



# Gastronomy

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GREECE





# Mouthwatering Greek taste



Stuffed eggplants  
PHOTO. © Symposio 2012 / Fotis Serfas

GREECE IS THE COUNTRY THAT  
GAVE BIRTH TO SYMPOSIA.  
THE TRUE EXPERIENCE OF GREEK  
GASTRONOMY SATISFIES THE MOST  
DEMANDING PALATES.

Original ingredients and countless luscious combinations make Greek cuisine unique the world over with dishes that echo the beauty of the country itself. Salty like the Aegean Sea or mellow like the Santorini sunset, warm like the morning Cycladic sun or cold like the frosty rivers of Epirus, velvety like the clouds of the morning Attica sky or intense like the gorges in Macedonia, crisp like the autumn rain on the Ionian Islands or invigorating like the spring breeze of Crete, imposing and vociferous like the Samothrace waves. Full of changes and pleasant surprises Greek gastronomy wins a place at the top of contemporary world gastronomies. Greek diet is famous worldwide; it is not only ambrosial but also very healthy, recommended by most expert top dietitians. As it has been closely linked with the long history of the country, Greek cuisine has gone through a lengthy and perfecting process of trial and error. Today it masterly combines tradition with modern concepts.

The traveller to Greece immediately feels the uniqueness, serenity, magic and complexity of the place, always evolving, always reflecting the newest culinary trends. Millions of tourists come every year eager to taste good food prepared only with the best-quality virgin olive oil or try the delicious olives, so commonly found in the Greek landscape. They savour the particular cheeses of the Greek countryside: feta, kasseri, graviera (gruyere), manouri, anthotyro, myzithra, metsovone. They relish wholesome meats and poultry and enjoy the freshest fish and sea food. Fruits and vegetables are a chapter on their own. They come in a great variety of fresh full flavoured and aromatic produce that make up a significant part of the Greek diet. Visitors will also indulge in a filling bite of rose spoon sweet or thyme honey. They smell the unique aroma of tsipouro, ouzo and mastic. They delight in a bite of fish roe, a farmhouse loaf of bread, a "dakos" salad and in the particular taste of the saffron crocus threads from Kozani. They taste the famous Greek white, rosé, or red wine, produced according to revered old recipes. Tasting Greece offers a rare experience with distinguishing recipes, emblematic products and original preparation techniques. The challenge before anyone is to discover its appetizing and unforgettable tastes.



Fasolada (bean soup)



Mousaka (vegetables with minced meat)



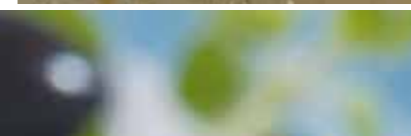
# Heavenly cheese



Feta cheese



Graviera cheese with honey



Tyropita (cheese pie)

FAMOUS ALL OVER THE WORLD, FETA CHEESE IS CERTIFIED AS AN EXCLUSIVELY GREEK PRODUCT WORLDWIDE AND IT IS THE MAIN INGREDIENT OF MOST GREEK PIES.

Soft or hard, salty or piquant, feta has a distinct place not only on the everyday Greek table but also in the menus of the best gourmet restaurants in the world. Cheesemaking, though, does not end with feta production. Other tantalizing varieties are the fresh anthotyro, galotyri, piquant Cretan, Tinos or Naxos gruyere, kasseri from Lesvos or Xanthi, "kalathaki" from Limnos, katiki from Domokos, kefalotyri or kefalograviera, the famous kopanisti of Cyclades, manouri, and metsovone and ancient myzithra. Greek stock farmers and cheese makers collect ewe's, goat's and cow's milk and convert it into excellent cheese applying their own traditional techniques. Greek cheese, unique in its kind, can be a course on its own, be a key ingredient or provide a tasty touch in a delicious dish.

