

# CULINARY DISCOVERY PAVILION

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## DOLMADES (STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES)

Julie Heathcote, Sunflower Chef Catering, Lebanon

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 jar grape leaves
- 1 ½ pounds ground beef (90% lean recommended)
- 1 cup uncooked jasmine rice
- 1 small white onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 tablespoons cracked black pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 lemons, sliced
- Juice of 2 lemons, divided
- ¾ cup chopped fresh herbs (mix of mint, dill, Italian parsley and oregano)
- 2 cups chicken broth
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- Additional lemon juice and tzatziki sauce (optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS

Remove grape leaves from the jar, place in a colander and rinse thoroughly under cold water. Place leaves in a bowl of water and let soak for 30 minutes.

In a large bowl, combine the ground beef, uncooked rice, diced onion, salt, pepper, cinnamon, water, juice of 1 lemon and chopped herbs. Mix thoroughly.

Line the bottom of a large saucepan with lemon slices.

Place a grape leaf on a flat surface, vein-side up. Trim the stem. Spoon about 1 tablespoon of filling near the base of the leaf. Roll it up tightly by folding the sides over the filling, then roll upward into a firm log. Place seam-side down in the saucepan. Repeat with the remaining filling and grape leaves, layering more lemon slices between rows if needed.

Pour chicken broth, the juice of the second lemon and melted butter over the rolled grape leaves. Cover with a lid and simmer over low heat for about 45 minutes.

Optional: If you have leftover filling, roll it into small meatballs and cook them alongside the dolmades.

The dish is ready when the beef is fully cooked and the rice is tender. Serve warm or chilled, garnished with additional lemon juice or a side of tzatziki sauce.

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