

Amelia Saltsman's Sweet and Savory Pancakes with Honey, Olio Nuovo, and Pistachios



Makes 15 to 18 3-inch pancakes. Recipe may be doubled.

Plan-ahead note. If using ricotta or cottage cheese: At least one hour before making batter, place cheese in sieve set over a bowl to drain liquid. If you prefer, you can place in refrigerator to drain overnight.

For pancakes:

1 cup farmer cheese, whole milk ricotta cheese, or whole milk cottage cheese (6 to 8 ounces)

2 ounces ricotta salata, kashkaval (AKA caciocavallo), or other salty semihard cheese

2 eggs

1/3 cup all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons good quality olive oil, plus more for frying

1 tablespoon honey

Toppings:

Honey (orange blossom honey would be very nice)

Olio Nuovo, or other delicious olive oil*

Roasted salted pistachio kernels, coarsely chopped (For nut-free version, substitute finishing salt, such as Maldon, for pistachios)

Make pancakes: Drain cottage or ricotta cheese as directed above. Using large-hole side of box grater, grate enough cheese to yield lightly packed ½ cup.

In mixing bowl large enough to contain all pancake ingredients, whisk eggs until well-blended. Stir in farmer cheese and grated salty cheese, 2 tablespoons olive oil, and 1 tablespoon honey. Mix thoroughly. Stir in flour until just blended.

Have the batter, a soup spoon, a paper towel-lined plate or sheet pan, and a pancake turner near stove. Pour 2 tablespoons olive oil into 12-inch skillet set over medium heat. When oil liquifies and shimmers, add a teeny bit of batter. If you immediately hear a good sizzle and the oil bubbles at batter's edge, you're ready to cook.

Using soup spoon, add generous spoonful of batter to skillet and gently flatten into 3-inch pancake. Repeat, leaving enough room between pancakes so you will be able to turn them easily. I usually can manage 5 pancakes to a 12-inch pan.

Cook pancakes until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Oil should continue bubbling nicely at edges of pancakes, but lower heat as necessary to prevent burning. Flip pancakes and cook second side, about 2 minutes longer. Remove pancakes to towel-lined plate to drain briefly. Repeat with remaining batter, adding 1 tablespoon oil to the pan between batches.

To serve: Warm honey briefly in microwave or in pan of hot water. Arrange pancakes on a pretty platter or divide among 6 individual plates. Drizzle pancakes liberally with honey and olive oil, and scatter chopped nuts or healthy pinch of finishing salt over pancakes.

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*If you would like to enhance this dish with the season's first oil, also known as olio nuovo, here are a few online resources:

- Monsieur Marcel Gourmet Market & Restaurant
<https://monsieur-marcel-gourmet-market.myshopify.com/>
- Market Hall Foods
<https://www.markethallfoods.com/collections/freshly-pressed-extra-virgin-olive-oil>
- FarmShop <https://farmshopca.com/>