



Food from the heart of Cyprus

Enjoy...Kali Orexi...



Food from the heart of Cyprus



Gazing back through the centuries, one can explore Cyprus' rich history in gastronomy with indigenous products and unique recipes that cannot be found anywhere else. Cyprus has a variety of authentic recipes for food and a variety of wines among which the most ancient wine in the world; Commandaria! Adding to the above, Cypriot cuisine, being a Mediterranean one, is one of the healthiest in spite of the fullness in flavours.

The Cyprus Tourism Organisation in its attempt to further promote Cypriot gastronomy has created this exceptional booklet with traditional recipes as well as variations with a more gourmet essence. Of course, this would have not been possible without the invaluable contribution of Tonia Buxton and her team, Vanessa Courtier and Wendy Veale.

Enjoy your ride through Cyprus' Flavours!





I am delighted to have been asked by the Cyprus Tourism Organisation to write a gastronomy booklet to showcase the finest cuisine in the world...that of Cyprus.

I have reason, of course, to be a little biased, but I do truly believe that this island is the prized jewel of the Mediterranean. Steeped in a prolific culinary history Cyprus has been gifted with its location, wonderful climate and rich fertile land to grow in culinary delight!

On the crossroads between Europe and the Middle East, along the path of the spice trading routes to China and India, the Cypriot cook has had the world's finest ingredients at her fingertips.

I have many wonderful memories about growing up in a Cypriot household and particularly revolving around food, cooking with my mother and grandmother, sharing food with friends and family. Anything of any importance in Cyprus always happens around food!

Thanks to our bygone sea-faring explorers, wise ancient vintners, now today's thriving state-of-the-art wineries, traditional farmers working alongside exciting new artisan producers, talented chefs...Cyprus from ancient to modern day has evolved without losing its very essence and spirit.

This is where my love of our cuisine was born and I am proud to be able to share my passion with you. What is just wonderful about Cypriot cuisine is that whilst a gastronomic delight to eat, its styles and flavours, using quality fresh, local ingredients are so very simple and delicious.

I hope you will enjoy this booklet...as a keepsake of your visit. Once back home caught up in daily life, these recipes will be a sunny reminder of when time stood still yet moved on, food revolving around festivals, family, friends....

Recipes from the heart of Cyprus for you,

Filakia
Tonia x



✿ Gastronomic delights to try when in Cyprus

From the scorching heat of the coast to the cooler, sometimes snowy mountains, Cyprus's diverse landscape yields an amazing wealth of ingredients, culinary treats and exotic flavours.

● **Halloumi** is a wonderful cheese made from a mix of goat and cow's milk. You cannot visit Cyprus without tasting this cheese. Its texture is unique and delicious, lending itself to both sweet and savoury accompaniments. Try it with olives and village bread or with a refreshing slice of watermelon. It is magic for cooking as it holds its shape and does not melt, so ideal for barbecuing over hot coals.



● **Anari cheese** is made from the whey produced when making *Halloumi*. Mild in flavour with a soft creamy texture and low in fat, it is the perfect addition to any healthy diet as part of breakfast or a snack. Available either salted or unsalted, *Anari* is delicious eaten freshly made. When hung to dry and harden it is excellent grated onto pasta or salads.



● **Carob** *Ceratonia siliqua*
The carob tree has been cultivated in Cyprus for almost 2,000 years.

● **Carob honey** is extracted from the ground pulp of the carob.

● **Pastelaki** is a nut brittle originating from Ancient Greece. The great historian Herodotus made reference proclaimed it a wonderful tonic as well as a sweet delicacy. Made using locally grown peanuts and almonds with select sesame seeds, this snack is deliciously crisp, healthy and nutritious.



● **Lountza (Cured meat)**: is fresh pork fillet which has been matured in a mixture of village wine and coriander seeds for about 15 days, followed by a curing process of 20 days. It is one of the main ingredients in our national Cypriot sandwich, halloumi and lountza. Wonderful cubed as part of a meze platter.

● **Loukanika**, our village sausages are made from selected fresh pork meat, wine, salt and spices. The meat is minced, marinated with coriander seeds, black pepper and salt, then left to mature in dry red wine for 7-15 days to absorb all the flavours. Delicious barbecued or fried, and enjoy with grilled halloumi topped with a fried egg for a great Cypriot breakfast.

● **Cypriot coffee** is wonderfully strong and aromatic. Served in demitasse cups, it is taken *sketo*, no sugar, *metrio*, one sugar or *gliko*, very sweet! The sign of a good cup of coffee is the *kaimaki* its creamy frothy top layer. You should never drink to the bottom of the small cup else you will end up with a mouthful of bitter coffee pulp!



● **Loukoumi** is a very sweet, delicious delight made from many popular flavours including rose, lemon, mastic and bergamot; sometimes pistachio and almonds are added. The best varieties are produced without the need for additives, using only the finest ingredients to set it.



● **Shoushoukos** is a grape-based gastronomic delight made by threading nuts...usually whole almonds or walnut halves...onto string, then repetitively dipping into a liquid jelly made of grape must often flavoured with a little rosewater. If you are in Cyprus toward the end of the summer during the grape harvest, you will catch sight of strings of shoushouko hanging out to dry from many a village veranda. Thinly sliced, shoushoukos is the perfect accompaniment to a glass of wine or brandy.

● **Glyka tou koutaliou** are sweet preserves served in a tiny spoon as a gesture of hospitality. These spoon sweets are made from unusual fruits and vegetables, like figs, cherries, watermelon peel, walnuts or almond stuffed



baby aubergines. They are often flavoured with cinnamon or pelargonium leaves. A wonderful sweet treat enjoyed with a Cypriot coffee or a glass of cold water.

