

Easy Turkish Salad Recipe

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Smashwords Edition

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Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Turkish Salads - Starting the Meal Right](#)

[Chapter 1 Exploring Turkey in your Kitchen](#)

[--Cooking with the Right Ingredients](#)

[Chapter 2 All Vegetable Salads](#)

[--Fattoush](#)

[--Turkish Green Olive Salad](#)

[--Onion Salad](#)

[--Lentil Salad](#)

[--Bulgur Salad](#)

[--Carrot Salad With Yogurt](#)

[--Sweet Potato Salad](#)

[--Dried Red Pepper Salad](#)

[--Tukish Bean Salad With Vegetables](#)

[--Dandelion Salad](#)

[--Red Cabbage Salad](#)

[--Celeriac Salad](#)

[Chapter 3 Salads with Meat](#)

[--Chicken Salad](#)

[--Albanian Liver](#)

[--Salad With Lamb Brain](#)

[--Lettuce Chicken Salad](#)

[Chapter 4 Salads with Fruits](#)

[--Apricot And Turkish Delight Mess](#)

[--Tahini Spinach Salad](#)

[--Roasted Chestnut And Watermelon Radish Salad](#)

[--Lemon And Pomegranate Couscous Salad](#)

[Chapter 5 Seafood Salads](#)

[--Crab Salad With Corn](#)

[--Baked Salad](#)

[--Fish Salad](#)

[--Lobster Sauté](#)

[--Green Onion Crab Salad](#)

[Chapter 6 All about Aubergines](#)

[--Grilled Aubergine With Chickpea & Walnut Sauce](#)

[--Aubergine Salad](#)

[--Roasted Aubergine Salad](#)

[--Aubergine Couscous Salad](#)

[--Roasted Aubergine With Goat Cheese And Flat Bread](#)

[--Griddled Aubergine With Sesame Dressing](#)

[Chapter 7 Hosting a Meal with Friends and Family](#)

[Chapter 8 Before your Close this Book](#)

Introduction.

Cooking is an art, mastered by many and explored by some. Turkish food, amongst the top three best cuisines of the world, alongside the French and the Chinese, offers a true culinary experience that will be more than just food. Like most ancient cuisines, Turkish cuisine showcases a depth of history and culture. If you are looking to delve into the experience of Turkish cooking, this book is the best place to start. Focusing on salads, where most amazing meals begin, you will uncover secrets that will bring color and flavor to your life.

TURKISH SALADS

Starting the Meal Right



Congratulations on your first move to conquer the wonderful culinary world of Turkey. Turkish cuisine, derived from the Ottoman cuisine, is a perfect fusion of Balkan, Central Asian and Middle Eastern cuisines --- rich in flavor, color and taste. Your decision to march forward to trying Turkish food has to start somewhere, and Turkish Salads will be a good place for you to embark. One thing you need to understand is that going Turkish goes above and beyond just flavor and spices, because the journey will bring you to a healthier version of yourself.

This book shall journey with you. It will take you into the culinary world of Turkish dishes, so that you can ease in slowly. Turkey is a wonderful place to discover, and their food is also a true adventure. With every Turkish dish, you are taken to a new place. With its carefully chosen ingredients, much room is given for originality and creativity, so the experience is one that you cannot find anywhere else.

When you ask any culinary expert about what they know and believe about Turkish cuisine, they will tell you one thing: it is amongst the top three greatest cuisines in the world. Unknown to many, it ranks alongside the French and the Chinese given its magnanimous history and culture; with ancient Turks adopting cuisines through their nomadic years in the neighbouring areas.

Back in the ages of the Ottoman Empire, they used to have control over what was known as the “spice road”. For six hundred years, therefore, the Ottoman Empire spread its culinary influence, thus explaining the similarities between Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and European cuisines.

Chapter 1

Exploring Turkey in your Kitchen



As in every cuisine you decide to explore, Turkish cuisine is going to be a fine journey into the culture and tradition of the place. Turkey has deep roots in the Middle East, Anatolia and the Balkans, as well as to other civilizations. These influences are reflected in the food served at the table --- and like most explorations you take, you dive into the beauty and magnificence of Turkey because it is a haven of adventure, tasted with every bite.

Every spoonful you take, you will be experiencing paradise, as if truly embracing the amazing Mediterranean climate of perfect sunshine and warmth. Remember that the Mediterranean is all about the sun and the sea, and every bite you take is a refreshing reminder of that. Page after page, chapter after chapter, this book will take you on a journey so that you will feel as though you are embracing the rich history and culture of Turkey.

There is a vast world to explore where Turkish cuisine is concerned. There are many dishes for you to try, but this book will focus on Turkish Salads, also known as “salatasi”. Salads may be eaten as a side or accompanying dish, but it may also be taken on its own, depending on the serving on the plate. When speaking of Turkish dishes, on the other hand, the salads are never really regarded just as a side dish because the art of creating every plateful of salatasi tells a story that goes deeper into the roots of Turkish culture and history.

It is also important for you to know that a “meze” is an appetizer, and most salad dishes are served as part of the “meze”, a course that is enjoyed with or without drinks, opening the magnificent and scrumptious meal. If not a “meze”, the salad dish is served as the main course, but either way it is thoroughly enjoyed.

Cooking with the Right Ingredients

Conquering the kitchen involves more than willingness, it also requires true readiness. You need to have the cooking equipment and tools, and you need to have the right ingredients to create the dishes.

