



Culinary Institute
of America

Mediterranean Cuisine



Learning Objectives

- List the countries who have the main culinary influence within Southern Europe, Northern Africa, and Western Asia.
- Explain the flavors and spices commonly used in each country.
- List the key ingredients used in each country.
- Explain the common cooking techniques used in each country.
- Describe the popular dishes representative of each country.
- Prepare a variety of dishes representative of these countries using standardized recipes.

Kitchen Responsibilities

- Silence and put away phones
- Clean your workstation as you go
- Place waste in proper receptacle:
 - **Green**: food scraps for compost
 - **Blue**: recyclables
 - **Gray**: trash for landfill
- Use paper towels, cleaning cloths, red sanitation bucket for spills
- Use side towel for handling hot objects, not for cleaning
- Place dirty utensils, tools, etc. on speed rack, not in sink
- Place anything with an edge in pan labelled "Sharps Only"
- Place dirty linen in linen bag

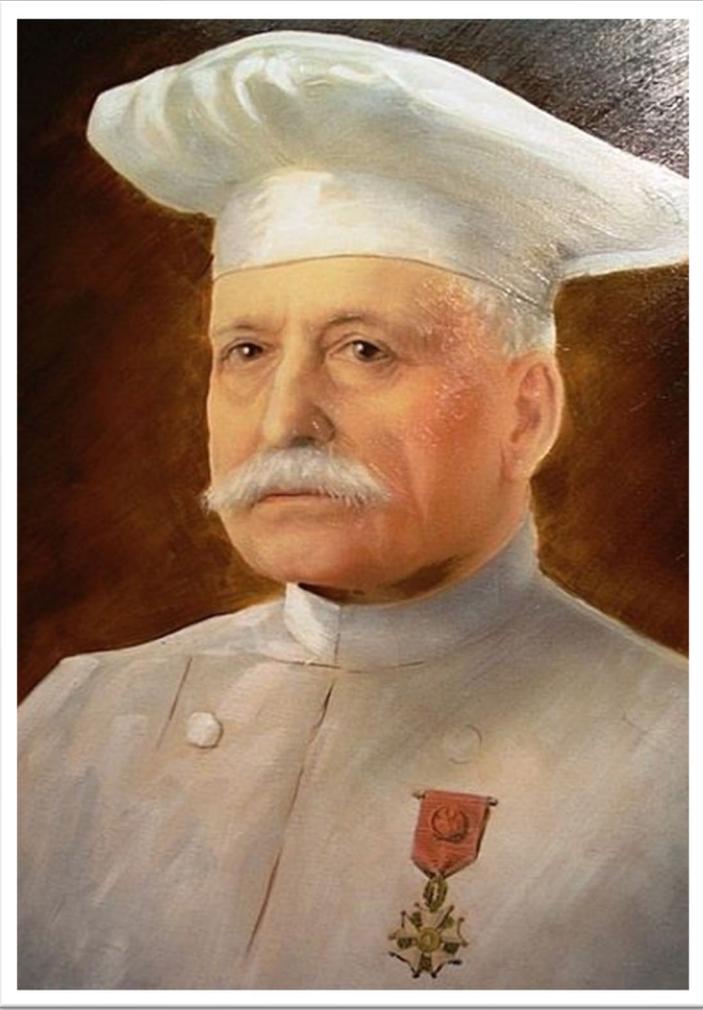


Food Safety

- Keep hair contained with toque, hair net, hair tie, beard guard
- Wash hands before starting work
- Wash hands after:
 - Touching hair, face, phone, pen, etc.
 - Coughing/ sneezing into tissue
- Wash, dry all produce
- Wash cutting board, knives, tools after each use
- Keep perishables refrigerated until needed
- Wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat food
- Keep raw meat, poultry, eggs, seafood separate from other foods
- Cook food to the temperature safe zone



