Sissy Nika

Central Greece
Let's Taste

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Central Greece. Let's Taste
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REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

In the next pages, you will get to know all the delicacies generously offered by the land of Central Greece.

Endowed by nature, but also by people with passion and a long history in production and processing of our unparalleled traditional products, Central Greece invites you to a wonderful journey to its unique gastronomic treasures.

And to make this journey even more enjoyable, we have gathered the best, most representative, and delicious traditional recipes of our land and proudly present them to you.

Seek out our products, cook our recipes, taste our delicacies.

And if you want to do it right, visit the land of Central Greece to discover our famous cuisine and taste our honey, olives, olive oil, fruits, vegetables, crops, dairy products, meat, and wine.

Follow this special culinary map leading to the very heart of Greece and authentic Greek cuisine.

Kostas Bakoyannis
Governor
Region of Central Greece

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Every trip needs a guide. And the tour of the gastronomic "paths" of Central Greece has now gotten its own guide!

With no doubt, the land of Central Greece produces some of the rarest agrifood treasures in the world. These treasures are a testament to the effort and dedication of Central Greek producers.

Such a tedious effort, though, has gained a powerful ally; the Region of Central Greece together with its Agrifood Partnership. The Agrifood Partnership of Central Greece is a non-profit organization founded by the Region of Central Greece, as a joint venture between the public and the private sector.
This non-profit organization aims to enhance the extroversion of local businesses, raise the awareness of the Central Greek gastronomic identity globally, and bridge the gap between producers and consumers.

Through the various initiatives of the Agrifood Partnership of Central Greece, as well as through both its official website - **www.agrifoodcentralgreece.gr** - and AGORA Central Greece -**www.agoracentralgreece.gr** - an electronic platform for the promotion of local products and their brands, the reader may discover the producers and their exceptional products that lay behind the gastronomy stories of this book.

Let's embark together on this beautiful journey full of flavors, aromas, and experiences from the unique places of Central Greece!

AGRIFOOD PARTNERSHIP OF CENTRAL GREECE

AGORA CENTRAL GREECE

In Lieu of Foreword

The pulse of authentic Greek gastronomy is beating loudly in the heart of Central Greece. The cuisine of the land, the mountains, and the sea is at its best, the produce is of star-quality and the people here look you straight in the eyes. They are proud of the place they live in, love their land, and are well acquainted with the art of hospitality.

Our goal is to invite you to embark on a journey of acquaintance, through these words, the 454 unique photos, and the 96 original recipes of the land and its monasteries. Our intention was for the journey to be realistic so we photographed the dishes in nature.

Our journey lasted a year, we travelled for 3,408 miles, took 10,652 photos and 150 recipes were prepared on the spot. We met 250 farmers and a great many people. The project was not an easy one, as it required perseverance and passion to complete.

The wager however is to make the gastronomical culture, cuisine, and produce of Central Greece known all around the globe. The words of Paulo Coelho are empowering, " when you want something, the entire universe conspires in helping you to achieve it "; and this is what we want.
You have yet to embark on this journey to the place of memorable experiences, of the four seasons, Central Greece.

Let your journey be fascinating…

Sissy Nika
Journalist
of Gastronomy and Tourism

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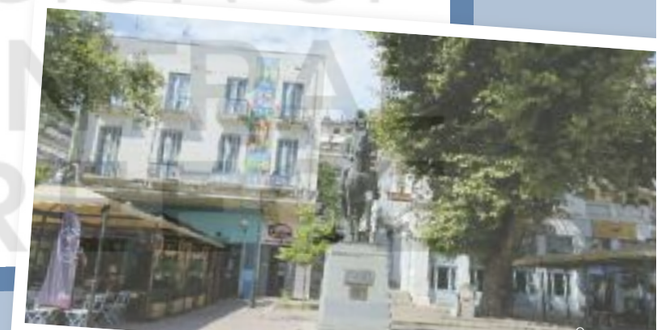
FTHIOTIDA

Dream like nature in hearty doses. A journey through history from antiquity to this day. Places of heroic deeds, places of bravery.
The **National Park of Oiti**, the mountain of myth, beauty, and the rare wild mountain goat, is of untouched beauty.
The plateau of Katavothra is a unique sight to behold. Wild horses, deer, and cows with their calves can be seen grazing alongside one another. Small lakes, streams, the impressive cave and ravine, as well as the ruins of the sanctuary of the Pyre of Hercules. Beehives of all colours laden with honey exude their sweet fragrance. Oiti harbours an invaluable wealth of herbs, meadows of mountain tea, oregano, lemon balm, and sage. Wild orchids and colourful flowers. Oiti seems to be born out of Van Gogh's brush, with all its shades of green, blue, yellow, brown, and red blending in fascinating harmony. Quaint **Pavliani** with its fir trees, with the springs of Asopos, and all the villages surrounding Oiti is a sight of beauty.
The **Monastery of Agathon**, perched on the mountain slope, overlooks the entire fertile plain. The **Spercheus Valley** is rich in renowned crops, shelled pistachios, olives, kiwi, stevia, pomegranates, and all God's goods in abundance.
At **Loutra Ypatis** we take in a breath of wellbeing in its healing thermal waters, while the walk in the park is relaxing. The capital of Roumeli is **Lamia**, on the slopes of Mount Othrys, with its Castle, museums, mills, and Plateia Laou, which is jokingly called cholesterol square... Spit-roasts and kokoretsi and every gourmet digression you can think of can be found here. We could not resist the sweet aftertaste of a crunchy sugared bun with almonds. The watermills of **Gorgopotamos,** with its bridge once blown up by the rebels, are straight out of a painting.
Alamana's Bridge features the monument of Athanasios Diakos, a heroic figure who fell here.
The climb up to **Domokos** offers a fascinating view of Central Greece and Thessaly. A walk up the hills up to the Castle and a taste of Katiki cheese are a must. Having been hit by the mountain gusts, the sea breeze is the way to go. The coastline of **Maliakos Bay** and **Evoikos Gulf** features quaint little towns with good food and fresh fish. Sea landscapes with fishing boats, seagulls, small wooden piers, strips of land extending into the sea, beaches shaped like an embrace. Taking a walk by the seaside is a breath of oxygen, while listening to the sound of the waves. Fthiotida also features a number of indulgent mineral springs.
According to mythology, the thermal springs were created by Hephaestus who struck the Earth with his hammer, granting the wish of goddess Athena, for the revival of Hercules after his labours. So, after Ypati, Platystomo and Thermopylae, the mineral waters are there to provide a boost of strength. Thermopylae is a place symbolic of the courage of heroic Leonidas. The verses of poet K. Kavafy "Honour to those who, in their life, have fixed and guard Thermopylae" always come to mind. In Kamena Vourla the baths and the seafood delicacies are truly sublime. Fthiotida has it all and you are bound to feel the vibe and energy of the place.



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

The cuisine

The flavors of Roumeli's cuisine are truly fascinating, as an entire philosophy of life lies hidden in the region's heart. Round a laid table feelings are shared, memories come to life.
The basis of this aromatic cuisine is olive oil, olives, bread, pasta, vegetables, wild greens, legumes, dairy products with Feta and Katiki cheese from Domokos playing the star roles. Goat and lamb are free range, bred in mountains with rich biodiversity but also in fertile plains. Fthiotida people know the secrets of roasting, the secrets of cooking over an open fire, the secrets of cooking herbs, and the terracotta casserole stew pot.
The ewe hods a special place on festive and non-festive spreads alike. Kokoretsi, gardoubakia are delectable dietary digressions. Pies constitute a quintessential flavour of the cuisine of Roumeli and have much to tell us about the days past as well as the present-day of our culinary heritage. Culinary connoiseurs can roll out handmade fyllo pastry out of fine flours in a snap, enveloping in it even the humblest of earth's produce, baking the pies in wood-burning ovens. The babanetsa, the greens and cheese pie, the wild green pies and cheese pies are all heavenly. Lentils and beans are even served as salads.

The visitors of Agathonos Monastery will have the blessing of trying their monastic cuisine, suitable for fasting, pinto beans in tomato sauce with olives, all picked from their vegetable gardens, green walnut preserve and coffee made in the monastery. Sea food holds its own distinct place... with glistening fresh fish and shellfish, since shell fishing in Stylida and the surrounding areas is still going strong...
We lost our mind over the meatballs made with squid, octopus and wild greens, as well as over the saganaki with seashells blending well with excellent tsipouro or wine and local beers. Its luscious honey holds a strong place in confectionery creations.
Exquisite shelled pistachios PDO, walnuts, and almonds give their distinct taste and nutritional value to each flavour. Holding the absolute lead in confections, and standing the test of time, is sugared bun, either in its round or other shapes... crunchy and containing whole or crushed almonds, with the aroma of butter overflowing. It does not have to be Christmas to enjoy this burst of flavour.
Visitors in Ypati may taste exquisite sugared buns paired with mountain tea, after a session of hydrotherapy in the location's famous thermal baths.
Moments of wellbeing...
Katiki cheese is ideal for preparing heavenly cheesecakes with kiwi fruit or by itself, drenched in fruit preserves or forest fruit jams.
The green walnut preserve is one of the best. Renowned pistachio nuts between airy sheets of fyllo pastry give a dreamy flavour to baklava desserts and dainty oriental pastries.
Fresh yogurt sprinkled with crushed walnuts and drenched in honey tastes angelic. The handmade ice cream produced from fresh milk on the mountain will make you lose your senses... It is worth trying the herbal tea from Oiti, with all of nature's revitalising scents and antioxidants in a cup. Fthiotida's cuisine is a cuisine of well being and well worth enjoying.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE
REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Cheese making

Fthiotida is a region of distinct biodiversity and geographical features. A large quantity of milk is derived from animals of indigenous breeds and low productivity, with unique quality characteristics and therefore its cheeses are of a rich yet fine taste. According to estimates, the total livestock population of Fthiotida comprises of 12.000 cattle and calves, 265.000 sheep and goats, 2.400 pigs, and 27.000 broilers and laying hens.
The gem of local cheeses is Katiki cheese, the scrumptious secret of Domokos. Fresh cheese that can make one lose one's senses from the first bite. A crisp white fresh cheese, light, creamy, with a velvety texture, pleasant aroma, and a cool tanginess. **Katiki Domokou PDO**, "is born" of rich goat and sheep's milk collected in springtime, coming from free-range animals grazing the local flora. Katiki cheese is prepared and matured exclusively in the region of Domokos and Xiniada, faithfully following an age-old recipe, with its traditional techniques and natural conditions, with no chemical additives in the process.
The traditional recipe spread from mouth to mouth and from generation to generation of tselinges (shepherds) has fortunately been preserved and is still enjoyed. It is an ideal cheese for a balanced diet since it has only 13% fat and a minimum amount of salt. Katiki cheese is the secret lending flavour not just to toasted bread, but also to imaginative culinary creations.

The Traditional Recipe

Following pasteurization, the sheep and goat milk is cooled to 27-28ºC. Coagulation follows with or without rennet and remains at temperatures of 20-22º C. The curd is shuffled and poured into special cheese cloths to drain. Cheese drying is complete when the moisture content of the cheese reaches 75-80% w/w. The drained curd is salted, blended to be homogenised and packed in containers or kept in freezer chambers at a temperature of less than 4º C. Bulk Katiki cheese keeps in the refrigerator for up to 10 days while packaged cheese keeps up to its expiration date.
Its chemical composition is: Maximum moisture 75%, fat content 40%, salt 2-3%. Average nutritional value per 100g: Energy 169 kcal, Protein 10 g, Carbohydrates 3 g, Fat 13 g
In Fthiotida throughout the cheese-making period, from October to July, fresh milk is collected by farmers every day, on the mountains and plains of Roumeli. The cheeses produced are fine and cover the entire palette of traditional cheeses. **Feta in brine PDO** is the leading cheese, having received numerous distinctions for its authentic, slightly piquant flavor, and excellent quality of 100% local sheep and goat milk. Feta is a rich source of protein.
Telemes, goat's cheese, anthotyro, myzithra, kefalotyri, gruyere, smoked cheese, saganotyri, galatotyri, and melityro all complement the palette of cheeses.
There is fine yoghurt while cultured buttermilk is sought after. **Telemes** is a light, white cheese in brine, traditionally produced from 100% local cow's milk and minimum maturation of 2 months.
Its taste is both spicy and cool. **Goat's cheese** retains all the beneficial properties and significant nutritional value of goat's milk, which is a rich source of protein, carbohydrates, fat, calcium, vitamins, minerals, and trace elements. Today, it is also produced in more sophisticated versions containing herbs, nuts, cranberries, or jam made with local fruit. **Kefalotyri** has a pleasant piquant flavor and is produced from 100% local sheep and goat milk with minimum maturation of 3 months.
Cow's milk **Gruyere** has a pleasant, subtle sweet taste with the rich aromas of local cow's milk and minimum maturation of 3 months. **Cultured buttermilk** is a healthy milk product with a special lactic acid culture.
It has a pleasant taste as a refreshment and is produced from 100% Greek fresh semi-skimmed cow's milk. Sheep's **Yoghurt** has a velvety texture, slightly tangy taste, and is made from sheep's yoghurt.
All the cheese products of Fthiotida meet European specifications.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Honey

The mountains of Fthiotida abound in beauty and myths featuring Hercules and also fairies. In a word, the mountains "are as sweet as honey"... Their biodiversity is unique and leaves nothing to be desired. Oiti is a national park with endemic plants, herbs, rare flowers, extensive fir tree forests, and bountiful waters.

The mountains and plains of Fthiotida are ideal for beekeeping. The bee colonies are estimated at 70,000 and professional beekeepers at 900. Honey even has its own mythological story to tell, since Ambrosia was a food of the Olympian Gods. Hippocrates, acknowledging its nutritional value, would administer it as a medicine. The palette of honey is rich, since there are so many different types produced in Greece. Beekeeping is an art form and keeping bees happy so that they may offer us their best requires love, care, and commitment. A beekeeper, tells us, "bees and their Queen is a super-organism which is in the position to offer its best, provided you take care of it and assist it in its work, offering rich bee gardens and making for a harmonious cooperation." Beekeepers live a nomadic life, as they move their hives by picking out bee gardens with a view to making their honey delectable.

The process from harvesting honey to packaging is handmade with minimal technology interventions. The quality of honey is ensured by frequent analyses.

The most important types of honey is **fir tree** honey, which is collected during the summer months from virgin fir forests and is of high nutritional value while never crystallizing. **Heather honey** and **wild oak tree honey** which is collected in the autumn is considered part of the pharmacy of nature. **Oak honey** comes from the dense oak forests of Western Fthiotida. Its main features are its dark color and robust flavour. It is a rare variety of very limited production.

Pine honey is collected in summer from wooded slopes and has a special aroma and colour. The Spercheus valley is a great bee garden and the honey we get from **wicker and wild flowers** is amazing. **Thyme honey** is exquisite and comes from secret thyme gardens.

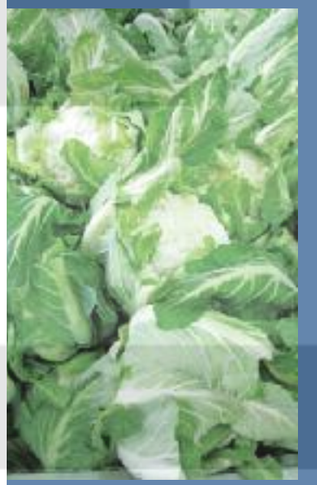
Polygonum honey is exciting as it is scarce and rich in enzymes.

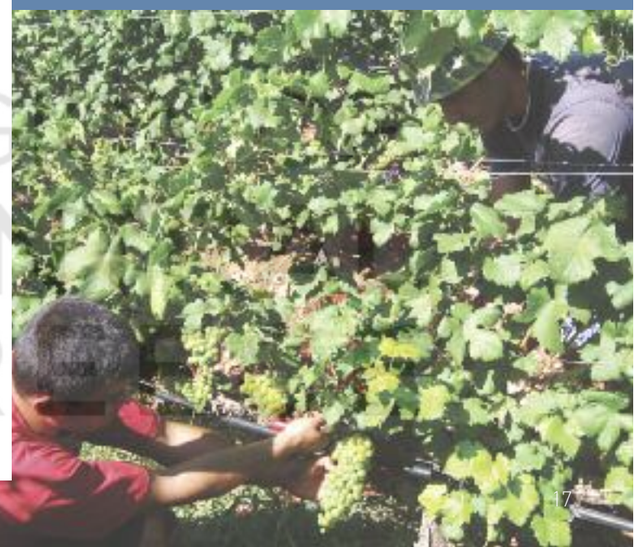
Oiti's beekeepers specialize in queen rearing. The droplets of gold that is **royal jelly** hide the secret of well-being and longevity. We would like to introduce you to one of the queens, she is a proud member of the Cecropia species, building wax in between honeycomb cells; the spawn begins early in spring and develops explosively large colonies; they are extremely thrifty and adapted to mountainous areas...

The crops

DESIGNED
CENTRAL
GREECE

The land of Fthiotida, a fertile place with valleys, plains, mountains, and a special microclimate, produces marvelous and distinguished crops. The produce of the land that are of **Protected Designation of Origin** are **table olives** from **Atalanti** and **Stylida,** the **kiwi fruit** from **Spercheus** and **shelled pistachios Fthiotida**. Of the new crops, the most significant are **stevia, aromatic herbs**, mainly lavender, oregano, mountain tea, and anise, as well as super-foods. **Legumes** and especially lentils, chickpeas, and beans are excellent, making a powerful "invasion" into our kitchens, nutritionally claiming their rightful place, as they are invaluable to our body. The mountainous regions are where **apples** of exceptional flavour and nutritional value are grown. **Grains** are both diverse and of high quality. **Viticulture** is significant and the wines delectable. Vegetable farming covers an expanse of 1050 hectares and fruit farming 526 hectares. Onion production is 4,356 tons. Olive growing is at its best. Olives produced for olive oil extraction are 48,829 tons, table olives are 64,746 tons, and mixed use olives are 73,938 tons. Konservolia Atalantis PDO and Konservolia Stylidas PDO stand out among the most select table olive varieties of the area. Cultivation is done with care and crops are of excellent quality. Olives are packaged and offered in a full range of black, natural, organic, whole green olives, destoned and stuffed with orange, almond, and garlic. Olive pastes are exceptional. The nutritional value of the olives is high with multiple benefits for our body. The **kiwi fruit** grown in the Spercheus valley is PDO, with particular quality characteristics in terms of flavour, while the colour of the flesh is luscious green. Its harvest begins on October 15th and ends by November 15th.**Almond** and **walnut tree** cultivation is significant, while their crops are delectable. A single handful of walnuts or almonds harbours a wealth of beneficial ingredients that protect and strengthen our immune system. A new promising, growing culture is that of **stevia.** This is a shrub, with leaves that contain natural sweeteners, 300 times as sweet as sugar, while having zero calories. Its final product is extracted by a process similar to that of brewing tea. Its cultivation is systematic and stretches over several hectares, producing the largest amounts of stevia leaves in all of Europe. The stevia market is divided by the type and application of its extract, in forms such as liquid, powder, and leaves. Stevia has various applications both in gastronomy and food supplements. It is a natural product, completely safe, and free of side effects. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), world consumption of stevia tends to replace 20% to 30% of all diet sweeteners.





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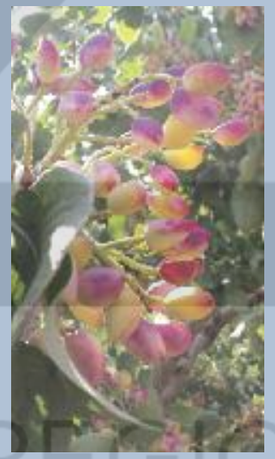


Shelled pistachios Fthiotidas PDO

In Fthiotida, pistachio trees are cultivated in the sunny and fertile valley of the Spercheus River. The ideal terroir, i.e., the microclimate, soil texture, and human capital, makes up the best conditions for the cultivation of the world-famous Greek pistachio trees. The European Union has recognized the distinctive characteristics of Shelled Pistachios from Fthiotida by granting them the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) certification. That said, from the area of Makri to that of Molos, Thermopylae, the cultivation of shelled pistachios is evident all around...

Its cultivation is demanding, care starts from the blossoming period of one year and ends at the blossoming period of the next...

Most growers belong to agricultural cooperatives and are constantly updating the methods of cultivation and processing of the product by developing know-how covering even the final pistachio aftertaste.Its nutritional value is high in proteins of plant origin, nutrients such as fiber, potassium, calcium, vitamin D.

An award-winning grower tells us that efforts are centered around a holistic approach from cultivation to processing, so that they may offer the consumer genuinely healthy nuts.

They use sustainable cultivation practices that neither burden the pistachio or the environment.

In addition, cultivation must be in full balance with the ecosystem, protecting biodiversity.

From the field to the shelf, thorough inspection of the product is carried out to avoid aflatoxin contamination of the production. During the drying process, the use of low temperatures up to 50°C helps shelled pistachios maintain their high nutritional value.

So shelled pistachios are not baked to their core and this is an innovation in nuts that are traditionally either baked or roasted. After marinating, a special drying technique is applied with temperatures not exceeding 50°C.

So shelled pistachios keep all their nutrients intact and become a truly healthy snack.

It is important to ensure maximum safety, hygiene, and quality of the shelled pistachios at all stages.

Production control is carried out at regular intervals despite the high cost of analyses.

Shelled Pistachios Fthiotidas PDO should be crunchy even when unsalted. Shelled pistachios should keep their freshness, as if just plucked from the tree.

The special mild drying process followed makes the pistachio naturally crunchy, with a intensely sweet taste. The ultimate healthy snack for your daily enjoyment.

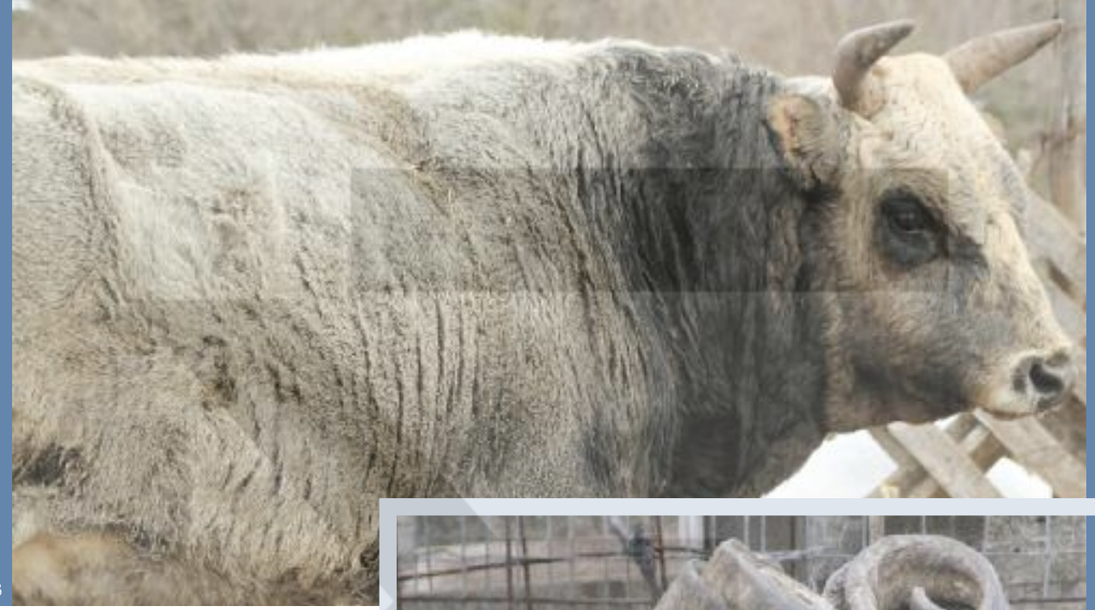
Needless to say the combination of shelled pistachios with lemon we tried was dreamy. International demand for pistachios is significant and Greece is in the ninth position of exporters worldwide. The region covers 52% of cultivated lands in our country, occupying the sixth place in world pistachio production.

5

Rare Indigenous breeds of farm animals

In the mountains of the Region of Central Greece, with its magnificent biodiversity and plains, livestock farming is developed. Our scientific interest was spurred by the presence of rare indigenous breeds of sheep, goats, cows, but also of poultry, horses, and livestock guardian dogs kept here. Professor of the Agricultural University of Athens, Mr. **Iosif Bizelis**, guides us through this wonderful world of animals, of rare indigenous breeds, in the hope they will not become extinct. Mr Bizelis is also vice-president of the **"Amalthia" Network**, with the object of maintaining these breeds. In the mountainous and semi-mountainous areas of Evrytania, Fokida, Viotia, and Fthiotida, indigenous goat herds are still being bred. In some herds of Viotia and Locrida a special type can be found, **Ulokeros** Goat (1) with its characteristically impressive spiral horns. It is a unique and extraordinary animal. It is characterized by pronounced sexual dimorphism and its characteristic horns are more pronounced in males.
It is an indigenous goat population of the area of Lokrida, first appearing in 1941, in an extensive study by Professor I. N. Dimitriadis. His study lists detailed information, in the then especially dense populations in some villages of the area. Ulokeros was fortunate to be the first type of domestic goat to be scientifically studied, but was since forgotten and has almost gone extinct.
On the initiative of the Amalthia Network in 2007 and with the cooperation of private breeders, a few small controlled nuclei of Ulokeros Goat were created, one of the few animals, about 200, surviving in the last herds. Ulokeros continues to be threatened with immediate extinction, due to the lack of incentives to goat keepers to maintain their breeding.
Two other indigenous goat populations in the region are **Orthokeratiki or Barbatsiki (2)** and **the Desfina Goat.** These two goat populations have not been officially recognized as breeds, but are quite specific and known over time to breeders. Barbatsiki or Orthokeratiki Goat is the most representative and in former times, perhaps the most widespread of Central Greece, yet currently in rapid decline. Also in Central Greece, the Greek indigenous short-horn cattle breed and the Greek black swine are still bred.
The **Greek Short Horn Cow and Bull (3)** are an officially recognized breed, therefore subsidized; the Agricultural University of Athens is systematically working on its study and genetic identification and it may be saved. In southern Evia, indigenous breeds of the **Karystos sheep** or **kokkiniko** and the Karystos goat, which are of particular interest, are bred to this day. The **Karystos goat** has impressive, characteristic upright horns, with black and brown colouration and is particularly hardy. The meat and milk of these breeds are highly sought after.

2



3

Quite characteristically, Karystos lamb has been highly appreciated and has been well known in the Athens market since the 1960s.
However, milk production of these indigenous breeds is unfortunately limited. Finally, on the island of Skyros there is still a pure-bred population of the small **sheep of Skyros (4)**. It is one of the smallest sheep of our country, particularly hardy and abstemious, adapted to the adverse conditions of the island, which is often plagued by long periods of drought and water scarcity. Its meat and cheeses are of high quality and much sought after.
Also on the island there are the famous small horses and the Kordonouri dog breed, their presence dating back to antiquity. Old populations of domestic poultry, turkeys, and guinea fowl surviving in mountainous isolated villages are recently being studied. They are relatively smaller than mass-produced breeds and have a different and extensive colour spectrum.
They also maintain greater flying capabilities than other larger and heavier breeds.

1

4

Browsing the microcosm of our rare wild mushrooms

The wild mushrooms which are rare and of great interest are the flavoursome gems of our mountains and valleys. With **Giorgos Konstantinidis**, Chairman of the Greek Mushroom Society and internationally known mycologist, who has studied the area, we went on a safari in their fairy-tale microcosm. Love of mushrooms by everyday tasters is booming, a number of festivals are organized and mushroom museums are founded... International demand for wild mushrooms and truffles is immense, so this may pose an opportunity of a good and lucrative occupation. Follow us on this safari of flavours in the gastronomic trails still unknown to the majority of people. Thousands of species of native mushrooms are produced in the forests, meadows, rivers and coastal ecosystems of the Region of Central Greece. Among them are the top edible species: Avgomilakia or Kaisarika / Amanita caesarea (1), Probatomanitara / Agaricus urinascens (2), Elatomanites / Pleurotus ostreatus (3), Kalogerakia / Boletus aereus (4), Vasilika / Boletus edulis (5), Morchelles or Koukounares or Arnakia / Morchella spp., Elatomanites / Pleurotus ostreatus, Zarkadisia or Adrachtites / Macrolepiota procera, Galaktites, Kanthariskoi, and black, summer truffles / Tuber aestivum. But beware because the gorgeous red dotted mushroom of fairy tales... is toxic so only see it as a photo opp from a distance... it is dubbed "crazy mushroom", Trelomanitaro / Amanita muscaria (6), as are the coral-like korallomorfaPerdikopodara or Chtenakia / Ramarialargentii.

The emergence of mushroom-loving interest in the region, in recent years, is evident by the organization of mushroom-harvest and mushroom-tasting seminars in Evia (Chalkida, Dirfy, Katheni), in Evrytania (Karpenissi, Krikelos, Voutyro), in Fthiotida (Ypati, Amfikleia, Pavliani) and in Phokis (Mavrolithari, Polydroso), as well as by the efforts to establish a small mushroom museum in Voutyro of Evrytania.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

OUR RECIPES

FTHIOTIDA

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Summer salad with lentils and feta cheese PDO

Suggested by Maria Ntzounou, Kompotades Lamia

Ingredients	Preparation
300 gr lentils, a rather soft variety	Boil the lentils in salted water
1 carrot	adding a carrot,
150 gr feta cheese PDO	until they get tender
1 fresh green pepper,	but not mashed.
the horn-formed variety, chopped	Take out the carrot,
10 cherry tomatoes, cut in 4 parts	in case you don`t include
½ tbsp fresh mint leaves	it in the salad.
1 tbsp fresh onions, chopped	Sift the lentils and rinse
100 ml virgin olive oil	with water.
Red wine vinegar	Drain the lentils thoroughly.
Salt	Use a big bowl to mix
Freshly ground pepper	lentils and all other
Oregano, optional	ingredients, except feta.
	Serve with some feta cubes on top.

Tip

We can even choose to add some Evrytanian prosciutto to our salad

Babanetza

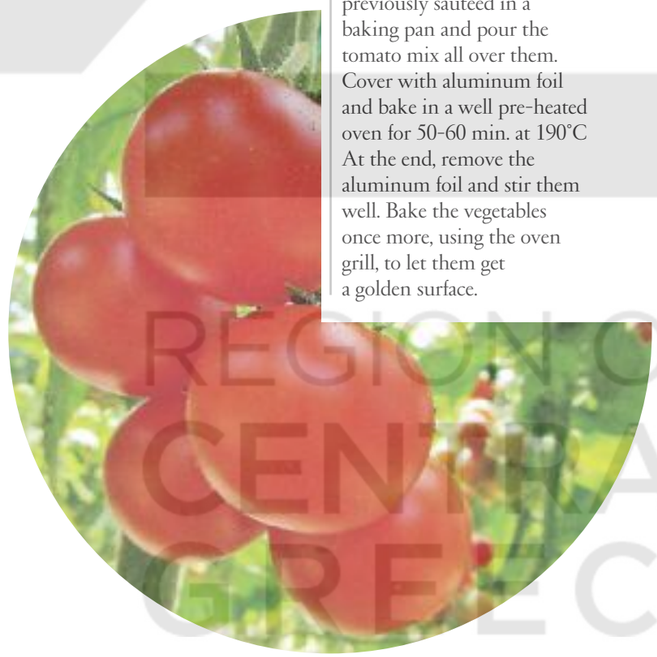
Suggested by Julia Alexakis, hotelier, Loutra Ypatis

Ingredients	Preparation
1300gr. variety of vegetable	To get the perfect babanetsa you need to have a variety of vegetables. Spinach and leek you can use more spinach than leek, two onions and a bit dill, parsley and mint.
500 gr. feta cheese PDO	
2 onions	
Dill	
Parsley	
Fresh mint	
2 ½ water glasses olive oil	Cut all the vegetables into small pieces and mix them. Make sure that there is no water after draining them.
3 ½ water glasses corn four	
Salt	
Pepper	Cut the feta into small pieces and blend it with the vegetables and the pepper.
	Cover the pan with oil, make a thick mush with 2 ½ of corn flour, 1 glass of olive oil, salt and pepper.
	Cover the pan with the mush and make sure that it is thick enough, so that no vegetables get in direct contact with the pan.
	Put the vegetables in the pan and wet them with oil.
	Then sieve some four on the vegetables so that they are covered.
	With the rest of the water and olive oil, sprinkle the flour so that it gets wet enough. Bake it in the oven for an hour at 200° C.
	Take it out of the oven and let it cool for about 20 min. before serving the pie into pieces.

Spring Briam

Suggested by Ioulia Alexakis, hotelier, Loutra Ypatis

Ingredients	Preparation
500 gr eggplants, sliced	Salt and sift the eggplants to get their bitterness out. Wash them and dry them thoroughly.
500 gr potatoes, peeled and sliced	Prepare a large non sticking frying pan to sauté the vegetables in some olive oil, starting with the potatoes and then, in turn, sauté the carrots, zucchini, onion, peppers and finally the eggplants.
500 gr zucchini, sliced	
200 gr carrots, sliced	
2 dry onions, sliced	
500 gr horn-formed peppers, cut into large pieces	
6 ripe tomatoes, grated	Take all vegetables out. Mix tomatoes and parsley, garlic, salt pepper, and sugar together with the remaining olive oil. Place all vegetables you have previously sautéed in a baking pan and pour the tomato mix all over them. Cover with aluminum foil and bake in a well pre-heated oven for 50-60 min. at 190°C At the end, remove the aluminum foil and stir them well. Bake the vegetables once more, using the oven grill, to let them get a golden surface.
2 tbsp parsley, finely chopped	
1 tbsp minced garlic	
1½ cup olive oil	
1 cup lukewarm water	
½ tsp sugar	
Sea salt	
Freshly ground pepper	



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Crushed olives with lemon juice

Suggested by Christina Orfanoudakis, Lamia

Ingredients

5 kg large green olives
1 glass water with a blend of sea salt and coarsely cut salt
1 glass lemon juice
1 glass orange juice
½ glass bitter lemon juice
Olive oil

Preparation

Wash all olives thoroughly using cold water. Crush every olive separately. Use any heavy instrument to do this, either a cobble or whatever else you want. Avoid crushing the olive core. Just limit your movements to the pulp only, to avoid getting a bitter taste in your olives.
Use a big plastic bowl to rinse the olives with plenty of water, in order to let them get rid of their bitter taste. Sift them. Heat some fresh water and just before its boiling point, pour it over the crushed olives in the basin. Let the crushed olives stay there for about 24 hours.
Afterwards, throw away this water and drain the olives thoroughly. Fill the basin with some fresh water and let them stay there for 8 more hours.
Repeat this process 3 more times or even longer, until you get out the bitterness from the olives.
The final step is wringing the olives and then adding all three fruit juices. Use your hands to stir the olives and then add both kinds of salt.
Stir the olives and let them stay in this marinade for 30 minutes. Fill some glass jars with your olives and add the oil. The olive jars can be kept out of the fridge, but they need refrigeration as soon as the jars are opened.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Seafood “saganaki”

Suggested by Christos Tsalikis executive chef, Lamia

Ingredients	Preparation
5 shrimps No 2 10 mussels, shells included 10 clams A pinch salt A pinch oregano 2 tabsp mustard paste A pinch garlic powder Juice from one lemon	Wash all seafood shells thoroughly and brush them well. Place them in a large saucepan together with all the other ingredients except lemon juice. Add one glass of water and bring to boil for about 10 minutes over moderate heat. Mind the fact that those shells that refuse to open, must be thrown away immediately. As soon as almost all the liquids evaporate, the dish is ready to be served immediately, sprinkled with a certain quantity of lemon juice.

