

ΝΟΣΤΙΜΟ

A Taste of Home

Recipes by Refugees



Dear Reader,

Since early childhood, Greece was a second home to us. When the country was hit by the financial crisis, it was almost natural for us to do our part in helping the country and people we loved. In 2012, we founded Echo100Plus as a family and friend's initiative, launched a few fundraisers on behalf of Greek NGOs and grass root organizations that were trying to come to terms with the social distress in the country, and thought that we had done our part.

Then summer 2015 came. Holiday resorts on the Greek islands filled up like every other summer, but among the usual sun-seekers from Western and Central Europe, a different kind of traveller had started to arrive. Thousands of refugees from war-torn countries such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. had started to leave the Turkish coast on whatever watercraft smugglers would provide to cross the few sea-miles that separated them from Europe; Europe, which allegedly held safety, human rights, and the prospect of a future that had been shattered to pieces in their homelands. Every single day, hundreds of people arrived on the Greek shores, families with children, babies, 90-year-old grandmothers, unaccompanied minors, men and women disabled and traumatized by war and persecution. In June, 30'717 arrivals were registered by the authorities, 51'951 in July, 107'843 in August, 156'457 in September. And the steadily rising curve was only punctuated by the numbers reported dead or missing in the waters between Turkey and Greece.

The good thing about a small NGO like ours is that it doesn't have long decision-making chains. After we

Welcome

had been at a refugee camp on Samos, we knew that instant action was needed. This summer 2015 was the beginning of a rollercoaster ride that turned us from remote fundraisers to fully-fledged activists, handing out clothes, taking new arrivals to the hospital, preparing formula milk bottles for the little ones -anything necessary, to somehow make living bearable in some of these camps. When the European Community struck a deal with Turkey to keep the "problem" out of Europe in March 2016, the "refugee crisis" virtually vanished from the front pages and evening news. But despite Turkish border controls, refugees still arrive in Greece, where they are now held in overcrowded Hotspot camps on the Greek islands for an indefinite amount of time. The changes in policy towards the refugees forced us to adapt as well. As the survival needs are now covered by the authorities, we are focusing on education and social activities for the refugees stuck on Leros, to make sure that even the ones who don't qualify for asylum and will be sent back eventually can take something along that nobody can deprive them of.

Luckily, we were not alone on this rollercoaster. Over the past three years our friends have multiplied and our small initiative has grown into a large network of supporters, with almost 600 volunteers who have come from all over the globe to support our work on the ground, and innumerable donors who have entrusted us with generous funds to keep our aid projects running.

The core of our involvement has remained unchanged: We still want to support Greece and its

people in times of crisis. In the meantime, however, we have understood that Greece and Leros in particular, is a placeholder for the world as such, or at least the world we want to live in, in order to call it a home. And the same goes for the people, whether they are locals, refugees, migrants, international volunteers - what unites us despite all possible differences, is the wish to belong and to have a place you can call a home.

When "Neighbors in Need" proposed to volunteer with us and run a cooking project for our multicultural Echo-Hub community, we loved the idea: Cooking and sharing a meal with family and friends, is at the heart of every human civilisation, and therefore epitomizes what we are trying to achieve with our endeavours: to hold on to humanity at any costs and to show these people stranded on the island for whatever reason, that there is a Europe beyond racial discrimination, border controls, and arbitrary asylum procedures. At least, there are little islands of solidarity within, that strive to make the travellers, that we all are, feel at home.



Belli
Dixon



Catharina
Kahane



Gabriella
Herberstein

An Island in Limbo

The island of Leros has been engulfed in a dark history over the past century. In the 1920s, when the island was under Italian rule, Mussolini recognized its strategic importance in gaining control over the eastern Mediterranean Sea. Subsequently, he stationed the Royal Italian Navy there. With them arrived more Italians whose influence still lingers on the island today; one of the main cities, Lakki, is largely built in the Italian Rationalist architectural style.

After World War II, the Greeks took back control of the island and in 1959 established a mental hospital which served as a concentration camp in the 1960s and 1970s under the Greek dictatorship. Patients from all over Europe were sent to the asylum on Leros, a small island closer to Turkey than to Greek mainland, becoming notorious for housing Greece's mentally ill. The asylum was eventually shut down in the 1990s after reports of the horrific maltreatment of patients emerged. About 3000 people supposedly died in this building, standing just next door to Mussolini's former mansion. Today, the asylum stands abandoned and decays on the shores of Lakki, the backdrop to a refugee camp sprawling in front of it.

Today, while the Greek youths are leaving Leros in search of more prosperous economic opportunities on the Greek mainland, filling their place, are refugees arriving on its shores via boats from Turkey. There are currently about 800 residents in the two camps on Lakki. Most are Syrian and Iraqi nationals, with a number from Afghanistan and even Africa. Most of the refugees reside in the main camp,

Hotspot, living in containers housing 7 individuals on average, surrounded by barbed wire. Hotspots on the Greek islands are notorious for harboring inhumane conditions, often being overcrowded, and having been compared to detention camps. The second refugee center, Pikpa, is a renovated former hospital building housing the "vulnerable". These include families with young children, unaccompanied minors, as well as the old and chronically ill. The lack of privacy in the building has prompted families living in the same room to form forts out of beds and blankets to create a sense of home and privacy.

