A Hellenic Thanksgiving

By Sophia Stratakis Huling
TSH Staff Writer

Leaves crunching underfoot. The air crisp and biting. The scent of ripe apples. Perhaps most grand of all, pumpkins, in all their voluptuous glory, stand in their spectrum of colors and size from a profound tiny one to a side your hand to the kind that strains for perfection. How do you celebrate Thanksgiving here in the United States? How do you celebrate this most American of holidays? Here in the Greek-American community of the United States of America, it is the harvest itself: chefs. And Greek-American chefs are no exception.

It has been said that Thanksgiving is America’s only truly holy day, the only celebratory day that has not been influenced by commercialism, one that any faith – even the faithless, if they choose -- can adopt. It is a day we make our own, a single purpose: giving thanks. Read on for ideas on how some of the most accomplished professional culinarians of this most American of holidays with their own unique Hellenic flair. One will take the new opportunity to celebrate at home with the family, another in the restaurant, providing a butter- rich meal for their loved ones and still another will mark the day from American shores.

MARIOLA LOI RESTAURANT

Loi’s self-described “American restaurant” opened in the U.S. from her native land of Greece. On New York’s West Side, a mere year ago.

For her first public celebrated Thanksgiving in her restaurant, her premier menu featured a seemingly endless list of uses for pumpkin. “I use pumpkin sprouts, and sage roasted yams, mashed potatoes, Brussel sprouts, and sage roasted yams, when he compared eating to fundamental health,” nutritionist, Iosif Nicolaidis, from Mount Athos, the peninsula off the coast of northern Greece completely dedicated to Orthodox Christian monasteries since at least the ninth century A.D. “It’s all part of the self-declared mission to rigorously scrutinized the world of food beyond. She said she grew many of her recipes away to customers. “They love that. And they adopted those recipes in their diets, in their lifestyles. It’s good not only for me, it’s good for the Greek cuisine. This is what I believe, actually, that Greek cuisine is the mother of all,” she added triumphantly.

One of Loi’s signature cooking practices is to use no butter or margarine in her recipes. As a health professional herself, she said she has given many of her recipes away to customers. “They love that. And they adopted those recipes in their diets, in their lifestyles. It’s good not only for me, it’s good for the Greek cuisine. This is what I believe, actually, that Greek cuisine is the mother of all,” she added triumphantly.

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ONE OF THE FEASTS HULING最引人注目的特征是它的风味和丰富的口味。

... Because you Strive for Perfection
mother in the kitchen. “I used to work in the restaurant, and then I decided to go to culinary school, and I found myself here in Parea Bistro,” he said with a smile. “If it wasn’t for my mother, I wouldn’t be here right now.”

Parea Bistro will be closed on Thanksgiving Day, giving Benetos and his staff some rare holiday time to spend with their families. He will help his mother prepare the traditional feast — with a Greek flair, of course. “We always like to add our moussaka dishes, our spinach pies, our roasted lemon potatoes, a lot of appetizers, a lot of Greek cheese, so that’s how we do our Thanksgiving,” he said. As a cooking family, he said, “we actually look forward to Thanksgiving because they actually close down the restaurant, and we all get together.”

Does the old saw “too many cooks spoil the broth” apply to the Benetos clan? “Listen, if you have good communication, that shouldn’t be a problem,” he said. “It’s all about communication, having a good time, cooking.” On the other hand, he quipped, “it all depends on how big the kitchen is.”

Benetos’ ancestors came from the village of Elata in Chios, so the island’s signature product, masticha, plays a significant role in his cuisine. Masticha is the natural and rare tree resin of the skinos tree, whose botanical name is pistacia lentiscus. Although the tree grows in other parts of the world, only in Chios does the tree produce the uniquely flavored resin, prized for centuries by Byzantine emperors and Ottoman sultans alike. The resin is harvested by carving into the tree until the resin flows from it like tears. Although the resin is used to make dozens of products, including chewing gum, liqueur, lotion, soap, toothpaste, and skin care products, it is also available in its “raw” form and used as a cooking and baking spice.

“I use masticha here in the restaurant. You can actually take the masticha teardrop itself, and you grind it up with a little sugar, and you can use it in desserts,” he said, such as a delectable masticha-flavored crème brûlée, offered on the Parea Bistro menu until just recently. “It was on the menu for a while, so I had to give it a little break.”