Squid meatballs

Suggested by Christos Tsalikis executive chef, Lamia

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg squid 1 large dry onion Sea salt 1 pinch wild growing oregano 1 pinch dry mint leaves or 1 tbsp fresh ones, very finely chopped 1 tbsp mustard paste 150 gr grated dry bread 1 tbsp olive oil	Clean and wash the squids and mush their pulp with the help of a food processor. This paste is then added to the mix consisting of bread, onion, oil, mustard, mint leaves and salt. Use a tablespoon to stir all your squid meatball ingredients thoroughly, before forming some small balls by using spoonfuls of this paste for deep frying each one of them. Sprinkle the balls with some flour before frying them in olive oil, using either a moderate or a rather high temperature. Each side must be fried for about 5-6 minutes until the meatballs are getting a golden hue. Serve the squid meatballs with potato salad or some cabbage salad.

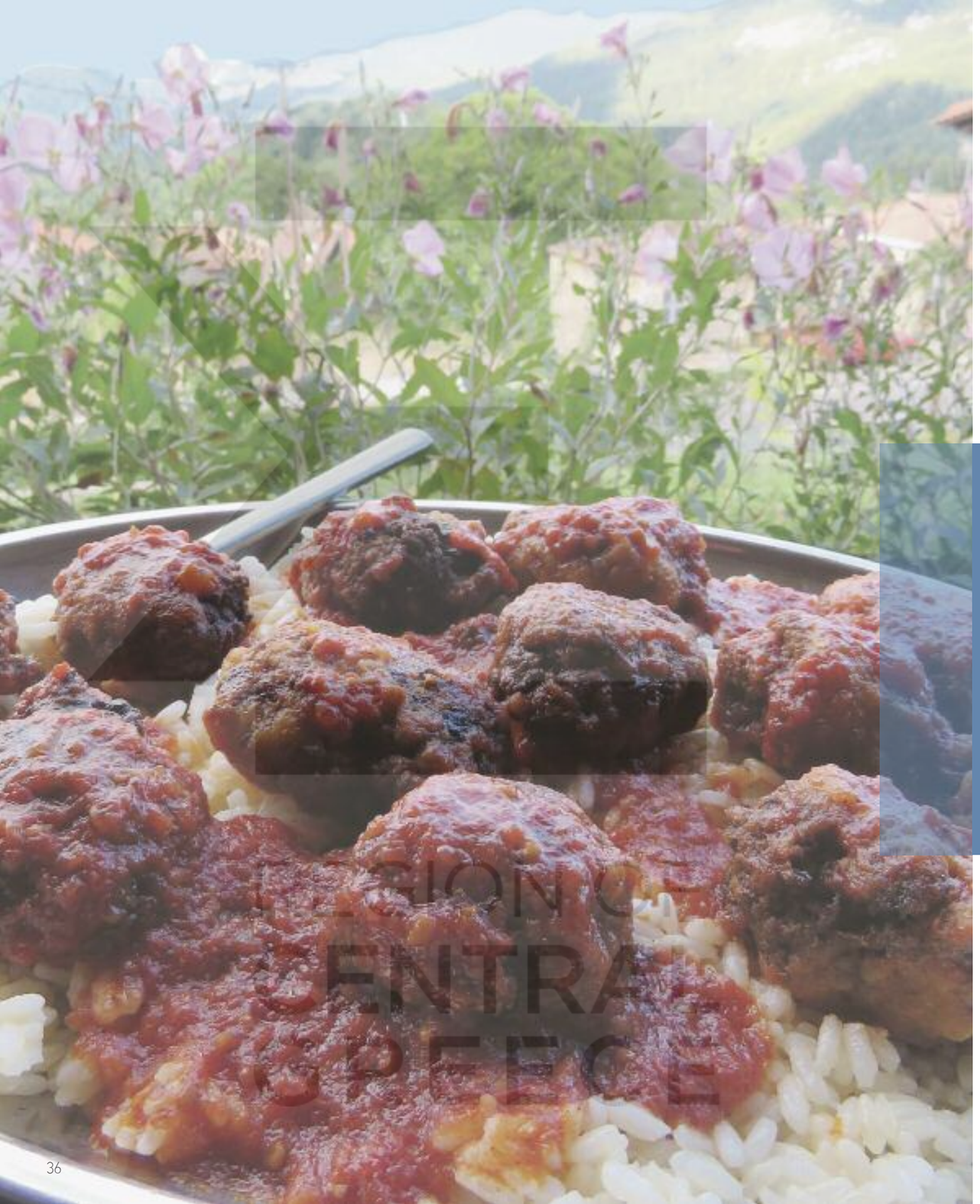
REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Shi drum with rice, lentils, pomegranate and truffle oil

Suggested by Aphroditi Marda, executive chef

Ingredients	Preparation
250 gr croaker or king fish fillet	Boil the lentils in water with a bay leaf in, for about 20 minutes.
1 pomegranate	Strain and keep them apart.
100 gr rice, bonnet	Boil the rice in some fish broth for about 15 min.
100 gr local lentils	Add pomegranate seeds, mango bits, salt, pepper, boiled lentils and truffle oil.
Bay leaf	Sauté the fish fillets in a large frying pan, for about 8 min. to get them golden, while using some very hot olive oil. A food tong will be necessary to turn them from all sides.
Salt	In a bowl, mix lentils, rice and the remaining ingredients to be served aside the fried fish fillets.
Freshly ground pepper	
100 gr mango, in cubes	
Truffle oil	
200 ml. fish broth	
Olive oil	

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Meatballs with rice and tomato sauce

Suggested by Popi Nikolaou, Pavliani

Ingredients

500 gr minced veal meat
2 slices dry leftover bread
1 fresh egg
1 dry onion, finely chopped
A pinch of parsley
A pinch of fresh mint leaves
1 shot- glass vinegar
Salt
Freshly ground peppers

For the sauce

3 ripe tomatoes, 1 small cup olive oil
1 tsp sugar, Salt
Freshly ground pepper

For the rice

3 ripe tomatoes, 1 small cup olive oil
1 tsp sugar , Salt
Freshly ground pepper
1 tbsp olive oil

Preparation

Let the bread slices stay in some water and absorb it, then drain them well.
Blend them with the minced meat.
Add egg, onion, parsley, mint, vinegar, salt and pepper and work the minced meat "paste" well.
Refrigerate your minced meat mix for about 4 hours while keeping it covered.
Use a saucepan to boil the tomatoes until all water is evaporated.
Add oil, sugar salt and pepper and simmer them shortly.

Use a separate saucepan to boil the rice in salted water.
Lower the heat to the minimum, until all water is absorbed and you notice some holes forming on the boiled rice.
Form the meatballs and deep fry them in olive oil.
Add the meatballs to the tomato sauce and simmer for another 3 min.
When they are ready serve the meatballs on top of the rice.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Young goat, wrapped in pouches of baking paper

Suggested by Nanà Gaboura, executive chef

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg meat from a young goat, cut in individual portions	Start with making a marinade consisting of oil, wine and aromatic herbs, to let the meat draw for about 30 minutes.
2 large dry onions	
4 large potatoes	
4 fresh peppers, green, red and yellow	Use a large and deep bowl for the young goat meat, adding all vegetables and potatoes cut into large pieces.
3 garlic cloves, mashed	
1 tbsp dried wild oregano	
200 gr kefalograviera cheese, the greek yellow cheese	Add yellow cheese cubes, garlic, mustard and sprinkle with oregano, salt, pepper and sage. Pour the marinade liquids over the meat.
1 pinch dry sage leaves	
1 pinch thyme	
2 tbsp mustard sauce	
½ cup olive oil	Mix well to get the maximum effect of the aromatic herbs and cover the bowl with some household film.
1 glass local white wine	
Sea salt	Put the baking pan in the refrigerator and let it stay there for 3 hours.
Parsley or mint, finely chopped	
Freshly ground peppers	
Oily baking paper	Prepare the oily baking paper by cutting it into 4 parts and fill each one with a portion of both meat and vegetables, using a large spoon.
	Before making a pouch, sprinkle each portion with either parsley or mint leaves.
	Wrap the pouches tightly, using some string and place them on a large baking pan, without any liquids added.
	Bake in a well pre-heated oven for 1 hour and 20 minutes at 180°C.
	Take the pouches out of the oven and let them cool for about 15 min. They will be steamy and very hot.
	Serve them open with the goat meat and all ingredients visible.
	Surround the pouches with your favorite aromatic herbs.

Thyme

Traditional Moussaka

Suggested by Sophie Orfanoudaki, Kamena Vourla

Ingredients

8 aubergines
5 potatoes, sliced

For the minced

700 gr. minced beef
1 large onion, grated
1 wine glass white wine
1 cup olive oil
1 tbsp tomato paste
1 bay leaf
1 pinch cinnamon
4 grains allspice
Salt
Pepper

For the sauce

3 tbsp fresh butter
4 tbsp flour
2 glasses milk
2 eggs
1 pinch nutmeg
1 cup tea cheese batter
Salt
Pepper

Preparation

Remove the stalks from the aubergines and cut into thick slices 1 cm thick. They salt and put them in a colander for about 30 min.
Rinse thoroughly and squeeze with your hand to leave the water. Then dry and fry in plenty of oil until golden brown. The rest onto absorbent paper to strained juices. Fry also the potatoes in plenty of oil until golden.
Prepare minced meat. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil and fry the grated onion until polish. Put the mince and cook stirring constantly to mix well with the onion. Add the wine. Allow to cook well the mixture until the wine evaporates well. Dissolve the tomato paste in a little water and pour into the mince. Put the bay leaf, cinnamon, allspice, salt and pepper. Stir and cook until the liquid has evaporated and dried minced. Leave it to cool. Prepare the sauce. Heat the fresh butter in a saucepan, add the flour and cook until browned and add the hot milk stirring constantly.

Once the sauce thickens remove from heat and pour into nutmeg, a pinch of salt and plenty of pepper. Pour the cheese and stir and pour the the eggs, quickly stir until absorbed by the mixture. Let it wait.
Take a baking oven pan and touch the bottom of a layer of aubergines and potatoes to leave no gaps. Empty minced up and straighten go everywhere and make a second layer with the potatoes and the remaining aubergines. Pour the sauce. To straighter a knife and baked in the preheating at 180ºC oven for about 1 hour and up from top to form a golden crust. Before cutting the moussaka in pieces let it stand for 30 minutes.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Baklavà” with pistachios

Suggested by Sotiris Laskaridis, executive pastry chef, Vice President of Greek Confectioner`s Club

Ingredients

20 dough sheets (fyllo)
350 gr Shelled pistachio nuts Fthiotis PDO, finely chopped
300 gr butter

For the syrup

2 kg sugar
1 lit ofwater
300 ml glucose
1/2 fresh lemon
1 cinnamon piece

Preparation

We start preparing the syrup, by placing all ingredients in a saucepan and bringing it to boil for 1 minute until the syrup gets thicker and then let it cool.
Divide the crushed pistachio nuts into 6 equal parts.
Use some melted butter to apply on a baking pan and place 5 “fyllo” sheets on it. Sprinkle the whole pan area with the first part of the pistachio filling and cover with one dough sheet. Repeat the process 5 more times so you get the 6 layers of crushed nuts and then cover the pie with 7 more sheets that you spread butter on, in between.
Put the baklava in the refrigerator for about 20 min., to let the butter cool and divide it into portions before you sprinkle it with some drops of water.
Then start baking in a well pre-heated oven for 1 hour and 10 min at 160°C. Pour the cool syrup on the hot baklava as soon as it is taken out of the oven. Sprinkle with some more crushed pistachio nuts.
Serve when it gets rather cool.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Almond biscuits with stevia

Suggested by Sotiris Laskaridis, executive pastry chef, Vice President of Greek Confectioner`s Club

Ingredients

For the first mixture
220 ml olive oil
140 gr butter
50 gr stevia
1 vanillin stick

2nd mixture
4 eggs

3rd mixture
380 gr wheat flour, sifted
8 gr baking powder
100 gr almonds, finely chopped

For coating
1 egg

Preparation

Put the first mixture in a food processor bowl and beat for about 5 min. until fluffy.
Add eggs and work for another minute.
Add the third mixture i.e. flour, baking powder and the almond crush.
The paste is ready when it no longer sticks to the bottom and the sides of the mixer bowl.
Form the biscuits anyway you wish.
Apply some baking paper on the bottom of a baking pan and arrange the cookies at a certain distance between them. Flatten these small balls by pressing them lightly with the palm of your hand and then with a fork to give them the desired shape.
Use some egg as a topping and bake in a well pre-heated oven for 10 -12 min. at 180°C, depending on the size of your cookies.

Stevia

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Cheesecake with Katiki Domokou and fig spoon sweet

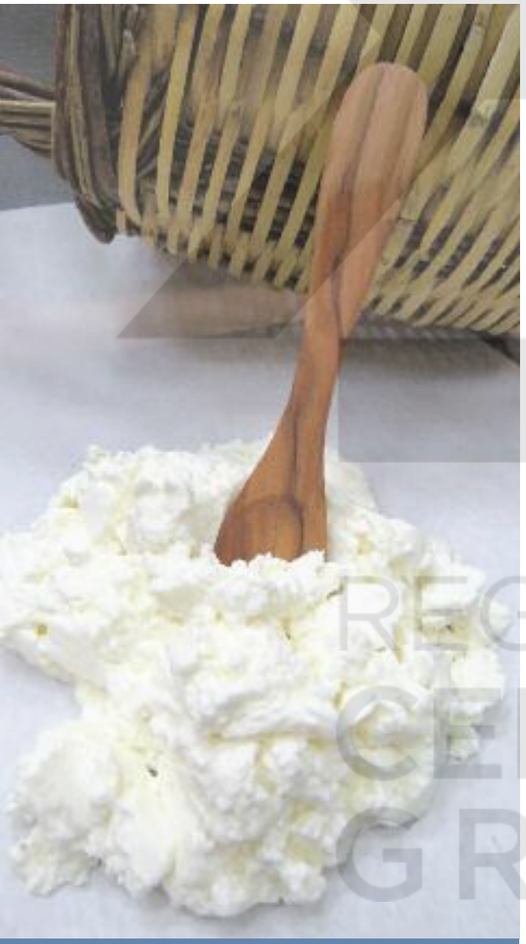
Suggested by Christos Tsalikis executive chef, Lamia

Ingredients

200 gr cheese katiki Domokou PDO
1 package "petit beurre" biscuits
100 gr margarine
Orange Zest
500 ml milk cream
300 gr ready-made candied figs in syrup

Preparation

Mash all biscuits and put them in a bowl.
Pour melted margarine over the biscuits and add the orange peel. This makes the cheese-cake base.
Whip the milk cream, preferably by using an electric household blender, until it gets firm and fluffy and then add the soft "katiki" cheese gradually and cautiously, as to get a soft mixture.
Use the mixer to mash the candied figs too, while keeping two fruits aside, for decorating the cake later on.
Arrange the biscuit base on the bottom of a recipient and top with the cheese cream.
Then, pour the fig syrup all over the cake and decorate it with two chopped figs.



Katiki cheese

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Ypati's Sugared buns

Suggested by Julia Alexakis, hotelier, Loutra Ypatis

Ingredients

1 kg genuine butter,
in room temperature
1 small plate sugar
1 egg
2 egg yolks
600 gr almonds, slightly roasted
1 coffee-cup cognac
1 water glass olive oil
1500 gr flour all purpose wheat, sifted

For the topping

Confectioner`s sugar

Preparation

Roast almonds in butter in a frying pan for about 10 min., while shaking the pan continuously

Use an electrical mixer machine to prepare the dough, starting with sugar, butter and olive oil, for about 30 minutes.

After the initial 20 minutes, add the eggs, first the whole egg and then the egg yolks slowly.

Three minutes before the end of the 30 min. process, pour the cognac and transfer the mixture from the mixer bowl into a clay pan.

Then add the almonds and the wheat flour and knead it, using your hands for about 5 more minutes.

Form the buns in a round or an oval or some different shape and arrange them on a baking pan.

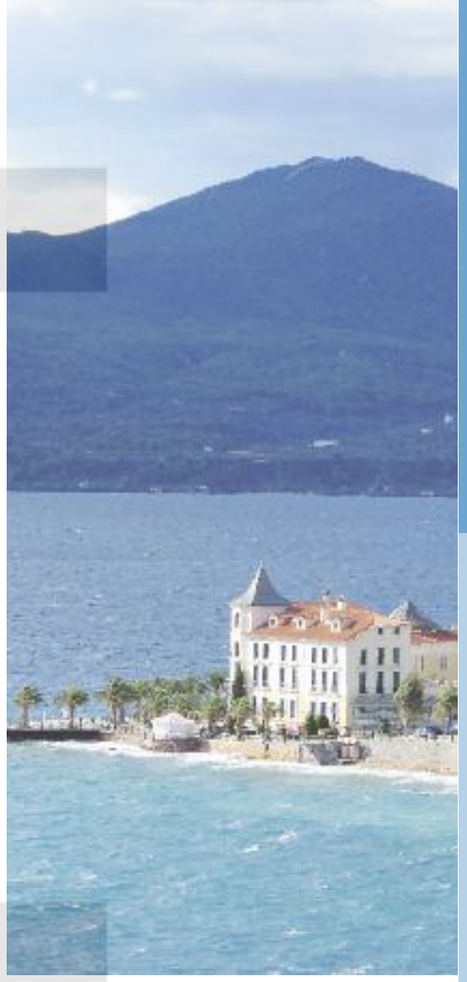
Bake them in a pre-heated oven, preferably with the oven ventilator on, for about 30 minutes at 180°C

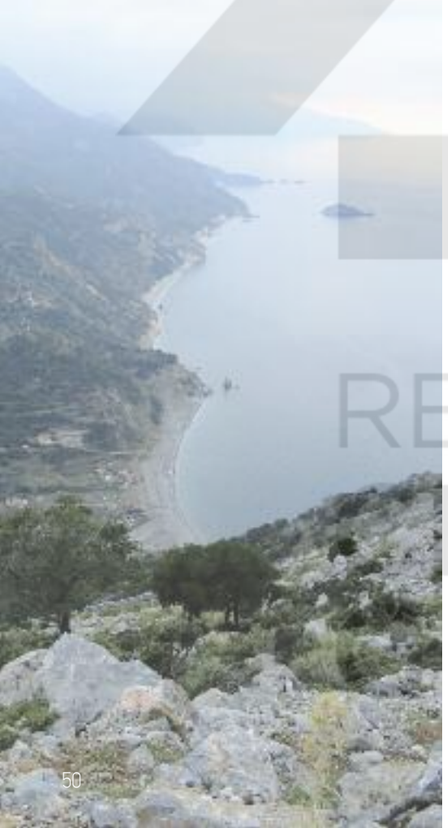
When the bun surfaces get a golden hue, take out the baking plate and let them cool for about 5 hours.

Arrange them on a serving plate and sprinkle them with confectioner`s sugar.

We can omit the sugary coating; the buns are delicious anyway.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE





EVIA

A real paradise. The island has two bridges connecting it with mainland Greece. **Chalkida** is a two-fold city with one side on the mainland and the other one on an island. In between, there is the Euripus Strait with the tide changing direction every 6 hours when the waters flood hastily or calmly on each course. This depends on the mysteries of the Universe...
The panorama from Fourkas hill is worthwhile, when standing by the castle of Karababas . On the island side of the city, one can see the waterfront ending with the Red House, a city landmark. In Chalkida central area one can encounter the presence of three different temples of worship, side by side in a few meters` distance from each other: the "Emir Zade" Mosque is adjacent to the Jewish Synagogue and the Greek Church of Aghia Paraskevi, built during the 8th Century. Across the seashore of Chalkida, as well as in Nea Artaki and Nea Lampsakos, seafood cuisine is full of gastronomy gems. In **Central Evia,** mount **Dirphys** has an impressive biodiversity. Visitors may taste wild-growing fruits while listening to the enchanting melodies of nature. At **Steni**, local delicacies are truly uplifting. We wandered around in **Eretria,** the naturally formed harbor surrounded by small islands and archeological treasures and then went on to visit **Aliveri,** with the nearby **Dystou** wetlands. We tasted "tsipouro" in Karavos. At **Chania**, we visited the 11th Century church of Aghios Dimitrios and at **Avlonari** with its Western Castle, we got "lost in time"... At **Oktonia**, seemingly being under the spell of a fairy tale, we tasted fountain water from Voivonta. **Kymi**, the Aegean balcony, has a significant Folk Museum, where many local artistically confection candy specialties are displayed, narrating the great culinary tradition of this area. It is also the homeland of some significant mansions built by sea captains coming back home. Needless to say, it is also famous for its fig production. At **Oxylithos,** there is an inactive volcano "sleeping" beside the church of Virgin Mary. **Northern Evia,** populated by friendly inhabitants, is a real puzzle, with many attractive pilgrimage destinations, seascapes, rare wetlands and some exquisite tasting food. Get some rest at the pine tree forest of **Mandoudi**, at **Prokopi,** where the church of Aghios Ioannis Rossos is located. The best place to have an unforgettable pick-nick is the "dancing plane tree forest" by the river Kireas. The small seaside town of **Limni,** bears testimony of the sea-faring activity of its people, while **Edipsos** is displaying its curative warm baths as a testimony of its thousand year long well-being activity, with about 50 warm springs that end up in the sea... **Istiaia, Oreoi, Taxiarchis,** with the well known figs, **Kanatadika,** with swans swimming around, **Roviès**, **Drymònas**, **Artemisio,** dedicated to God Poseidon, **Gouves,** bearing the testimony of poet Drosinis, **Ellinika** and **Aghia Anna,** are some pearls appearing along your way there. In **Southern Evia**, nature is still unspoiled. Mountain **Ochi** with the well-known "dragon houses", side by side with gorges, water mills and ancient quarries, is located by an emerald green sea, where **Petalioi** and the windy **Cavo d`Oro** are breathtaking. **Karystos** with the bastion Castello Rosso, Bourzi, from the 13th century and the neo-classical buildings, makes us feel nostalgic. The wider **Karystos** area was once famous for its marble. The **Kastanologgos** is like a natural museum with some centenary chestnut trees, unique herbs and wild animals. The **Marmari** harbor is the seagate of **Southern Evia** and the beaches there are charming. The most famous culinary attractions can be found at **N. Styra**, **Reouzi**, **Almyropotamos** and **Niboreio**.
Evia has all the elements needed to become an authentic global culinary destination.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

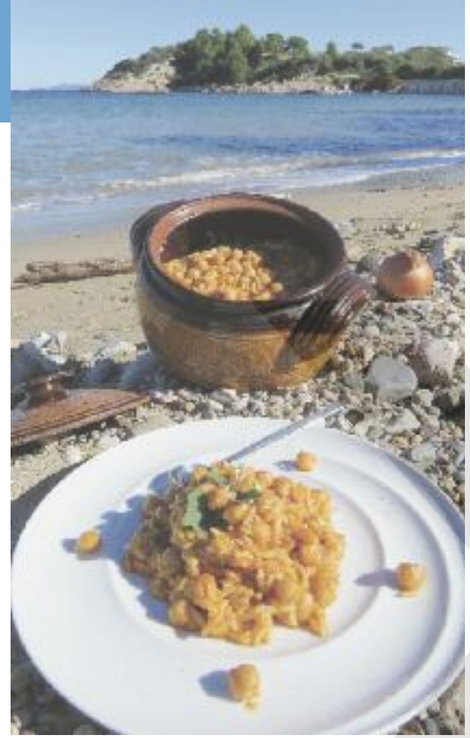
Sentimental, creative and imaginative, are the words best describing the Evia culinary scene, which is incorporating various multicultural and specifically oriental essences.... The tasty culinary creations spread their harmony and freshness, while many colorful and interesting tastes linger on in our memory...The seafood cuisine can be equally tasteful, when compared to the one usually found in the inner parts of the island. In Chalkida, Nea Artaki, and Nea Lampsakos, the seafood cuisine is glorified. The seashell fishing enriches the tasty creations with various kinds of molluscs, such as cockles, ark clams, bubble shells, scallops or venus-shells. Octopus and fish growing in the rich harvesting sea fields of Evia are exceptional and define the seashore cuisine. The Evia mainland is mostly known for its locally produced meat, prepared with either vegetables or pasta and paired with some local cheese varieties. At Stenì, with the rich water streams and plane trees, "fiery" tastes dominate the scene ....with suckling-pig meat, "kondosouvli", pork meat on a spit, "kokoretsi", entrail-spit, pork chops, or young lamb meat. You can find a superb celery-and-meat stew (with either pork or veal meat) wherever you travel in Evia. At Katheni, both the wild or farm-grown mushrooms constitute a unique culinary experience... Sometimes, some precious truffles make their appearance, with the white ones included, as well. At the wider Karystos area, some simple and genuine tasting foods, like young goat meat, dough pies and "goglies" or "kourkoumbines", the hand-made fresh pasta sorts, are created with inspiration, while playing with some exquisite flour dough, managed by able fingers. This fresh pasta is then cooked and topped by "slightly burnt" butter or olive oil and sprinkled with grated dry cheese. Milk and dairy products like cheese play an important role here. Small fried bread plates, the so called cheese-and-dough plates, usually deep fried, are made of dough, local cheese, eggs and a bit of milk or water. Drenched in oil, they are typical for the local cuisine and confectioned on the spot. Local small cheeses give their fantastic taste to the vegetable pies, made with fluffy dough. The upside-down pies at Reouzi play with fire...and their taste is unique. With great inventiveness and fantasy, meat is prepared in a hundred different ways, while the filled young goat meat is exceptional. Sausages are good, and "paspalàs" has a slight smoky taste. In the wider Kymi area, meat stew with dry onions, called "stifado", is a traditional treat. The same applies to "rodinès", meaning small cheese breads which are artfully made. The specialties here are called

"kakavià" (fish soup), red mullets, the dream-like lobster spaghetti, the day-fresh white tuna fish salad, small octopuses with hot peppers and "taramosalata" i.e. preserved fish roe salad; all the above have "enchanted" us... At Avlonàri, the sour-dough bread made by the local cooperative is superb. You must absolutely taste "trachanàs" from Aliveri and various seafood creations from Kàravos. While you are wandering about at Prokopi, don`t miss the Klimaki spaghetti, which is exquisite. The gourmet creations of northern Evia are always remembered... and include the "chick-pea risoni" and "kourkoutò", that is the local sour cheese pie. The heavenly olives PDO from Roviès, the rooster with egg-pasta and the cabbage "dolmas" are at their best here. Octopuses are prepared in 20 different ways at Oreoi, and the sea anemones called "galìpes" are chopped and formed in seafood meatballs. They are nowhere else to be found. All these tasty foods can be combined with "tsipouro", ouzo, or the nice wines made of rare local grape varieties.

Sweets

The "baklavà" from Kymi and the local hexagonal almond cookies are well known, as much as the "soutzoukia" made from wine must and hanging to dry in every home, giving a sweet sensation. The walnut pie is not to be missed. The traditional spoon sweets made from various fruits and the marmalades are some of the sweet creations of Evia. Figs, and quince jams make a significant contribution to the Evia culinary scene. The pancakes and the yoghurt are topped with fine honey, minced almonds and walnuts. The dairy based sweets like the milk and rice cream called "rizogalo", or the sweet pumpkin pies, are equally appreciated, as much as the wedding "kourabiedes", "tsourekia" and "melomakarona", mostly Christmas treats.

The "baklavà" from Kymi plays the leading role, as it is confectioned with no less than forty dough sheets (made in Psachna), some locally produced butter, plus almonds or walnuts. The preparation process is the ultimate test for local housewives. The most important secret lies, namely, in the manner it is baked in the oven. It is then cut into rhombs and being considered as the sweet treat appearing in merry celebrations and other festive occasions.



The cuisine

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Livestock farming

Livestock farming had always occupied a predominant role in Evia. This sector's importance dates back to antiquity. Testimony is given by the very name of the island, composed of the words «Eu» (good), and «Bous» (ox). Livestock and poultry farming are dominant in Evia. According to estimates, the total livestock population of Evia comprises 3.000 cattle and calves, 350.000 sheep and goats, 70.000 pigs, and 1 million broilers and laying hens per breed cycle - with four breed cycles per year. In Southern Evia, the most interesting sheep and goat breeds are the ones of **reddish sheep**, as well as the **Karystos goats**. Those breeds are strong and especially resistant to the hard climatic conditions of the surroundings, i.e. the northern winds of Cape Cavo d`Oro, in conjunction with the scarce vegetation on these stony mountains. Sheep have a short reddish fur on their bellies, feet, head, and neck, while their back is covered with a long and tight fur and the tail is long and flat.

The **Karystos goat** is brown or black, very strong, and resistant, in fact "stiff-necked". These animals reach the coasts and lick the weather-beaten rocks in search of salt flakes hidden in there.

Their meat is in high demand. Although their milk production is relatively limited to a mere 500 ml a day, in comparison to the 1,5 – 2 lt of the daily output of the average bovine breed, their milk is denser and ideal for cheese production.

Cattle farming in Northern Evia is predominantly of the free-range type.

The Dirfys mountain slopes are well known for their traditional ovine husbandry, bearing testimony of some genuine production methods of the past. In the wider Nea Artaki area, white meat like pork and chicken has been developed, using well organized farming and embracing the latest technical methods. The farming establishments here follow the strictest sanitary rules, pastures are rich and breeding is systematic.

Animal feeding stuffs are chosen carefully and forage is enriched with the best nutritional elements. No efforts are being spared when trying to achieve high quality healthy and tasty meat, with all the necessary nutritional properties.

EVIA REGION CENTRAL GREECE

Cheese making

The pure natural environment of Evia displays a well-balanced combination of sea breeze and mainland winds. The above factors, together with the admirable bio-diversity, result in the production of excellent sheep`s and goat`s milk. The big variety or cheeses produced here is impressive. These cheeses are seen as culinary treasures of high nutritional value, since milk- skimming is not in use here. The traditional way of cheese making has always been transferred from each generation to the next, steadily evolving without losing its initial identity. New technologies and utensils combined with respect to tradition result in excellent cheese varieties. The majority of the local factories produce PDO "feta" cheese, Greece`s "national" product, as well as fresh "myzithra", goat-milk small cheeses, "kefalotyri" (a kind of yellow cheese), traditional **barrel-matured Kàrystos cheese** or even "**touloumotyri**" a goats in bag cheese.
Feta cheese from Kàrystos and Zàrakes has a fine taste that really thrilled us. **Kefalotyri**, the well known Greek yellow cheese, based on sheep`s and goat`s milk, is a chapter in itself. Production routines rely on the following steps: pasteurization, coagulation, re-heating and draining. In past times, draining was usually carried on in baskets made of rushes. After salting, the cheese it is set to mature for three months, after which the **kefalotyri** is "born". "Touloumotyri" is a special semi-hard cheese with a constant presence
in Greek cuisine.
It is left to mature inside some specially prepared goatskin bags called

"touloùmia". It originates from mixing goat`s and sheep`s milk, with a prevalence of the former. Production follows the usual pasteurization; after re-heating, the cheese mass is set in 10 kg moulds where it stays for 2 days.
After being cut into small pieces, it is salted and set to "rest" in wooden barrels containing salt-processed "myzithra". After maturation for another 2-3 months the **barrel-matured Karystos** cheese is ready.
Fresh goat milk little cheeses using French production methods are excellent. They are tasty and velvety, while displaying some organoleptic traits worthy of a fine palate. Their nutritional value is high, since they contain proteins, vitamins, calcium, and minerals. Lately, certain cheese makers, in order to achieve a spicier version, have "enriched" them with aromatic herbs or even some ashes from burning old vines and started "dressing" them in original shapes.
Cattle farmers here still use the original ways of cheese making, when confectioning "myzithra" and "kefalotyri".
Yoghurt offers us its special nostalgic taste. In Vassilikò, traditional yoghurt and dairy products are greatly appreciated. It was just here that small ceramic bowls specially made for containing yoghurt were confectioned.
The Evian cheese makers` aim is mainly making some good tasting and healthy quality products in some up to date establishments using 100% local raw materials.
The majority of the cheeses produced here are certified according to Greek and international standards, ensuring health benefits and quality.
Anyway, cheese gives us some unique tasty experiences, when accompanied with a glass of local wine...

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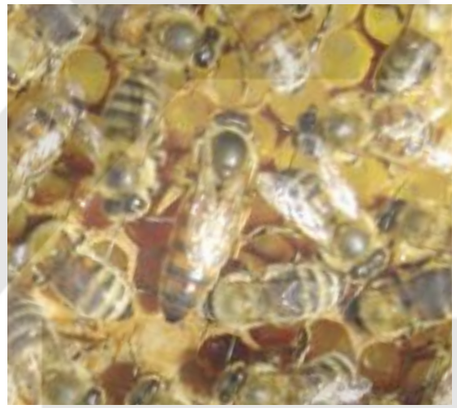
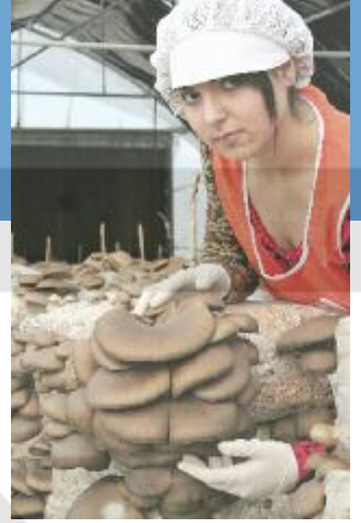
Honey

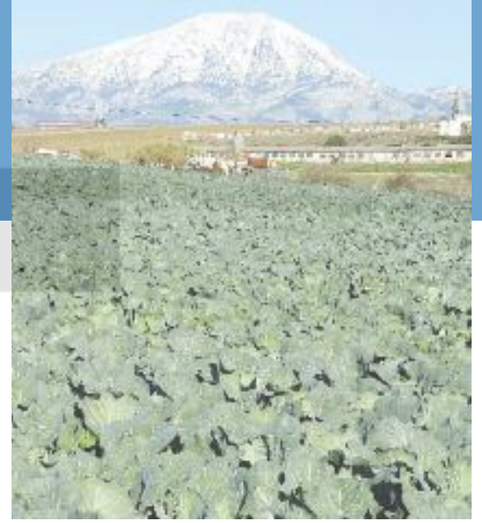
Apiculture is very developed and well integrated in the culinary tradition of Evia, on cause of the rich vegetation, the blooming of aromatic flowers and herbs, as well as the admirable bio-diversity noticed here. All these traits result in some excellent quality honey.
Bee colonies in Evia are estimated to be between 70.000 and 80.000.
Most of the beekeepers behave ecologically and produce some non-processed genuine natural products coming from the bees, thus maintaining the special organic and healthy proprieties of the "nectar" created by this admirable insect .
The May honey coming from **flowers** and **wild growing herbs** is "harvested" at the end of Spring and is being considered a miraculous item of the Greek nature.
It has a gleaming color, a gentle and rich aroma, a mature and ripe taste and displays a multi-flower bouquet full of health and well-being, because of its rich micro-minerals or micronutrients.
At the coastal areas of Evia, towards the end of July, a thyme-scented honey is collected.
It is displaying an exceptional and shiny quality.
It is well-known abroad for its insuperable taste, the rich aroma and beneficial health properties.
This honey is marketed as a pure product, without any prior processing, as it follows the example of other local types of honey.
All around the monumental "Kastanòloggos", a centenary chestnut- tree forest, with red heather, wild growing lavender and multitude of herbs growing there, the famous "kissouri" honey is born, the highest quality honey of the wider Karystos area. It comes from the red heather, called "kissouri" by the locals. Its hue is deep copper-red. with a particular scent. It is a very rare natural medicine, due to the B-vitamins, amino-acids, enzymes, minerals and proteins it contains.

