

Komili



M. Ömür Akkor

KOMİLİ TRAVEL BOOK OF FLAVOURS

WITH ÖMÜR AKKOR





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Komili Travel Book of Flavours with Ömür Akkor

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"A Harvest in Ayvalık"

*I stare after the departing
ship;*

*I can't throw myself into
the sea, the world is
beautiful;*

*There is manhood inside,
I can't cry.*

Orhan Veli Kanık



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*Where is now that
raspberry syrup;
congratulations to those
who know and can find it...
Just a remnant of its name
now; and those Bursa
knives for souvenirs. We
used to take our Bursa
knives as a souvenir
wherever we went. No one
observes that tradition
anymore and that should
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SOURDOUGH
"GÜMÜŞHANE BREAD"



*"The sun is like a turban
on fire on our heads. Lean
earth is ours shoes on our
bare feet. A villager more
dead than his old mule is
next to us, not just next
to us but in our burning
blood..."*

Nazım Hikmet Ran



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CAPITAL OF TURKISH
GASTRONOMY

*“Red handkerchief,
green handkerchief God
bless the hands of those
from Gaziantep”*

*I cannot tell how blessed
those hands are... God
bless all those for all their
efforts for Antep as well as
9 other cities of the world
who are under UNESCO
protection.*



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*It was a delightful trip to
the East which still has
its bearing upon me. It
was cold, just like it is in
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forget the tea I had in
the morning nor the
warm bread baked in the
tandoor or the melting
butter in the bread.*

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*“I feel like the first time
I arrived here some 770
years ago, I always return
here to find peace as I lost
it here. In my palm is the
stone courtyard of Kubad
Abad, Your eyelashes are
the moon rising above the
lake*

And the silent night...

*Waters have risen, it is
springtime,*

*Your shadow on the stairs
leading to the lake from
the stone courtyard,*

Two lost lives,

Black dreams

*And your eyelashes
burning in my palm...”*



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RECIPES

M. ÖMÜR AKKOR

He has graduated from Uludağ University Department of Economics and currently continues studying for his second major at Anadolu University Cultural Heritage and Tourism Department. He is a lecturer at Eastern Mediterranean University Department of Gastronomy on History of Anatolian Cuisine, Ottoman Cuisine and History of Turkish Cuisine.



He is currently a chef and member of a workshop team reviving 4000 year old dishes at Alacahöyük excavations, the oldest excavation in Turkey which have been going on for 105 years. Moreover he is the first and only chef officially working in an excavation of ancient sites in Turkey.

He has traveled to 80 provinces for the last 14 years studying Turkish cuisine and completed the project of “250,000 km for Turkish cuisine”. The project continues as “350,000 km for Turkish cuisine”.

Documentaries;

A documentary titled “Ustalıkla Geçmiş Zaman/Ömür Akkor” has been featured on the TRT Documentary Channel.

TV Programs;

His 240 episode TV cooking shows titled “Komşuda Pişer” and “Keşf-i Lezzet” have been broadcasted on different TRT channels in 5 different languages.

He has directed cooking sessions once a week for the last five seasons for “Deryalı Günler” on Show TV and “Derya’nın Dünyası” on Kanaltürk TV channels.

He made TV programs named “Bademiçi’nde bir Ömür” and “Ömür Akkor’la Hayatın Tadı” for Olay TV channel.

He made the TV show titled “Güzel Bir Yer, Güzel Bir Tat” on Line TV channel.

Published Articles;

He has written more than 200 articles on culinary art and culture published in local and national printed media.

He has written monthly articles on food culture and travel in magazines such as Food in Life, Gourmet&Styling, Yolculuk, Uçuş Noktası, Olay Trend, Dergi Bursa and some local magazines.

Besides...

He is a professional paragliding pilot. He has attended Paragliding World Cup Training camps, Turkish championships and several other competitions. He is the founding captain of Bursa's first paragliding team "Stratus Team" and one of the founders of Bursa Paragliding Association (BUYAP).

He was placed 42nd in the Turkish Cup and 110th in World Cup.

He conducts seminars and courses abroad on "Healthy Food", "Turkish Cuisine", "Culinary Culture" and "Anatolia's Oldest Dishes".



Books by M. Ömür Akkor

Bursa Mutfağı
Selçuklu Mutfağı
Gormand Cookbook Awards Best Culinary History Book in the World 2012
Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Yumurtalı Tarifler
Mutfaktan Güzel Kokular Geliyor
Türkiye'nin ilk braille alfabeli görme engelli yemek kitabı
Best fundraising and charity cook book in the europa 2013
Anadolu'nun Eski Tadı
Sağlıklı Şekersiz Tatlılar
Türk Mutfağından Pratik Tarifler
Alafranga Yumurta Tarifleri
Osmanlı Mutfağı
Ömür Akkor'la Mutlu Tarifler
Ömür Akkor'dan Anadolu Tarifleri
Kahvaltıda Lezzet Pınarı
Komili ile Ramazan Lezzetleri
Anadolu Tarifleri
Kır Çiçeği Sofraları
Erken Dönem İslam Mutfağı

Printed Abroad

Ottoman Cuisine
Early İslamic Art Cuisine
Best Egg Recipes
Healty Dessert
Seljuks Cuisine
Pratical Recipes
Ottoman Cuisine
Recetas de Hueva
Postres Saludables
Les Recettes a Base D'oeufs
Recettes de Dessert Sains
Natrulish Süss
Turkish Kochen
Anatolishe Küche
Gerichte aus der Türkischen und İnternationalen Küche (Alman görme engelliler yemek kitabı)
Sağlıklı Şekersiz Tatlılar (Rusça)
Yumurtalı Tarifler (Rusça)
Rusya Görme engelliler yemek kitabı (Rusça)



PREFACE

It was a big dream and a long journey.

I took me 15 years to cover almost 250,000 km on this journey, which I have started for my travel book visiting 7 regions, 80 provinces and hundreds of counties... My heart was throbbing fast both in the first place I have traveled to as well as in the last. After each trip, I have understood and appreciated the value of Anatolia, my homeland and its people. Anatolia is a never-ending journey, an old tradition and the richest culture in the world. I learned how to eat from a common plate and share my soup, which is and is sometimes hard to swallow; I also learned to be happy and thankful for a glass of tea and sometimes even less.

Of course, this is not the end of the world for me!

Anatolia is boundless when you travel or write about it. My love for this country will never end. But I have collected a couple of thousands of kilometers for you from this 15 year long trip; I hope you will read them with the same excitement I experienced writing them.

Enjoy your journey.

M. Ömür Akkor

April 2016 / Gümüşhane



Photographs

Ali İhsan Öztürk

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Halil Ülker

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Mustafa Büyükkafalı

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Hopefully my books will be read with great excitement even after 400 years.
That is my only aim in life.
In homage to the memory of Evliya Çelebi



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I wish to thank the great craftsmen of Anatolia, whose reputation and names are unknown; they are modest masters and veteran women whom we hold in high esteem, the main actors of our gastronomic journey,

Thanks to the Komili Olive Oil family for understanding my 15 yearlong enthusiasm and providing moral and material support to the publication of this book,

Thanks to the master photographers who provided their limitless support for the pictures, Haluk Sönmezer for the graphic design, Cüneyt Şenyavaş and his team for the engravings, Öznur Seviş for the amendments and all my dear friends for their cooperation ,

Thanks to my family and the Doğan family whom I consider as my second family as well.



A HARVEST IN AYVALIK

I stare after the departing ship;
I can't throw myself into the sea, the world is beautiful;
I am a man, I cannot cry

Orhan Veli Kanık

A Major Separation, A New Life, A New Harvest,

Havva Hanım

İskamya Village, one of the most beautiful villages of Lesbos, with olive orchards stretching all the way to the sea, stone houses and the fresh smell of spring... That is how Havva remembered it. She was staring at her childhood drifting away in the boat that she boarded in tears after leaving her home one Eid morning.

How could she leave everything behind and go, would she be able to see her village again? Despite so many years, those were memories she never wanted to recall. The spring fluttering around her hair was gone and she became someone else as she set her feet on land again.

Hüseyin Bey

Kavala was a beautiful town. It had cobbled stone streets, houses, orchards and many almond trees.

You knew it was spring from the smell of almond trees. The olive harvest was completed and it was time to play on the street. He did not have to work picking olives, carrying sacks or pressing olives for oil.

He could not understand what was going on in the house that Eid morning. His mother drying her tears with her muslin scarf would not give him any explanations. She only said “We shall leave, we shall go somewhere without even knowing where”. He had left several memories behind him when the door of his home was shut forever.

Women children, fathers, soldiers were at the harbor... There were many boats on the sea and tears of deep dark sorrow.

There was no other world for these people whose hometown was Kavala, and no other city to go to.

Population exchange

The word “mübadele” which means population exchange, is derived from the word “bedel” meaning “a price to pay”. Days were spent with a deep stinging pain.

The pain of losing your hometown, the place where you were born and raised, is a nostalgic feeling, which stays with you wherever you go.

Pain and memory are always hanging at the brink of your eyelashes. Tears start flowing when the evening wind carries the smell of your hometown or you hear a folk song of your childhood. You always remain a “displaced” person for life.

A New Life

The two children who left their hometown were grown into two youngsters who carried life's burden on their shoulders. They immediately recognized each other's homesickness when their eyes first met. They got married in order to carry the burden together. They lived together for 26 years until Hüseyin Bey died, leaving 8 children and a whole lot of memories behind.

It was his homeland and the olive tree under which he stopped to breathe that were left behind

It was the bread his mother baked,

It was his homeland which was the house on the hills at the end of a cobble stone path where he was greeted with a smile when the door opened.

Sometimes he remembered his homeland with a stinging pain inside his heart.

His father returning from the fields,

The dark glass of tea at the coffee shop, the wheat scattered by the wind.

The world he carried on his shoulders when he held his father's hand.

Peace and happiness when his father knocked at the door in the evening.

Harvest

Both of their families were olive workers and the only thing they knew were olives.

When Havva Hanım started riding the donkey to go to the fields, her 6 siblings lined up behind the donkey as she held one in her lap and the other on her knees.

In December, in the cold morning wind of Ayvalık, it took them a full hour to arrive to the field after leaving home at early Morning Prayer time. First, they handpicked the olives which were at the bottom of the trees. The children wrapped their frozen little hands with olive sacks to warm them up. Water started boiling over the fire made with crushed olives and they sat around it to brew a pot of tea. They ate black olives, home baked bread and sesame oil halva with tea.

You need 6 bags of olives to fill one press. 8 siblings and their mother collected 2 bags a day. They had to ride the donkey back and forth to the fields for 23 days. They collected the olives they picked in their garden and sent them to the clamp for pressing...The olive paste squeezed between millstones in the clamp was left to rest in the stone pool. The vegetal oil, “göbek yağı” which is the “olive milk” rose on top of the olive paste after a night’s rest in the pool. This was the most delicious oil of all. The remaining olive paste was placed in bags loaded into the press to be squeezed to remove the oil and water in the paste. The oil and water were left to rest in the stone pool again, allowing the water to deposit. Then olive oil was collected through dollies to be filled in copper vessels, brought home and stored in earthenware jars under the staircase.

Havva Hanım made sure she cooked semolina halva using the first oil brought home to ensure the blessing of abundance. She distributed that semolina halva to her neighbors accompanied by a small bottle of olive oil; this was a tradition, which made her happy. Towards summer, Havva Hanım made soap for the family by mixing the pulp, which remained at the bottom of the jars with some soda ash that she bought from the marketplace.

This was how years went by.

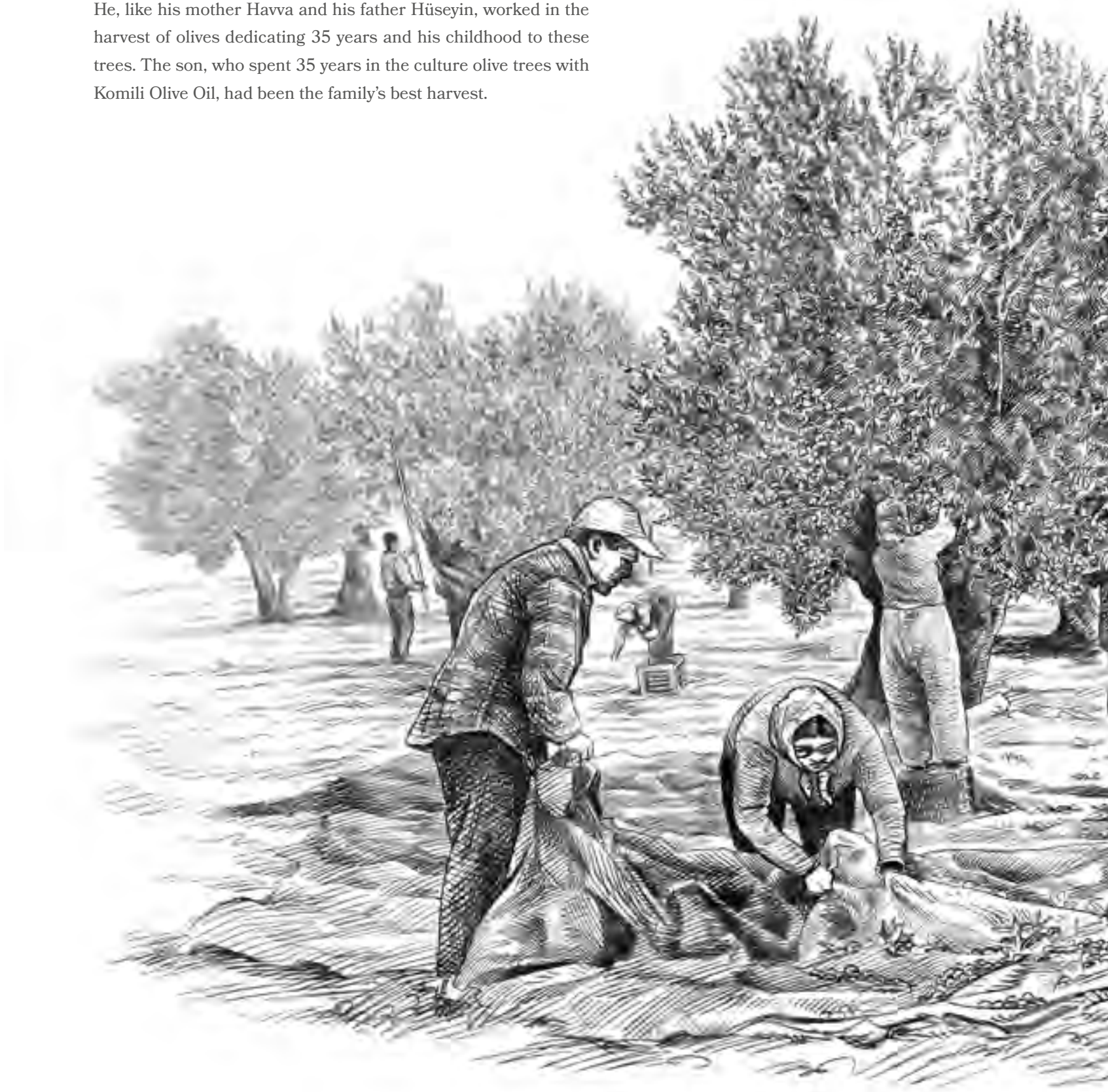
Family's Biggest Harvest

I have listened to this story from their son, at an olive harvest season in Ayvalık, years later.

93 years after the populations exchange.

He regarded the land he arrived as his home and adopted his fathers' land and fathers' trees.

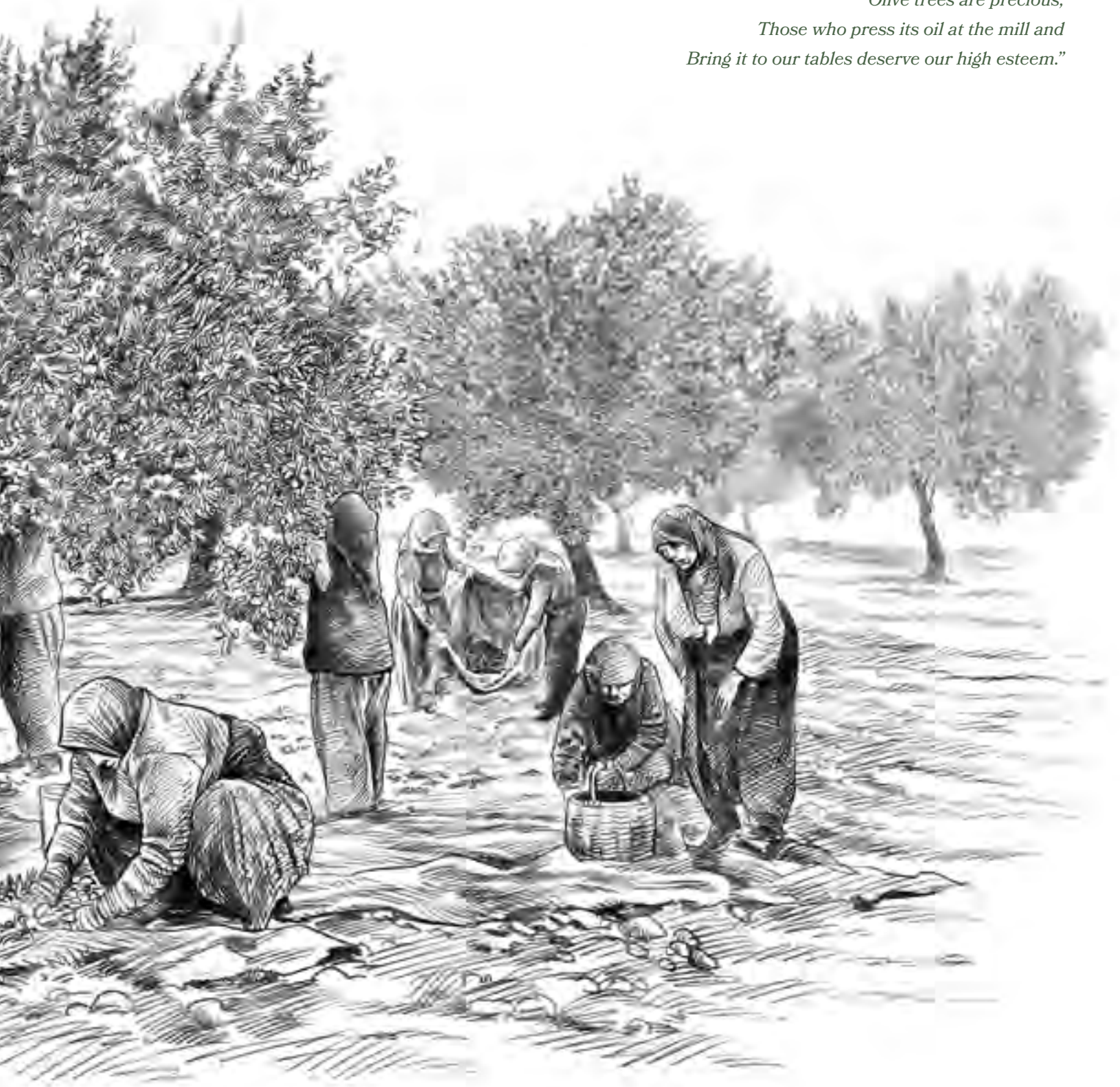
He, like his mother Havva and his father Hüseyin, worked in the harvest of olives dedicating 35 years and his childhood to these trees. The son, who spent 35 years in the culture olive trees with Komili Olive Oil, had been the family's best harvest.



*"Olive trees are precious,
Those who place their efforts
And value it deserve our high esteem.*

*Olive trees are precious,
So are those who plough their fields,
Collecting each olive under the dry frosty wind of Ayvalık or
Anywhere else around the world.*

*Olive trees are precious,
Those who press its oil at the mill and
Bring it to our tables deserve our high esteem."*





HAVVA HANIM'S SEMOLINA HALVA

Ingredients

- 2 glasses of Komili Olive Oil
 - 3 glasses of semolina
 - 4 glasses of granulated sugar
 - 5 glasses of milk
 - 50 g of pine nuts
 - Cinnamon
- Pour the delicious Komili Olive Oil into a saucepan and start frying pine nuts in it.
 - Add semolina a minute later and fry it under low heat until it gets brown.
 - Meanwhile start boiling milk and sugar in another pot.
 - When the semolina is brown, add the syrup and mix it. Turn the heat off and let it rest.
 - 20 minutes later, serve it in bowls with cinnamon sprinkled on top.



GUIDE FOR AEGEAN PITA MAKERS

Pita is one of my favorite dishes and I can never get enough of it. I can have pita anytime, in the morning, evening or noontime. I don't only eat pita where I live but also travel to taste it. I have been everywhere in Turkey wherever there is good pita, the Black Sea, Konya, the Mediterranean, the Aegean... I was never lazy to travel anywhere where they bake pita. After visiting 80 provinces and 7 regions, I have decided that pita is a little bit more delicious in the Aegean; but this is my personal taste. It is up to you to decide after all.

So Why Are Aegean Pitas A Little Bit More Delicious?

First the variety is great; pita comes with herbs, olive oil, double cheese, buffalo cream, as sweet, savory, plain and in many different variations. It makes pita so delicious as the cheese is not limited to aged kashar and almost each region has a unique blend of their exclusive cheese, which I think is a very important factor.

The variety of herbs is directly reflected upon the flavors.

Using buffalo cream boosts the flavor.

In some regions bitter orange is squeezed instead of lemon, which makes it really taste better

The delicious taste of local vegetables, especially tomatoes and peppers have a direct positive impact on its taste.

Almost all regions use homemade village butter.

Yogurt is a major complimentary item served as ayran made of sheep milk yogurt.

So, let's get on the road. Let's see where we shall find pitas.



Mikado Pide

Ödemiş

Ödemiş pita is a folded pita. It is filled with lots of parsley and a small amount of minced meat and baked in wood fire ovens, but that's not all about it. After removing it from the oven, it is sliced and sprinkled with 2 year-old aged grated Ödemiş cheese on top; I think this is very important!

Then melted butter and grated cheese are sprinkled on top of the sliced pita. It is absolutely delicious. I would recommend to plan your trip and have a break here on your summer holidays this year.

Töngül Pita Mimar Sinan / Ödemiş

Yeşil İzmir Pita / Ödemiş

Yenipazar

Aegean's very famous county for pita makers as well as member of the “slow city” movement, Yenipazar has pita bakers working 24 hours a day. I think this shows how serious they are about pita baking. Although I find all their pitas excellent, I have two suggestions:

Sümer Pide

Folded pitas are my favorite but you will never regret any type of pita that you try. They are all made of the best, local and highest quality ingredients such as flour and butter as well as ayran and water.

Yörük Ali Efe Cad. No: 24 / Yenipazar

Hukul Pide

Another legendary Yenipazar pita maker is Hukul Pide. Its egg and cheese pita is especially good. Village eggs are a major contribution to its delicious taste. You can order any kind of pita without hesitation.

Çarşı, Avşar Sok. / Yenipazar

Kismet Pide / Nazilli

Most famous pita maker of Nazilli As Kismet Pide has generally the same menu as other pita makers, it brings a major gastronomic question to our mind;

So who is the best of the region then?

This is actually a very, very difficult question to answer. It doesn't seem possible to decide in terms of deliciousness. I think you can only make a choice after eating 5 times in each location.

I will definitely share my decision with you if I finally manage to come to a conclusion.

Reşit Galip Cad. No: 87 / Nazilli

Elmalı Pide / Tavas

This is actually the typical roadside pita maker but his mastership is great. I only had tahini honey walnut pita at Elmalı admiring the neighborhood while I stopped there one afternoon. Not only the pita but the stew is also very famous. I especially came here from Bozdoğan passing over the Aydın Kemer Dam and both the view and the pita were fantastic. If you are in the vicinity, don't hesitate to stop by and visit this place.