● **Zivania** is a centuries old local hooch common to all Cypriots. A pure white distillate produced from a blend of grape pomace and local dry wine, it has a distinct taste and aroma. Other than enjoying Zivania as an alcoholic drink, it is also used to treat wounds, massage aching bodies, and is a remedy for colds and toothaches. Warming too as a hot toddy during our cold winter months...

● **Recipe notes:**

Although these recipes are in metric, we Cypriots tend to measure ingredients throughout using a cup or glass of approx. 200ml ...or as my aunts will say, when I revert back to a frustrated North London Cypriot...‘oso sikosi’ which means ‘as much as it will take’ or ‘sto mati’ roughly translating to ‘use your eyes to see if it looks ok!’ For electric fan ovens reduce the temperature by 20°C or refer to the manufacturer’s manual. Use level tablespoons unless stated. Herbs are fresh, organic vegetables peeled unless stated. Medium sized eggs are free-range. Season with sea salt, freshly ground black pepper. When frying, do not leave the pan unattended.





Traditional Cyprus

Elderly ladies sitting on their verandas embroidering Lefkara lace, men gathered around tables at the local café playing backgammon; peep into a courtyard, watch, listen to ladies sitting, rolling both their tongues and Koupepia, stuffed vine leaves for the family dinner, inhale the waft of bread baking.

The beautiful landscape of our sea, ancient ruins, donkeys carrying their wares up craggy mountain paths, all this can still be seen in Cyprus today. But most traditional and long-lasting of all is the warmth and hospitality of our people.





Meze

Meze is part of our daily life...a traditional way to enjoy our favourite food, slowing down the pace of fast food in a modern world. Meze can be a snack, even breakfast for some hardy locals, or the start of a family celebration meal. Wonderful to graze and nibble on with drinks as the sun goes down, meze is a selection of tasty little dishes, spicy or savoury, cooked or raw, hot or cold but always best enjoyed when sharing, chatting and embracing the warmth of Cypriot life. If serving meze for 4 people I suggest 5 or 6 of your favourites such as houmous or tahini dip, grilled halloumi, olives, ravioli, kalamari, beans, aubergine, koupepia, keftedes accompanied with village bread or warm pitta... so *kopiaste, ke kali orexi*, enjoy our very social way of eating....

● **To make Tahini dip** use an electric blender to blitz together 2 heaped tbsps tahini paste, 4 -5 cloves garlic, juice 2-3 lemons, 4-5 tbsps olive oil.

Blend in just enough cold water to form a consistency similar to thick pouring cream.

Season with salt, cover and chill well. When ready to serve sprinkle with parsley, sometimes paprika and drizzle with olive oil.

● **For Talattouri**, coarsely grate or finely chop a firm cucumber into a bowl. Leave to stand for a short while then blot up or drain away any excess water.

Finely chop several plump garlic cloves, add to the cucumber then crumble in a handful of your sweet pungent dried mint or use freshly chopped mint if preferred.

Now fold in some thick Greek yoghurt to make the perfect consistency and finish with a drizzle of olive oil and some chopped mint to garnish.

● **For a quick way to prepare Elies Tsakistes**, rinse and pat dry some cured Greek green olives, lightly crush them to allow flavours to seep in.

Place in bowl, squeeze on some lemon juice, add quartered lemon slices, a generous sprinkling of crushed coriander seeds, lots of garlic slithers, enough olive oil to lightly dress.

Fold together, cover and leave at room temperature ideally for a couple of hours to marinate before enjoying. Covered and refrigerated, they will keep for at least 3 months, tasting better as the flavours develop.

● **For the Koupepia** or cigar-shaped stuffed vine leaves, delicacies are served as part of a meze at many of our wedding feasts.

2-3 tbsps olive oil

2 onions, finely chopped

1 kg coarsely minced pork

400g can of chopped tomatoes

½ bunch parsley, finely chopped

a handful of dried Cypriot mint, crumbled

1 tsp ground cinnamon

200g pudding rice

salt and pepper to taste

1 bunch of fresh vine leaves, destalked

(or use canned leaves in brine, drained)

juice of 1 lemon

Heat the olive oil in a pan, add the onions and cook gently to soften but not brown. Crumble in the pork, cook gently for 5 minutes or until the pork has coloured. Stir in the tomatoes, parsley, mint, cinnamon and rice. Season well and cook for a few minutes more.

Have ready a stack of the vine leaves, vein side up, the pork mixture and a shallow circular ovenproof dish ready to put the dolmades in.

To form koupepia place 1 tsp of the filling up from the centre base of the leaf, fold the leaf over the mince from the base then fold in the left and right side of the leaf. Now roll up, not too tightly, to make a little cigar shape.

Continue making until all the koupepia are packed in the dish. Squeeze on the lemon

Clockwise from bottom: Tahini dip, Talattouri, Elies Tsakistes

juice and cover with any remaining vine leaves, like a blanket. Place an inverted plate on top of the vine leaves. Carefully pour boiling water in around the edge of the dish to come up to just touch the plate. Cover with foil, cook in a preheated oven 200°C /Gas 6 for 30 minutes, then reduce the heat to 180°C/ Gas 4 and cook for a further 30 minutes. Serve warm or cold.

● **For the fried Kalamari** This is such a simple dish, popular as part of a meze. Whilst much of our food can be prepared in advance I strongly recommend this has to be freshly cooked, eaten crisp and hot with lashings of lemon juice and tahini dip.

4 small kalamari

1 egg, beaten
plain flour seasoned with salt and pepper,
for dusting
groundnut oil for deep frying

Wash the kalamari, slice the body into rings, the final ring attached to the tentacles. Dip into egg then toss into the flour. Lightly shake off surplus flour.

