

# Turkey and Turkish cuisine

Please email [rkrane@yahoo.com](mailto:rkrane@yahoo.com) with your choice to prepare.

If there is a name by the food, call anyway as we accept more people and do double assignments.

The mediterranean food store in the center where The Station and the pool store are located has Tahini and most of the items you will need. They are open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dinner is on January 10, Saturday, at 6:30 at the Nexsen home, 173 Montair Drive, Danville.

Meze (appetizer):	Humos, - <b>Murray</b>	Spinach Dip- <b>Lauper</b>	pide bread <b>Sanchez</b>	raki drink - <b>Murray</b>
First course:	Red Lentil Soup - <b>Nexsen</b>	Wine served with dinner - <b>Williams</b>		
Second course:	Baked Fish with carrots - <b>Krane</b>	Tahini Sauce - <b>Krane</b>		
Main course: shiskabob - <b>Carter-Smith</b>	bulgar pilaf - <b>Bradenburg</b>	plain yogurt and pide bread (served with bulgar) <b>Sanchez</b>	spinach sala <b>Clark</b>	roasted eggplant - <b>Simkin</b>
Dessert:	Baklava - <b>Milan</b>	Turkish coffee - <b>Nexsen</b>		





The country of Turkey is just a little larger than the state of Texas, but it has many more people. Turkey is in a very special location. It is the only country that is on two continents at the same time – Asia and Europe! It is known as the bridge between east and west because Asia is considered “east” and Europe is considered “west”. Istanbul, is right at the spot where the two continents meet.

Turkey has a long and important history. Besides Great Britain, it is the only country in the world that has never been dominated by another country. (Can you think of which country or countries dominated the United States in the past?) The Turkish people are very proud of their history and culture.

Istanbul is Turkey’s largest city and the center for industry, business and education. More than 10 million people live in Istanbul. Istanbul has a large port. It is a very old city. In fact, Istanbul is one of the oldest cities in the world. The majority of the people in Istanbul are Muslim, and there are many beautiful mosques around the city where the people can go worship. Other religions include christianity and jewdewism.

Turkish food is considered some of the most delicious food in the world. It brings together many different ingredients and flavors that were influenced by other countries. The people of Turkey eat a lot of lamb and rice. They also eat a lot of yogurt and vegetables such as tomato and eggplant. Many of their dishes are cooked in olive oil because olives grow very well in Turkey. Many families make their own olive oil by using an olive press. One Turkish dish that you may have eaten before is shish kebob. These are pieces of meat and vegetables that are put on a stick then grilled. Yum!

Like Americans, Turks usually eat three meals a day. Breakfast often consists of bread and honey, cheese, tomatoes, eggs, olives, and coffee or tea. Lunch used to be the main meal of the day, but since most Turkish adults work outside of the home now, dinner has become the main meal. Sometimes a dinner will start with, which is like an appetizer sampler plate!

Then, there is usually a plate with meat, rice and vegetables. Dessert is usually fresh fruit such as cherries, strawberries or melons.

Turkey has some amazing pastries, too, but those are mostly eaten in the afternoon with some coffee or tea. Have you ever tried (pronounced bah-klah-VAH)? It is full of honey and nuts and it’s delicious! Some bakeries in America sell baklava just like it’s made in Turkey



Information below is from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

## Spice Bazara in Istambul

Turkish cuisine is largely the heritage of Ottoman cuisine, which can be described as a fusion and refinement of Central Asian, Middle Eastern and Balkan cuisines. Turkish cuisine also influenced these cuisines and other neighbouring cuisines, as well as western European cuisines. The Ottomans fused various culinary traditions of their realm with influences from Middle Eastern cuisines, along with traditional Turkic elements from Central Asia such as yogurt. The Ottoman Empire indeed created a vast array of technical specialities. It can be observed that various regions of the Ottoman Empire contain varying selections from the vast array of Ottoman dishes.