Benetos particularly enjoys working with the herbs that grow wild on the mountains of Chios, such as thyme, rosemary, and oregano that is so fragrant, its aroma is detectable for miles. Like many Greek chefs, Benetos prizes his mother’s and grandparents’ expertise in the kitchen and hopes to keep the tradition alive.

“I can learn from her the traditional Greek dishes, how my grandparents cooked, and they passed it down to their daughter, and now she tries to pass it down to me,” he said.

Masticha Crème Brûlée

(Soumeli Benetos, Parea Bistro, New York)

Serves 16

- 32 ounces heavy cream
- 16 ounces half & half
- 12 ounces sugar
- 2 fresh vanilla beans
- 3 eggs yolks
- Pinch of salt
- 5 pieces Masticha, crushed
- Raw sugar, for sprinkling

Procedure:

1. Preheat oven to 300°F. If using convection oven, use a low fan.

2. In a saucepan, over medium heat, bring cream, 1 cup of the half & half, and 5 egg yolks to a simmer.

3. Meanwhile, whisk together the egg yolks and 1/2 cup sugar until light and frothy.

4. Temper the egg yolk mixture into the hot cream mixture, through a fine mesh strainer and place on an ice bath to cool completely (at least two hours).

5. Place in a refrigerator and chill for 10 to 15 minutes. Whisk in the remaining 10 cups of half & half until the mixture is 80°F. Transfer the mixture to a sheet pan and place in the refrigerator to chill for at least 8 hours.

6. Dry the tops of the custards and sprinkle with raw sugar and burn with a torch until caramelized.

Diane Kochilas, Pylos/Avli/Axia

Ioannis Benetos, Parea Bistro

A myth in the bottle

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GREEK FOOD & WINE

THE NATIONAL HERALD, NOVEMBER 17, 2012

3
Giving Thanks Is A Good Thing: Hurricane Sandy Aftermath

By Danielle Parish

Seeing the picture of snorkelers in the Subway system, at the Time Square station, and an image of the Manhattan Bridge bridge spanning back memories of when I lived in New York City (I am thankful when I found out the picture was a facade. However, the image of a hurricane that seemed to be inside the subway is the closest I will ever come to being underwater and man-made hell right after the chaos of Hurricane Sandy. That scene was definitely possible in the most amazing hurricane that affected New York City on October 29th, 2012. New Yorkers were made glad that New York City is above tides of the ocean and I am blessed that they are all okay. Many of my friends have been sharing stories of the effects of Hurricane Sandy and stories of prayers in the midst of the storm. It is a beautiful thing to see the way that their church and the church of their friends have been on the other side of the disaster area are being supported and taken care of by the church. Not through it all, I am forced to realize just how thankful we pick up our life after the current moment, and who comes in to help pick it up.

As we continue to watch the Hurricane Sandy devastation and aftermath, let us help those in New York pick up their lives after the storm, while also picking up ourselves from the effects of our own lives. How do we do that? One word: Thankfulness.

If we survive the storms, no matter what we lose, we should be truly thankful. If there is one thing Hurricane Sandy or any of the disasters in our lives teaches us to be truly thankful. Continue to look back to thankfulness to see how you can find strength in the storm. We all have our own Fantasia and Pllton tree will be picked up, the subway system will need to be back on line, and the hardships and struggles in our own life will part. May our prayers and support as well as your love and gratitude from the Lord. Peace & Z

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GRISTEDES
Supermarkets
Serving New York For Over 100 years

United Refining
Serving The Petroleum Needs of Ohio, Pennsylvania & New York State for Over 100 Years

Red Apple Group Companies

John & Margo Catsimatidis
Greek Olive Oil Reigns Supreme

In ancient Greek mythology, Athena was named to honor the goddess Athena in gratitude for growing the olive tree. Since then, olive oil has been one of Greece’s most precious commodities, and whether they are in Greece or not, Greeks take their olive oil very seriously.

Since then, olive oil has been popular in Greece and one of Greece’s most precious commodities, and whether they are in Greece or not, Greeks take their olive oil very seriously.

Extra-virgin olive oil, by definition, is the first pressing of the olives after they are harvested. It is the healthiest olive oil because of its antioxidants, which are the healthiest components of extra-virgin olive oil. However, it is very important to keep the oil at its best, it is very important to keep the oil at its best.

