



GASTRONOMY
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Gastronomy

greek taste

You are in the country that gave birth to symposiums... The true experience of Greek gastronomy satisfies the most demanding tastes with the originality of its ingredients and the countless tasty combinations - sometimes salty like Aegean sea, others sweet like the sunset on Santorini, warm like the morning Cycladic sun or cold like the frozen rivers of Epirus, "soft" like the clouds of the morning Attica sky or wild like the gorges in Macedonia, cool like the autumn rain of Heptanisa or "refreshing" like the spring breeze of Crete. Imposing and vociferous like the Samothrace wave, full of changes and pleasant surprises, Greek gastronomy commemorates its "ripe" history winning a place in the pedestal of contemporary world gastronomies. It could not be any different in a country such as Greece, which "comes from far away", masterly combines tradition with modern concepts, is multi - faced and takes pride in the sun, the sea, the warm smile of its people and its hospitality.

The traveller arriving in Greece immediately feels its uniqueness, the serenity it emits, the magic and complexity of Greek nature - elements experienced by millions of tourists coming to Greece from everywhere around the world in order to witness the unique moment of the revival of the Olympic Games in the country that gave birth to them.

Anyone travelling around the country and plunging into its gastronomic temptations "tastes" this uniqueness - in the virgin olive oil and the fruits of the olive groves that comprise the Greek landscape, in the unique cheeses of the Greek countryside: feta, kaseri, graviera (gruyere), manouri, anthotyro, myzithra, metso-vone, in the wonderful meats, poultry and fish and in the purest vegetables of the earth, in a filling bite of rose spoon sweet or thyme honey. They smell it in the unique aroma of tsipouro, ouzo and mastik. They enjoy it in a bite of fish roe, in a farmhouse loaf of bread, in a dakos and in some stamens from the unique saffron from Kozani. Drinking the wine, white, rose, or red, distilled with the respect of a sacred ritual.

Greece of taste can offer some rare experience, with distinct recipes, unique products and original preparation techniques. It challenges you to discover it.



cheese - pies



Famous all over the world, feta was certified as an exclusively Greek product after a hard fight in the European Union.

Soft or hard, salty or piquant, feta managed to win a distinct place not only on the Greek table but also in the menus of the biggest gourmet restaurants of the world.

Cheese - making, though, does not end in feta. The person that has not tasted fresh anthotyro, a plate of galotyri, a slice of piquant Cretan, Tinos or Naxos gruyere, a piece of kasseri from Lesbos or Xanthi, a "kalathaki" from Limnos, some katiki from Domokos on a rusk, a slice of kefalotyri or kefalograviera, the famous Kopanisti of Cyclades, Manouri and Metsovone or the ancient myzithra cannot claim that knows anything about Greek cheeses. From one end to the other, Greek stock farmers and cheese makers collect ewe's and goat's milk and convert it into excellent cheese applying their own traditional techniques. Greek cheese, unique in its kind, can be autonomously present in a meal or provide a tasty touch in a delicious dish.

Many people support that cheese must be eaten raw. Others adore it when fried or roasted, melt or "mastichoto" (fairly melt). You can choose it anyway you like and you will love it!

Pies comprise a distinct part in Greek gastronomy and tradition. In the past the housewives resorted to pies in their effort to make their tables richer with a tasty and nutritious dish during the difficult years of war. The technique of rolling out the pastry using two basic ingredients, flour and water, has been developed into a real art overtime!

Nowadays, one can find pies with thin or thick pastry, kourou or puff pastry, pastry made of corn meal or whole - meal flour, stuffed with anything you can imagine. From simple spinach to goat's cheese with truffle oil or aubergine, vegetable marrow, chicken, rice, meat and others.



A large, mature olive tree stands in a field of vibrant yellow flowers. The tree's dark, gnarled trunk and branches are silhouetted against the bright sky. The field is filled with small, bright yellow flowers, creating a lush, natural setting. The overall scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting a late afternoon or early morning setting.

oliveoil - pulse



The olive tree, the most recognizable symbol of peace worldwide, the wreath of victory, conciliation, noble competition, fair play and reward has its roots in Greece.

The first tree, as the myth goes, was planted by Goddess Athena on a rock, in the middle of Acropolis, in a contest with Poseidon. With the passage of time, the olive tree and its products were identified with the Greek tradition and have become a basic component of the Greek diet as well as a "weapon" in the people's hands in order to maintain their good health.

Furthermore, the therapeutic properties of the olive oil, the leaves and fruits of the olive tree, have been praised by many with the famous doctor of the antiquity, Hippocrates, being the first. The "oath of Hippocrates" describes more than 60 therapeutic uses of the products of the "sacred tree" (olive tree), while hundreds of recipes also exist in popular medicine, mainly in the olive - producing regions of the country.

