



ONION BLOSSOMS

*5 medium onions
4 cups flour
5 tsp baking powder
2 Tbsp paprika
1 tsp garlic powder
2 tsp Greek seasoning
1 tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper
3 eggs
1 1/2 cup milk
Oil for deep frying*

Cut off and discard the top half inch of the onions. Peel them but do not cut off the root end. Place each onion, root end up, on a cutting board. With a sharp, pointed knife, make vertical cuts all around the onion about a quarter inch apart. Start the cut a 1/4" from the root for small onions or a 1/2" from the root for very large ones. Make sure the knife goes into the center of the onion. Place all the onions in a large bowl of cold water, add ice cubes, cover and refrigerate several hours or overnight. The onions will open up like mums. Drain upside-down when ready to proceed. In a large bowl, mix together thoroughly the flour, baking powder and spices. In another bowl, beat together the eggs and milk. Dip the onions one by one into the egg mixture, opening the petals with your fingers; let the excess drip off, and place in flour. Work the flour mixture into the center gently with fingertips. Shake off excess flour and repeat egg dip and flouring, shaking off the excess thoroughly.

Half fill a deep fryer or large, deep, heavy pot with oil. Heat the oil to 360° or until a small piece of dry bread turns deep gold in 15 seconds. Fry the onions without crowding them (one at a time for large ones) keeping them submerged with a spatula or by placing the frying basket on top of them. Plunge them in root end up and turn them over once.

To serve at once, fry large onions for about six or seven minutes, small ones for five minutes, or until deep gold. Drain upside down on paper towels; then invert on a serving plate. Keep warm in a low oven while frying the others. Remove the centers of large onions with a very sharp knife. Small onions may be left whole or the center can be scooped out with a melon-ball cutter. If serving the next day, fry the onions until pale gold; do not fry completely. Let cool. When ready to serve, reheat the oil to 380° and fry the onions just long enough to heat and brown, about 15 seconds. Drain and serve. To get the same taste without making mums, simply cut onions vertically to make "petals" or crosswise and separate into rings. This can be done ahead and the petals or rings kept in ice water. Egg, flour and fry as above.