Raw, fried, roasted, melted or "mastichoto" (fairly melted) Greek cheese is a succulent authentic experience. Pies are as old as Greece itself and are a distinct part of Greek gastronomy and tradition. In the past, the housewives resorted to pies in their effort to make family tables richer adding 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, is a genuine art in which expert cooks and chefs take great pride! Nowadays, one can find pies almost everywhere in a broad assortment. The pastry can be thin or thick, "kourou" or puff pastry, made of cornmeal or wholemeal flour. Pies are stuffed with anything you can imagine, from spinach to goat cheese, highly valued truffle oil, zestful aubergines, divine vegetables, perfect chicken, sweet rice pudding, spicy mincemeat, earthy greens, sugary creamy fillings, pungent mushrooms and so many more. Imagination is the only limit.



Skaltsouni (pie with herbs and cheese)





# Healthy olive oil & 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.

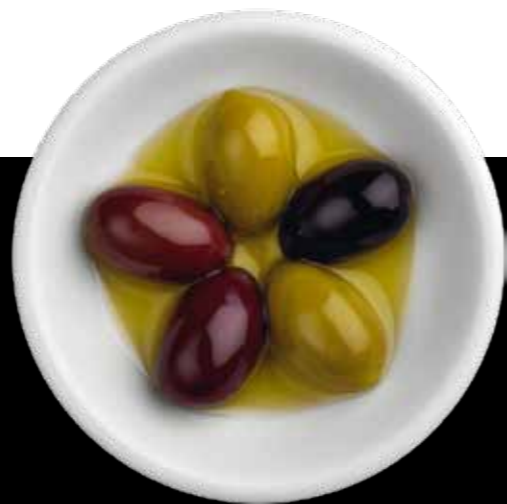


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Lentils



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 Greek tradition and have become a basic component of the Greek diet. The international scientific community considers it a basic health factor.

The therapeutic properties of olive oil, but also of the leaves and fruits of the olive tree, have been praised by many and Hippocrates, the famous doctor of the antiquity and "father" of modern medicine, was the first among them. The books of Hippocrates describe more than 60 therapeutic uses of the products of the "sacred tree" (olive tree), while hundreds of recipes exist in popular medicine, mainly in the olive-oil producing regions of the country. Tourists travelling around Crete, the Peloponnese, the Ionian Islands, Lesvos, Thassos, Chalkidiki as well as Sterea Ellada (Continental Greece) were impressed by age-long olive trees. New and innovative cultivations produce rich varieties of quality olive oil and delicious olives. Everywhere in Greece from Amfissa to Messinia, Styliada and Volos, olives sweet or bitter, black, green or brown, large or small, in vinegar, salt water or olive oil, are widely consumed and are some of the tastier of the world.

Greek pulses (beans, lentils, broad beans, chickpeas) are a basic part of the celebrated Mediterranean Diet. They promote health, occupy a highly regarded place on the table and they are simply delicious.

Most of pulse cultivations in Greece are family business and their secrets pass from generation to generation. The producers take extra care to avoid the use of chemical substances. Many of the old varieties that disappeared for decades are being re-introduced to enrich gastronomy.

Modern Greek culinary art uses pulse to create ingenious trendsetting dishes that surprise and amaze even the most sophisticated taste buds.





Fish roe



Ouzo



# Authentic fish roe & OUZO

Messolonghi



Like a "gold brick" protected in wax, the Greek fish roe, has a strong taste, characteristic aroma and small golden-yellow specks that numb the tongue. It is considered one of the most valuable gastronomic treasures of the country and the world.

It is produced in Messolonghi from the eggs of the striped grey mullet via refined processes, some traditional, others more visionary and pioneering. One of the best ways to enjoy it, is with a drink of tsipouro or grated over spaghetti.

It is said that ouzo was first produced in antiquity and was famous and much appreciated in the Byzantine times. After the liberation of Greece in early 19th century it was almost exclusively produced in Lesvos. It is certainly the national drink of Greece and can be drunk either with or without anise flavour and definitely on the rocks!

Tsipouro is the original Greek drink not produced in any other part of the world. It is really a distillation of experience and knowledge mainly produced by the remains of must, after the grapes (or other fruits such as berries) are pressed.

The best tsipouro is produced in Thessaly, Epirus and Macedonia while the Cretan version tsikoudia is a much stronger drink that should definitely be tried at least once!





WINE, THE NECTAR OF THE ANCIENT GODS HAS A PROMINENT PLACE ON THE GREEK TABLE SUPPLEMENTING AND PROMOTING THE RICHNESS OF THE GREEK CUISINE SINCE ANTIQUITY.

