

Greek Recipes

Greek food comprises the traditions from Ancient Greek and Byzantine cuisine, while incorporating Ottoman, Middle Eastern, Balkan and Italian influences.

Griddled Halloumi and Aubergine Salad – [V]

When we introduced this recipe to the children in our schools we were surprised at how much they loved the griddled Halloumi.

Serves 4

1 large aubergine
Sea salt and black pepper
6 ripe plum tomatoes
40g Kalamata black olives, stoned
small bunch mint, shredded
Olive oil for brushing
450g Halloumi cheese, thinly sliced
2-3 tbsp plain flour

For the olive dressing:

75g Kalamata olives, stoned
3 tbsp red wine vinegar
1 tsp dried oregano
150 ml olive oil

Cut the aubergine into thin slices. Cut the tomatoes into wedges and put into a large bowl with the olives and mint. Set aside while you make the dressing.

For the dressing:

Tip the olives, wine vinegar and oregano into a blender and blitz to smooth purée. With the motor running gradually pour in the olive oil and season well to taste. Transfer to a jar and set aside.

About 15 mins before you are due to serve put a griddle pan over a high heat. Brush the aubergine slices with olive oil and griddle for 2 mins on each side until softened and slightly charred. Add to the bowl of tomatoes. Pour over some of the dressing and toss to coat.

Lightly coat the Halloumi with flour and griddle the slices until they have turned golden brown around the edges and just starting to melt.

To Serve:

Arrange the griddled aubergine on a large platter and top with the Haloumi. Spoon the tomato and olive salad on the top and drizzle over a little more olive dressing.

Serve at once while the Halloumi is still warm.

White Bean and Vegetable soup – [V]

This soup is known as Fasoulada in Greece. This is a wonderfully sustaining and economical soup which can be served with country bread as a wholesome lunch or in small bowls as a rustic starter.

Serves 4

3-4 tbsp olive oil
2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped
1 large onion, peeled and finely chopped
2 celery sticks, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
Sea salt and black pepper
400g tin of chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato purée
1 tsp dried oregano
400g haricot beans, drained
Small handful of flat leaf parsley, chopped
100g feta cheese
Crusty bread to serve

Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and add the carrots, onion, celery, garlic and some seasoning. Cook stirring frequently over a medium high heat for 6-8

minutes until the vegetables begin to soften. Add the tomatoes, tomato purée and dried oregano. Stir over the heat for another minute and add a little more water if necessary to ensure everything is covered and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the beans and simmer for another 5 minutes.

To serve:

Ladle the soup into warm bowls and scatter over chopped parsley and crumbled feta.

Souvlakia

This is now also a traditional Greek dish, but the ingredients are found in traditional Egyptian food too. This is a great recipe not only for a filling meal but is also excellent for packed lunches and picnics.

Serves 2

225g lamb fillets, cut into 1cm slices
½ onion, grated
3 garlic cloves, mashed to a paste with a little salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp cumin
½ tsp cayenne pepper
2 tbsp olive oil
2 wholemeal pitta breads
Juice of ½ lemon
4 tbsp low-fat yoghurt
½ tsp mint leaves, chopped
½ tsp coriander leaves, chopped

Toss the lamb with the onion, garlic, black pepper, cumin, cayenne pepper and 1 tbsp olive oil. Allow to marinate for as long as possible, at least an hour.

Heat the remaining olive oil in a heavy-based saucepan and cook the lamb for 2 minutes on either side. Warm the pitta breads, and cut the edges to form a pocket. Stuff the lamb into the pocket and dribble with the lemon juice, yoghurt, fresh herbs and spring onions.

Barbecued Sea Trout with Tzatziki

Tzatziki is a traditional Greek accompaniment to meat and fish. This recipe can be either barbecued or cooked on a griddle on a traditional cooker.

Serves 4

450g trout fillets
Olive oil to drizzle
Sea salt and black pepper

For the Tzatziki:

1 cucumber
2 garlic cloves, peeled and grated
350g Greek yoghurt
Juice of half a lemon
2 tbsp virgin olive oil
Small handful of mint leaves

To prepare the Tzatziki, peel the cucumber, cut in half lengthways and scrape out the seeds. Cut into small pieces and place in food processor. Whizz for 1 minute until finely chopped. Add the garlic, yoghurt, lemon juice and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover and place in the fridge.

Heat a griddle pan or barbecue. Rub the fish with a little olive oil and some salt and pepper. Place the trout on the griddle for about 3 minutes on each side or until cooked through.

Serve the trout with the Tzatziki on the side and scattered with chopped mint. Served with pitta bread.

Quick Falafel – [V]

This recipe is normally associated with the Middle East but is popular in Greece too.

Serves 4 as a starter or light lunch

400g can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
garlic clove, chopped
handful of flat-leaf parsley or curly parsley
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
½ tsp harissa paste or chilli powder
2 tbsp plain flour
2 tbsp sunflower oil
toasted pitta bread

200g tub tomato salsa, to serve
green salad, to serve
1 small red onion, roughly chopped

Pat the chickpeas dry with kitchen paper. Tip into a food processor along with the onion, garlic, parsley, spices, flour and a little salt. Blend until fairly smooth, then shape into four patties with your hands.

Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan, add the burgers, then quickly fry for 3 mins on each side until lightly golden. Serve with toasted pittas, tomato salsa and a green salad.