Pour enough oil into a heavy based deep saucepan to fill to $\frac{1}{3}$. Heat until hot. Test by dropping a cube of day-old bread into the oil, it will float to the surface and brown in seconds if the oil is ready. Now carefully fry the kalamari, a few at a time, for around 3-4 minutes or until crispy golden. Remove with a slotted spoon or long tongs, transferring onto kitchen towel to drain whilst you cook the remaining kalamari. Wonderful!

● **For the Keftedes** Delicious, big and oval served with lemon wedges for squeezing, yogurt and a Greek salad. Or as part of a meze make small circular balls and serve with hummous, pitta bread, olives, capers too...

1 kg coarsely minced pork or use 50/50
pork and beef

1 kg potatoes, grated

2 large onions, finely chopped

$\frac{1}{4}$ loaf stale bread, made into fine
breadcrumbs

1 large bunch flat leaf parsley, finely
chopped

1 small bunch fresh mint leaves, finely
chopped

3 eggs, beaten

1 tsp ground cinnamon

Olive oil or groundnut oil, for frying

In a large bowl mix together all the ingredients. Flatten the mix into the bowl then pour on a thin film of oil. Cover and chill for 30 minutes.

Refer to previous recipe for heating up oil. Scoop up some meat mixture and use both hands to shape as required. A bowl of cold water nearby to dip your hands into stops them from getting sticky. Carefully slide a few Keftedes at a time in the hot oil to cook.

For larger oval Keftedes fry for around 10 minutes on each side, for meze size, around 5 minutes or until golden brown. Drain onto crumpled kitchen towel. Serve hot, at room temperature or chilled, it makes no difference, they are delicious however!

Olives, Tahini, Talattouri: Rosé; Mavro & Grenache Linos Winery, Lemosos. White; Vouni Panayias, Spouritiko, Vouni Panayias Winery, Panayia, Pafos. **Koupepia: White;** Keo- Xynisteri, Mallia Winery, Lemosos **Keftedes: Red;** Organic Red, Mavro & Cabernet Sauvignon, Lambouri Winery, Kato Platres, Lemosos. **Kalamari: White;** Ayioklima, Xynisteri, Constantinou Winery, Pera Pedi, Lemosos.

Clockwise from topleft: Koupepia, Kalamari, Keftedes



✿ Halloumi ravioli

In Cyprus ravioli is very much a Lenten dish made in kitchens around Carnival week. It is delicious scattered with crumbled dried Greek mint, enjoyed as part of a meze or supper.

Makes approx. 24

Dough

425g plain flour and extra for dusting

pinch of salt

Filling

**3 dry halloumi cheeses (around 500g),
grated**

2 tbsp dried Greek mint

3 eggs, beaten

● Sift the flour and salt into a large bowl or food processor. Work in just enough warm water to form a dough. Turn out onto a lightly floured board, knead well until smooth and elastic. Leave to rest for 20 minutes.

● Set aside 2 tbsp grated halloumi and mint for garnishing. Mix the remaining ingredients for the filling adding just enough beaten egg to bind. Divide the dough into 4. Roll each out on a floured board into a long strip about 8cm wide.

● Place 1 tsp of filling every 4cm along the length of each strip, slightly off centre. Brush water along the edges of the dough, fold and seal well. Cut the filled dough into crescent shapes. Cypriot women use the rim of a small wine glass to stamp out this shape. Use fork prongs to crimp and seal the edges of the ravioli.

● Bring a large saucepan of lightly salted water to a rolling boil. Cook the ravioli, in batches, for around 10 minutes or until the crescents float up to the surface, a sign that the dough is cooked through. Remove, draining thoroughly with a slotted spoon.

● Serve bowls of ravioli with a spoonful of the starchy cooking water to moisten. Sprinkle with the reserved halloumi and mint to garnish.

✿ **White:** *Melapsopodi, Sauvignon Blanc, Tsalapatis Winery, Polemi, Pafos*



✿ Fasolaki yiahni

The Mediterranean diet uses lots of pulses and beans, ideal during Fasting. This stew is delicious with feta cheese crumbled in just before serving. Good also as part of a meze with a selection of little tasting dishes. There is a variation below with lamb too.

Serves 4-6

3 tbsp olive oil

1 large onion, chopped

1 stalk celery, chopped

2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes

400g can butter beans, drained

1kg fresh green beans, trimmed

1 tbsp freshly chopped parsley

a good pinch each ground cinnamon,
sugar, salt and pepper

- Heat the oil in a large pan, lightly fry the onion and celery until softened. Stir in the tomatoes, butter beans, fresh beans, parsley and seasoning. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until thickened and the beans are tender. Adjust the seasoning to taste, then ladle into bowls. Serve with village bread and tahini dip or thick yoghurt.

To make into a lamb stew add 1kg boneless lamb shoulder, cut into 5cm chunks to the onion and celery, stir and cook until browned then add the tomatoes. Cover and simmer for 1 hour before stirring in the rest of the ingredients.

✿ **Rosé:** Aes Ambelis, Lefkada and Maratheftiko, Aes Ambelis Winery, Kalo Chorio Orinis, Lefkosia.





Village pasta

My 'take' on a truly delicious fresh pasta dish. If you do not have any *sklilitzi* or river reeds to form this pasta once back at home you might want to buy similar ready prepared 'Trofie' shaped pasta.

Serves 4-6

600g village flour (plain flour)
400g fine semolina
200ml warm water
1 pinch salt
1 tbsp olive oil

● Work everything together, kneading smooth to a firm pliable dough. Cover and leave to rest for 2 hours. Take a river reed and roll pinches of pasta around it to form into the desired little shapes.