The following are some of the staples in Turkish cuisine. If you are certain about wanting to embark on this culinary journey, you will begin by stocking your kitchen pantry with the following:

- Almonds
- Aubergine
- Beef
- Black pepper
- Cabbage
- Cheese
- Chicken
- Chick peas
- Cucumber
- Cumin
- Dill
- Dried beans
- Fish
- Garlic
- Green beans
- Green peppers
- Hazelnuts
- Lamb
- Lemon
- Mint
- Olive oil

- Olives
- Onions
- Oranges
- Paprika
- Parsley
- Phyllo dough (yufka and kadayif)
- Pistachios
- Pomegranate molasses
- Red pepper flakes
- Red pepper paste
- Sumac
- Tomato paste
- Tomatoes
- Walnuts
- Yogurt
- Zucchini

Before you begin your journey, do equip yourself with the ingredients above. More so, have an open mind about this entire experience because cooking is an art, one that is only perfected when the “chef” is truly devoted to his dish.

Chapter 2

All Vegetable Salads

When someone chooses to have a salad, it is often assumed that this person is on a diet, choosing health over everything, and making a decision to go “green” to embrace all the benefit it brings. With Turkish all-vegetable salads, you get the nutritional benefits that vegetables promise, plus amazing flavors. Mediterranean cuisine is known for flavor, so every bite you take is an amazing experience. Mentioned in the previous chapter are some of the ingredients commonly used in the Turkish dishes; as you journey further, you may meet more ingredients, uncovering even more about this culinary world.

FATTOUSH

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

SALAD

1 pita bread

8 plum tomatoes, seeded and quartered

cucumber, peeled and chopped

green pepper, sliced

8 radishes, sliced

1 shallot, sliced

handful of rocket leaves

1 small gem lettuce

handful fresh mint leaves

DRESSING

300ml olive oil

juice of 2 lemons

1 garlic clove, crushed

4 tbsp sumac

salt and pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prepare the dressing by whisking together the olive oil, lemon juice and zest, garlic and sumac.
2. Season the dressing with salt and pepper.

3. Prepare the salad by laying the pita bread on a plate and topping it with tomatoes, cucumber, rocket leaves, pepper, radishes, gem lettuce, mint leaves, and the shallot slices.
4. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper, and serve with a generous helping of the dressing.

The most significant feature of this dish is that it has a very characteristic sourness, and it is best paired with all kinds of meat dishes. Control the amount of lemon if you want it less sour, but welcome all the juice you want, depending on your preference.

TURKISH GREEN OLIVE SALAD

(Yesil Zytin Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

SALAD

½ cup green olives - filled with red pepper

½ head of romaine lettuce

1 small carrot, finely grated

¼ cup walnuts

DRESSING

4-5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 tbsp pomegranate paste or grenadine syrup

1 pinch cayenne pepper, crushed

1 garlic clove, with salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Using your hands, tear the greens and place them in a bowl.
2. Arrange the sliced carrots and olives over the greens, and top them with the walnuts.
3. Whisk all the dressing ingredients together, and pour it over the salad.
4. Garnish the salad with parsley.

This very simple salad dish may be easily prepared, but it is nutritiously beneficial to all. The dressing ingredients provide a pleasant sweet and spicy taste, uncommon to most salads.

ONION SALAD

(Sogan Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2



INGREDIENTS

1 onion, finely sliced

½ tsp salt

½ tsp sumac

GARNISH

fresh parsley or dill

lemon wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rub the sliced onions with the salt, then wash under cold water.
2. Drain the sliced onions and place them on a salad plate.

3. Spread on top and add the sumac.

4. Garnish with parsley or dill, and the lemon wedges.

This salad is often enjoyed on its own, but can also be eaten as a side dish accompanying many other famous Turkish dishes. Prepare this salad to be eaten along with kebabs, pizzas, and other meat dishes. The salt brings out the sweetness of the onions, making it a great addition to savoury dishes.

LENTIL SALAD

Yesil Mercimek Salatasi

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

2 cups green lentils

1 cup crushed walnuts

1 bunch parsley

1 bunch dill

4-5 scallions

juice of 1 lemon

salt, black pepper, red pepper, to taste

½ cup olive oil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the lentils until tender, but ensure they are not mushy.
2. Finely chop the parsley, dill and scallions.
3. Combine all the ingredients together, and serve cold.

This is a healthy dish that is rich in vitamins and minerals. The different colors afforded by the different ingredients make for a very appetizing salad. It has a simple taste that is easy to love, and since it is easily prepared, this salad is perfect for a quick snack.

BULGUR SALAD

(Kisir)

Preparation Time: 25 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

2 cups bulgur, finely ground

1 bunch fresh parsley

1 bunch fresh mint

1 bunch green onions

1 tbsp tomato paste

3 tbsp red pepper paste

3 tbsp pomegranate molasses

½ cup olive oil

⅔ cup of boiling water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the ground bulgur in a bowl and boil until the bulgur grains are soaked.
2. Cover with plastic wrap and let the bulgur sit for 20-30 minutes. When they are soft, add the red pepper and tomato paste, and knead for 5 minutes.
3. Add the pomegranate molasses and knead for a few minutes more. If you do not have pomegranate molasses, you can use lemon juice.
4. Meanwhile, finely chop the parsley, mint and green onions, and add them to the dish. Mix well to ensure the bulgur grains are separated.
5. Add the olive oil and mix. Enjoy this on a bed of romaine lettuce along with tomatoes, cucumbers, pickles and green olives.

