

PREPARING AND COOKING FRESH OCTOPUS, THE GREEK WAY.

By



Chef Chris



PREPARATION TIME



COOKING TIME



SERVES



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INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole octopus – approx. 2kg
- 4 dried bay leaves
- 250ml of red grape vinegar
- Parsley for decoration
- Olive oil for decoration



A staple dish on most Greek menus, nothing beats fresh octopus when prepared and cooked beautifully.



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Method

Preparing the octopus:

1. Take your whole octopus and rinse it thoroughly in fresh water.
2. On a clean cutting board, lay your octopus lengthways – left to right – across the board, making sure the tentacles are straight.
There are three parts to an octopus:
 - the head – big bulb at the top
 - the middle - where the eyes are
 - the tentacles – its legs
3. Using a sharp knife, make a cut just below the eyes, separating the head from the legs. Put the head aside.
4. Take the tentacles (legs) and feel for the beak – this is the mouth of the octopus – where all the legs join together. Give a gentle squeeze until the beak pops out and discard. Keep the tentacle section whole.
5. To prepare the head, make a cut just above the eyes. Discard the eye section, leaving just the head, which now looks a bit like a balloon.
6. Turn the head inside out and remove the nerves and ink sac. Rinse again under fresh water to remove the ink.



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7. Turn the head outside in, and using your hands or a knife, remove the skin.

Cooking the octopus:

1. Fill a deep pot with fresh water, adding the bay leaves and red grape vinegar.
2. Place your octopus tentacles and head into the water.
3. Setting the temperature to a medium heat, cover the pot and leave the octopus to gently simmer for a minimum of 45 minutes.
4. Take a fork and pierce the thickest tentacle. If it feels soft, the octopus is cooked.
Note: cooking time will vary depending on the size of the octopus.

To serve:

The octopus tentacles and head can be barbequed on a grill, served with a fresh Greek salad and eaten straight away. Similarly, the head and tentacles can be cut into pieces and preserved in jars of sunflower oil and vinegar, and kept in the fridge to enjoy as needed.

Bon appétit!



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