On Muğla Road opposite Petrol Ofisi / Tavas

Ersöz Pide / Uşak

I went to Uşak just to eat pita and came back. I am glad I did it. Its sesame cheese and sesame spinach pitas are really delicious. Their top pita is the one with meat cubes but I did not order that one. I only appreciated it after stealing a slice from the neighboring table. The family has worked in pita baking for 40 years and then their children took over. I think it is absolutely great to see how they take their job seriously and are proud of it. The accompanying oven baked village peppers, onions and local tomatoes are very delicious as well. I would recommend to change your itinerary for a visit there if you are in the vicinity.

İslic Mah. Değergeç Sok. No: 5 / B / Uşak,

Mikado Pide / Bozdoğan

This is one of my 3 favorite restaurants in Turkey. If I was living abroad, I would just travel to eat here and then go back home. There is an appraisal for 3 star restaurants in the famous Michelin guide "You can travel to a country just for this restaurant." So you should travel to Turkey just to have a meal at Mikado Pide.



Ödemiş Pita



Tahini Pita



Sümer Pide



Mikado Pide

So why; is it because they make very delicious pitas?

I think this is not enough, although the answer is “yes”. It is absolutely obvious that they make delicious, very delicious pitas, but I think the most important feature is that they are “local”.

The butter is from Bozdoğan, the yogurt and ayran are from Bozdoğan, vegetables are from Bozdoğan, bitter oranges are from Bozdoğan, meat is from Bozdoğan, water is from Bozdoğan, soda pop is Bozdoğan Municipal Soda Pop. So what else can we say? It is rare to find such a local restaurant even among the top restaurants of the world.

There is a statement for 3 star restaurants in the famous Michelin list: “You can travel to a country for this place.” This is valid for Mikado Pide, you can travel to Turkey just to have a meal here. That’s how I exactly think and feel.

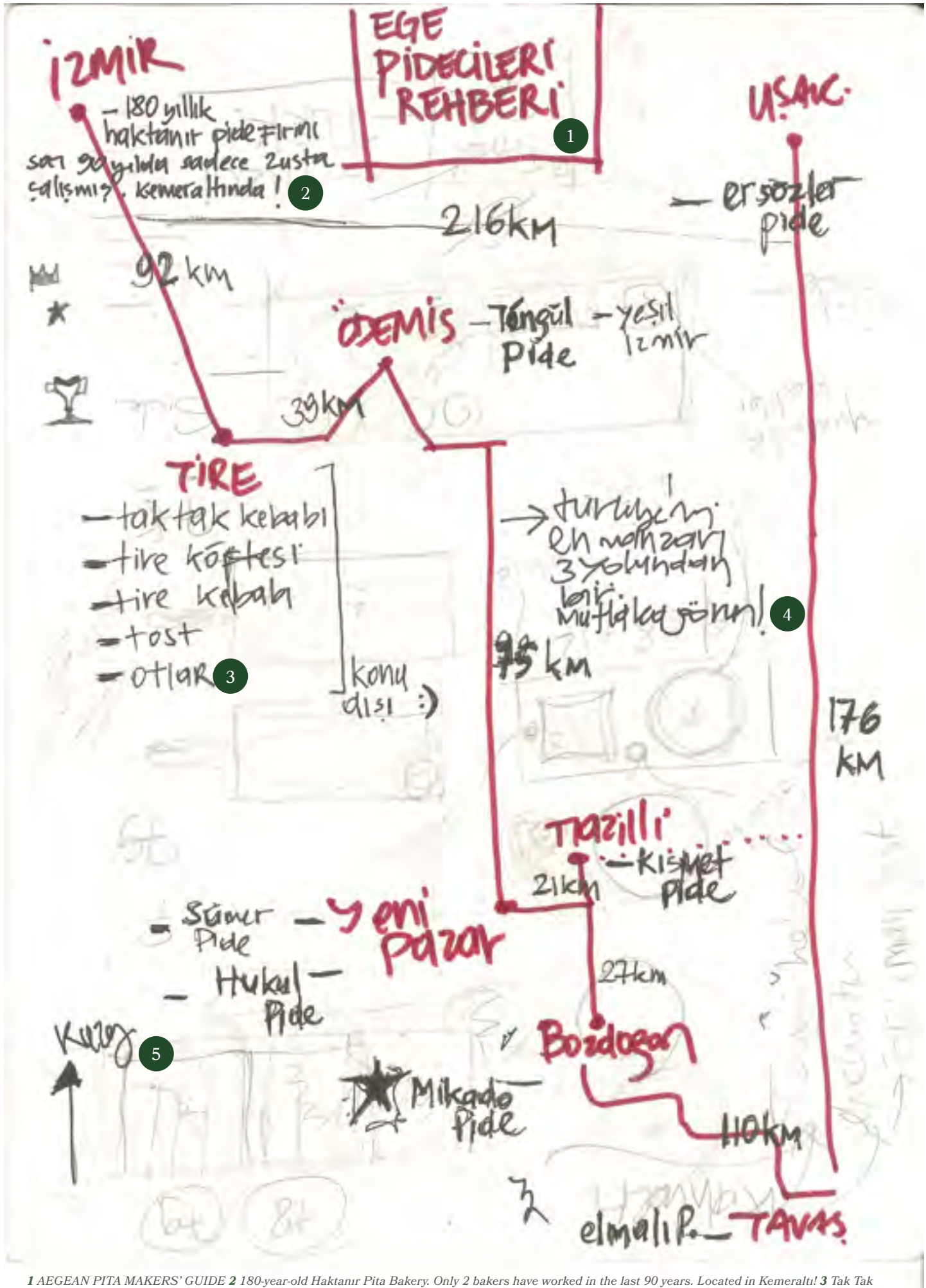
Their support to the local producers is also admirable. Mikado Pide supports local producers for local ingredients used in their pitas, thus preventing traditional methods from disappearing as well as conserving their delicious taste. For example they buy buffalos for the villagers to produce the buffalo clotted cream they use, then buy the feed for those animals and pay to buy the clotted cream. This is more costly, but they underline the importance of protecting local producers even at a higher cost.

Yes, this is one of the most important rules you have to adopt in our sector if you wish to acquire a worldwide reputation. We can only grow and improve if we support each other and promote the reputation of Turkish cuisine to the rest of the world. Unfortunately this is not possible by acting unilaterally.

Although I have rambled a bit, I would like to state that I don’t consider the restaurants that I visit just as “flavors”. I think this is the best pita maker of Turkey. (I would like to say that this is my personal opinion, as someone who has traveled to 80 provinces, 7 regions and many destinations for countless times.)

Mikado Pide on the right page





1 AEGEAN PITA MAKERS' GUIDE 2 180-year-old Haktanır Pita Bakery. Only 2 bakers have worked in the last 90 years. Located in Kemera! 3 Tak Tak Kebab, Tire Meatballs, Tire Kebab, Toast, Herbs. 4 One of the 3 best landscapes in Turkey. A must-see! 5 North.

What can we have at Mikado's?

We shall order a small size pita with minced meat and squeeze some bitter orange juice on top to enjoy it. Besides, my favorite one is the folded pita with curd cheese (lor). Their pita with vegetables and buffalo clotted cream is amazing and our final temptation will be clotted cream and tahini pita.

I believe the place is worth rerouting your travel path if you are on holiday, as I already said I would travel from abroad just to eat here, it is that good!!!

Hükümet Cad. No: 7 / Bozdoğan



PRAYERFUL TİRE BAZAAR

For over 200 years, both merchants and the whole town of Tire start this bazaar with prayers on each Tuesday morning at 08.30. Its abundance, variety, beauty, intimacy and sincerity rely on these unconditional prayers.

In my opinion, this is the greatest market place in the world. It is not likely to find anywhere else the variety of greens and herbs or the cheese, yogurt and butter similar to those brought here from more than 100 villages nearby.

I said the bazaar is opened with prayers and thus got its abundance; it is exactly like that. If you happen to be in Tire on a Tuesday morning, you will see that all shops are filled with people and each stall has crowds met with smiles proving this abundance and plentitude

***How come all streets of
a town would turn into
a marketplace?***

*It would, would it not?
That's Tire Bazaar for
you. You get to wander
around the old streets
of the town and walk
around the whole
market. While visiting
almost 6 kilometers
of marketplace, don't
pass by it; restaurants
competing for
deliciousness are all
in that marketplace.
You will be satisfied by
whichever restaurant
you choose. Let's walk
around the greens sold in
this bazaar first.*

GREENS OF TİRE

The most beautiful season in Turkey is spring: a winter passed, the earth is resting, and fledgling Anatolia, as everywhere you go, will be green. All roads, all cliffs, all valleys...

The Aegean is a little bit luckier in this season. Plants offered by the fertile soil feed both the eye and your stomach. You both watch and taste it. The Aegean means "greens" too. If it is spring, then it is just the right time....

In the Aegean each green herb has a different name in each village, with completely different recipes attached to it. Everyone cooks them as they wish according to their home taste. Some cook with clotted cream, some with olive oil. Some would add it into their salads. The cuisine of this colorful geography becomes green in spring, getting more colorful. Then it is something different to sit at a table, more than anytime else around the year. Although we cannot taste and write about each herb and green one by one in this fertile geography, let's have a look at some of the most renowned ones and those most common down in the Tire bazaar in spring.

Wild asparagus (Tilkişen)

It belongs to the liliaceae family. It has other names such as acı ot, tül, ayrelli, dikenli ot, tilki kuyruğu, bıçık, çitirgi, kırğınotu, sarmaşık otu in the region.

There are various recipes for wild asparagus, which is found more than plenty at dinner tables in spring.

It is fried with stale bread and olive oil, to be served with yogurt. In another recipe, it is fried with spring onions in a frying pan, and served as a delicious meal, with a cracked egg on top. Besides all that, it is also served with lemons and olive oil, or baked in a borek¹.

Opopanax (Sarı Ot)

Opopanax from the apiaceae family grows in all parallel latitudes from Iran to the Aegean as well as in Cyprus. It has other names such as kalemotu, gazyağı, kaymacık, kaymakotu, kaymaklık in the region. Especially in Muğla, Datça and Milas, it is boiled, then fried with lots of milk and hot red peppers.

Red poppy (Kapçık)

It belongs to the papaveraceae family. It has other names such as gelincik, alava, börekotu, çaplaçanak, düğmeli ot, gagaç, gelincik mancarı, gelineli, vıccı vıccı, zemberlik, in the region. The variation of names is also reflected into its dishes too. When raw, it becomes a salad. It is fried with onions, and eaten with a cracked egg on top. It is used in recipes as a meal with rice or minced meat. When used in pitas and borek, it is very delicious. Its leaves are stuffed as well. Its meatballs taste like nothing else. It is a part of the cuisine with very different recipes in different locations, thanks to crafty hands all over.

Wild leek (Köreme)

It has other names such as körmən, sebzi, köremen in the region. When used as filling for borek, it is very delicious. It is eaten raw next to rice pilav. It is added into salads and other dishes cooked with greens. It grows all around the region. Its roots under the earth are never plucked off, as it grows back from its roots.

Fennel (Arapsacı)

It belongs to the umbelliferae family. It is commonly used in cooking. Especially sauced lamb fennel dish is very famous. When used in salads as boiled, it goes very well with fish. It is also fried with a cracked egg on top, and cooked as spinach, as well as cooked mixed with other greens. Mallow is exclusively cooked with fennel, as it is both a complimentary and the main meal on a proper table.

¹ General name for all stuffed flaky pies and pastries in different shapes.

Chicory

Just like the other favored greens and herbs of the daisy family, this is a medicinal herb. It has other names such as radika, Bostanhindibası, göynek, acıgıcı, acı kulak, akgüneyik, könik. It has a bitter taste. Its bitter but delicious leaves are used in salads as raw, as well as boiled and strained to be cooked. The most common recipe for chicory is its fried version, with fennel, garlic and olive oil.

Mallow

It belongs to the mallow family. It has its own family because it grows almost everywhere around the world except for the Poles, and has more than 1500 species. It is found in great variety in the Aegean and Anatolia. It has other names such as develik, evelik otu.

It is fried with tomato paste, stuffed in vine leaves with bulgur wheat, cooked with grits and bulgur wheat. When cooked with fennel, it is delicious. It is sometimes used as an alternative to spinach and purslane.

Kışgin

It is also called kışkin, which is a mixture of greens and herbs. It is found in all Aegean markets. When cooked with minced meat borek or with rice as a meal, it is very delicious.

Goosefoot (Wild parsley)

It belongs to the amaranthaceae family. It is also called kazyak and wild parsley. It is fried with onions, cooked with eggs in the oven, and is especially delicious with poppies and cheese in borek, in pitas and salads. As it has a sour taste, it is also added in other meals cooked with greens.

Sea beet

It belongs to the amaranthaceae family. This is a thicker stemmed version of common spinach. It can be used in all dishes when cooked with spinach. When cooked in borek, with rice and as a salad, it is very delicious. It can easily be mixed with other greens and herbs.

Golden thistle

It belongs to the asteraceae family. It has other names such as akkız, bostanotu, mübarekdikenı, şevketotu. It is one of the most delicious greens of the Aegean. The most common and favored recipe is when cooked with olive oil and lamb meat.



Tak tak kebab



Sezgin Meatball Restaurant



Kaplan Dag Restaurant



Wild Radish

It belongs to the brassicaceae family. It has other names such as bayır turbu, acırğa, uslu turp. It is boiled and used in salads, and fried as well.

Wild radish is washed really well and boiled with lots of water. After being strained, wild radish is placed on a platter for serving. It will be ready for serving after chopped onions in slices, salt and Komili Olive Oil are poured on top.

Nettle

It belongs to the urticaceae family. It has other names such as dalan, dalayan dikenî, deli ısırgan, dalaygan. As acids and histaminic materials emerge when touched, it causes itching and it is also called stinging nettle too. It is cooked as a meal as plain, with eggs, rice and minced meat. It is also cooked in borek and pitas.

The greens of Tire are endless to count, write about, cook and eat. This fertile land had been more than generous especially in that regard. In this article, we have mentioned most common and known greens. Besides all these, sage, cabbage sprouts (cibes), common sow thistle, glasswort, European sea rocket, common sea rocket, capers, French lavender, sorrel and others grow here too. You can create similar but unique and very different flavours using all these greens.

TİRE'S GASTRONOMIC LIFE

When you have so many various great ingredients and such talented crafty people in one location, you definitely will have great food too!

Of course you do, actually even better than you can imagine. Tire cuisine using most traditional ingredients and methodologies is legendary. From its meatballs to greens, and its yogurt to its molasses, its place cannot be replaced. Let's have a look at a list must-try spots when in Tire together.

Ali Usta Tak Tak Kebab

Opening at 00.30 AM, this restaurant starts its preparations first. Lamb hung in a well gets cooked slowly while rice and water are placed in a cooking pan at the bottom of the well. Lamb broth and fat from the lamb hung in the well for many hours, drool into the rice soup, and get cooked together.

At 03.30 AM, customers start to arrive at the restaurant as the service continues until 09.00 AM.

Tak tak kebab and rice soup are traditional dishes of Tire. It is called tak tak kebab as the chopping knife creates that sound while chopping the meat.

Atatürk Cad. No: 45 / Tire

Sezgin Meatball Restaurant

This is a legendary address for the Tire finger meatballs. Next to its meatballs, especially the chopped leek salad with rocket and lemon salt, served until April, is a legend!

I have never tasted anywhere else anything like Tire's sheep yogurt served here. Usually I would say Konya is the place for yogurt, but this is a notch better. I would like to state once more that this is a very very delicious restaurant.

Gümüşpala mah. No: 85 / Tire

Faik / Şükrü's Kebab Restaurant

Cooked over coal fire and then fried with tomatoes and peppers in butter, these meatballs get an extra pour of fried butter over them. As the ingredients are of high quality, the dishes are extra delicious. Meatballs come either with tomatoes or yogurt. The 90 year old restaurant of Master Faik is now in the hands of his son, Master Şükrü. Tire kebab or meatballs are the most important must-try choices of dishes when in Tire, I say you must try it.

Türk Ocağı Cad. No: 13-A / Tire

Kaplan Dağ Restaurant

Kaplan Village is one of the most beautiful villages of the Aegean, and this restaurant is an important stop for Turkish gastronomy. You can find the most delicious versions of local dishes and all greens from this area in this restaurant. Its view stands to be one of the best restaurant views of all of Turkey. When in Tire, it is inevitable to stop here. You will absolutely prove me right.

Kaplan Village / Tire



BURSA GUIDE FOR THE TRAVELER “1931”

This is one of the most interesting books printed by Governorship Printing House in 1931, which I came across among many books and magazines written on Bursa that I have found during my research in libraries while writing my first book titled Bursa Cuisine.

“Bursa Guide for the Traveller – This is prepared for those who will stay in Bursa for six hours, for a day, or three days.”

We are talking about a reference book written for those travelling to Bursa in 1931 for 6 hours. It is really very surprising... I don't think that this kind of guide has ever been published for any other city, let alone Bursa, during the age of internet and information we live in. The book is not just a guide for the traveler planning to stay in Bursa for 6 hours, but it is a special guide, giving time its value, and using it efficiently even back in those years.

I would quote the traveler's itinerary in the book exactly word for word, without correcting its grammar.

TRAVEL ITINERARIES

ITINERARY A

(Exclusive to those planning to stay in Bursa for 6 hours)

(Driving is recommended)

1- Museum of ancient monuments is subject to a small entrance fee. You can get here your permission to visit the famous Turkish art of Bursa and tombs, including Turkish history as well as Muradiye tombs.

2- Green Mosque

3- Green Tomb

4- Spectacle of the view of the valley at the coffee shop next to Green Mosque (You have to have a cup of Turkish coffee here)

5- Grand Bazaar (Please buy silk cloths and towels of Bursa here)

6- Grand Mosque of Bursa (While passing by, please buy Bursa's famous chestnut candy and raspberry syrup at candy shops here)

7- Tombs of Sultan Osman and Orhan (Spectacle of the view of Bursa valley at Topane)

8- Visiting Muradiye Mosque and its tombs

9- Visiting the Eski Kaplıca (old hot springs) and Çekirge Kaplıca (Çekirge hot springs)

10- Hudavendigar Mosque.

ITINERARY B

(Exclusive to those planning to stay in Bursa for 6 hours)

(Driving is recommended)

Museum of Ancient Monuments (Refer to Itinerary A)

Green Mosque

Green Tomb

Resting at the coffee shop next to Green Mosque and spectacle of the valley view

Yıldırım

Knife makers (Bursa knives are good souvenirs)



Grand Bazaar (Please buy silk cloths and towels of Bursa here)

Lunch at hotels in Çekirge

Çekirge hot springs and visiting Hudavendigar Mosque

Visiting Eski Kaplıca (old hot springs) in Çekirge

Visiting tombs of Muradiye

Visiting Muradiye Mosque

Tombs of Sultan Osman and Orhan (Spectacle of the view of Bursa valley at Topane)

Grand Mosque of Bursa (While passing by, please buy Bursa's famous chest-nut candy and raspberry syrup at candy shops here)

Return back to the hotel, or bathing at Çekirge hotels or hot springs





ITINERARY C

(Exclusive to those planning to stay in Bursa for three days)

First day

Museum of Ancient Monuments

Green Mosque

Green Tomb

Resting at the coffee shop next to Green Mosque and spectacle of the valley view

Yıldırım

Lunch in any of the city restaurants

Departure to Uludağ with an automobile and rest

Bathing in Çekirge hotels and hot springs (lunch can be at a mountain hotel too.)

Second day

Çekirge hot springs and visiting Hudavendigar Mosque

Visiting Eski Kaplıca (old hot springs)

Visiting Kükürtlü hot springs and hotel

Visiting Yeni kaplıca (New hot springs), Kara Mustafa hot springs

Visiting Muradiye tombs

Visiting Muradiye Mosque

Tombs of Sultan Osman and Orhan, and spectacle of the view of Bursa valley at Topane

Lunch in the city

Drive to Abulyont “ıssız han” (Deserted Inn) – Eşkel village – Trilye – Mudanya – Bursa excursion. (This would be a very nice excursion for travelers.)

Bathing in Çekirge hotels and hot springs

Third day

Grand Mosque of Bursa (While passing by, please buy Bursa’s famous chestnut candy and raspberry syrup at candy shops here)

Grand Bazaar (Please buy silk cloths and towels of Bursa here)

Knife makers (Bursa knives are good souvenirs)

Visiting a couple of weaving mills at Setbaşı location

Lunch

5- Visiting Yenişehir and İznik towns and ancient monuments in İznik

6- Return to Bursa in the evening and visiting Gemlik – Orhangazi – Yalova on the way to İstanbul



Where is now that raspberry syrup; bravo to those who know and can find it... Just a remnant of its name now; and those Bursa knives for souvenirs. We used to take our Bursa knives as a souvenir wherever we went. No one observes that tradition anymore and that should be the moral of our story.

We owe a lot to this city we live in (the author is currently living in Bursa).

Let alone bringing in the new, it would even be enough if we manage to protect what we have.



NEAREST PLACES

Mudanya, Mustafakemalpaşa, Karacabey, Bursa

Bursa is a city that somewhat remains carved in the memories of all. It is our first imperial city, and besides being a 1000 year old Turkish city, some of us have an aunt or an uncle still living here, if not perhaps our father had worked here as a public officer. Some like me have studied here and stayed here for years.

*Bursa is a great place,
and so are its environs
and nearest town... And
it is close to almost
everywhere. Bursa is
practically equidistant
to Ankara, Istanbul
and İzmir as well. So, I
would say travel to Bursa
to spend a wonderful
weekend. You will have a
nice time in a hundreds
of years old Turkish city,
and you will also be on
an incredibly delicious
weekend tour.*

Pasto and Palemek

Both of these locations are bakery shops of my closest friends, which I may mention as if owned by my own family.

For 4 generations, that is 130 years, Pasto is a family spending their lives with bread; the mother is a baker, father a baker, elder sister, elder brother, siblings and nephews and nieces are all bakers.

Palemek Yıldırım Kara Fırın is the unique bakery shop of Master Şevki of Rize city for the last 40 years.

If you ask me about bread, I would name three people in Turkey, two of them would be Ayhan and Hakan Doğan brothers, and the third one is Palemek Şevki Dilmaç. Bursa is very lucky to have all these three located here. It is obvious that they make bread to set the world standard and have the talent and knowledge to do it.

It takes only to buy bread from these two bakery shops and smear it with some butter; I would say you have a full breakfast if you can order a glass of tea as well.

Sourdough bread

Both Palemek and Pasto are very good when it comes to sourdough breads. Their breads prepared with traditional Anatolian wheat, and baked with most traditional methods, are amazing. I say you should definitely buy bread to bring home before you leave Bursa.

Kastamonu bread, made of 17-year-old main yeast and 4 authentic Anatolian wheat variations, and Yıldırım Beyazıt rye bread, are among my favorites.

Bulla bread baked by Pasto on weekends is totally legendary. I don't think bulla bread, which is originally traditional Cyprus bread, is not baked even in Cyprus anymore in such a traditional fashion like here. Bulla bread freshly baked out of the bakery oven only needs a bowl of stone pressed olive oil; I don't think you will get enough of it. As the bread has authentic Cyprus halloumi cheese, çakızdez olives (green cracked olives), cilantro, parsley, fresh mint, fresh spring onions and olive oil in it, all these ingredients create a tremendously delicious bread.

Pasto also serves breakfast menus. Pasto uses authentic recipes for various local dishes as well as toasted bazlama (flat bread) sandwich with Erzurum kavurma, İspir style spring onion green omelet, homemade tomato paste by Gülay Abla, Nuriş Hanım's vegetable gözleme (pancakes), breakfast sauces by Master Zeynel and many others. I say you should travel to Bursa just to try it

out here and then return if you will. One more thing, we should mention Sister Dilek too, but we don't need to write about her as she will find you as soon as you arrive at the bakery shop.