The word Bulgur is of Turkish origin. It is a cereal made from different species, and it is very popular in Middle Eastern, European and South Asian Cuisines. Bulgur Salad is a rather light

salad that may be enjoyed on its own, or in combination with another dish. A similar dish called Tobouleh often creates conflict with this dish, but to a true fan of Turkish dishes you will know that Bulgur is so much tastier. Bulgur is commonly served in small or large gatherings. It is served along with lettuce or grape leaves, with tomatoes, olives and pickled peppers on the side. If you are unable to find bulgur, you can substitute it with oats or quinoa.

CARROT SALAD WITH YOGURT

(Yogurtlu Havuc Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 5 minutes

Serves: 3

INGREDIENTS

4 cups carrot, grated

1 cup plain yogurt

1-2 cloves of garlic, minced

2 tbsp olive oil

3-4 tbsp fresh dill, chopped

salt

1 tbsp mayonnaise

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a skillet and add the grated carrots. Stir-fry until the carrots are wilted.
2. Remove the carrots from the skillet, then put them in a bowl.
3. Add the yogurt, garlic, dill and salt, and mix well.

As absurd as it may sound, carrot salad with yogurt is a very popular dish to have when drinking. Most women prepare this when they serve alcohol to their husbands, in an effort to lower their consumption of alcohol, and it works wonders. It is very simple to create, but wonderfully tasty and enjoyable. It is common to find this dish in seafood raki pubs, to conform with cultural tradition.

SWEET POTATO SALAD

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 35 minutes

Serves: 6

INGREDIENTS

SALAD

1.2kg sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into biggish chunks

1 tbsp olive oil

DRESSING

2 shallots, finely chopped

4 spring onions, finely sliced

chives, snipped into quarters, or use mini ones

5 tbsp sherry vinegar

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

2 tbsp honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 180oC
2. Toss the sweet potato chunks with the olive oil and some seasoning, and spread on a baking sheet. Roast for 30 - 35 minutes until tender and golden, then cool at room temperature.
3. Whisk together all the dressing ingredients with a little more seasoning and gently toss through the potato chunks.
4. Scatter the dish with crumbled feta or toasted pine nuts for extra flavor.

If you are fond of the mayonnaise version often followed in potato salads, this salad dish is going to be a healthier alternative. It may be enjoyed as a snack or a side dish for an actual meal --- thus ensuring that you have a healthy option to enjoy.

DRIED RED PEPPER SALAD

(Kuru Kirmizi Biber Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

1/3lb dried red peppers

1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped

1 large clove garlic, finely chopped

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp lemon juice

1 tsp salt

water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the water in a pot and soak the dried peppers in the water for 30 minutes.
2. Rinse the red peppers under cold water and drain. With a sharp knife slit each pepper lengthwise on a cutting board. Remove and throw away the seeds, and then remove the flesh of the peppers from the skin by running the knife from the top portion of the pepper towards the end.
3. Add the garlic, parsley, lemon juice, olive oil and salt to the peppers. Mix well and serve at room temperature.

The beauty of preparing salads is that they are very easy to make. As they are not labour intensive you can easily prepare them without disrupting your other daily activities. For this particular salad dish, you could either make your own dried peppers or you can buy them commercially. The problem with commercially sold dried red peppers is that they may have a tough skin. If this becomes a problem, all you have to do is to separate the flesh from the skin. Like most salads, this may be enjoyed as a side dish or an entrée. It could be served as a paste to combine with sandwiches, such as a chicken sandwich to give it a better taste, or it may be enjoyed on its own.

TUKISH BEAN SALAD WITH VEGETABLES

(Fasulye Piyazi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

2 cans of precooked cannellini beans

½ onion, thinly sliced

3 tomatoes, chopped

3-4 tbsp olives, halved and stoned

2 hardboiled eggs, quartered

A handful of flat leaf parsley, chopped

1 tsp salt

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

juice of 1 lemon

1 tsp ground sumac

½ teaspoon paprika flakes

salt and pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse and drain the cannellini beans. Place the beans in a bowl.
2. Massage the sumac and salt into the onion slices to soften them and to bring out their flavours.
3. Add together the onions, half of the olives, chopped tomatoes, paprika, and parsley. Whisk together the extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice.
4. Season this with salt and black pepper, then combine well.
5. Arrange everything neatly on a serving plate and garnish with the eggs and the remaining olives.

For this particular dish, the beans are combined with onions, olives, tomatoes and boiled eggs. This is a perfect dish to prepare when you do not have a lot of spare time. As well as being easy to prepare, this dish is very tasty and, like most Turkish salad dishes, it is healthy. In more modern restaurants, this dish is often combined with Turkish style meatballs, providing more flavor and spice. When using beans, you always have the option to use canned beans or dried ones. Dried beans will have to be soaked overnight before they are boiled, or it will take them a long time to soften whilst boiling. Make sure to drain them well before you use them for this salad dish.

DANDELION SALAD

(Hindiba Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

2 bunches dandelions

3 cloves garlic, chopped

$\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp red pepper flakes

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp paprika

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil

$2\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp pomegranate molasses

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wash the dandelions thoroughly and cut off the roots. Leave the leaf and stalks intact.
2. Boil the dandelions, making sure not to overcook them.
3. When cooked, remove them from the water and place in a bowl.
4. Add the garlic, olive oil, salt, red pepper flakes, paprika and the pomegranate molasses.
5. Toss everything together and serve at room temperature.

