

Simply Plated! 2

More than 25 Innovative Dishes from Crete and Santorini



Kerasma
Greek Mediterranean
Gastronomy

Simply Plated! 2

One of the most telling characteristics of Greek cuisine is its regionality. Greece is a small country with a big table, much of it rooted in the regional traditions of the islands, mainland, and mountains.

In this, our second edition of the award-winning Simply Plated! we decided to offer up a table full of dishes from two of the most unique Greek regions, Crete and Santorini: Crete because it is the cradle of the Mediterranean and the mother of the Mediterranean Diet, an island with a vast variety of raw ingredients that have been the foundation of the table from time immemorial; and Santorini, because it is the complete opposite, bone-dry, volcanic, minimal, with a cuisine forged of a dearth of raw ingredients but honed into a delicious whole thanks to the ingenuity of generations of island cooks who took the handful of basic ingredients that are the foundation of Santorini's table and created a simple, healthful, timeless cuisine. Both islands, are, of course, among the most popular tourist destinations in Greece.

The cooking of Crete is arguably the most complete of all the regions of Greece. It is a cuisine where Minoan elements have persisted and flourished through the ages, with ingredients such as honey, barley, snails and wild greens as important to the Cretan table today as they were several thousand years ago. Crete is one of the most important agricultural hubs of Greece, a major producer of citrus fruits, tomatoes and other vegetables, olive oil and olives, and more. Its cheeses are savored all over Greece and exported all over the world. Its thyme honey is exquisite. Its mountains and ravines are host to one of the widest selection of wild greens and herbs—well over 300 edible varieties of both—in all of Europe. The entire cuisine of the Aegean culminates in Crete, a paean to simplicity, seasonality, and variety. Raw ingredients such as greens find their place in myriad dishes, from small hand-held pies browned in the island's award-winning olive oil to stews and braised dishes that combine healthful greens and vegetables with all sorts of other protein, from lamb and goat to snails, octopus, cuttlefish and squid, to fish and seafood. This combination of greens and vegetables with more expensive meats, fish, etc., is an age-old way to stretch a meal but it is also surprisingly contemporary, as more and more nutritionists today support the ample presence of vegetables in any given dish.

In Santorini, the palate of flavors is limited to a few simple ingredients, mainly the island's famed yellow split pea, some fish and meat, its gorgeous, small tomatoes, white eggplants, simple cheeses and grapes. Santorini is arguably the most unique vineyard in all the Mediterranean. With this seeming paucity of raw ingredients, however, the island's cuisine has developed a distinct, regional character.

We drew on the traditional dishes of both places but also enlisted two distinguished island cooks to create a handful of modern dishes using Crete's and Santorini's ancient palette of ingredients. The result is a selection of more than 25 Simply Plated, simply delicious dishes, both savory and sweet, that are timeless, timely, healthful, perfect choices for today, no matter where you are.

Enjoy! Greek Food, Real Taste, Great Living, Gr. Living.

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Stamnagathi

Santorini Plum Tomatoes

Sea Salt

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Greece produces some of the best olive oil in the world and we consume it lavishly, especially raw, in salads such as this.

Sea Salt

How can a country with thousands of miles of coastline not be home to some of the finest sea salt in the world. Indeed, Greece's sea salt is so flavorful that one rarely needs any other herb or spice in a dish.

Santorini Plum Tomatoes

Santorini, with its volcanic soil and its unique microclimate, produces several excellent raw ingredients, among them the island's small, intensely flavored tomatoes.



Stamnagathi

This member of the wild chicory family is one of the most beloved greens on Crete. Its name means "the thorn of water jug" after its traditional role as a stopper on top of small amphorae filled with water. It is used in salads, stews, braises, pies and more.

1 pound (1/2 kilo) wild chicory (stamnagathi) or other lightly bitter fresh greens, trimmed, 16 fresh Santorini plum or other tomatoes, washed and dried, 1/2 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, preferably Cretan, Sea salt to taste

Trim the greens: Remove their root ends and pull apart the leaves. Wash thoroughly and spin dry. Blanch in lightly salted water for 2 minutes, remove, drain, and rinse in cold water. Drain thoroughly.

Cut the tomatoes in half. Toss with the greens. Dress with extra virgin olive oil and Greek sea salt. Serve.



Dakos (Barley Rusk)

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Cretan Graviera

Oregano

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Here, Cretan olive oil, some of the best in Greece, graces the salad. It is herbaceous, peppery, and absolutely delicious.

Cretan Graviera

Graviera, a cheese that has been made in Greece for more than a century, has a special place in the dairy traditions of Crete, which produces some of the best. It is a sweet, nutty, sheep's milk cheese perfect as a table cheese, great in salads, and excellent with soups.



Dakos

Dakos is the name of these round barley rusks, a specialty ingredient of Crete, where barley has been a staple since the Minoan era.

Oregano

Oregano is arguably the most popular herb in Greece and one which finds a place in everything from the national tomato salad to meat and fish dishes. It is notably sweeter than the oregano from other parts of the world.

4 Cretan barley rusks (dakos), **1/2** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **2** large firm, ripe tomatoes, grated or peeled, seeded, and chopped
Salt to taste, **2** tsp. dried or fresh Greek oregano, **1** cup shaved Cretan graviera, Santorini capers

Fill a bowl with water and submerge each of the rusks for a few seconds, until soaked through. Hold up and drain off all the water or wring dry in a lint-free kitchen towel.

Place the rusks on a serving platter. Drizzle each with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and spoon the grated tomatoes evenly over them. Garnish with cheese and capers. Sprinkle with the salt and oregano and pour on the remaining 1/4 cup olive oil. Serve.



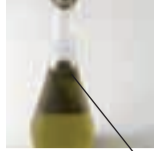
Bulgur



Feta



Fresh Mint

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Raisins

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

No salad, whether made from fresh garden vegetables, cooked greens, or hearty grains is ever complete without a drizzling of the country's fine extra virgin olive oil.

Raisins

Greece, with its long viticultural history, also has a long history of raisin production. Crete is especially well known for its raisins, as is the Peloponnese, home to the famed, dark Corinthian raisin. Raisins are used in both sweet and savory dishes in the Greek kitchen.

Bulgur

This salad calls for both bulgur and whole wheat kernels.

**Fresh Mint**

Greek cooks tend to use most herbs dried; mint, however, is an exception. Exceedingly aromatic, it finds its way into all manner of dishes, from salads to meatballs to pies.

Feta

Our national cheese, a tangy, creamy white brine cheese made from sheep's or sheep's and goat's milk and aged for at least three months.

1 cup whole wheat kernels, 1 1/2 oz. (50 gr.) coarse bulgur, 5 oz. (150 gr.) beet leaves, 2 pomegranates or 1/2 cup Greek raisins, 1 small bunch parsley, chopped, 2 medium red onions, finely chopped, 2 Tbsp. pine nuts, finely chopped fresh mint, to taste, 1 Tsp. lemon zest, 5 oz. (150 gr.) Greek feta, cut into small cubes

Soak the bulgur and whole wheat overnight. Blanch the beet leaves and set aside. Break one pomegranate into kernels and juice the other.

To prepare the salad: Mix the whole wheat, bulgur, parsley, onions, mint, pomegranate seeds or raisins, pine nuts, mint, and lemon zest in a large bowl.

Drizzle the salad with some olive oil, garnish with the beet leaves, feta cubes and pomegranate juice (if available) on top.

Trahana
or XinohondrosExtra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Herbs

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Here, olive oil is used to lubricate the delicate chicken mixture, evincing one of its many roles in the Greek kitchen.

Trahana/Xinohondros

One of the most exotic yet oldest ingredients in the Greek pantry, sour trahana is a tiny, pebble-like pasta made with wheat and with either buttermilk or yogurt. There are "sweet" varieties, too, made with milk or vegetable pulp. Trahana is traditionally used in soups and stuffings, but it has recently been rediscovered and is slowly finding its way into high-end Greek and American kitchens, too.

Herbs

The Greek flora is rife with countless herbs, used both in cooking and for their therapeutic value as teas and infusions.



For the broth: Chicken bones, **2** carrots, **1** leek, **1** onion, Lemon greens, **17** oz. (500 gr.) sour trahana, **4** cups milk, **10** oz. (300 gr.) cooked minced chicken, **1** medium red onion, finely chopped, **2** garlic cloves, minced, **2** egg whites, Olive oil, to taste, Salt and pepper, to taste, Dittany, sage, rosemary, to taste

Bring all the ingredients for the broth to a boil in a large pot of water. Season with salt and pepper and simmer for at least one hour.

Mix the minced chicken with the onion, garlic, egg whites, some olive oil, salt and pepper. Shape the mixture into "lollipops" and press around a stick. Bake them on an oiled rack in a preheated oven at 350F/180C until brown.

Cook the sour trahana with milk in order to form a malleable mass and press it over the minced chicken skewers. Serve the broth in a cup with a skewer of trahana chicken submerged in or next to each.



Artichokes

Fresh dill

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Olive oil is the fat par excellence in all Greek egg dishes, lending its heady flavor to delicate omelets, frittatas, and more.

Artichokes

There are several varieties of artichokes in Greece. In Crete, where the vegetable is especially esteemed, the small, wild, thorny artichoke is most favored. This dish, married with eggs and seasoned with dill, is one of the island's classics.



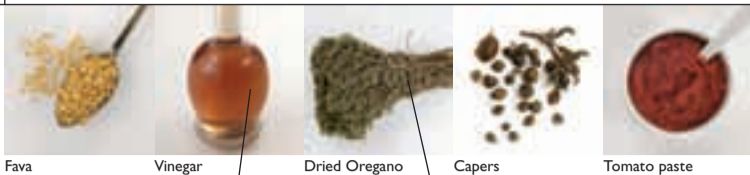
Fresh Dill

Dill is among the few herbs used almost exclusively fresh, a harbinger of spring and a natural partner with artichokes.