The queen bee



It is very strong because it is ready during Fall and bees make it to feed on during Winter. The **heather-scented,** honey as well as the **arbutus fruit –scented** one coming from the vast arbutus bush forests all around the area of the "Drakospita" near Karystos, has an exceptional quality, with certain biological characteristics and benefits for the human body. In Northern Evia, **pine-tree** scented honey is admirable and rich in micro-minerals, full body and gives a mineral after-taste. In the area of **Istiaia,** the surprise comes from **aniseed scented** honey and **oak tree scented** honey, which are very rare and possess anti-oxidation properties. **Fir-tree** scented honey is a specialty here, as it maintains its remarkably healthy traits. All Evian honey varieties are highly prized in contests held abroad and faring very well commercially.
Some pioneer beekeepers here create various honey-based products, using all the newest research results in health prevention, healing and strengthening of our immune system. Cosmetics based on honey and its derivates help maintain and increase our beauty with the help of nature`s wisdom.
Under the shadow of the century old pine trees of N. Evia and the forest clearings of Central Evia, we can spot some multi-colored bee-hives and the beekeepers taking good care of them.
These sights are some bright moments for our culinary tradition, because man has been dedicated to apiculture and the peculiar bee-swarms that constitute a real mini-society. Think about the fact that the secret of life can be hiding in a jar of honey.





The crops

In the vast area surrounding Psachna and Nea Artaki, vegetable farming covers 1.335 acres, onion farming 43 acres, and carrot farming 99 acres.
Carrot production comes first with 1918 tons and the first harvesting of the year, when European terms are concerned, comes out just in this area.
Onion production reaches 1.718 tons.
The areas around **Pissonas**, together with the **Dirfys** mountain slopes as well as **Lilandio**, are excellent grounds for horticulture.
Potatoes, broccoli, onions and cauliflowers, together with cabbage, lettuce and green salads are excellent.

Fruit cultivation is taking up 1.120 acres. At **Stropones,** beans and tomatoes have a special taste. The wider **Avlonari**, **Kymi**, **Taxiarchis** and **Istiea** areas are mostly famous for their figs, but they are also known for their olive oil, pulses, fruits and garden vegetables. **Oktonia** is known for its onions, and **Rovies** are known for their organic Konservolia olives PDO, as well as for their olive oil.
Olive trees are omnipresent in the entire Evia territory, taking up 18.581 ha.
According to estimates, Evia produces 78.400 tons of olives for olive oil extraction, 1.307 tons of table olives, and 17.293 tons of mixed-use olives.

At **Katheni**, mushrooms are cultivated like the "pleurotus" and "lentinula" varieties.
The annual "pleurotus" production amounts to 300 tons, 35 tons is the amount for yellow "pleurotus" and the fresh "lentinula" reaches 12 tons.
At the **Mandoudi** pine tree forest, resin collecting is the biggest in Greece.
This resin is dense and of high quality, mostly employed for producing one of the trademark-wines of Greece, namely "retsina".
This type of wine is presently in fashion again, after falling behind for several years.

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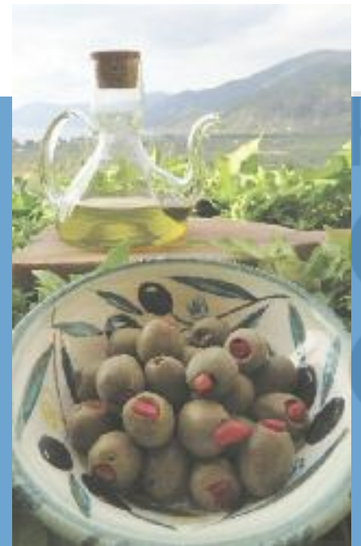
The best known products of Evia abroad

Psachna is best known for its exquisite dough products, made with high quality wheat flour. They are sold both as fresh or frozen products, like the big export item they are. Evian pies, made by either artisan or household industries, maintain always a high quality. In **Roviès** the olives PDO are filled with lemon bits, almonds or chili peppers. On the culinary scene, olive paste and olive oil stand proudly for themselves both in Greek and foreign markets. The Evian hand-made pasta called "goglies", "trahanas" made with 20 different ingredients, as well as the egg-pasta products, are considered as super-foods coming in cute looking packages and have their own fans. Fruit concentrates, made with agave, stevia and pepper-root, are excellent. At **Politikà**, some 1.500.000 vine leaf "dolmas" are produced daily, along with other Greek specialties. They are all met with enthusiasm by connoisseurs. At **Kymi**, **Taxiarchis**, and **Vasiliko** the exporting activity of figs and their derivative products flourishes. Sun-dried figs, sun-dried tomatoes, marmalades, and other fig-based products are conquering international markets.

At **Katheni** both wild and cultivated mushrooms are packaged.
At **Pisssonas** and **Lilandio** some super-foods are confectioned in many inventive forms, sealed in glass jars and start their own voyage...
On mountain **Dirfys**, at an altitude of 1000-1500 m, mountain tea, or scientifically called "Sideritis sp. Euboea" is omnipresent. You can find this sedative or simply "well-sleeping" herb that is highly appreciated abroad for its anti-oxidation properties. Hippocrates recommended it as an invigorating substance, as it is rich in iron and Dioscurides called it "a shield" for the human body. This tea is an essential herb for our well-being.



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The renowned sun-dried figs of Taxiarchis PDO and Kymi PDO

Figs have made Kymi and Taxiarchis well known all over the world, because they constitute some exquisite, classified as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) products. The geographical areas of their provenience are rich in bio-diversity and the superior fig quality resulting makes them a "super-food". They are a rich source of minerals, (iron, potassium, selenium and calcium) vitamins (A and C), anti-oxidants and fiber. Since ancient times they were a basic nutritional element, as these desserts were called "tragìmata" in ancient Greece.
Their taste and consistence are unique, especially when sprinkled with aromatic herbs. Figs are grown under the sun and cooled by the fresh sea-winds, while the sunshine helps them mature and they dry. Harvesting is always done manually and starts in mid-August. Thereafter, the sun-drying process is followed. It is estimated that about 3.040 tons of Taxiarchis figs are produced annually, while those from Kymi amount to 250 tons. The producers` continuous efforts and inventiveness have succeeded in creating some original fig products, such as fig-bars, wine-drenched chocolate-coated figs, salt-flake figs, honey or chutney figs and so on.They are mainly exported to Germany, the United Kingdom, U.S.A., Australia and Canada. Exports have increased by 30% from 2016 to 2017.

The procedure of drying

- Figs are sun-dried on wooden trays, protected from airborne contamination, until they get a clear golden-brown hue.
- With the help of scissors their stems are discarded and then they are split in the middle.
- Arranged in rows one beside the other, they are placed under the sun to dry once more.
- Then, the two halves are joined together to form a whole fig called "askada", the final product consisting of the two fig "petals".

High quality figs are juicy, tasty and aromatic, a well sought after product in international culinary environments.
Their nutritional properties, aided by the inspiration and care shown by their producers, are earning them many prizes in several prestigiou international culinary contests.

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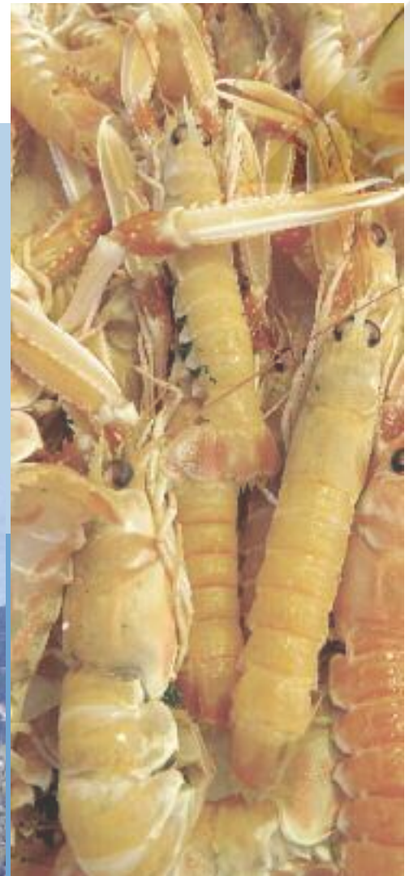
Fish farming



The seafood treasures of Evia deserve their fame. Bio-diversity and temperatures alongside with the never ceasing tide, favor fish-farming in the entire Evian strait from north to south.

Nireas area and the whole coastline is famous for high quality fish, like gill, head bream, bass and red sea bream, that are farmed there and being considered as high demand items in markets abroad. Fish caught in open sea are also appreciated for their great taste. These, include red snappers, dentex, skipjack tuna, stonefish, sardine, as well as squid and octopuses.

On the eastern side of Evia, going to the open sea of the Aegean, seafood treasures have been praised by Plutarch for marine fields, salt density and water purity. Among the seafood treasures fished there, we can name the impressive lobsters, crayfish, white tuna, stonefish, white and black groupers, and red mullets. In Nea Artaki, sea-shells are being farmed successfully. Cockles, ark shells, clams, mussels, scallops as well as various sorts of fish are very tasty. At Oreoi and Yaltra, fishing areas are rich.

In Evia, when fish flocked and were so abundant they could not be handled, the people used to preserve them in many ways, precisely as they are doing nowadays in a commercial manner.

Evian fishing is responsible for supplying fish to Athens, Southern Greece and elsewhere.

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Vineyards and wine

Ilandio is traditionally considered as a wine-producing area that the locals have simply named **Mytikas** "Ambèlia", vineyards.
This unique "terroir", meaning micro-climate, soil consistence, and cultivation methods, contributes to the production of first choice wines, with a significant presence abroad. Northern cold winds blowing from Dirfys mountain keep the vine leaves dry and chase away pathological organisms attacking them.
Cold Winters, warm Summers and dry Falls help "fenol" maturation in grapes.
The varieties in use here are both the locally grown Evian ones, but even some others bearing a foreign origin.
It is just here that re-instated the ancient red variety called "**Kymi mavrokoundoùra**" and presented an exceptional red ruby wine, with a fruity rich taste and strong velvety tannins.
At **Malakòndas** the vineyards oriented towards sunshine bathed slopes, combined with the sea breeze, result in some ideal conditions for grape cultivation.
This way, first class raw materials sided by the local know-how, together with technological advancements in the field, result in an exceptional wine production.
Wine-tourism is at its best here.
Wine expertise blends with the nice culinary experience found in the area.
At **Ritzona** the landscape is wonderful, known since ancient times for its micro-climate, because the variations in topography and soil conditions contribute to the diversity of various tasting aromatic wines.
The aim here is to highlight each wine variety so it can bring out its best personality traits.
Some winemakers have an impressive collection of artifacts and tools for vineyards and wine making, including some utensils of the past.
At **Yaltra** the hillsides are covered by vineyards.
The great Homer mentions the " brave Avantes tribe that ruled Evia, Chalkida and Eretria, as well as the much blessed grape producing Istiaia...", convincing us that this activity went on during antiquity.
Mythology says that God Dionyssos spent his childhood on Nysaio mountain, called Xiro in our days.
Wine is referred to as the elixir of joy, enabling the human soul to express itself.
The micro-climate and soil composition helps the grapes grow biologically.
Re-establishing old local varieties like Mavrokoundoura and **Vradyano**, result in our acquaintance with some premium wine qualities in our days.
In **Kamaria** they maintain the oldest varieties that otherwise could have vanished from the wine-map.
Red wine like Vradyanno, **Kartsioti** and white wines as **Asprouda, Roditis** and **Asyrtiko** are cultivated.
In the wider area of **Karystos** with the strong summer winds that blow away the leaves from the plants, while grapes get the sunshine they require, give us a special bouquet wine when aroma and color are concerned.
The dominating variety in the vineyards of the area called **Mandilaria** gives its color to the local red wine.
Savvatiano is successfully integrated here and gives a wine with rich body and taste. Roditis, Asyrtiko, Malagouzia, Moschato give excellent results. The eco-certified vineyards have an island origin varieties like red **Liatiko**, **Athiri**, **Asyrtiko**, and **Aidani**.
There are many Evians making and enjoying their own wine.

Tsipouro and liquers

The "tsipouro" brewed here is exclusive. In Karystos wider area, they even mix it with some exquisite honey and the local "raki-with-honey" varieties are unique. Liquor is produced in the form of a "well-seasoned-tsipouro", ouzo and some prized varieties of "liquer". The well balanced liquor production highlights the aromatic substances present in grapes and herbs such as aniseed and lime.

Beers

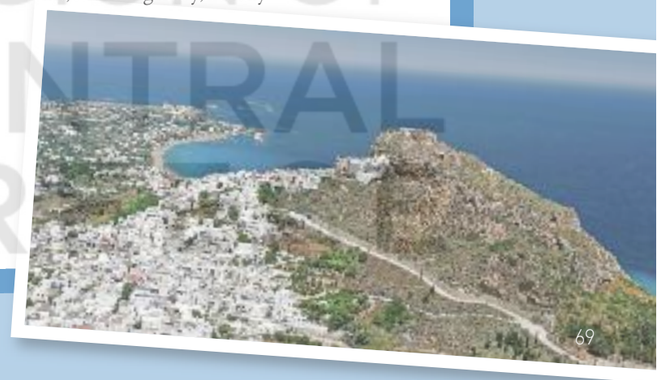
At Avlonari, local unpasteurized beer is produced. Such a process preserves the full bouquet of aromas and the characteristic taste of hops. Also, farmers have begun cultivating hops in the area. In Chalkida, a double brewed beer with rice and corn-seeds is produced.

SKYROS

Skyros is a picturesque island. The capital, "Chora" lies sluggishly white and cubistic on a slope, starting from the castle up high and proceeding downwards, while overlooking the Aegean Sea. Small houses embrace each other and serpentine small streets are crossing them, flanked by bougainvilleas gardens and small open squares in between. At the Faltaits Museum there is a recreation of a traditional house with the well known carved-wood furniture together with some embroidery and ceramics. At Molos, there are the ancient Pouria quarries sunken and taken over by the sea, presently used for lobster-farming. There are some countryside chapels carved on the soft stone or on big rock formations. The bio-diversity of the northern side of the island captivates the visitor. At Palamari, one can encounter the surprising remains of a well organized and productive stone-age town with its defensive walls, workshops and the everyday household-utensils, dated to 1600 A.D.
At the southern part, you can find Kochylas mountain with some stone-gardens and a crossing between olive trees and yew bushes, crystal clear sea waters protected by the "Natura" network. Emerald sea populated by seals swimming between small islands. The Skyros pony is a genuine locally found race known since antiquity even depicted on the fringes of the Parthenon front. They are clever, sensitive and friendly. Meeting them is a wonderful experience.

Agricultural products, honey, cheese, wine and the cuisine in general

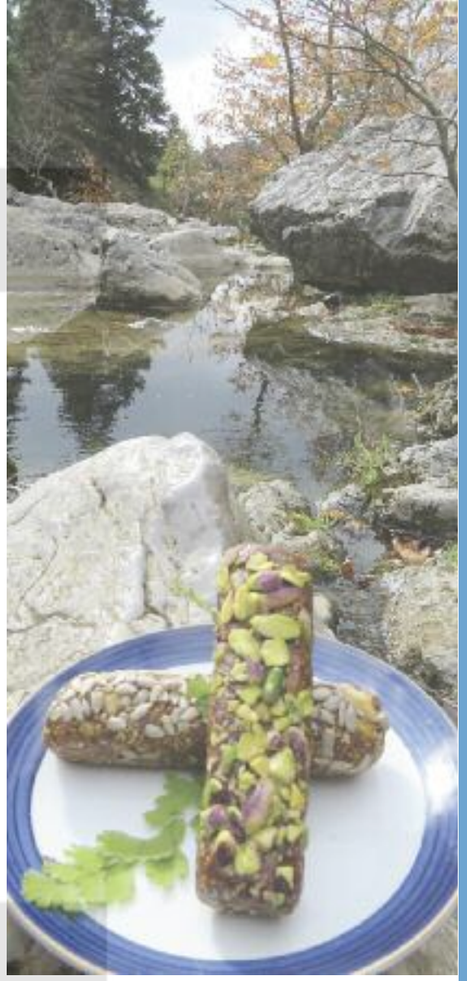
On the fertile soil of Northern Evia, some rare vegetable and tree varieties are grown, just typical for this area, namely cherry tomatoes, sweet peppers, melons, garlic, along with almond trees and short lemon trees. This is a "garden of Eden" experience for the culinary specialist. The location gives us a honey resembling a real treasure, with its distinct aroma and rare transparency, because the apicultural locations are amidst certain wild- growing aromatic herbs like thyme etc, together with pine trees found all around this area. The island has always had a great tradition in husbandry, as proven by folklore traditions, like the famous carnival happenings performed by bell-ringing animal-clad figures called "koudounati". Cheese making is genuinely traditional. Goat and sheep-milk are the exclusive raw materials employed, coming from some strictly local breeds of Skyros animals. The spicy yellow cheese called "graviera", fresh cheese and curd are some of these exquisite varieties. The inhabitants used to let the yellow cheese "graviera" mature inside big clay pots with thyme in between. During springtime, these big pots were sealed and dug in earth holes. They were kept there until Christmas, when they were taken out as tradition commanded. The most famous dish found in Skyros cuisine is mountain young goat meat with lemon or tomato sauce. Oil-pies confectioned on the spot are made from fluffy dough and cheese. The lobster-spaghetti is a brand dish in seafood cuisine and the local fish tastes like heaven. Their doughnuts, the "trahanas" small crepes drenched in honey, the almond buns and the fresh-milk ice cream with almonds, all the above made me crazy. At the vineyards, real efforts are made to re-establish local grape varieties that result in some remarkable wines. During the religious feast celebrated at the 10th Century Convent of St George, just under the Byzantine castle, tradition implies the "benediction" of local wines in the monastery well. Big caldrons, filled with young goat-meat cooking with rice and tomato, or octopuses with rice are prepared. They are served, accompanied with local wine, streaming freely, literally.



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

The well known "fava"

Pisse is the specific name given to the "fava" plant (a sort of pulse) being produced in the wider area of Aliveri, since antiquity. Recently, an advanced research is being carried out on this "fava" sort by the Agricultural University of Athens. This special "fava" variety was originally awarded a prize at Thessaloniki in 1932. The cultivation needs a very limited water quantity, and this is a fact that makes it ideal for the local climatic conditions. It is usually sowed in October and harvested in June, while threshing is done during July. The traditional manner requires employing horses stepping on it and grounding it. Thus, the seeds are separated from their ears. Then, winnowing is following and the seeds fall to the ground, as straws are flown away by the wind. Sifting is the next step, while a certain quantity is being kept aside, for further sowing next year. The seeds are then coarsely crushed in a hand-mill, according to tradition. "Fava" is prepared in a ceramic pot over open fire at the kitchen fireplace called "f 'gou" in the local dialect.



OUR RECIPES

EVIA SKYROS

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Trahanas soup with vegetables

Suggested by Sophia Spanou-Dardouma, Velos

Ingredients	Preparation
1 cup home made sour trahana	Put trahana and water in a saucepan and bring to boil.
4 cups water	Use low heat and simmer for about 10-15 minutes stirring occasionally.
Feta cheese	Towards the end, add salt, pepper and butter.
Sea salt	Take out of the heat, as soon as the trahanas soup gets creamy.
Freshly ground pepper	Serve your trahanas soup with feta cheese in a deep plate, placing in the middle.
1 tbsp butter	To ensure a better aspect for this treat, place some fresh spearmint stems or oregano on top and crouton.
	Also you can serve trahanas soup with local sausages.

Dystos

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Tarama salad

Suggested by Dimitris Spanos, hotelier, Kymi Beach

Ingredients

2 tbsp preserved cod roe, pure, colorless
1 middle sized dry red onion,
100 ml fresh lemon juice
100 gr leftover bread slices,only the inner part
1 liter sunflower oil

Preparation

Soak the bread in water for about 5 min in a bowl.
Wring it to get all the water out.
Use a blender to mash the onion, while adding the cod roe, lemon juice and bread.
Go on blending the paste until you get a uniform mixture.
Lower the speed and slowly add the sunflower oil until you get a velvet-like paste.

Taste the salad and add some lemon juice or oil, if necessary.
Decorate with either dill or wild dill and serve with some toasted bread slices.
Keep the tarama salad in a bowl, covered and refrigerated.

Shrimp “saganaki”

Suggested by Babis Mastrantonis, restaurant owner, Karystos

Ingredients

20 middle sized unshelled shrimps, rinsed and cleaned
250 gr local yellow cheese
210 ml tomato sauce
Olive oil
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
Oregano

Preparation

Sauté the shrimps in a “saganaki” pan with some olive oil and add the tomato sauce you have previously prepared.
Add oregano, salt and pepper.
After letting them simmer, add the cheese in small pieces

Stir and then serve.
They are an ideal tidbit to tsipouro or ouzo.

Steam- cooked mussels with wine

Suggested by Nana Gamboura executive chef

Ingredients

1 kilos whole fresh mussels
including shells
1 dry onion, sliced , 1 tbsp butter
2 garlic clove, sliced
1 ½ glass Asyrtiko wine
5 tbsp pure olive oil
1 red pepper, sliced
Parsley, chopped
Sea salt , Freshly ground peppers

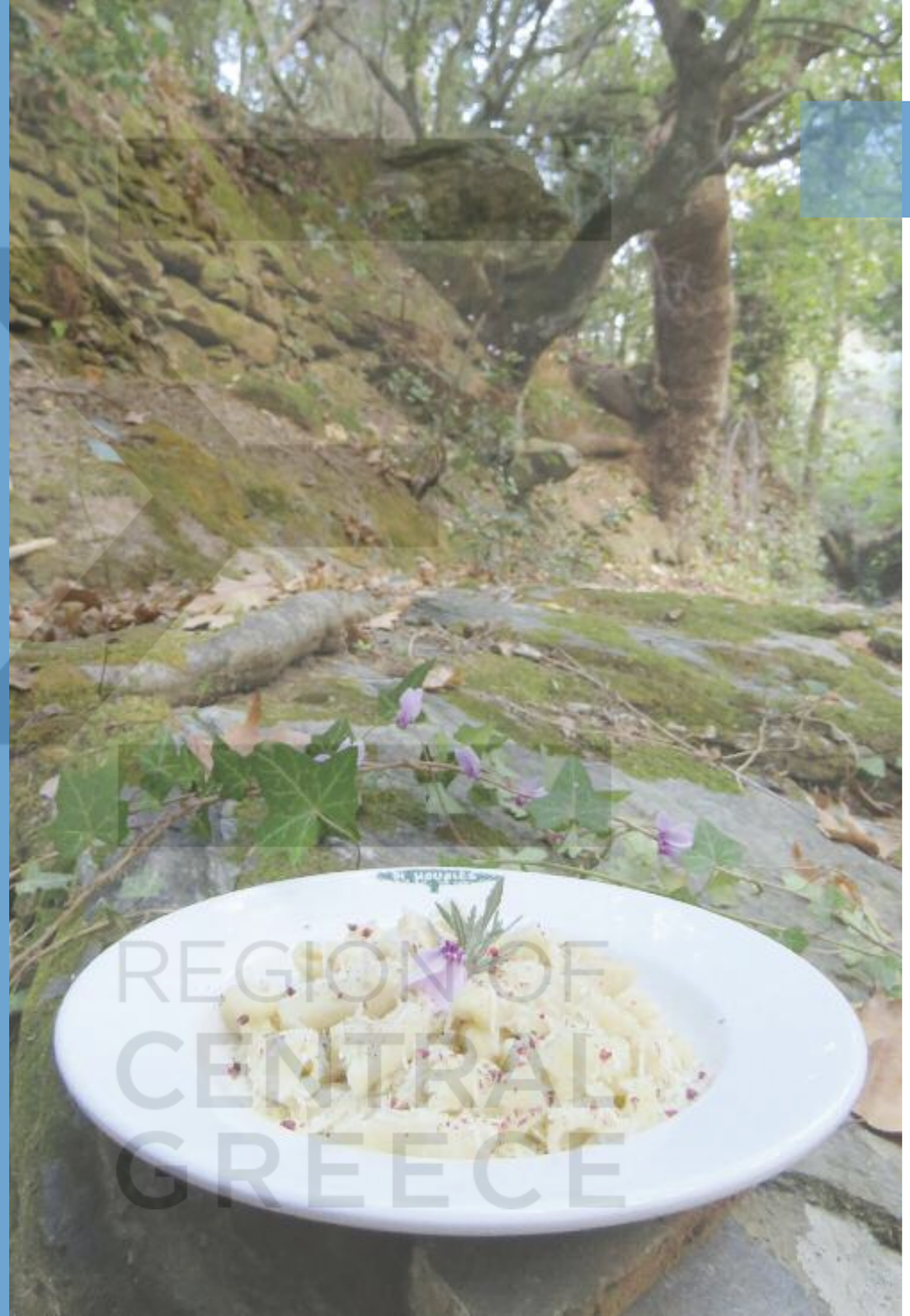
Preparation

Wash and rinse the mussel
in a strain, pouring lots
of water over them.
Brush them clean one by one
and draw out their hairy part,
since their shells must be absolute-
ly clean. Place them in a bowl.
Using a large and deep saucepan,
bring the onion and garlic to fry
slightly in olive oil and interrupt
cooking by pouring in the wine.
Increase the heat before adding all
the mussels together with parsley,
red pepper, salt and pepper.
Cover the saucepan with
a lid and continue steaming the
mussels for 5 minutes with no
added water, because they produce
their own.
When they are finally opened,
they are sprinkled with their
own sauce.
Serve in a large plate or in smaller
portion-sized saucepans.

Tip

The shells that don`t open when heated,
must be thrown away.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Kourkoumbines or Goglies

Suggested by Antonis Antoniou, restaurant owner, Paradisi

Ingredients

1 Lt fresh milk
All purpose sifted wheat flour, "as much as needed"
Sea salt
1 small confection fresh yeast

For sprinkling

Local myzithra cheese
small confection of fresh yeast

Preparation

Place all ingredients in a bowl and make a dough, kneading vigorously.
Let the dough stand for 30 min. covering it with some plastic film.
Cut the dough in smaller portions and form some small balls that you will later form some dough strips with a thickness of 2 cm. These strips are in turn cut in smaller pieces of 1,5 cm each.
Cover them with flour use your fingers to form each one like a sea-shell.
Go on until you have given all your pasta some sea-shell forms.
Boil them in salted water for 10 – 15 minutes and take out those that are surfacing first.
Sprinkle some grated local cheese, after you have given the kourkoumbines a frying pan treatment, using some olive oil and fresh butter.
Serve them as they are or as a side plate to some stewed rooster in tomato sauce or even goat meat in red sauce.

1

2

3

4

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Risoni pasta with king-and wild-mushrooms, cheese and black truffle

Suggested by Lefteris Lahouvaris, mushrooms producer, Katheni

Ingredients

250 gr medium-sized "risoni" pasta
50 gr dried king-mushrooms
50 gr fresh local mushrooms Lentinoules
1 medium onion, chopped
10 cherry-tomatoes
60 ml olive oil
1 glass white wine "moshofilero"
750 ml water or vegetable broth
50 gr grated black truffle cheese
Salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Let the dried king-mushrooms soften in a bowl with lukewarm broth under 15 min. Strain them and keep the liquid.
Sauté onion and olive oil in a deep frying pan and add the mushrooms.
Let them simmer for a while.
Add the risoni - pasta and reduce the heat by adding some wine.
Bring to boil once more, there after add the cherry tomatoes, cut in 4 pieces each, together with salt and pepper and boil for another 15 min, stirring all the time. Serve immediately after sprinkling them with grated cheese.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Fried cheese-pies from Psachna

Suggested by Maria Vasiliou, Psachna

Ingredients

500 gr flour all purpose wheat
1 small portion yeast or a bit of natural yeast
Lukewarm water
250 gr stained fresh cheese or soft feta cheese
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Sift the flour, form an opening in the middle and fill it with the yeast that you have previously diluted in a small amount of lukewarm water; press it well with a fork, to help it melt easily.
Knead it properly to make a soft, rather malleable and fluffy dough, by lifting it now and then.
Use a wooden rod to make your round and well flattened dough sheets properly. They should have a final thickness of about 1 cm.
Heat some olive oil in the frying pan you are going to fry your cheese pies with.
Each dough sheet should now have a diameter of 25-30 cm.
Your cheese filling is placed on the one half-circle side, while you fold the other half a top of the already filled part.
Take care of sealing the entire semi-circular borders of the pie, by pressing them with a wet fork to avoid sticking.
Each side of the semi-circular big cheese pie should take 3 minutes to fry on each side.
When it gets a golden hue, turn it over to fry on the other side; pay attention not to spill any filling, when you do so.
Use an absorbing sheet of kitchen paper to get rid of some excess oil, when you serve these big cheese pies, cut in smaller portions.
It is advisable to serve them along with some real tasty local Karystos sausages, as well as a nice tomato salad coming from a nearby kitchen garden.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Spinachcheese pie, otherwise Kondoulas` overturned pie

Suggested by Nektarios Stoupas, restaurant owner Reouzi, Karystos

Ingredient

For confectioning the dough sheets

500 gr. wheat flour of all purpose wheat flour
1 tsp intensely flavored vinegar
Sea salt
Olive oil

For the filling

500 gr. fresh spinach
500 gr. fresh chard
800 gr. stained cheese from Karystos

Preparation

On our working surface, we arrange the flour in a mound and pour the vinegar, salt and a little warm water at the center. We then start kneading the dough vigorously, by using our hands. We let the dough stand for a while and then form it into thin sheets. We need two dough sheets for the bottom and another two for the top. We must use a well-oiled baking plate and place the first sheet on the bottom using a confectioner`s brush to apply some oil. Then we place the second dough sheet and the whole filling in a horizontal layer, flattened with the help of a tablespoon.
We follow the same procedure with the other pair of dough sheets and "seal" the ends of our pie.
We have already prepared the traditional oven using wood that has burned out and become charcoal, which we arrange all around our baking pan and not under it.
We bake our pie for a certain period of time and then turn it over like an omelet. We serve the pie on a wooden surface and cut it into rectangular portions.

Traditional Zucchini Pie

Suggested by Miltos Chelmis, hotelier, Chalkida

Ingredients

1200 gr. zucchini tenderly
5 eggs whipped
300 gr. feta cheese, grated
300 ml fresh milk
300 gr. flour
½ bunch of mint chopped
1 dry onion grated
¼ fl olive oil

Preparation

Mix the eggs, the cheese, the zucchini, the mint and the onion.
Add the olive oil and the milk.
Then slowly add the flour.
Apply salt, after trying the mixture.
Apply the mixture in an oiled pan.
Bake in a pre-heated oven at 180°C for 40-45 minutes.
Take it out and let it cool a bit, in order to cut it.
We serve after 20 minutes.

Spinach, cheese and zucchini pie

Suggested by Sophie Lagonikou, hotelier, Karystos

Ingredients

300 gr leeks, finely chopped
200 gr zucchini, grated
200 gr fresh spinach
1 bunch dill, finely chopped
1 bunch fennel, finely chopped
200 gr shephers`s feta cheese
3 fresh eggs
Salt

For the dough sheets
500 gr flour all purpose, sifted
2 tbsp olive oil
Salt
¾ glass of water

Preparation

On our kitchen bench, we form a small heap of flour and right in the middle, we pour some olive oil, water and salt and knead thoroughly, until we get a soft and malleable pastry. We let it rest for about 30 minutes and then go on to flatten the necessary four dough sheets for our pie. In the meantime, we make the pie filling by cutting the spinach leaves, slice the leeks, zucchini, dill and fennel. Mix all the above ingredients and add eggs and mash the feta cheese with the help of a fork. Add some salt, if needed. Spread some oil on a baking pan and place the first two dough sheets on its bottom then add one half of the filling, cover with the other sheets and put the rest of the filling on it. Top with the last one of the four dough sheets. Sprinkle with some drops of oil and water. Bake in a well pre-heated oven for 30 min. at 200°C. Take the pie out of the oven and let it cool. Finally you have to cut into portions and serve.