For the Pesto anari

leaves from 1 big bunch of fresh basil
50g pine nuts
125ml olive oil
100g dry anari cheese, grated

● Mix everything in the blender.

For the zucchini or courgette sauce

2 zucchini or courgettes, around 300g,
cut into fine strips
3 tbsp olive oil
pinch of salt
leaves from ¼ bunch of fresh mint


To finish

1 zucchini or courgette, cut into matchsticks
1 tbsp olive oil
shavings of anari cheese

● Plunge the zucchini into boiling water for 1 minute to cook. Drain thoroughly then blend with the remaining ingredients to make a smooth sauce.

● Cook the pasta in boiling water for 10-12 minutes. Fry strips of raw zucchini in the olive oil then add the zucchini sauce. Simmer for a few minutes then toss in the pasta. Remove from the heat, stir in the pesto and serve garnished with the anari cheese shavings..



 **White:** *Ayios Chrysostomos, Xynisteri, Ezouza Winery, Pafos*

✿ Makaronia touournou

This dish is a family favourite, delicious eaten hot or cold. All it needs is a fresh village salad and a hearty Cypriot appetite.

Serves 8

500g makaroni (ideally no.1 long tubes)

1kg minced pork or beef

4 tbsp olive oil

3 onions, finely chopped

a bunch of flat leaf parsley, chopped

400g can chopped tomatoes, optional

1tsp ground cinnamon

salt and pepper to taste

For the sauce

2 litres fresh milk

3 eggs, beaten

3 tbsp cornflour

100g grated halloumi or kefalotiri cheese

● Bring a large pan of lightly salted water to the boil. Add the pasta and cook until just 'al dente' then drain thoroughly and toss with 1 tbsp olive oil.

● In another pan heat 3tbsp of olive oil and gently cook the onions until translucent. Add the minced meat and parsley, cook until browned and crumbly. Season with salt and cinnamon to taste. If using tomatoes, add at this stage.

● Make the sauce by heating $\frac{3}{4}$ of the milk in a pan. Mix the remaining milk with the cornflour in a large bowl to make a paste. Beat in the eggs. Now briskly beat in some of the hot milk then add this egg mixture back into the remaining hot milk. Heat, stirring all the time until the sauce becomes smooth and thickened.

● Assemble the *makaronia touournou*. First pour a thin layer of sauce in the base of a large rectangle ovenproof dish, then cover with half of the pasta. Now spread on the meat mixture, followed by another layer of pasta. Finally cover with the remaining cheese sauce and top with grated cheese.

● Cook in a preheated oven at 180°C/Gas4 for 40–45 minutes or until golden brown on top. Leave to cool a little before cutting into generous square portions.

✿ *Rosé: Olympos, Cabernet Sauvignon, Olympus Winery, Lemesos.*




Stifado

Beef stew Cypriot style, wonderfully robust. This is good served with cracked wheat, *pourgouri*, and a crisp green salad. The name *Stifado* refers to any meat that has been cooked with shallots and aniseed.

Serves 6-8

100ml olive oil
1.5 kg lean beef, cubed
1.5 kg shallots, peeled
4 cloves garlic, chopped
5 tbsp red wine vinegar
3 pieces cinnamon bark
2 bay leaves
1 tsp whole cloves
1 ½ tsp aniseed or fennel seeds or
2 whole star anise
3 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
salt and pepper

- Heat the olive oil in a large heavy based pan and brown the cubed meat in batches. Then add the shallots, cooking gently to turn golden and caramelise. Now add the garlic, vinegar, spices and tomatoes. Season well.
- Stir in a 200ml glass of water. Cover tightly and simmer for 1 ½ -2 hours or until the meat is tender and the sauce richly thickened.

 *Red: Tsangarides, Mataro, Tsangarides Winery, LEMONA, Pafos.*



Home-produced pork marinated with aromatic coriander seeds and red wine...this is traditionally served with steamed cracked wheat we call *pourgouri*. Simplicity at its best!



Serves 6

For the *Afelia*

1kg (shoulder) pork, cubed

4 tbsp olive oil

½ bottle or 350ml Cypriot red wine
(if possible marinate from the night before)

3 tbsp coriander seeds, crushed

For the *pourgouri*

2 tbsp olive oil

1 large onion, chopped

1 nest dried vermicelli or angel hair pasta

200g cracked wheat or *pourgouri*

2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes,
optional

salt and freshly ground black pepper

● In a large pan, heat the oil then fry the pork in batches until browned all over. Add the wine, let it bubble for a minute, add the coriander seeds and a pinch of salt.

● Part-cover the pan and gently simmer for 30 minutes or until the pork is just tender. Do not over-cook or allow it to dry out, add a splash more wine, if necessary. As the sauce reduces it will become intensely rich.

● For the *pourgouri*, heat the olive oil in a saucepan and cook the onion until softened but not coloured. Crush the vermicelli into the pan, add some seasoning then the cracked wheat.

● Add 400ml of hot water, stirring over a low heat for 2-3 minutes or until all the water has been absorbed. If using tomatoes, stir in at this point. Adjust the seasoning, to taste.

● For the *pourgouri*, heat the olive oil in a saucepan and cook the onion until softened but not coloured. Crush the vermicelli into the pan, add some seasoning then the cracked wheat.

● Add 400ml of hot water, stirring over a low heat for 2-3 minutes or until all the water has been absorbed. If using tomatoes, stir in at this point. Adjust the seasoning, to taste.

● Remove the pan from the heat, cover with a clean tea towel and let it stand for 10 minutes to allow the *pourgouri* to finish cooking to perfection.

● Ladle the pork *Afelia* onto a bed of steaming *pourgouri*. This is good topped with a dollop of thick Greek yogurt.