2/3 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **4** large artichoke hearts, quartered and kept in acidulated water, **Salt** and freshly ground white pepper to taste, **1/2** cup snipped fresh dill, **4-6** eggs, to taste, lightly beaten

Heat 1/2 cup of the olive oil in a wide pot or skillet over medium heat. Remove the artichokes from the acidulated water. Place in the pot with the oil, stir, and add just enough water to barely cover the artichokes. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and simmer until the artichokes are tender, about 15 minutes. Drain well.

In a large, heavy skillet, heat the remaining oil. Spread the artichokes evenly in the skillet. Pour the eggs evenly around the skillet and season with salt and pepper. Reduce the heat to low and cook until the bottom is golden, about 5 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat, place a plate over it, and flip the omelet. Slide the omelet back into the skillet and cook until golden brown on the other side. Serve.



Fava

Vinegar

Dried Oregano

Capers

Tomato paste

Vinegar

Greek vinegar has seen a mini revolution in the last few years as more and more top winemakers turn to this intriguing expression of the grape, turning out single-varietal aged vinegars, sweet, balsamic-style vinegars, and more.

Dried Oregano

Dried oregano is the herb that most defines Greek cuisine.

Capers

Greek capers are all wild, and are mainly culled from the bone-dry earth of the Cycladic islands, among them, of course, Santorini, where they have long been a staple.

**Fava**

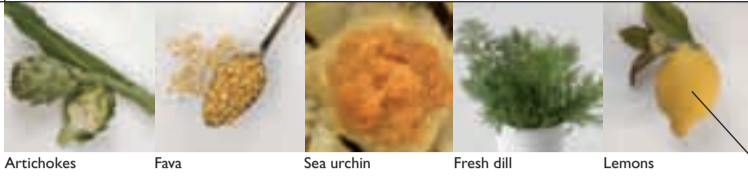
Fava is the name Greeks give to bean purees, especially the puree of yellow split peas, a national dish that finds the best expression in Santorini, where split peas grow to tender perfection thanks to the island's volcanic, porous soil and dry climate.

Tomato Paste

The best Greek tomato paste is the sun-dried paste that is a specialty of various Aegean islands. Greeks use tomato paste to thicken sauces but also as the base in an unusual dip, together with spring onions and fresh herbs.

For the Fava: 1/3 to 2/3 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, to taste, 1 medium red onion, finely chopped, 1 cup dried yellow split peas, picked over, rinsed, and drained, 5-7 cups water, as needed, Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, 1 tsp. dried Greek oregano, 2-3 Tbsp. red wine vinegar, to taste, **For the sauce:** 1/2 cup Greek olive oil, 3 large red onions, halved and sliced, 2 Santorini ripe tomatoes, grated or 2 Tbsp. tomato paste diluted in 3 Tbsp. water, 2-3 Tbsp. capers, rinsed and drained, 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon, 1 bay leaf, Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat 1/3 cup of the olive oil in a large pot and sauté the onion until soft. Add the split peas, stirring for 1 to 2 minutes. Cover with water. Cover the pot and bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat, uncover, and simmer for 45 minutes. Add water as needed to keep the peas covered. When the split peas have cooked down to a purée, remove from heat and stir in the oregano and vinegar. Cover with a cloth and let sit for 1 to 2 hours. Sauce: Heat half the olive oil in a large skillet and cook the onions until translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes, cinnamon, and bay leaf and season with salt and pepper. Simmer, covered, over low heat until the sauce is fairly thick and the onions are very soft, about 20 minutes. About 5 minutes before removing from heat, stir in the capers.



Artichokes

Fava

Sea urchin

Fresh dill

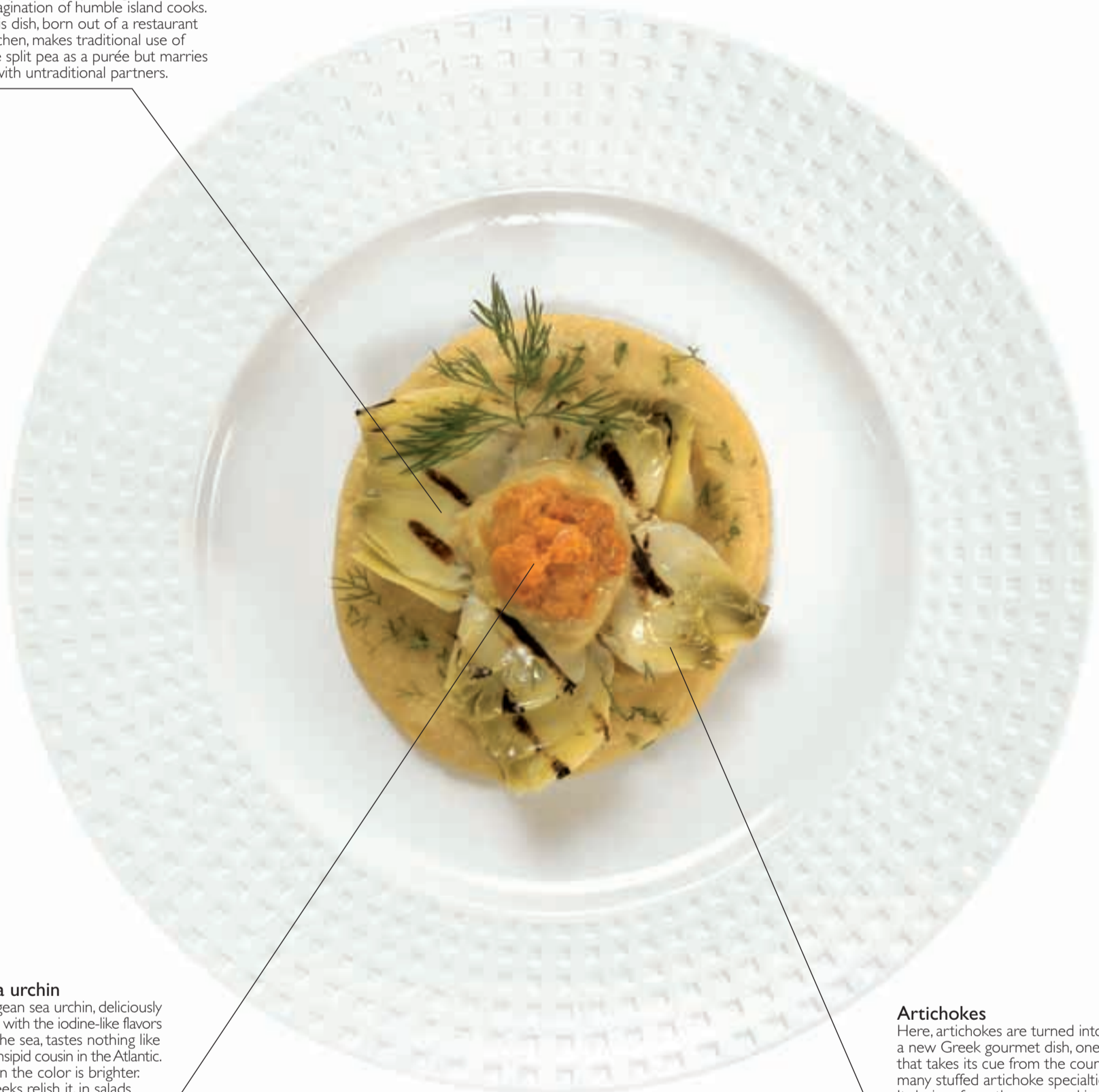
Lemons

Lemons

Lemon is arguably the most widely used flavoring agent in all of Greek cuisine, especially in the vegetable and fish cuisines of the Greek islands. Lemons grow easily in the sun-drenched countryside.

Fava

Fava - yellow split peas - are one of the foods of sustenance of Santorini, a raw ingredient that is typically cooked in myriad ways, proving the inherent imagination of humble island cooks. This dish, born out of a restaurant kitchen, makes traditional use of the split pea as a purée but marries it with untraditional partners.

**Sea urchin**

Aegean sea urchin, deliciously rich with the iodine-like flavors of the sea, tastes nothing like its insipid cousin in the Atlantic. Even the color is brighter. Greeks relish it, in salads and sauces and in unusual dishes, such as this.

Artichokes

Here, artichokes are turned into a new Greek gourmet dish, one that takes its cue from the country's many stuffed artichoke specialties. It derives from the new cooking of Santorini, as evinced in the use of the yellow split pea.

8 sea-urchins, cleaned, **3** Tbsp. extra virgin Greek olive oil, plus 1 additional Tbsp. for drizzling, **F**resh lemon juice, to taste, **1** scallion, only the white part, finely chopped, **1/2** cup yellow split peas, boiled to a purée, **8** small artichokes (preserved in olive oil, preferably from Tinos), **D**ill, to taste, finely chopped, **S**alt and pepper, to taste

Toss the sea urchin roe with a tablespoon of olive oil and lemon juice to taste.

Purée the scallion and cooked split peas, gradually adding olive oil and lemon juice, until the mixture takes the form of a loose cream. Add water, as needed. Season with salt and pepper.

Open up the small artichokes and place them on the rack of the preheated broiler. Grill lightly. You can do this with small, fresh artichokes, too. It is best to blanch them first.

Spread 2 tablespoons of the split peas purée on a serving plate. Plate the 2 small artichokes over the fava, garnish each artichoke with a little more purée and spoon the sea-urchin eggs on top. Sprinkle with some chopped dill and serve.



Fava

Santorini Tomatoes

Capers

Tomato Paste

Fava

The yellow split pea - fava - is arguably the one raw ingredient in the Greek pantry that best manifests the versatility of simple foods. A staple in Santorini, island cooks turn it into purées hot and cold, soups, sauces, fritters, and even pie shells, a novel use whipped up by one of Santorini's best-known restaurateurs.