This is one of the strongly recommended shops of our travel book.

Pasto: Hancı Cad. No: 6, Osmangazi / Bursa

Palemek / Yıldırım Kara Fırın: Yıldırım Mah. Kurtuluş Cad.

No: 80 Yıldırım / Bursa



Palemek

Tavacı Refik (Stirfrier Refik)

I don't know if I should say it, but I hope you will understand. If death arrived one day and said "It is time to go, Ömür" and added "You spent life on food, let's have a last meal", then this restaurant would be one of the three spots.

As you can understand from its name, this restaurant is famous for its stir fried dishes. Nobody has yet found the answer to how the meat cooked in 4 minutes on a wok in an oven can be that delicious. Tava yogurt (stiff, drier yogurt) that looks like feta cheese served next to the stir fried meats, Karacabey onions baked in the oven, again Karacabey fresh red peppers in season baked in the oven, butter, bread, tomato paste and pickles served here, are legends of their league. It is even enough just to have some bread and complimentary dishes served. But it is not just about that!

Whatever you have at Tavacı Refik, how much you have it, you should end your meal with the dessert. Cheese dessert Kemalpaşa dessert can only be found here in its most traditional version. There is also a mesmerizing pumpkin dessert cooked for a long time in a stone oven in chestnut revak (syrup).

I would also remind you that clotted cream served next to this dessert is the best. After having tried this pumpkin dessert, you will never forget this restaurant. This is also a delicious point you have to stop by when driving to Istanbul, Izmir or Ayvalık.

I will also put it into record that you can travel to Turkey from abroad just to eat at this restaurant.

Karacabey Onion Wholesale Market, Karacabey / Bursa



Tavacı Refik

Gökhan Aperatif

This restaurant is one of the best places in Turkey for breakfast. Just tell them, “Ömür says hi, we would like to try his breakfast order” and see what it will lead to...

Roasted liver & kidney: If you start your day with a variety of offal, this roast is just for you. I always make sure to add red-hot chilies (attention, as theirs is really hot) and oregano to dip my bread into it, and I highly suggest that you should too.

² Braised lamb meat cubes browned in their own fat

Full mixed eggs: First you don't notice in the menu fried eggs prepared with kavurma, pastrami, sucuk (spicy sausages) and tomato paste. When served, the egg yolk breaks nicely under the ingredients after you dip your bread into it. Truly, that moment is really a happy moment. I still could not understand how they manage to be cooked so nicely as done to a turn.

Tomato paste toast: This is another legendary dish of Gökhan Aperatif. Ingredients include good quality kavurma, good quality cheese, topped with tomato paste after the toast is fried and olive oil sprinkled on top... That is my ritual at this restaurant.

So, what else do they have? They have this legendary Çanakkale honey; yes, exactly honey from Çanakkale, fig molasses, best quality Gemlik olives, and damson plum juice...

Their traditional shop has 4 tables and is located on Karlıdağ Street. But if you wish to go to their new branch, it is located on Izmir Road 11th km, Food Wholesale Market, Shell Gas Station.



Gökhan Aperatif



Pasto breakfast menu served in Ömür Akkor's china collection



Atadan Cheese Shop

A family of cheese makers for 4 generations, a small shop and fabulous cheese... You can find all kinds of cheese both from the region and vicinity at this shop. Nowadays 4th generation member Sabri Özderici is running the shop, which in my opinion is very significant for the gastronomy life of Bursa. You can talk to him about best cheese in the world and cheese production globally, and have a wonderful chat about the local cheese types as well.

I think peppered lor (curd cheese) cheese made by keeping lor cheese with peppers for a year, and authentic unsalted Bursa lor cheese, are some of the best sold in this shop. You can also find here the best types of Mıhalıç, feta, Manyas and local cheese types.

Kemalpaşa Cad. No: 12 Mustafakemalpaşa / Bursa

Seha Delicatessen

It is located in Kubbeli Cheese Wholesale Market. Cheese Wholesale Market and Seha Gıda are located at the same spot since 1949. This is located right in the middle of Salt Market, which is also the centre of gastronomy in town. Back in the time, Bursa was planned like a large market place, which is one of the reasons why it was also called as the storehouse of the palace. Salt Market, Cheese Wholesale Market, Artichoke Office, Head Sellers, Bakers, Yogurt Makers are some of several historic names of places.

The owner Mehmet Diriel continues his profession successfully as he inherited it from his grandfather. It is necessary to come here just to have a tour around the historical han (inn) buildings. They would offer you sage tea with honey and cheese, and make sure you taste candied chestnuts. If you happen to go there on a Friday, then fresh warm simit (sesame bagel) and cheese would be on the counter. Everyone can pick as much as they like, as it is complimentary. Tradesmen are of a different breed here.

You can buy anything you like here. Semra Hanım's trade, her friendliness and kindness will make sure that you come back here over and over.

Salt Market Wholesale No: 29 Heykel / Bursa

Turkish coffee at Koza Han

Koza Han is the busiest of han district at its peak time. Located between Grand Mosque of Bursa and Orhan's Mosque, Koza Han was commissioned to be built by Bayezid II in 1491. Although it used to be the sales place for silkworm cocoons in the past, nowadays it is surrounded with shops selling silk, to keep up this old tradition.

It is a Bursa ritual to have a cup of coffee here. You would travel back in time when seated on the chairs around the beautiful fountain under the hundreds of years old plane trees. Although it is in a touristic district, real local people of Bursa also stop by here. You can start daydreaming, despite the humming noises around, travelling to the imperial times of Bursa.

Historical Han District / Heykel / Bursa

Kayhan Bazaar

Local delicacies of Bursa are found here. This is the point of start for the bazaar style culinary culture of Bursa. The cuisine of Bursa has two categories, as in homemade food and bazaar type food. Now Kayhan Bazaar has been the center of bazaar style cuisine since the beginning. Cantık and meatball with pita are the two most important dishes of this bazaar. Actually, these dishes are food for the common people. As people from Bursa, we make sure our guests feast on İskender kebab, but hungry family members dine on meatballs with pita. İskender kebab has always been a dish for the rich in every era of the past.

Two Most Important Restaurants of This Bazaar:

Pidecioğlu

This bakery is 153 years old. They bake kebab pitas and cantık pitas, which is a type of pita exclusive to Bursa. It is a ritual for people of Bursa to eat cantık at this bakery on Sunday mornings.

Kebapçı İdris

This is an 80-year-old restaurant for meatball with pita. They are the master of it, cooking the most delicious version. Common people, thinking İskender kebab is a little bit expensive, can have 1,5 portion of meatball with pitas with all family members at once. The digestive served next to 1,5 portion of meatballs is şıra, which is fermented raisin juice.

Bursa Kebab (Aka Iskender Kebab)

Literally very famous, its name got across the oceans, and its recipe dates back to centuries ago. Smell of authentic Bursa butter covers the streets, makes you wait in lines outside the restaurant, and your plate would be empty before you know it.

There are very good places for this dish, but the trade of the masters is an old tradition of Bursa. I say you should find Hüseyin Usta at Heykel. It is not very well known, is not very popular, but we value him like I said, as being a tradesman is a difficult task.



EDİRNE

If you see it there;
As it flows slowly and charmingly
Kissing each branch of willows
Like three braids of sables
Water runs in three branches;
Good news my dear;
You are in Edirne.

It is the chapter of spring;
It is nighttime with moonshine
And you would be
At Bridges
As if walking on a canopy of heaven.

With a crimson red plum in your mouth,
As if fallen on earth with the moonshine;
Girls as they are beautiful,
Fully fledged and bejeweled.
It is even possible to fall in love
All over again
If it had been easy to sing my old song:
“Edirne Bridge is made of stones,
It is you who enticed me away.”

N. Akıcıoğlu

We have set off on our journey for “ġastroway” project of Food in Life magazine; it was me, editor of the magazine and my friend Gökmen, my chef friends Maximilian and Alexis... Our destination was Edirne, and we would visit local producers together, eat food and cook food. You can't imagine how happy we were to see the road sign. It was a little cold, snowing calmly, the running waters of Meriç River; perhaps it was exactly what we wanted, as it was Edirne in winter..

Selimiye and Old Mosque

Selimiye is one of most important monuments of Ottomans, let alone the city of Edirne, and is named after Selim II who commissioned it to be built by Master Architect Sinan who was 90 years old. Therefore, he called it “my masterpiece”. It is breathtaking, indescribable and totally a work of another “universe”...

Old Mosque, which is nearby, is a fabulous Ottoman era mosque, which was started during Ottoman Interregnum era and completed in 1414... You can only come back from the centuries you travelled to when you go out of its doors.

Marzipan and Almond Cookies

Edirne is famous for its almonds and so are the almond desserts of Edirne... We visited Keçecizade which is one of the local producers. The company owner Metin Keçeci born in 1939 met us and started telling the whole story..

He has Thracian almonds collected, and then peeled and pounded, then he nicely mixes them with sherbet, pouring it all over the marble counters, and then left to mighty and crafty hands... We have tasted one candied almond when still warm, and I cannot describe the savory smell.

Are almond cookies and Kavala cookies the same?

Actually I thought they were, but there are differences. Almond cookies have no other aroma or flavor than almonds, and no baking powder is used in them, but Kavala cookies have vanilla, egg whites, eggs and baking powder as added ingredients.

Kırkpınar Butcher's Meatballs

This is the famous Edirne meatballs... Think of two families, as one of them is the Baykal family which is the “oldest butcher family” in Edirne, and the other one is Tahmis which is the “oldest meatball maker family”... They decided to collaborate on it, and started Kırkpınar Köftecisi.. The goal is rather to protect and promote Edirne meatballs.

Edirne Meatballs

Of course, they are made of Thracian meat; this meat, which is rather expensive to maintain, has higher fat concentration and is veined, is also the reason for these gorgeous meatballs. It is also the source of deliciousness in dishes by Master Sedat who was trained by Hüseyin, the first meatball master of Edirne.

When it comes to the ingredients, it includes salt, black pepper, minced meat (back of the animal, ribs, veal entrecote) and cumin, grinded twice in the meat grinder, and left to rest for a day. The next day onions are added; this mixture is kneaded definitely by hand, and shaped to be ready for the grill.



It is made sure that kneading is done by hand, as meatballs get stiff if a machine is used. Besides, it is prepared daily so that a sufficient amount is produced, preventing extra being left at hand.

It is grilled most definitely on cast grills over charcoal fire with a distance of 10 cm between the fire and meatballs. Another important issue is that they “are not turned too often” and turned only twice, which prevents its losing its juice, keeping the flavors in the meatballs. After both sides of the meatballs are grilled for 4 minutes, they are directly served to the tables with “hardaliye” (fermented grape juice).

Hardaliye

I am typing this piece-which I normally don't- 10 days after the trip, as hardaliye has been stuck in my mind so bad for the last 10 days that I can't tell you enough of it.

Hardaliye is an Ottoman sherbet. Although long forgotten, it is alive again thanks to the local producer knowing how valuable it is. Hardaliye facilities founded by Sac family through their own investments are definitely a role model.

We read it in letters of Busbecq from Turkey that it was first sold in Istanbul in 1500s and Evliya Çelebi mentions that he drank it in Thrace in 1640. Let's have a look at how it is made:

Industrial methods like boiling, thermal process, cooling, freezing and pasteurization are not used in the production stage of hardaliye, which is produced using totally traditional methods. Traditional grapes of Thrace are squashed and taken into barrels where they are kept to rest, and black wild mustard seeds are added. They are kept together for almost 30 days. The “sinigrin” in the mustard seeds suppresses yeast and alcohol production, and it all ends up as a non-alcoholic sherbet. In the meantime, sour cherry leaves are added in the last phase of waiting, in order to add aroma to it. Bottled up, hardaliye is sent to all meatball shops and liver restaurants of Edirne.

Kandilli Mantı (chicken ravioli) of Murat IV

I still remember the delicious taste of the mantı (Turkish ravioli) made by Müşerref Gizerler who is a researcher in Edirne cuisine as well as Turkish and Ottoman cuisines... It is made of homemade phyllo dough filled with pilaf, then topped with hunted duck, and the rest is up to your imagination.

Now, this is an important issue as it is Edirne cheese

According to Turkish Standards Institute, feta cheese is named as Edirne cheese. I was surprised actually as I missed this one too. When it comes to feta cheese, we think it is Ezine but it was not like that in its story. Now we are headed to the cheese farm run by the Yardımcı family since 1923.

Born in 1948, Mustafa Yardımcı starts telling us:

80 % sheep's milk and 20 % goat's milk yeasted with calf abomasums... The milk collected from the animal's body is strained as it is warm, and left to cool off in cold water at 14 degrees in a basin. When the milk's temperature is 30 degrees, the milk is fermented and after a while the milk thickens as yogurt or "teleme" (curd). When the master touches to feel that cheese is done, then the teleme is collected and cut with poultry netting. Then the cheese is wrapped with cheese cloth and left to strain. Cheese is placed between two planks, which are especially made of pine, and is pressed with tin can weights placed on top to enforce the straining. Approximately 1,5 hours later, as the master touches the cheese to approve that it is ready, cheese is cut in cubes with the size of 8*8*13 and placed in tin boxes of brine. But how?

First, the brine is prepared as sea salt and water are mixed in a tank. Then the bottom of the cheese tin can is covered with wax paper as cheese is placed on top and then added with brine. Cheese waits like that for a day, and two layers are added on the second day. The next day a third layer, followed by a fourth layer on the next day, are added as well. The tin can is covered and left to rest for at least six months in cold rooms. The cheese tin can has to be 100 % tinned and made in Zonguldak, Ereğli or Karabük.

Let's talk about Ezine cheese... Cheese making in Edirne started with Jewish citizens. The first know master is called Zaher. In 1930's as Atatürk said "Turks should be in trade" while visiting Edirne, cheese making for Turks started as well. In the 1970's meadow grazing was banned, and people of Edirne started selling their animals, stopping their business gradually. Cheese production therefore moved to Ezine, carrying its reputation too.

Let's talk about Ezine cheese... Cheese making in Edirne started with Jewish citizens. The first know master is called Zaher. In 1930's as Atatürk said "Turks should be in trade" while visiting Edirne, cheese making for Turks started as well.



And Liver of Edirne

Edirne is very famous for its fried liver and its reputation covers the whole country.... Sliced thin, the liver is covered nicely in flour to be deep fried. It is served with fried dried hot red peppers and raw onions. I am a total fan of liver and can eat it at any time of the day. I think that the most important point of this journey is to observe the liver eating ceremony... Please don't leave Edirne without trying fried liver here.

Kazım Usta, Osmaniye Cad. No: 43 / Edirne



PASTO'S BULLA

Ingredients

- 750 g of flour
- 30 g inactive yeast (IDY)
- 15 g of rock salt
- 700 ml of water
- 25 ml of Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 125 g of çakızdez (green olives with or without pits)
- 150 g of halloumi cheese (diced big)
- Half a bunch of gollandro (fresh coriander)
- Half a bunch of parsley
- Half a bunch of spring onions
- Half a bunch of fresh mint
- Half a bunch of onions (chopped thin)

- Add flour, yeast, salt and 500 ml of water in a kneading mixer and run it at low speed for 4 minutes, and fast speed for 6 minutes. After kneading it, add Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil, and then the rest of the water slowly into the dough in 4 minutes.
- When the dough is smooth, add greens chopped largely, onions, çakızdez olives and halloumi cheese into it.
- Knead this dough on slow speed until all is mixed for 1-2 minutes more, and place this dough in a deep basin oiled with Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil, letting it rise up to 2/3 of its volume.
- Then sprinkle the counter with flour, placing the basin upside down on it. Strain flour on the dough spread, in rectangular shape on the counter. Cut the dough in small rectangles, placing them on a tray, or place them directly into the stone-based oven at 220 degrees with a peel.
- If you use a convectional (fan) oven instead of a stone-based oven, raise the temperature 10 or 20 degrees higher.
- After it is baked for 20-25 minutes as its top is browned, serve it with Komili Unfiltered Olive Oil.



24 HOURS IN TOKAT

Tokat has taken its spot as the 77th province I have visited in Turkey on my travel book

#ömürakkorseyahatnamesi.

Actually, it was on the top of my list for the cities I wanted to visit. Nevertheless, after a couple of cancellations, finally I managed to travel there this week. Tokat is really an impressive place. You have to travel there a couple of times so that you can know it by heart. I stayed there for 24 hours and was really impressed.

Traditional Tokat Breakfast

Tokat is an amazing city especially in regards to its local products. Industrial products are sold in many places in Anatolia now under the disguise of locality. I have never seen anything similar concerning almost everything I have eaten and drunk in Tokat. I think the local sucuk in cloth (bez), Tokat yağlısı (crispy flaky pancakes), chickpea yeasted walnut rolls, çökelek sündürme (fried skim-milk cheese), Zile molasses, cornelian cherry jam and rosehip jam make Tokat breakfast something out of this world. If you choose each one of these with bread, you are done for breakfast. It becomes a feast if you wish to eat it altogether. Akıncılar Bakery in Tokat for 4 generations offers you this chance of a feast with Firnistan as its new brand of a patisserie, and their muffins and cakes from their own bakery are very tasty.

Kathrine Branning who is my friend from USA lives in Manhattan in a very bohemian French building; every year she stays in an old Tokat house on Sulu Sokak almost for a month... Yes, you have read it right, she is a total fan of Tokat... Sulu Sokak is right below the castle in a neighborhood which is one of the most beautiful neighborhoods in Turkey, consisting of old Tokat houses.

in restaurants located amongst vineyards and gardens right by the roadside, are almost directly from the tree to your table, which I haven't seen anywhere else in Turkey.

Tokat Yağlısı and Rolls

Tokat yağlısı has the seat of honor for everyone from Tokat at breakfast, sometimes served with some cheese or some jam... Tokat rolls are made of chickpea yeast. Common use of sourdough is one of the aspects carrying Tokat to a higher point than others in terms of being local. Our next domestic trip with our sourdough group (Pasto Hakan and Palemek Şevki) working together for a long time, will be to Tokat for the yeasts. I believe the sign on many windows of grocery stores in Tokat saying "Homemade yeast bread" is more than enough to get excited anyway.

Fruits and Vegetables

Whichever road you take to arrive or leave Tokat, you have to pass by vineyards and orchards for 50 km. 10 % of total fruit and vegetable production of Turkey comes from Tokat. So, you get to eat the best of all in Tokat. Fruits served



So you sit at your table and let's say that you have apricot trees on one side and cherry trees on the other. You get to continue your conversation by eating them off the trees.



Tokat Kebab

Tokat Kebab

Its lamb is from Niksar,

Tomatoes from Tokat,

Eggplants from Erbaa,

Peppers from Kazanova,

Potatoes from Artova,

The craftsman who built the oven for the dishes is from Tokat,

The forger who made the shish for the kebab is from Tokat...

The chef who cooks it all is also from Tokat. So I hope you have a slight idea about what will come out of all that...

Unfortunately, I first tried Tokat kebab somewhere else than Tokat, and since the day I tried it I kept thinking I should eat it again in Tokat too. I was right after all, as you need to try it at the authentic location.

Actually I have been waiting for this trip for two years, mostly to try this kebab. I managed to come in the right season too, as kebab season starts now and continues until the end of September in its most delicious way. In my opinion, check possible flights as soon as you read this.



Firinistan Tokat Breakfast

So, What Have I Missed?

First of all, I haven't tried bat³ for which I will come back. I haven't tried keşkek baked in the oven, with its top browned to a crisp, either. I haven't even seen Turhal, Zile or Erbaa. Besides all that, one season is not sufficient to see it all you cannot cover all about Tokat just by staying here for 5 days. You have to see summer, winter, spring and autumn here, so you should visit several times. I kept thinking about it since the moment I set my foot in the city. I would come here often then.... I believe it is an important issue that Tokat protects or tries to protect its old structure and formation. If I had been a civilian authority, I would keep all of Tokat under protection, and restore it all so that it would be included in the relevant world heritage lists, which I am sure, it would. Especially the district below the castle gives you great pleasure when you watch it over at the top, as you don't see any apartment buildings. You only see one or two story high old houses and their rooftops amidst several trees... You can find a similar view in Europe but it is difficult to find it in Turkey. I think Tokat should be valued for that aspect and it should be valued a lot...

So, let's go to Tokat,
Travelling is healthy...

³ A local dish made of lentils, bulgur wheat, greens and vine leaves



EVLIYA ÇELEBİ'S ANCHOVY PİLAKİ STEW

Our location is Trebizond,
We never keep our old money,
If it wasn't for fish,
What would we do then?

In the first volume of his Seyahatname (Travel Book), Evliya Çelebi writes about Istanbul and its environs, and on 23rd of April in 1640 starts his journey, which will last for years to come.

376 years have passed after this journey. I will tell you now about this travel book which I have been reading nonstop during the recent years, and especially about anchovy pilaki⁵.

³A local dish made of lentils, bulgur wheat, greens and vine leaves

⁴A dish made of mutton or chicken and coarsely ground wheat.

⁵A type of stew with onions, oil, vegetables or fish.

Evliya Çelebi has written his Seyahatname between 1640 and 1683. Seyahatname was concluded as Evliya Çelebi passed away in 1683 following his trip to Egypt. Its original version is displayed and exhibited at the Topkapi Palace Museum in Istanbul. Printed in 10 volumes, Seyahatname covers the regions below in each volume:

Volume 1: *Istanbul and environs*

Volume 2: *Bursa, Bolu, Batum, Trabzon, Caucasia, Erzurum, Azerbaijan and Georgia, Crimea – Crete Expedition*

Volume 3: *Konya, Kayseri, Antakya, Damascus – Syria, Palestine – Urmia, Sivas, Al-Jazeera, Bulgaria and Dobruja*

Volume 4: *Van, Tabriz, Bagdad, Basra*

Volume 5: *Van, end of journey to Basra, Ochakov, counter campaign to Rakoczi, Russia, arrival in Bursa via Çanakkale, journey to Bogdan, journey to Transylvania, journey to Bosnia, Dalmatian expedition, arrival to Sofia*

Volume 6: *Expedition to Transylvania, journey to Albania, return to Istanbul, expedition to Hungary, Austria, Germany, Netherlands and Baltic Sea, journey to Herzegovina and Ragusa, expedition to Monte Negro, expedition to Kanije and Kanizsa-Croatia.*

Volume 7: *Austria, Crimea, Dagestan, Cumania, Astarkhan Khanate*

Volume 8: *Crimea, Crete, Thessaloniki, Rumelia*

Volume 9: *Kütahya, Afyon, Manisa, İzmir, Chios Island, Kuşadası, Aydın, Tire, Denizli, Muğla, Bodrum, Aegean Islands, Isparta, Antalya, Alanya, Karaman, Silifke, Tarsus, Adana, Maraş, Antep, Kilis, Aleppo, Lattakia, Damascus, Beirut, Sidon, Safed, Nablus, Jerusalem, Medina, Mecca and journey to environs*

Volume 10: *Egypt*

⁴ A dish made of mutton or chicken and coarsely ground wheat.

⁵ A type of stew with onions, oil, vegetables or fish.

As the red-hot sun rises two spears higher than the tower of fate in mid-morning, all sailors come together saying, “Fortunately, thanks to God, this is the right time” picking the boom letting the anchor aweigh. All levends (Ottoman naval officers) draw the anchor of the ship getting ready. With prayers and praises, the sails are raised, chanting Fatiha prayers saying, “Let the Lord prevail us” setting on the road. That clipper ship he has boarded also carries famous people of its time. Head Icekeeper of Sultan Ibrahim, tambour player of Sefer Aga, dulcimer player of Sefer Aga, ney player and kemancha player of Sefer Aga, a player of Messenger Black Recep Aga for Grand Vizier Black Mustafa Pasha, and two singers accompany him on this journey. As the passengers approach, Çelebi says, “Let’s sing a tune in segah (a musical mode) to eradicate the sorrow of this whirl of emotions”, and both the singing chapter and Evliya Çelebi’s journey, which will last many long years, start at the same time... First stop on Evliya Çelebi’s first journey was Mudanya. And it was Mudanya’s luck to host them for the first Friday prayers on his journey...