✱ **Red:** *Gerani, Maratheftiko, Kalamos Winery, Amargeti, Pafos*



✿ At the bakery

When you first walk into a Cypriot bakery you will be overwhelmed with the amazing smell of freshly baked bread neatly lined up, rack after rack of huge village loaves. There is everything you could ever desire let alone eat...try sweet *koulouraki* swirls with a sesame top, perfect for dunking into a bitter Cypriot coffee, or savoury sticks which are great dipped into olive oil.

Glass cabinets filled with desserts and cakes, *baklavas*...some with almonds some with pistachios, delicious *galaktoboureka*...are deep filled custard pies wrapped in crisp filo pastry, all scented with rose water or orange blossom water.

There is so much to see and taste in a Cypriot bakery, it is worth making time for a visit. Aside from bread and cakes, you will find mince and parsley filled *koupes* or halloumi filled *bourekia*...you won't walk out empty handed!



Baklava

Syrup-drenched pastries like Baklava are so Greek...sticky, sweet, steeped with flavours I love so much, aromatic rosewater and my favourite of spice, cinnamon. Enjoy with thick yoghurt.

Makes approx. 15-16

For the syrup


- 300g caster sugar
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 3 tbsp rosewater
- 1 piece cinnamon bark

For the Baklava

- 250g filo pastry sheets
- 400g chopped almonds
- 75g caster sugar
- 4 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- 150ml rosewater
- 200ml olive oil

- To make the syrup place all the ingredients in a heavy based saucepan with 200ml water. Then bring to a steady boil over a medium heat for 5 minutes until syrupy. Leave to cool.
- Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas 4. Brush the sides and bottom of a 23cm x 33cm shallow ovenproof dish with a little oil.

- For the filling mix together the almonds, sugar, cinnamon, cloves and rosewater.
- Carefully separate the filo sheets, line half the sheets in the dish, brushing each sheet with the olive oil. Now spread on the filling, cover with the remaining filo, layering and oiling as before, including the top sheet. Score the top to form diamond shaped slices.
- Bake in the middle of the oven for 20-30 minutes. Increase the heat for the last 5 minutes to give the pastry a light golden colour.
- Remove from the oven. Whilst still hot pour the cooled syrup all over the pastry. Leave to stand for at least 1 hour before cutting through and serving.

 **White:** *Vlasides, Xynisteri, Vlasides Winery, Koilani, Lemosos*



✿ Bourekia me Anari

Your house will fill with the heady scent of cinnamon and rosewater when cooking these wonderfully delicious sweet cheese puffs...the essence of Cyprus. If you cannot purchase anari then the best substitution is unsalted ricotta cheese.

Makes approx. 24

1kg plain flour
200ml groundnut oil plus extra for frying
pinch of salt

For the filling

800g unsalted anari cheese
1 heaped tsp ground cinnamon
3 tsp caster sugar or to taste
rosewater
icing sugar

● *For the dough* mix together the flour, oil and salt. Work in enough cold water, kneading well, until you have soft pliable dough. Wrap in cling film and chill for 30 minutes to allow the dough to relax.

● *For the filling* lightly mash the anari cheese in a bowl. Add the cinnamon and enough rosewater to make a smooth but spoonable mixture. Stir in sugar, to taste.

● *To make the Bourekia* roll the dough out onto a floured surface, nicely thin yet strong enough to support the cheese.



● Use a wine glass to stamp out rounds of pastry. Brush a little water around the edges.



● Place 1 tsp of filling onto each circle.



● Fold the dough over the mixture, pressing to seal along the edge. Use a fork to crimp and seal securely.

● Deep-fry the Bourekia in batches. First make sure the oil is hot enough by dropping in a small piece of dough; if it bubbles and turns golden brown instantly the oil is ready. Carefully slide a few Bourekia into the hot oil, cooking until golden on all sides. Remove from oil onto crumpled kitchen towel to drain.

● When cool, arrange on a pretty serving dish dusting liberally with icing sugar and cinnamon. They taste wonderful hot or cold









Modern Cyprus

Jasmine-scented nights, street-lined cafés, bars, young people pouring out, laughing, chatting, texting. Lush green golf courses, gourmet restaurants, minimalist interiors, beach bars, banana plantations, fashion events, art exhibitions.

Modern wineries, jewellery studios...Cyprus is erupting with new young talent. Swirl a glass of Commandaria over rocky ice, take in the wonderful aroma of grilled halloumi wafting through the balmy air, listen to the word *Kopiaste* buzzing all around.



✿ Fresh salad with carob dressing, pomegranate and shaved kefalotiri

Do try the unusual flavour of carob as a salad dressing, deliciously sweet with the likes of peppery fresh rocket, or your favourite mixed leaves...I like to then add crunchy pomegranate seeds and Cypriot cheese for a bowlful of vibrant colours and flavours.

For the dressing

1tbsp carob syrup

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp apple cider vinegar

½ tsp wholegrain mustard

1 garlic clove, finely chopped or grated

● Place all the dressing ingredients in a small screw top jam jar and shake to form the dressing. Keep refrigerated until required.

● For the salad, mix your freshly picked leaves and herbs in a large bowl, scatter on shavings of kefalotiri cheese and fresh pomegranate seeds and toss altogether with a good drizzle of the dressing.

✿ **Red:** *Methi, Cabernet Sauvignon, Vasilikon Winery, Kathikas, Pafos*

✿ Carob



Known as Cyprus's Black Gold, *Ceratonia siliqua* or the carob tree has been cultivated in Cyprus for over 2,000 years and was one of the islands most fruitful exports. It is well known that Cypriot carob is the best in the world. Whilst an acquired taste to many, the syrup is simply delicious so do try it drizzled over vanilla ice cream, as a salad dressing or even on your morning porridge.