Santorini Tomatoes

Islanders call their beloved, super-sweet tomatoes "anydra," or waterless, for the dry soil and arid climate in which they flourish. For centuries, Santorini's tomatoes were one of the great sources of income on the island. Today, a few canneries still exist but most locals have turned to tourism as a more lucrative way to earn a living.



Tomato Paste

Tomato paste, especially from sun-dried Greek tomatoes, is one of those ingredients that rounds off dishes, adds depth, and thickens sauces and fillings with an intensity of flavor unmatched by similar products made elsewhere.

Capers

In Santorini the caper is king of the plate and every part of the plant is used, from its buds to its leaves to its blossoms, all pickled or sun-dried and rehydrated to use in salads, sauces, and more.

1 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, or more as needed, 1/2 cup dried yellow split peas, picked over, rinsed, and drained, 3-5 cups water or stock, as needed, Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, 2 tsp. fresh, strained lemon juice, 6-8 Tbsp. fine semolina, or more as needed, 4 large red onions, halved and sliced, 2 cans Santorini plum tomatoes, 2 Tbsp. tomato paste, 4 Tbsp. capers, rinsed and drained, 1 scant tsp. ground cinnamon, 1 bay leaf, Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, 6 large eggs

Heat 1/3 cup of the olive oil in a large pot and sauté the split peas. Cover with water or stock. Cover pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook for about 1 1/2 hours, until cooked down to a purée. Remove and stir in 1/3 cup more olive oil and lemon juice. Cover with a cloth and cool. Stir in the first 6 tablespoons of semolina and add more, as needed, to make a stiff dough. Heat remaining olive oil in a large skillet and sauté the onions. Add the tomatoes, cinnamon, and bay leaf and season with salt and pepper. Simmer, covered, until the onions are soft. About 5 minutes before removing from heat, stir in the tomato paste and capers. Remove and cool slightly.

Press the fava into small, oiled tart pans. Fill with the tomato mixture. Carefully break an egg over each of the tarts and bake in a moderate oven until the egg sets, about 15 minutes. Remove and serve.



Santorini Tomatoes

Fresh Mint

Santorini Tomatoes

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Olive oil is used just as easily in the skillet as it is in the salad bowl in the Greek kitchen and lends delicious flavor to anything that fries in it.

Santorini Tomatoes

Here Santorini's sun-sweetened small tomatoes find their perfect expression. The tomato fritters are among the best-known dishes on the island, something found with equal ease in home and restaurant kitchens.

Tomato Paste

Delicious Greek tomato paste lends body to these classic summer fritters.



Fresh Mint

Mint, like parsley and dill, are among the herbs almost always used fresh in the Greek kitchen.

1 1/2 pounds firm, ripe Santorini tomatoes, grated, **2** scallions, white and tender green parts, finely chopped, **2** Tbsp. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, **2** Tbsp. chopped fresh mint, **Salt** and freshly ground black pepper to taste, **1 1/4** to **1 1/2** cups all-purpose flour, as needed, **1/2** tsp. baking powder, **O**live or vegetable oil for frying

In a large bowl, mix together the grated tomatoes, scallions, herbs, salt, and pepper. Combine **1 1/4** cups of the flour and the baking powder in a small bowl and add it to the tomatoes, mixing well. Add flour if necessary to give the mixture the consistency of a thick batter. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper.

Heat about **1 1/2** inches of oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is very hot, drop a tablespoon of the batter at a time into the skillet and fry the tomato fritters on both sides until golden. Remove with a slotted spoon and let drain on paper towels. Serve hot.



Fresh mint

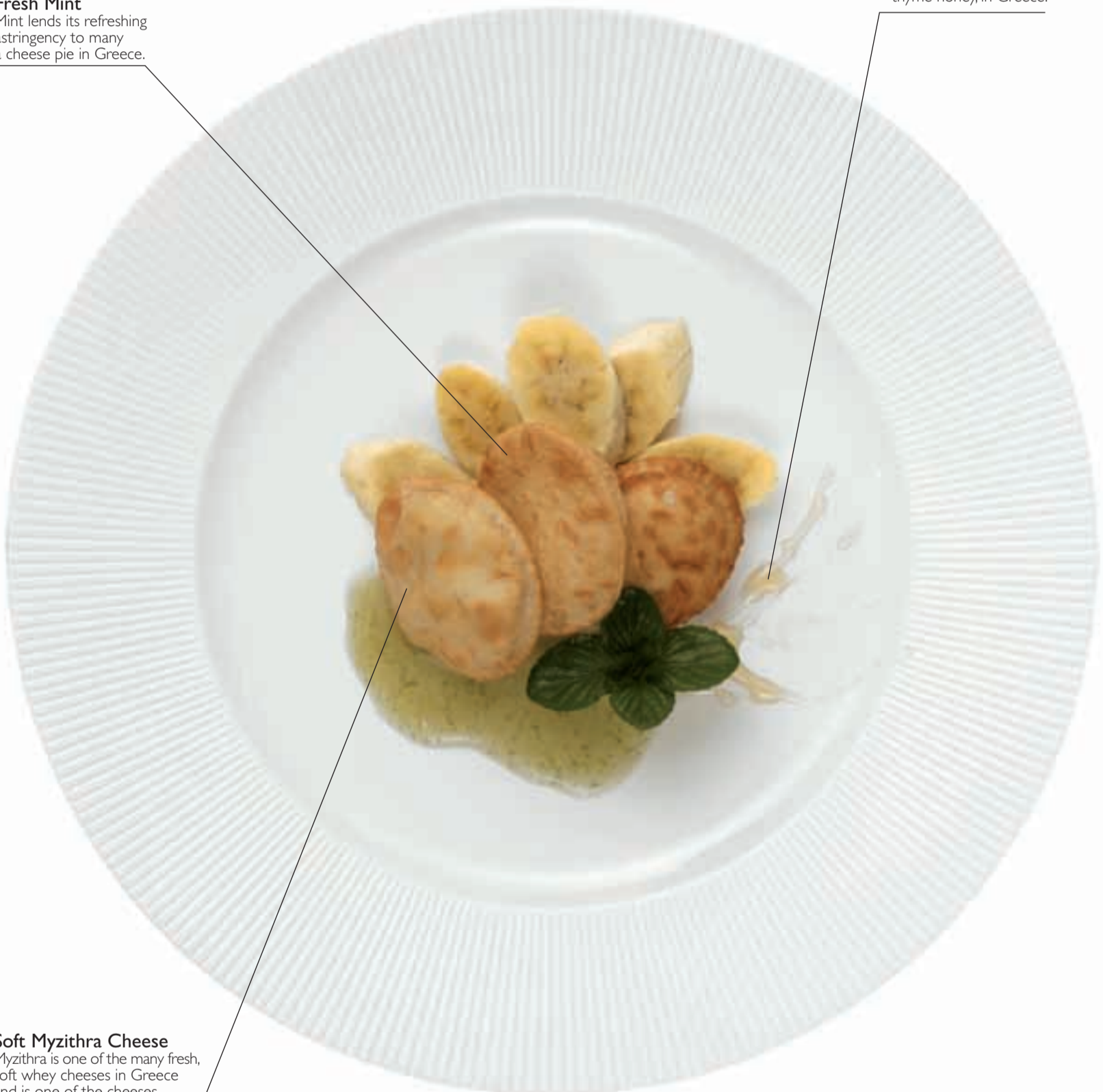
Soft Myzithra Cheese Honey

Fresh Mint

Mint lends its refreshing astringency to many a cheese pie in Greece.

Honey

Greek honey, the undisputed best there is, is mainly varietal and seasonal, and Crete, whence this dish draws its influence, produces some of the top honey, especially thyme honey, in Greece.

**Soft Myzithra Cheese**

Myzithra is one of the many fresh, soft whey cheeses in Greece and is one of the cheeses for which Crete is famous.

For the dough: 2 pounds (1 kilo) flour, 80 ml milk, 2 oz. (60 gr.) Greek yogurt, Salt, to taste, Sugar, to taste, 2 tsp. baking powder; 2 chicken breasts, 1 cup fresh Cretan myzithra cheese or other soft, mild Greek whey cheese, 1 small bunch fresh mint, 1 small bunch fresh coriander, 3-4 bananas, 2 Tbsp. butter, 1 Tbsp. sugar, Cretan thyme honey, as needed

Combine all the ingredients for the dough in a medium bowl and knead until smooth. Cover and let it rest for 20-30 minutes. Boil the chicken breasts in salted water. Remove, cool, and shred. Mix the chicken with the myzithra cheese.

To make the pies: Roll out the dough on a floured surface and cut into circles, squares, or strips. Fill with the myzithra-cheese mixture and shape as desired. Bake in a lightly greased pan in a preheated oven at 180C/350F for about 12 minutes, until golden. Remove. Blanch the mint and coriander and then submerge immediately in an ice bath. Purée to make an aromatic sauce.

Slice the bananas and sauté them in a skillet with butter and sugar. To serve, place the bananas on a serving plate, put the myzithra pies on top, add some aromatic sauce and drizzle with some honey.