Dragon houses

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Dolmas with vine-leaves

Suggested by Kyriakos Moutsis, restaurant owner, Karystos

Montofoli

Ingredients

40 fresh vine leaves
800 gr. minced meat from veal
200 gr. minced meat from pork
1 water glass American-type rice
2 large dry onions, chopped
3 fresh green onions, chopped
1 leek, chopped
1 tbsp spearmint leaves, chopped , Salt
Freshly ground pepper

For the egg and lemon sauce

3 eggs
Juice from 4 fresh lemons

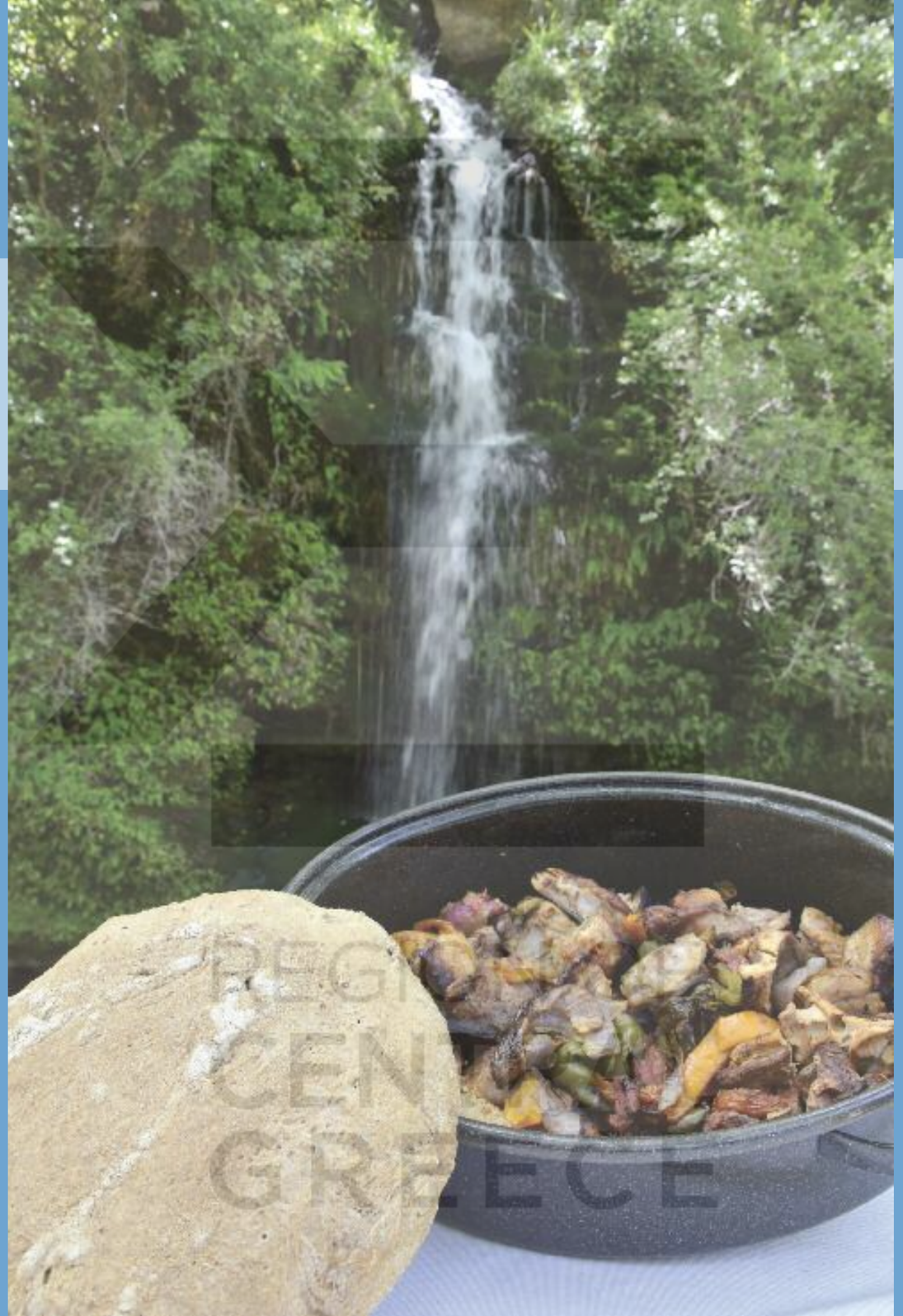
For the cream

3 cups broth, 2 tbsp of "niseste",
a very fine flour, resembling corn flour
2 fresh eggs , Juice from 2 lemons

Preparation

Use a large bowl to prepare the "dolmas" filling using the chopped onions, rice, spearmint, minced meat, salt and pepper. Mix well using your hands to get a homogeneous filling.
Immerse vine leaves in boiling water for an instant, take them out and have them ready to be filled.
Place a small portion of the filling inside each leaf and roll it in such a way as to make it seem like a small pillow.
Arrange them carefully in several layers on top of each other, using a saucepan, whose bottom you have previously covered with either aromatic herbs or vine leaves, to avoid the dolmas` sticking at the bottom.
Fill the saucepan with the water quantity that is needed to cover them. Add approx. ¾ of a water glass olive oil and then cover them with a porcelain plate to get them steady when they are being cooked. Bring to boil for 45 - 60 minutes over moderate heat.
Take them out from the heat and strain them to get the broth left in the saucepan.
Beat the egg whites to get a thick meringue and then add the yolks, slowly stirring the whole time.
Add lemon juice and the broth that you got when you strained them.
Pour the sauce over the dolmas in the saucepan, while shaking it to avoid their sticking at the bottom.
Prepare the white cream with broth and niseste and take it out from the heat.
Beat eggs and lemon and use the mix to top the dolmas.
When they start getting cool, serve with freshly baked bread and feta cheese.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



"Kondosouvli" spit-roasted BBQ pork

Suggested by Anna Gaspari, chef, Karystos

Ingredients

For a whole large-sized spit

3 kg pork loin or "pancetta"
4 fresh red sweet peppers from Florina, sliced
4 green peppers, sliced
4 orange pepper, sliced
2 large dry onions, sliced
2 water glasses of local white wine
1 water glass of prime quality olive oil
Juice from 3 fresh lemons
Ground oregano
2 whole stems of oregano
Sea salt
Freshly ground peppers
Paprika

Preparation

Wash the meat and cut it into portions of at least 3cmX10cm each. You should start preparing the grill during the previous afternoon, by marinating the meat in a large bowl with wine, olive oil, lemon juice, all the oregano, salt and pepper. Cover the bowl with some plastic film and keep it in the lower level of the refrigerator overnight. Take out the bowl with the meat and let it stay in room temperature two hours before you start threading it to the spit. When you are about to do that, you should clean the spit with the six lemon halves, while you give it a stint of citrus fruit at the same time. Wash fresh peppers thoroughly. Light the grill fire using either wood or charcoal and wait until it is ready for grilling. Now, start threading the meat peaces alternating them with peppers, the following way: One meat bit, one red pepper; then another meat bit followed by a green pepper and so forth....

You can now lower the grilling temperature by throwing some ashes to the fire, because the secret of a good "kondosouvli" lies in "ashing it" and get a kind of "subdued" fire the whole time.

When you are grilling or barbecuing the meat, it is necessary to start turning the spit slowly, preferably by letting other people participate and help you with this chore. It will take you about 60-90 min. to get it ready. Take the spit out of the fire, before serving the meat portions that are taken down from it while you are holding it upright on a baking pan. Serve the "kondosouvli" by mixing meat portions and peppers to make it look colorful and tastier.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Roasted stuffed goat meat in dutch oven

Suggested by Sevasti Zografou, famous cook and butcher

Ingredients

1 goat 7 kg or two upper parts of a goat
1 ½ water glass American rice
2 big dry onions, chopped
1 bunch fresh spearmint leaves chopped
250 gr fresh Karystos non salted cheese,
or even "kefalotyri" cheese , 1 tsp tomato paste
1 slice hard bread, grated , Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper

For the potatoes

1kg coarsely sliced small potatoes

For the gravy added to the oven-baked potatoess

2 fresh lemons
1 tbsp strong-tasting mustard sauce, 1 wine glass olive oil

Preparation

Prepare the goat for the oven, using some salt and pepper.
Sauté the chopped onion with oil in a saucepan until it becomes transparent.
Add 1 ½ glass of hot water, rice, spearmint and tomato paste.
When the filling is boiled and soft, add some grated cheese and bread crumbs and stir with a wooden spoon.
Place the meat in a large baking pan and fill the belly or other cavities that you slit with a knife with the rice filling you have prepared.
Keep the filling inside the meat by stitching both sides of the opening, using a needle and some strong thread to seal it.
Mix all sauce ingredient thoroughly in a little bowl.
Place the filled goat together with the potatoes and the sauce in a large ceramic well-covered recipient.
Bake in a well-heated oven for 90 minutes at 200°C. Then, lower the heat to 180°C and go on for about 1 hour.
Take the whole recipient out and let it cool a bit, in order to cut it.
Serve the baked potatoes all around it and sprinkle it with some fresh oregano, small cherry tomatoes locally produced.

Cyclaminen

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Stifado”, the Virgin Mary celebration stew

By the Oxylithos Union

The Virgin Mary celebration day, on the 15th of August at Oxylithos is a unique experience, both ceremonial and culinary; the place being on a hill that is in fact an inactive or “sleeping” volcano. This is the biggest religious feast in Evia and its origins are traced way back in time.

The treat called “stifado”, with its traditional taste, plays the most important role in the culinary “happenings” met in this area, occurring mainly during religious festivities called “panygiria”. It is reputed that it was blessed by the Holy Virgin. After the celebratory mass of the day, the “stifado” is blessed by the Bishop. Afterwards, both locals and visitors enjoy a traditional common meal, sharing the exquisite tastes, along with the purest emotions. Any previous diversities lying deep in people`s souls are forgotten and they are forgiving each other on this instance, ending up in a sort of “pitiful unison”, with the help of Virgin Mary. It is well known that this religious feast signifies starting the new season of the year for the inhabitants of Oxylithos. Preparation goes on for several days prior to this event, starting with purchasing or gathering all ingredients, and ending up with cooking the huge meal. All ingredients are locally produced, while several ones are offered free of charge. Cooking is performed with devotion by the whole village, including both grownups and children. Following a slow cooking process and enjoying their tasks, is a probable explanation of the reasons why the villagers manage to give this meal a mellow and exquisite taste.

This religious feast reaches a culinary perfection. It is the celebration of love and forgiveness, starting with the village women distributing basil bunches to all faithful people and ending with the ceremonial preparation of the Blessed “stifado”. They start cooking it at dawn, employing several hours to prepare. A hundred caldrons are needed for this task, each one holding 50 whole portions and the fire needs nothing less than... 6.000 kilograms of firewood.

The necessary ingredients for 5.000 servings are:

2.700 kg of locally produced veal meat, 2.350 kg of tomatoes, 2.250 kg of small dry onions, 300 lit of olive oil, 600 lit of white wine, 30 kg of sea salt, 2 kg of pepper, 2 kg of allspice, 3 garlic “braids”, 2 kg of bay leaves, 400 gr of cumin and some rosemary twigs.

The cooking procedure is as follows:

They fill the big caldrons with water and boil the meat, letting it simmer for some hours. Then, the “master chef” taste the meat and when it gets tender, they give a ”signal” to add the olive oil, and sauté the concoction. Afterwards they add onions, garlic and tomatoes. Towards the end, they add wine, salt and the rest of the spices to let them give away their aromatic essences. This can be a unique and worthwhile culinary venue you have to attend to, at least once in your lifetime.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Baklava from Kymi

Suggested by the Sideraki sisters, confectionery, Kymi

Ingredients

For a round baking pan with diameter of 45 cm

100 ready-made thin “fyllo” sheets from Psachna, called “Beirut fyllo”
3 kg almonds, finely minced
1 ½ kg sheep`s butter from Kymi

For the syrup

1 ½ lit water
2 kg white sugar
1 kg pine - or fir- scented honey
Juice of 1 lemon
A little lemon peel

Preparation

Let half the amount of butter to melt in a little saucepan and apply 100 gr of it on the baking pan, using a brush.
Start applying all fyllo sheets on the baking pan, gradually, in the following manner: They should have the same diameter of 45 cm as that of our baking pan.
Place the first four dough sheets and sprinkle the fourth one with some butter. Repeat the same thing three more times.
After that, sprinkle the last sheet with butter and cover its surface with 1 ½ handfull of minced almonds. Place one more sheet above the first layer of filling, sprinkle it with butter and cover it with one more layer of almonds, as previously done.
Go on with alternating fyllo and filling until we have filled the whole pan to the top.
Finish all layers with 4 more double sheets, all of them brushed with butter.
Cut the baklava in portions following a rhomb pattern pour all the remaining butter over it and bake for 2 hours in a well pre-heated oven at 160ºC.
Let it cool, while you are preparing the syrup.
Put all syrup ingredients in a saucepan and bring to boil stirring all the time until it thickens.
Pour the syrup over the cool baklava while it is still hot.
Serve the baklava after one hour.

Tip

If we wish, we can enrich its flavor by adding some cinnamon, clove and a little cognac.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Fig Marmalade with Chios Mastiha

Suggested by Chryssoula Papalexi, hotelier

Ingredients

2 kg of fresh figs unpeeled, cut into either 4 or 6 parts
1 kg sugar
Peel and juice from 1 lemon
1 small cup of mastiha liquor

Preparation

Wash all figs and discard stems and hard parts underneath.
Let them rest for one evening before cooking them. Use only half of the sugar on top of them.
This process helps them drain their liquids.
Next morning boil the figs in a large saucepan stirring with a wooden spoon.
Add the remaining sugar and both the lemon peel and juice.
Boil over a moderate heat.
Avoid getting yourself burned from the bubbles forming over the boiling fig syrup.
Don`t overcook the marmalade and avoid making it too dense.
To find out whether it is ready or not, try using the proven method consisting of dropping a bit of marmalade on a frozen plate.
The sign given when the marmalade is still "standing" after you drop it on the frozen plate and not flattened immediately, means that it is ready.
Just before taking it out of the heat, add the cognac and let the marmalade simmer for a little while.
Let it "rest" for about 10 min.
Use a large wooden spoon to fill up some sterilized glass jars to the top. Put the lid on and turn them upside down, letting the jars "rest" for a day.
After that, they are ready to use.

Quince spoon sweet

Suggested by Irene Papatsarouha, Aidipsos

Ingredients

800 gr. quince
800 gr. sugar
2 stems pelargonia flower
2 ½ glasses water
Juice of one lemon
100 gr. almonds, bleached and crushed

Preparation

Peel the quince and cut them in small sticks.
Use a saucepan to make the syrup with warm water and sugar. Bring to boil.
Add the quince and boil them for 10 min until you get a thick syrup.
Before ending the whole cooking process, add lemon juice, pelargonia and almonds.
Shake well and wait until the mix is cool.
Fill some glass jars to the top and seal.
Turn them upside down overnight and the next day they are ready to be stored in a cool and dark place.
They can be kept this way for several months, while sealed. If they are opened they must be placed in the refrigerator.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Fried bread with heather honey topping

Suggested by Marina Koutsopoulou, chef

Ingredients

500 gr wheat flour
1 cup water
50 gr. sugar
1 tsp salt
1 envelope dry yeast
1 tbsp of olive oil
Heather honey

Preparation

Using a bowl, mix dry yeast, sugar, salt and flour. Stir gently, while you add water, until you make a dough that you let rest for about 30 minutes.
Knead the dough while you add some olive oil.
Form some small balls that you then flatten, using your hands only.
Deep fry in hot sunflower oil until they get red-golden from both sides.
Serve with heather honey topping.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Amygdalota”, almond cookies for wedding celebrations

Suggested by Assimina Getimi, N. Artaki

Ingredients

2 kg of skin-free almonds, bleached
2 kg confectioner`s sugar
2 whole egg
6 - 8 egg whites only
A small amount of bitter almond

Preparation

Bleach the almonds by immersing them briefly in boiling hot water, to rid them of their brown skin and then dry them.
Put them in a bowl, together with confectioner`s sugar and stir. Now use an electric blender where you put all the eggs in the mixing bowl and then start adding the almond mix until you get a malleable dough.
Cut the dough in small pieces and form various shapes, like flowers or hearts, even arranging them together to form larger patterns.
Arrange them on a baking pan with some baking paper underneath and bring them to bake in a well pre-heated oven for 1 hour at 100°C.
When they are ready, take them out of the oven and let them dry. We can even use some confectioner`s color to brush them with. They are simply marvelous.

Traditional wedding sugar buns from N. Artaki

Suggested by Eleni Niti, N. Artaki

Ingredients

4 kg confectioner`s sugar, sifted
4 kg wheat flour No 2, sifted
2 kg margarine

Preparation

Put the vegetable-butter in an electric blender bowl and work with it for about 20 minutes at maximum speed, until it gets fluffy.
Slowly, add the confectioner`s sugar that you have equally sifted in advance, reducing the blender speed to a minimum and then resume the original maximum speed, gradually.
Change the blender utensil to the special one for kneading dough and add all the flour sugared buns, until you realize that the dough is malleable.
The dough can now be formed in various shapes like, for example, leaves, flowers and several other patterns.
Arrange all “sugared buns” on a baking pan, using some baking paper underneath.
Bake in a well pre-heated oven for about 20 min. at 170°C.
Let them cool without covering them.

Almond Pie from Mantoudi

Suggested by Natasa Xatziarvaniti, Mantoudi

Ingredients

For the syrup
400 gr. sugar
3ml water
1 tsp cognac
Juice from a lemon
1 vanilla

For the sponge cake
1 ½ tea cups grated almonds
2 cups peeled toast
5 eggs
300 gr. sugar
1 cup butter, softened
1 cup cognac
1 tbsp. baking powder

Preparation

Prepare the syrup by adding the ingredients. Once the sugar dissolves, remove it from the fire and let it cool down.
In a bowl, add and mix well all the solids, almond crust, toast, baking powder.
Mix the melting butter with sugar, crock and cognac.
Mix the eggs in a tight meringue.
Stir the solids with the sugar butter mixture with gentle movements.
Add the meringue slowly.
Apply in a buttered pan and bake in the air in a preheated oven at 180ºC for 35-40 minutes.
Sap the hot almond pie with the cold syrup. Let it cool a bit, in order to cut it.
Serve it with almonds and coconut grated.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Fava of Skyros

Suggested by Amersa Panagiotou, Magazia

Ingredients

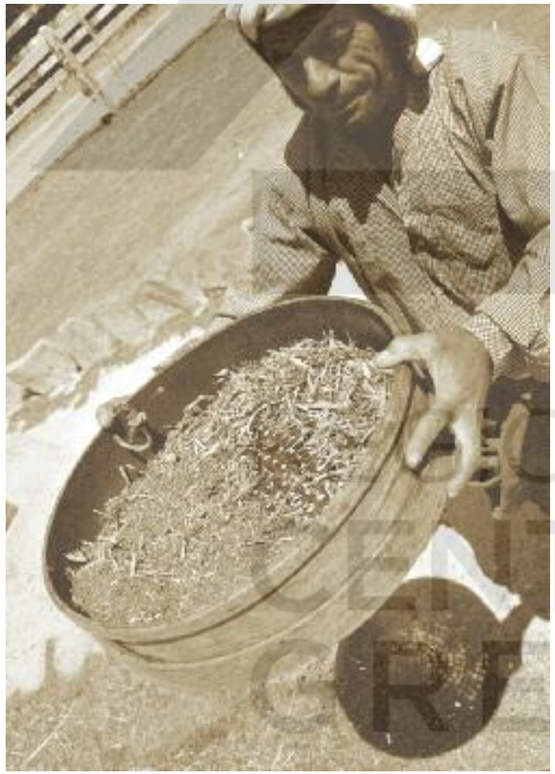
500 gr fava
60 gr onion
30 gr peppers
120 ml fine olive oil
Wild dill
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper corns

Topping

Olive oil
Black olives
Chopped onion
Wild dill stems
or fresh fava seeds

Preparation

Clean the fava split peas from small stones and impurities.
Wash and drain well.
Put in a saucepan with 1 liter of water together with onion and peppers and bring to boil.
When it starts boiling, lower the heat and get rid of the foam produced.
Add salt and continue simmering for about 1 hour, stirring the whole time with a wooden kitchen spoon. Before ending the cooking, add the wild dill and pepper corns.
When the fava gets thick, take it out from the heat and add olive oil. Use an electric mixing rod to make it softer like a velvet cream.
Serve in a deep plate topping it with olives, olive oil, chopped onion and dill stems.



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Olive oil pie of Skyros

Suggested by Anna Koutsoupi, Chora

Ingredients

3 ½ cups flour
1 portion, one envelope dry yeast
1 pinch salt
A certain quantity of lukewarm water
Olive oil

Preparation

Mix flour and salt
in a bowl and then form
a little cavity on the
flour heap,
where you place
the dry yeast.
Add 1 ½ cup of water.
Make a dough working and
kneading for about 10 min.
Cover and let it rest
in a warm environment for
about one hour,
until it doubles its size!
Divide this dough in 6
equal parts and knead them
too, making small balls.
Cover the dough balls and
let them rest for
another 20 min.
To deep fry these small balls
in a non-sticking pan,
flatten them, until they get
the size of your frying pan
and pour some oil in it.
When the oil gets really
hot, fry each plate,
one at a time on
both sides,
until they get a golden
surface.
Now they are ready to
serve.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Lobster with spaghetti

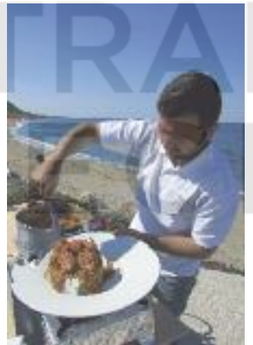
Suggested by Manolis Vasilakos, restaurant owner, Skyros

Ingredients

1 lobster, weighing 1.300 gr
2 average sized onions
Some stems dill and wild dill
Salt
Freshly ground pepper corns
4 garlic cloves
250 ml olive oil for both sautéing and cooking
2 fresh tomatoes
2 tbsp tomato paste
250 gr spaghetti nr. 6 or 10

Preparation

Wash the lobster and find the specific spot under its tail, where the first clog of sand is found, having the shape of an oval membrane; then find the second one under its chest, having a round shape. Discard them both.
Use a sharp knife to slice the tail in 5-6 round slices and slit the main part of the body in 2 parts, lengthwise.
Chop onion and garlic and sauté them in some olive oil and then add the lobster.
Continue sautéing the lobster, until it gets a red color.
Add some water to cover it and then tomato, tomato paste, dill, wild dill, salt pepper and let it simmer for 10-15 min.
Keep the cooking liquid, produced from boiling the lobster and use it to boil the spaghetti for about 8-10 minutes.
Serve in a large plate.



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Traditional goat meat with rice

Suggested by Eufrosini Eugenikou, hotelier, Chora

Ingredients

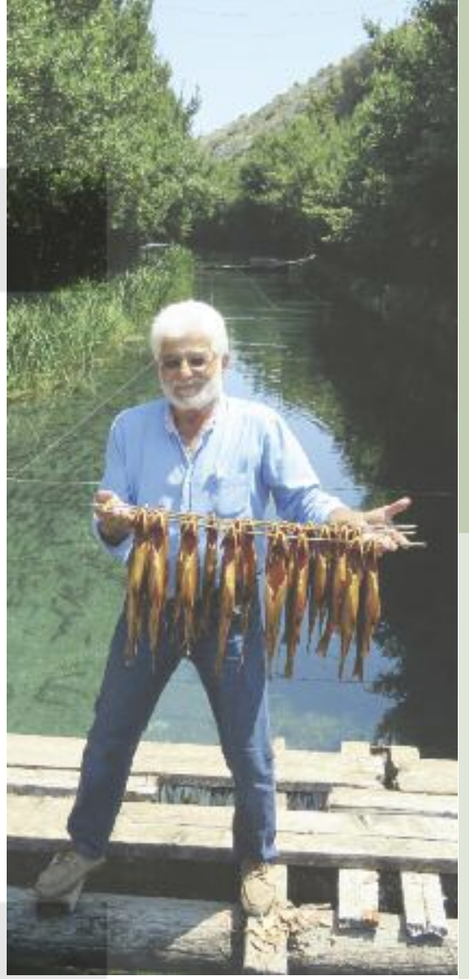
1½ kg of local Skyros goat meat, cut into individual portions
2 large onions chopped
4 garlic cloves chopped
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper
2 tbsp flour, all purpose
The juice of 2 lemons
1 cup olive oil

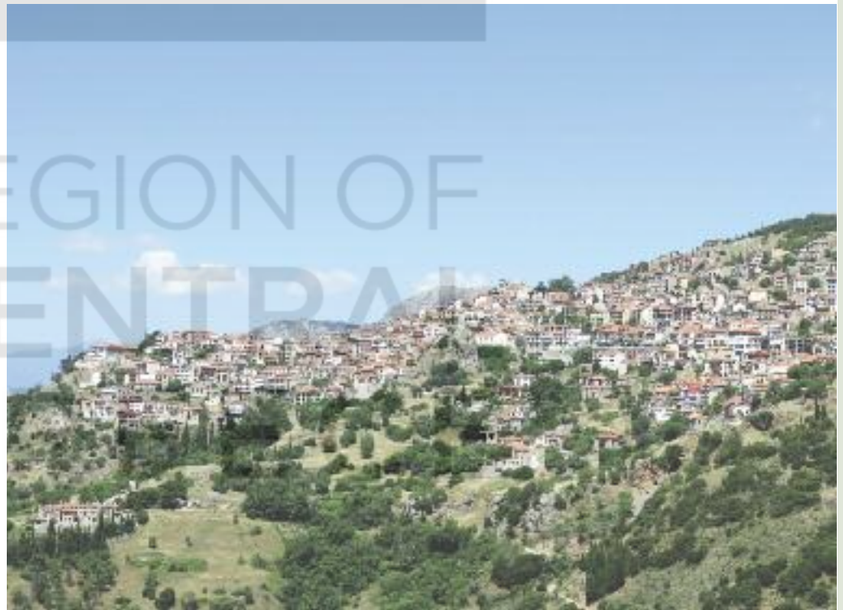
Preparation

Using a large and deep frying pan, sauté the meat portions in olive oil until they get a golden hue, turning them from all sides with some kitchen tongs.
Discard excess oil quantity.
Sauté onion and garlic in some oil, using a large saucepan. When they get a golden hue, add the goat meat that you have previously salted and peppered.
Add hot water and let it boil for another 90 minutes or so, depending on the meat quality.
Perforate the meat by using a fork, in order to find out whether it is ready or not. The right moment is when no liquid is coming out.
Use a bowl to mix flour with ½ a cup of water, add lemon juice and then add this sauce to the saucepan containing the meat, shaking it very well to avoid lumps in the sauce.
Simmer the meat and sauce mix to get a nice homogeneous sauce with no clotting.
Serve with cooked rice or potatoes fries.

Koudounati

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



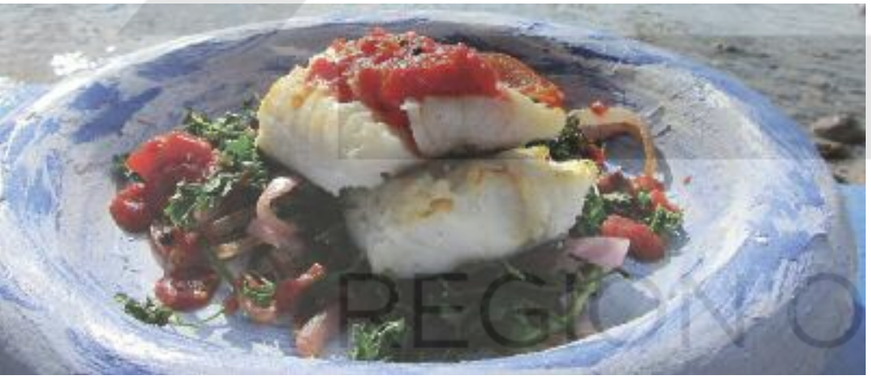


VIOTIA

Across roads of cultures, a meeting point of antiquity with yesterday and today. A place that is as beautiful as it is fertile. A place of contrast and wonder. Our first stop is **Thiva** (Thebes), one of the most ancient and most powerful cities of Greece, since it played a dominant role in Greece in the 4th century.
Thiva of the seven gates and seven hills. According to mythology, Hercules, Dionysus, Pindar, as well as the famous General Epaminondas were all born here. Its new museum is considered one of the top three in Greece, so a visit here provides ideal food for thought. If you wish to have a panoramic view of the area, climb up to the 12th century **Monastery of Metamorphosis** or **Sagmata**. It is worth it... Evia seems so close that you think the mountains are within touching distance; lakeYliki is life-giving, since it provides Athenians with water, while the entire valley is at your feet. The land's produce is bountiful; its onions and potatoes are renowned.
Head to **Vagia** to enjoy rizogalo rice pudding and various cheeses. In **Mazi** you can get delicious bread made with locally produced flour. The **Valley of the Muses** is a vast vineyard, at the foot of **Mount Helicon**, mythological haunt of the 9 Muses. In **Evangelistria** you will enjoy the beauty of nature and hospitality of a hostel straight out of a fairy-tale. In **Aliartos** you will discover Kopaida's curing secrets and in **Asopos**, between the crops and the stud farm, you can enjoy river skiing...
Quite original; if you have no wish to try it, you can always enjoy a cup of coffee. In **Orchomenos**, archaeological sightseeing is varied and significant. Among the sites are the Tholos tomb of Minyas, the Acropolis, the Theatre, and the Church of Panagia Skripous, which is an important religious monument.
At **Charites Springs**, in an astounding natural setup, trout are grown in the river. A landscape of beauty, fortunately designated as a Natura 2000 site. Between the mountains of Parnassos and Helicon lies **Livadia**, the city of waters, of gastronomy, and the good life. It is worth visiting at Easter time, as it would make an experience to remember for years to come.
The custom of spit-roasting in fire pits is brought to life and the entire city becomes a rotisserie. A walk to the springs of Kria, Erkyna river, with its watermill, beautiful trees, running waters, the cool breeze...
Arched stone bridges from the time of Turkish occupation and, yes, you are at the centre of the city... incredible.
The Clock Tower has been standing there since the rule of the Franks in Greece. The **Monastery of Hosios Loukas** is a significant monument, a landscape compelling you to sing the Lord's praise. Olive groves, fields planted with almond trees and fine produce. In stone-built **Arachova** with its snow and fir-forests, you will have a unique view of the olive grove, have a wonderful time, eat well, and tsipouro distilleries can be found just down the road...
Parnassos is gorgeous any time of year... while looking out from the refuge, the lyrics of Nikos Kazantzakis come to mind:
"Nothing is nearer to us than heaven.
The earth is beneath our feet, and we tread upon it, butheaven is within us..."

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

The cuisine



The cuisine of Viotia is all about harmony, balance and smart tasty combinations full of colours and aromas of the earth and the sea. Its mountainous regions offer high quality lamb, goat and ewe meat, the latter being quite popular during meals with family and friends.

The spits are set ready in the blink of an eye and the locals hold the secrets of proper roasting. Easter in Livadia and Arachova is an experience to remember, as lambs are spit-roasted in the streets and squares... Dishes like lamb roasted on vine branches, giouvetsi, lamb-stuffed vine leaves, steaming bean stews, trahana soup made with goat meat, wild greens with rock salt, as well as local sauces with orange cherry tomatoes create unforgettable memories and experiences. Cheese products have an authentic flavour and Arachova's Formaella P.D.O. cheese lends its own distinct flavour to treats cooked over an open fire. Opsimotiri cheese or winter geremezi cheese are ideal as a spread on hot bread or in salads. Feta cheese P.D.O. is delightful when combined with star-quality olive oil and wild oregano. The fertile plain of Kopaida is renowned for its tomatoes, vegetables, greens, carrots, and onions. Viotia's flours are widely known as well, both for their high quality and their nutritional value. They give bread a yellowish hue and flavour that hauntingly good... The customary buns and sweet decorated bread prepared for weddings and joyous occasions are true artworks, as the bread is riddled with dough decorations depicting symbols of happiness and health. The pasta and hand-rolled fyllo pastry are delicious. The pies are fantastic and can be harmoniously paired with sweet trahana, cheese, and herbs. French toasts are made with fresh eggs and stuffed omelets are worth a try. Rooster meat is perfectly combined with trahana, chylopites pasta or thick macaroni; while chicken is cooked quite imaginatively. The chylopites of Thiva, even plain with myzithra, taste like a dream... In Livadia, the spinach pie with a very light and crispy fyllo pastry sheet... and their pasta, made with fresh vegetable pulp, was also amazing... The crunchy carrot spoon sweet is a gastronomic feast. Definitely worth a try... Cured meat products are of excellent quality. Wild mushrooms and wild game cuisine are widely known and genuinely delicious. Visitors may taste a delicious breakfast in Evangelistria, on Mount Helicon; macrobiotic flavors and goodies from their land, as well as local black truffles. A gastronomic experience, where all the senses were involved, surrounded by the sounds of nature and classical music, in a heavenly landscape. Seafood cuisine is also quite prevalent, since Viotia is located between the Evian and the Corinthian gulf, both well-known fishing grounds. The crab pasta is exceptional and the fish snacks accompanied with ouzo or tsipouro are out of this world.

The local wines and beers are exceptional. Orchomenos' trouts hold their own distinctive place in the kitchen. You will certainly crave some yogurt doused with star-quality honey and walnuts or sweet preserves...

The local decadent desserts are karydopita, diples, pancakes sprinkled with crushed walnuts, karydata, syrup desserts, hand-made sweet preserves by Women's Cooperatives and that divine rice pudding with fresh milk from Vagia...

It is all about flavours of well-being, just a breath away from Athens that are sure to delight you.

Cheese making

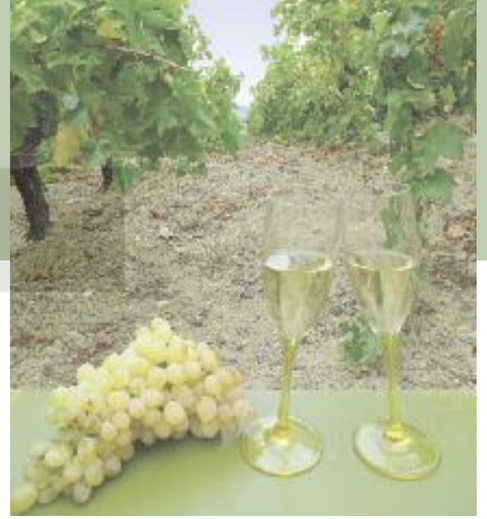
On the slopes of mount Parnassòs at Aràchova village, that dominates the landscape of **Ancient Delphi** and the well known olive groves, the **PDO "Formaella" Cheese** from **Aràchova,** Parnassòs is created.
This special kind of cheese encloses all the aromatic substances of the surrounding forests with the unique biodiversity one can find on Parnassòs.
The small cheeses are round, weighing about 500gr each and have a yellowish color and a rustic taste that is pleasant and aromatic.
It is semi-hard, compact and rather rubbery, with a salty and piquant aftertaste, that surfaces when grilled.
It is registered as a PDO cheese since 1994 and is traditionally produced with either goat`s or sheep`s milk, or a mixture of the above. This top quality milk comes from free-range breeds of sheep and goats, whose pastures rely exclusively on local vegetation. Milking must start about 10 days after the ewes give birth, in order to be substantial and nutritious.

Coagulation of milk for cheese making must start in a time span of 48 hours from milking and when it coagulates, a strict temperature schedule must be followed. It is not permitted to use additives of any kind for this particular cheese, neither can proteins, salt, coloring, preserving or antibiotic substances be used to facilitate this procedure. The only thing allowed in this process is the traditional rennet or curd.
The "formaella" cheese making process is standardized and has been followed for a long period of time.
Maturation and cheese making is exclusively done locally.
The original cylindrical shape is a result of using special baskets made of wicker twigs, used as molds for maturation and getting the special naturally formed crust.