On average, the residents spend eight months on the island, before moving on to Athens, but today, in light of the EU-Turkey deal, some refugees on the island have been stuck for 2 years since the deal came into effect. They await the decision on their asylum application, with a yes meaning they can move forward on their journey for refuge in Europe, and a no meaning being sent back to Turkey and even the countries they were desperately fleeing from. Thus, the residents sit on Leros for months with a lack of routine or purpose, filled with uncertainty, and often depression. Many do not dare to think about what their future might bring.

Despite the darkness that encompasses the island, with the grim stories of how those there arrived, and a clandestine reminder of those that did not make it its shores, smiles and cautious glimmers of hope characterise the beautiful individuals in transit on Leros.



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Impressions

As a group of six students, we, "Neighbors in Need" went to Leros in February 2018 to volunteer on the island. We organised a week of international cooking featuring recipes from different countries, where the residents could share and celebrate their diverse cultures with us and each other. We believe home can be found in the intimate act of sharing a meal with family, recipes that get passed along through generations. While these migrants abandoned their physical homes, home will forever live within their memories and manifest itself wherever their feet take them, namely through the dishes they will go on to cook. Therefore, we worked to create this cookbook with the residents, supported by the NGO Echo100Plus. We would like to share some of our impressions with you.

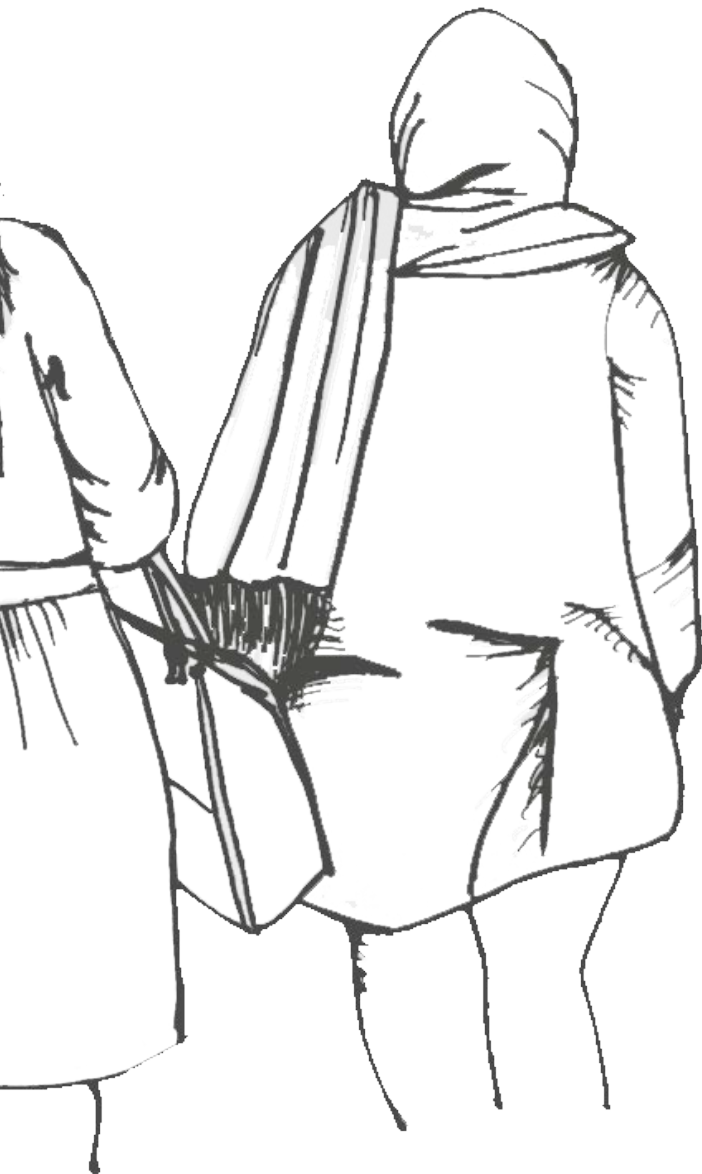
One of the reasons our stay in Leros touched us so deeply, was how much we could relate to the camp residents. They are so much like ourselves. Many of them used to lead normal middle-class lives in their home countries. They lived in houses like ours, worked in offices like ours, and ate dinner with their families like we do. Then, one day, they were faced with the unfathomable decision to leave their home, their country, their family and friends. They sold all they owned to raise enough money to finance their trip in a flimsy rubber boat, travelling across continents, with no guarantee of surviving the journey. All this in the hopes of reaching safer shores, in hopes of a better future.

Those lucky enough to make it to the island, carry a lifetime of grim memories of the trauma they faced in reaching Europe. While children play in the streets

of the island, and people laugh on the corners as they run into friends, the display of normality is elusive. What they have been through is etched in their being, their stories have become them. One resident shared with us the video of a car bomb exploding near him – since then he has become forgetful. Another shared with us a deeply moving poem he wrote for his family that he left in Iraq. On



a cognitive level, we know what many went through, that they crossed a dangerous sea. Yet, talking to someone who personally recounts how close he felt to death when his boat capsized, moved us on a more tangible level. The people we met were those who made it. There are so many who did not. It was impossible for us to comprehend these feelings – it is surreal to be sitting in front of someone playing



chess one minute, and discussing how many hours he was left swimming at sea, caught between continents, the next.