**Parsley**

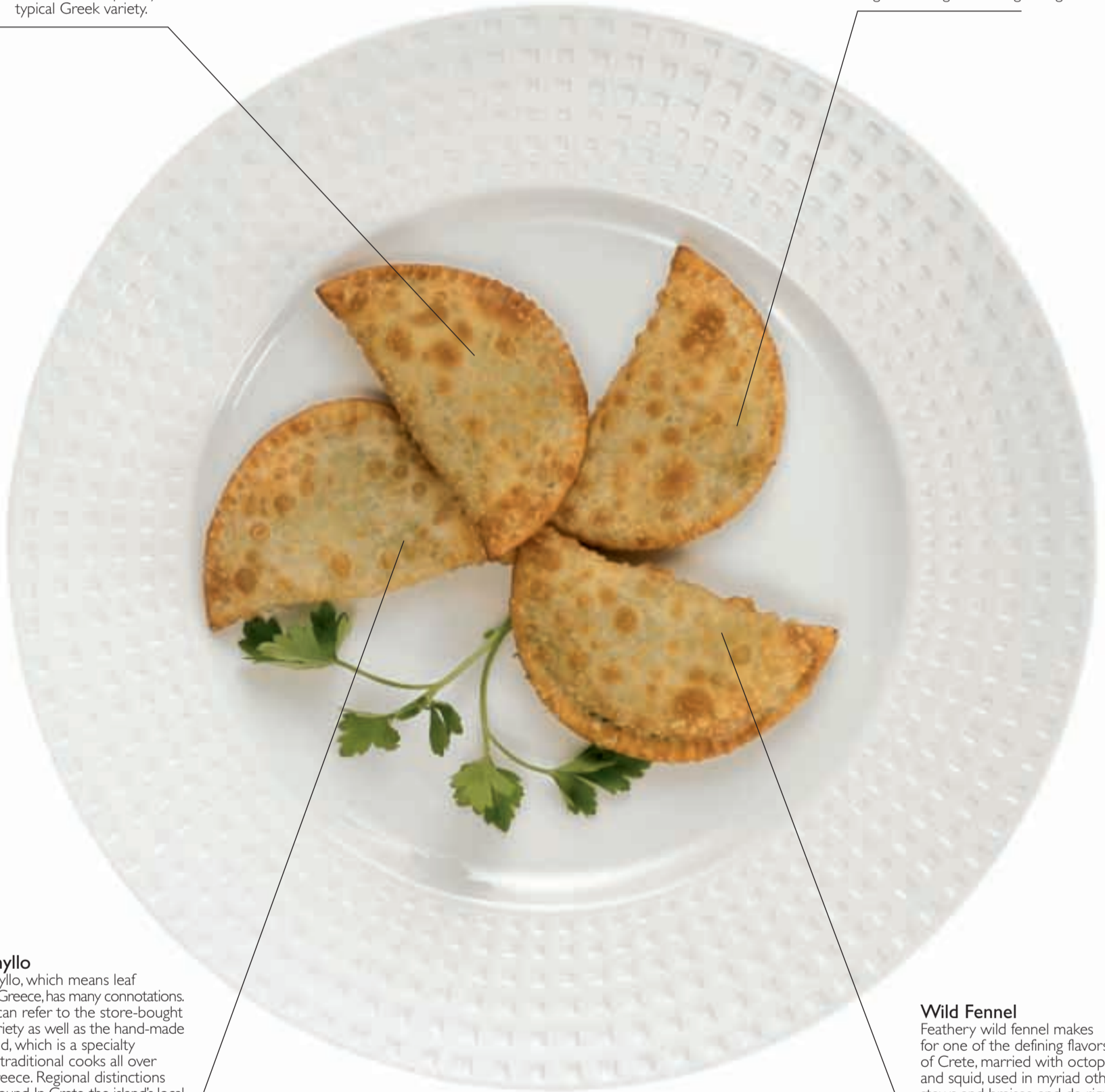
Parsley, one of the herbs consumed fresh in Greece, is a standard in fillings and as garnish for salads and other dishes. Flat-leaf parsley is the typical Greek variety.

Kafkalithres

This relative of chervil is a delicate springtime green that is one of the best-loved for pies.

Sorrel

Sorrel is one of the many seasonal greens in Greece, used in pies and other dishes. Cretan greens pies are famous for the dozens of different herbs and greens that go into a single filling.

**Phyllo**

Phyllo, which means leaf in Greece, has many connotations. It can refer to the store-bought variety as well as the hand-made kind, which is a specialty of traditional cooks all over Greece. Regional distinctions abound. In Crete, the island's local fire water, tsikoudia, is often added to the mix.

Wild Fennel

Feathery wild fennel makes for one of the defining flavors of Crete, married with octopus and squid, used in myriad other stews and braises, and de rigueur in greens pies like this.

1/2 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **8-10** scallions, to taste, white and tender green parts, or 2 large onions, finely chopped, **2** garlic cloves, minced, **1 3/4** pounds (800 gr.) mixed greens, tough stems discarded, leaves washed well, drained, and finely chopped, **1** cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, **Salt** and freshly ground black pepper to taste, **1** homemade phyllo, **Olive** oil for frying

Sauté the scallions or onions in olive oil. Add the garlic and greens and cook, until all the liquid has evaporated. Add the parsley, season with salt and pepper, and set aside.

Divide the dough into 3 equal balls. Roll the first ball into a large, thin sheet. Using a round cookie cutter or glass about 3 inches in diameter, press and cut circles out of the dough. Place a scant tablespoon of the greens mixture in the center of each circle, fold to form a half-moon, and press the edges closed with the tines of a fork. If using commercial phyllo, cut into strips and shape into triangles.

In a large heavy skillet, heat about 1 inch (2 1/2 cm) of olive oil to just below the smoking point. Place about 4 or 5 crescents (or triangles) in the skillet, or as many as will fit loosely, and fry until lightly golden on both sides, about 5 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Continue until all the pies are fried. Serve warm at room temperature.



Anthotyro

Feta

Greek yogurt

Zucchini

Dried mint

Dried mint

Mint is used with equal ease fresh and dried. In dried form it is a natural partner in cheese-based pies.

Anthotyro

Another one of Greece's many soft cheeses, Anthotyro is among the cheeses associated especially with Crete. It is a soft curd-like cheese, mild on the palate and versatile. This recipe is an adaptation of the original, which calls for a cheese named xinomyzithra, sour myzithra, which is hard to find outside the country. Mixing the mild Anthotyro with feta approximates the flavor of the authentic Cretan cheese.

Feta

Feta is not generally used in the authentic version of this spring and summer Cretan layered pie, but it is used here to help approximate the sour taste of an unusual cheese called xinomyzithra.

**Zucchini**

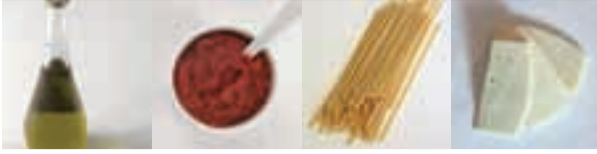
Zucchini, a late spring and summer vegetable in Greece, is used in dozens of different dishes, from multilayered pies like this to simple boiled salads. Like all vegetables, it is used almost exclusively when in season.

Greek yogurt

Greek yogurt, thick and tart, adds just the right touch to this pie, even though it is not part of the authentic version.

2 pounds (1 kilo) zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch-thick rounds, salted, drained and rinsed, **Salt**, 1/2 pound (125 gr.) anthotyro, 1/2 pound (125 gr.) Greek feta cheese, crumbled, 1/4 cup plain thick, Greek yogurt, **H**ome-made or commercial phyllo, 1/4 cup olive oil, 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, **1** heaping tsp. dried mint, **F**reshly ground black pepper to taste

Combine the cheeses and yogurt. Divide the phyllo in half. Oil a 15-inch (38-cm)-by-2-inch (5-cm) deep round pan. Preheat the oven to 375F/180C. On a lightly floured surface roll out the first ball of dough to a circle slightly larger than the pan. Place the phyllo in the pan and brush with a tablespoon of olive oil. Alternatively, place half the commercial phyllo in pan, oiling each sheet. Toss zucchini with flour and salt. Place the zucchini neatly on the bottom of the pan, overlapping the slices concentrically. Dot generously with half the cheese mixture, season with pepper, and sprinkle with 1/2 tsp. of the mint. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Roll out the second dough ball, place over the filling, or layer and oil remaining phyllo, and turn in the edges to form a decorative rim. Brush the top with remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil and bake until the pastry is golden, about 50 minutes. Remove, cool, and serve.



Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Tomato Paste

Greek Pasta

Kefalotyri

Greek Pasta

One of the best-kept secrets of the Greek kitchen is the wide use of pasta and the extraordinary regional variety of shapes, sizes, and recipes for both fresh and dried pasta.

Kefalotyri

One of the many hard, yellow sheep's milk cheeses in Greece, Kefalotyri is the de facto grating cheese for simple pasta dishes such as this. Crete produces some of the best.

**Tomato Paste**

The tomato paste in this recipe acts as a base for the copious amount of garlic.

1 pound (1/2 kilo) long, tubular, preferably Greek, pasta, **1** head of garlic, peeled and crushed, **1** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **2** Tbsp. tomato paste, **S**alt and pepper to taste, **G**rated kefalotyri cheese to taste

Fill a large pot with enough salted water and bring it to a boil. Boil the pasta, stirring frequently to keep it from sticking. Drain and rinse the pasta and place back in the pot to keep warm. Toss with a little olive oil.

To prepare the garlic sauce: Heat some olive oil in a skillet. Add the crushed garlic and tomato paste diluted in 1/2 cup water. Stir and season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer the sauce until the liquid cooks off and only the olive oil remains.

Serve the pasta in a serving platter, sprinkle with grated cheese and drizzle with the garlic sauce.



Greek Beans

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Canned tomatoes

Orange

Greek Beans

The Greek landscape adapted well to the NewWorld array of beans and legumes, so much so that the country's national dish is considered the bean soup, made with dried navy beans.

**Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil**

With the exception of one day a year, Good Friday, olive oil is always a component of Greek bean soups, rounding out the flavor and adding texture and richness to an otherwise simple, spartan dish.

**Orange**

Oranges, which grow all over Crete, one of the country's citrus baskets, lend their aroma to the bean soup and mirror the regional distinctions in the Greek kitchen even when it comes to simple dishes like this one.

Canned Tomatoes

Tomato cannery is a major agricultural occupation in this country of constant sunshine and temperate climes, where the tomato flourishes and reaches heights of taste perfection unrivaled anywhere else in Europe.