Having evolved and adopted new and better vinification techniques, Greek wines are deservedly considered nowadays among the best in the world, both for their unsurpassed taste and wide selection.

Loyal to the vinic heritage of the country, Greek producers tenderly embrace the indigenous varieties and do not hesitate to fuse them with international ones, creating a whole new and exhilarating experience.

Greek wine, metallic, fresh or acidic has a strong personality that does not go unnoticed. Greek retsina, the fresh white wine not subjected to the ageing process, is characterized by its unique aroma and taste. Famous varieties include white ones such as Assyrtiko, Moschofilero, Athiri, Zitsa of Epirus, Roditis, White Moschato, Robola, Savatiano, or red such as Agiorgitiko, Xinomavro of Thessaly and Macedonia. Acclaimed sweet wines such as Mavrodaphne from the Peloponnese and Kefalonia or from Samos complement the end of any meal with style.



# Cardinal wine





# Fresh fish & meat

JUST-OFF-THE-SEA AND THE TASTE OF SALTY AEGEAN STILL LINGERING, GREEK FISH AND SEAFOOD CONSTITUTE A BASIC PART OF THE GREEK DIET.



Shrimps with beet sauce



Sea bream



Octopus

And it could not be any different in a country surrounded by sea and islands. The famous fish soup "kakavia" is made in thirty different ways since every region makes its own original recipe.

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

The capstone of Greek cuisine, souvlaki, has won over every-

one 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 on the Greek menu.

"Kokoretsi" "forbidden" yet unique, is made of lamb offal and it is cooked for many hours on the spit until it is ready for consumption. "Kontosouvli" as well as "exochiko" also have to be roasted for many hours, but it is worth the wait. The same goes for a succulent kid in the pot (gastro), a suckling pig on the spit, a veal steak or rabbit stew in red sauce. Greek meats are "well-bred" of exceptional quality and offer refined and healthy choices.



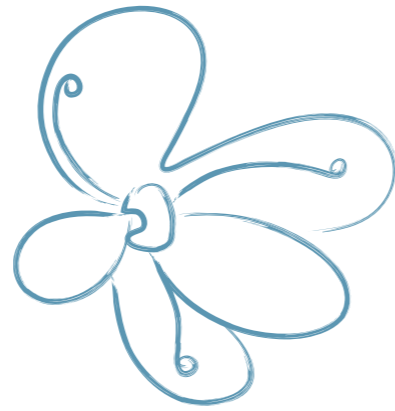
Meat balls



Souvlaki (meat on chopstick)



# Original mastic & crocus



A SMALL TASTE IS ENOUGH TO HEIGHTEN YOUR SENSES AND TAKE YOU ON A CULINARY JOURNEY. MASTIC IS TOUGH BUT ALSO UNIQUE AND A VALUABLE TREASURE FOUND ONLY ON THE BEAUTIFUL ISLAND OF THE AEGEAN: CHIOS.



Crocus

Chios mastic, which recently made an impression on the foreign markets, has been successfully used since antiquity for pharmaceutical purposes for its healing 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 nearby sea area; hence, it's "explosive" aroma.

Crocus is truly one-of-a-kind 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 solely cultivated in Kozani are enough to transform simple rice into a tasty feast or chicken into a heavenly dish. Its authentic taste, amazing aroma and incomparable colour – so much like the colour of the Greek sunset – makes any dish an exotic adventure.

Crocus is known to fight blood-clotting, it is invigorating and antioxidant. It also improves cerebral function and, especially, memory, while in the past it was used 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 as you serve, especially with soup. If you are going to use it in dough, you should soak it first.



Masticha Vanilla



# Pure honey & sweets



MOST REGIONS IN GREECE ARGUE ABOUT WHO CAME UP 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 all compete in taste and aroma. Made only with fruit, sugar and some drops of vanilla, spoon sweets are mouthwatering traditions.

Honey was supposedly one of the basic foods of the Olympian gods and according to the myth Zeus was honey-fed by the nymph Melissa. (or Honey Bee). Whichever region it is collected from, it reminds you of Greece. Thyme honey brings to mind the highest mountain peaks of the countryside; flower honey the smells of the spring in central and western Greece; orange honey the endless orange groves of Peloponnese; pine honey the forested slopes of Arcadia.