While arriving on the island is in itself the goal, it is not the end of the journey, not the end of hardship, it is just the start. The residents of the camps on Leros wait months or years to continue their journey to Europe, or face the grueling reality of rejection and being returned to Turkey. The prolonged waiting fuels boredom, anxiety, frustration and depression. Hope can be dangerous in such an environment, but it can also be the only thing that keeps one going. The whole island seems to live in limbo: the residents waiting for a letter that decides their fate, the volunteers that spend a few weeks or months there before returning to their normal lives, the locals waiting for the tourists to return in summer.

We were deeply moved by the time we spent on Leros. Throughout the past few years, the news has been dominated with stories of the refugee crisis. This topic has been highly and controversially debated in Europe. By some, refugees are feared, by some they are pitied. For us, it became much harder to talk about “refugees” as there is no homogeneous mass of refugees. These are individuals, people like us, who would have much preferred to stay in their homes. They lost everything and departed on a journey with no guarantee of survival, because staying would have been more dangerous than crossing the sea in a tiny, inflatable boat.

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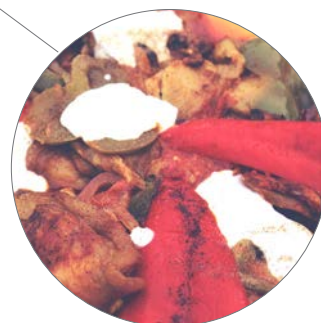
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AFRICAN CUISINE

Africa is much larger than it is often perceived – the the area of the US would fit into Africa three times! Accordingly, cuisines on the continent vary widely. Northern and northeastern cuisine is influenced by Arabic eating habits. In southern Africa, tribes partly defined themselves through the foods they ate resulting in many distinct eating patterns. Western Africans eat a lot of rice and corn and central Africa is shaped by cooking bananas and yuca roots. One dish common throughout Africa is Fufu,. A boiled, starchy vegetable is pounded with pestle and mortar into a doughy mass, rolled into little balls and dipped into sauce or soup.

BOULETTES

500 g minced meat
2 cloves of garlic
1 onion
A handful parsley
1 cube vegetable stock
2 eggs
Oil
Salt
White pepper

1. Place the minced meat in a bowl. Add 2 minced garlic cloves, one finely chopped onion, the parsley, the salt and pepper, and one cube of vegetable stock.
2. Mix the eggs into the minced meat mixture. Knead into a mass until everything is mixed well.
4. Form ping pong ball sized spheres out of the minced meat mixture.
5. In a bowl of boiling water, boil the meat for 20 minutes and add water as needed.
6. After the meat balls have boiled, place 2 tablespoons of oil in a pan. Let the meatballs fry for three to five minutes on one side, then carefully roll them over and cook for another few minutes. Delicious!





FISH WITH BASQUE SAUCE & STEAMED RICE

300 g rice
2 onions
1 handful parsley
1 kg white fish
1 cube vegetable stock
1 egg
1 tsp white pepper
3 tomatoes
1 leek
2 green bell peppers
5 cloves garlic
2 tsp chilli powder
Vegetable oil
Salt
Pepper

1. Rice: In a medium-sized pot, heat 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil, then add the rice, ½ of a finely chopped onion, and half of the parsley. Stir for about two minutes. Add 500 ml of water and cook until done.

2. Fish: Wash the fish and then cut into medium-sized slices. Place the fish in a bowl, add vegetable stock, one egg and white pepper to taste, and mix well. Cover the surface of a pan with oil, add the other half chopped onion and the fish. Fry for about 5 minutes.

3. Fish Sauce: Finely chop the tomatoes, leek, bell peppers, garlic, parsley and onion. In a pot heat some oil and cook the tomatoes, leek, garlic and the remaining parsley. Add the bell peppers, onion, garlic, parsley and chilli powder. Add the fried fish. Season with white pepper and salt to taste. Enjoy!



FUFU WITH OKRA SAUCE

Sauce

1 kg beef
500 g frozen okra
3 tbsp baking soda
2 tomatoes
1 leek
4 cloves garlic
2 onions
2 tbsp peanut oil
1 tbsp chili pepper

Fufu

1 cube vegetable stock
500 ml cooking water
1 kg flour

Sauce

1. Dice the meat into pieces around the size of a fist.
2. Finely chop the okra and continue to chop and mix until it forms a paste-like texture. Add 3 tablespoons of baking soda and stir.
3. Chop the tomatoes, leek, garlic, and onions into small pieces.
4. In a pan, heat two tablespoons of vegetable oil and add onions, leek and parsley. Cook for about 5 minutes and then add the meat pieces. After 10 minutes, add some tomatoes and chili pepper. After about 20 minutes, add the chopped garlic. Cook the meat for approximately 30 minutes in total.
5. Add the okra paste to the meat and cook them together for approximately 10 minutes.

Fufu

6. Cook water and add the cube of vegetable stock.
7. Mix stock with flour and knead until it becomes a thick mass.
8. Break away smaller chunks and place them in a medium-sized bowl. Form oval shapes out of the fufu by lightly shaking the bowl from side to side.
9. Serve the Fufu with the okra and meat sauce. Yummy!



SYRIAN CUISINE

Syria has been embroiled in civil war for 7 years. The conflict has escalated into a proxy war between superpowers. However, the country is so much more than the war it has been engulfed in. A country on the western Asian continent, bordering the Mediterranean to the west, is home to a multitude of ethnic and religious groups including Arabs, Assyrians, Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, Turks, and Circassians. The land that constitutes modern day Syria has seen occupations from the Umayyads to the Ottomans, only gaining independence from France in 1946. Throughout this rich and diverse history, its cuisine has been largely influenced by the civilizations that have passed through.