1/2 pound (250 gr.) dried Greek navy beans, picked over and rinsed, **1** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **1 1/2** cups finely chopped red onion, **1** cup finely chopped celery or **3/4** cup chopped wild celery with leaves, **1** large carrot, chopped, **3/4** cup peeled, seeded, and chopped tomatoes (canned are fine), **1** large strip orange zest, **Salt** to taste

Soak the navy beans for 6-8 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse. Place in a pot with enough fresh water to cover. Bring to a boil, remove from the heat, and drain. Place the beans back in the pot with ample water, bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat **1/3** cup of the olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-low heat. Cook the onion, celery, and carrot, stirring with a wooden spoon, until softened, about 10 minutes.

Add the sautéed vegetables to the beans, together with the tomatoes and another **1/3** cup of the olive oil. Simmer slowly until the beans are very tender and the soup is thick and creamy, 2 to 2 1/2 hours. About 20 minutes before removing from the heat, add the orange zest.



Fish



Salt



Red Wine Vinegar



Saffron



Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Salt

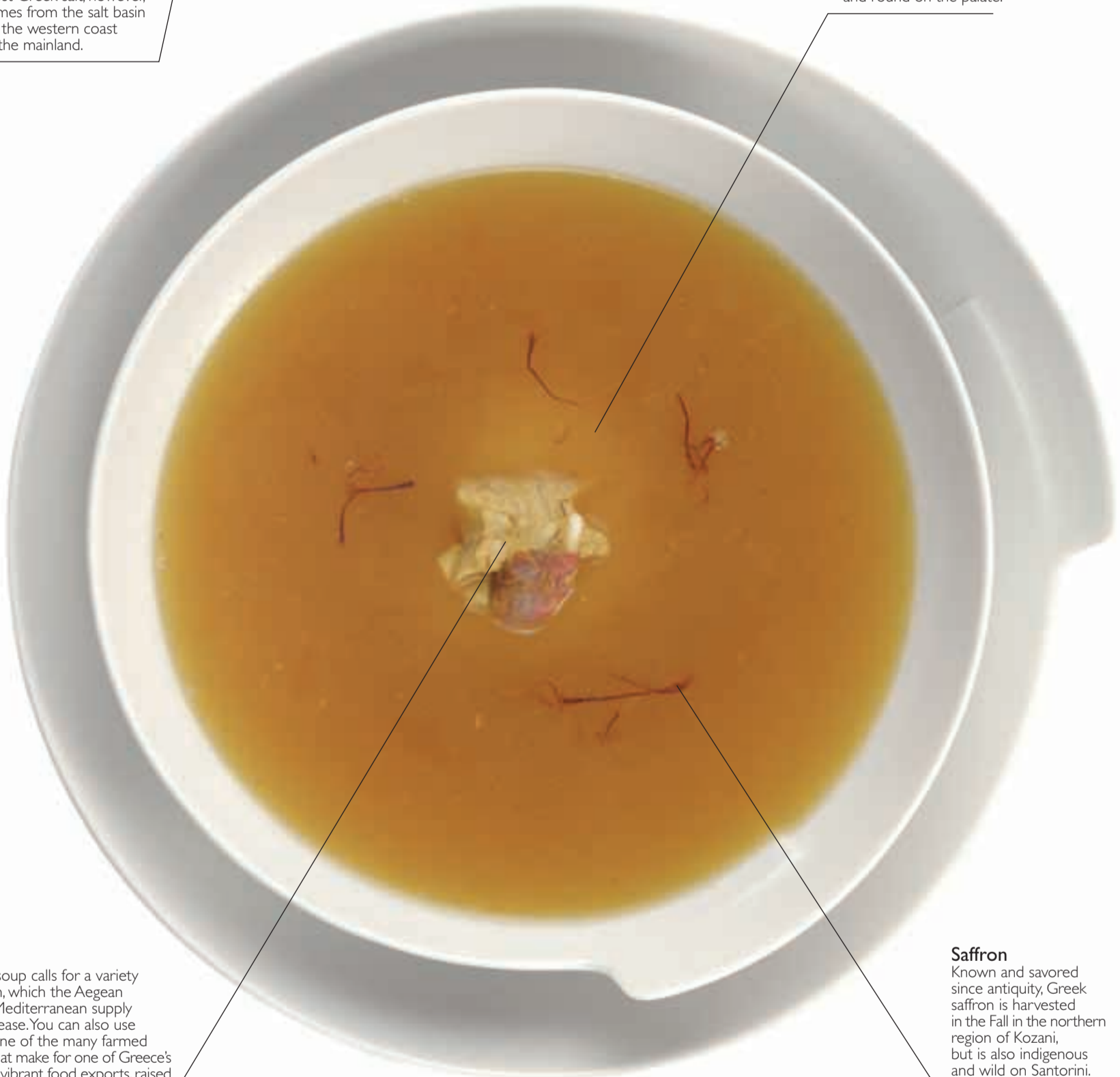
This recipe traditionally calls for sea water to be part of the ingredients, which fishermen would use with restraint to season their on-board creation. Aegean sea salt is tasty; most Greek salt, however, comes from the salt basin on the western coast of the mainland.

Red Wine Vinegar

Greek vinegars have gone decidedly gourmet in the last few years as more and more wine producers turn their talents to making fine, aged vinegars, too.

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Used everywhere in the Greek kitchen, olive oil here, in copious amounts, acts as an emulsifier, making for a soup that is exceedingly simple in technique and ingredients yet texturally rich and round on the palate.

**Fish**

This soup calls for a variety of fish, which the Aegean and Mediterranean supply with ease. You can also use any one of the many farmed fish that make for one of Greece's most vibrant food exports, raised in ideal conditions in many parts of the country.

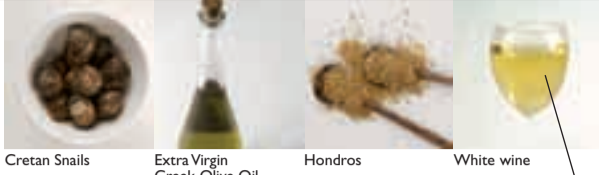
Saffron

Known and savored since antiquity, Greek saffron is harvested in the Fall in the northern region of Kozani, but is also indigenous and wild on Santorini.

2 cups extra virgin Greek olive oil, **4** large red onions, finely chopped, **1/3** cup red wine vinegar, **2** pounds (1 kilo) fish, appropriate for soup (scorpion-fish, perch, gilthead bream and/or bogue), whole, cleaned and gutted, **Salt** to taste, **Fresh** lemon juice to taste (optional)

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat and add the onions. Cover the pot, lower the heat, and steam the onions until wilted and very soft, about 15 minutes. Pour in the vinegar. One minute later, after the vinegar has cooked off, add the fish (the bigger ones on the bottom and the smaller ones on top). Season each layer of fish lightly with salt. Add enough water to cover the fish. Cover the pot and cook the kakavia over medium heat until the fish is fork tender, about 20 minutes.

To serve, remove the fish from the soup and place on a serving platter. Sprinkle with additional olive oil and lemon juice, if desired. Serve the broth in individual bowls with plenty of bread. You can also serve the fish and the broth together in individual bowls.



Cretan Snails

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Hondros

White wine

White wine

Greek white wines number in the dozens and are produced from myriad indigenous grapes.

**Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil**

Crete produces some of the very best olive oil in the world, and it is seldom absent from the island's varied cuisine.

Cretan Snails

In Crete snails have always played an important part in the diet. There are three basic varieties of land snails on the island but countless ways to cook them. There is also a lively exports market for Cretan snails, with many of them shipped off to France, where the escargot is especially revered.

**Hondros**

Hondros is the Cretan name for bulgur, an ingredient used widely in the healthful Greek kitchen.

2 pounds (1 kilo) large, preferably Cretan, snails, **1/2** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **1** large red onion, finely chopped, **3** large, firm ripe tomatoes, grated or chopped (optional), **1** scant tsp. ground cumin, **1** cup dry white wine, **1** bay leaf, **S**alt and freshly ground black pepper, **3** cups water or stock, **1 1/2** cups coarse bulgur; Cretan hondros or xinohondros (sour trahana)

If you use fresh snails - those without a membrane covering their opening - they need to be purged and blanched. Place in a deep basin over several handfuls of dried pasta and cover with a large cloth. Leave for a week. Rinse extremely well under cold running water and blanch the snails in salted water for 5 minutes. If using hibernating snails - those with a membrane - scrape the membrane clean with a small sharp knife, wash the snails thoroughly and blanch in salted water for 5 minutes. Remove and rinse well.

Heat the olive oil in a large, wide pot and sauté the onion. Add the cumin, wine, bay leaf, tomato, and snails. Season with salt and pepper and simmer for 12-15 minutes. Remove the snails with a slotted spoon. Add the water to the pot, bring to a boil over medium-high heat, and add the hondros or xinohondros (bulgur or trahana). Stir frequently until all the liquid has been absorbed and the grains are tender. Add the snails back to the pot, stir to warm through, and serve.



Artichokes

Lemons

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Fava Beans

Artichokes

Greeks use the inner, bottom part of the artichoke and about an inch or so of the stem and almost never bother with the leaves.

Fava Beans (Koukia)

Young, tender fava beans, called koukia, are often cooked in their pods in Greece. Favas are a mainstay of the Cretan kitchen and have been cultivated on the island for eons. They are, of course, among the most ancient legumes in the Greek pantry.

**Lemons**

Lemons are used in this dish to help keep the artichokes from oxidizing once cleaned but also to make the sauce, which pairs naturally with the artichoke-fava duet.

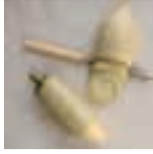
Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Crete produces some of the very best olive oil in the world, and it is seldom absent from the island's varied cuisine.