Many believe that dandelions are bitter and not at all tasty. It is a true art to really bring out the taste of dandelions. Mature dandelions are harder to chew, so you need to look for younger ones. Scour your grocery stores for some of these if you want to be more successful. The other secret is to cook the dandelions whole, keeping the leaves attached, and what you get is a bitter-free lovely salad.

RED CABBAGE SALAD

(Kirmizi Cabbage Salad)

Preparation Time: a few days

Serves: 2



INGREDIENTS

1 whole red cabbage

3-4 scallions

1 tbsp chopped parsley

2-3 tbsp olive oil

salt

1 cup vinegar

juice of ½ lemon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Slice the red cabbage thinly.
2. Sprinkle the sliced cabbage liberally with salt. Knead it well then wash.
3. Place the cabbage in a glass jar. Add the vinegar and enough water to cover. Allow it to rest for a few days.
4. Chop the scallions and parsley, and mix with a portion of the cabbage in a deep bowl. Top with olive oil and lemon.
5. Retain the remaining cabbage in the glass jar with the vinegar water. Keep in a refrigerator until needed.

Perfect as a ready-dish that you can take out from the refrigerator when you are having some cravings, this red cabbage salad can be forked easily from the jar and then enjoyed. It may be had as a snack with a piece of bread or pita, or may be enjoyed as a side dish in combination with other dishes.

CELERIAC SALAD

(Kereviz Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

2 medium celeriac roots (celery knobs)

½ cup finely crushed walnuts

1 cup yogurt with garlic

1 tbsp mayonnaise

salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Peel and wash the celeriac, grate finely.
2. Combine with the remaining ingredients.

Celeriac root is like celery root, shaped like a knob. It is usually edible when raw, but it can be cooked. It can be blanched, mashed, roasted or stewed, and combined in different kinds of dishes such as soups and casseroles. In this particular salad dish it is served raw, merely washed and grated. Just like normal celery, celeriac root can imbibe all the flavors of the mayonnaise and garlic, providing a great taste to every bite.

Chapter 3

Salads with Meat

Many regard salads as boring, bland and insufficiently filling. You have a salad and you find yourself starving because vegetables do not exactly fill you up. It is for this reason that meats are incorporated to salad dishes to give the dish some flavor and substance.

In Turkey, meat plays a daily role in the inhabitant's diet. Meats are often enjoyed ground, and they are commonly combined with vegetables and yogurt. Examples of famous meats include veal, poultry and lamb. Being predominantly Islam, pork is not part of Turkish cuisine, so you should not expect to find many recipes for this meat.

CHICKEN SALAD

(Tavuk Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minute

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

1 chicken breast

½ cup crushed walnuts

1 tbsp mayonnaise

½-¾ cup yogurt with garlic

salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Simmer the chicken breast until cooked. Cut into small cubes.
2. Combine the chicken with the crushed walnuts.
3. Mix together the mayonnaise and yogurt, then combine with the chicken and walnuts. Add salt to taste and set aside.
4. Serve as a cold meze.

As previously mentioned, a meze is an appetizer commonly served with Turkish meals. Tavuk Salatasi is a tasty and filling cold meze with just the right smoothness and crunch that you can surely enjoy.

ALBANIAN LIVER

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

1.5kg lamb's liver

200g flour

Add a littlesalt

1 tbsp chilli powder

1 tsp sumac

5 onions, sliced into rings

1 bunch parsley leaves

thyme

2 cups sunflower oil

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Remove the membrane around the liver and dice it. Rinse it well and then drain in a sieve.
2. Sieve the flour and salt together, and add the chilli powder. Coat the liver in the flour mixture, shaking to remove any excess flour.
3. Heat the oil and fry the liver for 1 to 2 minutes.
4. Slice the onions, rubbing them with salt. Rinse and pat dry.
5. Mix together the liver, onions, herbs, sumac, and chilli powder or paprika.

This liver salad dish is all about spice and taste. The liver, with its own rich taste, is enhanced with the spices incorporated into this dish.

SALAD WITH LAMB BRAIN

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

SALAD

4 pieces of lamb brain

¼ iceberg lettuce

¼ romaine lettuce

¼ andil

2 tomatoes

¼ rocket lettuce

parsley

2 eggs

DRESSING

1 tbsp lemon juice

1 tbsp oil

1 tsp white pepper

1 tsp salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the lamb brain with lemon juice in water.
2. In a separate pot, boil the eggs with the vegetables.
3. Mix the brain, eggs and vegetables together with the lettuce,, parsley and rocket.
4. Add the oil, and salt and pepper to taste.

Lamb brain is a traditional Turkish ingredient and, in this dish, it is nicely incorporated with the collection of greens and vegetables, thus providing a great combination of different textures.

LETTUCE CHICKEN SALAD

(Tavuklu Kivircik Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

½ head of lettuce, torn

2 chicken breasts

2 green onions, diced

1-2 tbsp mayonnaise

1-2 tbsp lemon juice

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Boil the chicken breasts in lightly salted water until they are cooked and tender. Once cooked, cut them into cubes.
2. Mix the olive oil, lemon juice, salt and mayonnaise together in a small bowl.
3. In a salad dish combine the chicken with the lettuce and onions. Drizzle with the olive oil sauce, toss gently and serve.