✿ Warm halloumi and peach salad

Traditional meets Modern. This delicious salad is a marriage made in heaven, salty halloumi, sweet honey and sun-ripened fruit. Enjoy as a meze or main meal.

Serves 6 as a meze or 2 as a main

3 ripe but firm peaches, halved and stoned

250g block halloumi cheese

2 tbsp olive oil

3 red chicory, root intact, quartered lengthways

1 bunch salad onions, trimmed, cut into 2cm lengths

For the dressing

1 red chilli, deseeded, finely chopped

½ large bunch fresh coriander, leaves and stalks roughly chopped

5 tbsp white wine vinegar

3 tbsp clear honey

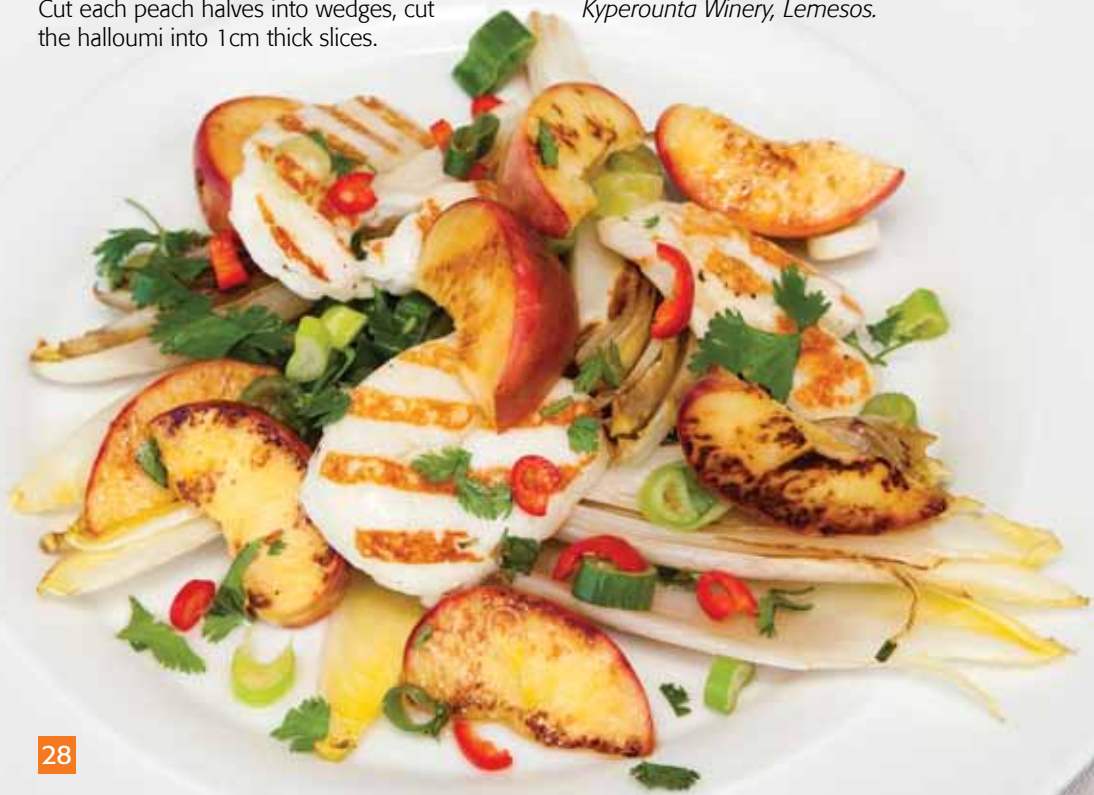
● Make the dressing by mixing everything together in a small bowl. Cover and set aside. Cut each peach halves into wedges, cut the halloumi into 1cm thick slices.

● Heat half the oil in a large frying pan. Fry the cheese for 3-4 minutes on each side or until golden brown and almost crusty. Remove from the pan and keep warm.

● Add the chicory and onions to the hot pan, stir-fry until slightly wilted and coloured. Transfer onto absorbent kitchen towel.

● Heat the remaining oil. Add the peach wedges and fry for a minute or two, until softened, lightly coloured but still retaining its shape. Combine all the ingredients together then pour on the dressing. Spoon onto individual plates, sharing out fairly!

✿ **White:** *Kyperounta, Chardonnay, Kyperounta Winery, Lemesos.*





☀ Commandaria mushrooms

A very modern take using our historic wine. Very little else is needed other than time to savour the rich flavours and maybe chunks of bread to mop up the delicious sauce.

Serves 6-8 as a meze

500g white button mushrooms

75g unsalted butter

200ml Commandaria

1 tbsp demerara sugar

3 sprigs fresh rosemary

salt and freshly cracked black pepper

● Melt the butter in a deep frying pan and toss in the mushrooms cooking to soften for a few minutes.

● Scoop out the mushrooms, now add all the remaining ingredients and allow to bubble, stirring occasionally for 5 minutes or so. The sauce will start to caramelize and thicken. At this point return the mushrooms to the pan to soak up the flavours before serving. Drizzle over any remaining sauce and garnish with sprigs of rosemary.

☀ **White:** *Makkas, Chardonnay, Makkas Winery, Statos-Ayios Fotios, Pafos.*



☀ Commandaria, the wine of Kings

This sweet wine is steeped in a rich history dating back to the time of the Ancient Greeks. In 800BC, poet Hesiod first described a dried grape wine from Cyprus as 'Cypriot Manna'. In the 11th century, during the Crusades, this was the same wine Richard the Lion Heart favoured, declaring it at his wedding as "the wine of kings and the king of wines".