A cup of Turkish coffee: Taken as a whole, Turkish cuisine is not homogeneous. Aside from common Turkish specialities that can be found throughout the country, there are also many region-specific specialities. The Black Sea region's cuisine (northern Turkey) is based on corn and anchovies. The southeast—Urfa, Gaziantep and Adana—is famous for its kebabs, mezes and dough-based desserts such as baklava, kadayif and künefe. Especially in the western parts of Turkey, where olive trees are grown abundantly, olive oil is the major type of oil used for cooking. The cuisines of the Aegean, Marmara and Mediterranean regions display basic characteristics of Mediterranean cuisine as they are rich in vegetables, herbs, and fish. Central Anatolia is famous for its pastry specialities such as keskek (kashkak), manti (especially of Kayseri) and gözleme.

The name of specialities sometimes includes the name of a city or a region (either in Turkey or outside). This suggests that a dish is a speciality of that area, or may refer to the specific technique or ingredients used in that area. For example, the difference between Urfa kebab and Adana kebab is the use of garlic instead of onion and the larger amount of hot pepper that kebab contains.

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**Grapes and cherries were first grown in Turkey. Hundreds of years ago, traders brought them to other countries and now they grow in many places around the world (including the United States!) Tulips originally came from Turkey. Before they were known to the world, Dutch explorers visited Turkey and brought tulip seeds back to their country. Now the Dutch are known for their beautiful tulips, but it's all because of Turkey!**

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**Turkey Turkish Cuisine Meze In Turkey, despite the Islamic prohibition against wine and anything alcoholic, there is a rich tradition associated with liquor. Drinking alcoholic beverages in the company of family and friends, both at home as well as in taverns and restaurants, is a part of special occasions. Similar to the Spanish tapas, "meze" is the general category of dishes that are brought in small quantities to start the meal off. These are eaten, along with wine or more likely with "raki," the anise-flavoured national drink of Turks sometimes referred to as "lion's milk," until the main course is served. The bare minimum meze accompanying "raki", are slices of honeydew melon and creamy feta cheese with freshly baked bread. Beyond this, a typical meze menu includes dried and marinated mackerel, fresh salad greens in thick yogurt sauce and garlic, plates of cold vegetable dishes cooked or fried in olive oil, fried crispy savoury pastry, deep-fried mussels and squid served in a sauce, tomato and cucumber salad, and fish eggs in a sauce. The main course that follows such a meze spread will be fish or grilled meat.**

**When the main course is kebab, then the meze spread is different. In this case, several plates of different types of minced salad greens and tomatoes in spicy olive oil, mixed with yogurt or cheese, "humus" (chick peas mashed in tahini), bulgur and red lentil balls, raw kofte, marinated stuffed eggplant, peppers with spices and nuts, and pickles are likely to be served.**

**We are serving humus and spinach dip with pide as our appetizer along with raki.**

### **Humus Recipe:**

- **1 can garbonzo beans**



- 1 lemon
- 3 medium gloves garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 Tablespoon tahini (may pick up from Roseann )

Grind the beans with half the juice from the can, the chopped garlic gloves, salt, lemon juice from one lemon, and the tahini. When it resembles a fine paste it is ready to serve. After you place the humus in the bowl, pour a small teaspoon of olive oil in the center. Serve with triangle cuts of pide.



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### Spinach Dip (Ispanak Ezme)

- 1 bunch spinach, washed, drained, pureed in a food processor
- 1/4 cup walnuts, coarsely ground
- 1-2 garlic clove, smashed with salt
- 2/3 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 tsp crushed red pepper
- Salt and Pepper

Garnish: 1 medium sized onion, sliced, caramelized with 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan.

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl with the spoon. Place in a service bowl. Sprinkle the caramelized onion over the top. Serve with toasted pide or bread slices.

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Turkish Wine is to be served with dinner.