Depending on how healthy you would like this dish to be, you can opt to remove the mayonnaise from the ingredients and simply enjoy the flavours provided by the lemon juice instead.

Chapter 4

Salads with Fruits

One of the issues that people have with salads and vegetables in general is the lack of flavor and taste. Adding meats and seafood defeats the whole purpose of trying to be green and healthy, so when some taste is being craved, it can be obtained from fruits. All kinds of fruits can be combined to salad dishes. It gives the dish a characteristic sweetness so that it may be enjoyed by more people, especially by those with taste palates that often demand even a hint of sugar.

Fruits also make good additions to salads because it offers coloring and, of course, appearances often contribute to one's appetite. Fruits give color, flavor and nutrition. Fruits are packed with amazing vitamins and minerals that will boost health, so every bite you take is surely worth the effort.

APRICOT AND TURKISH DELIGHT MESS

Preparation Times: 15 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

100g mascarpone cheese

50g Greek yogurt

25g icing sugar, sifted

2 tbsp orange flower water

1 meringue nest, broken into rough pieces

3 apricots, stoned and chopped

2 cubes Turkish delight, orange flavored if available, chopped

25g skin-on almonds, roughly chopped

4 mint leaves, shredded, plus extra to decorate (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the mascarpone, yogurt, sugar and orange flower water into a large bowl and whisk until thickened.
2. Fold the other ingredients into the mixture, then divide between two dessert glasses or bowls.
3. Decorate the mix with extra mint on top as a garnish

This dish is a Middle Eastern version of Eton Mess, a classic British dish. This is a lovely dessert which is a feast of flavors, with a citrus burst that refreshes your palate. This dessert can be served with mint tea for a perfect close to the perfect meal.

TAHINI SPINACH SALAD

(Tahinli Ispanak Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

SALAD

200-300g spinach leaves

1 avocado, cubed

8-10 red onions, sliced

1-2 tbsp almonds, sliced

DRESSING

1-2 tbsp tahini (ground sesame paste)

1/3 cup yogurt

1-2 garlic cloves, with salt

2 tbsp lemon juice

1 pinch ginger, grated

1/2 tsp lemon zest

salt

pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lay the spinach leaves on the serving plates.
2. Whisk all the dressing ingredients together and pour it over the greens.
3. Sprinkle on top with avocado, red onions and almonds.

This is another easily prepared salad dish, ideal for those days when there is not enough time to prepare a complicated dish. Rather than having junk food for a quick snack, you can whip yourself something this nutritious and perfectly safeguard your health by doing so. Snacking is often one of the hardest “meals” to have, and this is where most diets fail. If you have something like this handy in the fridge, you have nothing to worry about.

ROASTED CHESTNUT AND WATERMELON RADISH SALAD

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

12 lettuce leaves, chopped

4 watermelon radish, pre-soaked, peeled, and thinly sliced

2 small green apples, peeled and sliced

400g roasted chestnuts, chopped

4 tbsp pomegranate seeds

2 tsp pomegranate molasses

2 tbsp lemon juice

4 tbsp olive oil

pinch ground pepper

pinch nutmeg, grated

salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Arrange the chopped lettuce leaves on a plate.
2. Arrange the slices of watermelon radish and green apple on top of the lettuce.
3. Sprinkle with the roasted chestnuts and pomegranate seeds.
4. In a bowl, mix together the pomegranate molasses, lemon juice, ground pepper, nutmeg, and salt.
5. Season the mixed salad with the prepared sauce.

The beauty and appeal of this salad dish lies with the colors. The combination of colors provided by the lettuce, watermelon radish and pomegranate seeds makes this dish enticing. This salad has a unique bitter-sour-sweet taste that you cannot find anywhere else.

LEMON AND POMEGRANATE COUSCOUS SALAD

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

1-2 pomegranates

200g couscous

250ml boiling chicken stock (or water)

sea salt

ground black pepper

juice of 2 lemons

6 tbsp olive oil

4 tbsp mint or coriander, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the couscous in a bowl and pour over the boiling stock, or water.
2. Stir in the olive oil and lemon juice.
3. Season the mixture with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
4. Cover this tightly with cling film and allow the couscous to sit in a warm place until the liquid is fully absorbed.
5. Remove the cling film and fluff the grains using a fork.
6. Allow the couscous to cool.
7. Add in the chopped herbs and pomegranate seeds.
8. Add the remaining olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste

It is always easy to whip up a couscous salad, and this salad dish can easily be enjoyed by itself, or with a lightly flavored chicken dish. The trickiest part of this dish is preparing the couscous, which is the base of your salad. Use a heat-proof bowl when you prepare your couscous, directly adding the lemon juice and boiling stock. Also, ensure you know how to handle the

pomegranate, slicing across the middle and spooning it to remove the seeds, then squeezing it to release the flavor. In as much as you can, use every essence of the pomegranate, so that you can maximize the flavor and taste.

Chapter 5

Seafood Salads

It is often normal for people to stay away from salads because it hardly fills them up. Salads are for those who are counting calories and would like to keep them low, but when you are looking instead at the healthy benefits of going green, you can devour as many salads as you can and stay healthy. For flavoring and taste, meats are added to the salad dishes. A healthier alternative, of course, is to use seafood --- seafood absorbs different flavors very well, and provides textures that make every bite truly enjoyable.

