



The Olive and the Caper: Adventures in Greek Cooking

By Susanna Hoffman

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The Olive and the Caper: Adventures in Greek Cooking By Susanna Hoffman

This is the year "It's Greek to me" becomes the happy answer to what's for dinner. My Big Fat Greek Wedding, the upcoming epic Troy, the 2004 Summer Olympics returning to Athens--and now, yet another reason to embrace all things Greek: The Olive and the Caper, Susanna Hoffman's 700-plus-page serendipity of recipes and adventure. In Corfu, Ms. Hoffman and a taverna owner cook shrimp fresh from the trap--and for us she offers the boldly-flavored Shrimp with Fennel, Green Olives, Red Onion, and White Wine. She gathers wild greens and herbs with neighbors, inspiring Big Beans with Thyme and Parsley, and Field Greens and Ouzo Pie. She learns the secret to chewy country bread from the baker on Santorini and translates it for American kitchens. Including 325 recipes developed in collaboration with Victoria Wise (her co-author on The Well-Filled Tortilla Cookbook, with over 258,000 copies in print), The Olive and the Caper celebrates all things Greek: Chicken Neo-Avgolemeno. Fall-off-the-bone Lamb Shanks seasoned with garlic, thyme, cinnamon and coriander. Siren-like sweets, from world-renowned Baklava to uniquely Greek preserves: Rose Petal, Cherry and Grappa, Apricot and Metaxa. In addition, it opens with a sixteen-page full-color section and has dozens of lively essays throughout the book--about the origins of Greek food, about village life, history, language, customs--making this a lively adventure in reading as well as cooking.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Traditional Greek cuisine favors sour tastes: lemons, capers, vinegar, wild herbs. Cooking with these pungent ingredients takes a sure hand or, failing that, a good recipe. Hoffman's book supplies the latter in abundance; it attempts nothing less than to capture the whole of Greek food culture between covers. That includes side notes on language, myth, literature and botany; details of regional specialties; lists of native greens; and an explanation of why we say "Greek" instead of "Hellenic." Like many warm-weather cuisines, Greek food relies on an abundance of grilled meats and fish and dressed greens. Hoffman presents them in dazzling variety, alongside familiar exports like Dolmadakia (stuffed grape leaves) and Tzatziki. Hoffman, an anthropologist and cook, includes recipes that might be challenging or improbable for American home cooks: Retsina-Pickled Octopus, Thyme-Fed Snails and "Greek-inspired ice creams" made with mastic or olive oil. There are labor-intensive recipes, too, showing how to make filo pastry and homemade sourdough noodles. Desserts—Semolina Custard Pie; Yogurt Cake with Ouzo-Lemon Syrup—go far beyond Baklava. With its fascinating trove of information, this work will please armchair cooks and traveling foodies. For those willing to surrender to its searingly bright palate of flavors, it's a boon to the kitchen, too. Photos, illus. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From the Back Cover

THE OLIVE AND THE CAPER is all things Greek: fall-off-the-bone lamb shanks seasoned with garlic, thyme, cinnamon, and coriander. A refreshing new *tzatziki* made pink with beets, and a dazzling filo pie filled with greens, fennel and ouzo. *Dolmadakias*—stuffed grape leaves—succulent with retsina-soaked currants and raisins. Fish grilled with mastic-flavored bread stuffing. A luscious *kapama* of beef stewed in wine, brandy, and coffee; chicken baked with eggplant and green olives. Inspired by the passionate cooks, bakers, fishermen, and housewives she befriended over thirty years of extended stays in Greece, Susanna Hoffman presents more than 250 recipes based on the original and still best Mediterranean diet, with a resounding...*Opa!*

About the Author

Susanna Hoffman was a co-owner, sous chef, and maître d' of Chez Panisse, where she met Victoria Wise. She is the author, most recently, of *The Olive and the Caper*, and lives in Telluride, Colorado.

Users Review

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Daniel Metz:

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