



Culinary Institute
of America

Mediterranean Cuisine

Day Three: Greece & Turkey



History and Culture of Greece

Ancient Greece

- The cradle of western civilization
- Created the philosophy of sharing meals as a social affair
- One of the first cookbooks written in 300 B.C

Influence of Foreign Invaders

- Ottoman Turks, Macedonians
- Under Ottoman rule for 376 years
- Regained independence in 1829



Influences on Greek Cuisine



Climate

- Hot, dry summers
- Cool, wet winters

Scarcity of Fuel

- One-pot dishes
- Often quick or no-cook dishes

Trade Routes

- Popular trade routes crossed the region

Little Refrigeration

- Wide use of preserved foods

Greek Cuisine



- Influenced by Turkey & Balkan states
- **Central elements:** legumes, grains, goats' milk, yogurt, and cheeses
- **Flavor profile:** hearty, comforting, vibrant
- Utilizes olive oil, salt, & lemon to enhance flavor
- **Common dishes:** moussaka, souvlaki, pastitsio

Flavor Profile

Lemon + Parsley

- **Flavor:** bright, fresh, earthy
- Used as sauce, dips, spreads, seasoning

Lemon + Oregano

- **Flavor:** warm, pungent, zesty
- Classic combination in Greek cuisine

Olive Oil + Tomato

- **Flavor:** rich, fruity, savory
- **Add-ons:** garlic, saffron, mixed herbs, cinnamon, lemon



Key Ingredients

Unified Ingredients: wine, olives, garlic

Nuts: hazelnuts, pistachios, almonds

Grains: bread, rice, barley

Vegetables: tomatoes, potatoes, leafy greens, zucchini, eggplant, bell peppers, onions

Dairy: yogurt, feta cheese, kasseri, goats milk

Fruits: figs, melons, grapes, apricots

Citrus: lime, lemons

Staples: lamb, phyllo dough, ouzo

Herbs: dill, bay leaves, thyme, mint



History and Culture of Turkey



- Turks were originally nomadic herdsmen from the deserts of Mongolia/ Central Asia
- **Influenced by:** China, Persia, and Greeks
- **Ottoman Empire (1453 – 1923)**
Conquered Byzantine Empire & Constantinople (Istanbul)
- **Modern day Turkey (1923-Present)**
 - Center of trade activity
 - Strong restaurant culture

Turkish Cuisine



- Fresh herbs and spices widely used, not a lot of heat
 - Mint, paprika, parsley, cumin
 - Sumac (sour/ lemony berry)
 - Garlic, onions
- Many variations of appetizers (Mezze)
 - **Kebabs:** lamb, grilled fish, no pork (Muslim)
 - **Pilafs:** rice and bulgur

Flavor Profiles

Cumin + Lemon + Parsley

- **Flavor:** bright, complex, earthy
- Used as marinades & seasonings

Chicken + Garlic + Paprika + Parsley

- **Flavor:** sweet, smokey, complex
- Chicken Tava (*Tavuk Tava*)

Lamb + Cumin + Dill + Mint

- **Flavor:** fresh, earthy, rich

Fish + Dill + Lemon + Black Pepper

- **Flavor:** vibrant, complex, touch of spice
- Plays a vital role in Turkish cuisine



Key Ingredients



- **Grains:** bulgur, wheat, rice
- **Vegetables:** cucumbers, bell peppers, eggplants, pumpkin, garlic, onions
- **Fruit:** pomegranates, olives, quinces, apricots
- **Herbs:** cumin, dill, mint, paprika, saffron
- **Legumes:** chickpeas, beans, red lentils
- **Nuts:** walnuts, pinenuts, pistachios, almonds
- **Dairy:** sheep's milk cheese, yogurt, Kaymak
- **Seafood:** octopus, squid, shellfish, finfish
- **Meat:** lamb, goat
- **Poultry:** chicken

Small Dishes of Turkey & Greece

- Not separate from the meal, it is the meal
- Designed for sharing & conversation

Turkey (Mezze)

- Hummus, baba ghanoush served with pita bread
- Foods served with an anise-flavored apéritif (*Raki*)

Greece (Meze)

- Tzatziki, skordalia, taramosalata served with bread



Turkish Mezze



Baked Kibbeh
Kibbeh Bil Sanieh



**Traditional
Lebanese Salad**
Tabbouleh



**Stuffed Grape
Leaves**
Dolma

Greek Meze



Little Frying Pan
Saganaki



Greek Meatballs
Keftedes



Spinach Pie
Spanakopita



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Any Questions?