Turkey is surrounded by seas, and since there is an abundance of seafood they are often a famous ingredient for Turkish dishes, even salads. The seafood may be fried, grilled or poached (a special slow-cooking method); and when combined in a salad dish it immediately helps transform it to something truly special.

CRAB SALAD WITH CORN

(Misirli Yengec Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

½lb crab meat, or imitation crab meat, chopped

½ cup mayonnaise

½ - ⅔ cup yogurt

¼ cup mustard

½ cup pickle slices, minced

½ cup sweet corn

¼ tsp black pepper

salt, to taste

¼ tsp thyme

fresh parsley, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix together all of the ingredients, except for the crab meat.
2. Once the sauce/dressing is combined, stir in the crab meat. Ensure that the crab meat is thoroughly mixed with the sauce/dressing.
3. Transfer into a salad plate and serve.

Apart from the need to cook the crab meat, this is a fairly simple salad dish to prepare, and it is great as the ingredients complement each other nicely. The crab meat is soft and tender, and with every creamy bite you take, you will sink your teeth in a kernel of corn that is deliciously crunchy.

BUKED SALAD

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

100g shrimps, peeled and deveined

1 lettuce

purslane flower (aka verdolaga, little hogweed, pigweed, parsley or moss rose)

10g capari flower

1 cucumber, julienned

1 carrot, julienned

1 lemon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Julienne the carrots and cucumber finely, and lay them nicely on a plate.
2. Layer the cleaned and chopped lettuce on the same plate with the carrots and cucumbers.
3. Add the boiled shrimps and capari flower.
4. Decorate your salad with some purslane flower and lemon, and serve.

This is a simple and healthy salad dish whose flavor is very much reliant on the lemon. With the vegetables enjoyed fresh, you get to enjoy a nice crunch with every bite you take of this dish. You let your teeth sink into the shrimp and then land a perfect crunch with your teeth as you bite into the carrots and cucumber.

FISH SALAD

(Balik Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

250-300g sole fillets or bluefish

1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

8 tbsp mayonnaise

1 tbsp Dijon mustard

1 tbsp lemon juice

1 tbsp dill, chopped

1 tsp red pepper, crushed

salt

pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the olive oil in a pan and cook both sides of the sole fillets, making sure not to overcook it so that it does not go dry.
2. Once cooked, cut the fish into small cubes and let it cool.
3. Combine the remainder of the ingredients to create the sauce, and cover the fish cubes.
4. Serve with pickle slices and toasted bread on the side.

Fish is a perfect ingredient that can be incorporated into many different dishes. In this simple fish salad, the flavor of the mayonnaise, mustard and lemon is perfectly infused into the fish, giving every bite an amazing taste. Adjust the lemon according to your own preference.

LOBSTER SAUTÉ

(Sotelenmis Istakoz)

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2



INGREDIENTS

1 whole steamed lobster

2 tbsp white onion

1 garlic clove (chopped)

2 tbsp fresh parsley

1 tbsp olive oil

¼ tsp paprika

¼ tsp ground black pepper

1 tbsp white vinegar

½ tsp salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the lobster in half, lengthwise, and remove the meat from the tail and claws. You might need a cracker to do this. Once separated roughly chop the meat. Set it aside.
2. Heat the oil, then sprinkle with paprika, black pepper and salt. Add the garlic and onions, and sauté until the onions are translucent.
3. Pour in the vinegar, and then add the chopped lobster pieces along with the parsley, and sauté for 1 minute.
4. Serve either warm or cold, with potatoes, rice or bulgur pilaf.

While lobster is often cooked by steaming, for this particular dish the lobster is enhanced by additionally sautéing with different spices. This dish is versatile enough to be delicious on its own, being served with a sandwich, as an accompaniment with a rice pilaf, or dished up with steamed vegetables.

GREEN ONION CRAB SALAD

(Yesil Sogani Yengec Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 3

INGREDIENTS

½lb crab/imitation crab meat, cut into chunks

1 cup iceberg lettuce, shredded

2 pairs of green onions, chopped

1 cup yogurt

1 tbsp mayonnaise or mustard

¼ tsp Italian seasoning

salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix the yogurt, mayonnaise/mustard, salt and spices in a bowl.
2. Stir in the other ingredients and mix well
3. Transfer to a serving plate and garnish with the green onions.

This dish is characterised by the great flavors of the ingredients used, especially those of the onions. All the flavors are absorbed nicely by the crab meat, thus ensuring that with every bite you will enjoy a culinary experience not to be forgotten.

Chapter 6

All about Aubergines

When you begin to truly delve into Turkish cooking, you will realize aubergines (or eggplants) are going to be a main ingredient in your kitchen. There are many aubergine salad dishes that you can explore, each showcasing different flavors and tastes. Many non-aubergine eaters start a new love affair after tasting this weird vegetable when incorporated into a lovely Turkish salad. It is often described as being mushy with a slippery texture, but it makes a great contribution to Turkish dishes as it acts as a sponge, imbibing all the flavors of tomatoes, peppers, and so much more.

Aubergines are also a great source of fiber, vitamin K and manganese, helping to boost bone formation. They also have tumor-fighting abilities that help combat the development of cancers.