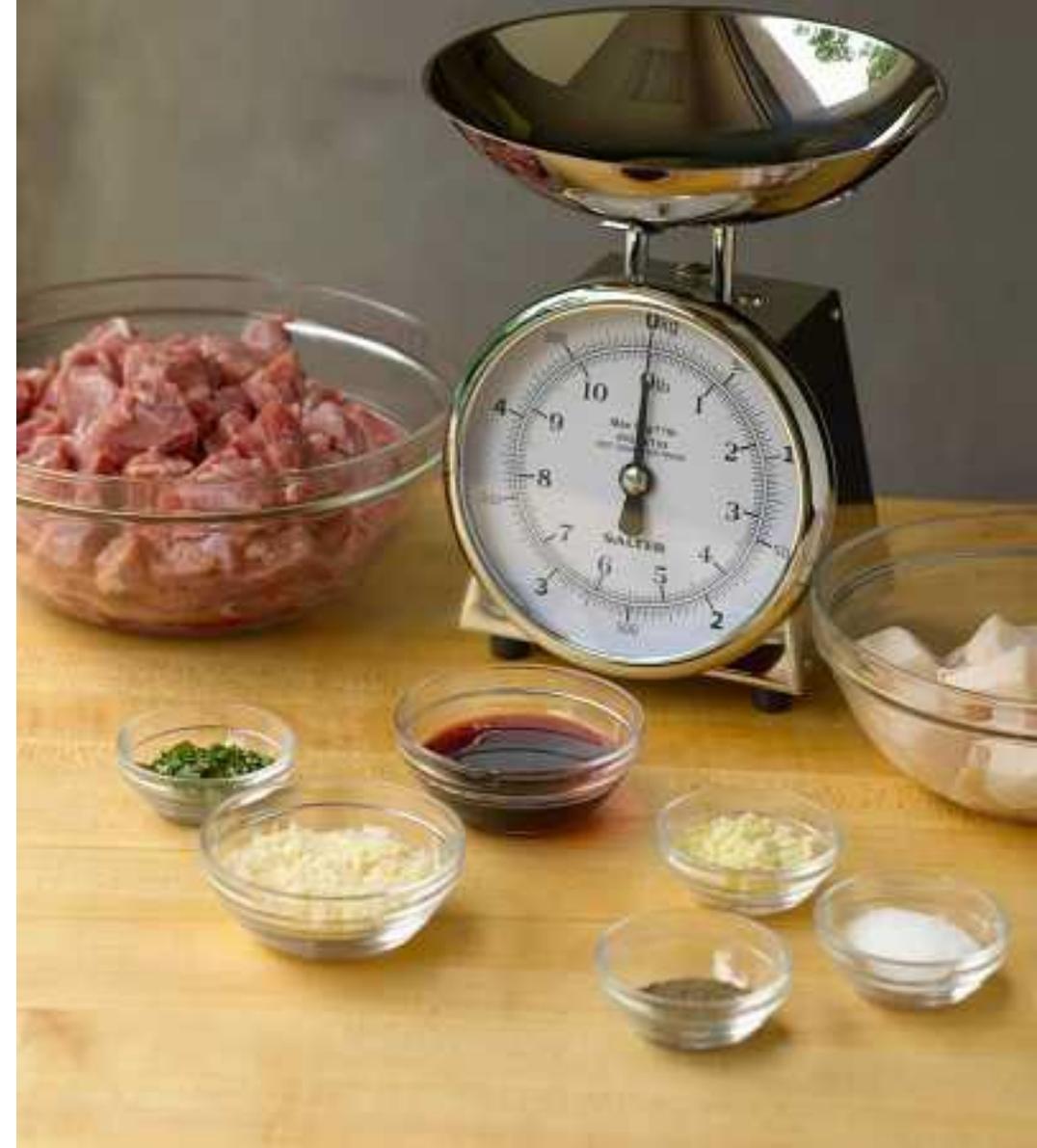
Mise en Place



- French for “everything in its place”
- Organizational system developed in 1800s by Auguste Escoffier, a former soldier
- Preparing the workspace, planning the cooking process
- Having everything ready **before** you cook, bake, or assemble your dish
- Vital part of all successful kitchens, required skill of professional chefs

Recipe Mise en Place

- Read entire recipe before starting
- Review yield, temp., cook times
- Understand terms, techniques– ask questions if unsure!
- Visualize the cooking process from start to finish
- Complete any pre-steps (soak, marinade, etc.)
- Gather, measure/ weigh all ingredients
- Complete all basic prep (wash, trim, grind, dice, etc.)