In his Seyahatname, Evliya Çelebi mentions imaret (soup kitchens), judges, castles, mosques, hans (inns), madrasah (schools), tekke (monasteries), merchant inns, caravanserais, bachelor inns, fountains, mills, hamams, markets and bazaars, coffee shops, bridges, sights, plateaus, sweet weather and water, food, industry, visit by the Sultan in the past, scientists, scholars and outstanding members with knowledge, in the places he had visited.

As Çelebi mentions some of the food from all of the places he had visited, he sometimes tells about the bread or vinegars, desserts, water or sherbets. Having covered thousands of different types of food in his work of 10 volumes that he had spent years on, Çelebi explains only a few recipes in detail. One of them is “Anchovy Pilaki” dish he found in Trabzon. Let’s see what Çelebi had written about this pilaki which we cannot find today:

“As you clean and wash out these anchovies, line 10 of them on skewers. Wash and chop parsley, celery, onions and leek and mix it with cinnamon and black pepper. Lay a layer of this green mixture on a pilaki pan and add a layer of anchovies. Pour the olive oil, which is the aqua vita of Trabzon, on top to cook it over, then cook mid heat for an hour or so. Those who have this dish will be full of divine light and become the light itself...”

*The first city Evliya
Çelebi visited is Bursa.
The whole story starts
as he gets on board
this clipper ship at
Sarayburnu, Istanbul in
1050 on the first Friday
of Muharram month
(23.04.1640) in mid-
morning...*



Let's have a look at the recipe I have adapted for you;

ANCHOVY PİLAKİ

Ingredients

- 1 kg cleaned and deboned anchovies
- Half a glass of Komili Cold Pressed Olive Oil
- 1 bunch of parsley
- 1 piece of celery stalk
- 1 bunch of spring onions
- 2 pieces of leek
- 1 tea spoonful of black pepper
- 1 tea spoonful of cinnamon
- 1 dessert spoonful of rock salt
- Wooden skewers

- Debone and clean the anchovies and line tens of them on a wooden skewer.
- Chop the parsley, celery stalk, spring onions and leek nicely and thin.
- Add salt, black pepper and cinnamon to this mixture in a deep dish mixing it nicely.
- Then lay a layer of this green mixture in the bottom of a casserole pilaki pan (like a flat pilaf pan) and top it with anchovies and repeat layering.
- Add Komili Olive Oil aka aqua vita on top and cook it over low heat.

.. those who have this dish will be full of divine light and become the light itself. If the dish is cooked over this recipe, it helps building sight and is good for the stomach. It is actually the serving table of Almighty God that has to be loved...



THE INDEPENDENCE TRAIL (İSTİKLAL YOLU) AND ITS CUISINE

During the War of Independence, ammunition brought from Russia via ships is unloaded at Inebolu port. Then everybody including old and young, adult and women, started carrying what they could to Kastamonu located 95 km away, passing over the Küre Mountains. Sometimes in scorching heat and sometimes in cold winter, ox carts covered in mud carry the ammunition in hunger, without water, and sometimes with oxen passing out...

This road is turned into a walking trail named as Independence Trail. I have walked this trail in one April within 3 days just by myself.

I have chosen this trail to commemorate our ancestors and also to write down what kind of food is cooked on this trail. But at the end of the trail, I have come to believe that Dear people of Kastamonu cover it without having a bite at all.

It was Kastamonu who took the first step...

During our national struggle, following ox carts, kept in separation and longing, with cribs still warm, without having received blessings, no moustache grown yet, waiting for the soldiers as if they will return as their martyrdom is known, while far far away, before the bandits arrived, in blazing cold winter and during the scorching hot summer, as the road gets mighty and the women get legendary, as history is being written page after page with each step taken....

It was Kastamonu who took the first step...





Although it is not invaded, Kastamonu, which had the highest number of martyrs during the War of Independence, also had the highest number of martyrs during the Gallipoli War. This is the Çanakkale Song which we all know by heart;

*In Çanakkale stands the Mirror Bazaar,
Mother I set forth against the enemy, oh, my youth, alas!*

*“The sun is like a turban
on fire on our heads.
Lean earth is our shoe
on our bare feet. A
villager deader than his
old mule is next to us,
not just next to us but
in our burning blood...
Villages like bear den,
towns covered in mud,
we have passed over bald
mountains. Here is how
we travelled around that
land...”*

Maybe you will be surprised by Çanakkale song that was actually Kastamonu song. I noticed two things while walking the Independence Trail. First I noticed how this country was saved, and second as most importantly, how the real owners of this country have embraced their own country.

People I have met in villages and towns carried this spirit of Independence Trail in their eyes more than a lot. Some told about how their parents have walked that trail and some couldn't as their eyes were filled with tears. As a result of all these, I came back from Kastamonu with the most impressive experience ever.

Nazım Hikmet

Independence Trail and Food

Independence Trail and Kastamonu in general has the most varied cuisine of our country. I have witnessed that quite often during the interviews I made along the trail,. I compared the food I have recorded in three counties I walked through, with those of the other counties. The food became different even in two neighboring counties. I witnessed that people in the city center didn't know about the glass kebab recipe which I had taken in Küre.

I also saw different approaches adapted on the issue of having such a varied cuisine in Kastamonu. Some said Kastamonu cuisine has so many different dishes due to the regional fauna and geographical structure; some also said the reason for such a varied cuisine is that the city had counties located both at sea level and in between Black Sea mountains and up in plains... Some mentioned another reason; Küre had always been a miner's town since the Ottoman times, and besides locals and slaves working in mines, others from other places had come to work here. They were of different nationalities, and got married to settle down around here, leaving traces of their authentic cultures, which is mostly reflected in the local cuisine.

Now I would like to mention some of the local cuisine, which is not possible for me to fit it all in here.

Eyşi (Apple Paste)

It is made of sour apples. Sour apples are boiled in a cauldron and brought to a paste and strained. As it cools off, it becomes solid and is placed in jars to be kept. If kept well, eyşi stays fresh for two years. It is usually added with water and consumed as sherbet.

Kiren (cornelian cherry) Paste

Cornelian cherries are picked and boiled in large cauldrons. After strained, the pits are removed and it is left to cool off. Like eyşi, this paste is also kept in jars for two years. Eaten at breakfast in villages, it is also consumed as sherbet next to pastries. Although it is not used in Kastamonu, I am sure it will go very well with salads and especially with dolma (stuffed food and vegetables).

Üryani (naked) Plums

Üryani plum is an authentic fruit exclusively grown in Kastamonu due to its unique fauna and flora. It is called üryani plum as it is peeled off. Nowadays it is scratched and thrown in hot water to peel, but it is more valuable when peeled by hand. Peeled plums are dried on wood and kept. It is consumed as compote without added sugar.

Tarhana and Kiren (cornelian cherry) Tarhana

Tarhana is the only common dish almost found in every village in the region. It is consumed as dried or like a tomato paste. I believe the cornelian cherry version of tarhana is exclusive to this region. All of the 5 people I have talked to were born between 1933 and 1938, and remember it as the first dish at breakfast prepared by their mothers, which indicates its importance.

Apple Molasses

I haven't seen this in any other region, but I believe this is possible. It is a type of molasses, which is very light. It is one of the indispensable items while preparing for winter in Kastamonu.



7 Sundried food made of curd or yogurt, tomato and flour

Mushrooms

The famous ones are red pine, orange cap and “noodle” mushrooms. They are indispensable to the village life. It is pickled, fried, added in börek and brined. It is treated as a type of meat. Preparations made using mushrooms are very important for the winter preparations. I feel luckier than you as I had a chance to try these in the garden of the Kıvrak family to which I was invited while passing by at Yukarı çayırılı Village.



Glass Kebab

It is called like that as the casserole used to cook this dish looks like a glass. Although the recipe is similar to a classic casserole, you cannot have enough of it when it is added to green beans grown locally in summer. The top is not totally covered when it is baked in the oven so that the smell of the oven simmers into the dish.



TRABZON – RİZE FOOD & DINING GUIDE

I am totally sure that Black Sea is not a place that makes only me happy. I thoroughly enjoy even the thought of travelling there.

Kalkanoğlu Pilaf Restaurant

In 1853 during the war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman army had gathered in Trabzon as it has a port, so that frontiers in Kars, Ardahan, Ağrı, Batumi and Caucasia were provided with supplies. During that era, the biggest problems of the army were food and clothes.



Kalkanoğlu Pilaf Restaurant

Soldiers in the frontiers could be fed with pilaf, compote and bread on a daily basis. When Osman Efendi,, Governor of Trabzon, saw this, he requested a pilaf cook from the mighty Sultan. The Palace then sent Pilaf Cook Süleyman Aga, whose nickname was Kalkanoğlu, to Trabzon. As Governor Osman Bey loved the pilaf cooked by Kalkanoğlu Süleyman Aga, he said “my people should also have this pilaf”, and a soup kitchen was opened at Pazarkapı district to give pilaf away to people of the town. As the Governor asked the pilaf to be weighed in order to be fair, the pilaf is sold only after it is weighed since then.

After the Crimean War of 1854 had ended, Süleyman Aga settled down in Trabzon and started selling his pilaf with compote at the current location. This restaurant has been at the same location since 1856, and continues to sell pilaf after weighing it together with compote on the side...

Pazarkapı Merkez / Trabzon

Bordo Mavi Fish Restaurant

This is one of the most delicious fish restaurants in Black Sea. Black Sea fish cooked traditionally can be found at this restaurant. Fish is bought from authentic Black Sea fishermen, who have been catching fish at night until dawn, and served according to the season.

My favorite ones include red mullets fried in a pan with tomatoes and garlic, as well as anchovies deep-fried in corn flour. Minzi cheese (a type of curd cheese), pickled cucumbers, Black Sea butter and oven baked potatoes served as starters are very very delicious...

Hastane Sok. No: 2 Boztepe / Merkez / Trabzon

Rüştü's Bakery

The 4th generation is running this bakery where Master Halil baked the first bread in 1920. This bakery also has significance as one of the oldest gastronomic spots in Trabzon. Back in the time it only baked bread, but has started to bake local pita dishes too. Minced meat and butter, kavurma and Sürmene style pitas are both very traditional and delicious. Although it doesn't operate like a restaurant, you can eat your freshly baked pitas with ayran next to it when it is still hot.

Pazarkapı Mah. Kalkanoğlu Sok. No: 4 / Trabzon

Ladies Market

You can find this market in Trabzon as well as many other places around Anatolia. You can find everything here, from greens freshly picked that morning from their gardens in their villages to eggs collected from their own coops, homemade buttery creamy fresh cheese and butter itself. Of course, you would be welcomed by beautiful Black Sea dialect speaking women with smiling faces. Touring around this market place will definitely give you great joy even if you didn't buy anything.

Pazarkapı Mevkii / Trabzon

Dam Fish Restaurant

This is a shabby fisherman restaurant consisting of a couple of wooden Black Sea houses on the roadside at Salacak Village. The Black Sea view, especially at the terrace tables, is magnificent. You can find all Black Sea fish here cooked according to their authentic recipes. Especially the fish grilled over hazelnut shells taste very different and very delicious. Potatoes baked in the cooking stove, and butter served as starters, are a good combo. Leave your choice of fish to the cook according to the season, and enjoy the lovely fish you will get.

Samsun Yolu Salacık Village Mah. Akçaabat / Trabzon

Lale Restaurant

One of the best merchant restaurants of Black Sea regions is located at Çayeli. Even If you are in Trabzon, you should still come here to eat, which I did several times, and it was more than worthwhile to do so. Its baked beans and kavurma are definitely so good and their yogurt almost proves that Turkish cuisine is the best in the world. Their rice pudding and roasted hazelnuts are made according to authentic Hamsiköy recipes.

I have to mention that I travelled back there after my first visit, as I kept seeing this place repeatedly in my dreams. You definitely should include it in your list if you are touring around the Black Sea region.

Hopa Cad. No: 93 Çayeli /Rize

Huzur Pide and Restaurant

This is a Rize restaurant serving since 1966. Although called Huzur, meaning peace, they have legendary kebabs, dishes, döner (gyro) kebab and legendary rice pudding. I say you should stop here only to try their rice pudding. Most famous döner kebab is also served here. Döner kebab tastes totally delicious especially in places where the meat is fatty, fleshy and tasteful, so I highly recommend it for you to try.

Cumhuriyet Cad. No: 111 / Rize



Trabzon Ladies Market,





Hamsiköy Rice Pudding

We all have heard the reputation of Hamsiköy's rice pudding, most of us have even tried it and some even tried to make it, but we never can cook it the way it should be. So, what is the secret of Hamsiköy's rice pudding then? Where does its unique deliciousness come from?

Here are the answers to these questions:

The variety of greens which the cows graze on is too many, which makes their milk so delicious.

Fresh milk is boiled a lot to create fat over it. 60 kilograms of fresh milk is left to boil on low heat for a long time and reduced to 40 kilograms over a long period of time. Consequently, the taste of milk is more concentrated and milk becomes fattier.

All dry ingredients are added into the milk without being processed at all. So the rice doesn't lose its starch as it is not boiled first. That is quite important for the consistency.

Additionally, the delicious egg yolk of the region is one of the secret ingredients to the recipe because we don't find egg yolk as an ingredient in standard recipes.

Last but not least, delicious hazelnuts of the Black Sea are roasted in a pan and ground, to be added on top of the rice pudding, which makes the famous Hamsiköy rice pudding unique.

Sümer Restaurant

If you go to Hamsiköy to eat rice pudding, there is another important stop you have to make before exiting Maçka, and it is this restaurant.

Here, you can taste fabulous dishes and delicacies of traditional Black Sea cuisine.

Kuymak (melted cheese, fried onion and chard, stuffed local kale, roasted pickled green beans, zumur (melted cheese dish), strained yogurt, Trabzon cheese, fried chard, dark fava beans in olive oil, corn bread, and anchovy omelet are the ones I have tried, and they are really very delicious. Their ayran made from village yogurt is unforgettable.

Especially zumur, among the dishes I have tried, has been my favorite. Corn bread is crumbled by hand and fried in butter with cottage cheese. Later, only egg yolks and black pepper are added and cooked slightly to be served immediately. I would definitely recommend it.

Maçka Sümela Yolu 2. Km. Coşandere Village Maçka / Trabzon

The best quality Black Sea hazelnuts are roasted in a pan, crushed and sprinkled on, thus making the Hamsiköy Sütlaç unique.

Road Break at the Plato

This is a small family establishment with two plateau houses both in Pokut and Ortan Village. Their houses, which also offer accommodation facilities, are very beautiful, and their local dishes are great. Last year (2015) was a year I travelled a lot personally. I flew almost to 130 destinations, and had a world full of food, and my best meal was served here.

I still could not forget their potatoes with clotted cream, homemade yogurt, locally made sourdough bread – which was not to be found anywhere else we checked – börek, stuffed kale, kuymak and baklava even today.

The view at Pokut plateau is especially something that cannot be found anywhere in the world. If you are looking for peace, stay away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, calm down, I believe there is no better alternative to this place in Turkey. Don't just stop here on your way around, but go there directly! This is one of the most important addresses of our Travel Book!

Ortan Village and Pokut Plateau / Rize

Ziraat Tea Garden

If you are looking for tea while you are in the homeland for tea, of course we will have some. We will be right in the heart of it actually. Ziraat Tea Garden overlooking Rize is a fantastic facility located amidst tea fields. I say you should try and have this tea served in a tea pot and brewed correctly according to the recipe.

Çaykur Facilities / Rize





In Pursuit of Sourdough

“GÜMÜŞHANE BREAD”

We are very excited since we heard about Gümüşhane bread, because it is one of the oldest breads baked in Anatolia, both technically and in regards to sourdough. I said we are terribly excited as Palemek Şevki – who is a master baker for 30 years – and Pasto Hakan – who is a boy born into the kneading trough from a baker’s family of 130 years – and myself, are all in pursuit of the oldest breads, wheat types and sourdough of Anatolia.

We have been waiting to hear of Gümüşhane bread for the last 6 months so that we can travel to the bakery in Cebeli Village located at an altitude of 1900 meters. The spring is about to come and it is April 2, and we are where we wanted to be, and we are very glad to be here.

*We believe that
sourdough, bread and
wheat are “national
issues”. We should not
and cannot forget about
these types of bread,
which are from Anatolia,
that belong to Turks and
to our own traditions.*

There they are: an old village bakery at an altitude of 1900 meters, bakers who are masters of their job, and traditional authentic Gümüşhane white wheat. We felt very “good”, also about this land, like we never had felt for a long time, while we were having bread baked in the kitchen stove, with the eggs we cooked in a copper pan with butter we just made ourselves, and tea from Black Sea.

Sourdough Gümüşhane Bread

First of all we made “gocuklama” a night before, with the main sourdough yeast that had been multiplied for over 100 years. That means we have increased our yeast for the Gümüşhane bread we were going to bake. In the morning, we were before our kneading trough made of pine, with white Gümüşhane wheat, rye, warm water, rock salt, raised sourdough yeast.

In the first stage, we held our dough and started kneading it, and then we left it to rest for an hour. Meanwhile we made “hasırlama” as we dipped our hands in the warm water. That means we have kneaded the dough really nicely so that yeast became activated. We have repeated this process three times over and left the dough to rest.

While the dough rested, we made “yorganlama” which means we have strained the flour on top of the bread and covered it with clean pieces of cloth and left it to rest for 2 hours.

Our dough was ready and we started the fire for our stone oven with pine trees, heating it up to 200 degrees. Then we placed into the oven all of the Gümüşhane bread we had shaped. We closed the oven lid and let the bread be baked for 2,5 hours considering its temper. Our traditional Gümüşhane bread was ready.

Tradition of Gümüşhane Bread “Sıcaklık” (Heat)

When bread was ready, we took it out of the oven and cut the top of the bread to place in the butter we had made that morning, and covered the lid back. We waited for the butter to melt and we ate the bread with pleasure. This treatment, done for the freshly baked bread, is called “sıcaklık” meaning heat.

That moment was a moment that we wanted to last almost for 1000 years...





Gümüşhane Bread “Sıcaklık” (Heat)

Butter

At an altitude of 1900 meters, we have milked our cow fed with greens we have collected from around us. After straining the milk, we have added it as raw milk into our machine prepared manually, and started churning it to separate the clotted part from the milk. Then when we have gathered enough clotted cream, we have left it to boil somewhere else. We have let the boiled clotted cream to cool off, and when it was cold we started churning it in the churner. After a long churning process, butter was ready. This butter in which you especially taste the whole flavor of milk, is a perfect accompaniment to the legendary Gümüşhane bread.

About Gümüşhane

You may think of a fabulous and amazing geography, Zigana, pestik or porcini mushrooms, walnuts, mulberries, sour cherries, rosehip and all. It is a fact that the view is magnificent in every season. We have only stayed for a day in Gümüşhane where we travelled only for bread, but we returned with amazing memories, and we are sure that we will come back.

We would like to thank eternally the people of Cebeli village, Kenan Karabulut, Temel Yolcu, Mustafa Akbulut and Recep Ergin, who made our journey incredible with the bread they bake, and hosted us with great Anatolian hospitality.





Capital of Turkish Gastronomy

GAZİANTEP

“Red handkerchief, green handkerchief
God bless the hands of those from Gaziantep”

I cannot tell how blessed those hands are... God bless all those for all their efforts for Antep as indicated with 9 other cities of the world and protected by UNESCO. God bless those hands of all, from baker's helper to master of beyran (rice and mutton dish), master of dough who rolls out 40 layers of dough by hand, to the kebab master standing right before his grill at 45 degrees even in summer, crafty housewives making their own pickles, making their cheese, sifting their olives, to our fathers who taught us about kebabs in the kitchen on Sundays.

World's first baklava shop Elmacıpazarı Güllüoğlu

Komili

*God bless the hands,
efforts, hearts and souls
of people of Antep who
cook their food in the
most traditional way
despite the everyday hustle
and bustle, speed and
haste; who don't change
or corrupt the original
recipes, who are proud
of their cuisine, culture
and dishes, carrying their
lahmacun, semsek (deep
fried calzones), kebab
and baklava everywhere
they go, who prepare a
paste of unripe grapes,
sour cherries, plums
and quince, consuming
everything in the right
season, inviting everyone
to their dinner tables.*

*Thanks to you our cuisine
has a bigger value now.
What else can we do
rather than kiss those
blessed hands?*

I thought my hometown; my Antep should be in this article while it is on UNESCO's agenda. I will write about places that I visit most often, my favorite Antep dishes, how to dine in Antep within 24 hours, places you must shop at, and everything else one by one for you.

You can consider this trip as alternatives for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Whenever I go to Antep even for 1 day, I try to visit all of these places in the list... Besides all of them, you should make people you know invite you for dinner at home in Antep.

I believe everyone should eat at least once in a lifetime at a house in Antep!

Coppersmith Bazaar

When in Antep, this is one of the most important bazaars you have to pay a visit to. A slightly low music in the background will accompany you while you are walking in it. The sound of copper hammered with close attention almost creates a symphony lingering in your ears when you walk through the whole bazaar.

Elmacı Bazaar

This market place right next to the Coppersmiths Bazaar is the temple of Antep gastronomy. All types of spices, pastes, sour patties, dried food, cheese, olives and everything else can be found here with the highest quality. You can buy anything you wish from all shops with peace of mind. May favorites at Elmacı Bazaar are the spices of Saçı Beyaz, baklava made by Güllüoğlu here – which is the first baklava shop in the world – and delicious küncülü (sesame) halva from Kıratlı.

Beyran

If I would have arrived in Antep in the morning, my breakfast would either include beyran or liver kebab. I would go to Metanet for beyran. This is the oldest and most delicious in Antep. Lamb meat is boiled all night for beyran. Boiled rice and lamb meat meet in a shallow copper frying pan and are boiled at high heat with spices. Then you can eat in great pleasure with Antep bread.

Liver kebab and roast

Even if I would not arrive in Antep in the morning, I cannot think of a day without liver, and I have two places in mind for that; one of them is the famous Ali Haydar Usta which opens up at 4 AM in the morning, closing at 8 AM, and the other one is Ciğerci Mustafa located in the heart of the city at Mütercim Asım... At Ciğerci Mustafa you can also try if you like, spleen, kidney, and lamb shish kebab, which are kebabs exclusive to Antep.

⁸ Crusty and very thing pizza with spicy meat filling



Then you would find yourself having a couple of shish kebabs without noticing, following a couple of wraps eaten with plenty of greens and great joy!

Antep cheese, pepper and küncülü (sesame) bread

This trio is my rock. This is another alternative for breakfast, which I would have while sipping my smuggled tea at my dear friend Aydın Uğurlu's shop at Karatarla in the morning. The crispiness of that küncülü bread, that unique taste of Antep cheese and Antep's pepper, which I believe, is irreplaceable in this world! I cannot describe you that moment...

Sahan (shallow copper pan) clotted cream

I almost forgot it, and I don't believe any breakfast would be complete without it. I always eat half of a full sahan together with küncülü bread. I definitely suggest that you should look for it. I buy mine from Lambsellers' Dairy Farm in İbrahimli. You must and should stop by at that place. Even if you don't buy anything, you can taste samples over the counter.

Licorice Sherbet

Of course if we eat that well, we would need a digestive. Licorice sherbet is the best option in this area. It is really refreshing in the summers. I believe I drink 2 liters on each trip that I make. You will find these traditional sherbet makers while walking around the market places.

After breakfast, you may feel a bit hungry while visiting the bazaars, market-places, the castle and mosques. So what can you nibble on for snacks?

Sweet sucuk or churchkhela

It is made of walnuts, hazelnuts and of course pistachios. Plenty of places sell it in all bazaars especially in Elmacı Bazaar. Dried fruits dipped in molasses are lined on strings. One bunch will be enough for you.

Kahke variations

You can hush down your growling stomach with kahkes made of Antep cheese whey. I cannot ever get enough with these tasteful kahkes I buy from a simit (sesame bagels) baker in the evenings. You can find it all around the city in many locations.

⁹ Biscuits and scones made locally in Antep with spices and sesames

After a very big breakfast, we had a couple of snacks for lunch. So what can we have for dinner?

Antep's lahmacun

It is like the summary of the whole Antep cuisine. Very thin and crispy dough filled with lots of vegetables and garlic is the encyclopedic description of lahmacun. You can order a sahan ayran to go with it, and fresh green peppers, parsley and balcan söğürmesi (roasted eggplants) are brought to the table together with lahmacun. Then you can roll your lahmacun in a wrap to eat it with all that. The smell, color and feeling you have while eating that makes me crave for it even when I write about it. It is something out of this world. You can go to Antep just for the lahmacun. You can find lahmacun in kebab restaurants or you can have the result of a collaboration of the butchers as they prepare the filling and send it to the bakery next door to be delivered at your door step. I like the ones made by Üçler and İmam Çağdaş, but the others made at other kebab restaurants and butchers have their own beautiful flavors.



Antep's Lahmacun



Antep street dining table

Kebabs

You can limit yourself to one lahmacun and try a kebab after it. The waiter will guide you according to the season. During summer they would recommend Ali Nazik kebab, eggplant kebab, kebab with ezme (hot salsa) underneath, kebab with loquats... During winter they would recommend onion kebab, simit kebab (with bulgur wheat), wok kebab... Kebab restaurants that I often visit include İmam Çağdaş located behind Coppersmith Bazaar, Çulcuoğlu in Şehreküstü and Küşleme Restaurant in Başpınar Organized Industrial Site offering breakfast, kebabs, katmer (flaky sweet pastry) and beyran, which I all love.

⁹ Biscuits and scones made locally in Antep with spices and sesames





*Zekeriya Usta Küşleme
Restaurant at Mütercim
Asım, which uses a wood
fire oven for katmer, and
Ünal's Place at Başpınar
are magnificent spots.*

Homemade dishes

Let's say that you are invited to someone's house for dinner. You will be met by a completely different cuisine here, and at the end of the evening you will be remembering everything like a dream, with memories that will later on water your mouth for good. I am very lucky about that. If I go to İlker's house, Auntie Gülnur must have cooked ekşili taraklık or Kilis kebab. She would serve Arab meatballs with cacık (tzatziki) underneath, semsek, lebeniye too. If I got to Nilgün's house, her father Uncle Aziz meets me with tray kebab, or if I go to Gökhan's house, Auntie Döne will prepare stuffed dry vegetables, kibbeh, yuvalama and so many other dishes for me. If we are at Serkan's house, Uncle Cesur and Auntie Ülkü will feed me with their own hands. I have never managed to go to Yeşim's house, and her mother never cooked for me any alacalı dövme soup (with wheat, chickpeas and lentils)...So I know the first address I will visit following this article. I say God bless those who cooked all these dishes mentioned in this article, and I would like to mention that they would not cook all these dishes only for me, but for you too if you found them.... Perhaps it is this hospitality, which differentiates Antep from other places.

And finally desserts

Baklava, baklava and baklava again. Not just any baklava with clotted cream, hazelnuts, and walnuts, but especially baklava with Antep pistachios. Don't ask about the others in Antep, as they won't have it. Don't ask for a fork either, and do eat each slice in two bites and not just swallowing it all. Hold the baklava in your hand upside down so that the fragrance of the pistachios and butter spread on its base can stick to your mouth and linger. You can stop everything just then!

Not just the baklava, but kadayıf, halvahs, ice-creams and katmer are unique and make you wish you could stay here longer while eating them.

Katmer is made for breakfast and includes lots of Antep pistachios and sahan clotted cream.

You can imagine the rest. I buy baklava from Elmacıpazarı Güllüoğlu, İmam Çağdaş, Baloglu and Koçak. Actually all baklava stores are good in their own way. Zekeriya Usta Küşleme Restaurant at Mütercim Asım, which uses a wood fire oven for katmer, and Ünal's Place at Başpınar are magnificent spots.

Our journey is almost over. It is not possible to cover the whole of Antep and its cuisine over one or two pages. I just wanted you to have an idea about it. There are many other dishes and aspects I might have forgotten, or people from Antep would say, "he forgot that too". I would ask to be excused and would like to invite you all on their behalf to Gaziantep.

¹⁰ Kebab served over roasted eggplant puree with yogurt and garlic sauce

¹¹ Sour lamb cutlets with quince

¹² Soup with minced meat, yogurt, chickpeas and wheat

¹³ Yogurt soup with rolled semolina and rice balls with lamb meat

¹⁴ Oven baked shredded wheat dessert with pistachio filling

SAAT SAAT ANTEP.

Bu saatler arasında uyandıktan sonra evden yemeğe yemeğe işin çıkıp geri gelip yemek ANTEP için önemli bir Ritüeldir. 2

Katmer Beyran Nohut dürüm SAATI. 4

Çay simit kahke melengiç kahvesi saati 7

9 bu sırada meyhan kökü şehet önemli bir hazırlanır.

10 Bağda akşamı hazırlık saati.

11 Küncülü ekmek kayırısına DİKAŞT!

★ DONDURMA KÜNEFE SAATI. 13

23.59

00.00

kebab, ciğer kavurma kelle paça saatleri. 3

05.00

06.00

07.00

CİĞER KEBAB SAATI 5

09.00

★ ILIK BAKLAVA SAATI
taze baklavalarda tezgaha konulur. amman kaçırmağın! 6

10.00

12.00

Küşlemeci Hüseyin Usta Çulcuoğlu, İmam Çağdaş, Üçler Lahmacun SAATI 8

16.00

18.00

19.00

kaşap ve fırınlarından evlere kebab ulaştırma trafiği 12

22.00

Bu kadar yiyince uyuyabilirsen uy! 14

1 ANTEP BY THE HOUR 2 It is an important ritual for Antep to wake up between these hours, go out to eat, then come back home and sleep. 3 Kebab, roasted liver, sheep's head and foot time 4 Katmer, beyran, chickpea roll time 5 Liver kebab time 6 WARM BAKLAVA TIME. Fresh baklava is served on the counter. Don't miss it! 7 Tea, simit (bagel), kahke, Melengiç coffee time. 8 Küşlemeci Hüseyin Usta, Çulcuoğlu, İmam Çağdaş, Üçler Lahmacun time. 9 By the way licorice syrup is an important digestive. 10 Evening preparations at the vineyard time. 11 Beware of the queue for Küncülü (sesame) bread. 12 Commotion to carry kebabs home from butcher shops and bakeries. 13 Ice cream künefe time. 14 Sleep if you can, after you ate so much



OMAÇ

Ingredients

- 5 pieces of dry yufka (flat bread) bread
- Half a glass of Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 300 g of Antep cheese
- 3 local soft tomatoes
- 5 green peppers
- 3 red bell peppers
- 1 onion
- Half a bunch of parsley
- Half a bunch of fresh mint
- 1 tablespoonful of hot red pepper paste
- 2 tablespoonfuls of tomato paste
- Rock salt

- Crumble dry yufka bread into a deep mixing bowl.
- Grate the tomatoes and add it on top of the crumbled bread.
- Add all the cheese and vegetables you have chopped fine and nicely into this mixture.
- After mixing all these ingredients nicely, add Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil, pepper paste, tomato paste and rock salt into it.
- Knead this mixture fine and shape it by hand to serve it later.

Note: This is a type of kneaded balls made often, and a lot especially while working at vineyard houses and fields. If it is too dry, tomatoes should be added, and if it is too wet bread should be added.

¹⁰ Sour lamb cutlets with quince

¹¹ Soup with minced meat, yogurt, chickpeas and wheat

¹² Yogurt soup with rolled semolina and rice balls with lamb meat

¹³ Oven baked shredded wheat dessert with pistachio filling



LOCAL VEGETABLES AND DISHES OF HAKKARİ

I met storytellers,
I sat in calm and cool gardens.
Samovar tea over coal fire accompanies the stories told,
And raisins next to it for sugar.

Dry winds have blown,
Cold water had been drunk,
Olives on branch have fallen down.
I walked on mountains and everywhere.
I have seen abandoned towers, burnt houses.
I walked through rainbow gardens of flowers.
I kept quiet.

I passed through creeks, saw snowy mountains, and listened to stories.
Sorrow has accompanies stories then
A cool wind has blown
Olives have fallen off the branch
The story is over.

M. Ömür Akkor

*Let's come to the point.
My hands have not been
sticky with juice while
having fruits for a long
time. In a recent article,
I have mentioned that
unfortunately, garden
vegetables and fruits
are a lie, and perhaps
our children will not
have real food at all. But
it is not the case here.
Protected local seeds,
efforts placed are as
usual here. Let's have
a look at vegetables
and cuisine of Hakkari
together...*

Hospitality

Imagine you didn't have any guests for a very long time; no, I am not talking about relatives, siblings, aunties, uncles. I am talking about guests who arrive out of the blue. I am talking about being a guest just to ask "how are you?" and know what it is like to be there and not for political reasons or ideas. Mine was such. After all that had been written and talked about, perhaps I was a guest to say "get well soon"....

But this hospitality is somewhat different, it was a different host, I can never forget.

I really cannot forget those days when I have been hosted with the friendship, brotherhood and hospitality of Hakkari. I have never been hosted like that for a long time, maybe never before.

Local Vegetables of Hakkari

Cucumbers

Seeds of local vegetables and fruits are saved and replanted in Hakkari because it is not possible to keep seed of vegetables brought from elsewhere. So Hakkari cucumbers stay authentic. Cucumbers are not collected when in season, and are kept on their branches until the end of the last month in autumn. Cucumbers on branches grow yellow at the end of the season. The farmer collecting these picks seeds off the dried cucumbers; places them in a bag, dries and keeps them. He plants them again in spring, protecting this fragrant, hard, juicy and authentic cucumber.

Tomatoes

Just like cucumbers, saved tomato seeds are replanted in spring to grow as fragrant, fabulous pink Hakkari tomatoes. People of Hakkari telling about their tomatoes say, "You can smell heaven when you touch its leaves".

White onions

This onion, which has a yield only once in three years, is especially protected. Onions planted in spring in the first year yield seeds in autumn. These seeds are planted in spring in the second year, which yield another seed similar to shallots. Third seeds

are replanted in spring in the third year, and authentic and real Hakkari white onions are harvested then.

And we sell onions ...

Green beans

It was a first when I witnessed juice oozing when I broke green beans into two. The soil, water, weather make these green beans something else, and that is a fact. The seeds collected and kept in autumn are replanted next year in spring, protecting the local seeds.



Fauna and Greens of Hakkari

It is surrounded by glaciers, located between Testere Mountains and Sümbül Mountain at an average altitude of 2400 meters (like a city founded on top of Uludağ Mountain) and River Zap goes around it.... Hakkari, with utterly different weather and waters, reveal its features mostly in its vegetables, fruits and greens.

Flowers with all sorts of fragrances, greens, herbs and trees loaded with fruits crown it all.

Siyabu: Usually added into herby cheese, is the most famous herb of the region.

Suvve: Growing near creeks and rivers, it is also used in herby cheese making.

Bike: It is also called bride's green, growing in mountains and arid areas, and is used in local dishes.

Kevi: Used in Keledoş and Kurdish meatballs, it grows up in the mountains in arid areas.

Cate: It grows in marshy green pastures, and is used as an alternative to dried mint in dishes.

Hagedan: This herb that grows in mountains around creeks and water, is plenty especially around Zap river. It is used for medical purposes and in pilafs.

Alu: It only grows in spring around forest areas. It is usually used in meals during spring, and added in omelets.

Cavşin: It grows in marshy areas, and is used in dishes.

Si: This is wild garlic.

Mendi: It grows in mountains, and is used a lot in cheese and bulgur wheat pilaf.

Liş: This is the first green growing after the snow melts in spring. It is added in omelets and bulgur wheat pilaf.

Kurat: It grows in bunches on top of Sümbül Mountain, and has a garlic smell. It is another type of wild garlic.

Halendur: It grows in plateaus, it is peeled off and used in salads. It is also considered a fruit.

Kehizer: This is a type of thorn, and its roots are squeezed to be used as chewing gum. Its seeds are dried to produce hıhik.

Hıhik: These are kehizer seeds and eaten like sun flower seeds.

Türüsü: This is a type of thorn with yellow flowers, and is peeled like a fruit. It is important for cheese yeast.

Gevuzan: It is also called as bitin or wild pistachios. It is added in cheese when green, and eaten like that too. In winter it is dried, ground with its shell, and mixed with honey, and its paste is used as medicine for the stomach.

¹⁵ Typical Anatolian dish with meat, chickpeas, lentils and white beet.

Breakfast

I thought of what I have been having for breakfast when I sat by the breakfast table in Hakkari. We always accept what we know of, but what about those we don't know about? It was just like that at this table, and there were no traces of the industrial breakfast we have in our city life, I couldn't believe what we had.



Eggs with siyabu; this fried green omelet made with all types of green in the region is more favored when made with siyabu, which is the first green that grows after snow. If it is not that time of year, siyabu is brined and used all year around.



Kade; is a type of katmer made with walnut paste.

Kavurma is the lamb meat fried slowly with tail fat. It can also be cooked with eggs.

Çukurca tahini (ground sesame seeds); local sesames growing in Çukurca are double roasted to make tahini.

Bike; is another herbal green eaten for breakfast. It is added in börek and roasted as well.

Jajı; strained yogurt, dill, butter, fresh mint, si, mendi, siyabu tassels are mixed altogether.

Puğhing; wheat is roasted and ground, to be roasted again with butter. It is eaten with honey or molasses.

Ağafk; butter, flour and eggs are roasted together.

Ğebis; butter, flour, sugar and honey are roasted together.

Compote, cookies and cheese trio: for breakfast usually compote of plums and apples is served next to walnut butter rolls and herby cheese. Actually this trio is more than enough for proper breakfast.

Herby Cheese

Hevin – Herby cheese yeast: In April gahevin, gehe, türüsü and haspist roots are kept in water for 1 day and peeled off. The next day four of them are boiled in a copper cauldron for 5 hours. One bunch of wild greens with yellow flowers, dried ginger and rahazer, dried hot green peppers and a bunch of gahevin and haspist not boiled, are all placed at the bottom of a large earthenware jar, and covered with juice of boiled greens' roots after being strained. The top of the jar is covered with white cloth, and left to rest for 3 days. If this mixture changes its color into dark red or color of tea, then our yeast is ready. If it doesn't, then this process is repeated.

In the evening, milk from cows and goats is strained before it cools off, and poured into a copper cauldron (it is important to be quick for that). Then the yeast made by us is added into this cauldron and stirred really well. At this stage, wild greens are added into the milk, and this is left to boil. One type of green is used for cheese, but different types of cheese can be made using different greens. Stirring continues until the cheese starts to boil, and the heat is turned off right before it comes to a boil. Then it is placed in other vessels covered with cloth.

Eaten fresh like that, this cheese can last for 1 week like that. But within one week, this cheese is filled in earthenware jars, and buried under the soil and left to rest for 6 months. After 6 months, cheese is unburied and eaten.

As the fauna has so much variety, it becomes the secret of this honey. As it is protected through traditional methods, it helps the honey to be unique after all.

Chickpeas, broad beans and wheat are boiled together and then cooked with potatoes, garlic, yogurt and *çavşınk* (blue-eyed grass). But before this grass is added in the meal, it is boiled and strained. *Keledoş*, which is also in Van cuisine, is cooked with *keş* (dried curd) in Van and with yogurt in Hakkari.

Rište

Actually this is a type of noodle cut thicker.... The dough prepared by flour, eggs and water is cut in big pieces and cooked with chickpeas and cate grass. The aroma of cate makes this dish utterly different than anything else.

Kurdish Patties

The bulgur wheat patties prepared by fine bulgur wheat, sweet basil and red peppers are boiled. Meanwhile a sauce is prepared using green lentils, tomato paste, onions and butter to be poured over the patties. Although there are several recipes for the sauce in the region, lentil sauce makes it exclusive to Hakkari.

Savaalobya

Broad beans exclusive to Hakkari are boiled and then cooked together with bulgur wheat pilaf.

Kiyis

Lamb meat on bones is boiled for a long while and then meatballs made of this lamb meat is cooked together with fresh walnuts, raisins, ground wheat, white onions, sumac and tomato paste. Kiyis is one of the two important dishes served at weddings and invitations in Hakkari.



Doğeba

It is prepared with meatballs made of lamb meat, boned lamb meat, yogurt, dahn (ground wheat) and cate. This is another meal served at weddings and invitations.

Boned Kavurma

Boned lamb meat is boiled for a long time with a small amount of water. Then, when the water is drained, the meat is roasted.

Hegedan Pilaf

As snow melts in spring, after the first grass harvest, hagedan is picked as it reaches 20 cm in height. Then it is dried and used in dishes. The most common and cooked recipe is pilaf.

First hagedan is boiled, and then the meal is prepared. This rule also applies to the pilaf recipe.

Tırşik

Fine bulgur wheat is kneaded nicely with flour and water. Ground or pounded walnuts are roasted with butter and flour. This walnut mixture is used as a filling in the thin bulgur wheat dough rolled out as big as a palm. Then these dough pieces are folded. One of them serves as one portion. Then they are boiled in a pot with a mixture of çavşin, sumac juice and white onions, and served with its soup.

Maşin Soup

Mung beans, chickpeas and wheat are left in water over a night. A day later, onions and all the legumes kept in water are added onto it. Sufficient amount of water is added and cooked together. Flour and tomato paste are fried in butter to be used as white roux to be added right before the dish is cooked. It is added in the soup and served.

Hakkari says;

*“Oh, those mountains,
Perhaps I will be purred
with joy here and reach
the clouds,
Dark grapes off their
branches,
Or the road laid before
me
Are as burdened as my
grief...”*



TITLE DEED OF ANATOLIA AHLAT

As we thought, it is a “national matter”, we went to Bingöl University this year for a lecture and practices. As we were there we have visited Ahlat and Adilcevaz, which I have seen and adored before. We have arrived in Ahlat at night and stayed at a hotel next to Van Lake. I was very curious to see what kind of view I was going to wake up to, and I guess I couldn't sleep well because of this excitement. I went to the window with the first light of day...

*I had a lake in turquoise,
green, blue, whatever you
call it, before me, Gevaş
and Hakkari Mountains
were behind the lake, I
had Nemrut on my right
and Süphan on my left,
behind me was Ahlat, the
first land of Turks with its
stone houses...*

*I think time had stopped
for me then...
At night, we had told the
hotel that we wanted to
have breakfast by the
lake, and the table was
ready right away.*

Breakfast

Adilcevaz walnuts almost released their oil when you squeezed them between your hands; there was Van cheese, flatbread, butter, Bitlis honey, Ahlat clotted cream, village eggs and many others... This breakfast was something unforgettable. And the songs of Reşid Behbudov which accompanied us.

It was a moment that you wished it would last 1000 years.

Turks' First Stamp in Anatolia

"AHLAT'S GRAVESTONES"

Ahlat is the third city titled "Dome of Islam" after Balkh and Bukhara. It is a very important city for Turks and Muslims, with so many saints, dervishes and fighters it had brought up.

One of the largest cemeteries in the world is located in this important Turkish town (almost 200 acres). Gravestones in this cemetery are the first stamp marks by Turks placed in Anatolia. They are also called as Orkhon Inscriptions in Anatolia, as Turks have blended both their own cultures and cultures of Anatolia in this land where they stayed while using it as a transition point from Central Asia into Anatolia.

In my opinion, these gravestones are very important for each Turkish citizen to see. They also have been significant, as Ottomans called this town as "Land of Ancestors" back at the time.

Some of the graves stones are so big; they look as if they reach for the sky and are made of Ahlat stone. These gravestones also include inscriptions of sections from the Koran and prayers as well as notes on the life and deeds of the person buried underneath it. Due to the notes written on them, these gravestones are accepted to have a language of their own and they provide real information about the culture and life of their period.



Examples of texts on the gravestones;

Oh God, don't treat us bad,

Let God heal his loneliness,

Let God forgive his sins,

Oh God, have mercy and grace on him,

*Let God make his migration easy, allow him in God's grace, have mercy on
the remaining members of the family, allow him in God's heavens and accept
the good deeds he had done, forgive his sin,*

That young bred rose is gone, spring branches envied his appearance



Love, Patience and Art...

Tahsin Kalender

Enlisted as a human treasure by UNESCO, a master that none of us knows... He is a mason, master of life, master of human beings; whatever you call him. He is 89 years old and had made almost all of Ahlat with the stones he had personally cut. He had cut stones for 60 years building houses. He is the king with his children who value him although we don't. Pride, happiness, respect in his sons' eyes are immediately perceived at the first glance. How happy I say, is the one who is content with what he is, and has no expectations.

Ahlat stone is from Nemrut Mountain and is a natural brick kilned by lava from the volcanic Nemrut Mountain. The best version has more glass in it, which allows it more resilience. So it is unique in the world. Graves of martyrs from Alparslan's army still stand as they were built with these stones back at the time.

Quarried as rocks in the past, the stones were fragmented with the help of nails, but today whipsaws are used, having ended the masonry mastership. New buildings collapse during earthquakes while the old ones stand still as the grooves formed with nails do not form with a whipsaw, and the stones don't hold onto each other then.

Uncle Tahsin says, "There is no stonemason anymore, but stone setters". He is called the architect of Ahlat because all the houses built are his work or works by his students... Planning a city like that, building it, spending 60 years in a town...

The World becomes a better place thanks to people like him, and Anatolia creates a blend with a major culture and humbleness for thousands of years, thanks to people like him.

Hanımeli Restaurant / Adilcevaz

It would be a shame not to stop at Adilcevaz when in Ahlat. You almost want to never leave here when you look at the view of the city located below an Urartian castle and the lake.

Hanımeli Restaurant in Adilcevaz which we stopped for lunch was very good in terms of local dishes. I would like to mention that I had the best food in Eastern Anatolia, which I have visited several times before. Ayran dish with acanthus was really very good, and I had two plates of it. The other delicacies brought to our table were keledoş, keşkek, murtağa (vegetable and eggs dish) and molasses halvah. Both the food and people from Eastern Anatolia are utterly different in so many ways...



Mount Nemrut



Amir Ali Tomb



Ancient city



Amir Bayındır Tomb



VAN

This place is something else,
What was told was different,
What I have understood was different,
What had happened was different,
What those that lived had told was different
What was written was different...

*There has never been
a time when I haven't
chosen any of my friends
as they were the "other"
and I have seen that
it has been the same
everywhere I travelled to.*

*So how did it all happen?
It is really impossible to
understand!*

Van is one of the most beautiful places in Turkey. Its nature and its mountains, lake and historical monuments are out of this world... It is a city of civilizations where tens of civilizations have ruled upon.

It is difficult to study, to go to a hospital or walk around here. Someone I know, who is from Bitlis, goes to Diyarbakir to see a doctor (210 km) ... All the expressways I have traveled in the morning are full of students. They are going to their schools, kilometers away, on trucks, tractors, or running on foot, to study. Another person says, "I commit my son to the ground due to an illness from which you can be cured with medicine" ...

I have collected very dramatic stories from Van, from Bitlis, from Ahlat... Everybody is exhausted; everybody is waiting to be reunited. As I enter Petrol Ofisi gas station, I am told: "Please, you first, you are our guest". I guess we also have lost our sense of peace since the time we have lost this sincerity in our cities.

Bright, barely 17-year-old girls, were in front of me at Van Vocational School for Girls, where I was going to give a lecture that day. No matter how far life had thrown them back, they were accelerating towards the future. They did not think of themselves as lacking or incomplete, they were like everyone else; they had wants, wishes, and dreams... I was fascinated by each and every story I listened to. While most of their peers were married off, weren't allowed to leave home, became victims of honor killings and bride exchanges, they were studying. Now I am more hopeful than ever, I didn't want to digress, but you should come here and decide for yourself.

Around the Lake

Going around the Van Lake is one of the best travel routes in Turkey, in my opinion. If you take this route, which is about 400 km, during May or September, you would be going in the most beautiful time of the region.

Gevas, Tatvan, Ahlat, Adilcevaz... The sceneries on your route are unbelievable, the scents indescribable. During this two-day route, I would say that you should definitely spend your first night in Ahlat, and wake up to the amazing view of the Van Lake. Sumbul, Suphan, Tendurek...

Van Herbed Cheese

Usually made from ewe's or goat's milk, sometimes from a mixture of both. After the ewe or goat is milked, the milk is boiled. Even though nowadays the milk is boiled on stoves, in the past it used to be boiled in copper cauldrons, on wood fire. After that, boiled milk is filtered three times through traditional leşek or parzılık cloths.

Filtered milk is left to rest and cool down. When the milk cools down enough so that it does not burn one's hand, yeast and herbs are added. Again, even though nowadays ready-made cheese yeast is used, in the past it was fermented with white root herb and cinnamon.

The herbs added at this stage are either fresh or they are boiled inside the remaining whey beforehand for 1 hour. 4 different types of herbs are used:

Mendi

Sirmu

Thyme

Heliz

Fermented cheese takes a yogurt-like consistency after it is left to rest for 1 hour. The cheese, which now has a yogurt-like consistency, is put into cloth filters (parzın) in 3 kg chunks and left for filtering. The cheese is rested on a piece of wood and a stone is placed on top of the cheese. This process takes approximately 4-8 hours.

Ready fresh cheese is salted with Canik salt and pushed into earthenware jars. Then the jars are turned upside down and buried in the ground. The cheese becomes ready to eat 10 days later. However, the favorite of the region is aged cheese. It can be aged up to 18 months. 55 kg fresh or 37 kg aged cheese can be made from 275 kg milk.

Van herbed cheese is on the tables for all three meals. People eat cheese before leaving the table after each meal. Cheese maker Süleyman Serindere says "Even if we eat meat, or we eat roasted meat, we do not consider ourselves to have eaten unless we eat cheese" while telling us about Van herbed cheese, and he emphasizes the value of their cheese saying "For it to be Van herbed cheese, the milk, the milked animal, the grass that the animal eats, the yeast, the herb inside the cheese, they all have to be from Van".

Cacık or Skim-Milk Cheese

Firstly, yogurt is made from the region's milk and filled into goatskin/sheepskin bags. Butter is taken out and the remainder is boiled and cooled down, this is called cacık.

Kurut

Prepared cacık is made into balls and left to dry in the sun for 1 week. Water is added before it is used.

Where is Kurut used?

Ayran (yogurt drink)

Keledoş

Kurdish meatballs

Ayran food

Anywhere yogurt is required

FROM VAN CUISINE

Ekşili (Sour)

Den (wheat), chickpeas, beans, sometimes meat, are boiled together. When it is nearly cooked, dried plum rollup, coriander or other herbs are added. It is served with butter. Sometimes eggs are used instead of meat.

Ayran Food

Sour yogurt or kurut is diluted like ayran. It can be served cold or hot. Especially spinach and coriander are preferred.

Keledoş

An ashoura (Noah's pudding) style dish made with lentils, chickpeas, den (wheat), beans, yogurt and regional herbs.

Kurdish Meatballs

Bulgur and basil are kneaded and made into balls. Served with kurut and butter with tomato paste on top.

Sengeser

Green lentils are boiled, then cooked with dried onions, tomato paste and cacık (a kind of whey cheese).

Fried Plum

After roasting dried plums with butter and sugar, sherbet is added. It is served with walnuts after it absorbs the sherbet.

VAN BREAKFAST

In the past, breakfast places were called “Sütçü” (Milkman). Nowadays, all breakfast places in Van are called sütçü. Sütçü Kenan is one of them; they have been serving traditional Van Breakfast for three generations. We grab a bite and talk. He says that the reason breakfast is so famous and diverse goes back to an old tradition, and starts to explain.

Early in the morning, the head of the household is about to go to the field to work, and he does not have the heart to wake up his wife at such an early hour, so he grabs something for breakfast, and leaves. All his friends who are going to work on the field that day do the same thing. So, everyone brings a little something from their home. All these breakfast items specific to Van are placed in the middle, and eaten together along with some tea. While telling this story, Sütçü Kenan particularly emphasizes how courteous the men of Van are.



Now let's see the must-haves of Sütçü Kenan;

- Van herbed cheese
- Water Buffalo Cream
- Walnut
- Çatak Karakovan Honey
- Cacik (a kind of whey cheese as I explained previously)
- Murtaga; butter and flour are fried and served with scrambled eggs. You can also add some honey if you wish.
- Kavut; Wheat is roasted and ground into some kind of coffee. Coarsely ground wheat is fried in butter and brought to the table. You can serve it with either honey or jam if you wish.
- Molasses with tahini
- Various kinds of fresh cheese
- Breads; silap pita, core (kete/pastry), lavash (thin pita), tandir (earth furnace) bread.

You should definitely stop by here if you go to Van...

Sütçü Kenan: Cumhuriyet Cad. Kahvaltıcılar Sok. No: 7/A Van



Muradiye Waterfall

Komili



A Winter Tale

AĞRI

It was a delightful trip to the East, and I am still under its influence. The weather was cold, exactly like the 'East'. I can forget neither the tea I drank early in the morning, nor the warm bread baked in tandır, nor the butter that melts inside that bread.

First Night in Ağrı

Yesterday the weather was 40 degrees warmer in Cyprus. Now the weather is frosty, there is ice, the road is long. I am about to hit the 300,000-km mark, and cover the whole of Turkey

Ağrı was the 78th entry in my travel book. Turkey is endless, roads are endless, Anatolia is endless. Also, my affection towards my homeland, towards Anatolia, towards her people, is endless.

It is around -26 degrees. While it was -6 degrees at around 15:00 hrs. it reaches -17 as of 18:00 hrs. No matter what kind of thermal underwear you wear, no matter how tightly you put on your scarf around your neck, you will feel this cold, I mean, there is no way out of it. In contrast to all this cold weather, the tea you drink at the local tea house, in front of the heating stove, and a piece of bread you break at the floor table, are that much warmer.

Old Ağrı

Ağrı used to be a tourism city. During the 1950s tourists coming through the border gate, Mount Ararat enthusiasts, and domestic travelers, used to meet here. At the time, when someone talked about the restaurants of Ağrı, the meat they roast was famous all the way until Istanbul.

Doğubayazıt used to be the Paris of that period. Because only in Europe you could have found shops like the ones that sell the items coming through the border. Swiss chocolates, fruit syrups, beverages, all kinds of fabrics, scarves... Most of the time there was a large crowd, resembling a fairground.

Now, after long years, Ağrı has become a distant, inaccessible land. Not to mention hundreds of excuses for declaring it inaccessible.

Ağrı is neither distant, nor cold, nor inaccessible!

I have returned from Ağrı with hundreds of incredible sceneries, dinner tables each more beautiful than the other, great hospitality, delightful nature and lots of memories. You should also go, as I am sure you would be returning with even more memories.

İshakpaşa Palace

Last great building of the Ottoman Empire during the Tulip Era.

According to the Takkapı Inscription of the Harem Hall inside the Palace, it was built in 1199 Year of the Hegira, 1784 AD.

The palace is 5 km from Doğubayazıt, and it is, in fact, a Bey's Castle. The 116-room palace has a tomb, mosque, ramparts, inner and outer courts, dewan and harem halls, and wards.

The palace incorporates elements from Ottoman, Persian and Seljuk architectures. Çolak Abdi Pasha of Cildiroğulları had it built in 1685, however, it took its final form after a few adjustments during Ishak Pasha II period, in 1784.



Tradesmen's Breakfast in Ağrı

Filled kete, herbed curd, cağ roast, yellow butter, Ağrı Aladağ honey, tandır bread... I always loved the eastern breakfast. Ağrı has a distinctive breakfast. If you find all the products in one place, it means you are sitting at a tradesman's table, just like me. I would like to say that it is generally a respectable breakfast if you eat it with tandır bread.



Abdigör Meatballs

Famous Ishak Pasha's father Abidin Pasha's meatball. A black stone is taken from the river bed. Since water has been flowing over the rock for years, it has become hard and flat. The most important ingredient of this meatball is this stone. After the stone is taken, the mid-section of a freshly butchered leg of veal is taken, and placed on this stone. It is beaten with a mallet made from elk tree. The reason the mallet is made from an elk tree is so that it would not fall apart while beating the meat. 1 kg of meat is beaten for 1 hour. When the meat turns into a paste, chopped white onion is added and it is made into fist sized meatballs. Then these meatballs are put into plenty of water and boiled. 15 minutes later rice is added and pilaf is made. When the pilaf is also cooked, butter is burned. Oh my...

Ergül Hanım's Restaurant / Doğubayazıt

A shop in Doğubayazıt that makes traditional Ağrı dishes. Ergül Hanım has a hand for delicious dishes. They are in this business as a family. I have eaten these with real pleasure:

Abdigör Meatballs (Küfte Pilaf)

It was very delicious, and she made it just as I described above, in the traditional style.

Çiriş Meal

It is made with almost all the regional herbs. We ate with çiriş. We boil and strain the herb, then fry it with onions and cook it with rice or bulgur. With tomato paste, with oil, with yogurt, it has lots of types. Actually, I don't understand why we only think about the Aegean region when we talk about herbs. I think you will understand better what I mean when you read other sections, particularly on Hakkari and Van.

Halise

Herise, keşkek, aşur, and so on, it has many names. Its name in this region is Halise. Wheat and lamb are put into the oven overnight. In the morning, the materials taken out from the oven are beaten with a wooden mallet and made into a paste. Burned yellow butter goes on top. It tastes different in every region, depending on the meat, butter, and the talent of the cook.

Kelem (Cabbage) Rolls with Apricots

A delicious cabbage roll with lamb and butter, it is covered with dried apricot once the rolls are lined up inside the pot. I think it is brilliant. Especially the smell and taste of apricot multiplies the taste of the cabbage roll. I say you should also try this style at home.

İsmail Beşikçi Cad. Doğubayazıt / Ağrı



Iranians Restaurant



Sofi's Place

Sofî Döner (Gyro)

A 38-year-old Ağrı Restaurant, maybe the continuation of those beautiful days of Ağrı. Chef Rifat Özmen is from Ağrı, and he is also the owner of the restaurant.

He slices the first serving of his döner at 10:30, and it is finished before 14:30. But don't think that he makes a small amount, he makes 150-200 kg döner per day, and I don't think even restaurants in Bursa, the homeland of döner, can sell that amount from a single shop in one day.

He prepares the döner mixture from 100 kg beef and 40 kg lamb, he uses female animals during the winter, and male animals during the summer. Chef Rifat requires that all the animals he uses must have been to the highlands. He seasons leaves of meat with yogurt, onion and salt, and leaves it to rest for 2 days. The döner he serves with tandır bread and vegetables is really very delicious. The effect of the region's fauna and the fact that the animals have grazed at the highlands is obvious.

Hanibaba Bulvarı No: 28 Centrum / Ağrı

Places near Ağrı

Now that you are in Ağrı, I suggest you wander around with your car. One of the most important reasons for this is seeing the Mount Ararat more clearly. My first stop here was Iğdır at the skirts of Mount Ararat, after leaving Doğubayazıt. The view is absolutely gorgeous. If the weather is nice, it makes you happy to see the peak of Ararat from time to time.

Iğdır is the only city with a microclimate in the region. After that cold, you would think you are in the Mediterranean region. There are fruit trees everywhere, vineyards and orchards, and a subtle Azeri dialect.

Dıngılıgöl Restaurant / Karakoyunlu / Iğdır

This place has been on my list for 2 years. This is a 17-year-old Eastern restaurant. Its owner, Leyla Hanım, is a rare kind of operator.

It is the only restaurant of the district, and in my opinion, it is unique, maybe in all of Turkey. Because she buys only rice and sugar from the market. Other than that, her husband carves the meat, while dried beans, chickpeas, flour, wheat, milk, yogurt, butter, bread, vegetable, and fruit are all of her own production. I have to say I am very impressed. We think that all the gastronomy is in Istanbul, and think that the world Michelin list is valuable; meanwhile at the edge of Anatolia, a woman, unaware of the rest of the world, is trying to be the best she can, with a smile on her face.

What more can one say other than “May God bless her”.

Here soup is 2 TL, pilaf 2 TL, beans 5 TL, chickpeas 5 TL, meat dish 8 TL, yogurt, cacık, pickles are their treat.

Karakoyunlu District / Iğdır



Iranians Restaurant / Iğdır

One of the oldest restaurants of Eastern Anatolia, 64 years old, yes you didn't misread, it has well passed half a century. The family have started this business when they moved from Tebriz to Iğdır. Nowadays the 3rd generation has taken over from their grandfather. The shop starts serving soup in the morning, and it is open till midnight. However, if you go there in the morning I suggest you eat bozbaş instead of soup.

Bozbaş, which is also called piti in Kars, is a dish from both Azeri, Iranian and our culture. Meat is cooked inside aluminum containers for a long time, and comes to your table with saffron, chickpeas, a mallet, onions, and tandır bread. If you want you can crush the meat and chickpeas inside the cup and make a wrap with onions, or if you wish you can slice the bread, pour the dish on it and eat it like that.

Örgütlü, İrfan Cad. No: 13 Centrum / Iğdır

Life at ıldır Lake

The weather is ice cold, the lake is frozen during the night...

It is incredibly impressive. If you don't see this place during this season, I think there is no point in seeing anything else.

Come here. The life goes by with excuses. Listen to lives of the people here, and be grateful. Drink a cup of dark tea.

Yes, it is a bit far from Ağrı, but you definitely have to see ıldır if it is winter. One cannot comprehend how such a large body of water can freeze, or how it can be so cold. There is a deep silence and a burning cold.

Traveling on the lake on a carriage, eating the fattiest fishes from the lake, and drinking tea steeped on top of a heating stove in front of the lake, are some of the other beautiful parts of this travel. I guess I will come back here a few times. Because I am still thinking about here...

Thanks

I have been a guest of Yıldırım, Erat, Köseoğlu, and ağa families of Ağrı. The hospitality of the East is famous, as you know. I have received more than my share of that hospitality. The only thing I can do is to thank, and I really am thankful beyond words. I am forever indebted but I also know that I have another home in Ağrı from now on.





A SMALL TOWN CALLED **EĞİN...**

It has been at the top of my Turkey list, waiting to be visited, for almost 10 years. Finally, I have gone, I have seen, eaten, drunk, returned; but my mind is still there.

I went there using the stone road over Divriği, it took four hours to go 25 km. It was an amazing journey, with tunnels carved into rocks, rain, flood, cliffs, dark canyon, and Munzur Mountain at the top. Finally, at the end of one of the largest canyons of the world, the Darkness Canyon (Kanalıklar Kanyonu), Eğin embraced me.

It really is one of the most scenic districts of Turkey. Eğin should be seen during each season, as it is a different beauty every time. By the way, if you say that just scenery is not enough, you can also come to Eğin for various sports activities, such as rafting, climbing, parachuting, and water skiing.

Eğin, or with its new name Kemaliye, is a district of Erzincan... During the history of the republic, first it has been a district of Malatya, then Elazığ, and then finally Erzincan. However, people of Eğin do not use its new name, and they consider themselves under the banner of Harput.

The first registered Turkish carpet manufacturer and 2nd registered company in the history of the republic, the “Turkish carpet company” is here. Bankers of Galata, Armenian bankers of Eğin, who left the Sorak Valley; former owners of the gold in Sorak Valley... Ahmet Kutsi Tecer’s Apçağa Village, the one in his verse “there is a village there, far away”. There are no prisons here; since the chamberlain of the meat duty was given to the people of Eğin in the 16th century they have been famous for their butchers.

Let’s talk about its cuisine!

EĞİN CUISINE

Fishes of Eğin

Pike (artificial)

Mirror carp (artificial)

Carp

Grey Mullet

Gümüşgöz

Tabak veren

Trout

So how are the fish cooked?

Boned fish; on metal sheet with vegetables

In butter

On barbecue

Buried in embers (mirror carp)

In the oven

Eğin's Hunting Cuisine

Both its geography and the variety of wild animals make hunting an important occupation in Eğin. Hunters make their own cuisines and recipes.

Grilled partridge

Quail crock (whole, with butter, tomatoes, garlic, pepper, onion) (in the oven)

Tarhana soup with bulgur pilaf (especially during vintage season)

Boneless rabbit meatballs

Stew

Bulgur pilaf with garlic

Tin chicken in a hole

Mountain goat, in the usual style (Hunting is prohibited, only allowed with quotas during the season).

Old and current dishes

My favorite thing about Eğin has been their loyalty to their food. I was very satisfied with that. There are old dishes and they are still prepared. This made me really happy.

Eğin soup (aşlık soup, soup with cowpea); made with döğme, dried cow beans, green beans, basil and a bit of tomato paste.

Quince kalye; Made with quince, lamb, tomato paste and sugar.

Bumbar (mumbar) stuffing; intestines filled with bulgur, basil, onion, black pepper, chili pepper mixture. Meatless bumbar is first boiled then fried or oven cooked.

Eğin bean salad (skim-milk cheese bean salad); the salad is prepared with mint, basil, tomatoes, peppers, and onions, then a lot of skim-milk cheese is added (curd). Especially good for breakfast in my opinion.

Fried meat; beef is boiled in a small amount of water for hours.

Roasted thistle: Thorns of a small thistle are weeded out and boiled. Then it is covered in egg and flour, and roasted in oil. **Kenger meal:** Thorns of a small thistle are weeded out and boiled. Then it is cooked with tomato paste and onions. **Blind stuffing (Kör dolma):** This is not a stuffing where you stuff something. Leaves are minced, cooked with bulgur, tomato paste, butter, and onions. Same stuffing can be made with other ingredients. **Lambs insides:** Minced meat is made from lamb's liver. It is roasted on oil with some onions and served with lots of herbs.

Mihla: It is some kind of poached egg made with yogurt.

Sırın: Some kind of silor or siron. Tomato paste, garlic, chili pepper and butter are roasted in a pan. Warmed up yaran is poured on phyllo bread. Melted butter with tomato paste and fresh spices are added on top.

Yarma pilaf: It is made just like meatless keşkek or gendarme pilaf, which is popular in the east.

Belly saute: Belly mountain mushrooms under Çaçar herbs are roasted and grilled.

Kiriş: Kiriş herb (Asphodelus) is cooked with onions, tomato paste, and rice, just like a leek dish.

Hışık stew: Dried green beans are cooked with dried bones.

Dried bones: Bones are dipped in salt and flour in September, and left to dry for 1 month.

Roasted dried fruit rollup (pestil): Dried mulberry rollup is roasted with walnut in butter.

Fig and apricot stuffing: Dried figs and apricots are soaked in water, then roasted in butter with walnut.

Lök: Mulberries and walnuts are put into a mortar and beaten for 1000 times. Now their oils are released and it has become a paste. When you hit it with the pestle it makes a "lök" sound, and it is ready.

Beşateş: It is another kind of sweet that is made from pestle almonds, mulberries, sugar.

Oricik: It is the classical walnut sucuk (fermented sausage) made from walnut with mulberry molasses.

Dried fruit rollup stuffing: Dried mulberry rollup is filled with walnuts, cinnamon, and sugar, it is dipped in eggs and roasted in oil. It is eaten with pleasure while hot.

Dried cream: Milk is left to boil in a wide tub. When it starts to boil, it is beaten and stirred with a wooden scoop. The wooden scoop helps milk froth. The formed layer is taken from the milk, laid down on cloth and dried.

Zetrine

Zetrine is a spice mixture made from more than 80 different spices collected during their respective seasons, and dried. Making of zetrine starts with snow flower (colchium autumnale) and takes one year. These herbs, which are collected during their season, are mixed together at the end of the year, thus zetrine is ready.

How to eat?

You can put it on Egin bread while it's hot, on meatballs or meat, in soup or other meals as you wish.

What are the ingredients?

It used to have almost 80 plants, nowadays the recipe includes more than 80;

Violet	Avilik	Walnut vine leaf	Linden leaf
Erdeşep	Pağdik	Bebik leaf	Daisy
Bokkur	Cummin	Walnut leaf	6 kinds of thyme
Toppas	Mayflower and its leaf	Sumac leaf	Roasted chickpeas
Has beet	Quince flower and leaf	Erziyan	Samit
Nettle	Mulberry leaf	Hibiscus	Scallion
Mallow	Vine leaf	Perit herb and its flower	Tulip
Knotweed	Fig leaf	Paçuk bread	Kırzi
Rose hip	Green plum leaf	Emzik herb	Salt
Nevruz	Bean leaf	Sour weed	Walnut
Hyacinth	Zucchini blossoms	Münver flower	Blackthorn flower
Rose	Cucumber flower and leaf	Cumin	Pirpirik
Clover	Kap	Yarpuz	Roquette
Four leaf clover	Çaşur	Musk weed	Bee Balm
Heştan	Beetle weed	Cucumber peel	Gasteria leaf
Beet	Thistle	Watermelon seeds	Hıyarcık
Parsley	Kiriş	Melon seeds	Yer somunu
Basil	Sahlep root	Tomato leaf	Hamtik
Mint	Tea weed	Pepper leaf	
Lamb's ear	Acacia flower and leaves	Bay leaf	

Natürel Sızma
Zeytinyağı



SAVAALOBYA

Ingredients

- 500 g Hakkari beans
(or string beans)
- 2 glasses of bulgur
- Half a glass Komili
Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
- 4 glasses of water
- 1 dried onion
- Black pepper
- Rock salt

For serving

- Strained yogurt
- Tomato sauce

- Clean the beans and divide into a few pieces, boil in salt-water for 15 minutes and strain.
- Then start roasting cubed onions in a pot with Komili Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
- Add boiled beans, and a few minutes later add the bulgur.
- Add rock salt, black pepper and water.
- Cook for about 20 minutes on medium heat, until it boils down.
- Pour yogurt and tomato paste sauce before serving.



A Dream from the Past Centuries

BEYŞEHİR

“Just like the first time I have been here 770 years ago,
Since I have lost my peace here, I come back to find it.

In the stone courtyard of Kubad Abad in my palm,
Your eyelashes, and the rising moon in the sky
And the silent night...

Water has risen, the season is spring,
Your shadow is on the stairs down to the lake from the
stone courtyard,
Two lost lives,
Black dream

And in my palm, your burning eyelashes...”

M. Ömür Akkor - Seljuk Cuisine p. 70

I place Beyşehir at the top of the list of must-see places in Turkey. I suggest that you spend your next weekend here. You will be full with history, nature, and food. As the taste stays on your palate, the color of the lake in front of your eyes, and the scent of history in your memory, you will want to come back here again and again. I'd say hurry up and get on the way.



Last April I have been to Beyşehir as guest of Selçuk University Ali Akkanat Tourism and Hotel Management Academy, and Selçuk University Beyşehir Ali Akkanat Vocational School of Higher Education... I had missed a small detail while I was beginning that journey. I immediately remembered what that was as I saw the Kubad Abad Palace sign 50 km to Beyşehir! There were a few hours to the start of the conference, and in hopes of not being late, I changed my course towards the Beyşehir Lake. I was speechless when I saw the color of the lake. The color of Kubad Abad ceramics that I so wanted to see for years was right in front of me.

Kubad Abad Palace

Ceramics of this palace, in my opinion, are among the best ones in the world. These ceramics take their color from the lake, and they are master pieces of Seljuk art with their patterns. My favorite “Balıklı Tabak” (Plate with Fish) from my collection is one of this series.

The palace is mentioned in Seljuk historian Ibn-I Bibi's Selçukname, it was built by Alaeddin Keykubad I. and it is the only Seljuk Palace that has survived until the present day. Until the Anatolian Seljuks Period, Kubad Abad was known with the name of this palace, later it was abandoned and buried deep into the darkness of history.

After I visited the palace, I was able to go to school on time, and I gave a lecture on Turkish cuisine. After the lecture, I had the opportunity to look around the school in detail.

Eşrefoğlu Mosque

Eşrefoğlu Mosque is one of the most impressive mosques I saw in Anatolia. Its fabric, its scent, its calmness and grandness are breathtaking. Largest and most authentic of the wooden-post mosques in Anatolia, it was made in 1296-1299. Its posts are made of cedar wood and they have been standing up for more than 700 years. Even though it is not utilized nowadays, for centuries during the winter, snow on the roof of the mosque was thrown through a gap in the middle of the roof, into a 25-meter deep hole in the middle, and snow collected here protects cedar wood posts from cracking or drying due to dry weather during summer, or due to the heating stove in winter. One can visit Beyşehir even only to see this mosque.

Four seasons of Eşrefoğlu Mosque



And finally it is time for Beyşehir cuisine...

Beyşehir Cuisine

Beyşehir has a lot of variety with its cuisine culture, rich history, and the abundance from its lake. On one hand, it is under the influence of classical Konya cuisine, on the other hand an idiosyncratic, unique cuisine thanks to Beyşehir Lake and creativity. Let's continue our article with some examples if you will. I think that especially the desserts made with molasses are wonderful, you must try them.

Breads

Types of bread differ even from village to village, but important ones are phyllo bread, flatbread (bazlama), tandır bread, corn bread, yeast bread, poppy bread, and tahina bread.

Herse Soup

Döğme (wheat, split) is put into a pot and boiled in a small amount of water. When it starts to open up and water evaporates off, a lot of milk and salt are added, and cooking continues. When it is ready, it is served with lots of mint.

Galle

Garden cabbage is thinly chopped. Boiled together with bulgur. Tomato paste, onions, pepper are roasted on the other side and added to the boiled dish. It is heated until it comes to a boil again.

Carp Bean Salad

Carp is cleaned, filleted, sliced into small pieces and put into a pot. On the other hand, onion is finely chopped, mixed with tomato paste, salt, lemon, olive oil, and a small amount of water, and then poured on top of the cleaned fish. You can cook it on the stove on low heat or in the oven.

Meyre

Large pieces are taken from a carp. A pot is filled with water and large pieces of onions, tomato paste, then dried whole peppers and dried mountain plums are added into a pot and left to boil. When it comes to a boiling point, the fish are added and cooked for half an hour. As it is nearly cooked, flour and tomato paste are roasted on another pan and added. Finally it is served with basil.

Çokartma

Heads and chopped meat of the fish is put on to a pan. Onions, garlic, olive oil, tomato paste, lemon and its juice, salt, and chopped parsley are added, and it is cooked like a stew. You can do it also by roasting all the ingredients and adding water later, if you wish.

Bulgur Halva

Sherbet is prepared with water and molasses and left on the stove for boiling. Thin bulgur is added to boiled sherbet, and it is boiled on low heat until it thickens. The heat is turned off and melted butter is added, and it is left to cool down.

Molasses with Eggplant

It is made during fresh molasses season. Eggplants are sliced and dried 2-3 days before the molasses is made. Later, when you start to prepare the molasses, just as it is about to be cooked, during the last half hour, dried eggplants are added to the boiling molasses and the stove is turned off half an hour later. This dessert is a type of jam, and it can be kept in a jar. The same dessert can be prepared in the same way using black squash.

Red Slurry

A sherbet with lots of milk and some molasses is prepared. Sieved flour is whisked into boiling sherbet to prevent aggregation. When it thickens, it is taken from the oven and left to cool, then served.



I love this place with a strange passion that I can't explain. Wherever in the world I go, I miss here. Seljuk Sultans used to come here and go mad, so did I. They used to come here and write to their heart's content, so did I. I want to live every moment, every time of the day here. Sometimes I go out at dawn, sometimes at dusk. What about the seasons; summer, winter, spring... Each time I wander around and come back to this place. The smell of the wooden mosque, peacefulness of the streets, color of the lake.



WHAT DID THE HITTITES EAT 4000 YEARS AGO IN ANATOLIA?

“NINDA-anazzasteni watar-a ekutteni”

“and eat the bread, and drink the water”

First King of Hittites Hattusili I

I have been working as the kitchen chef with the Alacahöyük excavation team for 5 years. For me, this is one of the most important disciplines I have worked for in all my life. I am both after records of what people ate thousands of years ago in Anatolia, and keeping a record of kitchen tools of that period. I want to give you a glimpse of the cuisine culture of Hittites and Anatolia at the time, based on a “Hittite kitchen” menu I have prepared when I was selected for the excavation.

For this workshop that I have started preparing for days in advance, I made breads that I wouldn't find in Alacahöyük in Bursa. My most important supporters when it came to breads were two important masters in traditional bakery, Ayhan and Hakan Doğan brothers. They helped me most in reading, interpreting, and applying 4000-year-old recipes. I have used two special flours for the breads. First of those was Çorum flour, since I think Hittites used local wheats, the other one was Ancient black wheat flour recently discovered by the Germans, and not yet produced in Turkey. The results and tastes were incredible.

Bread, just like it is in today's Anatolia, has been synonymous with eating and filling one's stomach. It can be understood from innumerable texts that the fundamental foodstuff of Hittites were bread and water. Hittite King Hattusili I's order to his soldiers, "and eat the bread, and drink the water" (NINDA-anaz-zasteni watar-a ekutteni) has played a crucial role in deciphering Hittite language.



With excavation leader Professor Doctor Aykut Çınaroğlu

There are names of almost 180 types of bread, cake, pastry, and bakery products in Hittite texts. These are the names that can be mentioned in texts. Hittites used to name breads according to certain geometric shapes, sizes, weights, regions, ingredients, and preparation techniques.



Thin bread (phyllo), thick bread (loaf), small bread (bun), fish shaped bread, hot bread, sweet bread, wheat, rye, and barley breads, yeast bread, unleavened bread, soldier's bread, sacrificial bread, etc.

The hardest part of this study was trying to get out of a contemporary chief's mindset and capturing the spirit of 4000 years ago... We tried to be in that state of mind while we were shaping the breads. I don't know whether we have been successful, but seeing that some of the breads we made were the same shape with those on Hittite tablets made us really happy in terms of being able to capture the spirit.

The idea of cooking based on Hittite tablets, was very exciting to me. But what would the result be? I can't say I wasn't worried. I thought that I had to draw some borders in the kitchen, considering what Hittites used to eat.

So, what did Hittites eat?

Cattle, sheep, goats, poultry and game animals: Just like today, Hittites used to eat only beef, goat, lamb and a small amount of pork. It is known that Hittites used to consume 30% bovine and 70% ovine animals.

Milk and dairy products: Hittites used to consume milk and dairy product for nutrition, they used to use animal milk as well as their meat, and made cheese, butter, and curd.

Grains and grain products: It can be understood from innumerable texts that Hittites' fundamental foodstuff was bread and water. Hittite texts include names of about 180 bread, cake, pastry, and bakery products.

Vegetables and fruits: Fruits consumed during the Hittite era include wheat, barley, beans, wild beans, green bean varieties, cannabis, lentils, wheat berry, onions, leek, cabbage, garlic, bitter garlic, cumin, sesame, grapes, dates, apples, hawthorns, apricots, pistachios, grapes, nuts, cherries, medlar, pomegranate, olive, cucumber, and lots of other plants whose names are not yet translated.

Oils and sugars: Hittites used olive oil, sesame, walnut, almond, cannabis, flaxseed, hazelnut, peanut oils and a few other oils. They used molasses and honey as sugar.

Among the plants from which oil is obtained, Aegean and Mediterranean regions' essential olive had a special place. Olive oil was probably also used in lighting, similarly to other cultures. However, olive is a total stranger in Central Anatolia and just like pomegranate, when talking about olive and olive oil food, one should think of Syria and Kizzuwatna, the Cilician Plain, not the Hittites. Otherwise, even if they were imported, there should have been olive seeds found during the excavations. These oils were used in food and also were eaten by dipping some bread in them. Because we have a verb that means, "dipping bread into oil" (suniya). A soup made using a lot of oil was also very valuable and was served especially to the kings.

Oils were also used to protect metal god sculptures from rust.

We did not stumble upon food recipes from the Hittites. However, within some ritual texts they have written what they ate.

For example, during a death ritual, we see the phrase “dannas bread and three sweet breads, each the size of a palm”. In the translation of An.Tah.Sum festival text, it is said that they ate meat also when it was cold.





Names of the dishes were taken from the book "Hittite Cuisine" by Metro Kültür publishing house.

OLIVE OIL WITH HONEY

Ingredients

- One measure of honey
- One measure of olive oil

Honey and olive oil is mixed; it is consumed with meat dishes or breads. Hittites used to put honey and olive oil on the mouths of their gods, and according to Hittites, gods tell them good things when they do it.

Tasting note;

Definitely very delicious and aromatic. When I ate this, I realized that we have been limiting ourselves by eating honey only with butter and cream. It is also an amazing sauce for meat.



Names of the dishes were taken from the book "Hittite Cuisine" by Metro K lt r publishing house.

NINDA.GUR.RA

Ingredients

- Whole wheat flour or ancient wheat flour
- Cheese
- Dried fig
- Olive oil
- Water
- Rock salt

A small amount of wheat flour is mixed with hot water and left at room temperature to ferment overnight. After letting it rest for a day, more flour and water is added and bread dough is made. Olive oil, cheese and figs are added and it is cooked in a moisture free oven.

Tasting note;

This bread, which is prepared with cheese and fig, has been one of my favorites from these recipes, I strongly suggest you to try and taste it.



Names of the dishes were taken from the book "Hittite Cuisine" by Metro Kltr publishing house.

HAPPENA

(Lamb cooked in crock or on direct fire)

Ingredients

- Half a kilo of lamb,
in small pieces
- 100 g lard
- 5 table spoons of honey
- 5 table spoons of olive oil

Lamb is cooked with sheep lard on direct fire. We also think that it is cooked inside earthen crocks and honey, and olive oil is poured on it while eating.

Small pieces of lamb are skewered and cooked on a grill. Honey and olive oil is poured on top while serving.

Tasting note;

Highly aromatic due to honey and olive oil, outside our classical taste, but I think it has to be tasted as soon as possible.



COLD MEAT

Ingredients

- A kilo of Veal steak fillet
- 1 glass of olive oil
- Rock salt

It is mentioned in Hittite texts that during An.Tah.Sum festival, cooks gave away cold meat.

The meat is covered completely with salt. An earthen vessel is filled with olive oil, and it is warmed up. All the meat is put inside. It is roasted until its outside is burnt. It is cooled down, sliced and eaten.

Tasting note;

My favorite... Its outside is covered in salt and burnt; the inside is soft and raw. I couldn't get enough of it. You must definitely try it.



GASTRONOMIC ATLAS OF KONYA

Konya Cuisine

A friend of mine explained Konya cuisine to me like this:

“We give as gift a full gold coin on weddings, but if you go to Antep you will see bracelets, belts, all kinds of golden gifts.

Konya is a calm place, a simple place.

For example, we take the meat, put it in the oven with its own fat, have some bread with it, that’s the oven kebab.

In Antep, eggplants go under it and it becomes Alinazik, put some tomato dip, a bit of garlic,

it becomes vegetable kebab...

Such is the Konya cuisine; calm, simple but precious."

Yes, exactly like that.

I lived in Konya for 6 months due to military service. I am in love with their food since then... My best memories from my military service are about the food of Konya. Although people don't usually revisit the place where they did their military service, I go to Konya at least four times a year. Both to salute the Dervish Lodge of His Holiness, and to eat.

Oven Kebab

When it comes to Oven Kebab, two addresses come to mind. But which one is better is a crucial question in Konya's gastronomy scene. Half of the people in Konya say Hacı Şükrü, and the other half say Ali Baba. I still can't decide which one is better. It seems like Ali Baba is one step ahead, but I am not sure. Oven kebab cooked in its own fat overnight, with onion, bread made in brick oven, and ayran made from sour yogurt. Do not ask for anything else. There isn't anything else in traditional service. I have to emphasize that they are particular about this for you to be able to taste the pure aroma of the kebab.

Hacı Şükrü

Devricedit Mah. Cemsultan Cad. Müneccimbaşı Sok. No: 20 / A Konya

Ali Baba

Şemsitebrizi, Şeref Şirin Sok. 5-A, 42010 Karatay / Konya

Tiritçi Mithat

This is a famous and secret recipe, you should know. I ask every time I go; every time the recipe is different. I am very curious about the secret of the parsleys on top. It is a small shop but it is always crowded. It is obvious that you will have to wait in line during dinnertime. Therefore, I prefer to go there in the afternoon. Here, eating zerde with tirit is another gastronomic tradition of Konya. Besides, if I am not wrong, there are only some beverages other than these two.

Instead of the traditional Seljuk tirit, they have something more akin to yogurt kebab. Even if I can't visit here every time I go to Konya, I will be there every other time. You should definitely include this place in your list.

İstanbul Cad. Yusufaga Sok. No: 21 Karatay / Konya

Hasan Şendağlı Bakery / Oil Loaf

This is the best pastry I have ever eaten anywhere in the world, utterly unbelievable!

During the same week, I have been to a place in Napoli that makes the best pizza of the world, and right after that I came to this bakery in Konya. The result is clear, the champion is obvious. If Sorbillo's chef were to come here, he would go back to Napoli weeping... Come to Konya if only to eat this pita!

Moldy Konya cheese, Konya butter, inside a masterfully prepared dough, inside the oven, sesame on top, and poppy, which leaves an amazing taste in your mouth. I shouldn't write any more, you should get up and go, say hi from me. If you bring your own butter and moldy cheese, it is 1 TL, if you will use theirs, then it is 5 TL. This is one of the most important addresses in this travel book.

By the Women's Market (Kadınlar Pazarı) / KONYA

Etli Ekmek (Bread with Meat)

If we are talking about etli ekmek, bıçak arası and cheesy bread, the best addresses are obvious. Cemo, Havzan and Bolu Restaurant, are the best in Konya. I have eaten at all three of those. In my opinion, Bolu Restaurant is the best. Especially their cheesy bread is wonderful. In Konya, craftsmanship in milk and dairy products is very good, therefore what I eat here is unlike anywhere else. Do not ask for anything other than ayran made from Konya yogurt on the side. You will definitely get the real taste of it with that sour ayran.

Cemo Etli Ekmek

Medrese Mah. Nalçacı Cad. Karatay Sitesi Altı No: 2-C Selçuklu / Konya

Havzan Etli Ekmek

Meram Yeni Yol Üzeri Armağan Mah. No: 1 / Konya

Bolu Lokantası

Aziziye, 42030 Karatay / Konya

Somatçı Fihi Ma Fih

“Somatçı” means one who sets the table. It is the 10th of 18 duties in a Mevlevi Lodge. “Fihi Ma Fih” means, “all is within” in Farsi. The name is carefully chosen. This is my friend Chef Ulaş Teker kaya’s restaurant. He prepares both traditional recipes and their new interpretations. All the products he uses smell of Konya. The meal starts with soups and ends with Mevlevi halwa. I recommend you to not be choosy while eating there. Especially the last time moussaka made with dried fresh peppers and beans was delicious; I cannot forget its taste. Along with these products he grew and dried in the steppes of Konya, you can also find sherbets, jams, and syrups made with fruits of Konya in his place.

Akçeşme Mah. Mengüç Cad. No: 36 / Konya

Köşk / Konak (Mansion) Restaurant

This restaurant used to be known as Köşk, but its name was changed to Konak, and it is one of the right addresses for traditional Konya food. Especially when it comes to okra soup and sac arası, it gets full marks from the people of Konya. You can also find stuffed vine leaves with meat, tirit, pilaf with roasted lamb, su böreği, and sometimes some examples from the Mevlevi cuisine here.

Kerim Dede, Topraklık Cad. No: 66 Karatay / Konya

And others

Women’s Market (Kadınlar Pazarı)

It is the temple of Konya gastronomy life. In my opinion, roaming this bazaar is as important as visiting the tomb of His Holiness. It is also convenient that it is really close to the tomb. Anyone can show you where it is. You can find mushrooms, vegetables, herbs collected, bread, cheese, yogurt, and various dishes in their most traditional form, made by women from the villages around Konya here. It is one of the most beautiful local markets of Turkey.



Konya Yogurt

I would sing praises, write songs about it. No matter how you eat it; whether with bread, or on top of stuffed vine leaves, or as ayran. Konya's yogurt is different. I have eaten traditional yogurts in every province of Turkey, but Konya's yogurt is number one for me.

Moldy Cheese

Not everybody likes it maybe, but I am a lover of moldy cheese of Turkey and around the world. I eat these sometimes in salads, and sometimes in pita and pizza. But Konya's cheese is especially good with their pita. I also love to melt it with butter, and eat it with toasted bread for breakfast. You should definitely buy some from Women's Market to bring home.

Okra Soup

Nowadays it comes to the table as an entrée, but in Konya it is given during the main course. It refreshes your palate with its sourness, and it is also a digestive. Okras are collected during the season while they are still flowers, dried, and then cleaned between two pieces of cloth. Cleaned okras are boiled in lemon water. On the side, lamb is roasted with onion and boiled. Tomato paste, okra, and unripe grape juice is added, and they are all cooked together.

I have to remind you that this is a dish you wouldn't want to return from Konya without eating.

Since the time of the Seljuks, Konya has the tradition of spilling pilaf or toy dinner. This ritual has been conducted unchanged for centuries during weddings, circumcisions, and pilgrimage dinners.

A Konya Ritual

“TRADITION OF PILAF SPILLING” OR “WEDDING DINNER”

Eating the food together, eating at the same time, and bringing everybody together at the same table, without discrimination, are the fundamental rules. There are no protocols at this dinner. The host starts preparations two days before the dinner. One day before, oak log furnaces are started. First the meat is boiled in tinned copper cauldrons. If the host has a guest who has arrived one day before the dinner, “tirit” is served to them.

Cooks continue cooking through the night. When the Morning Prayer is heard, a hodja comes and lifts the lids of all cauldrons with a prayer. After the soup that is served at breakfast, the wedding dinner is served at noon, and at the end of the dinner, a prayer is said.

This is the unchanged order of centuries

Yogurt soup

Lamb pilaf (wedding pilaf)

Semolina Helva

Okra Soup (digestive)

Pilaf and zerde are served together

Fruit Stew (apricot, grape)

Right page: A mevlevi meal Hasetten Lokma





HATAY

I have been coming here since the day I was born. Sometimes I feel like I am from here. I even wanted to be from Hatay. Their food, people, language, sound, salted yogurt, hot weather, orange groves, everything about it is different.

When we used to live in Kilis, Samandağ, our first holiday destination, had a special place in my heart, as the first waters I swam in.

Last week of an August, I am in Hatay to purchase some materials, not minding the hot weather, thinking it is just the time. Instead of flying directly to Hatay, I preferred to go after a kebab break in Adana. I am glad I did. Then I had some ayran in Misi, and I am the happiest.

Anthony Quinn once said, "If you do not run across God in Jerusalem or Hatay you will not find Him anywhere else." He summarized the fact that Hatay is a very important territory for many religions, in a beautiful sentence... I have to say that I, a bit coincidentally, have stayed at the Antioch Synagogue during my trip to Hatay. I mean I have started the day feeling like a true man of Hatay.

In the evening, as soon as I arrived, I went to the Sveyka Restaurant. As always, everything was delicious. Especially zahter salad, raw meatballs with roasted minced meat, bread, sucuk rolls, and garlic cream made me glad that I came.

Fava bean humus

Çayırıcı fava beans humus shop was a place I have been hearing about for a long time, and finally I was there. In fact, I have to confess that I came to buy these materials from Hatay this year only because of this place, and I am glad I did. At this place, where I came for breakfast, they only serve humus and fava beans humus.

Fava beans are put into carra overnight, they are sent to the hammam (Turkish bath) as it is about to close, and it is cooked in the külhan (water heating furnace) of the hammam.

Carra: Fava bean humus pot

Külhan: Cooking technique

Then, the fava bean chef takes it and brings it back to the shop, and hammers it for each order, adds Gaziantep tahini and olive oil, and serves it with bread. For fava bean humus, fava beans from Balıkesir, and for humus, chickpeas from Antioch are used.

Pöç Butcher

It has become a very famous place since it appeared practically on every television show there is. They make paper and pan kebabs. They both have the same ingredients; lamb brisket is mixed with leg meat and finely ground with a mincing machine. Cops garlic, onion, parsley, and pepper with zırh knife are added to the meat. Some salt, pepper, and chili pepper are added. If it is laid on a piece of paper on the aluminum pan, it becomes paper kebab. If it is laid down without paper, and tomato sauce added, it becomes pan kebab. The chef cooks the kebab at his baker neighbor, and serves it.

It is really delicious, must-go. However, since I am from Kilis, Kilis pan kebab is also a similar recipe. The only difference is that the meat is also chopped with zırh knife. My personal opinion is that pan kebab of Kilis is a notch more delicious.

Antioch Künefe

I have learned that it is not the kunefe we know and eat. I must admit I was a bit surprised. Kadayıf must be prepared the day before; it is not made with fresh kadayıf.

Classical Samandağ village butter is used, must be unsalted and light yellow colored.

The tray should be of copper and medium thickness (0.5 cm).

The fire should be coal fire, and the coal should be stove coal.

The cheese should be unsalted fresh cheese of Antioch, from village dairy, 50% skimmed because this makes it stretch. Fatty cheese does not stretch as much. Some use chestnut cheese. It stretches more, but it is not preferred since it becomes rock hard when it cools down.

As to how it is made, we oil the broken kadayıf, and spread it on the piled copper tray. We do not put molasses or tomato paste. We put the cheese in the middle and put more kadayıf on top of it, then cook it on coal fire, occasionally turning it upside down. Then we add its sherbet and eat it hot.

Çınarlatı Künefe Salonu Yusuf Usta / Uzun Çarşı

Dönerci Tacettin

In my opinion, he has an excellent döner. His tomato paste, hot spices, cumin, parsley, onion are utterly wonderful. We called to let them know that we would be there at 11:00, we were surprised when he gave us a reservation for 14:20. Frankly we were a bit angry, we thought “why should we wait that long” but we did anyway. Lo and behold, there are only 3 tables. Then we asked why. Tacettin Usta cuts and serves all the döner by himself; therefore he is able to serve only 3 tables. That’s why he accepts only 3 tables at a time. We were a bit surprised, but ate two servings of döner. You should definitely stop by, Hatay döner is a bit different, it is like kebab, and it is great with sour ayran.

Samandağ Pepper

Unique, has a strong taste, and moderately hot. I think it is an indispensable part of Hatay’s most important trio, humus, oven bread, and Samandağ pepper. I couldn’t eat enough, and brought some back home too.

Tangerine Syrup

Last time I drank this syrup 25 years ago, and its taste was still on my palate. When I found it at the shop of the foundation of Vakıflı Church of Turkey’s only Armenian village, I immediately opened the bottle, and its smell enchanted all of us. I realized that it was the same thing before taking a sip; I grabbed a bottle and drank it. However, with all that excitement I forgot to ask how it is made.

And Others

Sürk, Antioch curd, salted yogurt, fresh zahter, simit (bagel), bread, tomato paste, pomegranate syrup, and others were unforgettable.

Mosaic Museum

I said wow... There is not much to write, I must see, it is very impressive.