The traditional recipe

Coagulation of milk, aiming at cheese making, starts with heating milk to a temperature of approx. 32° C. After coagulation that lasts for about 2 hours, cheese masses are heated to reach 40° C under a time span of 10 minutes. Later, it is formed into big clumps filling some molds that fit the right cheese size; they are called «forms» or «small baskets» measuring 8X13 cm. Those molds containing cheese are then lowered into a bed of whey with a temp. of 60° C, for one hour. They are taken out of the whey bed and turned upside down and the re-fitted into the molds. Later, they are sunk into a pre-heated whey with a temp. of 75-80° C for one more hour.
The process then followed is taking the cheeses out of the liquid and salting them. After that, they are left to dry for about 24 hours. The next step is to take them out of their molds and put them in open shelves and left to dry there for 4 days. This way "formaella" cheese is ready to be consumed either grilled or fried.
Mount Parnassòs is one of the places where our national cheese, otherwise called our white gold, Feta is produced. It is a semi-hard cheese displaying a pleasant balance between a slightly sour taste and a mild saltiness. It is made of sheep`s and goat`s milk with a great nutritional value. This specific "feta" variety, kept to mature in wood barrels, is snow white, with a buttery and piquant taste reminding us of fresh milk.
Feta is a very good source of proteins, vitamins B and D, calcium, magnesium and zink. Its consumption fortifies our immune system. Some specialized cheese makers with their roots in farming families, are able to transform milk coming from their herds into masterly created cheese sorts, like **Saganotyri, Greek Gravièra, Kefalotyri, smoked cheeses**, a winter time fresh cheese called **Gheremèzi** containing 10% fat, **Opsimotyri** and traditional yoghurt coming from goat`s milk of an excellent quality, that reminds us of the fresh air on the mountains and planes of our country.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Vineyards and wine

The vineyards extend mainly from the famous Muses Valley and Vagia to the mountain slopes. The terroir is of ideal quality, making it easy for Viotian winemakers to produce high quality, unique wines representative of each grape variety.
The cultivation of the vineyards is carried out by respecting the environment and winemaking is done with the use of specialized techniques.
Indigenous varieties are the pride of the production, with **Mouchtaro** being the most celebrated wine, a local red variety that has been preserved and revived by a well-known family of winemakers.
Indigenous white varieties are Kontoura, **Malagouzia** and **Savatiano** wines**. Kontoura white** is an indigenous Greek variety planted in the Muses Valley and is a unique clone of Savatiano, a widely known and particularly well-acclimated variety in Central Greece.
This uniqueness of the plants combined with the terroir of the Viotian land produce the raw material used for fine wines.
As regards to foreign varieties, **Merlot**, **Grenache Rouge**, **Syrah** and **Sauvignon** have acclimatized perfectly.
The winemaking and bottling of wines is carried out at the local wineries. Most of the wineries can be visited. A guided tour in the vineyards and wine tasting is the best thing you can do... In a place full of energy, with vineyards that "give birth" to memorable wines.
Winemakers of the area preserve the wooden wine press from 1800, where locals pressed the grapes, as well as the botsa, the measuring equipment usedfor wine... In a place where the past meets the present...

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

The crops

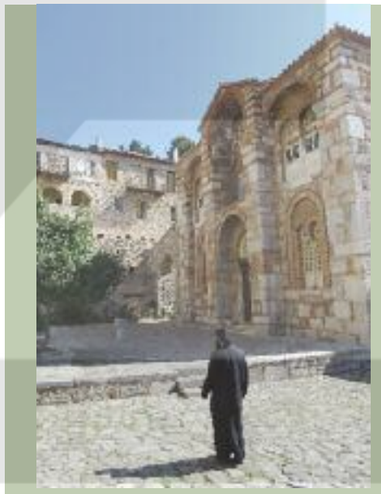
In the fertile plain of Kopaida the crops extend to 4,046 hectares, of which 1,550 hectares are dedicated to the cultivation of onions and 490 hectares to the cultivation of carrots. Viotia comes first in onion production with 85,918 tons and 9,815 tons of carrot.
Fruit is grown in an area of 71 hectares. It is worth mentioning that Central Greece is the biggest cultivator of cabbage in Greece and also cultivator 70% of carrots, 55% of onions, and 55% of chicory, out of the total cultivation.
Both the microclimate of the area and the abundant water favour crop production.
Summer tomatoes are of excellent quality, grains are very fine and olive groves are well-kept.
Potatoes are special as well and the area holds a long history of land cultivation.
The Greek poet Hesiod was the first to describe what parts the plow should consist of.
In ancient years, the Hesiod plow was used in the Muses Valley to cultivate the land.
In its original form it was wooden, but over the years it was made of metal while maintaining the same shape.
It is the basic type of plow for the cultivation of land that continued to be used until recently, up to the emergence of agricultural machinery.
An authentic replica of the plow is safeguarded by local winemakers.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Fish farming

In a unique natural setting, in Charites Springs (Three Graces), in the Orchomenos plain, declared a Natura 2000 site, trout are grown.
The waters come from the melting snow of Parnassos, ending up in the Charites Springs and the Melana river.
The riverbed has been taken care of, and the banks are built with stone.
With a hard effort and by the use of exclusively natural materials, the marshland has been turned into a place to behold. By doing so, the whole area became proper for trout farming.
2,000 trees and aquatic plants have been planted in the area, providing proper shading and food to the trout, achieving a harmonious growth of the fish within this natural environment.
The trout bred are rainbow trout, living in a completely natural environment and giving a very high quality product.
In the central stream of the river, large and medium sized trout are bred, while smaller ones and the spawn are bred in the right and left waterways.
The water volume is about one cubic meter for 20 trout.
Since trout grow in an ideal environment, they obtain an intense pink color, strong flavor, and are of high nutritional value.
As soon as the trout gain the proper weight, they are caught in special containers, washed, cleaned, and kept in brine for 18 hours.
They are then air dried and beechwood smoked.
The next steps are gutting, slicing, and packaging. Annual production is estimated at 45-50 tons per year.
The visit here is an absolute experience...

The Monastery of Hosios Loukas



The famous Monastery of Hosios Loukas (Saint Luke) is situated at a scenic site at the western slopes of Mount Helicon, shortly after the town of Distomo.
This 1,000 year old monastery has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its aesthetic and architectural values are unique; the mosaics are a typical example of the incredible art of the Middle Byzantine era. The mosaics and marble inlays, the alabaster windows, the marble column capitals, and of course the composite and asymmetrical building with the two great churches stand out; so do the Church of the Theotokos (Panagia) and the Katholikon, the burial crypt, the bell tower, the cells, the guest houses (archontarikia), the museum, the old oil press. The monastery is dedicated to the miracle-working local saint, and soon acquired unique radiancedue to the fact that its art is considered as a model for all byzantine monuments in Greece in the 11th century. Katholikon construction is chronologically to have taken place in the first decades of the 11th century and, according to tradition, is attributed to three Byzantine emperors: Romanos II, Basil II (nicknamed the Bulgar Slayer) and Constantine IX Monomachus. Incoming tourists are unexpectedly rising in number. About 2,000 tourists visit the hospitable monastery on a daily basis have loukoumi, cool water, or tsipouro to receive blessings. Annual consumption of loukoumi exceeds 2 tons. The monumental olive grove of the Monastery generously offers its crops and the organic olive oil is of excellent quality. The organic cultivation of the olive grove is completely natural, without any interventions. The olive oil is organically produced as well. Their olives are packed in containers with plenty of olive oil and sent all over the world. The monastery's almond grove offers crops of high nutritional value and the herbs are exceptional. Tsipouro and wine are produced in small quantities.
The vegetable gardensand lands of the monastery could serve as material for a field study in gastronomy.

OUR RECIPES

VIOTIA

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Peasant bread

Suggested by Dimitris Zygogianni, baker, Mazi

Ingredients

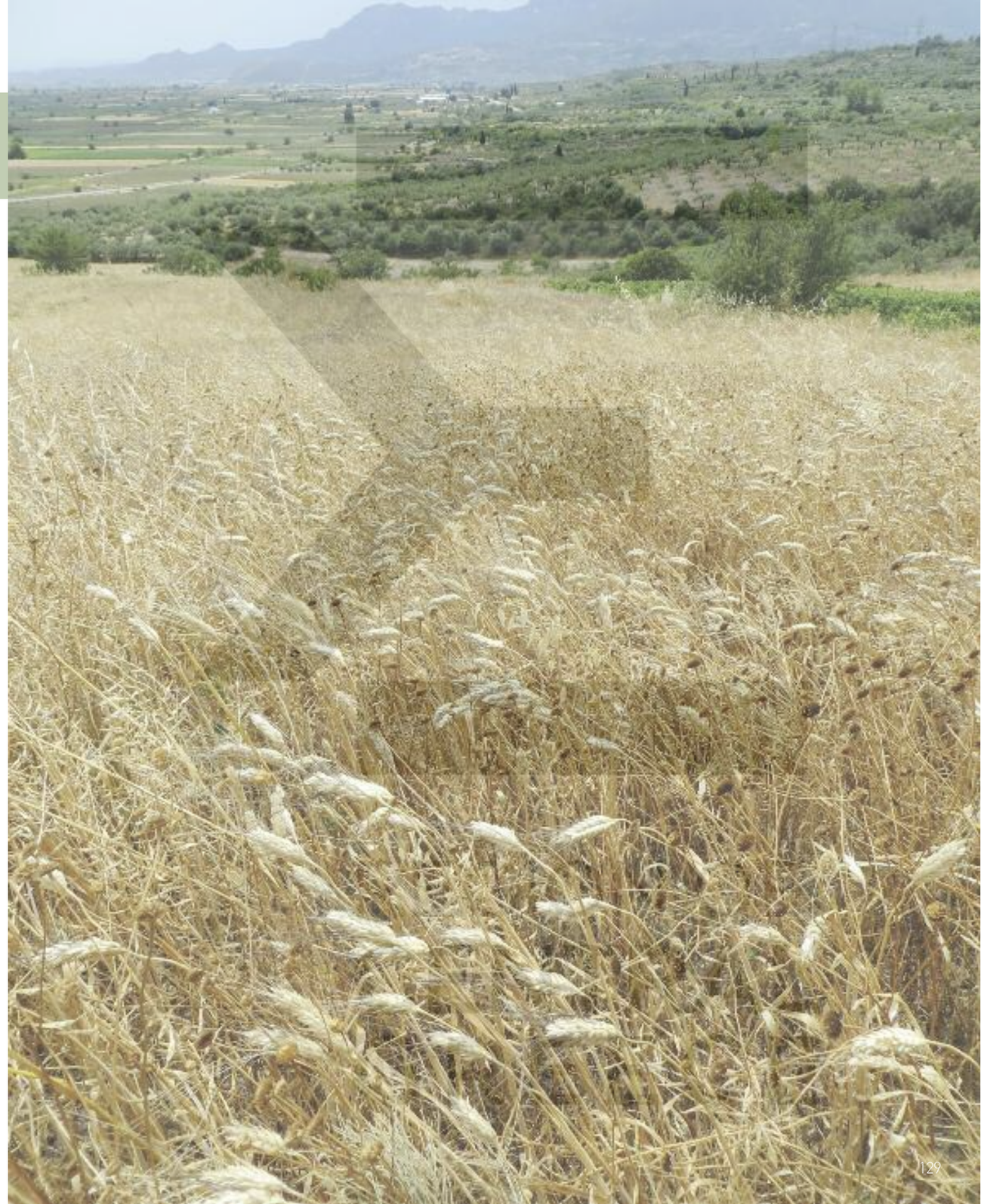
For a loaf of bread

1 kg soft wheat flour No2, sifted
2 envelopes dry yeast
1 tsp salt
1 wine-glass olive oil
850 ml pure fountain water, "as much as needed"
sesame

Preparation

Dissolve the granulated dry yeast in a glass of lukewarm water, stirring with a fork.
Using a large bowl, knead your dough with flour, salt, olive oil and yeast, working vigorously and using the appropriate amount of fresh water so that you get a soft and malleable paste, that results in having a fluffy bread.
Let the dough rest in a warm place of the kitchen usually for one hour during summer and 3 hours during winter.
When it has swelled, knead the dough once more and put it on a baking pan. Let it rest for about half to one more hour.
Sprinkle some sesame seeds, if you prefer.
Punch some small holes with a toothpick.
Bake in a pre-heated oven for approx. 1 hour at 180°C.
Let the bread cool for 1 more hour after taking it out of the oven and cutting it into slices.

REGIONE CENTRAL GREECE



REGION OF
CENTRAL
GREECE

Embroidered wedding-bread

Suggested by Anthi Dritsa, Mavromati

Ingredients

For the bread
1 ½ kg all purpose wheat flour
3 small envelopes dry yeast
3 tsp sea salt
1 tbsp anise seeds
"Chios mastic" in powder form
3 cups of water, approx.

For the dough "embroidery"
Dough
Confectioner`s colors

Preparation

Place all ingredients in a big bowl, that is flour, yeast, salt, anise seeds, mastic powder and finally water.
Mix thoroughly by hand to make a dough that we let stand and rest until it doubles its size.
Spread some oil on the baking pan and place the loaf of dough to bake, forming any shape you wish.
Bake in a well pre-heated oven for 45-60 min. at 200º C
The loaf is then decorated by employing something called as "ineffective dough" made by equal quantities of flour and salt adding the appropriate amount of water.
Choose any color you wish and then let the dough rest some more to get a uniform consistence.
Before the baking procedure is over we form the decoration on it and then we brush it with some egg white to give it a glossy appearance.
Resume baking for 10 more minutes at a temp of 100º C to get the decorations as solid as the rest of our bread.
The result of our efforts is going to be worthwhile.

Spinach and cheese pie with sweet “trahana”

Suggested by Vassilis Kaskaveliotis, pasta producer, Thiva

Ingredients

For the dough sheets

1 kg flour for all purpose
2 shot-glasses vinegar
300 ml olive oil
Water, as much as needed

For the filling

800 gr feta cheese from Vayia
200 gr sour “trahanas”
1 kg spinach, slightly boiled
1 finely chopped dry onion
200 ml olive oil
50 gr anises seeds
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Use a rather big bowl or a flat kitchen working area to make a heap of flour you have previously sifted, with a small cavity in the middle, in order to pour all liquid ingredients. Work with your dough until it gets soft and malleable and stops sticking to your hands.
Let the dough rest for about 15 min. and form some small balls weighing about 150 gr each.
Spread some oil on a 45 cm baking pan and start confectioning the dough sheets.
Mix all filling ingredients to form an even paste.
Spread some oil on each dough sheet, before filling it with that paste and roll it. Place each roll on the baking pan.
Using a brush, spread some oil one a chroll and bake in a well pre-heated oven for about 55 min at a temp of 200°C. Cut in portions when cool.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Traditional cheese pie from the mountain

Suggested by Konstantinos Stamatis, Arachova

Ingredients

For a large baking pan

For the dough

1 ½ kg soft wheat flour, special for making pies
2 cups "nisestè", fine wheat flour resembling corn flour
1 tsp salt
1 wine glass olive oil
Village spring water, "as much as needed"

For the fillingn

1200 gr local feta cheese.
700 ml olive oil
12 fresh eggs

Preparation

Put the flour, that you have previously sifted, in a big bowl and form a small cavity in the middle to put olive oil, a small amount of water and salt and start working with the paste, lifting it to "let it breathe".
When kneading, use some more water, as much as needed, to have a soft and malleable dough that doesn`t stick on your hands.
Use the dough to form12 small balls and place them on a baking plate covered with a plastic film.
Let the dough balls rest in a warm place for about 30 minutes.
Flatten them with a rod, making one dough sheet out of each of the 12 balls.
Sprinkle with the "nisestè" flour to avoid their sticking together.
In the mean time, prepare then filling in the following manner:
Beat the 12 eggs and the olive oil.
Still in another bowl, mash the feta cheese with a fork. Use some water to make its ofter.
Add the feta paste to the eggs until you get an even paste for the filling. Use a brush to spread some olive oil on the baking pan and then add each dough sheet with a portion of the filling on it until you have used them all.
The filling has to cover the whole baking pan area, each time you put a new layer on.
You have to finish with a dough sheet that you have to sprinkle with oil and some drops of water.
Start baking in a traditional village baking oven that you have previously pre-heated by making a wood fire. The time needed is about 25-30 min.
When using an electric oven instead, you have to pre - heat it at 250°C for the first 5 minutes.
Then, you have to lower at 200°C and go on for about 20-25 min. until you get a crunchy and golden pie.
Take it out of the oven and let it cool for about 20 min. before serving the pie.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Zucchini balls with feta cheese PDO

Suggested by Konstantinos Stamatis, Arachova

Ingredients	Preparation
4 persons	Shred the zucchini, only the outside part excluding the inner seeds. Salt them and let them rest for about 10 min. Sift the zucchini and add all the ingredients. Mix well until you get a sort of paste. Use the zucchini mix to form some small balls that you flatten with your hands to make them thinner. Cover them with flour and deep fry them in olive oil on a non- sticking pan, using 4 min for each side. Fry them on both sides, turning them over with the help of a tong. The temperature must be between medium and high. Let the balls rest in room temperature for 10 minutes. Serve them with some cool yoghurt blended with fresh mint leaves or tzatziki.
1 ½ kg middle sized zucchini	
1 fresh egg	
150 gr boiled and mashed potatoes, purée	
1 tbsp corn flour	
2 middle sized dry onions, finely chopped	
150 gr shredded feta cheese	
20 fresh dill, finely chopped	
40 gr fresh mint leaves, finely chopped	
150 gr yoghurt containing mint leaves, chopped	

Traditional bean soup with wine

Suggested by Xristina Taratsa, Arachova

Ingredients	Preparation
500 gr dry beans	Fill a bowl with wine and put the dry beans in, to soften overnight. Sift them the next morning. Use a saucepan to cook the beans in water that just covers them and let them simmer for about 30 min. Sift them once more. Now, sauté onion, carrots, celery and chervils, adding the tomato paste as well. Put the half-cooked white beans again in the saucepan and add so much water as to cover them, topping them by 3 cm. Simmer once again for 40 min with the lid on. Finally, add crude olive oil, salt, pepper and smoked paprika. Stir gently with a wooden spoon and leave them to simmer for another 5-10 min., until they are really soft and make a creamy soup. Serve the bean soup rather hot.
2 big dry onions finely chopped	
3 carrots, sliced	
2 celery twigs finely chopped	
1 bunch chervils hand-chopped	
2 tbsp tomato concentrate	
1 cup virgin olive oil	
1 lt local white wine	
Salt	
Freshly ground pepper	
Smoked paprika	

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Chicken au gratin with Formaella Arachovas Parnassou PDO, tomatoes, and arugula

Suggested by Afroditi Marda, executive chef

Ingredients

400 gr chicken breasts, cut in portions
200 gr formaella cheese from Arachova (PDO)
100 gr cherry tomatoes
50 ml balsamico syrup
30 gr brown sugar
Salt
Freshly ground pepper
50 ml olive oil
10 rucola leaves

Preparation

Sprinkle chicken fillets with salt and pepper and sauté in some very hot oil in a frying pan, turning it from all sides, with the help of a tong to attain an even color.
Then, place it in a small baking pan together with the formaella cheese and gratinate it for about 6 min. at 180oC.
Repeat this sauté - process with the cherry tomatoes separately for about 2 minutes and then add sugar and balsamico syrup. Let it draw for one more minute to get a candied consistence and take it out of the heat.
Serving suggestions: chicken fillets in the middle of the plate, sided by formaella cheese and cherry tomatoes, sided by some arugula leaves.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Traditional country-style pasta "Hilopites" with trout

Suggested by Giannis Gonias, restaurant owner, Livadia

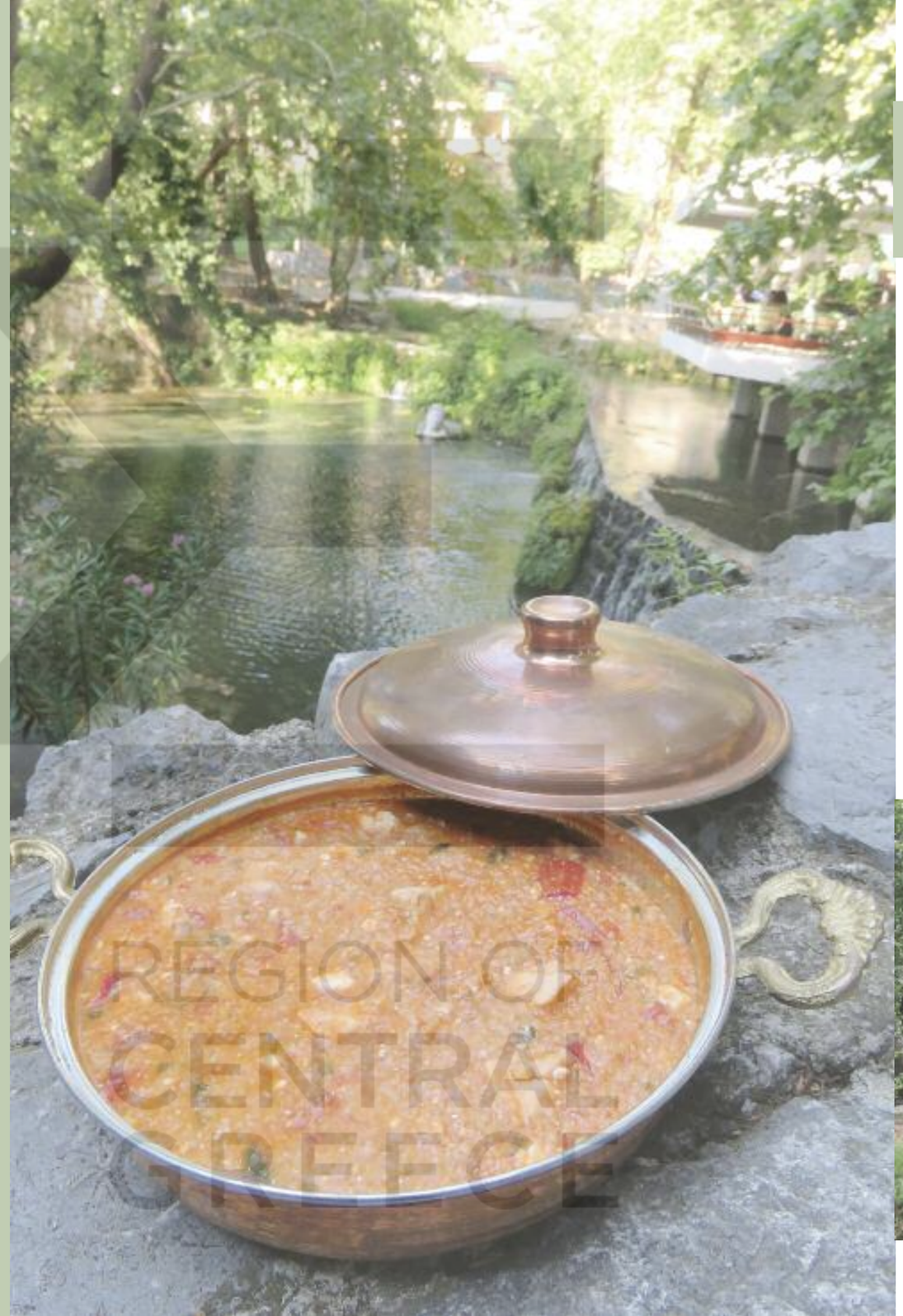
Ingredients

500 gr egg noodles
200 gr trout
50 ml ouzo
150 gr tomato marmalade
2 fresh tomatoes, sliced
10 gr salt
10 gr. parsley
5 gr pepper

Preparation

Cut the trout into bits.
Put them in a saucepan and add some ouzo, and simmer together with fresh tomatoes the tomato marmalade, parsley, salt and pepper plus a little water.
In the mean time, you have been boiling the egg noodles for 3 minutes, separately.
Drain the noodles and add them to the tomato and trout sauce.
Serve immediately as soon as your sauce thickens.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Rooster with “trahana” and tomato

Suggested by Ermioni Chachalou, pasta producer, Livadia

Ingredients

1,5 to 2 kg roster, cut into portions
1 big dry onion, finely chopped
1 tbsp virgin olive oil
3-4 ripe tomatoes finely chopped
or 2 tbsp tomato concentrate
2 cups “trahana”,
the so called “sweet variety”
200 gr of feta cheese PDO
Salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Cut the ewe meat in portions and wash it thoroughly
Bring it to boil in a saucepan, adding as much water as to cover all meat. Simmer the meat, while taking the excessive foam out, when needed now and then.
Change the water and continue boiling the meat.
Add onion and olive oil.
Boil the meat over moderate heat for 3 hours, until it gets tender.
At that point, add the tomatoes together with some salt.
After a certain time, take the meat out and place it on a big serving plate. Keep the liquids in a separate saucepan.
In case the broth needs some more water, add it and bring to boil.
Pour the “trahana” over and stir thoroughly. The “trahana” soup will be ready in 15 minutes.
It is at its best if eaten lukewarm during summertime, while it is preferably served as a very hot dish, in the winter.
Serve the meat on a plate, together with “trahanas” or on a separate dish topped with mashed feta cheese.

Suggestions

You can choose to use other kinds of meat except rooster, such as lamb meat or even ewe meat.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Risotto with carrots and onions

Suggested by Nana Gaboùra, executive chef

Ingredients

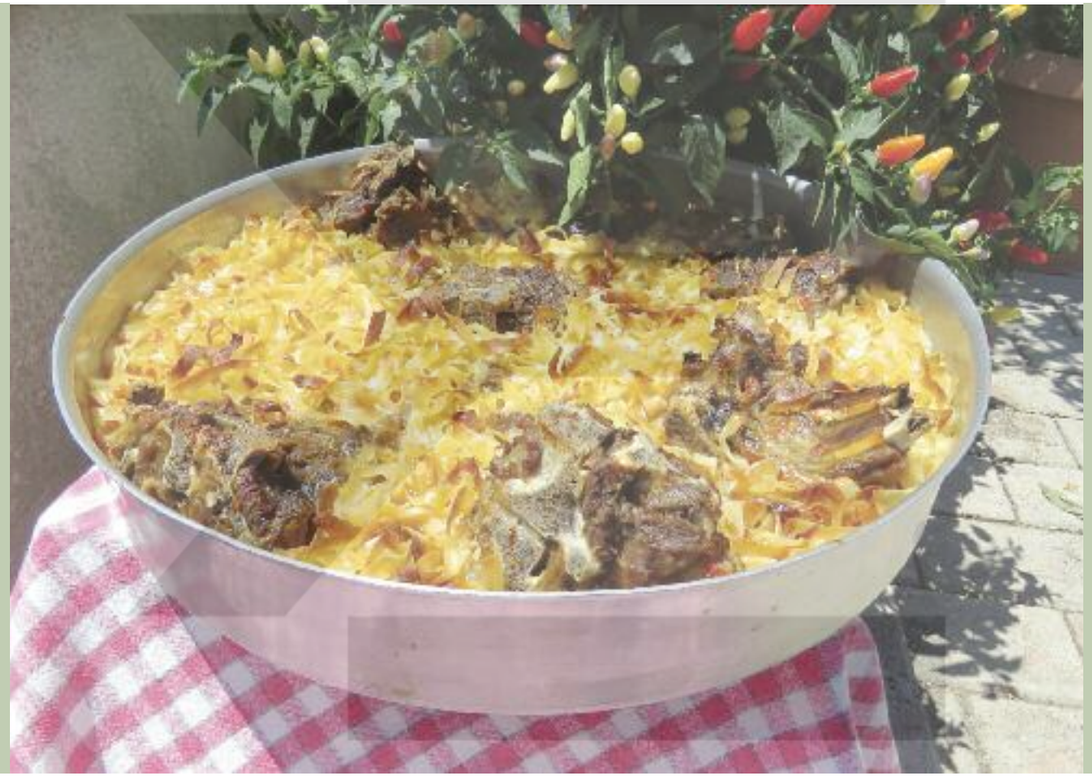
4 cups Arborio (Italian) rice
7 tbsp olive oil
4 cups grated carrots
1 tsp pepper corns
2 middle sized onions, minced
8 cups chicken broth
1 cup grated "kefalograviera" (yellow Greek cheese)
1 tabsp butter
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Use a sieve to rinse rice thoroughly under running water, until you get a clear water flow.
Let the rice drain and discard all water.
Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and sauté carrots and pepper corns for about 3 min., stirring occasionally. Add onion and sauté for a few seconds; stir for another 2-3 min. Then, add chicken broth, salt and pepper.
When the rice starts to boil, lower the temperature and cook with the lid on, until all broth is absorbed.
Add butter during the last 2 minutes and stir the risotto.
Take the saucepan out from the heat, add grated cheese and stir again. Cover with a clean kitchen cloth and place the lid over.
Let it draw for about 8 min. before serving.

Traditional "Giouvetsi" goat meat pot roast

Suggested by Vasilis Kaskaveliotis, pasta producer, Thiva



Ingredients

4 person

1200 gr goat meat from a free-going animal, cut into portions
500 gr traditional egg-noodles
500 gr chopped ripe tomatoes, harvested in our garden
1 middle sized dry onion from Thiva
Olive oil
Allspice
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper

For sprinkling

Dry curd, grated

Preparation

Use a large saucepan and boil the goat meat in abundant water, until it gets tender. Cooking time always depends on the type of meat you use.
To sauté the boiled meat, use another large saucepan, starting with deep frying the onion and then adding the meat portions turning them from all sides with a tong. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper and allspice and simmer until the sauce thickens and the meat gets mellow.
Pre-heat the oven at 200°C.
Use a clay pot and place both the meat and the sauce, while adding the egg noodles.
Bake for another 10 minutes until even the noddles are done and serve while the food is still hot.
You can sprinkle the dish with some grated dry curd.

“Kokoretsi” from Roumeli

Suggested by Marina Koutsopoulou, executive chef

Ingredients

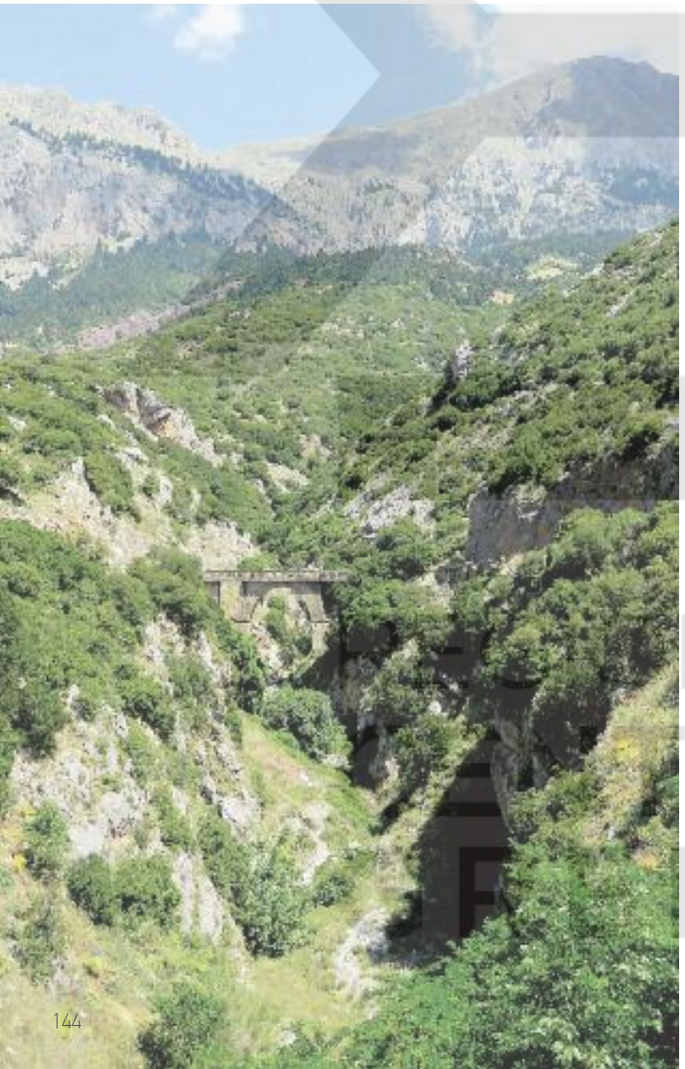
For a big spit

3 kg intestines from a young lamb
2 whole entrails from a young lamb
4-5 whole fatty tissues covering the animal`s entrails
Salt , Pepper

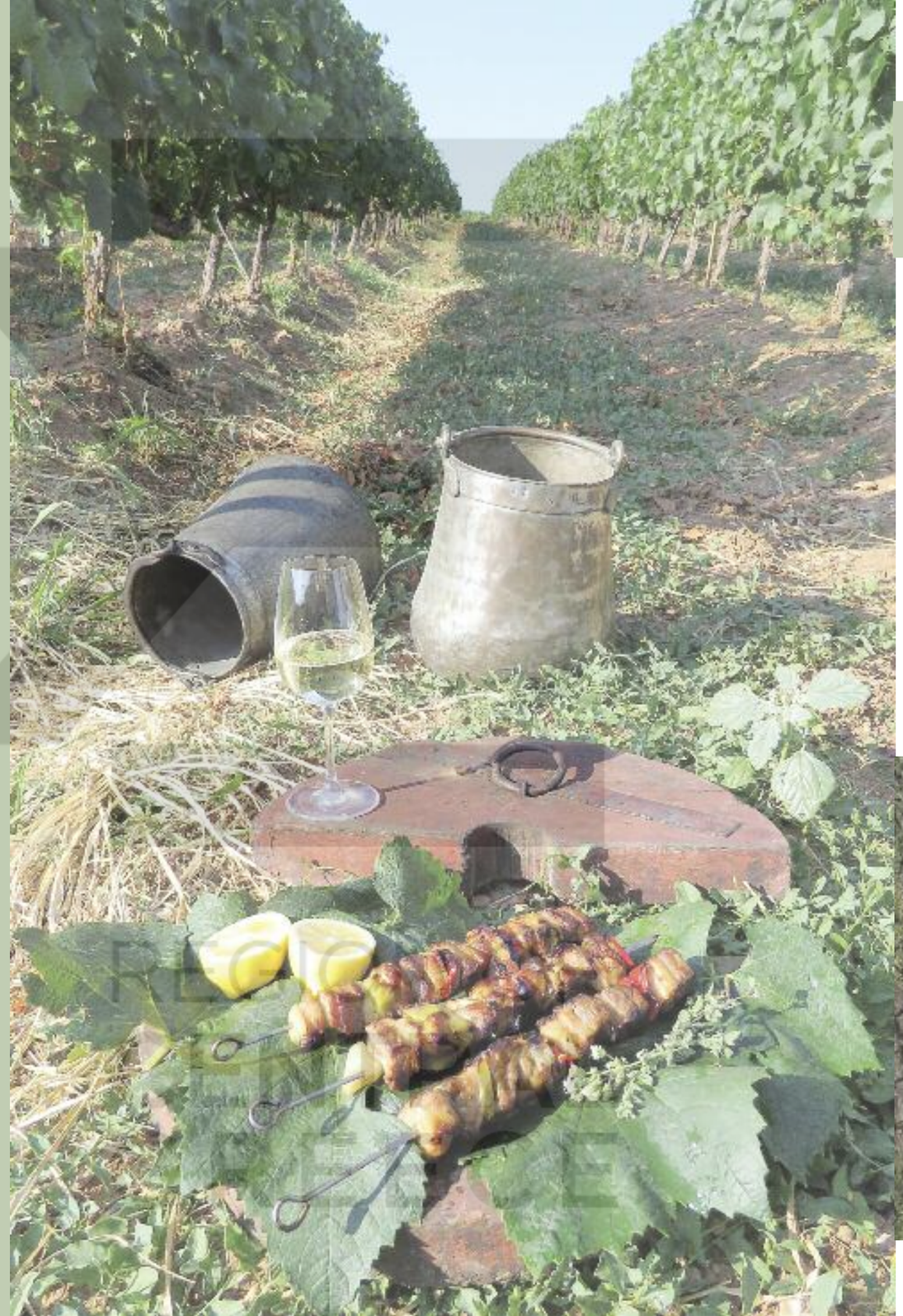
Preparation

Wash intestines at least twice. After washing the entrails, use some lemon juice, for disinfection.
Cut the entrails into pieces, i.e. liver, lungs and testicles, leaving aside the heart and throat, because they are hard and impossible to eat.
Sprinkle with salt and pepper and use lemon juice on the spit for disinfection. Thread the minced entrails into the spit, alternating them while following a succession of lungs, testicles, liver and so on, until you have used up everything.
Cover them with the fatty tissues and then tangle the intestines all around the entrails just like making a braid that will cover the whole spit from top to bottom.
Prepare your grilling “bed” by using some charcoal and let the fire “draw” to the point that you no longer get a vivid fire. Spread charcoal uniformly all over the length of the grilling area.
Place the long spit at the medium level over the fire and grill your kokoretsi by rotating it at a fast tempo for about 30 minutes, in order to get a so called “shield” around its surface.
Then shift the spit to a higher roasting level and grill for about 1 hour.
The last stage is going to take another 30 minutes, after placing the spit on the highest level of the grill.
You have to test whether the kokoretsi is ready by sticking it with a sharp knife.
In case it is, you have to serve it immediately, because the kokoretsi is supposed to be very hot when it is consumed.