Especially nourishing, invigorating, antiseptic and necessary for good health, honey really does wonders. It is said that it helps those suffering from anaemia, or from a heart condition and it is rejuvenating. It contains more than 180 different original elements and Greek tradition says that it sweetens people's lives and brings good luck to the newlyweds. It can transform a biscuit into a delicious small honey cake (melomakaron) and a crunchy dipla (fold) into an amazing traditional Christmas delicacy. In many parts of Greece, it is the basic ingredient for the preparation of marzipans, such as "Rozedes" in Kythera. In recent years it is used in many Greek recipes that contain meat or sea food creating new "exploding" tastes.



Yogurt with honey and nuts



Jam of bitter orange



## DAKOS

(CRETAN APPETIZER)

- 1 LARGE BARLEY OR WHOLE - MEAL RUSK (PAXIMADI)
- 2 TBSP VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- 1 LARGE TOMATO OR TWO SMALL ONES CUT INTO DICES
- 1 TBSP 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)

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. The olive oil for frying is recommended. It can endure higher temperatures than seed oil and it is healthier. 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.



## EGGS WITH CROCUS

- 2 EGGS
- 10 FILAMENTS OF CROCUS
- 2 TBSP VINEGAR
- 1 SMALL FINELY - CUT ONION
- 5 MINT LEAVES

- 3 TBSP OF OIL
- 100 GR. ANTHOTYRO
- SALT, PEPPER

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, mint and crocus. Stir well until the mixture becomes a sauce. Finally, add the cheese. Season the eggs and pour the sauce over them.



## LAHANOSALATA

(CABBAGE SALAD)

- 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 TBSP VINEGAR
- SALT
- A PINCH OF SUGAR

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. Serves 4.



## CUTTLEFISH IN WINE

- 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 DILL WEED
- 2 SMALL HOT PEPPERS, CHOPPED
- SALT AND PEPPER

Rub the 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 is tender and the sauce has cooked down (about 1 hour or more). Taste and correct seasonings. Stir in the chopped dill and serve at once. Serves 6.





## SAGANAKI

(FRIED CHEESE)

200 GR GRUYERE OR KEFALOGRAVIERA OR KEFALOTYRI CHEESE, IN SLICES 1 CM THICK.

10 TBSP FLOUR  
OIL, 1 LEMON

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

## DOMATOKEFTEDES

(TOMATO FRITTERS)

500 GR 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  
150 GR FLOUR  
OLIVE OIL FOR FRYING

Wash the tomatoes and grate them. 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. Mostly known in Cyclades. Serves 4.



## LAMB WITH APRICOTS AND HONEY

2,5 KG LAMB (LEG OR SHOULDER), CUT IN SERVING PORTIONS

OLIVE OIL OR BUTTER

150 GR DRIED APRICOTS (16 PIECES)

JUICE OF 2 ORANGES

1 TBSP MUSTARD SEEDS

1 TBSP HONEY

SALT

PEPPER



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) Serves 6.



## FISH WITH LEEK AND FENNEL

600 GR GROUPER OR SEA BASS FILLET

400 GR LEEKS CUT THIN

400 GR FENNEL BULB, FINELY CHOPPED

1 CUP OLIVE OIL

1 CUP FINELY SLICED TOMATO

1 MEDIUM ONION, FINELY SLICED

SALT PEPPER

Sauté the onions in olive oil. Add the leeks and fennel and sauté them without letting them turn 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.



# ANTHOTYRO WITH HONEY & PEPPER

"ANTHOTYRO" (FRESH FARMER'S CHEESE OR FRESH GOAT CHEESE)  
 COARSELY GROUND PEPPER (RED, WHITE, BLACK)  
 HONEY

Cut the anthotyro in thin slices, sprinkle with coarsely ground pepper and pour over some honey.



# HALVAS

½ KILO ALMOND HALVAS (GREEK SWEET DELICACY)  
 ½ CUP OF ROASTED SESAME

2 TABLESPOONS OF TAHINI (SESAME SEED PASTE)  
 1 KILO ICE CREAM (OPTIONAL)

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.



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