Commandaria is the oldest 'appellation d'origine' wine in the world. Made from the indigenous Mavro and Xynisteri grape varieties, it spends a minimum of two years in oak barrels. To be called Commandaria it has to be produced from grapes grown in the fourteen villages within the perimeter of the Commandaria region.

There are now other Cypriot sweet wines produced based on the foundations of Commandaria but with a more contemporary feel. Anama, Agia Mavri and Menargos winery are to name but a few.





✿ Fish

It is so worth getting up early to wander down to the local harbour, taking in the fresh morning air and the colourful sight of the little fishing boats returning with their fresh haul, their livelihood.

We are fortunate - our seas are rich with fish, so many to choose from...sparkling little whitebait to then dust in flour and deep fry, and delicious red mullet, vibrant in colour, so sweet simply cooked in olive oil. We are lucky enough to have great catches of sea bream and sea bass – so fresh and flavoursome that nothing more is needed than a hot grill to cook and an emulsion of olive oil and freshly squeezed lemon to dress.

Catch sight too of the weathered fisherman, deftly massaging and beating an octopus against the rocks or quayside to tenderize it before delivering to a local restaurant to be grilled or cooked in a red wine stew.

Early summer is the time for schools of tuna to pass by through our warm Mediterranean waters. The local tavernas will chalk up this popular catch on the 'specials' board whilst chefs at the growing number of sushi bars will work their artistic skills to present a modern way with fish.

But however you like to eat fish, when in Cyprus one thing is for certain...locally caught fish, simply cooked will be a taste you will always remember but rarely replicate!



✿ Kolokasi with tiger prawns

Kolokasi or Taro is a speciality in Cypriot cuisine, a root vegetable often stewed in tomato sauce with pork. Apparently, Kolokasi was brought to Cyprus by the Romans who would cook it in a sauce of pepper, cumin, rue, vinegar, oil and liquamen which is a fish-based sauce they used as a condiment. Here is a modern take on using Kolokasi....a delicious work of art!

Serves 4

500g kolokasi

6 tbsp olive oil

1 spring onion, chopped

1 tbsp finely chopped parsley

2 firm tomatoes, deseeded and diced

1 tsp coriander seeds

a large pinch of ground cumin

16 fresh tiger prawns, de-veined
juice of 1 lemon

1 tbsp finely chopped coriander
salt and freshly ground black pepper

● Steam or cook the kolokasi for 45 minutes or until just tender. Peel and cut into small cubes. Pan-fry in 2tbsp olive oil until lightly coloured. Transfer to a bowl ...and add the spring onion, parsley, tomato, coriander seeds and cumin, salt and pepper to season.

● Sauté the prawns in the pan with a little extra olive oil as required. Keep warm. Now add the remaining olive oil to the pan with the lemon juice and chopped coriander. Swirl the pan around to blend into a dressing.

● Season and divide the kolokasi salad between four plates, topping each with 4 prawns. Drizzle on the dressing.

✿ *Rosé: Oenanthe, Grenache, Gaia Oinotechniki, Ayios Amvrosios, Lemesos.*



Lamb Kleftiko


A modern twist on this classic dish.

Serves 4

4 x 400g lamb shanks
450ml lamb stock
freshly chopped thyme, oregano and
rosemary plus sprigs for garnish
1 clove garlic, chopped
8 baby carrots, scrubbed
8 new potatoes, halved
200g baby courgettes, thickly sliced
8 fresh asparagus spears, trimmed
8 spring onions, trimmed
8 cherry tomatoes
2 red onions, quartered
150g feta cheese, cubed
olive oil

- Heat 2 tbsp oil in a roasting dish, brown the shanks on all sides. Add stock, herbs and garlic, cover with foil to seal. Cook in a preheated oven 160°C/Gas 2 for 2 hours or until tender.
- Blanch the carrots and potatoes in boiling water for 4-5 minutes. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Drain thoroughly. Blanch the courgette and asparagus for 30 seconds, drain and refresh as before.
- Increase the oven to 200°C/Gas 6, remove foil, scatter in the red onion and roast the shanks for 15 minutes, basting with the jus. Lift the shanks to a warm plate, let the remaining pan juices bubble to reduce to a sauce consistency. Adjust the seasoning.
- Quickly sauté the blanched vegetables in olive oil to colour and complete cooking. Either pan-sear the feta cubes to brown on one side. Divide the vegetables between 4 dishes, add the shank, some juice and garnish with the grilled feta and some sprigs of fresh herb.



 **Red:** *Zambartas, Maratheftiko, Zambartas Winery, Ayios Amvrosios, Lemesos.*

✿ A way with Halloumi

The picture of this wonderful recipe speaks for itself....a very modern, more complex twist on all that we love in Cyprus...so many of our favourite ingredients making an appearance without wishing to out do one for the other...flavoursome lamb, earthy root vegetables, our love of bright, shiny sun-ripened aubergine, tomato and courgette, pumpkin too...fragrant mountain thyme and rosemary, always garlic and olive oil in abundance and some trading influences have sneaked in from our neighbouring Middle Eastern countries...couscous, raisins and cumin.

● For even the most adept of cooks, perhaps a dish you would rather have placed in front of you to masterly disassemble and enjoy rather than attempt to make? Leave this to one of our many top notch chefs working their Cypriot magic!

● But a nice touch which you can easily replicate at home is to use our malleable halloumi cheese as a moist savoury cheese crust for lamb or chicken, pork ..good too topped onto stuffed peppers and tomatoes.

● So...mix together grated halloumi and as much crumbled dried Greek mint as you fancy with enough beaten egg white to bind. Press an even layer over fillet of pork, lamb or chicken breasts, lamb cutlets, and cook to a golden brown crust.

