

INGREDIENTS, for the pistachio paste

1½ cups [375 ml] shelled unsalted pistachio nuts
2/3 cup [160 ml] granulated sugar
½ cup [125 ml] whole milk

Optional

1 tsp [5 ml] pistachio or almond extract

METHOD

Bring a small pot of water to a boil. Add the shelled pistachio nuts and simmer for two minutes. This is gonna blanch the nuts and make them easier to peel and grind later on.

After two minutes, drain and rinse the nuts under cold water to cool them completely.

Dry the nuts with paper towels. If the nuts still have their skin on, you need to peel them because using the nuts with the skin on will change both the color and texture of the gelato. To peel a pistachio, simply pinch it between your fingers: the skin should come right off.

To make the paste, put the blanched and peeled nuts in the bowl of a food processor, then add the sugar. Pulse until the nuts are finely ground, stopping from time to time to scrape down the bowl.

Add the whole milk and process until the mixture is as smooth and creamy as the food processor will make it (some tiny pistachio bits will remain but that's ok). If you want an even smoother texture, transfer the pistachio paste to a mixing bowl and puree it further using a stick blender.

To make pistachio gelato, whisk the pistachio base into a batch of Sicilian-Style or Classic gelato base. If desired, whisk a teaspoon [5 ml] of pistachio or almond extract. Pour into the bowl of an ice cream maker. Freeze according to the manufacturer's instructions. Stop the machine when the gelato is icy but still soft.

Transfer the gelato to an airtight container and freeze until firm, about two hours. The gelato will keep, frozen, for up to two weeks. Always take the gelato out to room temperature 10 to 15 minutes before serving to soften it and make it easier to scoop.