The tourists travelling around Crete, the Peloponnese, the Ionian Islands, Lesbos, Thassos, Chalkidiki as well as Sterea Ellada (Continental Greece) have been impressed by the age - long olive trees, the new cultivations and the rich variety of the olive oil qualities and the fruits of the olive tree. From Amfissa, Messinia, Styfida, Volos, olives sweet or bitter, black, green or brown, large or small, are ones widely consumed. Greek black olives are some of the tastier in the world.

Greek pulse (beans, lentils, broad beans, chick - peas) are a basic part of the Mediterranean Diet for the promotion of health and occupy a separate place on the table because, first of all, they are delicious, with fine husk and easily boiled.

Most of the pulse cultivations in Greece are family businesses and their secrets pass from generation to generation. The producers are very careful in avoiding the use of chemical substances.

Modern Greek gastronomy is more than the traditional bean soup and exploits pulse in various tasty combinations, on their own, or as salads, with meat, fish or vegetables.



fishroe - ouzo



It is like a "gold brick", well protected within a wax cover. It has a strong taste, characteristic smell and small golden - yellow specks that numb the tongue. Greek fish roe is one of the most valuable gastronomic treasures of the country.

It is produced in Messolonghi from the eggs of the striped grey mullet and reaches our table after a complex process. The best combination in order to enjoy it, would be with a bit of tsipouro or grated over spaghetti.

It is said that ouzo was produced during antiquity, that it was famous and very appreciated in the Byzantine times and that after the liberation of Greece it was almost exclusively produced on Lesbos. It is certainly the national drink of Greece and can be drunk either with or without anise flavour and definitely on the rocks!

And if ouzo is our national drink, tsipouro is the original Greek one since it is not produced in any other part of the world.

It is really a distillation of experience and knowledge and is mainly produced by the remains of must after the grapes are pressed as well as by other fruits, such as berries.

The best tsipouro is produced in Thessaly, Epirus and Macedonia while the Cretan version is tsikoudia - a much stronger drink!





wine



Wine, the sacred liquid of the God Dionysus, has its own place on the Greek table supplementing and promoting the richness of the Greek cuisine since antiquity.

In recent years, Greek wine has won deservedly the role of the "ambassador" of our country. Learning from the passage of time and progressing at fast paces, Greek wines are considered nowadays among the best in the world, both for their unique taste as well as their huge variety.

Loyal to the vinic heritage of our country, Greek producers tenderly embrace the indigenous varieties and do not hesitate to "marry" them with the international ones, achieving a tasty and extremely qualitative result.

Greek wine, metallic, fresh and acid, has a strong personality that does not go unnoticed. Greek retsina, the white wine drunk "fresh" without being subjected to the ageing process, characterised by its aroma and taste, pleasantly accompanies all kinds of tasty delights. Food is equally accompanied by all the varieties cultivated in Continental Greece and the islands, irrespective of whether they are white ones, such as Assyrtiko, Moschoflero, Athiri, Zitsa of Epirus, Roditis, White Moschato, Robola, Savatiano, or red, such as Agiorgitiko, Xinomavro of Thessaly and Macedonia, or sweet ones, such as Mavrodafne from the Peloponnese and Kefalonia.





meat · fish

Extremely fresh and with a unique taste, Greek fish and sea - food constitute a basic part of the Greek diet. And it could not be any different in a country surrounded by sea and including plenty islands. It is not a coincidence that the famous fish - soup "kakavia" is made in thirty different ways at least, since the inhabitants of every region have their own recipe to propose.

Raw, grilled, fried or cooked, Greek fish as well as sea - food (oysters, mussels, urchins, octopuses, squids, shrimps, crayfish and others) are wonderful. And Greek chefs duly honour them in their creations combining them with white wine, lemon, garlic and parsley, crocus, cooked with ouzo or tsipouro or "built" in the salt.

The capstone of Greek cuisine, souviaki, has conquered everyone that has tasted it. With Gyros or small pieces of meat, with or without tzatziki, in pita or placed on a skewer, it holds the first place in the list of Greek fast food.

Greek kokoretsi, "forbidden" but unique, is made of lamb offal and many hours on the spit until it is ready for consumption. "Kontosouvii" as well as "exohiko" also have to be roasted for many hours, but it is worth waiting. The same goes for a succulent kid in the pot (gastro), a suckling pig on the spit, a veal steak or rabbit in red sauce. Whatever one chooses, Greek meats are "well - bred" of exceptional quality and offer refined and healthy tastes.

mastic - crocus



A small piece is enough to change your taste, to take you on a journey and change your mood. Small, tough but also unique, it is a valuable treasure discovered only on the beautiful island of the Aegean: Chios.

Chios mastic, which recently started the foreign markets, has been successfully used since antiquity for pharmaceutical purposes for its therapeutic properties, for the preparation of cosmetics and perfumes as well as in cooking and confectionary.

It is a natural resin coming from the trunk of the mastic tree and owes its production to the volcanoes in the sea of the area; thus, its "explosive" aroma.

Truly unique like the Macedonian sun that "nourishes" it! So unique that it deservedly holds the first position in the saffron spice world list. The dried stigmas of the flower constitute the valuable crocus or saffron and some filaments of this unique ingredient exclusively cultivated in the prefecture of Kozani are enough to transform simple rice into a tasty feast or a chicken into poultry from Paradise. It has wonderful taste, amazing aroma and offers a unique colour -the colour of the Greek sunset- to anything it is mixed with.

Crocus is antithrombotic, invigorating, anti - oxidant, improves cerebral function and, especially, memory, while in the past it was given to combat pain, fever and insomnia. Before using it, put it into a bowl with some water and leave it for up to two hours so that it can let its colour out. You can use the crocus even when you serve, especially when the dish is soup. If you are going to use it in dough, you have to soak it first.





honey - sweets




Most of the regions in Greece argue about who came first with the magical idea for spoon sweets.

Shaddock and rose - sugar in Peloponnese, pistachio in Aegina, citrus - fruits and bitter orange in Epirus, quince in Macedonia, cherry and morello in Thessaly, small walnut and codling in Pilion, small tomato and small aubergine on the islands compete in taste and aroma. Made only of fruit, sugar and some drops of vanilla, spoon sweets are clearly sweets with few calories but rich taste.

It is not a coincidence that honey was one of the basic foods of the Olympian Gods or that the myth wants Zeus to be fed by the nymph Melissa. Whichever region it is collected from, it reminds you of Greece. Thyme honey brings to mind the highest mountain peaks of the countryside and the islands; flower honey - the smells of the spring in the central and western part of the country; orange honey - the endless orange groves of Peloponnese; pine honey - the full - of - forests slopes of Arcadia.

Especially nourishing, invigorating, antiseptic and necessary for good health, honey really does miracles. It is said that it heals those suffering from anemia, helps the good function of the heart, while it is also a valuable ally in the fight for the maintenance of youth. It contains more than 180 different substances and Greek tradition says that it sweetens people's lives, brings good luck to the newly - weds and transforms a biscuit into a delicious small honey cake (melomakaron) and a crunchy dipla (fold) into a unique traditional Christmas delicacy. In many parts of Greece it is the basic ingredient for the preparation of marzipans, such as Rozedes in Kythera, while one can taste it in recent years in many Greek recipes that have meat or sea - food as their basis.

If honey is "crystallized", it does not mean that it is not of good quality or that it is adulterated. It may be due to the type of honey. It is better to avoid buying honey from producers that have their apiaries near motorways, industrial zones or big cities because bees carry the nectar from the trees burdened with heavy metals or hazardous substances.





Dakos (Cretan appetizer)

Ingredients

- 1 large barley or whole - meal rusk
 - 2 tablespoons virgin olive oil
 - 1 large tomato or two small ones cut into dices
 - 1 tablespoon feta cheese
 - 1 teaspoon oregano or thyme
 - Green or black olives in thin slices or caper (optional)
- Water the rusk on both sides.
Put a tablespoon of oil on the rusk.

Add the tomato and the second tablespoon of olive oil, the grated cheese, the flavourings and season with salt and pepper.

The ideal "marriage"- A bottle of olive oil of top quality, a strand of rosemary or thyme or oregano, 2 cloves of garlic, slightly beaten, Grains of red and green pepper, a small red hot pepper (optional)

Instructions

Put the olive oil and all the ingredients, which should not have lost their aroma, in a glass bottle. It will be ready to transform a simple meal into a tasty delight in one week.

Tips: Keep the top quality virgin olive oil for salads, boiled vegetables or in order to sprinkle it over meats and grilled fish. You can use olive oil for frying without any fear. It can endure higher temperatures than seed oil. Be careful, though, to strain it so that the next time you use it, there will not be any food remains. Moreover, olive oil must be heated gradually and not suddenly. If you want to add extra olive oil, wait until the first round of fried food is ready. For sweets, better use olive oil without a strong aroma.



