

# BOUGATSA TIS TEBELAS

## (LAZY WOMAN'S CUSTARD PASTRY)

"Bougatsa is a custard-filled pastry popular throughout Greece. It is a semolina-based custard layered in-between sheets of flaky, buttery filo. This version is the 'lazy woman's' (homecooking in Greece is nearly always cooked by mom) because it cuts out the need to make a custard. Instead, a sweet milk/egg mixture is poured over baked filo sheets and baked further until the milk soaks the bottom layer of filo pastry, turning it dough-like and achieving a kind of 'custard'. The whole is served sprinkled with icing sugar and dusted liberally with cinnamon.

### INGREDIENTS (16 servings)

	2/3 (10-12)	1/2 (8)
450g phyllo pastry, thawed	300g	225g
285g butter (you can get away with 226g if you absolutely have to)	190g*	145g
1 (400g) can condensed milk - also works well with coconut condensed milk	266g	200g
hot water (enough to measure out 2 1/2 times the volume of the can of condensed milk)	1 1/4 tins	1 1/4 tins
230ml milk	150mls	115ml
15ml (1 tablespoon) vanilla extract	10ml (1tsp)	7ml
1 lemon, zest of	“	“
3 extra-large eggs (4 regular)	2 eggs	3 bantam eggs

### GARNISH

icing sugar  
cinnamon

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a small saucepan, melt the butter over medium-low heat. Once melted, continue to heat it another few minutes (anywhere from 4-5) until it turns a dark amber colour and becomes very fragrant (this is called *beurre noisette*). Immediately remove from heat.
2. Preheat oven to 375F (190C).
3. With your browned butter, generously butter first sheet of filo pastry, then, scrunch up the pastry as if you were making a paper fan (beauty is unimportant, but that is the overall shape you want to achieve - you should be able to do this quickly, no more than 30 seconds per sheet of filo). Lay buttered filo fan down lengthwise in an 18 X 10 inch baking pan. Continue the same way with the remaining sheets of filo, until you have completely filled your pan. If there are any gaps, fill these with your last sheets of buttered filo, torn to accommodate gaps. Pour any browned butter that may be left, over the pastry.
4. Bake pastry in preheated oven until a golden-brown colour, about 20-25 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, empty condensed milk and 2 1/2 times its container of hot water. Add milk, vanilla and lemon zest. Whisk to blend and add the eggs, whisking to blend. (It is important to add the eggs AFTER the addition of cold milk as the milk will cool of the hot water somewhat, so the eggs don't curdle).
6. Pour the milk mixture over the filo pastry and continue to bake for another 45 minutes.
7. The pastry is done when it appears quite 'set' when pressed upon gently -ie. no liquidy custard appears.
8. Cut into 4 strips lengthwise and 4 strips crosswise, producing 16 pieces.
9. Liberally sift icing sugar over pan and be generous with the cinnamon!
10. You can serve this hot, warm or at room temperature.

\* you can cut this to 150g