GRILLED AUBERGINE WITH CHICKPEA & WALNUT SAUCE

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 30 minutes

Serves: 2



INGREDIENTS

4 tbsp olive oil

1 onion, finely chopped

1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped

2cm piece ginger, finely chopped

½ tsp each ground cumin, coriander and cinnamon

400g can chickpeas, rinsed and drained

200g tomatoes, chopped

juice ½ lemon

2 aubergines, sliced lengthways

WALNUT SAUCE

200g Greek-style yogurt

1 garlic clove, crushed

25g walnuts, chopped

A handful of coriander leaves, roughly chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat 2 tbsp of oil. Add the onions and sauté until softened and browned. Add the chilli, ginger, spices and mix.
2. Stir in the chickpeas, tomatoes and 5 tbsp of water, and bring to the boil.
3. Add a little salt, pepper and the lemon juice, and let it simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Lightly brush one side of the aubergines with oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill until tender and golden. Repeat for the other side.
5. Mix the yogurt with garlic, walnuts, coriander, salt and pepper. Arrange the aubergine on a warm platter and spoon over the chickpea mixture, and drizzle with the walnut sauce. Garnish with any remaining walnuts and serve.

Depending on how well you cook the aubergines, this salad dish is full of texture and great taste. The chickpeas, combined with the walnut sauce, provide a soft and creamy taste that blends well with the unique smoothness of the aubergines.

AUBERGINE SALAD

(Patlican Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2



INGREDIENTS

1kg aubergine

1 onion

5-6 “sivri” peppers, diced

2-3 tomatoes

2-3 tbsp olive oil

Salt

1 bunch parsley

1 lemon, juiced

INSTRUCTIONS

1. On a grill, or over a gas flame, cook the peppers until they are burned and blistered.

2. Skin the peppers.
3. Repeat with the tomatoes and aubergines until you can chop them finely without mashing the vegetables.
4. Cut the onion in half, lengthwise, then cut into thin half rings. Knead them with salt, then wash well.
5. Wash the parsley and chop finely.
6. Combine all of the ingredients, and serve with a squeeze of lemon.

This simple aubergine salad provides a healthy and enjoyable way to combine grilled aubergines, peppers and tomatoes. If you want your food spicy, you can add Maraş pepper flakes. The dried peppers provide extra flavor and a true Mediterranean feel. Some of the peppers in this recipe may be hard to find in your local shops, but suppliers can be found on eBay.

ROASTED AUBERGINE SALAD

(Kozlenmis Patlican Salatasi)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

2 medium aubergines, chopped

1-2 bell peppers, chopped

1 tomato, chopped

1-2 cloves of garlic, minced

¼ cup olive oil

½ lemon, juiced

2-3 sprigs parsley, chopped

1 tsp salt, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To prepare the sauce, mix together the lemon juice, olive oil and minced garlic in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Roast the aubergines and bell peppers over the stove or in the oven until they are soft. You may also consider roasting the tomatoes too, to make them softer. This will allow you to remove the skins easily.
3. Cut all the roasted vegetables into cubes.
4. Add the vegetables and the parsley to the prepared sauce. Sprinkle with salt. Once combined serve on plates.

This salad dish is perfect for vegetarians. It may be enjoyed on its own, or eaten as a side dish. The salad may be served along with arugula, lettuce, or any other greens that you desire. Fresh greens will offer its some crunch and freshness, thus ensuring a nice “bite” to the salad.

AUBERGINE COUSCOUS SALAD

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

1 large aubergine, sliced into 1cm rounds

3 tbsp olive oil

140g couscous

225ml hot vegetable stock

200g cherry tomatoes, halved

handful mint leaves, roughly chopped

100g log firm goat cheese, cubed

Juice of ½ lemon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the grill to high, and place the aubergine slices on a baking sheet. Brush them with oil and seasoning. Grill the aubergines for about 7½ per side, when turning ensure to brush them with more oil. Grill until browned and softened.
2. Put the couscous into a large bowl, pour over the stock, then cover and leave for 10 minutes.
3. Mix the tomatoes, mint, goat cheese and remaining oil together. Fluff the couscous up with a fork, then stir in the aubergines, tomato mixture and lemon juice.

The mint leaves added to this salad truly livens up every bite you take. For those looking to have a healthy meal, the grilled aubergines are ideal. However, if you are looking to add meat to this dish you can incorporate lamb cutlets, or chicken. If opting to use chicken, you can remove the cheese, tomatoes and aubergines, and add chopped oranges for some extra flavor.

ROASTED AUBERGINE WITH GOAT CHEESE AND FLAT BREAD

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

INGREDIENTS

2 aubergines, thinly sliced lengthways

3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

12 cherry tomatoes, halved

1 Middle Eastern flatbread or pita

3 tbsp balsamic vinegar

handful of mint leaves

2 shallots, 1 finely chopped, the other thinly sliced

1 red chilli, finely chopped

50g goat cheese, crumbled

handful wild rocket, to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oven to 180oC.
2. Brush the aubergine slices with 1 tbsp of the oil, then season liberally and arrange on a baking tray or sheet. Roast for 20 minutes, or until browned. Place the tomatoes on the tray for the final few minutes.
3. Tear the flatbread into pieces and place on a separate baking sheet. Brown it in the oven for 8 minutes, or until crisp, then remove.
4. For the dressing, mix together the vinegar, mint, chopped shallots, chilli, remaining oil, and some salt and pepper.
5. Scatter the aubergine slices, tomatoes, sliced shallot and crisp flatbread into serving bowls. Pour over the dressing, sprinkle with the goat cheese and scatter over a little rocket.

Often, the problem with foods synonymous to health is that it is boring and not at all tasty. This is not at all true for this salad dish because the burst of flavor with every bite almost helps you forget that you are eating a “boring” salad.