Tasting spoons

Sanitation bucket with handy wipes

Paper towels

Salt + pepper

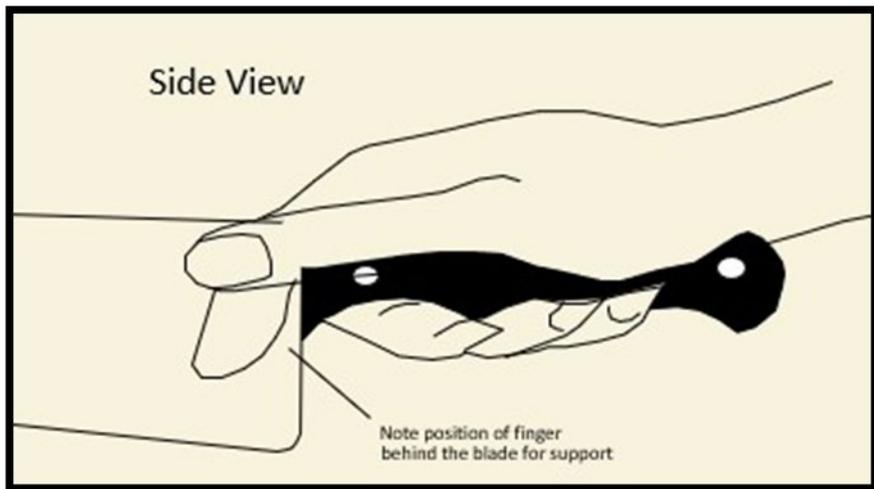
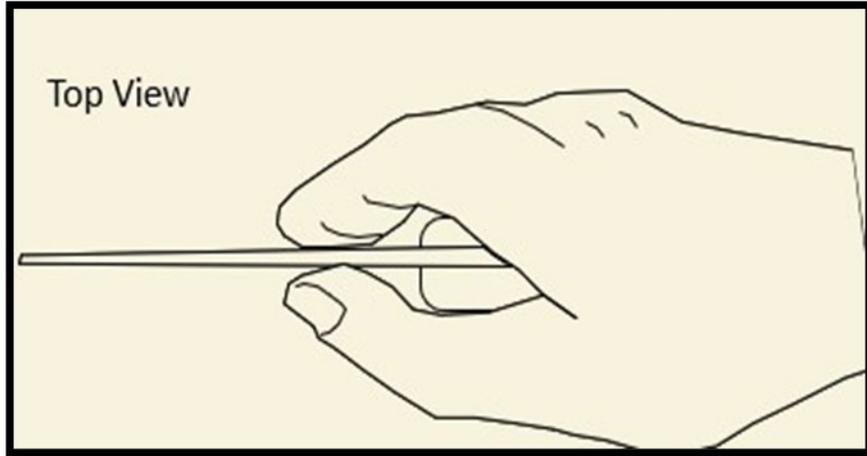
Receptacles for trash + compost

Secured cutting board

Receptacles for product

Workstation Mise en Place

Knife Safety



- Use a sharp knife
- Hold the knife firmly with correct finger positioning
- Cut away from your body
- Use a cutting board
- Place knives on flat surface, away from table edge
- Keep knives in clear sight, never covered
- Do not grab blindly for a knife
- Pass knives using handle, never the blade
- Carry knives with point down

Basic Knife Cuts

Julienne & Dice

1. Square off ends and sides
2. Slice into even slabs of the same thickness
3. Stack slabs, slice into even sticks (julienne)
4. Gather sticks and cut into even cubes (dice)

Large Dice = $\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{3}{4} \times \frac{3}{4}$ in.

Med. Dice = $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ in.

Sm. Dice = $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$ in.



Mediterranean Countries

France
Italy
Greece
Turkey
Tunisia
Morocco
Spain
Slovenia
Monaco
Malta
Cyprus



Algeria
Libya
Egypt
Israel
Lebanon
Syria
Albania
Montenegro
Bosnia-
Herzegovina
Croatia