TABBOULEH SALAD

Salad

50 g burghul (cracked wheat)
A handful parsley
2 cucumbers
3 tomatoes
1 large red onion
Romaine lettuce leaves (optional)

Dressing

1 tbsp tomato paste
80 ml lemon juice
1 clove of garlic
1 tsp paprika powder
80 ml olive oil
Salt
Black pepper

1. Soak the burghul in cold water for 30 minutes.
2. Chop the fresh parsley, cucumbers, tomatoes, and onion into small pieces. Put into bowl.
3. After the burghul has soaked, drain the water and add the burghul to your bowl of chopped salad ingredients.
4. For the dressing, mix the tomato paste, olive oil, lemon juice, minced garlic, black pepper, paprika, and salt (to taste) in a small bowl. Stir well and then pour over the salad bowl.
5. Looks even better if garnished with Romaine lettuce leaves (optional)!





YEKHNI

4 chicken breasts
4 white onions
1 cube chicken stock
400 g rice
Salt
Black pepper

1. Slice the chicken into thinner pieces and cut the onions into thick slices. Place the chicken and onions in a pot, add the chicken stock cube, teaspoon of salt and teaspoon of pepper. Boil in 700 ml of water for 45 minutes.
2. Soak the rice in water for five minutes, then drain. Boil the rice in 500 ml of water.
3. Serve the chicken soup next to the rice. Delicious!



MAQLUBA

1 whole chicken
 2 white onions
 3 potatoes
 1 eggplant
 3 tomatoes
 1 cube chicken stock
 150 g rice
 1 tbs paprika powder
 70 g almonds
 300 ml olive oil
 Salt
 Pepper

1. Wash and cut the chicken into small pieces. Thinly slice 1 onion. Boil the chicken and onions in just enough water to cover the chicken for 30 minutes.
2. Put the chicken pieces into a larger pot. Set the broth aside to cool.
2. Cut the potatoes, eggplant, tomatoes and remaining onion into large round slices.
3. Sautee the remaining onion in 1 tablespoon of oil over medium heat until golden, then set aside.
4. In separate pans, semi-sautee the sliced potatoes and quickly fry the eggplant in a pan covered in oil. Do not cook them through.
5. Meanwhile, place the rice in a bowl and pour boiling water over it, just enough to cover the surface. Let rest for 5 minutes. Drain the rice and set aside.
6. In the large pot, place the chicken at the base and season with black pepper flakes, paprika powder and salt.
7. Cover the chicken with a layer of rice, followed by a layer of potatoes, another layer of rice, then layer consecutively with tomato, onions, eggplant, peas, and a final layer of rice. Thinly slice 3 pieces of butter and place over the rice.
8. Place the chicken stock cube into 250 ml of hot water and mix well, then pour the broth over the layered pot. Sprinkle teaspoons of salt, pepper and paprika. Cover the pot with a clean plastic nylon bag, and cover with lid. Cooking with the plastic bag traps the vapor and allows the rice to cook better.
9. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes. Reduce the heat further and cook for another 30-45 minutes.
10. Fry the peeled almonds in a tablespoon of olive oil until golden brown.
11. Place a large plate (make sure the diameter of the plate is larger than that of the pot) over the pot and flip, removing the pot gently.
12. Garnish with the candied nuts and enjoy!

SYRIAN KEBAB

HINDI

1 kg minced beef
2 cloves minced garlic
1 handful parsley
1 tsp paprika powder
4 eggplants
3 tomatoes
2 onions
2 green peppers
4 tbsp tomato sauce
1 l water
Olive oil
Black pepper

1. Preheat the oven at 180°C.
2. In a bowl, mix the garlic, parsley, salt, black pepper and paprika. Add the minced meat and mix all well. In your palm, ball small pieces of meat, and then flatten them into medium-thick patties.
3. Slice the eggplant, tomatoes, onions and green pepper into round slices.
4. In a baking dish, arrange one slice of eggplant, followed by one meat patty, tomato and a green pepper. Repeat until the baking dish is full. Pour olive oil and sprinkle some salt.
5. Place in the oven to cook for about 45 minutes.
6. In a small bowl, prepare the sauce. Mix the water and tomato paste well. Take the baking dish out of the oven, pour over the sauce evenly, and then place back in the oven.
7. After another 15 minutes, the Syrian Kebab is finally ready to eat!





IRAQI CUISINE

The Republic of Iraq is home to the region of Mesopotamia, often referred to as the “cradle of civilization”, where man made notable developments in the areas of agriculture, writing, mathematics, and trade. The landlocked country in the Middle East, is made up of two major ethnic groups, the Arabs and Kurds, with the majority being Shia Muslims, in addition to Christian minorities. Once a part of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq later came under British rule, until it attained independence as a kingdom in 1932, and eventually became a republic in 1958. While it is a country of strategic importance, due to its vast oil reserves, the country has been entangled in war: the eight-year war with Iran starting in 1980, the First Gulf War in 1991, and most recently, following the US-led invasion of the country in 2003. However, a historical gem, the region is believed to be home to the first semblance of the modern day cookbook. Amid ancient ruins in Iraq, tablets found reveal Akkadian recipes dating from the 2nd millennium BC, the oldest recorded recipes of this world. Today, Iraqi cuisine is heavily influenced by its neighbouring countries, namely Syria, Iran and Turkey.