2/3 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **2** scallions, white and tender green parts, chopped, **1** garlic clove, minced, **2** pounds fresh fava beans, shelled, **6-8** large artichokes, cleaned, **S**alt to taste, **1** scant Tbsp. all-purpose flour, **J**uice of 2 lemons, **W**hite wine

Heat the olive oil in a large, wide pot over medium heat and add the scallions and garlic. Toss to coat in the oil, reduce the heat to low, and simmer, covered, for 5 minutes. Add the fava beans, toss to coat, and add enough water to cover by 1 inch (2 1/2 cm). Cover, bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer for 10 minutes. Place the artichoke hearts, tops down, in the pot. Season with salt. Add enough water to come about halfway up the artichokes. Cover and simmer over low heat until the artichokes are very tender, 35-40 minutes.

Whisk the flour and lemon juice together. Add a ladleful of the pan juices to the flour-and-lemon mixture in a slow, steady stream, whisking all the while. Pour this mixture into the pot, tilt the pot back and forth so that the mixture spreads evenly throughout, and simmer until the sauce thickens, 3-4 minutes. Remove from the heat and serve.



White Eggplants



Red wine vinegar



Parsley



Tomatoes



Dried Oregano

Red Wine Vinegar

Some of the most interesting and high-end vinegars in Greece are produced on Santorini, with indigenous grapes like the Assyrtico and aged for at least five years.

Dried Oregano

Greeks pick oregano in the early spring and summer, tie it in bunches and leave it to dry in a warm, shady area. It graces countless Greek dishes and is noticeably sweeter than oregano produced in other parts of the world.



White Eggplants

These plump, small eggplants are indigenous to Santorini and one of the vegetables for which the island is well-known. They are used in a variety of ways, stuffed, grilled, baked, braised, and stewed, have a sweet, mild flavor, and make for beautiful summer fare.

Tomatoes

In Santorini tomatoes mean the island's unique, "waterless" variety, so named because of the dry climate and chalky soil on which they flourish. Here, any tomatoes may be used; fresh, vine-ripened are, of course, best.

For the Marinated Octopus: 1 medium octopus, about 2 1/2 pounds (1 kilo), 1/2 cup Greek red wine vinegar, 1/2 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, 1 tsp. dried Greek oregano, Sea salt and peppercorns to taste, **For the Eggplants:** 4 medium white Santorini eggplants, trimmed, 2 Tbsp. extra virgin Greek olive oil, 3 large scallions, trimmed and coarsely chopped, 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped, 3 large fresh, ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced, 1 small bunch parsley, finely chopped

Rinse octopus thoroughly and place in a large pot with no water. Cover and cook over low heat for 50 minutes to 1 hour, until pink and tender until the octopus has exuded its liquid. Remove and cool. Cut into 8 tentacles. Combine vinegar, extra virgin Greek olive oil, oregano, salt, and peppercorns. Place the tentacles in the marinade and marinate for at least 2 days or up to 1 week. Remove 4 tentacles and cut into small chunks. Remove and reserve the eggplant caps. Scoop out the flesh from each eggplant and finely chop. Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet and sauté the scallions, garlic, and eggplant flesh until tender. Combine with the parsley, tomatoes and chopped octopus. Fill each of the eggplants with the mixture. Place the caps back on the eggplants, brush a little olive oil over their exteriors and bake, covered, for about 25 minutes, or until tender.



Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Tomato Paste

Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Sun-dried tomatoes used to be part of the yearly preparations of every agrarian household, especially in several of the Cycladic islands and in the northeastern Aegean. Chefs have rediscovered local sun-dried tomatoes, which are especially sweet and come either strung garland-like or preserved in olive oil.

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Almost the entire production of Greek olive oil is extra virgin thanks to the fact that olive groves are small and family owned, hence cared for with pride; olives are taken immediately to the local mills to be pressed; and varieties, such as the Coroneiki, from which most olive oil is produced, make oils that are naturally low in acidity, fruity, herbaceous, and delicious.



Tomato Paste

In the Cyclades, tomato paste is an old agrarian preparation that has become one of the local specialties, an artisanal product that commands gourmet attention.

1 pound (1/2 kilo) salt cod fillets, **1/2** pound (250 gr.) waxy potatoes, scrubbed, **3-4** garlic cloves to taste, minced, **Salt** to taste, **1/2 to 3/4** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, as needed, plus 2 tbsp. for the sauce, **1/4** cup red wine vinegar, **6-8** Tbsp. Greek olive oil, as needed, for pan-frying the cod, **2** Tbsp. tomato paste diluted with 1/4 cup water, **1** scant tsp. sugar

Rehydrate the cod (soak for 2 days with plenty of cold water, changing it every 6-8 hours). Boil the potatoes until fork-tender. Cool slightly. Peel the potatoes and have the garlic ready. Whisk with a paddle or pound the peeled hot potatoes and some of the minced garlic, adding a little salt, the extra virgin olive oil, and vinegar in slow, steady alternating streams until emulsified. Drain and trim the cod. Cut into serving pieces. Heat the olive oil and cook the cod until golden and crisp. Preheat the oven to 350F (180C) and lightly oil a large ovenproof glass baking pan.

In a large skillet, heat the 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Cook the diluted tomato paste into the hot oil until thick. Add the potato-garlic mixture and stir to combine. Spoon a little sauce over the bottom of the baking pan and place the fried cod on top. Spoon the remaining sauce over the fish and bake until heated through, 8-10 minutes. Remove from the oven and serve hot.



Lavraki (Sea Bass)



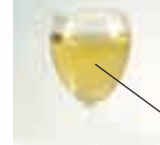
Santorini Plum Tomatoes (fresh & canned)



Lemons



Red Wine Vinegar



White wine

White Wine

Try any one of the refreshing whites from Santorini or Crete in this dish.

Lemons

Crete and the Peloponnese are home to most lemon groves in Greece, and their fragrant fruit go hand-in-hand with many a fish dish, but especially with this unique dish from the traditional table of Crete, where proteins such as fish are often combined with seasonal vegetables.

Lavraki (Sea Bass)

Lavraki, or sea bass, is one of the best farmed fish in Greece. This dish calls for it, but other fish may also be used.

**Santorini Plum Tomatoes (fresh & canned)**

Either version of Santorini's intensely sweet, small tomatoes may be used here; tomato canning on the island has been a major part of local industry for decades.

Red Wine Vinegar

Although Greek vinegars have seen a renaissance in the last few years, this recipe calls for a light vinegar with which to soak the okra. It's a technique Greek cooks use to firm up the vegetable and make it more palatable.

1 1/2 pounds (750 gr.) fresh small okra, **1 1/4** cups red wine vinegar, **One**, **2 1/2** - **3** pounds sea bream or sea bass, cleaned, gutted, and scaled, Juice of **1** lemon, Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, **1/2** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **2** medium onions, quartered and thinly sliced, **2** garlic cloves, finely chopped, **8-10** Santorini plum tomatoes to taste, peeled, seeded, and coarsely chopped (canned are fine), **1/2** cup dry white wine, **1** bunch fresh dill, snipped

Trim the okra: Remove the tough upper rims and a bit of the stems. Rinse, drain, and marinate in the vinegar for 30 minutes. Season the fish inside and out with the lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat and cook the onions, stirring, until wilted, 7-8 minutes. Add the garlic, then the okra, stirring gently to combine. Pour in the tomatoes and wine, cover the pot, and simmer until tender. Add the dill. Spread half the okra evenly on the bottom of a baking pan large enough to hold the okra and fish. Place the fish over it and spread the remaining okra around and over the fish. Bake, covered, until the fish is flaky, about 25 minutes. Serve hot.



Fagri (Sea Bream)

Kafkalithres
(Chervil)

Sorrel

Fennel

Chard

Chervil

One of the most delicate wild greens in the Greek pantheon of greens and herbs, chervil is used mainly in savory pies and fillings.

Sorrel

This seasonal, slightly sour Greek green is eaten as a salad both raw and cooked, but also used in myriad pies and some unusual stuffings, like this one, evincing Crete's ages-old love affair with flavorful leafy greens.

Fennel

Wild fennel, which is so much more intense than the finocchio modern cooks know, is one of the most beloved herbs in Crete.

**Fagri**

Sea Bream is starting to be farmed more and more in Greece.

Chard

Chard is a workhorse green in the Greek kitchen, used in braises and vegetable stews as well as in stuffings and plain boiled salads, dressed with olive oil and vinegar or lemon juice.

4 medium-sized gilthead bream, cleaned and gutted, **S**alt and pepper to taste, **A** variety of mountain greens, trimmed, **3** leeks, finely chopped, **1** medium red onion, finely chopped, **2** small batches fennel, finely chopped, **4** tomatoes, diced, **O**live oil to taste, **S**alt and pepper to taste, **F**ennel seeds to taste, **3** lemons, sliced

Season the cavity of each fish with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Blanch the greens, drain, and reserve the water:

Blanch the tender green parts of the leeks in the same water. Dice the tomatoes, chop the fennel and white part of the leeks. Mix the ingredients with the greens.

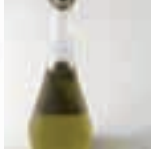
Fill the fish with the mixture, secure closed with blanched leek greens, and sprinkle with fennel seeds. Place the lemon slices over each fish and bake in preheated oven at 375F (180C). Serve in a deep dish and ladle with a little of the greens broth.



Canned Tomatoes



Capers

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Capers

Santorini capers, tiny, wild, sun-blessed, and delicious, are a local specialty product with universal appeal.

Canned Tomatoes

Greek canned tomatoes hail mainly from the Peloponnese, Crete, parts of the north, and Santorini. Tomato cultivation is one of the main agricultural occupations in the country.



Sea salt to taste, **2** pounds (1 kilo) red mullet, cleaned, gutted, and trimmed, **1/3** cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **2** large onions, halved and sliced, **3** garlic cloves, minced, **2** cups grated firm, ripe tomatoes or good-quality chopped canned plum tomatoes, with juice, **1** bay leaf, **1** cup small Greek salted capers, soaked in warm water for 1 hour and drained, **F**reshly ground black pepper to taste

Lightly salt the fish and set aside, covered, in the refrigerator until ready to use.