The Mediterranean Diet

Cuisine

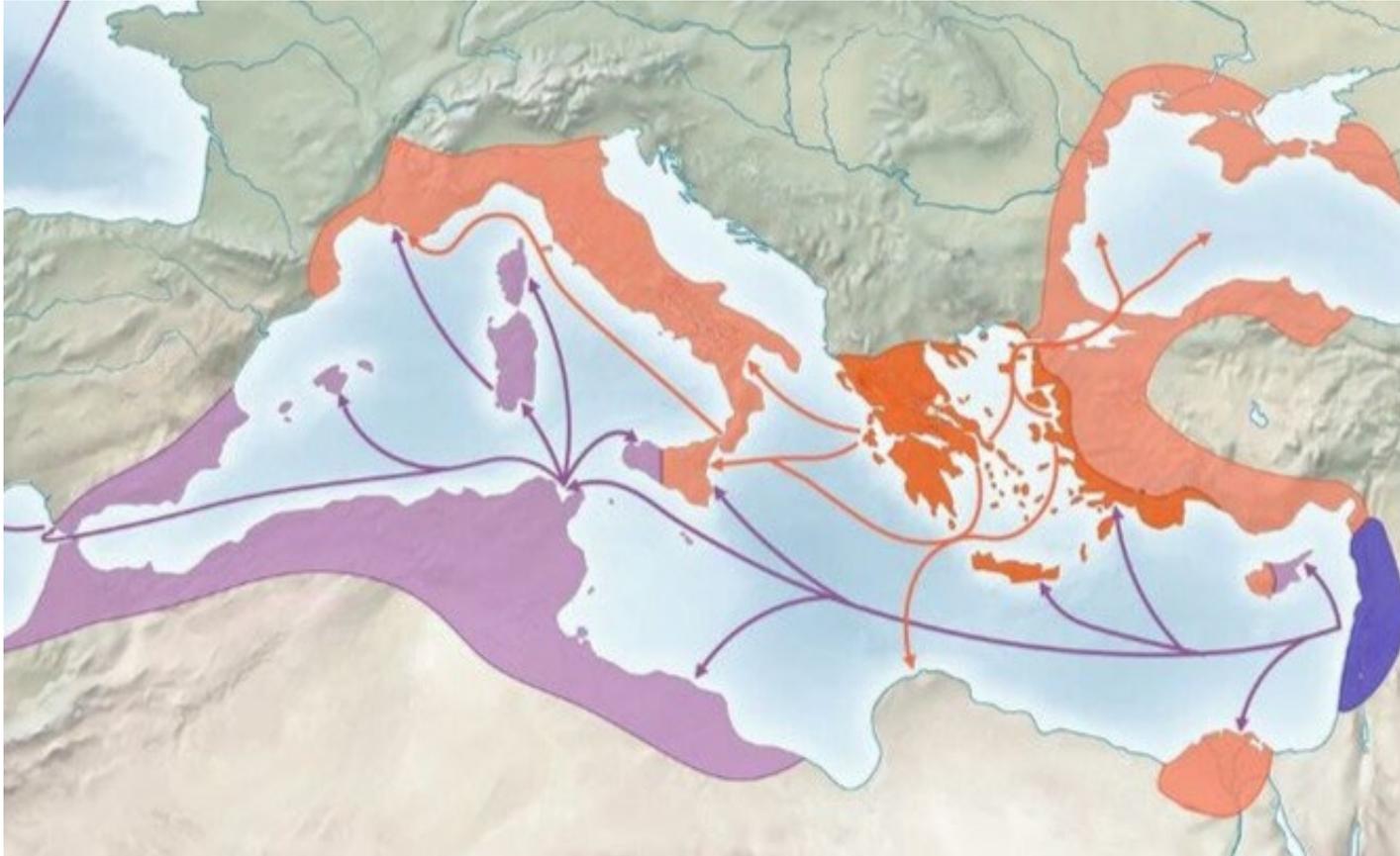
- Tied to nature, seasons, ripeness, regionality
- Reflection of the environment
- Utilizes fresh ingredients
- Plant-forward meals
- Simple food, simple preparations

Lifestyle

- Low consumption of animal fats
- Regular physical activity
- Social cultures



Historical Influences on Cuisine



Climate: hot, dry summers, cool & wet winters

Fuel scarcity: one-pot dishes, quick, or no-cook dishes

Trade routes: popular trade routes across the region

Migrations: mixing of cultures cuisines and new ingredients and spices

Southern Europe

- Italy, Southern France, Spain, Greece have the most culinary influence
- Influenced by the Greeks, Romans, Etruscans, Arabs
- **Geography:** peninsulas, islands, mountainous landscapes, shared coastline
- Emphasis on fresh ingredients
- Rich culinary heritage influenced by ancient civilizations, trade, conquest, agricultural diversity



Northern Italian Cuisine



Osso bucco:
veal shanks
braised with
vegetables,
white wine,
broth

Risotto:
arborio rice,
cremini
mushrooms,
parmesan



- Rich, hearty flavors from fresh ingredients
- Wide range of cheeses like Parmesan, gorgonzola, fontina

Cooking methods: preserving, braising, slow-cooking

Staples: butter, rice, fresh pasta, meat, game, mushrooms, cream, wine, herbs, *Prosciutto di Parma*

Seasonings: basil, rosemary, thyme, sage, parsley, bay leaves, chives, nutmeg, saffron, garlic

Central Italian Cuisine

- Balance of rich, rustic flavors
- Focus on simplicity, freshness

Cooking method: braising in wine

Staples: fresh vegetables, olive oil, bread, grains, fresh/dry pasta, herbs, meats, game, wine