KEBSE

METABEKH AHMAR FERA KH

1 green pepper
1 onion
3 potatoes
6 cloves minced garlic
1 handful parsely
5 small tomatoes
3 tbsp tomato paste
1 whole chicken
1 lemon
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground cardamom
400 g rice
Vegetable oil

1. Slice the green pepper, onion and potatoes into small cubes. Mince the garlic, and finely chop the parsely.
2. Mash the tomatoes until pureed, add the tomato paste and mix well.
3. Half-boil the chicken and a drop of lemon to the water, cook for about 15-20 minutes.
4. Drain the chicken and pour over it the cumin and cardamom. At the base of the pot place two tablespoons of oil, then cook the chicken, potatoes, green pepper, onions, and garlic for about 15 minutes.
5. Add the tomato mixture and 500 ml water to the pot and bring to a boil, cook for another 30 minutes. Add salt (to taste).
6. Add the (uncooked) rice to the pot and stir, then cover, cook all together for another 20-30 minutes on low heat.
7. Garnish with parsley and serve with the Jajik. Enjoy!

JAJIK

2 cucumbers
1 clove minced garlic
250 g yoghurt
Salt
Celery (optional)

1. Grate the cucumbers and drain the water from it.
2. Add the cucumber to the yoghurt and mix thoroughly adding the garlic and salt (to taste).
3. Serve with the Kebse (chicken and rice) and add celery for decoration (optional).



DOLMA

400 g rice
200 g vine leaves
6 onions
10 celery leaves
1 handful fresh dill
3 cloves minced garlic
½ kg minced meat
3 small green peppers
3 small zucchinis
3 tomatoes
3 tbsp tomato paste
200 g yogurt (optional)
Vegetable oil
Lemon salt
Black pepper

1. Soak the rice in hot water for 10 minutes, then drain. Soak the vine leaves in hot water for 20 minutes, until softened, then drain, and cut off the stems.
2. Finely chop 3 onions, celery leaves, dill, add the minced garlic, meat, and rice; mix well. Sprinkle the lemon salt and black pepper. Cut down the side of the 3 remaining onions (from top to bottom), place the onions in a pot, cover with water and bring to a boil until the onion layers are separable.
3. Carve out the green peppers, zucchini, and tomatoes. Lightly fry in a pan with one tablespoon of oil, on low heat, for approximately 5-7 minutes. Place one tablespoon of the rice and meat mixture on a vine leaf, and roll, folding the ends inwards. Repeat with the remaining leaves. Stuff the carved vegetables with the rice and meat mixture.
4. Place 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil at the base of a pot. Arrange the onions, peppers and zucchini at the base of the pan, then arrange the stuffed vine leaves on top in layers. Place a plate upside down on top of the layered pot to add pressure and cover. Cook over medium heat for 20 minutes.
5. Remove plate and add 500 ml water mixed with 3 tablespoons tomato paste and lower the heat. Cook for another 40-50 minutes, covered. When you place a knife inside, and it comes out clean, you know the dolma is ready. Place a plate on the pot, flip the pot and slowly lift the plot. You can serve with a mixture of yogurt and minced garlic.





BERYANI

400 g rice
 2 potatoes
 1 eggplant
 1 handful Parsley
 1 whole chicken
 1 onion
 150 g vermicelli pasta
 1 tablespoon sugar
 70 g raisins
 70 g peanuts
 200 ml vegetable oil
 Salt

1. In a large pot, pour 3 tablespoons of oil and turn on low heat. Add the rice, stirring regularly. After about 3 minutes of stirring, add 700 ml water. Add salt to the water and cook, covered, for 15 minutes.
2. Dice the potatoes into small pieces, peel and dice the eggplant, finely cut the parsley, removing the stem.
3. In a pan, fry the potatoes and eggplant in plenty of oil. Cook until golden.
4. In a separate pot, break the chicken into smaller pieces and dice the onion. Bring the chicken to a boil in plenty of water. Once the chicken has boiled, drain it from the broth and fry in a separate pan.
5. In another pan place 2 tablespoons oil, and cook the vermicelli pasta until browned. Add the sugar to a cup of water, mix well, and then pour over the pasta. Let cook for 10 minutes, then remove from the stove.
6. In a small pan, cook the raisins and peanuts in a tablespoon of oil over low heat, until browned.
7. To plate - place a layer of rice at the base of the serving dish, top with a layer of eggplants, followed by potatoes, the chicken, and finally the vermicelli pasta. Sprinkle the peanuts, raisins, and parsley on top to garnish. Yummy!



BASBOUSA

Dough

2 eggs
200 g white flour or coarse semolina
75 g coconut flakes
250 g yogurt
2 tsp baking powder
100 ml water
50 g vegetable oil or melted, unsweetened butter

Sharbat (syrup)

500 ml water
800 g sugar
½ lemon, squeezed

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Grease a large oven pan with oil or butter.
2. Mix the eggs, flour, coconut (keep some for decoration), oil (or melted butter), yogurt, baking powder and water. The mixture should form a relatively thick texture.
3. Place the mixture into a baking dish and cook in the oven for 30-40 minutes until the surface becomes golden.
4. Take out of the oven and cut into small pieces.
2. For the sharbat (syrup), boil the water, sugar and lemon in a pot on medium heat until it comes to a boil, and heat for another 5 minutes, then remove.
5. Pour the sharbat over and place back in the oven for another 10 minutes.
6. Sprinkle extra coconut on top and enjoy! Pour extra sharbat to sweeten, depending on taste.