Although the majority of Turks profess the Islamic religion, alcoholic beverages are as widely available as in Europe. However, some Turks abstain from drinking alcohol during the holy month of Ramadan. There are a few local brands of lager such as Tekel Birasi, Marmara34 and Efes and a large variety of international beers that are produced in Turkey such as Skol, Beck's, Carlsberg and Tuborg.

There are a variety of local wines produced by Turkish brands such as Kavaklidere, Doluca, Corvus, Kayra, Pamukkale and Diren which are getting more popular with the change of climatic conditions that affect the production of wine. A range of grape varieties are grown in Turkey. For the production of red wine, the following types of grapes are mainly used; in Marmara Region, Pinot Noir, Adakarasi, Papazkarasi, Semillion, Kuntra, Gamay, Cinsault; in Aegean Region, Carignane, Çalkarasi, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Alicante Bouschet; in Black Sea Region and eastern part of the country, Öküzgözü, Bogazkere; in Central Anatolia, Kalecik Karasi, Papazkarasi, Dimrit; in Mediterranean Region, Sergi Karasi, Dimrit. As for white wine, the grapes can be listed as follows; in Marmara Region, Chardonnay, Riesling, Semillion, Beylerce, Yapincak; in Aegean Region, muscat and semillion; in Black Sea Region, Narince; in Central Anatolia, Emir, Hasandede (for further info <http://www.hayyam.com/uzumler/index.php>). In addition to mass production, it is quite popular to produce wine in private farms and sell them in the locality. Visitors can find different "home made" wines in Central Anatolia (Kapadokya/Cappadocia region - Nevsehir), Aegean coast (Selçuk and Bozcaada (an island in the Aegean Sea)).

Raki, a traditional alcoholic beverage flavoured with anise, is the usual drink with meze, fish or kebabs. As a matter of fact, the abolition of the monopoly of the state undertaking "TEKEL" on the production of alcoholic beverages spurred the production of Raki and wine in Turkey.

Seafood is one of the delights of [Turkish cuisine](#), even though it is fairly expensive. Fish is one of the glories of dining in [Istanbul](#) and indeed anywhere along Turkey's thousands of kilometers of coastline, and fresh or frozen fish are shipped to inland cities as well. *Alabalik* (trout) are raised in fish farms for the table. Fish is usually served by itself, looking like a fish, rather than as an ingredient in stews, pastries, etc.

Shellfish (shrimp, lobster, mussels, etc.) and other *deniz mahsulleri* (deh-NEEZ mahh-sool-leh-ree, "sea harvests") are on many seafood restaurant menus in Turkey, even though consumption of shellfish is prohibited by [Islamic](#) dietary law. Because of this prohibition, shellfish are unlikely to be included as unknown ingredients in many dishes. The chef may see it as his responsibility to let diners know if shellfish have been included in a meal so that diners who follow Islamic dietary customs may avoid them.

Traditional Turkish dishes do not usually combine seafood and meat ingredients.

[Meze](#) (appetizers) may include seafood, such as *taramasalata* (fish roe spread), or fresh sardines (*sardalya*) or fresh anchovies (*hamsi*) prepared in various ways, or *lakerda* (salted, pickled tunny).

The cuisine of the [Black Sea region](#) is particularly rich in fresh sardine and anchovy dishes.

Many restaurants serve both meat and fish, but others specialize in one or the other, so anyone subject to fish or seafood allergy may want to avoid seafood restaurants and prefer those specializing in meat or traditional Turkish ready-food dishes.

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### Fish with Carrots Enveloped in Paper (Kagitta Havuclu Balik Dolmasi)



1 piece fresh Gilt-Head Bream, Whiting, Silver Hake or any kind of white meat fish, gutted, and washed  
Romaine leaf, parsley and dill stems  
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
Salt and Pepper  
5-6 lemon slices

#### *Filling:*

1 medium size onion, sliced  
1 medium size carrot, peeled, grated  
3-5 garlic cloves, peeled, sliced

