

NOUGAT

500 g (1 lb 2 oz/2 cups) sugar
250 ml (9 fl oz/1 cup) liquid
glucose

175 g (6 oz/1/2 cup) honey
(preferably blossom honey)

2 egg whites

1 teaspoon natural vanilla
extract

125 g (4 1/2 oz) unsalted butter,
softened

50 g (1 3/4 oz/1/3 cup) pistachio nuts

100 g (3 1/2 oz/1/2 cup) glacé
cherries (not imitation)

MAKES 1 KG (2 LB 4 OZ)

Lightly grease a 28 x 18 cm (11 x 7 in) baking dish and line with baking paper. Place the sugar, glucose, honey, 60 ml (2 fl oz/1/4 cup) water and 1/4 teaspoon salt in a heavy-based saucepan and stir over low heat until dissolved. Boil for 8 minutes, or until the mixture reaches hard ball stage or 121°C (250°F) on the sugar thermometer.

Beat the egg whites in a bowl with electric beaters until firm peaks form. Slowly pour a quarter of the syrup onto the egg whites in a thin stream and beat for up to 5 minutes, or until the mixture holds its shape. Place the remaining syrup over the heat and cook for 2 minutes, or until it reaches hard crack stage, or 143°C (290°F) on the thermometer. Pour slowly onto the meringue mixture with the beaters running and beat until very thick.

Add the vanilla and butter and beat for 5 minutes. Stir in the pistachio nuts and cherries using a metal spoon. Turn the mixture into the tin and smooth the top with a palette knife. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or until firm. Cut into pieces with a sharp knife. Wrap each piece in cellophane and store in the refrigerator.

PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINUTES +
COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES