

# Lifestyle

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2017

Oh the Places You'll Go!  
Dr Seuss museum  
opens its doors

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A Palestinian plays with fire crackers as he celebrates the Muslim holy month of Ramadan at the town of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, on June 2, 2017. — AFP

## Beyond kebabs: Turkish cuisine seeks place at the table

'In our country, everything is available throughout the four seasons'

In a bid to banish stereotypes of late-night greasy fast food, Turkish chefs are trying to burnish their image by showcasing the culinary riches the country has to offer. A new breed of cooks has shaken up the Istanbul food scene with an innovative approach to Turkish cooking, while others are on a mission to show there is more to the nation's cuisine than the perhaps notorious, doner kebab. For many outside the country, Turkish food brings to mind images of pitta bread stuffed with shavings of meat roasted on a vertical spit, usually consumed after a heavy night of drinking.

The doner was brought to western Europe by the Turkish diaspora, especially those in Germany where additions like salad and mayonnaise have made it a heavier meal than in Turkey. But did you ever try karniyarik, a dish of split aubergines with a meat filling, or cilbir-poached eggs in garlic yoghurt? Ever heard of tulum, a traditional cheese ripened in a goat's skin, or a dessert called cezerye-caramelized carrot with coconut? "Turkish cuisine is largely known abroad through doner and kebab," says Defne Ertan Tuysuzoglu, Turkey director of Le Cordon Bleu, an international culinary academy, which started in Paris and now has campuses all over the world. "Turkish cuisine is not well known," agrees Aylin Yazicioglu, executive chef at Istanbul's Nicole Restaurant. "The food that comes to mind when people talk about Turkey is, unfortunately, all bad examples. "We see this changing slowly. We'll do our best to change it."

### 'Rustic and different'

At Nicole, diners are offered a multicourse tasting menu of local products aimed at showing off the best that Turkish cuisine has to offer. "I believe that in a world geared towards the 'local', we've started to understand the value of our cuisine.



A man is seen serving Kebab in Istanbul.

"We've started to realize the value of our products," says Yazicioglu. "In our country, everything is available throughout the four seasons." Turkish food, she says, has much to offer and needs to promote its greatest assets, such as olive oil. But to truly change perceptions, more work is required. "I can say there's been a movement but it would be very strong to talk about a revolution. The conditions are not yet ripe for a revolution," she says. Arnaud De Clercq, who has taught at the Istanbul branch of Le Cordon Bleu for the past two years and has worked in Michelin star restaurants in France, described Turkish cuisine as "very rustic" with its focus on sauces, ragouts and stews. "It is close to the traditional French cuisine: beef bourguignon, veal blanquette, lamb navarin-all this you can find here, but a bit different."

### Ottoman appetizers

He singled out Turkish meze, the selection of small dishes served as an appetizer at the start of a meal. "When the Ottoman Empire expanded, it also spread its kitchen," he said.

"You can find Turkish meze in all regions, in all countries and each country adapted it to its own taste, like in Lebanon, in Syria or in Jordan." Turkish chef Serkan Bozkurt from the Chef's Table Culinary Academy, an Istanbul-based cooking school, said perceptions about Turkish cuisine were changing. Today, he said, Turkish restaurants and cafes were blossoming in Europe, with chains like the bakery Simit Sarayi and the Kahve Dunyasi coffee shop opening up in London and other places.

### Cheese-lovers' paradise

Despite the somewhat limited perception of Turkish food overseas, the cuisine has a wide variety of regional differences, with specialties from the western Aegean differing sharply from those in the eastern Black Sea region. Antakya in the southeast has a rich culinary heritage inspired by Aleppo in Syria, while specialties on the Black Sea include dishes such as muhlama, an unusual fondue made with cornflour, butter and cheese. In a huge country, which spans 784,000 square kilometers (300,000 square miles) -- an area bigger than Germany, Poland and Austria together-the cooking styles are very varied, from the herbs and vegetables used in the Aegean, to the meat-dominated specialties of the east, Bozkurt said. Its cheeses alone are likely to impress-Turkey has dozens of varieties, which differ sharply from region to region, he said. "I always say if a week-long cheese tour was organized in Turkey with trips to its seven regions, people would get dizzy!" "Turkish cuisine is not confined to meat and kebab," he said. — AFP

### Bizarre News

#### Teenager pens Yale essay on love of pizza

A teenager secured a place at Yale University after writing an essay on how much she loves Papa John's pizza. Carolina Williams, 18, applied for the Ivy League university and during the process she had to write an essay on 'something that you love to do' and the teenager immediately thought of the greasy cheesy grub, the Mirror Online reports. But it wasn't just her adoration for the pizza chain that got her the spot at Yale - which has an admissions rate of just 6.7 percent for the class of 2021. But it played a significant role in her winning the place.



#### Tesco to bring in delivery robots

Tesco have announced they will start delivering groceries by robot rather than a truck. After a successful trial, the supermarket delivered a shopping order using a six-wheeled robot, according to the Daily Star. The 4mph battery-powered robots can carry items within a three-mile radius of stores or delivery hubs and customers can track its progress. Each robot is equipped with GPS technology which help it navigate where it's going. However, the introduction of the robots could make delivery drivers redundant.



#### Mother breaks neck again after laughing at joke

A mother has broken her neck for the second time after she laughed at a friend's joke. Monique Jeffrey, from Australia, was lying in her bed in 2012 when she sneezed which jolted her neck forward and caused the vertebrae to collapse. After spending 14 weeks in a halo brace, the mother-of-one made a full recovery however five years later Monique, 33, was at work and felt a pain in her neck. She thought her neck was unstable and when she was in the staff room she laughed at a colleagues joke and it happened again. Doctors have been left baffled at her injuries, according to the Metro newspaper, and now Monique is recovering from her injuries yet again.



Aylin Yazicioglu, the chef-proprietor of the Nicole restaurant works in Istanbul.



A picture shows a dish by Aylin Yazicioglu, the chef-proprietor of the Nicole restaurant in Istanbul. — AFP photos