**1 tsp lemon zest**  
**1 tsp oregano**  
**2 Bay leaves**  
**Salt**  
**1 tsp Peppercorn**

**Season the inside and outside of the fish with salt, pepper.**

**Spread the olive oil all over the surface of the fish. Place the Romain leaf on a piece of parchment paper.**

**Arrange the parsley and dill stems on it. Place the fish on top.**

**Toss all the filling ingredients and fill the inside of the fish. Place the lemon slices on top.**

**Fold the parchment paper over the top and the sides to prevent the juice from leaking out.**

**Place on the oven tray.**

**Preheat the oven to 450 F (230 C). Cook for about 30 minutes on the middle rack.**

**Then remove the tray out of the oven, wait 2-3 minutes and open up the parchment paper.**

**Discard the Bay leaves. Serve while still warm with the lemon wedges.**

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## **Tahini Sauce**

**Tahini sauce is made from tahini - a sesame seed paste. Tahini sauce is thinner and used in pita sandwiches, marinades, and dips. Tahini sauce is very easy to make. Store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator and it will keep for about two weeks.**

### **Ingredients:**

- **1/2 cup tahini (sesame seed paste)**
- **3 gloves garlic, crushed**
- **1/2 teaspoon kosher salt**
- **2 tablespoons olive oil**
- **1/4 cup lemon juice**
- **1 teaspoon parsley, finely chopped (optional)**

**Preparation: In a food processor or mortar and pestle, combine garlic and tahini. Add kosher salt.**

**Remove from food processor and add olive oil and lemon juice. If too thick, add a teaspoon of warm water until desired consistency.**

**Mix in parsley and Serve immediately or refrigerate.**

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**RED LENTIL SOUP WITH RICE (PIRINÇLI KIRMIZI MERCIMEK ÇORBASI) Ingredients: (6 servings) • 1 c red lentils • 6 c chicken stock • 2 small onions • 2 small size tomatoes • 2 tablespoons rice . Salt and pepper Mix the lentils and rice in a pot.**

**Add peeled and chopped onions and tomatoes, and the chicken stock.**

**Cover and cook on low heat for 45 minutes.**

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SHISH KEBAB - Sis Kebab Lamb meat cut into 1" pieces.  
2 green peppers  
1 dry onion  
4 tomatoes



1 thinly sliced cucumber

Cut the tomatoes into 2" pieces. Cut the green peppers into 2" pieces and remove the seeds.

Peel and cut the dry onions into 2" pieces. Prepare one skewer of meat per person with about

four pieces of meat. Cut Skewer a piece of meat, tomato, green pepper, and onion successively.

Broil (preferrably on a barbecue) 3 to 4 minutes per side. As we

have other dishes to taste, only serve each person a scewer of meat and vegetables on or with

pita bread. Present with slices of cucumber, lemon and parsley.

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## PIDE

In Turkey, pita (called pide, also refers to the pizza-like food) typically has a soft, chewy

texture and is pocketless. The pizza-like foods called lahmacun is made with oval-shaped pieces

of pide dough that are topped with finely chopped meat and herbs before baking. Pide also refers

to another pizza-like food made of pide dough which is topped with different material; there are

regional variations in the shape, baking technique, and the topped materials used where it can be

said that every region has its own pide. You can purchase pide at the a market close to the

corner of North Main and Sunnyvalle Road at the following address.

Sunnyvale Market & Deli

1512 Sunnyvale Avenue

Walnut Creek, CA,

(925) 932-8404

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### Roasted Eggplant (Cevizli Patlican)

2 large eggplants, sliced  
1/2 lemon juice  
2 Tsp extra virgin olive oil  
1/2 tsp cayenne pepper  
Salt  
Pepper

Before putting them in the oven, make holes on the eggplants with a fork so that they will soften and roast better. Then place them on an oven tray and roast for about 25 minutes on broil. Alternatively, you can barbecue them until softened.

Place the roasted eggplants in an ovenproof dish. Season eggplant by adding the lemon juice, olive oil, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper and toss. Keep in warm oven until served.