Parnassos



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Grilled ewe chops and skewers

Suggested by Thanassis Kolisiatis, chef, Aliartos

Ingredients

2 kg ewe meat,
can even be either lamb
of goat meat
4 tbsp sea salt
Oregano

For marinating

Juice from 3 lemons
Freshly ground pepper
1 tbsp juniper berries
½ tsp cinnamon
A small quantity olive oil
Some strong tasting red wine

Preparation

Cut the meat into large square portions and place them in a big bowl. Sprinkle with salt and the sort of wild oregano growing on our mountains. Let the meat rest for a while in a kind of light marinade. Before using the big spit, you have to wash it and then pass the two lemon halves through it. Thread the meat portions into the spit. Roast it over a coal fire, that has to be very strong in the beginning and then continue grilling it over a lesser fire that has to be uniformly distributed under the whole length of the spit. Grill under 45 minutes, or until neither blood nor a reddish color appears inside the meat.

For the small ewe spit "souvlaki"

Use meat from ewe leg that you cut in small bits and marinate with the same ingredients given above. Thread the meat on a spit. You can even alternate meat bits and vegetables of your choice like peppers, onions or tomatoes. Start with grilling over a moderate fire; end with increasing the heat to get a nice crust on your meat. Sprinkle with oregano and serve with French fries, grilled sweet corn or boiled vegetable.

The page on the left shows some utensils that were used for viticulture (wine growing) back in the 1800s. The metal wine barrels called "bòtses" were recipients for measuring wine volume. There is also a wooden press for turning grapes into wine must.

Traditional Halvas

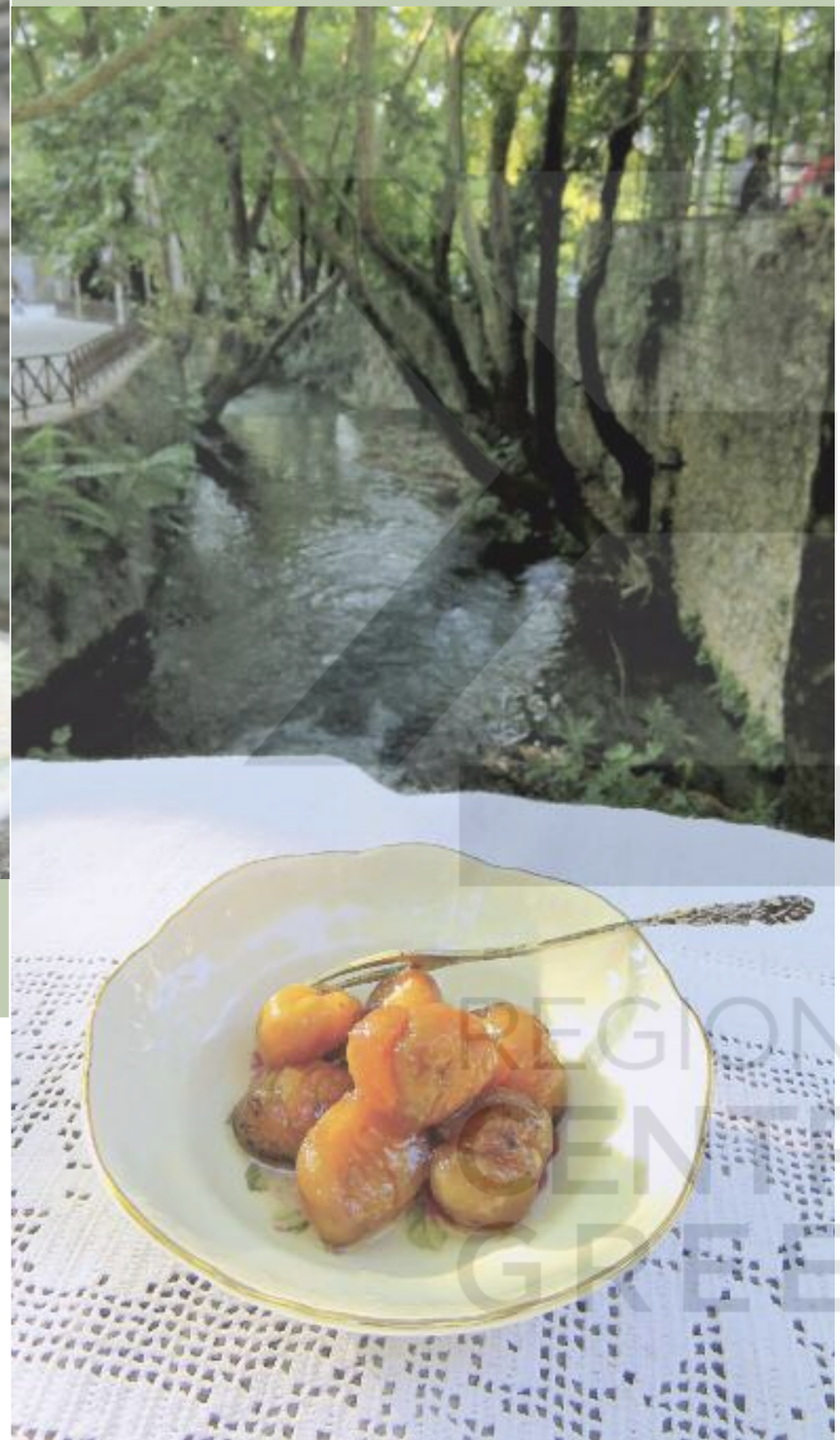
Suggested by Vasoula Stamati, St.George Arachova

Ingredients

300 gr fine semolina
200 gr thick semolina
900 gr sugar
1.200 ml mineral water
200 ml olive oil
2 vanillin portions
Orange peel from 2 oranges

Preparation

Put all ingredients except semolina in a large saucepan.
Mix both semolina sorts in a bowl.
When liquid ingredients start boiling, add semolina, and mix with a wooden spoon until the paste thickens.
Place the halvas paste in a mold and let it cool.
You can then take the "halvas" out of the mold and serve along with either with candied fruit such as figs, bergamot and some nuts.



Chesnut spoon sweet

Suggested by Ermione Chachalou, Livadià

Ingredients

1 kg big chestnuts

For the syrup

2 lt water
1700 gr white sugar
Juice from a big lemon

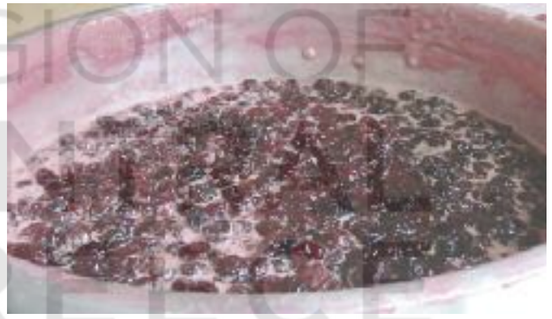
Preparation

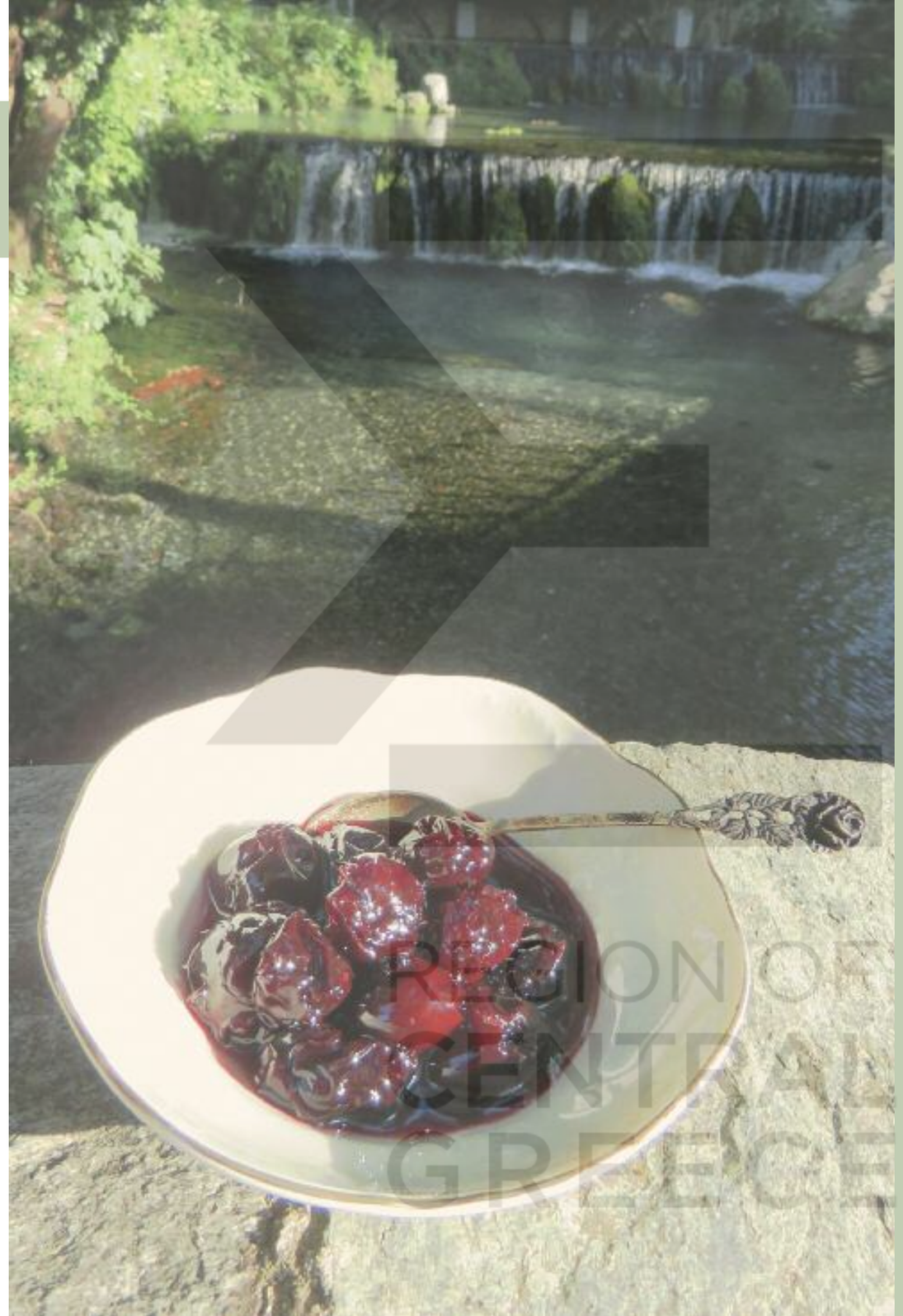
Use a wet cloth to clean all chestnuts thoroughly.
Arrange them as they are on a baking pan, without splitting or punching them.
Grill them in a well pre-heated oven at 150ºC for 10 minutes.
Peel them without breaking them; they have to stay whole.
Bring to boil some water and sugar in a big saucepan and cook it for about 20 min. Then, add the chestnuts and cook them for about another 10 min. Take the saucepan out from the heat.
Let them stay and draw overnight.
Next morning, check whether the syrup has thickened, otherwise continue boiling them still for some time.
Add lemon juice, stir and the candied chestnuts are ready.
Fill some sterilized jars with it and turn them upside down, letting them stay this way overnight.
Next day they are ready to be stored in our cupboards.

Cherry spoon sweet

Suggested by Ermioni Chachalou, pasta producer, Livadia

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg cherries 750 gr sugar 1 tbsp of glucose	Wash the cherries and take their seeds out. Bring them to boil with sugar and glucose. Boil for about 20-30 min. Discard the froth they produce. Let the mixture cool for a day and the next day boil or 20-30 minutes, until you ge a thick syrup. As soon as your candied cherries cool, fill some glass jars with it and turn them upside down letting them rest overnight in this position. Next morning, they will be ready to store. This way, we can capture all summer tastes, in order to enjoy them during wintertime.





Mustalevrià of the Muses

Suggested by Joanna Zaxaria, winemaker, Aliartos

Ingredients

1800 ml ready-made grape juice, fermented
170 gr fine semolina
200 gr almonds
50 gr coarsely cut walnuts
3 leaves pelargonium
Sesame seeds
Cinnamon

Preparation

Bring grape juice to boil except for one cup that you will use to dissolve the semolina in, stirring it with a fork.
Add even this cup to the rest of the grape juice that is already boiling, seeing to it that you don`t get any clumps and let the grape juice cook for a little while.
Put the saucepan lid on and let the grape juice simmer for 10 more minutes.
Add the walnuts, except a small quantity you will later use for decoration.
Stir and add even the almonds and the pelargonium leaves.
The syrup must go on simmering slowly, until it gets shiny and transparent besides thickening, of course.
Wet your serving plate and pour the cream over. Sprinkle with cinnamon and sesame seeds, as well as crushed almonds and walnuts.

Grape spoon sweet with star anise

Suggested by Joanna Zaxaria, winemaker, Aliartos

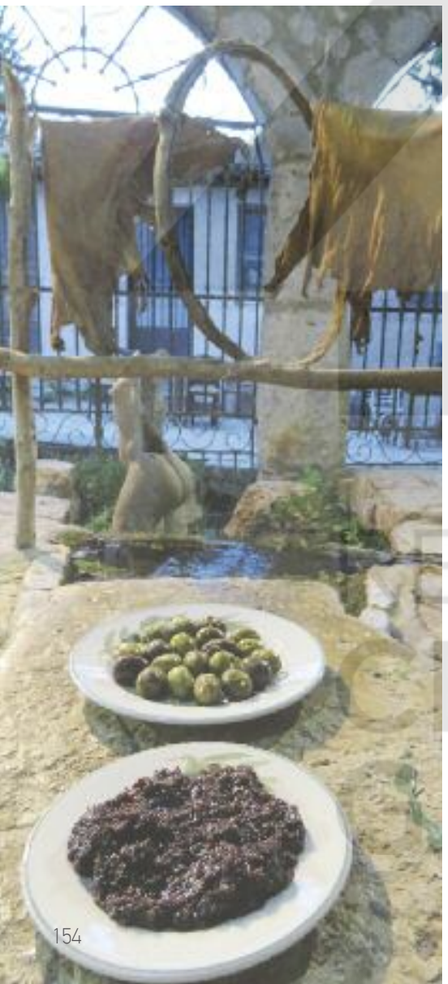
Ingredients

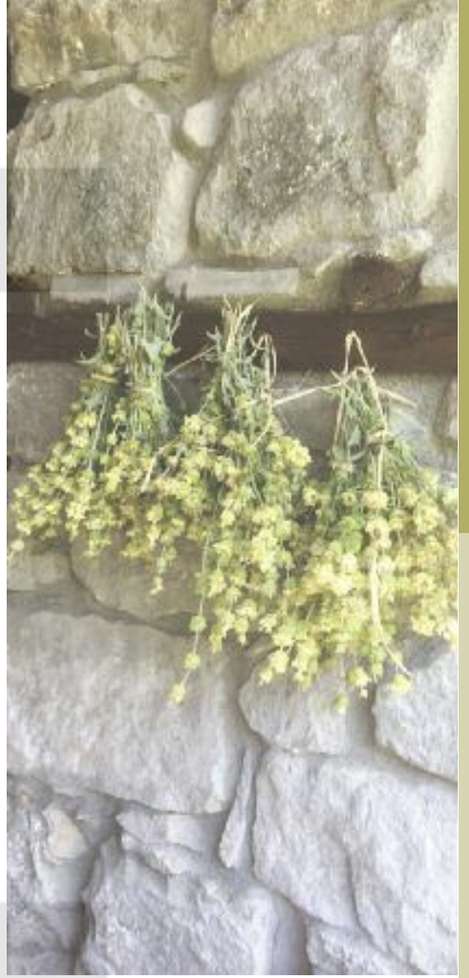
2 kg grapes
1 kg brown sugar
100 ml water
1-2 small vanillin powder confections
Juice from 2 fresh lemons
1 cinnamon stick
1 star anise

Preparation

Separate grapes one by one wash and drain them.
Put them in a saucepan
Add sugar and lemon juice before adding all the grapes and let them stand and draw for about 24 hours. Soon afterwards add water, cinnamon and star anise and bring to boil for 1 hour and 20 min., until you get a thick syrup.
At that point, add the vanillin powder and stir the saucepan.
As soon as it gets cool, fill your sterilized glass jars with the candied grapes.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE





FOKIDA

A fairy-tale land harbouring hidden treasures. At the foot of high Parnassos, in an imposing landscape between two towering cliffs called Phaedriades, the famous Oracle of **Delphi** used to lay hidden. While cooling down at the Castalian Spring of Pythia, its mythology comes to mind. This was the meeting point of two huge eagles, released by Zeus at the two opposite ends of the universe, to designate the "Navel of the Earth". For many centuries, Delphi was a spiritual and religious centre, a symbol of unity for the ancient world. Thousands of travellers from around the world still visit Delphi with its famous archaeological sites and museum. On the journey to Galaxidi the view is breath-taking and at our feet lies the historical olive grove of Amfissa, one of the world's largest with 1,200,000 olive trees, protected under the Natura 2000 network. These wondrous olive trees are natural monuments, their trunks being living sculptures, since they continue to give olive oil and their renowned olives to this day.
Amfissa is a beautiful city. Its Castle is worth visiting. At the Gallery you can view the works of famous visual artist Spyros Papaloukas.
A meeting point... Wandering the alleys of Charmaina, the district of tampakides, the local tanners, has its own history... and the "Apparition of Charmaina" is revived on the Saturday of Apokries, the Carnival... As you stroll along the streets of the town with its neoclassical buildings, the mansions are of particular interest to one's photographic lens. If you like climbing or hiking breath-taking mountains, you are at the right place. Giona, Parnassos, and Vardousia mountains await...
The seaside town of Itea is the southernmost tip of the Delphic landscape. Its fine road design and numerous restaurants by the sea await for a relaxing stop. We continue to the beautiful **Galaxidi** of captains with its neoclassical buildings. An islet betwixt mountain and sea is the port of Chirolakas, with its flowery gardens, splashes of colour, and interesting gastronomy. Flavours influenced by the voyages of local captains around the world. Strolling these streets will create a lasting impression; local hostels offer the finest breakfast...
The coastal villages of **Agioi Pantes**, **Erateini**, **Agios Nikolaos**, **Marathias**, and **Elaia** are also ideal for gastronomic ventures. The local gem is hiding at the opposite end, on the single small island of the Corinthian Bay, **Trizonia**. A place of beauty, filled with flavours of traditional seafood cuisine. Having had our fill of the sea... the mountains await. **Lidoriki**; this town seems to be guarding the life-giving lake Mornos, with its dreamy landscapes and waters. You are bound to come across young cows, donkeys, and the villages of mountainous Doris, which are gorgeous. Giona and Vardousia are mountains of beauty, with their herbs, mountain cuisine, and cheeses. These are considered mountains of people who have charted their own history over time, from Athanasios Diakos in **Artotina**, to Makrygiannis in **Krokylio**, but also to Maria Pentagiotissa in **Pentagious** and Kroustalo in **Dichori**.
Untouched beauty one cannot get enough of. It's worth it... this is a journey to remember.

In Fokida, the cuisines of the mountain and the sea compete in flavours and originality. The Doric austerity of the mountain cuisine amazes with its authenticity and pure tastes that highlight the exceptional quality of the raw materials.
The wood-burning oven is still present in most houses and the bread has the rustic flavor of the past. Cheese pies have a stuffing of local cheeses in generous amounts, especially in the heart of Roumeli, where pies are widely appreciated.
In Dichori village, the kitchen is authentic with flavours of open-fire cooking and a welcoming smile. The expert of galaktompoureko in Athens has retired and moved to this area, so perhaps you might enjoy one of Greece's most delicious galaktompoureko in Vardousia... Moreover, the tea gathered at the mountain tops is a true treasure. In Fokida, lamb roasted on a spit and ewe meat have been widely-known over the years, and they are prepared in imaginative ways: in the terracotta casserole stew pot, fricassee, kapama, stifado stew, kontosouvli.
It is said that in Malandrino, they make the best Roumeli roast.
The mastery of its preparation and roasting is unique.
Kokoretsi is spit roasted in a wood burning oven...
The yoghurt, cheese, and honey are exquisite.
In Chani, at the Reresi bridge which has been operating since the last century, the wild game meatis excellent and their hospitality unique.
On the coasts of Fokida, the seafood cuisine is also outstanding in the islet of Trizonia, where fish delicacies are exceptionally fresh and delicious.
In Galaxidi, a place of captains, the urban cuisine with ravani prepared with rice, midopilafo or mussel pilaf, kelemia, stuffed onions with minced meat, fish, and almond dessert is absolutely delightful. The handmade breakfasts are epic.
In the Monastery of St. Seraphim of Sarov, in Trikorfo village, we were initiated in the monastic diet of the monks and their amazing cheese, honey, pasta, legume, and meat products.
A little further on, we enjoyed the original cheese products, as well as pasta and confections prepared by the nuns of St. Nektarios Monastery. Amfissa, with its historic olive grove, is the land of olive and olive oil dominating the flavours.
Of course, in Salona roasted lambs are out of this world... In Itea, galaktompoureko cream dessert with kataifi pastry and the rose-flavoured milky ice-creams are simply exquisite.
The cuisine of Fokida is characterised by great variety and originality full of flavours that haunt our taste buds...
An experience worth living...

The cuisine

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Livestock farming and cheese making

Central Fokida is a mountainous region with tall and beautiful mountains, such as Parnassos, Giona, and Vardousia.
According to estimates, the total livestock population of Fokida comprises 10.000 cattle and calves, 115.000 sheep and goats, 500 pigs, and 41.000broilers and laying hens. The presence of indigenous breeds is significant, while short-horn cows can be seen grazing free in the hills and around the life-giving Mornos river. The Desfina goat, near Delphi, is rare and should be treated with attention.
The water element is abundant, and so are the herbs; as a result, the milk is unique and the cheeses have a wonderful taste.
At the heart of Roumeli you will discover **Opsimotyri** or **Psimotyri,** a fresh creamy cheese of the shepherds and the mountains, born next to the fir trees. A rare gourmet treasure with a spicy taste. We tasted it on hot leavened bread and it was delightful. It is made of sheep's yoghurt which is strained in the tsantila cheese cloth and salted well. Right afterwards, they put it in a pot and fill in 1/3 with fresh salted mizythra cheese.They leave it outside of the refrigerator for 2-3 days and stir it at intervals in order for it to obtain its characteristic piquant taste.
They put it in the fridge and is ready in five days. Opsimotiri has always been the shepherds' snack accompanied with rusks. Fokida is famous for its **Feta cheese**.
The spring Feta cheese is full of herbal aromas.
It is of high nutritional value.

The **Kefalotyri** and cave-aged **Gruyere cheese** are gourmet gems. The **Saganotyri, goat** and **Mizythra cheeses** are marvelous.
The world famous **traditional sheep yoghurt** is made exclusively of fresh sheep's milk of high nutritional value and is prepared quite easily.
Its exceptional taste is owed to the excellent-quality mountain milk produced in Fokida with aromas of herbs, making it rich and wonderful...
A livestock farmer in Lidoriki village, offered us one of the tastiest yoghurts. She milked her animals in the morning and prepared the yogurt so that we could enjoy it after our meal. She put 2 liters of milk in a large saucepan and cooked it on medium heat to boiling point, reaching 85-90°C (185-194°F). As soon as the milk began to boil, she removed the saucepan from the heat source and left it to cool down until it reached 39°C (102,2°F). She then added the rennet, which is a yoghurt culture, that is, dissolved a teaspoon of yoghurt into half a glass of warm milk.
She stirred it well with a wooden spoon, a handmade heirloom from her grandmother.
She distributed it in clay bowls.
She left the bowls covered for 3-4 hours in a warm place to avoid losing their temperature until they coagulated. She finally refrigerated them for 2 hours. We enjoyed them along with honeycomb a bee-keeper gave us.

Vineyards and wine

The microclimate of Fokida and especially that of the wider area of Parnassos, the soil conditions and the people living there are the main reasons of success of the vineyards' fine wines.
Winters are mild and summers are cool. The mountains of Parnassos, Kalidromo, and Oiti allow north winds to penetrate the plateau where the vineyards are, thus maintaining low temperatures and adequately oxygenating the vineyards during the summer.
The Greek varieties cultivated here are "**Mavroudi**" of Arachova, a variety revived after long years of experimentation... and which now forms the basis for most of the wines. The local variety "**Asprouda**", aromatic "**Malagouzia**", and "**Asyrtiko**" are varieties which already hold honors and have prospects of earning world acclaim.
Of the international varieties, the classic white varieties **Sauvignon Blanc** and **Chardonnay** are cultivated and of the red ones the world famous **Merlot**, **Cabernet Sauvignon**, and **Pinot Noir**.
It is worth noting that the vineyards of the area are part of an integrated management system, where the production of grapes is done based on full respect, both of the customer and of the environment.
All tasks in the vineyard, such as pruning, bud pruning, flipping, and harvesting are done by hand, placing an emphasis on the human factor, which is so important in the creation of wine. Local wineries have stone guesthouses and winetasting cellars that host important wine tourism events.

Honey

The region is suitable for beekeeping, with excellent results. The dense fir-forests of Mounts Parnassos, Giona, and Vardousia, with their rich flora, herbs, and rare wildflowers, produce excellent organic fir honey.
Where fir forests meet thyme plants, the weather permitting, a rare fir honey is produced, also containing thyme and wildflower honey.
This honey has a thick consistency, an amber golden-yellow colour, and a woody scent. Its low HMF content makes proof of its top quality indicating that it is a rare product where quality and nutrients are being preserved.
It is rich in trace minerals, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, and iron. The Giona mountain area and the coastline from Itea, Galaxidi, up to Efpalion are part of the European Natura 2000 protected sites network, which means there are no farmlands in the area where bees are active and, as a result, they cannot have access to pesticides.
Some beekeepers keep their apiaries among the high peaks of mountain Giona at an altitude of 2,508 meters.
The honey produced is organic fir and contains over 90 wild herbs.
A honey literally straight out of nature's pharmacy.
Honey quality is ensured through continuous and comprehensive controls carried out in relation to raw material and to the final product.
Other bee products such as pollen, propolis, royal jelly, and wax are also produced.

The olive grove of Amfissa

Gazing at the horizon from the highlands of Delphi's archaeological site, one is lost in a silver-green sea of olive groves, of more than 3,000-years-old... A top cultural monument of our gastronomic heritage, a focal point where the historical past meets the present.

A monument of nature and a living olive grove, since up to this day it produces the precious fruity olive juice, olive oil. A great part of the olive grove is an integral part of the Delphic landscape, a UNESCO world heritage site.

There is an ancient path passing through the olive grove, which is a unique experience if you wish to walk and reach the Oracle of Delphi. Below the area of Chrisso village, from the Crissaean plain, the view is breathtaking; it is the place where the all-significant Pythian Games were once organized. The olive grove, which is one of the largest uninterrupted groves of the country, reaches from the basis of Delphi to Amfissa, reaching Itea. It is estimated that there are more than1.2 million olive trees, while 70% of them count more than 150 years of age.

The beginning of their cultivation is literally lost in the mists of time. According to historical sources, the olive trees were planted by the Pelasgians and the Aeolians.

The historic olive grove stretches over an area of 5,500 hectares and is rich in biodiversity. It is the only olive grove containing monoculture olive trees. Its alluvial soil was apparently created by a sudden change in the geological relief of the area.

The tree trunks have deep creases and their height reaches up to 10 meters. Intertwined branches can sometimes create natural gateways. The locals refer to each field using the word "lachidi". In the olive grove there are mounds of earth called "trafia", that hold back the rain water and terraces are formed in sloping areas. The agricultural cultivation system is original.

The preservation of the traditional image of olive growing and the exploitation of the Olive grove will significantly contribute to the maintenance of the Delphic landscape. Within the olive grove there are auxiliary buildings, which are a reference point of our traditional folk architecture.

Yale University (USA) has recognized the unique natural monument in combination with the history of Delphi and accepted the proposal of Greek scientists to make Delphic olive groves a global place of olive and olive oil culture.

This development is of a great importance as a unique and historical region of our country is being recognized on the international stage.

The Region of Central Greece aims at making the olive grove accessible to visitors. Moreover, agri-food must become one with our gastronomic culture and be the spearhead for the development of thematic tourism, a growing global trend. The high quality olive products can be associated with the strong brand name of Delphi.

The role of the olive in religious worship, beliefs, customs, social development and in economy is timeless. Even from the Neolithic era, it is reported that wild olives used to be harvested; samples of olive pollen have also been found. Nowadays, olive oil is still considered to be a valuable derivative of the olive tree, a gift to man by God which perhaps holds the secrets of longevity and well-being.

Perhaps its religious symbolism is associated with the essential characteristics of the olive which are power, hardiness, the everlasting, and the eternal...

OUR RECIPES
FOKIDA

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

"Burgietto"

Suggested by Natasha Sini, restaurant owner, Trizonia Island

Ingredients

1 john dory or even a stone fish called "sklebou fish", locally
1 scorpion fish
2 - 3 cray fish
2 potatoes
2 dry onions
1 lemon
Olive oil
Salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Clean and rinse all fish thoroughly.
Cut potatoes and dry onions into large cubes and put them in a wide saucepan, together with the stonefish.
Cover with water and bring to boil over a moderate heat.
When the soup is almost ready add the scorpion fish.
Ten minutes before our cooking time is over, add cray fish, salt the pepper.
Mix oil and lemon juice in a bowl and add it to the soup.
Let it still simmer for a while and serve the soup while it is still hot.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Ancora” Salad

Gianna Sinì, restaurant owner, Trizonia Island

Ingredients	Preparation
300 gr watermelon,cut in cubes 200 gr feta cheese PDO cut in cubes Rucola leaves Green or purple-colored salad leaves 200 gr prosciutto from the region of Evrytania 1 pinch exquisite salt, flower of salt 1 tsp black sesame seeds, roasted on a frying pan Balsamico vinegar, with a pomegranate taste 6 tbsp virgin olive oil	Place all salad ingredients in a deep dish and pour olive oil and pomegranate balsamico over them. Mix them all, by using your hands and add prosciutto slices and finally some black sesame seeds. Serve your salad.

Sea bass fillets ceviche

Suggested by Aghis, executive chef , Galaxidi

Ingredients	Preparation
4 fillets fresh sea bass from local fishing farms 60 ml prime olive oil 15 ml fresh lemon juice 10 gr ginger, grated 5 ml tabasco sauce 5 ml habanero sauce Salt flakes Freshly ground pepper Rosé pepper corns	Use a special knife to make fish fillets, by separating them from their skin and bones and taking out smaller bones, using a tiny tong. Cut the fillets in smaller square pieces. Use a bowl to blend a mixture of olive oil, lemon juice, tabasco and habanero sauces, ginger and pepper to get a sort of marinade for about 5 min. Serve with some rose pepper and salt flakes.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Octopus carpaccio with caramelized onions

Suggested by Afroditi Marda, executive chef, Eratini

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg either fresh or frozen octopus 10 corns black pepper 2 bay leaves 100 ml. of white wine 50 gr small “pearl” onions 20 ml balsamico vinegar 20 gr brown sugar 2 gelatinous foils Sea salt Freshly ground pepper Olive oil	Use a saucepan to boil approx. 2 lit of water where you will let the octopus simmer with wine, bay leaves and pepper corns, until it gets tender. This will take about 90 min. Discard all liquids except an amount of only 50 ml. that you will need later on. Dissolve gelatin foil sand add to the small amount of the above cooking broth you have kept aside. Place the cooked octopus with its liquids in a mold and squeeze it well to fit in. You must then put the mold in the deep freezer for about 24 hours. When it is already frozen, take it out and slice the octopus in very thin slices, using a very sharp knife. Use a frying pan to heat some oil and sauté the small dry onions. Add sugar, salt, pepper and end cooking by adding some vinegar, while letting those ingredients simmer for a short period of time until they get a candied consistence. Serve the thinly cut octopus slices along with those candied small onions.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Doughnuts stuffed with olives

Suggested by Yuly Fatsitsa, catering, Amfissa

Ingredients	Preparation
500 gr all purpose flour, sifted 9 gr yeast 450 ml lukewarm water 1 tbsp salt ½ tsp sugar ½ cup olives both green and black, finely chopped Olive oil for frying Honey or sugar	Mix flour, sugar, salt and yeast. Add water and blend until you get a rather loose mixture (gruel), falling slowly from the spoon. Add the chopped olives and let this porridge swell up in a warm place for 2 hours. Heat olive oil, without burning it and take small portions of the mixture with your fists that you let drop on the hot olive oil with the help of a teaspoon and deep fry it. Continue forming small portions that you fry until you use up everything. Let the doughnuts get a golden color and serve them hot. You can preferably top them with honey, sugar or grated cheese.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Ostria” spaghetti

Suggested by Natasha Sini, restaurant owner, Trizonia Island

Ingredients	Preparation
½ package spaghetti or liguine, boiled “al dente” ¼ chopper dry onion 1 glass local white wine 7 - 8 marinated anchovies prepared with peppers and garlic 10 capers Freshly ground black pepper Fresh parsley, chopped	Fry chopped onion and capers in a bit of hot olive oil. End the frying procedure by pouring in some wine and add the pasta and the anchovies. Mix lightly and take it out of the heat, while adding some pepper and chopped parsley. Serve immediately.

