

Revani Verrias

For the syrup:

- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 tablespoon Cognac

For the cake:

- 1 cup butter, plus more, at room temperature
- 2 cups coarse semolina (see note)

1 tablespoon baking powder

- 1½ cups sugar
- 6 eggs, at room temperature, separated
- 1 tablespoon Cognac
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- ½ cup finely ground blanched almonds

1. Prepare the syrup: in a medium saucepan, bring 3 cups of water and the sugar to a boil, stirring to dissolve. Add the cinnamon stick and Cognac and simmer over medium heat until reduced by half, about 15 minutes. Let cool. Discard the cinnamon.
2. Make the cake: preheat the oven to 350 degrees and butter a 10-inch springform pan. In a bowl, sift together the semolina and baking powder. Using an electric mixer, beat the butter until creamy. Gradually add the sugar, then add the egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the Cognac and orange juice. With the mixer on, sprinkle in the semolina mixture and then the almonds, mixing well. Transfer to a large bowl.
3. Whisk the egg whites to soft peaks, then fold into the semolina batter until combined. Pour into the prepared pan. Bake until golden and a thin, spongy layer has formed on top, about 45 minutes. Cool on a rack.
4. Gently score the cake: draw a sharp knife vertically down the length of the pan and then diagonally to form diamonds. Pour the syrup over the cake. Serve warm or at room temperature. *Serves 8 to 12. Adapted from "The Food and Wine of Greece," by Diane Kochilas.*

NOTE: Coarse semolina is available at www.kalustyans.com.