Seasonings: rosemary, sage, thyme, parsley, bay leaves, oregano, mint, black pepper, nutmeg, saffron

Cheeses: ricotta, Pecorino Romano



Spaghetti alla carbonara:
pasta with eggs, hard cheese, cured pork



Pici all'Aglione:
thick spaghetti and soft cooked garlic in tomato sauce

Southern Italian Cuisine



Neapolitan pizza:
tomatoes, fresh
basil, mozzarella,
olive oil

Pasta alla norma:
pasta, eggplant in
herby tomato
sauce



- North African, Greek influence

Cooking methods:
preserving, stuffing, slow-cooking, baking

Seasonings: oregano, basil, thyme, rosemary, caraway, coriander

Staples: olive oil, tomatoes, seafood, fresh vegetables, dry pasta, bread

Cheeses: mozzarella, caciocavallo

Southern French Cuisine

- Spanish, Asian, Middle Eastern influence
- Fresh, light dishes with a focus on seafood & vegetables

Staples: olive oil, fish, shellfish, tomatoes, zucchini, eggplant, peppers, olives, tapenade, lemons, goat cheese, bread

Seasonings: herbs de Provence, garlic, parsley

Equipment: Dutch oven (*cocotte*), pilon, cast-iron griddle (*plancha*), ceramic grill (*grill en fonte*)

Cooking methods: grilling, braising, poaching, stewing, searing

Flavor profile: bright, savory, fresh, briny, earthy



Popular Dishes



Salade Niçoise:

salad of tomatoes, hard-boiled eggs, anchovies, olives, and tuna, dressed in a vinaigrette



Socca:

crispy flatbread made from chickpea flour, water, olive oil



Pissaladière:

anchovy and onion tart

Popular Dishes



Tortilla Española:
Spanish omelet



Paella a la marinara:
seafood paella



Tapas:
small plates served
individually or as
an entire meal

Greek Cuisine



- Fresh, high-quality ingredients
- Influenced by Turkey & Balkan states

Staples: olive oil, lamb, feta, tomatoes, lemon, pita, Greek yogurt, cucumbers, onions, spinach, garlic

Seasonings: oregano, thyme, mint, dill

Cooking methods: skewering, layering (casseroles, wraps)

Equipment: magiritsa, clay pots, santoku knife

Flavor profile: fresh, simple, earthy, bitter

Popular Dishes



Moussaka:
layers of eggplant,
beef in tomato sauce
topped with béchamel



Souvlaki:
meat skewer



Spanakopita:
spinach pie

Northern Africa

- Tunisia and Morocco have the most culinary influence
- **Geography:** mountainous, fertile river valleys, desert landscapes
- Influenced by the Ottoman Turks, Arabs, Moorish, French
- Emphasis on rich, diverse flavors
- Each dish has a unique origin, reflecting historical, cultural, topographical factors



Tunisian Cuisine

- Located on the coast
- Fresh, seasonal ingredients, tangy flavors
- Influenced by the Berbers, Arabs, French, Sicilians

Staples: olive oil, couscous, lamb, seafood, tomatoes, chickpeas, yogurt, *khobz* bread, eggplant

Seasonings: harissa, cumin, coriander, garlic, caraway, mint, cilantro

Cooking methods: stewing, grilling, preserving

Equipment: couscoussier, tajine, clay pot (*m'khoukh*)

Flavor profile: zesty, spicy, aromatic



Popular Dishes



Lablabi:
dried chickpeas served
in a thin, garlic &
cumin-flavored broth



Kaftaji:
fried vegetables mixed
with fried eggs,
seasoned with harissa



Tunisian brik:
pastry stuffed with
potato, tuna, egg

Moroccan Cuisine

- Known for its rich, spicy, and flavorful dishes
- Influenced by Berber, Arab, Andalusian, Mediterranean, African

Staples: couscous, lamb, olive oil, garlic, tomatoes, chickpeas, preserved lemon

Seasonings: cumin, ginger, paprika, coriander, 30 ingredient spice blend (*ras el hanout*)

Cooking method: slow-cooking

Equipment: couscoussier, pot for slow-cooking (*tagine*), skewers (*sikh*), flatbread griddle (*mihfa*)

Flavor profile: sweet, spicy, earthy, bright



Popular Dishes



B'stilla:
Moroccan
chicken pie



Harira:
lentil &
chickpea soup



Tagine:
chicken pieces
braised with spices,
garlic, onion, olives,
preserved lemons