Fisherman`s linguine pasta

Suggested by Anna Karabelou, restaurant owner, Tolofon beach

Ingredients	Preparation
500 gr linguine pasta 500 gr local fresh mussels 1 kg fresh shrimp 2 kg ripe tomatoes, chopped 2 dry onions 1 garlic clove 500 gr dragonet fish, for its broth 500 gr scorpion fish, for its broth 2lt water for making the broth 50ml local white wine 50ml of ouzo 5gr greek saffron 5 gr string chili **For decoration** Lemon drops 5 gr. fibers of chili peppers	Boil both the dragonet fish and the scorpion fish with 2 stems of saffron, until you get a dense broth. In a wide saucepan, sauté garlic, onion, fresh tomatoes together with shrimp and mussels. Add ouzo and then finish simmering with some wine. Add fish broth and some more stems of saffron. Let the ingredients simmer for 4 more minutes. Add linguine and cook for another 5 minutes. Pour the juice of half a lime over this concoction. Serve with some lemon pearls and chili strings.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Mussel pilaf

Suggested by Maritsa Papageorgiou, restaurant owner, Galaxidi

Ingredients

1 kg fresh mussels from Galaxidi
500 gr rice (American type, called Bella)
1 garlic clove, chopped
2 tbsp red dry onion, chopped finely
Lemon juice from 3 fruits
5 fresh onions, sliced sideways
½ bunch of dill, finely chopped
50 ml ouzo
50 ml local white wine
100 ml virgin olive oil
500 ml vegetable broth
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper corns

Preparation

Wash mussels thoroughly and cut off fibrous impurities sticking out of their shells.
Sauté the onion with garlic and mussels in olive oil using a large and deep saucepan. Shake the saucepan vigorously and then put the lid on. In case you find any mussels refusing to open, throw them away immediately.
Add ouzo and then wine to stop the simmering process.
Wash the rice and add it to the saucepan, while lowering the heat and adding 2 glasses of vegetable broth. Let the mussels simmer for about 10-12 minutes, taking care of adding some more water, if needed. Shake the saucepan.
Two minutes before finishing their cooking, add dill, fresh onions, pepper and eventually salt and then serve.

Mussle farming

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Trahanótto” with shrimps

Suggested by Aphroditi Marda executive chef, Eratini

Ingredients

200 ml chicken broth
30ml olive oil
50 gr chopped dry onion
1/2 mashed garlic clove
150 gr sweet “trahanas”
80ml local white wine
8 shrimps No 1
40 gr fresh tomato
20 gr sun-dried tomatoes
30 gr feta cheese PDO
20 gr kefalotyri cheese from Lidoriki
20 gr fresh butter
6 basil leaves
Salt
Fresh ground pepper
40 gr fresh tomatoes

Serving

With small rucola leaves

Preparation

Use some very hot olive oil to sauté dry onions and garlic.
After 2 min. add the “trahana”.
End cooking by pouring in some wine and, as soon as its alcohol is evaporated, add some boiling hot chicken broth. Boil for another 10 minutes.
Sometimes before the end of the cooking process, add the shrimp, some pepper, salt and some fresh tomato.
Consequently, add the sun-dried tomatoes, the feta cheese, the kefalotyri cheese and the butter.
Go on simmering all ingredients and let them get a round shape using a circular form.
Serve, together with basil or mint leaves.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Delphi pie with “trahanas”

Suggested by Maria Maggania, restaurant owner, Delfi

Ingredients

For the filling

250 gr feta cheese
250 gr goat milk-trahanas, scented with marjoram
300 ml. fresh milk
2 fresh eggs
200 ml olive oil
150 gr of grated yellow cheese, (the sort called “gruyère” in Greece)
A bit of freshly ground pepper

For the dough sheets

500 gr all purpose flour
1 cup lukewarm milk
A pinch salt
A pinch sugar
1 tablespoon olive oil

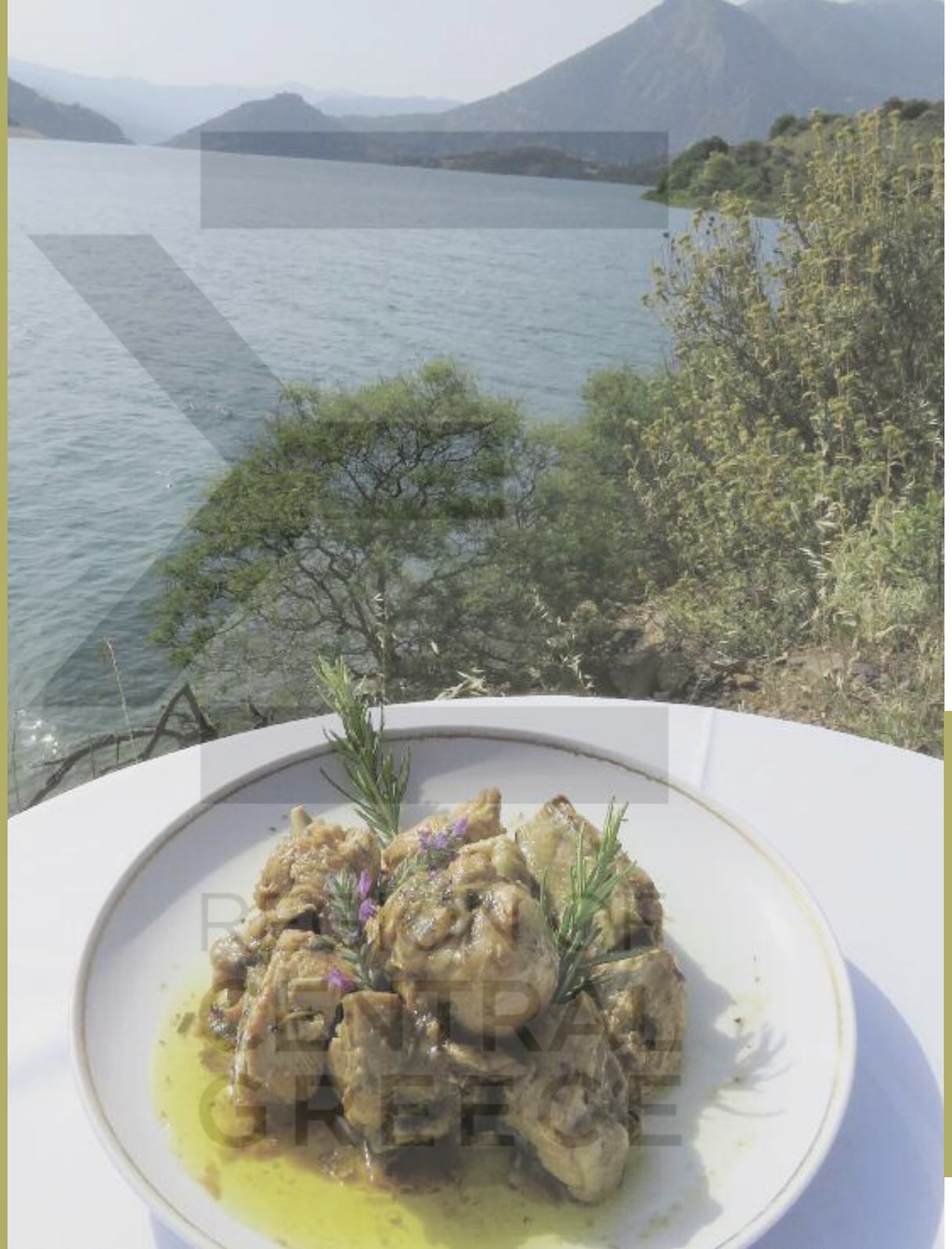
Preparation

Make the dough in the usual manner, according to the instructions previously given in other recipes and let it rest for a while.
Prepare the filling as follows: Beat the eggs in a bowl and add milk, olive oil, some pepper and the mashed feta cheese, gradually. Divide the filling into three portions.
Mix “trahana” and yellow cheese flakes in a separate bowl.
Make the flour dough sheets using a rolling pin, seeing to it that they get to be as thin as possible. Apply some olive oil on a baking pan and spread the first dough sheet, while topping it with the first portion of the filling. Add some of the trahana and yellow cheese flake mix.
Go on with the other two dough sheets the same way as before. Cover with the last dough sheet and sprinkle the pie with olive oil. Bake in a well pre-heated oven for 45 min. at 180°C.
Serve with tomato and oil-baked bread.
The pie recipe described above came from our great-grandmother. The village shepherds of those times used to take the pie along with them, for their mid-day lunch break, when leaving home at down during summertime, in order to take their goats to pasture and this is the reason the pie is a bit salty. Besides that, we should mention that the marjoram-scented “trahana” is our own specialty.

Tips

The pie recipe described above came from our great-grandmother. The village shepherds of those times used to take the pie along with them, for their mid-day lunch break and this is the reason the pie is a bit salty. Besides that, we should mention that the marjoram-scented “trahana” is our own specialty. It is prepared with this particular pie in mind, because otherwise this herb can give a bitter taste and aroma.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Fried chicken with honey and aromatic herbs from Giona

Suggested by Kostas Rellos apiculturist, Malandrino

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg chicken, cut into portions 1 average sized onion, chopped 3 fresh onions, chopped 1 shot tsipouro 1 tbsp mustard 1 tbsp bio-honey 1 glass hot chicken broth Some bio-olive oil Thyme Rosemary Oregano from the mountain of Ghiona 1 clove garlic, crushed Sea salt Freshly ground pepper	Use a medium sized saucepan to heat some olive oil. Sauté the chicken portions turning from all sides until they get golden. Add both onion and garlic and continue to sauté. Add the tsipouro and let its alcohol evaporate. Add salt and pepper then the mustard and the chicken broth. Let it simmer using an average heat for about 40 min. with the lid on. When the sauce thickens, add the honey and stir gently. Add all Ghiona herbs and let them draw for about 10 min. and then serve.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Kelemia

Suggested by Bebelis restaurant owner, Galaxidi

Ingredients	Preparation
8 persons	Peel onions and cut them to the core. Boil the musing average heat for about 20 min., in order for you to be able to separate each layer. Drain and let them cool. Use a large bowl to mix minced meat, rice, dill, parsley, mint leaves, olive oil, fresh tomato, salt, pepper, fresh green onions and dry onions too. Stir this filling well, using a wooden spoon until you get an even mixture. Separate each onion layer and place some filling with the use of a small spoon. Close the onion “lids” just like you do with the “dolmas” shaped filled vine leaves and place the filled onions on a baking pan. Pour some olive oil and fresh tomato juice over them as well as any liquids that are left over. If, needed, add some more water. Bake in a well pre-heated oven for about 45 min. at 200°C. After taking them out of the oven, let them cool a little bit before serving.
10 big white dry onions	
For the filling	
2 onions, finely chopped	
3 fresh green onions, finely chopped	
¼ cup olive oil	
800 gr minced meat, either pork or veal	
2 cups rice, american type	
¼ cup brandy or cognac	
½ bunch dill, finely chopped	
½ bunch parsley, finely chopped	
½ bunch fresh mint leaves, finely chopped, Sea salt	
Freshly ground peppers	
Sauce	
2 cups chopped fresh tomatoes	
1 tbsp tomato concentrate	
1 tsp of sugar	
2/3 cup olive oil	
Sea salt	
Freshly ground pepper	

RECIPES OF CENTRAL GREECE

Dolmas made from stuffed cabbage leaves

Suggested by Katina Paza, restaurant owner, Eratini

Ingredients	Preparation
1 middle sized white cabbage	Mix all ingredients for the filling of the “dolmas” in a bowl.
For filling	Wash the cabbage and discard the hard part of the stem.
500 gr. minced meat from veal	Put it in boiling water for a short time, to facilitate separating the leaves, one by one.
1 coffee cup rice, American type	Cut the cabbage leaves in pieces, large enough to be able to roll them after you have filled them with the mixture of minced meat and rice.
Dill, fine chopped	Keep all coarse pieces of cabbage that are left over and place them at the bottom of a saucepan. Continue with arranging all the “dolmas” you have rolled on top of the bigger cabbage leaves.
1 dry onion, chopped	Add hot water to cover all “dolmas” and bring to boil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
Sea salt	To keep them steady when they boil, cover them with a porcelain plate before you start cooking them.
Freshly ground pepper corns	Boil the “dolmas” over medium heat and shake the saucepan occasionally to avoid their sticking at the bottom.
A limited amount olive oil	Prepare the gravy as follows:
For the gravy	In a little saucepan place 3 cups of the “dolmas” broth.
2 eggs	In a separate bowl mix 4 tablespoons of corn flour and water.
2 lemons	Beat egg yolks and corn flour mixture and add to the little saucepan with the “dolmas” broth, stirring continuously.
1 tbsp butter	Add a tablespoon of butter and the lemon juice and use all this as the “dolmas” gravy.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Pork knuckles marinated in honey and beer

Suggested by Marina Koutsopoulou, restaurant owner, Dichori

Ingredients

2 pork knuckles
1 bottle beer
Lemon juice from one lemon
Orange juice from the whole fruit
1 cinnamon stick
2 allspice seeds
1 tbsp salt
1 tbsp pepper
1 tbsp curry
1 tbsp sweet paprika
2 tbsp honey
½ teacup salt
½ teacup sugar

Preparation

Place the pork knuckles in a bowl with half the amount of salt and sugar and cover with water. Keep them covered for about 8 hours.
Rinse them and place them in a casserole with the remaining salt and pepper, the curry powder, paprika, allspice, cinnamon, orange and lemon juice, beer and honey.
Bake in a well pre-heated oven for about 2 - 3 hours at 200°C.
Take it out of the oven and serve on a wooden plank, preferably made of an old wooden wine barrel.

Wild boar stew

Suggested by Nitsa Reressi, restaurant owner, Evpalio

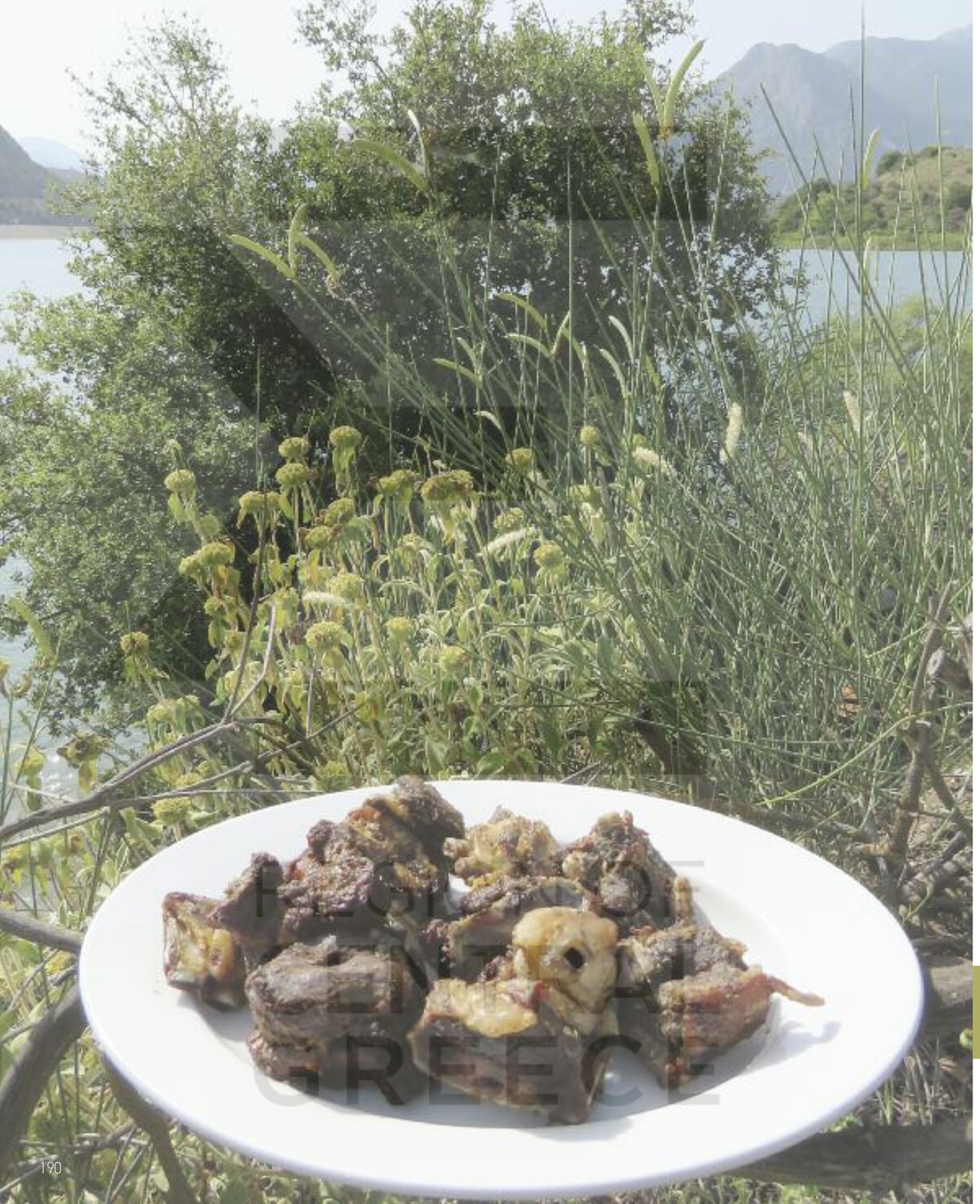
Ingredients

1 kg wild boar, cut into portions
1 small onions used for a stew
1 cup olive oil
3 bay leaves
3 garliccloves
1 kg ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 cup vinegar
Salt , rather coarse
Freshly ground pepper
Chili

Preparation

Deep fry the meat portions in a saucepan with hot olive oil for about 5 minutes until it gets golden, turning it from all sides with the help of a tong.
Diminish the heat by adding some vinegar and then add the remain ingredients gradually.
Add some hot water to cover both meat and other spices and shake it well before you start cooking it over moderate heat for 60 minutes.
Add onions and you cook for 40 minutes.
Check if the meat is tender during simmering time before you get it out of the heat.
Let them 10 min. cool a little bit before serving.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE



Spit-roasted BBQ ewe

Syggested by Aggeliki Laggourani and Takis Panagiotopoulos, Lidoriki

Ingredients

2 kg of ewe meat, can even be either lamb of goat meat
4 tbsp of sea salt
Oregano

Preparation

Cut the meat into large square portions and place them in a big bowl.
Sprinkle with salt and the sort of wild oregano growing on our mountains.
Let the meat rest for a whil in a kind of light marinade.
Before using the big spit, you have to wash it and then pass the two lemon halves through it.
Thread the meat portions into the spit.
Roast it over a coal fire, that has to be very strong in the beginning and then continue grilling it over a lesser fire that has to be uniformly distributed under the whole length of the spit.
Grill under 45 minutes, or until neither blood nor a reddish color appears inside the meat.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

“Kleftiko”* lamb with Formaella Arachovas Parnassos PDO

Suggested by Babis Kourelis hotelier, Delfi

Ingredients	Preparation
4 persons	By using the air-blowing device of your oven, pre-heat it at 180°C.
About 1 ½ – 2 kg of lamb meat, preferably a leg of a new-born lamb, cut into portions	Using a bowl, mix olive oil, mustard, water, peppers, tomatoes, garlic and the cheese cubes.
4-5 big potatoes, peeled and cut into large pieces.	Use a big casserole, a ceramic cooking pot with a lid, to place the lamb, the potatoes, salt and pepper and sprinkle them with the oregano.
2 carrots, cut into slices	Pour all the ingredients you previously mixed in the bowl over the lamb pieces.
2 sweet red peppers	Cover with the lid and bake in the oven at 200°C.
2 green ones, cut into slices	Then lower the heat to180oC and continue baking it for 1 ½ hour.
2 tomatoes preferably big and ripe, cut in to slices	One hour before taking it out of the oven, uncover the casserole, stir the potatoes and turn all the meat pieces upside down to get a golden hue for both the meat and the potatoes.
1 garlic clove cut in to slices	After taking them out of the oven, let them cool a little bit before serving.
”Formaella” PDO cheese, cut in small cubes	
2 tbsp mustard	
½ wine glass olive oil	
1 glass water	
Salt	
Freshly ground pepper	
Fresh oregano	

** “klepht” means a member of an armed group of men who took refuge in the Greek mountains and lived by stealing and fought against the Ottoman rulers.*

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Galaktoboureko

Suggested by the well - known confectioner Spyros Giannakopoulos, Dixori

Ingredients

For a baking pan with a diameter of 32 cm
1 πακέτο φύλλο τύπου Βηρυτού

For the cream filling
2 ½ lit. fresh milk
5 eggs
1 kg sugar
1 lemon peel
300gr semolina
200 gr melted butter

For the syrup
½ lit water , 1 kg sugar
1 tbsp of glucose
1 portion of vanillin powder
1 package of dough sheets, called Beirut "fyllo", in Greece

Preparation

In a saucepan, mix whole eggs and sugar to make a fluffy paste.
Add milk and bring to boil over a moderate heat, stirring constantly, to avoid lumps.
When your cream has been boiling for a while, add the "semolina" flour and take it out from the heat. Add lemon peel.
Use some melted butter for the bottom of the baking pan and start placing each dough sheet, forming it like an envelope, using two dough sheets, one beside the other.
You have to use melted butter on each sheet.
Fill the dough sheets with the cream and then place some last sheets on top of the galaktoboureko.
The sheet margins remaining outside the pan are to be folded towards the inside to make a "nest" in confectioner`s terms.
Bake in a well pre-heated oven for 1 hour at 180ºC, using the air-blowing device of the oven.
Prepare the syrup in a saucepan with water, sugar and glucose for 2-3 min. adding the vanillin, at the end.
Pour the warm syrup over the galaktoboureko while it is still hot. Applies for both the syrup and the galaktoboureko.
Avoid cutting it into portions before the time lapse of 2 hours.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Ravanì from Galaxidi

Suggested by Chryssoula Papalexi, hotelier, Galaxidi

Ingredients

1½ kg soft porridge rice, called “glacé, in Greece
2 kg sugar
1 vanillin portion
¾ water glass olive oil.
Water

Preparation

Wash the rice and dry it.
Grind it in a rice-mill of a food processor.
Put it in a saucepan and add the double amount of water together with the olive oil. Bring to boil over a moderate heat, then add the rice with sugar and vanillin.
Mix water and olive oil and heat it inside a saucepan. When the water gets to be lukewarm add rice, sugar and vanillin. Keep stirring the whole time, to avoid that the paste sticks to the bottom.
Use a wooden spoon and when it starts boiling, lower the heat to a minimum, while keeping the mixture fluid until it gets thicker and thicker.
When realizing that our paste can easily be separated from the saucepan bottom, then it is ready and can be taken out and spread on a nr. 38 baking pan in an even and uniform manner with the help of an oiled wooden spoon.
Before starting to bake, cut the paste in square portions and place a clover bit in the middle of each one.
Baking time is about 30 min at 250°C, using a heat source from below for the first half of the baking process and from both below and above for the rest of the time.
Our ravani is ready when it stops sticking to the baking pan and can be easily separated from its sides and its bottom.
Sprinkle with cinnamon, before serving.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Sweet almond paste

Suggested by Chryssoula Papalexi, hotelier, Galaxidi

Ingredients

1 kg almonds, finely chopped
1 kg sugar
500 ml water
10 “mastic” drops, ground together with sugar to avoid their sticking together
1 teaspoon of lemon juice

Preparation

Make a real thick water and sugar syrup, using a saucepan until you get some lumps. Keep apart about a glass of this syrup that you may need to use later on.
Let the syrup cool a little bit and then add the finely chopped almonds, mastic and lemon juice stirring with a wooden spoon.
Use the food processor to work with this paste until it gets white and fluffy. That`s as sign it is ready and can immediately be canned in some glass jars that you can keep in the fridge and use starting from the next day.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Orange pie

Suggested by Gianna Sinì, restaurant owner, Trizonia Island

Ingredients

4 eggs
500 gr sugar
200 gr strained yoghurt
200 ml sunflower oil
1 small envelope of baking powder
Orange peel from 5 fruits
1 dough sheet (fyllo)
1 vanillin portion

For the syrup

300 gr sugar
500 ml water

Preparation

Start with making the syrup. Use a saucepan to boil sugar and water until it gets thick. Let it cool.
Use a food processor to beat eggs with sugar until you get a thick whitish paste. Add the rest of the ingredients and stir lightly to get a soft and even paste.
Cut the dough sheet in pieces and add it to the above paste.
Oil the baking pan and bake this mixture in a well pre-heated oven using heat sources placed both above and underneath, for about 40 minutes at 180°C.
As soon as your pie is taken out from the oven, pour the hot syrup over it. Let it stand and cool and then cut into portions and serve, preferably with some “kaimaki” ice cream on top, along with some orange sauce to go with it.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Bergamont spoon sweet

Suggested by **Mother Monica**, the St Nectarios convent

Ingredients

2 mature bergamot fruits
700 gr white sugar
500 ml water
1 cinnamon stick
1 small confection of vanillin essence
2 slices of lemon

Preparation

Wash the bergamot fruits thoroughly. Grate the outer part of their skin and put this peel aside. Cut the fruits in 4 pieces each, separate the white part of the skin and keep it, while the inner part of the fruit is not needed. Put the bergamot inner skins in a small saucepan with water and boil them twice. Throw away all water that you cooked them in both times, to get rid of their bitter taste. In a small saucepan, put the cooked bergamot skins, sugar, water, cinnamon stick, vanillin essence, 2 slices of lemon and boil until the fruit inner skin is tender and the syrup is thick. Our candy filling is now ready.

"Risoni pasta" casserole with chick peas

Suggested by **Father Isaak, the St Augustine and Seraphim Saroff monastery**

Ingredients

300 gr chick peas
1 big dry onion finely chopped
cup small "risoni pasta"
cup olive oil
1 red pepper finely chopped
3 ripe tomatoes chopped
1 tbsp of tomato paste
1 big carrot, sliced
2 zucchini cut in cubes
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper
Sweet red pepper powder

Preparation

Put chick peas in a bowl of water and let them stay overnight, in order for them to get tender.
Next morning, wash them and boil them in a saucepan, until they get really soft.
Using another saucepan sauté dry onions and zucchini in olive oil, together with carrot, pepper and tomatoes
Add the boiled chick peas, the "risoni pasta" and a quantity of water equal to three times the volume of the "risoni pasta".
Add the tomato paste and all the various herbs and go on boiling until most of the water has evaporated and a dense sauce is formed.
Take out of the heat and let the concoction rest for about 10 min. before serving.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

EVRYTANIA

Nature is glorified here... Evrytania, according to UNESCO, is the region with the highest levels of atmospheric and environmental purity on a global scale. A place of well-being... Mountains standing tall, unstoppable rivers, bridges, lake Kremaston, dreamy forests, plane trees, springs, stone-built villages, monasteries, pilgrimages, and the fairy tale plain of Karpenissiotis, which also harbours gastronomic treasures. Evrytania extends for 722 square miles, with 53% of the site having an altitude of over 3,280 feet. It is one of the most sparsely populated mountainous region of Greece. Wander in its mapped hiking trails and take in the sounds of nature, letting you eavesdrop on the secrets of the forest. Relish the fruits of the forest, the bramble berries, raspberries, wild strawberries, dogwood berries, which taste better than anywhere else. If you are lucky, you may encounter some creature of the wild. Make a stop at **Kefalovryso,** with its plane trees and waters at the Markos Botsaris monument; further down at the quaint **Gavros,** and a tsipouro with a fish delicacy is amust. The black bryony and wild asparagus of Potamia are gastronomic gems, as are its wild mushrooms, provided you are in the know. In spring and autumn the colours of nature make up a unique pallet and the fragrances are unprecedented. **Karpenissi** looks straight out of a fairy tale, especially on snowy days, with the fir tree forest all around and its ski centre at **Velouchi**, just 6.5 miles on. Velouchi is equally beautiful without snow, with his green curvatures and vertical rocks; We take in the colors of nature, and our gaze is lost in the mountain ranges, beyond **Potamia**. Visitors will be amazed by the 20-mile journey of outstanding natural beauty from Karpenissi to **Proussos**. The rivers, the wooded slopes of Kaliakouda and Chelidona, and the amphitheatrical villages that look like they're straight out of a painting, **Voutyro**, the**Megalo Chorio**, the **Mikro Chorio**. The vertical rocks, the river, and the road all become one... **Kleidi** with its rocks and the imposing landscape reaching Prousos is a dream. At the chapel **Patimata tis Panagias**, the Steps of the Virgin Mary, we light a candle giving praise to the Lord...Heavenly beauty. At **Dipotama**, rivers Karpenissiotis and Krikellopotamos converge in the waters of Trikeriotis. The monastery of **Panagia Prousiotissa** perched on a vertical cliff, renowned throughout Roumeli and across it the famous Scholeio Ellinikon Grammaton, School of Greek letters, the clock and the two stronghold towers of Karaiskakis. Another journey to **Lake Kremasta**, with its scattered villages and harmonious landscapes, is full of twists and turns till **Tatarna Monastery**. The bridge of **Episkopi** offers the best photo-op location for the lake. In the summer time, hiking, Krikellopotamos, the Pantavrechei gorge with its waterfalls offer a perfect relaxation. Our walk through the paved pathways of **Megalo Chorio** starts off with mountain tea and honey, as well as galaktompoureko and is completed with a milk pie. **Mikro Chorio,** with its grand history never ceases to move us while its museum is also interesting. From **Neo Mikro Chorio** the view of Karpenissiotis valley is idyllic. At **Koryschades**, visitors will admire the stone-built houses, the paved pathways and the Museum of National Resistance. The people here are hospitable with a clear, straight gaze. In the springtime we look down at the city from the Hill of Saint Dimitrios; just before Klafsi, the 5th century Paleochristian church of Saint Leonidis is astounding.

Evrytania is a place of memorable experiences... a place where one can enjoy all four seasons.

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The cuisine

The Evrytanian cuisine is full of new experiences, original mountain freshness and taste. It gives us some pure culinary sensations, with a stint of village authenticity and herbal essences. The leading role is held by all sorts of pies.
They are made of handmade dough using the best of flours. Their fillings are rich, with exquisite cheese sorts and an original combination of other ingredients. You will always recall tasting the cheese pie, leek pie, "babanetza" pie (maize flour, animal fat and cheese) and pumpkin-cheese pie. Milk pie is like a dream, as it is filled with really fresh milk and embodies the culinary identity of Evrytania, standing as its trade-mark.
Young goat and lamb meat are either grilled over an open fire, or in a casserole with pasta in the wood-fire oven and finally rooster is prepared with egg-pasta. "Trahanàs" and pasta are unique, because the former is cooked as a soup with goat`s butter and cheese coming from the surrounding mountains. Hand-made pasta is either confectioned at home or at the local cooperatively run workshops, using genuine ingredients, and dominating the culinary scene of Evrytania . "Tsalafoùti" cheese with freshly baked bread is something you have to experience. Special "anadiòtikes" potatoes give a sweet aftertaste. Trouts are minced and used in fish-meat-balls, usually accompanying a legume soup. Dry beans of the "klapsiòtika" variety are soft, easily cooked and very tasty. Legumes are combined with sausages, prosciutto and cured meats and the result is astonishing.

At Proussòs, near a fir tree forest, producing prosciutto the Greek way, according to an ancient recipe, when this specialty was called "acrocòlion" at those times. A Parma-prosciutto recipe is being used, blended with the Evrytania traditionally salted pork leg. The production is carried out manually, without any chemical additives or preservatives. It is set to mature naturally for 12 months, air dried by the winds blowing from the mountains covered with fir tree forests.... In a traditional wood-burning oven, these people create several cured-meat types following old recipes. These highly appreciated specialties are "lonza", wine cured ham, air dried salami, smoked bacon and rustic sausages.
At Karpenissi, cured meat delicacies are produced, blending traditional and modern methods. Seven sorts of sausages stand out, among them the ones filled with "trahana" and "feta " cheese.
Evrytanian cure meat products have been prized by the "Organoleptic rating of Greek meat derived products ".

The Evrytanian cured meat products have been highly appreciated by food markets abroad. Even the game cuisine is alive and well here.... Hares and partridges are prepared with chestnuts or small "stifàdo" onions and wild mushrooms are delicate, too. Monastery cooking professed at the Tatàrna Convent is nice to experience....
And the cooking books are like a gastronomic Bible. While in Karpenissi, we had the luck to get some pleasant moments and a sense of well-being when meeting with grandmothers, whose narrations about yesterday and today in Evrytania really radiate romanticism, nostalgia and warmness. Visitors who have the chance to seat by the fireplace, have a nice cup of tea with fir honey, and a milk pie or a chestnut soup will literally immerse themselves into Evrytanias gastronomic stories. One thing is for sure, though. Throughout Evrytania, visitors will enjoy their meals and will undoubtedly adore local cuisine.

Confections

In Evrytania, confections narrate their own story. Raspberries, wild strawberries, cornelian cherries or common cherries, walnuts and chestnuts are masterfully transformed into some precious marmalades and fruits spoon sweet. Cornelian cherries liqueur is a real dream. The "galaktoboùreko" pie and yogurt with walnuts and honey at Megalo Horio are renown, and the walnut cake is a sensation wherever you taste them.
Drinking the famous tsipouro-honey mix is an unforgettable experience.

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Cheese making

The Region of Evrytania benefits from a clean air and a great bio-diversity; as a result, the region is a well known producer of some exquisite cheese sorts. **Tsalafouti** is one of these really precious, white, fresh and creamy cheeses, containing 12 – 14 % fat. It is slightly sour and has a taste of aromatic herbs, reminding us of the cool and pure mountains of Evrytania. It can set every refined palate "rippling"; therefore it has the potential to play a leading role in the culinary scene. An initiative for the "standardization" of its unique character has already started and a great future can be predicted for this cheese. For connoisseurs, this could be the "tastiest secret" among the vast range of Greek cheeses.
Confectioning it is a whole process "transmitted" from each generation to the next. It has always been made at the Agrafa mountain chain by the shepherds ("tsopànoi") themselves, using a blend of sheep`s and goat`s milk, from the end of July until the middle of September. Milk proportions were determined by the quantities available. In those mountain pastures, the free-going flocks of sheep were giving a type of milk that was better than the one produced by animals staying at the lowlands, due to their feeding on wild vegetation, including aromatic herbs. The result is that milk is richer in proteins and has better coagulation properties.

