

Taste the Hills



Recipes and Tips

Modern Roman Libum Recipe *(serves 4)*

- 1 cup plain flour
- 8 ounces ricotta cheese
- 1 egg, beaten
- bay leaves
- 1/2 cup clear honey

Sift the flour into a bowl.

Beat the cheese until it's soft and stir it into the flour along with the egg.

Form a soft dough and divide into 4.

Mold each one into a bun and place them on a greased baking tray with a fresh bay leaf underneath.

Heat the oven to 425° F.

Cover the cakes with your metal bowl and bake for 35-40 minutes until golden-brown.

Warm the honey and place the warm cakes in it so that they absorb it.

Allow to stand 30 minutes before serving.

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LIBUM (SWEET CHEESECAKE)

Libum was a sacrificial cake sometimes offered to household spirits during Rome's early history. The recipe below comes from the Roman consul Cato's agricultural writings, which included simple recipes for farmers. Libum, sometimes served hot, is a cheesecake he included.

Ancient Roman Libum Recipe

Libum to be made as follows: 2 pounds cheese well crushed in a mortar; when it is well crushed, add in 1 pound bread-wheat flour or, if you want it to be lighter, just 1/2 a pound, to be mixed with the cheese. Add one egg and mix all together well. Make a loaf of this, with the leaves under it, and cook slowly in a hot fire under a brick.

The Romans often covered their food while it was cooking with a domed earthenware cover called a *testo*. You can use an overturned, shallow clay pot, a metal bowl, or casserole dish as a brick.

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