Western Asia



- Turkey and Syria have the most culinary influence
- **Geography:** arid deserts, mountainous regions, fertile coastal areas, river valleys
- Influenced by Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Central Asian cultures
- Dishes from each country are known for vibrant local spices and rich flavors

Popular Dishes



Pide:
stuffed flatbread



Mezze:
a collection of small,
appetizer-sized dishes
to share



Turkish baklava:
phyllo dough
pastry stuffed
with pistachios,
and a lemon and
sugar syrup

Syrian Cuisine

- Greek, Persian, Middle Eastern influence
- Fresh, complex, locally sourced dishes

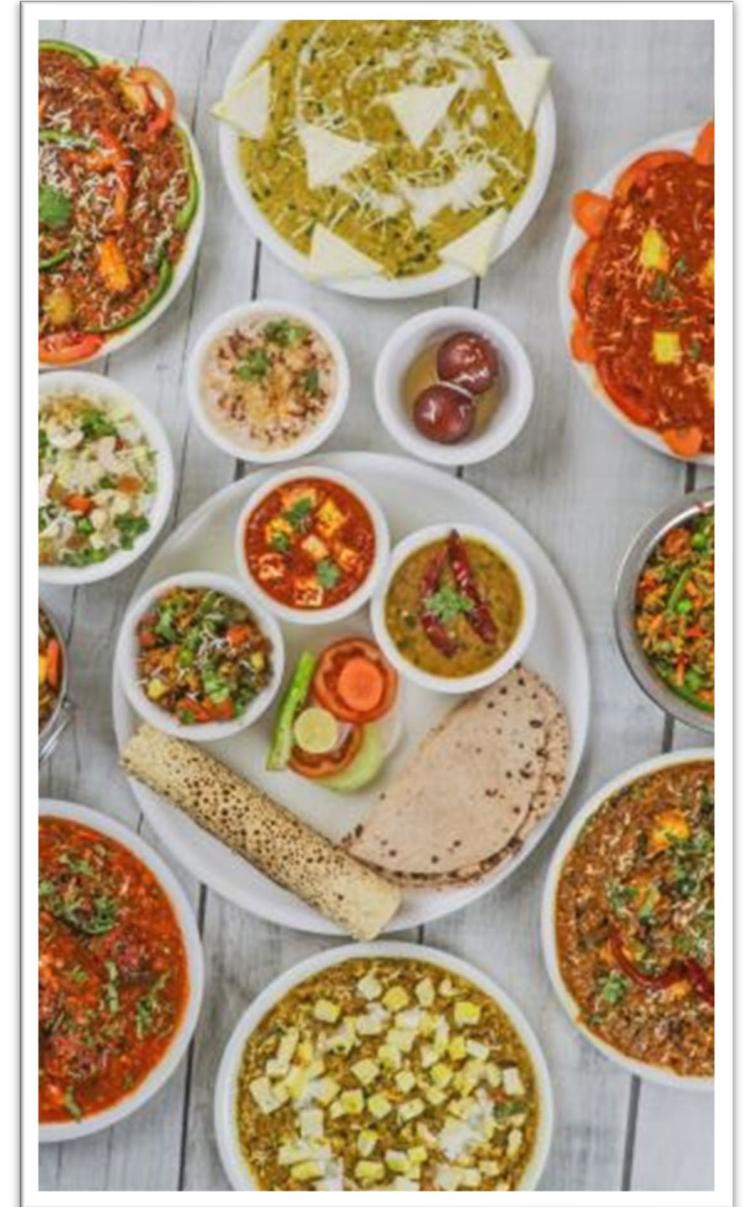
Staples: lamb, chickpeas, lentils, rice, *freekeh*, tomatoes, eggplant, zucchini, peppers, *Akkawi* cheese, pomegranate

Seasonings: parsley, mint, allspice, cumin, Aleppo pepper, sumac, *Baharat*, garlic

Equipment: clay pots, copper pans, metal griddle (*saj*), kibbeh grinder

Cooking methods: oven baking (*siniyeh*), griddle baking, stewing in tomato/yogurt sauce (*yakhini*)

Flavor profile: fresh, spicy, savory, tangy, earthy



Popular Dishes



Falafel:
fried balls of
ground chickpeas,
spices



Shawarma:
thinly sliced, slow
roasted meat
served in a pita



Kibbeh:
a shell of pounded
bulgur wheat, onions,
ground beef filled with
stuffing



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Any Questions?