The process of cheese making

In order to coagulate the milk (for cheese - making purposes), farmers used to drain it with a double cheese cloth, immediately after milking and then they boiled it to "get its elements decomposed".
It was essential to use some coarsely cut salt at the end of the procedure, as well as adding some rennet, in case it was needed. Then, the mixture was used to fill some thoroughly cleaned wooden churns made of cedar tree.
The tsalafoùti cheese was "born" this way. It had to stay and ferment in there for 15 days. During the first 5 days they had to stir it twice a day, then once a day, for the next ten days. All this was made in some mountain huts, constructed on an altitude of 1200 to 1500 m. Then, they dug holes in the ground to bury those wooden churns

inside, where temperature reached 10ºC. Fifteen more days were needed there for "tsalafouti" to get coagulated, at which point it was ready for consumption.
This cheese had been the shepherds` favorite food in everyday life or when having a good time with their friends. In our days, this process is followed by the most state-of-the-art cheese making workshops.
The local entrepreneurs have managed to transfer the traditional craftsmanship unaltered through the ages, while meeting today`s requirements.
The important thing is they respect their great tradition and keep all the useful properties of this particular traditional cheese unaltered. "Tsalafouti" has a high nutritional value that meets the needs of both adults and children. Its contents for 100 gr are: Energy 207 kcal, Fat 14 gr, of which Saturated fat amounts to 7,2 gr , Carbohydrates 6,6 gr, Sugar 6,5 gr, Proteins 7,9 gr and Salt (NaCl) 1,8 gr.
While tasting "tsalafouti" at Veloùhi, under the fir trees, we had the opportunity to discuss with people about the historical aspects of this particular cheese making and learn about their life on the mountains, in forests or by the rivers. We got to understand the relation between artisan cheese making and the special aspects of these folks` lives and traditions. The "tsalafouti" cheese production is limited to this specific region of Evrytania. This cheese is a basic ingredient in cheese creams, cookies, salads, pasta, and dip sauces with aromatic herbs.
Still another sort of farmstead cheese is **goat`s cheese,** marked as a traditional brand, made exclusively from goat`s milk. The great Homer mentions it in the famous epic poem Iliad. It is snow white and its taste is genuine and really captivating, with a stingy touch, carrying an herbal taste, especially if it is produced during springtime. It has a high nutritional value and contains calcium and vitamins. The most characteristic Evrytanian cheese brands are the following: the **Kefalograviera** a yellow cheese made from 70% goat`s milk and 30% sheep`s milk, set to ferment and mature for a period of 8 months and **Graviera** (alteration of Gruyère) **cheese,** likewise from 70% goat`s milk and 30% sheep`s milk, set to mature for a period of 8-12 months. Some other important cheese sorts include **Feta** and **Saganotyri**, the latter being confectioned as an ideal "fried-cheese" sort. Some other particular specialties are **goat`s butter** and **traditional yoghurt.**

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Livestock farming

Evrytania is a mountainous and rocky region and has always been a livestock farming environment. General Makrygiannis (one of our best known War of Independence heroes) tells us about some guerilla war leaders (kapetanèoi), who used to keep their own cattle flocks, just for feeding their brave young soldiers (pallikària). Sheep and goats were called "lianà", meaning small ones, while bovines were called the "big ones". Nowadays, the total livestock population of Evrytania comprises 62.000 sheep and goats, 4.600 cattle and calves, and around 100 pigs. Because of the climatic conditions in various pasturing fields, there is a great number of wandering farmers. Sheep are better for lowlands, while goats are ideal for mountainous areas. Bovines include the short-horned cows, a local breed existing here since ancient times. This cattle breed is low consuming, but low yielding in milk, as well. Their quality milk is, though, richer and more valuable, because it has a high nutritional value on account of the purity of the environment and their specific feed. It is also rich in anti-oxidation substances coming from various herbs. **Goat`s milk** has a high nutritional value and should be included in everybody`s diet. We should bear in mind that, according to Mythology, Ancient God Zeus fed on goat Amaltheia`s milk. Goat`s milk is exceptionally rich in nutritional elements like vitamins and calcium; consequently it is easily digested, because of the micro-lipids it contains. Casein intolerance, caused by cow`s milk, is not traced in goat`s milk, because of the difference in protein combination. Its casein is highly soluble and the presence of lactose-bulmin enables it to get easily absorbed. It contains a low percentage of lactose, which makes it an alternative for those suffering from lactose intolerance. In conclusion, it is beneficial for our organism, since it is rich in fatty elements that shield us and have the metabolic convenient to yield their energy, while they lower our cholesterol at the same time. Near the Strofylovouni forest, at Proussos, pigs are farmed. The cattle farmers there, alongside with the usual breeds, have additionally developed a cross-breed between pork and boar, producing unique cured meats and sausages with a stint of wild nature. Evrytania could be considered as the place for sheep and goat breeding, on account of its geography, soil conditions, and the vast pasture areas amounting to 76.000 acres. These are the ideal conditions for this sort of husbandry. Sheep and goat farming is particularly interesting on an economic level and the local breeds are subsidized, in order to multiply and continue to produce. The district of Evrytania has all the requisites for an ecologically driven cattle farming business. Due to the continuous request for consumption of steadily bigger amounts of goat`s milk and biological cheese, professional chances are good for young people wishing to stay in their home villages and have the initiative to start some productive activity on their own.

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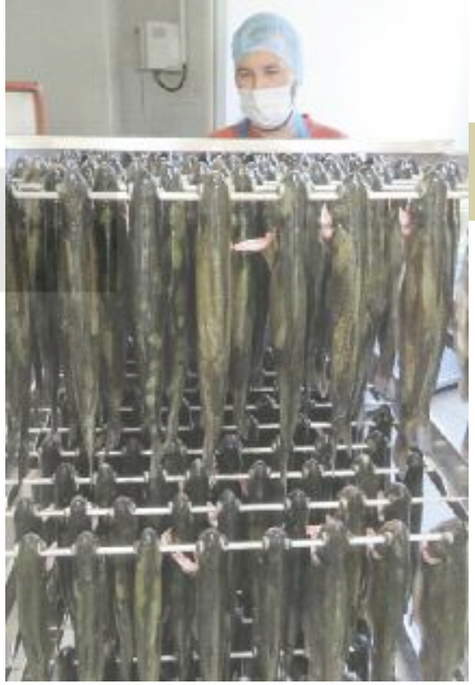


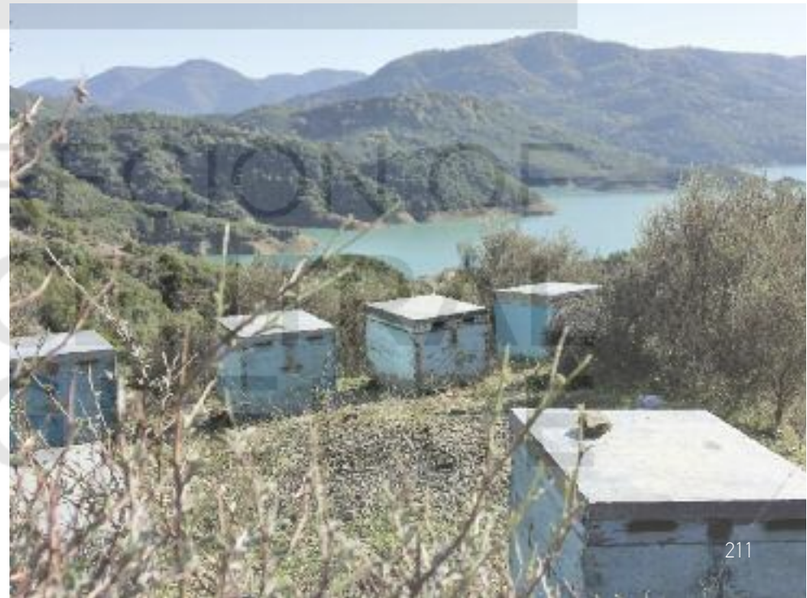
Fish farming and mountainside fishing

In the cool and clear waters of Karpenissiòtis river, down the mountain slopes of Kalliakoùda, microclimate conditions are ideal for trout farming.
Here the trouts are grown under ideal conditions in waters coming from a natural spring.
Low temperatures and clear waters contribute to delay fish development, a fact that results in their growing slowly, needing some 18-20 months to reach a full-grown size.
On the other side, this fact ensures us a high quality product.
The smoked trout production can reach 50 tons a year.
The Karpenissi trout has conquered the Greek food market.
Even fresh fish is locally sold to customers, directly from the source.
Visitors will be impressed by the transparent waters of the area.
Processing, starting from fishing and going on with smoke treatment and then packing, is very demanding.
As soon as the trouts get to weigh about 500 gr, they are fished, thoroughly cleaned, washed, marinated and then they undergo a smoking process. The wood fire comes from some oak tree logs and a secret mixture of herbs is added.
Then, they are pasteurized at a temp. of 90° C and left to rest and cool before they are vacuum-packed either whole or as fillets.
They can be kept in a refrigerator at a temp. of 4° C or lower, for about 4 months.
Guided tours are often held in the area.
Visitors may taste various local dishes based on either fresh or smoked trout.
Wild trout or carp is even fished in the clear waters of the Evrytanian rivers with the well known bio-diversity.

Honey

Fir honey is classified among the highest quality honeys. The Evrytanian region has the highest air purity factor worldwide, since the atmosphere here is uncontaminated.
Unique forests and rich bio-diversity are the determining factors for the high quality honey produced here.
Apiculturists in Evrytania are well aware of the fact that their local eco-systems are very sensible and they profess their apicultural activity under the condition of a peaceful co-habitation with nature, by avoiding disruption of the delicate natural balance existing here.
On the other hand, when they handle environmental issues successfully, the benefits drawn are favorable for everybody.
Honey is one of the products they highlight.
They wish to proceed with certifying and promoting all top-quality honey varieties produced in Evrytania and getting their nutritional properties widely known to the public.

A recent study, undertaken by the University of Thessaloniki, has proved that fir and oak honey has the highest anti-oxidation properties in the world.
Fir honey is the most usual variety of the Agrafa mountain chain and Evrytania in general.
Apicultures are located high up on the mountains, surrounded by wild growing vegetation and dense forests.
Harvesting occurs mostly during June-July.
This honey has a refined taste, a distinct look and a wide range of aromatic features.
Apart from all the above, its most precious property is not getting crystallized.
Oak and pine honey comes under the category of honey-like saps that are collected by scale insects, i.e. Phemicryphus, aphids that scrounge on the oak trees as well as mealy bugs, that in their turn are being used by bees for their honey.
The so called **forest honey** is a natural amalgam with a varied provenience from forest trees. It is considered as the gift of nature, with high nutritional properties.
Oak honey has a very dark hue and the apiculturists call it “meloùra”.
It possesses a medium to high liquidity and several biological benefits.
Harvesting starts in June with the honeylike saps of oak leaves and can go on until August.
Chestnut honey has a rather limited production but, all the same, it has a very distinct aroma and a slightly bitter aftertaste.
It is probably the richest in trace elements like potassium, magnesium, manganese and barium, as well as fructose and tannins.
It contains a great quantity of pollen grains, a fact that makes it a natural medicine.
It is specially recommended for diabetes patients.
In conclusion, we should mention that hundreds of Greek apiculturists are gathered in this area each year, due to the unique forest environment.



OUR RECIPES

EVRYTANIA

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

White dry beans with smoked trout

Suggested by Aggeliki Gioldasi, trout cultivator, Karpenissi

Ingredients

500 gr of locally produced white beans
200 gr smoked Karpenissi trout, cut into small pieces
2 fresh onions, finely chopped
Finely chopped parsley
Salt
Freshly ground pepper
Olive oil
Really strong wine vinegar

Preparation

Bring the white beans to boil in salted water for about 45min-one hour and drain them. Then use a bowl to mix them with the smoked trout bits and the rest of the other ingredients. Stirring gently until they get to be a uniformly looking mixture that goes very well with tsipouro.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Penne with smoked trout from Karpenissi

Suggested by Aggeliki Gioldasi, trout cultivator, Karpenissi

Ingredients

500 gr penne pasta
300 gr smoked Karpenissi trout
30 gr cherry tomatoes cut in half or in small cubes
100 gr light milk cream
1 shot tsipouro
Salt
Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

Boil the pasta in salted water and drain.
Rinse the same saucepan and use it over the same heat source to prepare the milk cream and cherry-tomato sauce.
When it gets a pink color, add the trout bits, a bit of salt and pepper plus the tsipouro shot.
Finally add the boiled penne and shake well until the sauce covers the whole amount of pasta.
Serve immediately.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Traditional trahanas soup with tomato

Suggested by Giorgos Anzas, Kremasta Lake

Ingredients	Preparation
2 cup rustic trahanàs	Use a cheese grater to mince the tomatoes. Discard overflowing water and keep the juicy part.
3 large mature tomatoes	
1 tbsp of tomato	
8 cups warm water	
2 dry onions finely chopped	Sauté onion and tomatoes in olive oil, using a saucepan.
1 shot tsipouro	Lower the temperature by pouring some tsipouro over and add concentrate and tomato juice to get a vivid color.
Olive oil	
150 gr coarsely chopped feta cheese	
A pinch sweet pepper, bukovo	Stir with a wooden spoon. Add trahanas and water. Keep the lid on while the soup simmers for about 20 min. Add bukovo before serving the soup.

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Traditional cheese pie from Karpenissi

Suggested by Triantafiia Gourgioti, pies producer, Karpenissi

Ingredients

For the hand-confectioned dough sheets
500 gr four for all-purpose
A tsp of salt
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp of vinegar
Natural bicarbonated (soda) water or spring water, as much as needed
A small quantity “semolina”

To aid confectioning of dough sheets use
3 tbsp fine corn flour, niseste and little wheat flour

For the pie filling
1 kg feta cheese
800 gr of myzithra cheese, soft unsalted cheese
200 gr of strained yoghurt
200 gr of tsalafouti cheese, local creamy cheese,
Salt, Pepper
One teacup of liquid soda
6 fresh eggs
Olive oil or locally produced butter

Before serving
50 gr of melted butter

Preparation

We start by making the hand-made dough. Its consistence should be average, neither hard nor soft.
First, we place the flour on our working surface, where we form a cavity in the middle, to fill with the liquids required. Sprinkle with some salt.
Knead the dough vigorously until it doesn´t stick on our hands.
When ready, form 5 equally sized balls with it.
Let them rest for an hour and then form the five dough sheets with a help of a thin rolling rod.
Sprinkle both the working surface and the rolling rod with some flour to facilitate this process.
Use a big bowl to mix all the filling ingredients and crush them with a fork, until you get a uniform paste.
Spread some olive oil on a size nr. 38 baking pan, using a brush.
Place the first dough sheet on the bottom of the pan and sprinkle it with some olive oil, then place the second one on top and put half the filling amount on it, distributing it uniformly and covering the whole baking pan area. Sprinkle with some “semolina”
Go on with another dough sheet that covers the first filling layer and then place another dough sheet and sprinkle some olive oil on it.
Then, fill with the rest of the filling arranging it uniformly like before and top with some semolina.
Finally, top it with the remaining two dough sheets that you have previously sprinkled with oil. Cut the dough sheet edges sticking out of the pan and roll the rest of them inwards.
Using a fork, punch some small holes on the dough sheets and cut into individual square portions.
Use some melted butter over the pie and then bake in a pre-heated oven at 200°C for 1 hour or so.
Take it out of the oven and let it cool for about 20 min. before serving the pie.

Confectioning...

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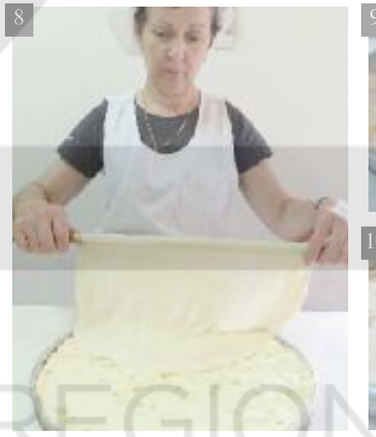
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Leek pie with feta cheese

Suggested from Catherina Kalantzi, Proussos

Ingredients

For the pie filling
1 ½ kg leeks, finely chopped
800 gr feta cheese
Salt , Pepper
6 fresh eggs , Olive oil or butter

Before serving
50 gr of melted butter

Preparation

It can be confectioned in the same manner
as the recipe Authentic Karpenissi cheese pie, but using this different filling.

Pumpkin pie with feta cheese

Suggested from Triantafiia Gourgioti, pies producer, Karpenissi

Ingredients

For the pie filling
1 middle sized pumpkin, grated
800 gr feta cheese , 6 fresh eggs
1 teacup liquid soda
I
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Olive oil or butter

Before serving
50 gr of melted butter

Preparation

It can be confectioned in the same manner
as the recipe Authentic Karpenissi cheese pie, but using this different filling.

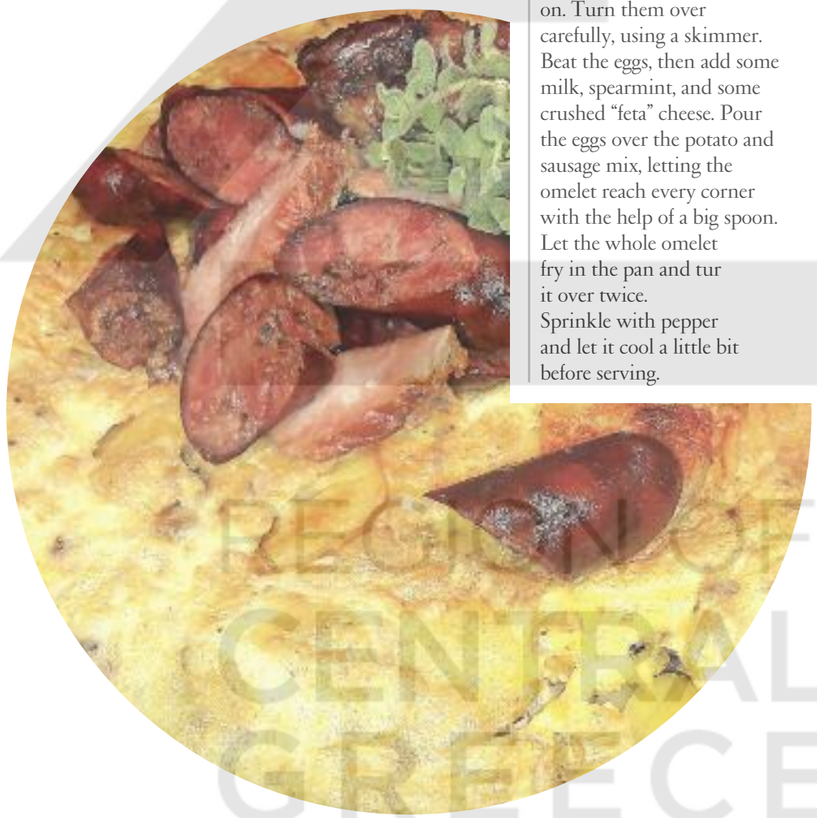
REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Eggs with country-style sausages and potatoes

Suggested by Ilias Provopoulos, Karpenissi

Ingredients

1 ½ kg yellow potatoes
6 eggs
1 small glass milk
10 spearmint leaves finely chopped
200 gr feta cheese
250 gr of Karpenissi made rustic sausage
Sea salt
Freshly ground pepper
Olive oil for frying



Preparation

Peel the potatoes and slice them. Put them in a bowl and wash them thoroughly to let out the starch, then sift them dry.
Using a deep frying pan to heat the olive oil and fry the sausages in it. Add potatoes and lower the heat to let them fry slowly for about 15 min., while keeping the lid on. Turn them over carefully, using a skimmer.
Beat the eggs, then add some milk, spearmint, and some crushed "feta" cheese. Pour the eggs over the potato and sausage mix, letting the omelet reach every corner with the help of a big spoon.
Let the whole omelet fry in the pan and tur it over twice.
Sprinkle with pepper and let it cool a little bit before serving.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Village rooster in tomato sauce with egg-pasta

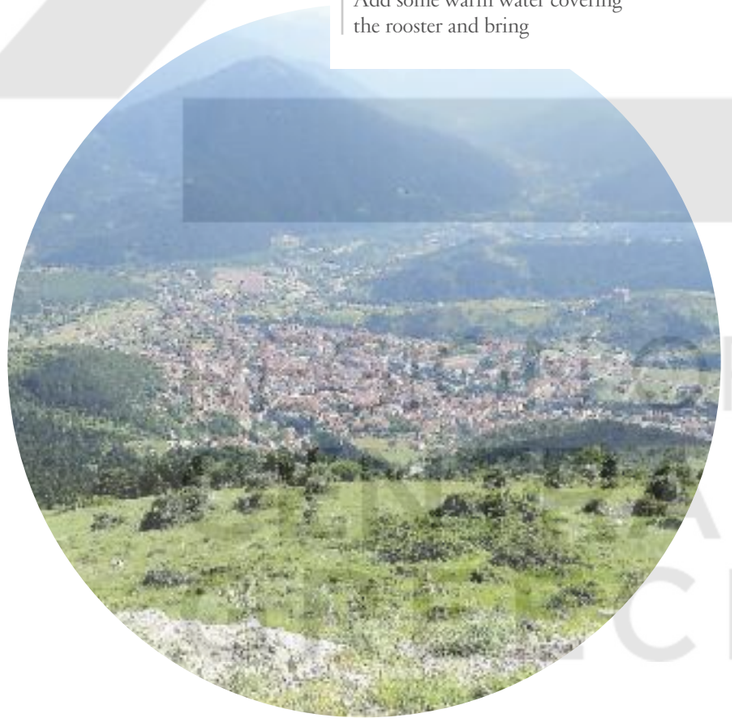
Suggested by Polyxeni Mantzoufa, hotelier, Karpenissi

Ingredients

1 rooster weighting about 2 ½ kg, cut into portions
800 gr traditional egg-pasta
3 dry onions finely chopped
1 glass red wine
2 kg mature tomatoes, chopped
3 big mature tomatoes, chopped
1 tbsp salt
1 tsp freshly ground pepper
10 seeds all spice
1 wine-glass olive oil

Preparation

Put some olive oil in a large saucepan and when it gets hot, use it to fry the rooster portions turning them from all sides, for about 10 minutes until they get a golden hue.
Add dry onions and fry them too until they get soft and golden.
Stop the process by adding the red wine and let its alcohol evaporate.
Add the tomatoes and let them simmer for a while and finally add salt, pepper and allspice.
Add some warm water covering the rooster and bring it to boil for about 2 hours on a moderate heat, with the lid on.
Take the rooster out from the saucepan and keep it on a serving plate seeing to it that it is covered.
Then put the egg - pasta instead and let it boil in the same saucepan. Some more warm water may be needed, when doing this.
The pasta will be ready in about 8-10 minutes.
Serve the pasta, placing the rooster on top.



REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Festive trilogy of meat cooked in a clay pot

Suggested by Kostas Arkoumanis, restaurant owner, Karpenissi

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg veal leg, cut in portions	Wash all meat with wine.
1 kg goat meat, cut in portions	Use a big saucepan to fry onion in
1 kg pork meat, cut in portions	some hot oil and add tomatoes
1 kg potatoes, peeled and cut in squares	and potatoes.
5 big dry red onions	Wait until they get a reddish hue.
1 kg of locally produced tomatoes cut in	Sauté all three kinds of meat in a non
8 parts	sticking frying pan, starting with veal,
Olive oil	followed by the goat meat and then
Freshly ground pepper	the pork meat.
Salt	As soon as the meat portions get
Bay leaves	crunchy, take them out and place
Some stems of oregano	them in the clay pot.
Allspice	Top them with the fried onion, tomato and potato mix, along with a bit of olive oil and spices.

Place the lid on top of the casserole pot and bake in a well pre-heated oven for about an hour at 200°C. Then, lower the temp. to 100°C and leave it in the oven for the next 5 hours. See to it that you take the pot out of the oven now and then and shake it lightly without uncovering it. You have to be sure that the baking liquids are sufficient .
Serve when ready.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

"Giovetzi" lamb stew with orzo pasta

Suggested by Kostas Arkoumanis, restaurant owner, Karpenissi

Ingredients	Preparation
2 kilos lamb preferred part leg, cut in portions 2 twigs of oregano 2 whole onion 3 onions, finely chopped 500 gr orzo pasta 2 tomatoes, finely chopped 4 tbsp olive oil 1 tsp tomato pasta Salt, Pepper 2 tbsp tsalafouti cheese	In a pan place the meat, the oregano and the whole onion and cover with water. Cook for about 2 hours. Add water if needed. Heat the olive oil in a deep frying pan and sauté the fine chopped onions until soften. Add orzo pasta and stir regularly for 2 minutes. Transfer all the ingredients except onion and oregano to a large baking tray. Stir, add salt, pepper, tomato, tomato pasta and the meat. Bake in pre-heated oven at 250°C for 20 minutes. Sprinkle with tsalafouti cheese. We can serve after 5 minutes.

Koryschades

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Tsalafouti cheese with pears, sweet wine and honey

Suggested by Nanà Gaboura, executive chef

Ingredients

300 gr tsalafouti cheese
200 ml milkcream, chilled
20 gr cinnamon powder
80 gr confectioner's sugar
20 gr walnuts
100 gr dough sheets ,
2 tbsp of sugar
A small amount olive oil
4 large pears, peeled
1 bowl "mavrodafni" a local sweet red wine
3 tbsp of honey

Preparation

Use the chilled and whipped milk cream together with tsalafouti cheese, cinnamon and confectioner`s sugar to make a fluffy mixture.
Use a cooking brush to spread the oil separately on each one of the dough sheets that you sprinkle with sugar and arrange them in three layers on a baking grind.
Bake for about 5 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 150°C.
Place the cheese-cream on top of each of the three baked dough sheets and then sprinkle with minced walnuts and honey.

Prepare the pears

Take out their core with a special kitchen device, leaving them whole without slicing them, and then immerse them in sweet wine that you have kept in a bowl.
Bake them in a pre-heated oven until they get a golden hue and then place them on the dough sheets with some honey on top.
Now, they are ready to serve.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Christmas "Melomakàrona", Honey cakes

Suggested by Father Dosìtheos, Tatàrna Monastery Prior, at Lake Kremastà

Ingredients

1 kg flour
1 kg fine "semolina"
450 ml virgin olive oil
150 gr fine sugar
200 gr crushed walnuts
½ wine glass brandy, cognac
1 wine glass "alysìva", lye water
Juice from 2 oranges
Orange peel, 1 orange
1 tsp soda
1 ½ tbsp mixed cinnamon and clove powder

For the topping

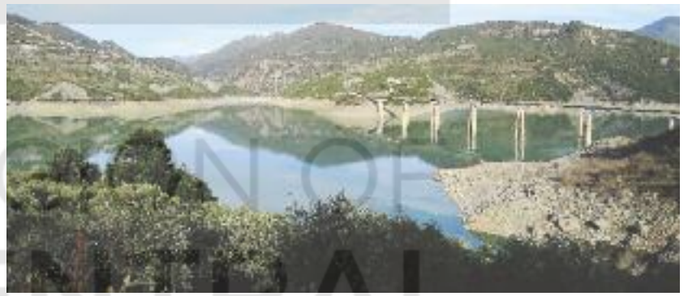
250 gr walnuts, crushed

For the syrup

3 cups sugar
3 cups fir tree scented honey
3 cups water
1 cinnamon stick
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 bit lemon peel

Preparation

Mix olive oil, sugar, orange juice and brandy in a deep bowl and work the mixture for several minutes until all sugar is dissolved. Add all the remaining ingredients, except walnuts. When it gets thoroughly blended, add flour and semolina very slowly and then add the walnuts.
Knead vigorously and, when your dough is malleable and no longer sticks to your fingers, you can start making the small buns. Be sure that your dough stays firm and neither splits or spreads around. Cut the dough in small regular bits and start forming them as small balls, "melomakarona"
Flatten your small balls and use a cheese grater to form different patterns on their surface. Arrange them on a baking pan, keeping some empty spaces between them. Bake them in a well pre-heated oven at 180°C until they get golden brown on both sides. Take them out and let them cool without covering them.
Prepare the syrup by boiling together water, sugar, cinnamon stick, lemon peel and juice. At last, add honey and stir to get a thick syrup. While the syrup is still boiling, dip each bun separately in it for a very short time, with the help of a perforated spoon and then sprinkle them with some crushed walnuts.



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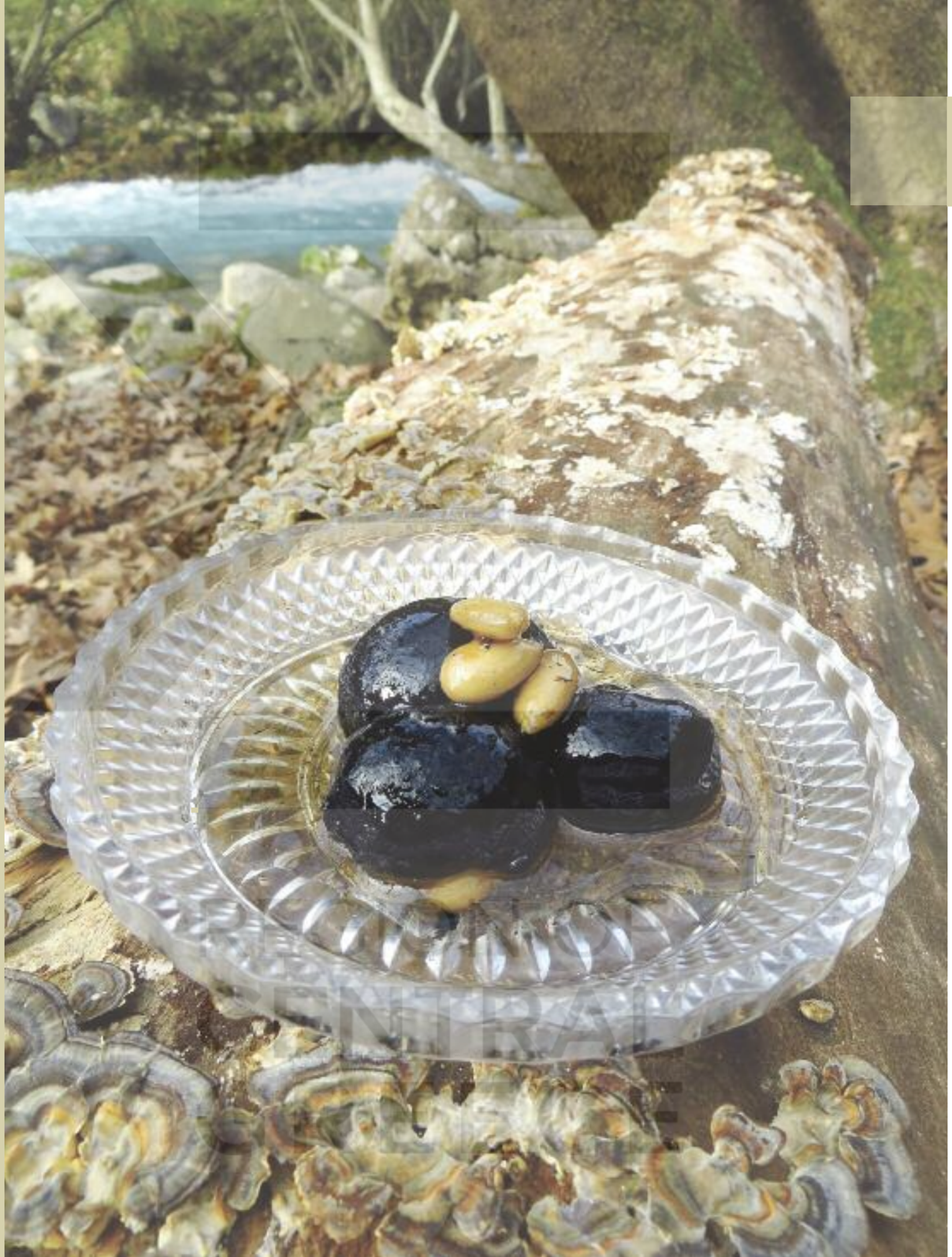

Walnut spoon sweet

Suggested by Nitsa Antza, Karpenissi

Ingredients

20 small fresh green walnuts harvested a long time before they ripen, usually between May and June
1 kg sugar
Almonds

Preparation

Use a long and big needle to make two holes through the fresh walnuts in a perpendicular direction. Boil them three times, for some 30 min. each time, while changing the water they were boiled in, to give them the opportunity to discard their bitterness. Strain them and then punch each one thoroughly with a clove. Put the fresh walnuts in a saucepan together with water and sugar and bring to boil over a moderate to rather high heat with the lid on, for about 20 minutes or as the syrup gets dense put the almonds. You are to use some glass jars to keep your candied walnuts while they are still hot. Seal and turn these jars upside down and keep them in a lukewarm oven overnight.
When they are ready the morning after, you can keep them in a dry and cool place for a certain period of time.

Tauropos or Megdopas

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Raspberry spoon sweet

Suggested by Cathrine Kalantzi, Proussos

Ingredients

900 gr raspberries
400 gr brown sugar
250 gr fir-scented honey
Juice from 2 fresh lemons
1 bunch verbena herb
1 shot-glass
bitter almond liqueur

Preparation

Wash the raspberries thoroughly in cold water. Avoid crushing them, as they are very delicate.
Place them to dry over kitchen paper.
In a wide saucepan put the raspberries, water and lemon juice.
Cover them with sugar and keep them in the refrigerator for 5 hours to let them stay firm and enable them to bring out their aroma.
Take the saucepan out and bring to boil, adding honey, liqueur and verbena. When the syrup is thickened, fill some sterile glass jars with it and close the lid tightly.
Turn the jars upside down and let them rest overnight.
The candied berries can be kept in a dry and dark place for a rather lengthy period of time.
As soon as the jars are opened, keep them refrigerated.

Wild sour cherry spoon sweet

Suggested by grandmother Dina Kalantzi, restaurant owner, Proussos

Ingredients

1 kg wild sour cherries
1200 gr sugar

Preparation

Rinse the wild sour cherries thoroughly.
Take out their core with the special tool for this purpose and then put them in a saucepan, while arranging them in consecutive layers, alternating one layer of cherries with one of sugar, until you have used them all.
Let them rest for the next 24 hours.
Bring them to boil and in the meantime, discard their excessive foam occasionally.
Reduce the heat and let them simmer for about an hour or so, until you get a thick syrup.
Let the candied sour cherries cool and then can them in some glass jars.

Wild strawberry spoon sweet

Suggested by grandma Dina Kalantzi restaurant owner, Proussos

Ingredients	Preparation
1 kg wood-strawberries 600 gr sugar 1 small cup water from our village fountain 1 tsp lemon juice	Wash the wood-strawberries in fresh cool water. Place the wood-strawberries in a saucepan together with sugar and a small quantity of water. Bring to boil over a moderate heat for 5 minutes only, stirring the saucepan a little. Add lemon juice and let it simmer. After one more minute, our candied fruits are ready.

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

REGION OF CENTRAL GREECE

Abbreviations

1 teaspoon : 1 tsp
1 tablespoon: 1 tbsp

Correlation table for liquid volumes

1 teaspoon : 5 ml
1 tableppon: 15 ml
1 teacup: 200 ml
1 mug: 240 ml
1 water glass: 250 ml
1 wine glass: 110 ml

When solids are measured, their weight is given in grams. When dosage is given as a volume (see above) the weight varies accordingly.

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