MULUKHIYAH

1 whole chicken
 200 g dry mulukhiyaha leaves
 (Jew's Mallow)
 1 tbsp samne (canned ghee)
 1 tbsp coriander
 2 cloves minced garlic
 2 cubes chicken stock
 Vegetable oil
 Lemon salt
 Rice or Arabic bread (optional)

1. Rinse and then boil one whole chicken. Then shred the chicken and keep the chicken broth.

2. Pour hot water over the dried mulukhiyah leaves for 5 minutes to cleanse them. Then press them to drain out the water, and separate the leaves. Place the leaves in a pan and fry in 1 tablespoon samne until bronzed (approximately 5 minutes).

3. In a separate pan, add 2 tablespoons vegetable oil and fry the coriander and minced garlic until bronzed, then add to the molokheya and cook together for 10 minutes. Add just enough chicken broth to cover the mulukhiyah, add shredded chicken pieces and 2 cubes of chicken stock. Let it come to boil, then add the lemon salt.

4. Try mulukhiyah with rice or arabic 'balady' bread!



AFGHANI CUISINE

Hospitality is an important expression of Afghan food culture. Guests are often invited to a dastarkhan. A table cloth is laid on the floor, tea is poured and a wide variety of meals is served, the best dishes being placed near the guest. The dishes include naan-like bread and dumpling-like noodles. They tell the story of a country being passed by merchants travelling between eastern Asia and Europe. Afghan dishes are inspired by food found all over Asia and Europe, yet has its very own taste. Fatty dishes were used to prepare and survive harsh winters, leading to oil and mutton fat being important ingredients until today.

QABILI

3 onions
4 chicken legs
3 large, grated carrots
70 g raisins
1½ tsp ground cardamom
2 tbsp cumin
300 g rice
20 g vegetable oil
Salt
Black pepper

1. Chop the onions into slices and fry over high heat in oil for approximately 5 minutes.
2. Add the chicken legs to the pan and add salt. Cook for about 15 minutes, turning the chicken until all sides become goldened.
3. Add the grated carrots and raisins to the chicken, mix everything and cook for approximately 5 minutes.
4. Add 800 ml of water to the pot with chicken, cook for 15 more minutes on medium heat, add pepper, salt, cardamom and cumin.
5. Rinse rice and drain, add to the pot and cook for 15 more minutes while regularly stirring, until the rice is cooked through.
6. Flip the pot onto a plate and enjoy!





HALVA

120 g flour
200 ml water
200 g sugar
50 g walnuts
50 g raisins
20 ml oil

1. Heat the oil on medium heat in a pot.
2. Add the flour to the oil and stir continuously. Be careful not to burn it.
3. Boil the water, and mix the sugar in until it dissolves.
4. Once the flour has browned, add the sugar-water to the flour and stir regularly. Add the walnuts, continue stirring for about 15 minutes and then remove from the stove.
5. Garnish with raisins, and it is ready to be served!

BORANI BANJAN

Main dish

2 eggplants
1 onion
2 tomatoes
2 green peppers
2 red peppers
3 cloves minced garlic
2 tbsp tomato paste
200 ml water
1 tsp ground ginger
20 g vegetable oil
Black pepper
Salt

Yoghurt sauce

3 cloves minced garlic
250 g yogurt
½ tsp dried, ground mint
20 ml water
Salt

Main dish

1. Wash eggplants and slice into large pieces. Half-fry in oil for approximately 5 minutes and then set aside.
2. Slice the onion, tomatoes, peppers, and mince the garlic.
3. Layer the eggplant with raw onions, tomato slices, green and red peppers in a pot.
4. Mix 2 tablespoons tomato paste with 200 ml water, minced garlic, and ginger, creating a sauce.
5. Pour part of the sauce into the pot.
6. Repeat layering with eggplant, tomatoes, onions, and again cover with sauce.
7. Sprinkle pepper and salt.
8. Cook for approximately 20 minutes .

Yoghurt Sauce

9. Mince 3 cloves of garlic and mix into the yoghurt, add salt and dried mint.
10. Mix with water until it reaches desired consistency.
11. Serve the borani banjan with a layer of the yoghurt sauce on top.





KURDISH CUISINE

The Kurds consider their homeland a mountainous region at the crossroads of four nations - Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. They have battled for independence, and while not formally considered a nation state, they do consider themselves distinct from their neighbouring nations. However, the differences amongst the Kurds themselves are extensive, with groups sharing cultural links to the nation states they live in. Thus their cuisine also shares similarities with Iraqi, Iranian, Syrian and Turkish delicacies.

KUBBA MA ROZ

Cover

400 g rice

1 potato

Vegetable oil

Salt

Pepper

Stuffing

500 g minced meat

3 onions

1 stalk celery

250 g almonds

Cover

1. Pour two cups rice into a pot with 700 ml water, some salt. Place a plastic bag over the top of the pot, and place the lid atop. The plastic bag will trap the vapor, allowing the rice to cook faster. Cook the rice for 10-15 minutes.

2. Peel and dice one potato, place in another pot with 150 ml water, boil and mash the potatoes into a puree, add some salt.

