each roll with sauce spooned over.



Extra large leaves can be cut in half, then tougher ribs cut away



The stuffing is placed inside leaves. Roll to form tight little parcels. Use cabbage heart as weight when cooking