✿ **Red:** *Hadjiantonas, Cabernet Sauvignon, Hadjiantonas Winery, Parekklesia, Lemesos.*



✿ Pears poached in red wine with cloves

Ripe pears yearn to soak up a robust Cypriot wine like Maratheftiko...just delicious! And whilst gently poaching there is an added benefit ...the whole house fills with an amazing aroma of orange, wine and cloves. Serve the pears warm or chilled; they also taste wonderful sliced and offered as part of a cheese plate.

Serves 8

8 firm dessert pears

**2 bottles of quality red wine preferably
Maratheftiko variety.**

350g caster sugar

a good handful of cloves

**2 beetroots, for colour, cut into chunks
pared rind and juice of 1 large orange**

- Peel the pears leaving the stalks on. Pour the wine into a saucepan, stir in the sugar, then add the pears, making sure they are submerged in the wine.
- Add the cloves, beetroot, orange peel and juice. Cover and gently simmer for around 30-40 minutes until the pears are just soft. Use the tip of a sharp knife or skewer to test....poaching time will vary depending on the ripeness of the pear. Use a draining spoon to carefully lift out the pears.

- Bring the red wine to a steady simmer reducing to a syrupy consistency. Strain into a large bowl, cool then add the pears. Cover and chill before serving.

- Enjoy with a dollop of Greek yoghurt, or masticha ice-cream.

✿ **Sweet white:** *Muscat of Alexandria, Nicolaides Winery, Anogyra, Lemesos.*



Cypriot wines

Cyprus was one of the first countries to start producing wine between 5000BC-4000BC. Its wine was legendary throughout the Ancient world. In those days they were unable to seal the clay vessels that transported wines so most early wines were sweet.

Cyprus is one of the few phylloxera-free wine producing countries in the world and because of this, many renowned wines of the world are made from vines brought to Europe from Cyprus after the Crusades. Champagne is said to have originated from a cutting taken from Mount Olympos in Cyprus.

Our long, sunny Mediterranean summer produces beautifully ripened full-flavoured fruit. All types of grapes are grown in Cyprus but for a true Cypriot flavour search out some of our indigenous varieties like *Mavro*, *Maratheftiko*, *Othhalmo* or *Lefkada* for red wines, *Xynisteri* or *Spourtiko* for white wines.

All the wines used in this booklet are award winning winery wines either locally or internationally. Cyprus has many fabulous wines, the suggestions here are just a taster to whet your appetite.



✿ Feta cheese parcels with honey and sesame

Serve these delicious cheese pies as part of a meze or as a starter...they can also be made with unsalted anari cheese which is similar to ricotta cheese...then a delicious dessert we eat with masticha ice-cream.

Makes 4

8 leaves filo pastry

5 tbsp olive oil.

8 tbsp Greek thyme honey

2 tbsp sesame seeds

4 x 100g pieces feta cheese

3 tbsp ouzo

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°C/Gas 4. Place one sheet of filo pastry on a large baking sheet, brush all over with olive oil then lie another sheet directly on top.
- Lay a little slab of feta in the centre of the pastry, drizzle on 1tbsp honey then sprinkle with some sesame seeds.
- Fold over the filo pastry, wrapping the cheese, making a secure parcel. Brush with some more oil. Repeat to make the four parcels now evenly spaced out on the tray. Bake for around 20-30 minutes or until golden.

- Heat together the remaining 4tbsp honey and ouzo with 3 tbsp water in a small pan until just hot. Transfer each cooked parcel onto individual plates, cutting in half then drizzling on the warm honey sauce and a final scattering of sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

- Enjoy with a dollop of Greek yoghurt, or masticha ice-cream.

✿ *White: Argyrides, Chardonnay, Vasa Winery, Lemesos.*



✿ Fig, walnut and Commandaria compote

A match made in Heaven! I enjoy this with a generous spoonful of creamy thick Greek yoghurt – a perfect breakfast to set me up for another busy day.

Serves 6

450g dried or semi-dried figs

175g shelled walnut halves

2tbsp clear Greek honey

2 tsp ground cinnamon

6 tbsp Commandaria sweet wine

● Alternate the figs and walnuts in a 15cm circular baking dish to make a compact single layer.

● Gently heat together the honey and cinnamon in a small pan, just to dissolve. Stir in 150ml water, bring to the boil. Remove from the heat then add the Commandaria.

● Pour the honey syrup evenly over the figs. Cook, uncovered in a preheated oven, 180°C/ Gas 4 for 30-35 minutes or until most of the liquid has been absorbed.

● Leave the figs to cool in the dish then cover and chill until required.



✿ *Sweet Anesperi: Commandaria, Coop Orinis Pitsilias, Kalo Chorio, Lemesos.*



Mahalebi

This is a wonderfully refreshing dessert and goes well with *triantafilo*, our rose-flavoured ice cream. Look out for the Mahalebi vendor selling his wares, walking along the beach or sea front ladling out these heaped little squares topped with icy water.

Serves 8

1.2 litre cold water

200g corn flour

100ml rosewater

To serve

rose cordial


sugar to taste

very cold water, sometimes ice too

● In a pan gently heat all the ingredients together being very careful not to burn the bottom of the pan. Stir all the time until the mixture turns from cloudy white to a transparent glue-like consistency. Very slowly bring to the boil, stirring for approximately 10 minutes.

● Pour into individual saucers, which is the traditional way, or into one big dish to cool and set.

● Cut the Mahalebi into cubes, place a few into a dessert dish, pour over 1 tbsp of rose cordial, sprinkle with sugar and add ice cold water, sometimes crushed ice. Mmm, so refreshing!

 **Sweet Red:** *Anama, Xynisteri and Mavro, The Anama Cellar, Lythrodontas, Lefkosia.*



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