3. After the rice and potatoes have cooked, mix them together, mash them into each other until they have completely mixed. Cover with plastic cellophane and let rest for 10-15 minutes.

Stuffing

4. In a pan place the minced meat to cook in a tablespoon of vegetable oil, add salt and pepper. Finely dice 3 onions and add to the minced meat after it has cooked. After approximately 5-7 minutes, when the onions have cooked, sprinkle two handfuls of finely chopped celery.

5. In a separate small pan, add oil and cook the raisins for 5-7 minutes with a dash of pepper. After this has cooked, add it to the meat mixture.

6. Place the almonds in a bowl of hot water, and place over medium heat for approximately 5 minutes. Remove off the stove, and take each almond and peel, then break into halves. Fry the peeled almond halves in a tablespoon of oil and then add to the meat mixture.

Combine

7. Heat some vegetable oil and then set aside. Form small spehres from the rice and potato mixture, then place two fingers in the center and indent, stuff with the minced meat and then close (as shown in the picture).

8. Fry in hot oil for approximately 2 minutes.



KURDI SALAD

Salad

1 apple
2 green peppers
1 lettuce
1 red cabbage
1 onion
3 tomatoes

1. Cut the apple, peppers, lettuce, cabbage, onion, and tomatoes and mix all well.

2. Squeeze the lemon juice over the salad, sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of salt, 1 teaspoon of pepper, and 2 tablespoons of olive oil. Mix well.

Dressing

2 lemons
Salt
Black pepper
Olive oil





HALAWA

Sharbat (sugar water)

200 g sugar
250 ml water
1 tsp lemon juice

Dough

200 g flour
1 tsp yeast
300 ml greek yogurt
20 ml hot water
70 g coconut flakes
Salt

1. Sharbat: Mix one cup of water with one cup of sugar. Add a teaspoon of lemon juice. Cook while stirring for 8 minutes, then let cool.
2. Mix the flour with yeast, add a teaspoon of salt, the yoghurt and hot water until you have a cream-like mixture.
3. Cover the dough with cellophane. Let rise, approximately 1 hour.
4. Heat a pan with oil (2-3 cm to cover the base of pan). Take a spoon of dough rolled into a sphere, fry in the oil for 30 seconds from all sides.
5. When a ball is evenly browned, remove from the pan and dip in the Sharbat.
6. Plate the Halawa and let them cool for a few minutes. Sprinkle with coconut flakes and enjoy!



IRANIAN CUISINE

Between the 16th and the 18th century, Iran was ruled by the powerful Safavid dynasty. They are considered the beginning of modern Iranian history ruling a territory from Eastern Turkey to Pakistan at their height. Besides shaping Iran's history, the dynasty also significantly influenced Iran's cuisine. In the 16th century, the royal family discovered their love for rice, which was imported by Chinese merchants. Soon, this appetite for rice spread throughout the population and rice became a main component of Iranian dishes, until today. Besides rice, the Iranian cuisine is based on eggplants, also called the "potato of Iran", bread, nuts and, of course, saffron.

IRANIAN PIZZA

Dough

500 g flour
300 ml warm water
2 tsp sugar
2 teaspoons yeast
Olive oil
Salt

Toppings

3 peppers (red, yellow and green)
2 tbsp tomato paste
10 cherry tomatoes
1 sausage
300 g Mozzarella cheese
grated
300 g Parmesan cheese
grated
Olive oil

1. Dough: Mix all the dough ingredients in a large bowl, knead the dough, then cover with cellophane and let rest until it rises, approximately 60-90 minutes, in a warm place.
2. Preheat the oven to 240°C.
3. Remove the dough from the bowl, coat your hands in flour and roll out the dough on a floured, flat surface into a very thin layer (as it will rise in the oven). Use your fingers to push from the centre outwards.
4. Top the dough with a tablespoon of olive oil, 2 tablespoons of the tomato paste, mozzarella and parmesan cheese. Then sprinkle the remaining toppings - slices of peppers, cherry tomatoes, sausage.
5. Bake the pizza in the oven for about 15 minutes or until crust is golden.





GREEK CUISINE

A country in Southern Europe, Greece is considered the birthplace of western civilisation where the first ideas concerning philosophy and democracy emerged during Ancient times. Greece achieved independence from the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century, after which it became a monarchy and a century later a republic. The Greek cuisine is heavily influenced by the Mediterranean diet, characterized by the incorporation of fresh vegetables. As the gateway to Europe, Greece has been entangled in the refugee crisis, with millions of refugees arriving on Greek shores in the hopes of leading prosperous lives in Europe.





FAKES

500 g lentils
100 ml olive oil
1 large onion diced
3 garlic cloves
3 carrots
3 tbsp tomato paste
150 g diced canned tomatoes
3 laurel leaves
3 tablespoons wine vinegar
Salt
Pepper

1. Place the lentils in a large pot with enough water to cover the surface, bring them to boil and then place them in a strainer.
2. Dice the onion, garlic and carrots.
3. In the empty pot heat the 100 ml olive oil and saute the onion, garlic, and carrots in medium-high heat for 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste and cook for another minute. Add the canned tomatoes, the laurel leaves, the vinegar, the lentils and 1 liter of water.
4. Bring them to a boil and then reduce the heat and let them simmer for 50-60 minutes.
5. Add salt and pepper according to taste. Enjoy four Fakes!





