

## 5 Greek Dishes

The **actual** plates cooked in Greek homes

### Bean soup (Fasolada)

#### *INGREDIENTS*

500g. beans of a medium variation (not too large)  
4 cloves of garlic  
3 medium red onions, sliced or trimmed  
3 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced into coins  
150 g. leaf celery, roughly chopped  
300 ml extra virgin olive oil  
1000 g. passata

1. Immerse the beans in a large bowl and leave them to soak overnight.
2. Put all the ingredients in a large cooking pot. Add the extra virgin olive oil and season with salt and white pepper.
3. Cook in medium heat for about 30 minutes. Accompany with feta cheese, smoked herring fillet and slices of bread crisped in the oven.

## **Stuffed Tomatoes (Ntomates Gemistes)**

### *INGREDIENTS*

10 medium size, mature, firm tomatoes  
1 round-shaped aubergine, peeled and grated  
1 eggplant with striped skin, peeled and grated  
2 lean zucchinis, peeled and grated  
2 potatoes cut in moon shaped halves  
200 ml. extra virgin olive oil  
200 g. rice  
2 large yellow onions, trimmed  
1 clove of garlic, bashed  
200 g. of parsley leaves, sliced thinly  
200 g. of chopped peppermint leaves  
500 g. passata

1. Cut and discard the stem of the tomatoes. Using a sharp knife carefully cut the lid of the tomatoes without removing it altogether. Remove the seeds.
2. With a spoon, scoop out the pulp of the tomatoes and put it aside.
3. Dry out the tomatoes turning them upside down on a paper towel.
4. Put the onion rings in a wok adding 4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil. Stir until golden brown.
5. Add the grated vegetables and mix gently.
6. Sprinkle the herbs onto the mixture and add the rice.
7. Put a generous portion of tomato pulp in the mixture and leave for 10 minutes. At first it will be watery but its liquids will slowly cook into a thicker mass.
8. Place the tomatoes on a baking pan and throw in some potato slices.
9. Fill the tomatoes with the contents of the wok. Close each tomato with its lid. Form a layer of passata on each tomato adding some olive oil. Sprinkle with trimmed rusk, white pepper and salt.
10. Cover the baking pan with aluminum foil and bake in a preheated oven, at 180C for an hour. Remove the foil and leave for another 30 minutes.

## **Greek Spinach Pie (Spanakopita)**

### *INGREDIENTS*

1 k. tender spinach leaves, rinsed  
300 ml. and 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil  
6 layered sheets of phyllo dough  
300 g. fresh, green onions, chopped  
200 g. chervil, chopped  
200 g. dill, chopped  
200 g. fennel, chopped  
300 g. feta cheese, crumbled  
200 g. mature Cretan graviera cheese, grated.

1. Put the fresh spinach leaves and 3 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil in a large saucepan and stir firmly with a large fork. When the spinach becomes rather soft and glossy, remove and place on a chopping board. Cut in stripes horizontally and then vertically until you have smallish chunks. Put them in a colander and squeeze to discard its liquids.

1. In a large saucepan put 200 ml. extra virgin olive oil. Add the green onions and stir firmly with a wooden spatula until golden brown.

2. Put the spinach in the pot and stir, occasionally scraping the bottom of the pot to make sure the mixture is evenly cooked.

Continue for 5 minutes and then add the rest of the herbs.

3. Put the mixture in a large bowl and add the crumbled feta and the graviera cheese.

4. Preheat the oven in 180C.

5. Brush olive oil on a square, 30x30 baking pan. Lay one sheet of phyllo dough, spread olive oil on it and fold it in an envelope-like manner, "gluing" its sides. Repeat with two more sheets. Empty the filling onto the sheets and smoothen its surface with a slotted spatula. Seal the filling with 3 more sheets, processed as before. Carve the surface forming square pieces and put in the preheated oven. Bake for about 40 minutes until golden brown.

## Greek moussaka

### INGREDIENTS

5 large, round aubergines

2 firm, multi-purpose potatoes, sliced in round pieces

700 g minced beef (Use a cut like chuck)

1 yellow onion, thinly sliced

1 red onion for a peppery flavor, cut in cubes

1 cinnamon stick

4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

500 g grated mature hard cheese like parmesan

Salt, pepper

For the white bechamel sauce: 1 lt. fresh, full-fat milk, 4 tbsp margarine, 4 tbsp multi-purpose flour.

1. Cut the aubergines lengthways into slices about 3 mm thick. Brush each slice with olive oil and grill for 20 minutes. (Alternatively, you can fry the aubergines in olive oil). Then, place on absorbing kitchen paper or cloth to drain. Sprinkle with salt and set aside.
2. Fry the potato slices in a shallow pan. Remove carefully with a perforated spoon. Place on kitchen paper to drain.
3. Put the onions in about 100 ml olive oil in a large saucepan. Stir them with a wooden spatula until they are golden brown. Place the beef mince in the pan and stir continuously with a large fork until well browned. Add 700 ml of passata and the cinnamon stick. Let it cook for approximately 25 minutes in medium heat.
4. Prepare the white sauce:  
Heat 1 lt. of full-fat milk. Put 4 tbsp of margarine in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. When it melts, add the all-purpose flour and stir gently. It will, at that time, have acquired a relatively dense nature. Add the heated milk gradually. Stir until it thickens and becomes glossy and creamy. Remove from the heat. Add salt and pepper of your choosing.
5. Line the bottom of a 25 cm diameter baking pan with half of the aubergines and the sliced fries. Add your cooked mince after removing the cinnamon stick. Use a slotted ladle to even out the surface. Add the rest of the aubergines and fries. For the top layer, use the bechamel sauce. Smoothen the surface with your ladle and sprinkle it with the grated parmesan cheese.
6. Bake in a preheated oven at 180C until the surface becomes brownish.

## Greek Salad

### INGREDIENTS

2 large red tomatoes cut in moon shaped pieces

1 medium size cucumber

1 red onion, sliced in rings

6-10 brown olives with glossy skin

200 g. feta cheese cut in brick-like portions

A handful of fresh oregano

Green peppers sliced in large rings

Mix all the ingredients in a ceramic bowl. Add 100 ml extra-virgin olive oil. Season with salt and oregano.

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