İskenderun Petek Pastanesi (Alexandretta Petek Patisserie)

It is a very important shop for İskenderun and Turkey. Desserts, pastries, katmers, böreks, cookies, baklavas, Aleppo desserts, drinks, etc. everything is perfect.



Afian coffee



Pöç Butcher



Dönerci Tacettin

İskenderun Humus Place

I think in this 6-square-meter shop on Fener Street, the history of humus is being written. It is made with eggs, butter, or lamb's feet. I ate and liked all of them very much. Especially the one with eggs is very interesting. If you happen to pass by, you should definitely search and find this place.

Samandağ Dervişhan Restaurant

Delicious shrimps, unforgettable appetizers and fish, even though it wasn't the season. Chef Ata said, "If you come to this place during the season, I will blow this table away". It really is one of the best fish restaurants of Turkey.

I heard from many people that shrimps, especially from the coastline between Tartus (Syria) – Samandağ are among the most delicious shrimps of the world, so I just wanted to remind you.



Sveyka



Sveyka

A brief note

During my travels to visit these places and see around, without hearing people and what they say, refugees, fugitives, terrorist organizations, etc. are not my concern. I came to Hatay hearing and reading about these. As I was swimming a stroke in the world's longest beach in Samandağ while the sun was setting, I said to myself "I am glad I came". This is the most beautiful place on earth.



- 1 et - erince kızart
- 2 kuyruk
- 3 / 100 gr
- 4 / 75 gr
- 5 et, kuyruk, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
- 6 tuz, biber, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
- 7 biber, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
- 8 tuz, biber, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
- 9 tuz, biber, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
- 10 tuz, biber, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
- 11 su, kuyruk, sap, tuz
- 12 tuz, biber, yağ, tuz, biber, tuz
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ADANA CUISINE IS ON THE STREETS

My favorite food, therefore my favorite city!

Yes, that's right, I just cannot get enough Adana Kebab. And I always eat Adana Kebab in Adana. I come at least 4 times a year.

I think this is one of the indispensable parts of this travel book for me. I do not only love Adana, but also the street food that makes you fall in love with it.

In Adana, home cooked meals are on one side, foods downtown is on the other side. All the people of Adana love these foods. You can come by these foods everywhere, on every counter.

Kebab is the most famous food of Adana and the downtown cuisine. It has a particularly unique place in my heart. Because, I can say that kebab is my favorite food and I can eat it every day without getting bored of it. I say, you can eat it everywhere in Adana, all of them are different, all of them are great (of course this is my opinion) ... Go to any restaurant, order one and a half serving and see what they bring to the table... Pepper weed, mint, onion with sumac, gavurdağı (salad with pomegranate syrup and walnuts), roasted eggplant, tomato salad, green lemon, and more...

I would also like to share the answer of the question I have researched just for you “how to make the best kebab”.

A good Adana kebab;

- Must be from male lamb.
- Lard must be from a male lamb, because it doesn't smell ever.
- Lamb's leg and loin must be used.
- 100% of the kebab meat must be minced with zırh knife.
- 75% of the kebab must be lamb meat, 35% lard.
- Kebab must consist of meat, lard, chili pepper of Maraş, and salt.
- Don't forget that it wouldn't stay on the skewer without salt.
- There mustn't be pepper paste in the kebab. Because the paste darkens the kebab and makes it taste sour.
- Fresh red pepper collected during the season, and only first quality wet red chili peppers of Maraş must be used.
- Prepared kebab must be thoroughly kneaded and left to rest for at least 12 hours.
- Rested meat must be cooked as soon as it is put onto the skewer, skewered kebab must not be left uncooked.
- Only water must be used while skewering the kebab.
- Kebab skewers must be 50% steel, 50% true flat iron (this mixture prevents the meat from sticking onto the skewer).

- Kebab must be cooked using stove coal.
- Each side of the kebab must be cooked in front of the fan for 1 minute, and on coal fire for 2 minutes, for a total of 6 minutes (The fan feeds the embers and increases the temperature, thus ensuring kebab to be nicely roasted, and prevents it from drying. This is really important.)
- The bread must be made from leavened dough and highest quality flour, baked on wood fire.
- Must be served with lots of herbs and onions with sumac.
- Kebab must be eaten from the hands of a master who has been an apprentice for 5 years and a journeyman for 10 years, to learn how to embroider the kebab on the skewer.

I think if you go to a kebab place, which follows all these rules, you will eat a 100-point kebab. Moreover, almost all kebab places in Adana follow these rules. Every time I travel to Adana, the address of the best kebab changes. Therefore, I will list my favorite original Adana kebab places without any specific order:

Kiling Usta

Kebabçı Mesut

Adil'in Yeri

Ufuk'un Yeri

Elem

All table kebab places

Other Downtown Cuisine of Adana

Another feature of downtown Adana cuisine is that a lot of entrails are consumed, especially during the night. These food items are sold mostly in shops during the day and by the street peddlers during the night.

Avcırlı Çürük

Spices, lamb's feet, garlic, and lamb's head are boiled together. Even though it seems like a classical lamb's feet, it tastes completely different in Adana...

Çürük

A simpler lamb's feet

Brain and Lamb's Tongue

It can be eaten as a soup with seasoning or broth, or it can be eaten as cold cuts, like I do.



Şırdan

It is an indispensable item of the night cuisine... Lamb şırdan (end of the lamb's intestines) is first boiled for 15 minutes. Then şırdan is filled with prepared stuffing. It is cooked for three hours in plenty of water.

Mumbar

Lamb's intestines are filled with prepared stuffing, and cooked in water for 1.5 hours. We (in Kilis) fry it after boiling. In Bursa cuisine, they put lungs inside and boil it. In that sense, it is distinct from other mumbar recipes of Turkey. This recipe has entered Bursa cuisine from the Balkans.

Bici Bici

Also known as haytalya, starch jelly, sugared water and carved ice... Simple, colorful, and attractive during the hot weather of Adana. You can get almost the same taste everywhere. Wherever you see on your way, you should definitely eat some.



Kazım Büfe (Snack Bar) / Gazipaşa Banana milk phenomenon in Adana

I have been coming to Adana for years but I didn't go there. I didn't care about it, thinking "why would I write anything about this place in the travel book". Ok, I take all of it back. This place is an urban legend and I think it totally deserves it. It is one of the best snack bars of Turkey. Banana milk is legendary. Also you cannot get enough of their fruit juices. Some claim that they are the best in Adana when it comes to şalgam (turnip drink). Especially if you came to Adana on a hot summer day you should stop by. It will be tasty and refreshing.

Ağaçaltı Tatlıcısı (Dessert Shop) / Karataş Yolu

He has been selling the same dessert under the tree for 54 years, halka (ring) dessert. I don't think there's anyone like him in this regard, and I have never seen anyone like him until now. They come on trays, warm. If you can manage, you should eat it while it is warm. Wait for a bit, you will not regret. I generally drive my car to this place after Kebabçı Yusuf, and eat two of these. I said try it, you will not regret it one bit.

Gönül Kardeşler Tatlıcısı (Dessert Shop) / Küçük Saat

Turkey's favorite address when it comes to having a quick dessert on the go. They make desserts non-stop from morning till night, and people are always eating dessert in front of the shop. Halka, taş kadayıf, and karakuş are their most popular desserts, prices vary between 1 TL and 3 TL. You can lose control in front of their counter, be careful!

Kebabçı Ufuk

Haydaroğlu Mah. Karataş yolu üzeri Yüreğir / Adana

Elem

Karataş yolu üzeri 6. Km Havutlu girişi Yüreğir / Adana

Yeşil Kapı Kebabçısı

Ordu Cad. 6/9 Seyhan Yüreğir / Adana

Kling Usta

Cemalpaşa, Vali Yolu Cad. No: 31 Seyhan / Adana

Kebabçı Mesut

Kocavezir mah. 23. Sok. No: 49 Eski sebze hali civarı Seyhan / Adana

Yeni Bulvar İşkembe

Mücahitler Bulvarı Kırar Apt. No: 77 / b Seyhan / Adana 0322 459 42 79

Ali Göde Şalgam

Kurtuluş Cad. No: 1 Kuruköprü Seyhan / Adana



5 MOST GASTRONOMIC DISHES YOU CAN EAT UNDER 5 TL

You know me, I am always on the road to eat, non-stop... I always have a ticket and a list of restaurants or foods in my hand. In more than 30 countries I have traveled so far, in many different restaurants, some of them with Michelin Stars, some of them only in a suggested list, some of them just on the way, I have always eaten something. But our Turkey is quite different, I must say.

In this article, I want to suggest 5 extraordinary foods that you can have for under 5 TL. Put down those lists or books, push the Michelin Guide aside... You won't find these most delicious, yet cheapest 5 dishes that will blow you away!

By the way, there is an inscription for 3-star restaurants in Michelin's list, which says,: "travel to the country of this restaurant", it means, go to that country just for that restaurant. My list is no less than that. Get up and go. Antep, Konya, Hatay... You should both eat and travel our country...

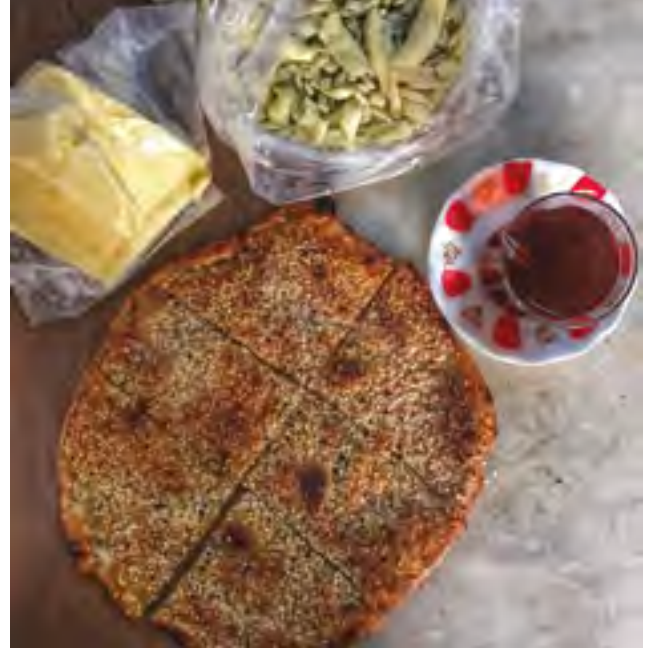
There is no specific order in the list, but number 1 is obvious!

Yağ Somunu (Oil Loaf)

Pideci Hasan Şendağlı 5 TL

This is the best pastry I have eaten in the world, utterly amazing!

I was in Napoli, at the best pizza place of the world during the week I wrote the article, right after that I went to this bakery in Konya. The result is clear; the champion is obvious. If the Chef of Sorbillo came, he would go back to Napoli crying... Come to Konya even if only to eat this pita! Moldy Konya cheese, Konya but-



ter, inside a masterfully prepared dough, in the oven, sesame on top, and poppy, which leaves an amazing taste in your mouth. I shouldn't right any more, get up and go, say hi from me.

Near Women's Market / KONYA

Roasted Liver Wrap / Ciğerci Mustafa 4 TL

If you cannot get enough liver like me, you can have a feast in the morning, or maybe at noon, with some delicious roasted liver. Liver is roasted with onions, red pepper and lard, served in pita. There are lots of herbs and spices on Ciğerci Mustafa's counter, you can choose from those and eat with pleasure. I add lots of spearmint, parsley, onions, lemon, cumin, and chili pepper, and eat with pleasure.

Mütercim Asım Cad. / Gaziantep*

Humus / Çayırıcı Bakla Humus Dükkanı (Fava Beans Humus Shop) 4 TL

Humus with lots of tahini, from fava beans or chickpeas, with free pickles and bread, and of course, water. Chickpeas or fava beans are put into carra (copper cauldron with handles) overnight, and sent to the hammam. Ingredients are cooked inside the külhan (water heating furnace) of the hammam, and hammered and served freshly when you order.

Eski Sanayi 5. Cadde / Hatay

Chickpea Wrap / Adil Usta 2.25 TL

We, people from Antep, love this. Chickpeas boiled in the water of boiled bones, on pita, kidney bean salad and onions on top, and some lemon juice, then everything is OK! With its astonishing price, Chickpea Wrap is the most gastronomic example of maximum taste and minimum price you can get for one course.

Old Demolished Market Place (Şehitler Cad.)

Behind Ağa Mosque / Gaziantep*

Kadayıf with Tahini / Ağaçaltı Kebapçısı 4 TL

It cannot be described but only experienced...

It is not only the best dessert 4 TL can buy, but also among the best desserts I have ever eaten... Definitely go to Kayseri to eat this. I have to particularly mention the effect Tarsus tahini has on the kadayıf. PHENOMENAL.

Automotive Industrial Estate (Oto Sanayi Sitesi) / Kayseri



*Definitely go to this branch.



RECIPES FROM THE TRAVEL BOOK



CHRONOLOGY OF OLIVE

1200 B.C.

In Sahara region of North Africa, some findings point to the existence of olive trees.

Science says that the motherland of olive oil is somewhere in MARDIN, KAHRAMANMARAS, HATAY triangle.

640/560 B.C.

Solon of Athens

"MADE THE FIRST OLIVE LAW"

193 B.C.

"EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL" was used as a medicine in Pergamon.

27 B.C.

In Rome, one who fertilizes wild olive tree is exempt from all taxes for 5 years, and one who plants a sapling, for 10 years.

FIRST TURKISH OLIVE OIL BRAND

"Didarzade Hasan Bey and Sons" was born in Mytilene Island, a town called Komi

Olive leaf fossil from 37000 B.C. was found in Santorini.

4500 B.C. - CRETE

"FIRST OLIVE OIL PRODUCTION"

4000 B.C.

First olive cultivation South-eastern Anatolia

1312 B.C. THE TORAH

Shortly before Adam's death, 3 seeds from the Garden of Eden were put into his mouth. These seeds that come into leaf once he's dead and buried are OLIVE, CEDAR and CYPRESS.

600 B.C.

FIRST (good quality) OLIVE PRODUCTION IN URLA

500 B.C. ATHENS CONSTITUTION

One who damages an olive tree will be sentenced with "CAPITAL PUNISHMENT".

50/60 A.C. THE BIBLE

"Olive tree is the tree of life. It is sacred."

610 / 622 A.C. HOLY KORAN

"Olive tree comes from Mount Sinai"

1878

2000

Olive Oil Atlas

4000 B.C.

First olive cultivation
in Southeastern Anatolia

- I -

From South-eastern Anatolia to
West Anatolia

- II -

From West Anatolia to Greece,
Italy, France and Spain,
via Aegean Islands

- III -

Meeting the second road via Syria
and Egypt, to the southern shore
of the Mediterranean

- IV -

To Afghanistan and Pakistan via
Iraq and Iran

- V -

During the 16th Century,
the Spaniards brought olive oil to
North and South America,
and thus its world tour was
completed.





Ruslia

Perconia

Zona frigida ex parte polarelli

Asia Magna

Zona torrida

EUROPA

Zona temperata Septentrionalis

Regna de China

INDIA

Tropicus Canceri

Equinoctialis

Mar Indico

Indi

ys Japonicum

Mar Meridional

Mar Australis



SALTED YOGHURT SALAD

Ingredients

- 4 table spoon salted yoghurt
- 5 table spoon Komili
Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 2 tomatoes
- 2 green peppers
- 1 red pepper
- 1 onion
- A few branches of parsley
- A few branches of
fresh mint
- Black sesame

- Dice all the ingredients and put them in a deep bowl.
- Add the salted yoghurt and mix properly all the ingredients with the yoghurt.
- Put the salad in a serving dish, and add black sesame and Komili olive oil.

Tasting note;

My favorite... Its outside is covered in salt and burnt; the inside is soft and raw. I couldn't get enough of it. You must definitely try it.



BURSA DELIGHT

Ingredients

- 1 kg flour
- 30 g. yeast
- 10 table spoon Komili Early Harvest Olive Oil
- 1 cup walnut meat
- 1 teaspoon of pimento

- Mix the flour, yeast and some water, to have a nice dough. Spread the dough with your hand, as one sheet.
- Chop up the walnut meat and add 5 table spoons of Komili early harvest olive oil mixed with the pimento, and cook for a few minutes.
- Spread walnut and olive oil mix on the dough and roll it, then cut it.
- Spread the rest of Komili early harvest olive oil under and on top of these delights.
- Bake for 30 minutes at 180 degree Celsius.

Tasting note;

A kind of bread specific to Bursa, actually not exactly a bread, but a kind of pastry. Delight with walnuts, one of Bursa's unforgettable tradition and the must have at henna rituals has started being sold again in bakeries around Bursa. It is unmistakably served in wedding houses and therefore called henna delight as well...



HOMEMADE PEPPER PASTE FOR BREAKFAST

Ingredients

- 3 kg red pepper
 - 500 g. green pepper
 - Half a cup Komili Cold Pressed Olive Oil
 - Half a cup grape vinegar
 - 4 gloves of garlic, minced
 - 5 table spoons tomato paste
 - Half a bunch of parsley
 - 1 coffee spoon sugar
 - 1 coffee spoon rock salt
- Roast the red peppers in the oven at high heat.
 - Let them cool and peel. And cut them in 2-3 pieces.
 - Boil olive oil and vinegar in a deep bowl.
 - Once it is boiling, add minced green peppers and garlic.
 - Turn off the stove and add red peppers, tomato paste, sugar and salt.
 - Lastly, add parsley cut in chunks, and let it cool.
 - Put your pepper paste for breakfast in a glass jar and add Komili olive oil.
 - Serve your pepper paste with tea at 5 o'clock or during breakfast.



LENTIL BALLS

Ingredients

- 2 cups red lentils
 - 2/3 cups of Komili Early Harvest Olive Oil
 - 1,5 cups fine bulgur
 - 2 onions
 - 1 bunch of parsley, finely chopped
 - 1 bunch of scallion, finely chopped
 - 2 table spoons tomato paste
 - 2 table spoons red pepper paste
 - 5 cups water
 - 3 tea spoon red pimento
 - 3 tea spoon cumin
 - 1 coffee spoon rock salt
- Wash red lentils. Bring to a boil and then simmer uncovered over low heat.
 - Once the lentils are soft remove from heat and add the bulgur.
 - Cover and set aside.
 - Chop onions finely and sauté at low heat with Komili olive oil.
 - Add tomato and red pepper pastes and cook a few more minutes.
 - Mix the lentils, onions and pastes, salt and cumin and knead, without burning your hands.
 - Add parsley and scallion, and form oval walnut-size balls and serve.



DANE-I CEZER

Ingredients

- 1 kg large carrots
- 2 cups Komili Early Harvest Olive Oil
- 3 cups rice
- 4,5 cups chicken broth
- 1 table spoon butter
- Pepper
- Rock salt

For the top

- 250 g minced meat
- Half onion, diced
- 1 table spoon tomato paste
- ¼ bunch parsley, finely chopped
- 2 table spoons pistachio
- 4 table spoons almond kernels cut in half.

- Peel carrots and cut into strips.
- Sauté in Komili olive oil for a few minutes until soft.
- Rinse sautéed carrots in cold water and set aside on a napkin.
- Keep rice in warm water for 20 minutes. Rinse and drain.
- Sauté rice in 1 table spoon butter and remove from heat.
- Put carrot in line in a deep saucepan.
- Add rice and chicken broth and start to cook this pilaf.
- Once it is cooked remove from heat and set aside.
- Sauté minced meat and onions without adding fat.
- Add tomato paste, salt and pepper. And add parsley and remove from heat.
- Sauté almonds and pistachio in 1 table spoon of Komili olive oil.

Lastly;

- Turn the rice upside down in a saucepan.
- Add minced meat sauce on carrots.
- Add almonds and pistachio on top and serve.



GRILLED AUBERGINE AND CHEESE

Ingredients

- 2 round aubergines
 - 1 pack halloumi cheese
 - 8 cherry tomatoes
 - 5 cloves of garlic, unpeeled
 - Komili Stone Pressed Olive Oil
 - Fresh thyme
- Grill aubergines at high heat. Peel and set aside, open them up with a spoon.
 - Chop big pieces of halloumi and cut tomatoes in half.
 - Start frying both sides of halloumi with Komili olive oil. Add tomatoes, thyme and garlic in the frying pan.
 - Stuff grilled aubergines with fried halloumi and serve.



TRAY MANTI

Ingredients

- For stuffing
- 2 potatoes, boiled (grated)
- 5 table spoons Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Half onion, finely chopped
- Chili flake
- Rock salt

For the dough

- 3 cups flour
- 3 table spoon Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Rock salt
- Enough water

For the sauce

- 250 g. minced meat
- Half onion, diced
- 3 table spoon tomato paste
- ¼ bunch parsley, finely chopped
- Strained yoghurt

To cook

- 2 cups broth

- Make a dough by mixing flour, eggs, Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil and water, set aside.
- Sauté onions in Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil and when tender, add potatoes and chili flakes. Set aside.
- Spread the dough and cut small round pieces with the help of a small coffee cup.
- Put the potato filling inside the dough pieces and close them in a half-moon shape.
- Put your manti pieces on the tray. Cook in the oven for 20 minutes, at 180 degrees.
- In the meantime, sauté onions and minced meat for 10 minutes, without adding fat.
- Add tomato paste, salt and pepper.
- Add parsley and remove from fire.
- Once mantı is cooked take it out and put on a stove.
- Add 2 cups of broth and cover, cook at low heat until there is no broth left.
- Serve with sautéed-minced meat and strained yoghurt.



MIXED CHEESE

Ingredients

- 1 cup curd cheese
 - 1 cup farm cheese
 - 1 cup feta cheese (grated)
 - ½ bunch dill, finely chopped
 - 1 coffee spoon black sesame
 - Komili Cold Pressed Olive Oil
- In a large bowl crush and make a hash with all the cheese.
 - Add mill and black sesame.
 - Add Komili olive oil, serve on a toast.



ÇAYKAMA OF MILAS

Ingredients

- 1 cup Komili Stone Pressed Olive Oil
- 2 cups curd cheese
- 2 cups flour
- 3,5 cups water
- 1 tea spoon yeast
- Rock salt
- Herbs as you wish (parsley, fresh mint, hibiscus, fennel, scallion)

- Dilute yeast with water.
- Add flour and the rest of the water and knead a liquid dough, set aside.
- Wash and drain herbs.
- Mix herbs, cheese, salt and Komili olive oil with dough.
- Oil the oven tray and pour the çaykama.
- Bake until roasted above and below, at 180 degrees, during 45 minutes, and serve.



WALNUT AND OLIVE OIL CAKE

Ingredients

- 1 cup Komili Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1,5 cup molasses
- 3 cups flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 coffee spoon cinnamon
- 1 coffee spoon crushed walnut
- 1 pack baking powder

- Beat eggs in a deep mixing bowl.
- Add molasses, Komili olive oil and milk, and continue beating.
- In another bowl mix flour, cinnamon and baking powder, and add this mixture to the other.
- Lastly, add walnuts and put in an oiled cake mould, bake for 30 minutes at 170 degrees. Set aside for 20 minutes, then serve.



CURD CHEESE COOKIES

Ingredients

- 5 table spoons Komili Early Harvest Olive Oil
- 1 cup unsalted curd cheese
- 1 egg white
- 1 cup icing sugar
- 2,5 cups flour
- 1 pack vanillin
- 1 pack baking powder

- Mix egg white, sugar, vanillin, curd cheese, flour, baking powder and Komili olive oil in a bowl to obtain a dough.
- Roll into walnut-size balls.
- Bake for 30 minutes in a pre-heated oven at 180 degrees, serve once cold.
- You can also serve with icing sugar or jam.





Komili

Komili Travel Book of Flavours With Ömür Akkor

M. Ömür Akkor



Anatolia will never end by traveling, or writing about it. My love for this country will never end either. But I have compiled for you some kilometers of this 15-year journey; I hope you will read it with the enthusiasm I had while writing it.

Bon voyage.

M. Ömür Akkor