PASTITSIO

Pasta

800 ml water
500 g pasta
1 onion
500 g minced meat
1 tsp ground cinnamon
2 tbsp tomato paste
Olive oil

White sauce

3 tbsp butter
3 tbsp white flour
500 ml milk
300g grated cheese
3 eggs
1 tsp nutmeg

1. Pour 800 ml water in a pot, and bring to a boil. Add the pasta, and cook for ten minutes. Drain the pasta, and set to the side.
2. In a pan, place a tablespoon of oil over medium heat. Cut and add the onion. Fry until slightly browned, then add the minced meat, cinnamon, and tomato paste. Add 2 table-spoons water to the meat while it cooks.
3. Once the meat has cooked through (approximately 10 minutes), add the pasta and meat to a big baking dish, mix well.
4. White sauce: Melt the butter, add the flour and milk and constantly stir the mixture so that it does not form lumps. When it thickens, remove from heat and add the cheese, beaten eggs, and nutmeg.
5. Pour the white sauce over the meat and pasta dish. Sprinkle with a dash of cinnamon and voilà!

Behind the Scenes

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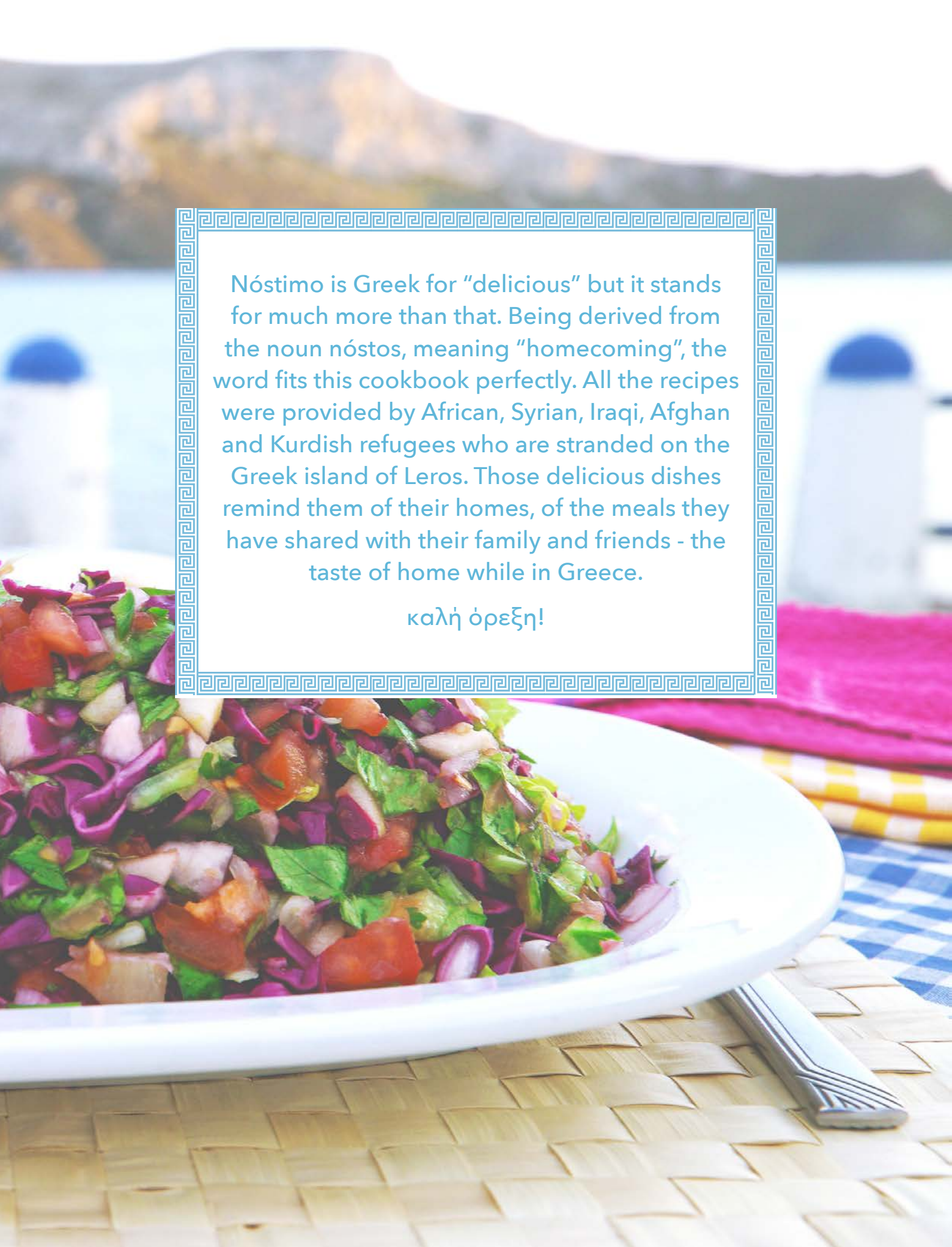
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Nóstimo is Greek for “delicious” but it stands for much more than that. Being derived from the noun nóstos, meaning “homecoming”, the word fits this cookbook perfectly. All the recipes were provided by African, Syrian, Iraqi, Afghan and Kurdish refugees who are stranded on the Greek island of Leros. Those delicious dishes remind them of their homes, of the meals they have shared with their family and friends - the taste of home while in Greece.

καλή όρεξη!