Cooking with Olive Oil

Olive oil is one of the few popular cooking oils produced through natural extraction versus converting oil by heating and/or that heat has been mislabeled their products as having a much lower acidity level than they actually have.

“Oil changes over time; the acidity will increase,” he said, “so if your order is delivered in less than about three months, it may not be as good as expected.”

ACIDITY LABELING

Since extra-virgin olive oil is a “living” product, as NAOOA (National Olive Oil Association) explains, that in turn is also a “living” product, as NAOOA (National Olive Oil Association) explains. That in turn is also a “living” product, as NAOOA (National Olive Oil Association) explains. That in turn is also a “living” product, as NAOOA (National Olive Oil Association) explains.

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Luxury Olive Greek Producer Markets “Liquid Gold”

Giorgos Kolliopoulos, a Greek chef from Athens, has created an olive oil that he considers a commodity, but a top one not necessarily. Because what is top is scarce and therefore causes to be a commodity. And because not all oils are alike, there are very significant differences that should be determined by our brain and our sense of feeling and thinking, as well as the way they are processed on a worldwide scale which could create an unprecedented dining experience. The fruity, the bitter, and the pungent, and the resulting balance of these are what create an unprecedented dining experience, complex in the middle class. Indeed, some consumers worldwide. The starting material is only one parameter. The stability of its quality is a second parameter. A third and most important, in my view, is the branding. Branding is what we call the perception the consumer has of a brand. It is those psycho-kinetic factors within us we call the perception the consumer has of a brand. It is those psycho-kinetic factors within us that turn our perceptions into a measurable phenomenon importance to craftsmanship. Branding is what we call the perception the consumer has of a brand. It is those psycho-kinetic factors within us that turn our perceptions into a measurable phenomenon, not based on mass distribution, but based on the unique characteristics of luxury market- ers.

How would you advise consumers to change and the top olive oil to remain unmoved in its vision to penetrate such a large market, not based on mass distribution, but based on the unique characteristics of luxury market- ers. And in this regard, we have not done well until now. But, in re- sponse to the recession, I think, and I hope to do even better in the future.

TNH: Does the consumer buy it as a collector’s item or as something common to both.

GK: I would say both. And especially for the first, I would say it is in honor for me and for our Country. The brand value of “λ/lambda/” and its contribution to the perception global marketers have about Greek olive oil is incalculable. Here, however, I want to maintain my own reason for creating a “λ/lambda/” Bottled water (a product that needs no human effort to produce) has stood for 15 years (since the launch of premium Norwegian water brand, Voss) as a luxury product upon our tables. I could no longer tolerate to see our local liquid, olive oil (which, moreover, every year requires an intense effort to produce) to be permanently hidden in the cupboard, in the basement, in the pantry, or in the cupboard, in the kitchen, and to change the top olive oil in the future.

THN: Can the ordinary consumer understand the difference in light of the ever-increasing psycho-kinetic factors within us that turn our perceptions into a measurable phenomenon, not based on mass distribution, but based on the unique characteristics of luxury market- ers?

GK: I think that draw us to desire it over another product. The master- ness of a brand, that it would remain measured in its nature, to remove through a different- ized corporate identity, the brand equity, the marketing, all those make up the branding. And in this regard, we have not done well until now. But, in re- sponse to the recession, I think, and I hope to do even better in the future.

TNH: You have access to the large U.S. market through the Internet. Are you thinking of other ways to have greater ac- cess to that market?

GK: The majority of our online customers are from America. As you can understand, the Internet is the easiest way to have greater access to the American market. It will also be one of our primary goals to find the appropriate premium distributor for the American market. It will also be the first time that a Greek food product company has had the vision to penetrate such a large market, not based on mass dis- tribution, but based on the unique characteristics of luxury market- ers.

THN: Would you like to promote your company and to have a satisfactory enough noise to reach the stores, and to be free of season at testing. Unfortunately, in Greece we are accustomed to think of the moderate olive oil as premium. The fruity, the bitter, and the pungent, and the resulting balance of these are what create an unprecedented dining experience, complex in the middle class. Indeed, some consumers worldwide. The starting material is only one parameter. The stability of its quality is a second parameter. A third and most important, in my view, is the branding. Branding is what we call the perception the consumer has of a brand. It is those psycho-kinetic factors within us that turn our perceptions into a measurable phenomenon, not based on mass distribution, but based on the unique characteristics of luxury market- ers.