Lahanosalata (Cabbagesalad)

Ingredients

- 3 cups cabbage, finely chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped green (bell) pepper
- ½ cup finely chopped sweet red pepper (Florina pepper)
- ½ cup finely chopped celery
- 1 cup grated carrot
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tbs vinegar
- salt
- a pinch of sugar

Instructions

Mix the first 5 ingredients together. Beat the olive oil with the vinegar, sugar and salt, and pour over the salad.

This is a salad made mostly in the region of Thrace.

The above above dosages will serve 4 persons.

Eggs with crocus

Ingredients

- 2 eggs
- 10 filaments of crocus
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 small finely - cut onion
- 5 mint leaves
- 3 tablespoons of oil
- 100 gr. anothyro
- Salt, pepper

Instructions

Break the eggs and poach them in a pan with plenty of water.

Take them out with a skimmer, empty the pan and put oil.

Brown the onion and then add the vinegar, the mint and the crocus.

Stir well until the mixture becomes a sauce.

Finally, add the cheese. Salt and pepper the eggs and pour the sauce over them.



Cuttlefish in wine

Ingredients

- 1½ kg cuttlefish, without backbone
- 2 cups green onions, finely chopped
- 1 cup tomato juice (or 2 beetroots, grated)
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 cup dry white wine
- ½ cup finely chopped dillweed
- 2 small hot peppers, chopped
- salt and pepper

Instructions

Rub skin off the cuttlefish, rinse, and cut into small pieces.

Sauté the onions and peppers in olive oil. Douse with the wine.

Stir in the tomato juice (or beetroots), salt and pepper.

Simmer until the cuttlefish are tender and the sauce

has cooked down nearly to the oil (about 1 hour or more).

Taste and correct seasonings. Stir in the chopped dill and serve at once.

Dosage for 6 persons.





Saganaki (Friedcheese)

Ingredients

200 gr. gruyere or kefalograviera or kefalotyri cheese,
in slices of 1cm thickness
10 tablespoons flour
Oil, 1 lemon

Instructions

Heat the oil in the pan well. Pour cold water over the cheese slices
and then flower them. Fry them for a few minutes on each side.
Pour some lemon over them while still warm.

Domatokeftedes (Tomatofritters)

Ingredients

500g small firm ripe tomatoes
2 medium onions, finely chopped
salt and pepper
6 tbsp finely chopped, fresh basil
2 tbsp finely chopped, parsley
2 tbsp oil
150g flour
olive oil for frying

Instructions

Wash the tomatoes and grate on an onion - grater. Combine them with
the parsley, basil, olive oil, and flour. Add salt and pepper. The mixture
should be thick. If necessary, add more flour. Fry spoonfuls of the
mixture in hot olive oil. Most known in Cyclades. Dosage for 4 persons.



Fishwithleekandfennel

Ingredients

600g grouper or sea bass fillet
400g leeks, cut into thin rounds
400g fennel bulb, finely chopped
1 cup olive oil
1 cup finely sliced tomato
1 medium onions, finely sliced
salt pepper

Instructions

Sauté the onions in olive oil. Add the leeks and fennel and sauté them
without letting them brown. Once wilted, add the tomato and season
with salt and pepper. When all the fluids are absorbed, put all ingredients
in a baking pan and arrange fish fillets on top of them.
Bake in the oven 180°C for 20 minutes.

Lambwithapricotsandhoney

Ingredients

2.5kg lamb (leg or shoulder), cut in serving portions
olive oil or butter
150g dried apricots (16 pieces)
juice of 2 oranges
1 tbsp mustard seeds
1 tbsp honey
salt
pepper

Instructions

Soak the apricots in the orange juice for two hours to soften.
Season the lamb with generous quantities of salt and pepper and sauté
in olive oil or butter. Add the mustard seeds, honey and 5 - 6 pureed apricots,
and simmer with the meat. Add the remaining apricots towards the end,
so they are not overcooked.
Typical recipe of the region of Pontus (Black Sea). Dosage for 6 persons.





Anthotyro with honey and pepper

Ingredients

"Anthotyro" (Fresh farmer's cheese or fresh goat cheese)
coarsely ground pepper - (red, white, black)
honey

Instructions

Cut the anthotyro (fresh farmer's cheese or fresh goat cheese) in thin slices, sprinkle with coarsely ground pepper (red, white, black), then pour on some honey.



Halvas

Ingredients

½ kilo almond halvas
½ cup of roasted sesame
2 tablespoons of tahini
1 kilo ice cream (optional)

Instructions

Cut the halvas into small dices, add the sesame and tahini and put it in the fridge. It can be also served with ice - cream.



