COOKBOOK · 82 RECIPES FROM 17 COUNTRIES

The Mediterranean Kitchen

Recipes from around the sea



BAKED LAMB WITH YOGURT



MOLOKHIA



BRUSCHETTA AL POMODORO



ARROZ DOCE

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Every recipe here is written for an ordinary home kitchen, in large print, with the story of the dish. Measures are as cooks in each country use them; taste as you go.

Tick the ingredients as you shop: every list has boxes.

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SOUTHEAST EUROPE

Albania

Albanian food is Mediterranean at heart, built on olive oil, fresh vegetables, herbs, yogurt, cheese and meat, with strong Ottoman and Italian touches. The north cooks with maize, beans and cabbage, the centre is known for baked dishes, and the south for olive oil, dairy and seafood. Bread is on every table, and lunch is traditionally the main meal of the day: often a slow-cooked meat and vegetable dish with a fresh salad of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onions and olives, followed by fruit.



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ALBANIA · MAIN

Baked lamb with yogurt

tavë kosi

SERVES 4 2 H ELBASAN, IN CENTRAL ALBANIA

Pieces of lamb and a little rice baked under a thick layer of yogurt beaten with eggs, butter and flour, which sets into a golden, slightly tangy crust. It is seen as one of Albania's national dishes.

You need

- [ ] 700 g lamb on the bone (shoulder or leg), cut in serving pieces
- [ ] 2 tablespoons olive oil and 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- [ ] 1 teaspoon dried oregano, salt and black pepper
- [ ] 50 g rice and 150 ml hot meat or chicken stock
- [ ] For the topping: 1 litre thick plain yogurt, 3 eggs, 2 tablespoons plain flour and 80 g butter

Method

1. Heat the oven to 180°C. Rub the lamb with the oil, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper and lay it in a baking dish.
2. Bake for about 1 hour, basting now and then with the juices, until the meat is tender.
3. Scatter the rice around the meat, pour in the hot stock and bake for 15 minutes more.
4. Meanwhile melt the butter in a small pan, stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute, then let it cool a little. Whisk the yogurt with a pinch of salt, beat in the eggs one at a time, then whisk in the butter and flour.
5. Pour the yogurt mixture over the meat and rice and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until the top is set and golden in places. Rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Did you know? In Turkey, Greece and North Macedonia the dish is often called Elbasan tava, after the city it is thought to come from.