

# Orange Blossom Water

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## Makdous Al-Bathenjan

From: Family Recipe / Servings:

5 kg Baby eggplants, approximately 1 1/2 - 2 inches long (3.8 - 5.1 cm)	These are baby eggplants, and this is the type of eggplants used for making makdous (try to find the same kind in the picture), approximately 1 1/2 - 2 inches long (3.8 - 5.1 cm).
Water, to boil and cover eggplants	
Coarse sea salt	Remove the hat of the eggplants.
500 g coarsely chopped walnuts	Cut off the stem of the eggplants as you see in the picture.
250 g coarsely ground red pepper, should be not hot (read my notes in the directions)	Arrange the eggplants in a deep pot, the same way in the picture.
Table salt	Cover with water.
100 ml olive oil, for the filling	This is the flat lid.
Olive oil, to cover the stuffed eggplants	Put the flat lid over the eggplants.
Crushed garlic - optional	Put a heavy thing over the flat lid, this is a piece of marble.
	Water is above the top level of the eggplants.
	Turn on heat, once water starts to boil vigorously, lower heat, and gentle boil on low heat. The total time of the whole process is about 60 minutes.
	This is after boiling.
	Drain the eggplants.
	Cover with water.

Keep in this water for 10 minutes.

Drain the eggplants, then place them on a strainer to drain.

Bring another strainer.

Line the stainer with a muslin, and set aside.

This is coarse sea salt.

Create a small vertical opening in the middle of the eggplant.

You can see the opening.

Stuff eggplants with about 1/2 tsp of coarse salt in each eggplant.

Close the opening.

Arrange the stuffed eggplants on the cloth, if you have a big quantity of eggplants, so arrange the first layer of eggplants on the cloth, then put another cloth then put another layer of eggplants, but the maximum number of layers is 3 .

Cover the eggplants with the cloth.

The layers from bottom to top: A large bowl (the blue), the strainer with cloth and the stuffed eggplants, a tray, then a weight on top which is 5 gallon water bottle . You need to put the weight and this is the secret for perfect makdous, the eggplants will need to drain out their water, because if the eggplants still have water, makdous will be not tasty.

Keep for 2 days in a cool place, and make sure that the eggplants drained out all of their water.

To prepare the filling, coarsely chop walnuts.

Add to the walnuts coarse ground red pepper which is not hot , (this red pepper powder is prepared at home in summer by removing the seeds then drying

the peppers and making them as a powder), you can use any type of ground red pepper but should be coarse powder and not hot.

Add table salt.

Add olive oil.

Mix all the ingredients, some people add crushed garlic to the filling.

Bring the eggplants.

This is the same opening you made in the steps 30, 31.

Stuff the eggplants with the walnut mixture.

Close the opening.

Arrange in the jar.

This close picture to show you how you should arrange makdous in jar, should be in the same way in the picture.

This is how they are arranged.

Cover with olive oil, and you can add crushed garlic to the oil in the jar.

Close the jar, and keep makdous at room temperature for 1 week, during the week you have to check daily if makdous needs olive oil or not, so add olive oil to keep the eggplants covered.

After one week you can serve makdous and eat it, and you have to store it in refrigerator, and check the first two days if makdous needs olive oil, so add olive oil to keep the eggplants covered, then check every once in a while to see if it needs olive oil or not, because if makdous is not covered with olive oil, mold will grow.

The olive oil may solidify in the refrigerator so allow to return to room temperature before serving.

### **Notes and Tips**

The quantity of the filling may differ, it depends on how much you are going to stuff in each eggplant, so you may need less amount of the filling or more, or you my measurements will be enough for you.