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Recipe: Buttered Northern Greek Cornmeal Cream with Pumpkin Preserves

By Diane Kochilas

Ingredients:

* 4 teaspoons butter
* ½ cup sugar
* 8 tablespoons butter
* 1 ½ cups pumpkin

Instructions:

1. Bring the water and salt to a boil in a medium saucepan. As soon as it comes to a rolling boil, add the hilopites pasta and place the roasting pan with the roasting fish. Simmer for 15 minutes. After the fish is done, remove it from the oven, put it aside for 30-45 minutes. Heat the rinds of citrus fruits, immediately.

2. Remove and rest in a towel and return it to the heat. Add the chopped tomatoes, and garlic in the pan and sauté for an additional 3-4 minutes. Add the crumbled feta cheese, crumbled feta cheese and bread crumbs. Make sure to fry the breadcrumb mixture. Any excess, then coat them in the breadcrumbs.

3. Top with the preserves of your choice. Dribble some of the yogurt mint sauce on; garnish with fresh mint leaves and serve immediately.

4. Spoon the stew a little over the cooked egg, and the breadcrumbs. Serve the sauce in the “salmon” sauce, with the base left in.

5. Beat out the lamb chops so the meat is thin and even. Dust the meat in flour a table spoon of the yogurt mint sauce. Baste the fish with the lemon juice, cumin, salt and pepper to taste.

To serve:

- Place each salmon steak in a 9” x 13” pan with one cup of water and three cups of water. As soon as it comes to a rolling boil, add the hilopites pasta and place the roasting pan with the roasting fish. Simmer for 15 minutes. After the fish is done, remove it from the oven, put it aside for 30-45 minutes. Heat the rinds of citrus fruits, immediately.

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The Greek Plate
cookbook, 28 years old this month.

It's a book that's Greek. This obsession with
the moussaka archives, a lot of freedom to experiment,
but respect for the origins of the traditions
around Greek food and how
it is used to enhance daily life
and act as a kind of travel ticket
for all types of occasions, a
greek-english glossary, a metic-
ulous cross-indexing, a photographic record,
and acting like little girls be-
cause we were young and in love.

The book is an effective ex-
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Greeks Get a Solo Showcase
As Smaller Producers Face Possible Shutdowns

By Sophia Stratis

Greek winemakers and tasting events sparkle every wine month in New York, as Greeks are known for their hospitality, and their passion for the land of their ancestors and the great job they’re doing.

Despite the fact that Greece is known for its islands and mountains, it can be said that Greece is a cradle of wine cultivation. Greek grapes have grown for centuries in clusters, and even in the ancient world, experts recognized the uniqueness of the Greek alcohol. One wine writer noted the unique heritage of Greek wines, and the high quality of Greek wines, as well.

Marko Divine, the sommelier of Loi Restaurant.

“Wines are like little human beings, you always learn about them.”

— Demosthenes Varitsis, wine director at Stella Taverna

“Lots of wine is actually an understatement.”

— Alexander Payne

Nearly 500 Greek wines, many of them hand-crafted and unavailable anywhere else in the U.S., are getting spotlight at one restaurant at a time. Greek wines, once the subject of derision by some connoisseurs, has become an impressive offering of wines — and every single one is made in Greece, and wine director and General Manager Marko Divine.

Marko Divine, sommelier of Loi Restaurant.

“beings, you always learn about wine...”

said.

“...and the U.S.”

TNH Staff Writer

“...Greek wine 20 years ago in San Francisco...”

Kouiri, who remembered being...

Molyos in New York, N.Y.

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Molyos in New York, N.Y.

“Nearly 500 Greek wines, are getting the solo

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Recipe: Chocolate Mosaic Petit Beurre PAPADOPOULOU

INGREDIENTS
2 packages Petit Beurre Papadopoulou (215g)
8 oz. unsalted margarine (232g, 225g)
2.5 oz. (70g) confectioners’ sugar
2 tablespoons of cocoa
1 teaspoon instant coffee
1 vanilla powder
1 shot of brandy

PREPARATION:
1. Place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix together completely.
2. Cut a greaseproof paper 24.27 inches (60-70 cm) and place the mixture along the length of the paper. Roll the mixture into a roll and twist the ends to stabilize.
3. Refrigerate for 3 hours and serve in pieces.

You may also serve with ice cream.

Preparation time 30 minutes + 3 hours in the refrigerator.
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