GRIDDLED AUBERGINE WITH SESAME DRESSING

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 6



INGREDIENTS

2 large aubergines, cut into 2cm slices

2 tbsp olive oil

250g full-fat Greek yogurt

3 tbsp tahini paste

1 large garlic clove, crushed

juice of 1 lemon

handful of chopped coriander, parsley and mint, plus extra leaves to serve

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Brush the aubergine slices with oil and season liberally.
2. Heat a griddle pan, or grill, and griddle the aubergine slices for 2-3 minutes on each side, until golden brown and tender.

3. Mix the yogurt with the tahini, garlic, lemon juice and herbs, then season to taste.

4. Top the aubergines with the dressing and scatter with the extra herb leaves.

Grilling is a great way to cook healthily, reducing your fat intake as you prepare a great tasting meal. With the combination of aubergines and grilling in this recipe, you benefit twice!

Chapter 7

Hosting a Meal with Friends and Family



Back in the day, the Imperial Palaces of the ancient worlds housed huge kitchens. The large kitchens were grouped into different sections, with a chief chef managing the functions of the kitchen staff that worked on specific dishes. Used to serving large guests, different chefs were assigned to solely create pilafs, dolmas, kebabs, baklavas, desserts and so on. To make the kitchen more efficient and productive in its function, the kitchens were kept a certain way, but much of that has now changed.

Today, while much of the culinary experience is maintained with every bite taken, dining has become more intimate. Out of the lavish Imperial Palaces, and housed in humble homes, through this book you can delve into a Turkish adventure with your friends and family.

Turkish dining is fun, and to host it for people that mean so much to you is going to make it even more special. Before everything else, you need to know that there are different things that you need to learn, and salads are only tip of the iceberg. As you delve deeper into Turkish cuisine you will uncover so much more to enjoy. They all say dining is an experience, so make it your goal to take your family and guests on a culinary adventure that they will never forget.

Turkish Cuisine Categories

1. Mezelar (Appetizers) which are also known as mezes, often served in multiples, as a cold or warm dish.
2. Salatalar (Salads) which are also known as salatasi.
3. Baklagiller (Legumes).
4. Etli Sebzeler Vegetables stuffed with rice or meat. Dolmar, the most popular, are stuffed peppers.
5. Corbalar (Soups).
6. Borekler (Stuffed pastries with meat, cheese or vegetables).
7. Kebaplar These range from kebaps, which may be kebabs that are cooked in a pot, to those that are skewered on a stick.
8. Zeytinyagli Sebzeler (Olive oil vegetable dishes) that are often served cold.
9. Pilavlar (Rice or Bulgur pilaffs).
10. Pideler (Flat bread) this is usually served with cheese, vegetables and meat.
11. Etli Sebzeler (Vegetables which are combined with meat).
12. Balik Ve Deniz Urunleri (Fish and Seafood).
13. Tatlilar (Desserts).
14. Icecekler (Drinks) these include Turkish coffee, Turkish tea, ayran and raki.

Armed with what you know about preparing Turkish dishes, you can now begin to plan your first dinner party. Eat like the Turks and have a feast. There is no fun in dining when no one can share what you have prepared, so go ahead and let them have a taste.

Chapter 8

Before your Close this Book

You have just joined us on a wonderful adventure that is Turkish Salads. As with any culinary experience, what is important is that you are: 1) able to apply what you have learned from this book to your everyday life; 2) you gain a deeper understanding of the true benefits you can enjoy with the choice you have made.

Turkish cooking comes with a lot of benefits:

1. Good for your health: Even with the savoury and seafood salads, the incorporation of a lot of vegetables, fruits and grains into the dishes make salads the healthiest choice. Packing every spoonful with a magnanimous helping of vitamins and minerals that your body can use, it is perfect for those looking to stay healthy and fit.
2. Easy-to-do: It is obvious what convenience and practicality salad-making will offer to your culinary attempts. Hardly requiring depth of skill and knowledge, some salad dishes do not even need cooking. Toss the ingredients in, mix them together, and you have a dish you can completely enjoy. Salads are perfect for on-the-go meals, when you do not really have a lot of time to devote to cooking. More so, they are made from affordable and readily available ingredients, thus not leaving you out of pocket.
3. Amazing taste and flavor: Whilst most salads are known to be bland and boring, the same cannot be said about Turkish Salads which are made with rich spices. A bite into a simple salad dish is an experience you will enjoy and not regret. It is tasty, enjoyable to have, and just worth every bite.
4. Freshness on a plate: The foundations and strengths of Turkish dishes lie in the fact that they are based from fresh ingredients. Many of the ingredients used in the rural areas come right from the cook's garden, grown and picked to be part of a truly special dish, whilst meats coming from neighbour's butchers, thus keeping dishes fresh and healthy. This means that every plate you have is like eating straight from the sea, from the garden, and from the butcher.
5. Deep history: What is most significant about every spoonful you take of a lovely Turkish dish is the history and culture that comes with it. The origins of the ancestors of Turkey hail from different parts of the world, and with a history as old as that of this place, you can expect that every plate served is accompanied by a beautiful tale.

Of course, Turkish Salads are just the tip of the iceberg, there is more for you to uncover. It was a pleasure journeying with you through your experience, and hopefully we will be part of your other culinary expeditions. For now, you can close this book and head to your kitchen what is all your learning for if not to put it to proper use, right?