Heat half the olive oil in a large skillet and cook the onions over medium heat, stirring, until translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the garlic and stir for a minute. Add the tomatoes and bay leaf, bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the drained capers and simmer for a minute.

Saute the fish lightly in olive oil in a non-stick skillet. When the fish is almost done, spoon the sauce over it and heat through. Adjust seasoning and serve.



Dry Red Wine

Kefalotyri

Kefalotyri

One of the most traditional Greek cheeses, Kefalotyri, produced in Crete and elsewhere in the Greek islands and mainland, makes for a perfect table cheese but also a great cooking and grating cheese.

**Dry Red Wine**

Greece boasts so many red grape varieties. For this dish look for a mild dry red wine from Crete, such as one made with the kotsifali grape.

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, **1** rabbit (about 2 1/2 pounds/ 1 1/4 kilos), cut into stewing pieces, **S**alt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, **1** large onion, finely chopped, **1** scant Tbsp. all-purpose flour, **2** garlic cloves, minced, **1** cup dry red wine, **2** bay leaves, **2** large eggs, lightly beaten, **3/4** cup grated Kefalotyri or any hard yellow Greek sheep's milk cheese

Heat 3 tablespoons of the butter in a large, deep skillet and season and sear the rabbit on all sides. Remove and set aside. Add the remaining butter to the pot and cook the onion until soft. Sprinkle with the flour and stir over medium heat until the flour turns golden brown.

Add the rabbit back to the pot. Add the garlic and stir for a minute. Pour in the wine and enough water to barely cover the rabbit. Add the bay leaves, salt, and pepper. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and simmer the rabbit until fork-tender.

In a small bowl, lightly beat the eggs. Pour a ladleful of the pan juices into the eggs in a slow, steady stream, stirring with a wire whisk. Stir in the cheese and pour the mixture back into the pot. Simmer for 1 to 2 minutes over very low heat. Remove the bay leaves. Serve hot.



Lemons

Chard

Sorrel

Fennel

Extra Virgin
Greek Olive Oil

Extra Virgin Greek Olive Oil

Greeks, who are blessed with an abundance of extra virgin olive oil, use it for everything from sautéing to seasoning.

Fennel

Wild fennel, feathery and aromatic, is the springtime herb of choice in many Greek islands, Crete among them.

Chard

Like the other greens in this dish, chard is a seasonal favorite, used in braises, stews, and as a cooked-salad green.



Sorrel

Sorrel is one of the rarer greens in the Greek pantheon of foraged wild foods, but cooks like it for its distinct flavor and often incorporate it into stews and pies.

Lemons

Lemons form the basis of the classic Greek sauce avgolemono, which adds tang and counters the innate richness of dishes such as this. There are several regional techniques for making avgolemono.

1/2 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, **2 1/2** pounds (1 1/4 kilos) lamb shoulder, trimmed of fat and cut into stewing pieces, **2** cups coarsely chopped onion, **Salt** and freshly ground black pepper to taste, **2 1/2** pounds (1 1/4 kilos) trimmed greens (spinach, chard, chicory, sorrel, wild fennel, vine shoots, chard, bryony, or sow thistles), washed well and drained, **2** large eggs, **Juice** of 2 lemons

Sear the lamb in the olive oil. Remove and set aside. Add the onions and cook until translucent. Return the lamb to the pot and stir. Season with salt and pepper. Add enough water just to cover the lamb. Cover the pot and simmer over medium-low heat until the meat is very tender, about 1 1/2 hours.

Blanch the greens in salted water. Drain and rinse under cold running water. Add the greens to the lamb and continue cooking for another half hour. Add more water if necessary. There should always be liquid in the pot.

Make the egg-lemon sauce: Whisk the eggs and lemon together until foamy. Add a ladleful of pot juices to the egg mixture in a slow, steady stream, whisking all the while. Pour the avgolemono into the pot, remove from the heat, and tilt the pot. Serve.



Mastiha

Oranges

Honey

Walnuts

Sesame Seeds

Oranges

Oranges are one of the main flavoring agents in Greek sweets, gracing everything from cookies to sweet breads to fritters like these. Crete is one of Greece's orange "baskets," and the island is blanketed in groves from east to west.

Sesame Seeds

Although Greece no longer has a production of sesame to speak of, sesame seeds are among the best-loved garnishes and several Greek companies package them.

Walnuts

Walnuts, which abound in Greece, are used in savory sauces, as a garnish for salads and sweets, as the basis of a rich cake, and whole and immature as a preserve, one of the most delicious in the long list of Greek fruit and nut preserves.



Honey

Ancient, beguiling, exquisite Greek honey is renowned throughout the world. Crete produces some of the best, especially thyme honey. It is used in countless confections and in none too few savory dishes, as well.

Mastiha

The crystal resin culled from a tree in the pistachio family that flourishes only on the island of Chios is arguably the most exotic, unusual spice in Greece. It is used in every sort of dish, savory and sweet.

For the dough: 2-2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, 1/2 tsp. baking powder, 1/2 tsp. baking soda, 4 eggs, at room temperature, 1-2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, 1/4 cup strained fresh orange juice, 1 tsp. vanilla extract, 2 Tbsp. butter; **For the syrup:** 1 1/2 cups water, 2 1/4 cups sugar, 1/4 cup honey
To fry and serve: Olive oil, for frying, Coarsely ground walnuts, Ground cinnamon, sesame seeds, or confectioners' sugar (optional)

Sift together 2 cups of the flour, baking powder, and baking soda. Whisk the eggs until frothy and pale yellow. Stir together sugar, orange juice, and vanilla. Slowly add the sugar mixture to the eggs, beating all the while. Add the butter last, and beat vigorously until mixture is fluffy. Add the flour mixture to the egg mixture and beat gently until a dough mass begins to form. Knead, adding more flour if necessary, until dough is smooth, about 10 minutes. Let dough rest. Combine water, sugar, and honey in a large saucepan, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Divide the dough into three equal balls and roll one at a time, into a thin sheet. Cut each sheet into strips 1 1/2 - 2 inches (4 - 5 cm) long. Cover the strips with a towel. In a deep heavy pot, heat 4-5 inches of pure, light olive oil. When the oil reaches 360F (182C), add the dough strips, one or a few at a time, twirling on one end of a long fork to form rosettes or letting them fry free-form. Fry them for only a few seconds and remove with either a slotted spoon or tongs. Drain on paper towels and cool on wire racks. Dip in warm syrup and sprinkle generously with nuts and cinnamon or sesame seeds, or dust with sifted confectioners' sugar.



White Eggplants

Honey



Chocolate

White Eggplant

White eggplant, a characteristic summer vegetable on Santorini, takes its cue here from the sweet eggplant preserves that are traditional all over Greece. It marries well with chocolate an syrup, as this unusual, modern dessert illustrates.

Chocolate

While Greece is not one of the world's premiere chocolate producers, there are several Greek chocolate companies, and chocolate has certainly been adapted in pastry both traditional and contemporary.

**Honey**

Honey, some of the best of which is produced in the Greek islands, is used in many different kinds of sweets and in traditional syrups.

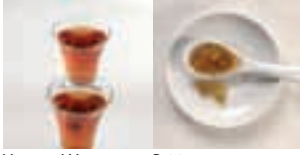
4 servings, 1 recipe for chocolate mousse, 1 1/2 cups sugar, 1/2 cup Greek honey, 1 cup corn syrup, 3 cups water, 4 small white eggplants

Have chocolate mousse ready.

Trim the stems and base off each eggplant and cut into thick rounds.

Make syrup: Bring sugar, honey corn syrup, and water to a boil. Reduce heat, add the eggplants, and simmer for 20 minutes. Strain well and wipe dry with paper towels.

Layer the candied eggplant with spoonfuls of mousse and serve, drizzled with a little syrup.



Vinsanto Wine

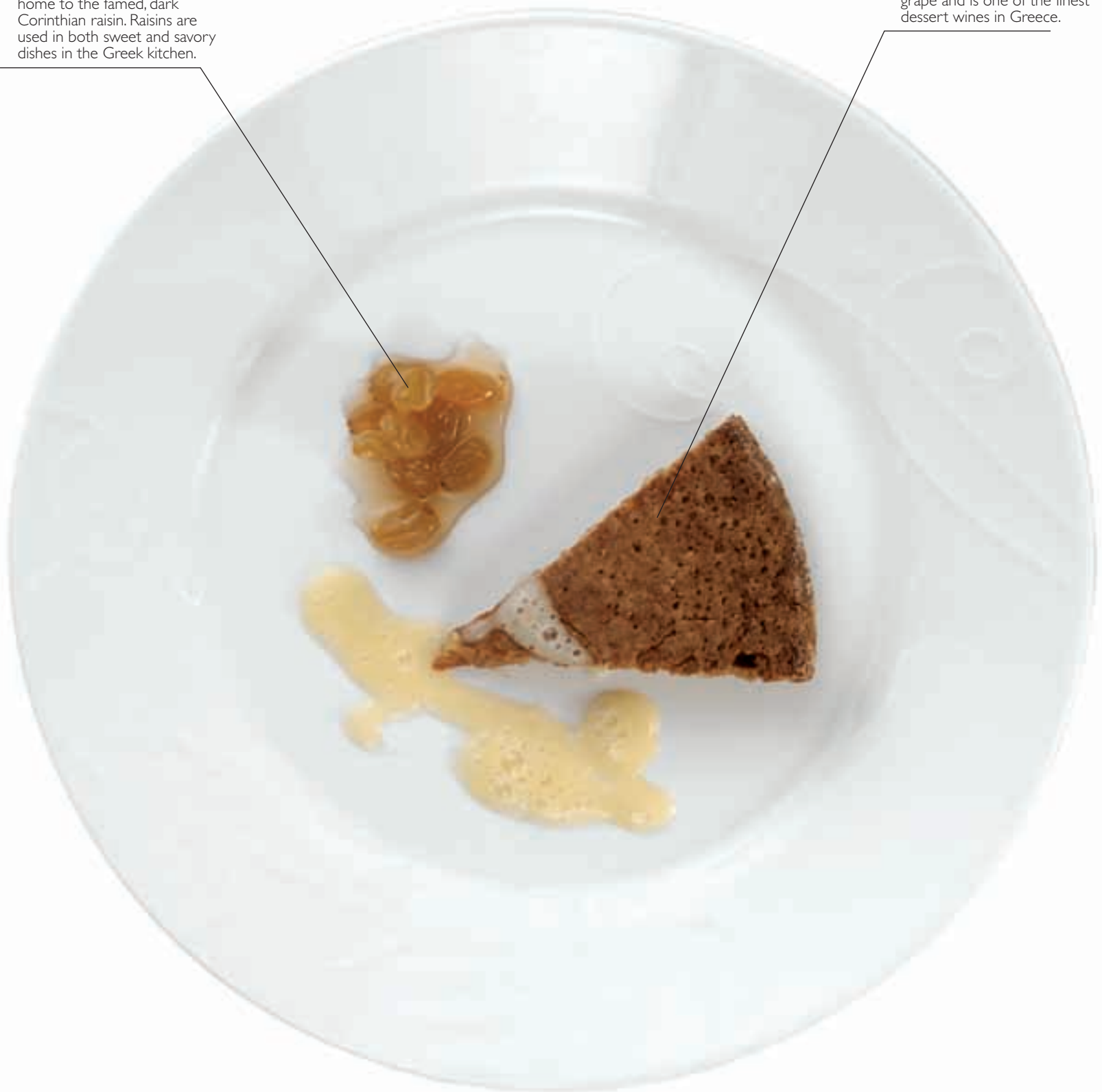
Raisins

Raisins

Greece, with its long viticultural history, also has a long history of raisin production. Crete is especially well known for its raisins, as is the Peloponnese, home to the famed, dark Corinthian raisin. Raisins are used in both sweet and savory dishes in the Greek kitchen.

Vinsanto Wine

A traditional and longstanding wine of Santorini, Vinsanto is the color of honey and as sweet as chocolate. It is made with the island's indigenous Assyrtico grape and is one of the finest dessert wines in Greece.

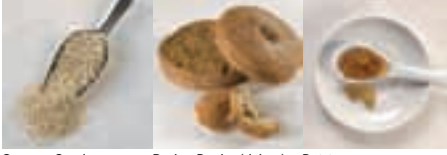


For the pudding: 3 cups milk, 3 cups sugar, 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, 1/2 cup plus 2 tsp. fine semolina, 1 Tbsp. ground cinnamon, 4 large eggs, lightly beaten, **For the sauce:** 6 large egg yolks, 6 Tbsp. sugar, 3/4 cup Santorini Vinsanto wine

In a large pot over low heat, cook the milk, sugar, and butter, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Pour in 1/2 cup of semolina in a slow, steady stream, stirring constantly until the mixture is like a thick cream. Stir in the cinnamon. Remove from the heat and let cool completely. Stir in the eggs, mixing thoroughly.

Preheat the oven to 375F (190C). Butter a medium-size ovenproof glass baking dish and sprinkle the remaining 2 tsp. semolina over the bottom. Pour in the semolina cream and spread evenly with a spatula. Bake the pudding for 1 hour; then reduce the oven temperature to 250F (121C) and continue to bake until the pudding is dense, firm, and lightly golden on top. Remove and score into serving pieces.

Place the egg yolks in a metal bowl or the top of a double boiler over boiling water and whip with a wire whisk until the yolks are liquid. Add the sugar in a slow stream, whisking all the while. Add the wine and continue whisking vigorously until the sauce is thick, about 5 minutes.



Sesame Seeds

Barley Rusks (dakos)

Raisins

Raisins

Greek raisins, dried to wrinkled intensity during the hot, bright months of Greek summer, are some of the most aromatic and flavorful raisins in the world. They have always been an agrarian staple, but there has also been a longstanding commercial raisin production and trade in various parts of the country.

Sesame Seeds

The appearance of sesame seeds in this rustic yet elegant dessert attests to the seminal place the tiny, nutrition-packed seeds once held in the Greek pantry.



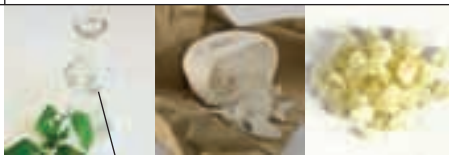
Barley Rusks

Barley rusks come in all shapes and sizes throughout the southern Aegean islands and are put to use in the most imaginative ways, in dishes as varied as fisherman's soups, bread salads, and desserts.

2 cups sesame seeds, **2** Cretan barley rusks, **2 cups** dark or golden Greek raisins, **2-6 Tbsp.** water, as needed

In a large dry skillet over low heat, toast the seeds, stirring constantly, until they are light golden, 2-4 minutes. Remove from the skillet and set aside.

Place half the sesame seeds in a large mortar and pound to a fine crumb with the pestle. Break up the barley rusks and add them, little by little, to the mortar, pounding them until ground. Add the raisins and continue pounding until the mixture is a damp pulp. You may have to add a few tablespoons of water to get the right consistency. You can do this in a food processor, first pulverizing half the toasted sesame seeds, then breaking up the barley rusks and adding them incrementally until ground. Remove the mixture from the processor. Place the raisins in the bowl of the processor and pulse until they are a dense, damp mass. Slowly add the ground-up sesame seeds and barley rusks and process, pulsing on and off, until the whole mixture is mealy. Take a heaping tablespoon at a time, shape the mixture into small balls or little logs. Roll lightly in the remaining sesame seeds and serve.



Orange Blossom Water

Chloro or Anthotyro

Mastiha

Orange Blossom Water

Orange Blossom Water is one of the most delicate of all Greek flavoring agents, used especially in sweet-cheese desserts but also in cakes, cookies, and creams.

Mastiha

The crystal resinous spice known in Greece as Mastiha Chiou is arguably the country's most unique aromatic agent, used for eons for its therapeutic and flavoring properties. It is a common seasoning in sweet cheese pastries as well as breads and baked goods.

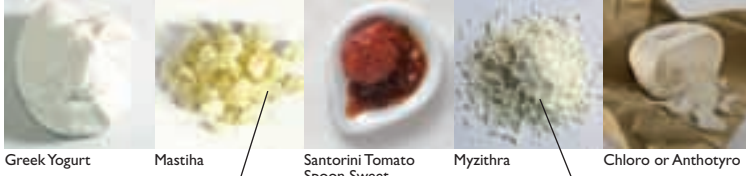
**Chloro or Anthotyro**

Chloro, which means fresh in Greek, is the name given to Santorini's delicious, mild local goat's milk cheese. It is a simple cheese, made for ages untold in the villages and homes of Santorini. It comes in both fresh and dried form.

For the dough: 2-2 1/2 cups sifted all-purpose flour, 1 tsp. baking powder, 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar, 1/4 tsp. salt, 4 Tbsp. butter, 1/4 cup vegetable shortening, 2 eggs, at room temperature, 2 tsp. orange-blossom water, 1-2 Tbsp. milk or water, at room temperature, **For the Filling:** 2 cups unsalted soft Greek cheese, such as chloro or anthotyro, 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar, 1 whole egg, plus 2 egg whites, 1/2 tsp. finely ground mastic, 1 - 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, **G**round cinnamon

In a medium-sized bowl, combine cheese, sugar, whole egg, mastic, and 1 cup flour. Mix thoroughly. In a large bowl and with an electric mixer set on high speed, beat egg whites until stiff but not dry and quickly but gently fold cheese mixture into egg whites. Preheat oven to 350F/180C.

Break off a small piece of dough and roll it into a 4-inch (10 cm) circle. Place a rounded teaspoon of cheese filling in the center of the dough and pinch the edges together to make an ersatz tartlet. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Place melitinia on a buttered baking sheet and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until cheese mixture has solidified and dough is a light golden brown. Remove and cool. Sprinkle melitinia with cinnamon before serving. Store covered in the refrigerator.



Greek Yogurt

Mastiha

Santorini Tomato
Spoon Sweet

Myzithra

Chloro or Anthotyro

Mastiha

Mastiha, the aromatic, musk-like crystal resin of a tree related to the pistachio, is produced exclusively on the island of Chios and goes especially well in cream desserts such as this.

Myzithra

One of the many soft, mild whey cheeses in Greece, myzithra is produced in many places around Greece but some of the best is made on the island of Crete.

**Santorini Tomato Spoon Sweet**

Greeks put up all sorts of seasonal fruits and vegetables in syrup, and the small Santorini tomato makes for one of the country's most unique such preserves.

Greek Yogurt

These days, deliciously thick, strained Greek yogurt needs no introduction; it has conquered markets the world over; one of our grand culinary success stories, thanks to its excellent, uniquely tart flavor and smooth, creamy texture.

1 envelope unflavored powdered gelatin, 3 Tbsp. ice water, 1 cup heavy cream, 2 tsp. powdered Mastiha, orange blossom or rose water, or vanilla, 1 cup soft myzithra cheese, 1 cup strained Greek yogurt, 6-12 Tbsp. Santorini tomato spoon sweet

Dissolve the gelatin in a small bowl with the ice water.

Heat the cream and Mastiha, infused water, or vanilla together. Do not boil. Remove from heat and stir in softened gelatin until completely dissolved.

Beat the myzithra or chloro and yogurt together until smooth and add to the warm cream. Pour the mixture into six or eight lightly oiled ramekins and refrigerate for 3-4 hours until set. You may also set in a large bowl and spoon to serve.

To serve: Remove cream from ramekins and place on a serving plate. Spoon 1-2 tablespoons of the tomato spoon sweet around each.





Kerasma

Greek Mediterranean
Gastronomy

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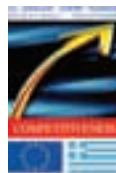
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