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### Spinach Salad with Yogurt Sauce (Soslu Ispanak Salatasi)

1/2 bunch spinach, washed and drained  
Thinly sliced red onion

#### Sauce:

4 tbsp plain yogurt  
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
1 lemon juice  
1 or 2 garlic cloves, smashed

1/4 small red onion, sliced Salt, Pepper  
Garnish: 3 medium-sized mushrooms, sliced

Mix all the sauce ingredients in a small bowl. Place the spinach and onion in a salad plate.

Pour the sauce on top and garnish with mushrooms.

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### Bulgar Pilaf Or Bulgar Pilavi

2 tsp olive oil, or butter

1 onion, finely chopped  
1 tomato, coarsely chopped  
2 cups chicken broth  
1 cup bulgur  
salt and pepper  
2 tbsp parsley, chopped  
1/4 c pine nuts

In saucepan, heat butter over medium heat. Cook onion for 7 minutes or until golden brown. Add tomato, cook for 4 minutes. Stir in broth. Bring to boil.

Stir in bulgar. Cover and cook for 5 minutes. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 12 minutes or until tender and all broth is absorbed. Remove from heat; let stand for 5 minutes.

Brown pine nuts lightly in butter. Fluff with fork. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Stir in parsley and pine nuts.

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## The Turks and Turkish Coffee



In the words of the famous 20th century Turkish Poet Yahya Kemal, coffee has created its own "culture" in Turkey. A little bit more than a casual visit to Turkey would convince anyone that this is the case. Coffee for Turks is not simply a drink, but has its own history, its institutions (coffeehouses), its rituals, its own rules of when and how to drink it, and even a tradition of fortune-telling by reading the coffee grinds deposited at the bottom of a traditional Turkish coffee cup... Most Turks would find it superfluous to call it Turkish coffee: coffee is simply Turkish coffee. Drinking coffee is a unique pleasure for Turks. A cup of Turkish coffee is endowed with a variety of important connotations for Turks: friendship, affection and sharing. This is best illustrated in the old saying: "A single cup of coffee can create a friendship that lasts for 40 years". Turkish coffee is such an intrinsic part of Turkish culture that it has given its name to the word for breakfast, "kahvalti", which translates as "before coffee", and is derived from the words ] "kahve" (coffee) and "alti" (before).

Serving a cup of Turkish Coffee is also a way of sealing a friendship. The preparation and care taken by a host in serving Turkish Coffee to his guests is an important aspect of hospitality. In Turkey, it is traditional for a prospective bride to serve coffee to her suitor and his family when they come to ask for her hand in marriage. Accepting a cup of coffee is a source of pride to the person who offers it. This is illustrated in the Turkish expressions "his coffee can be drunk" and "I would drink a cup of your coffee". Nothing compares to long, friendly conversation over a cup of frothy Turkish Coffee, followed by having your fortune told. Turkish coffee is served in small cups and when you order it with sugar and usually drunk very sweet. You will need to learn the three words which describe the levels of sweetness. 'Sade' is without sugar, 'orta' is with a medium amount of sugar and 'sekerli' is with a lot of sugar. It is usually helpful to the coffee maker if you order the same level of sweetness as your co-drinkers, as each level of is made (cooked) individually. You only drink about three quarters of the liquid, leaving the thick sediment.

A connoisseur can easily tell the difference between a properly made Turkish coffee and one prepared the way cheap restaurants would do, basically boiling the coffee quickly, degrading thus the taste and producing little if any froth that needs to cover the cup of coffee.

Although to this day there are still a few people who either do or at least know the days when coffee was heated on charcoal, for all practical purposes modern electric or gas stove tops became the heating equipment of choice. To make proper Turkish coffee you need Turkish coffee beans, a Turkish coffee pot ("cezve"), and Turkish coffee cups ("fincan"), and optionally, if you want to grind the beans, a Turkish coffee grinder ("kahve degirmeni"). Note that Turkish coffee requires extra fine ground coffee which some electrical grinders fail to produce. To make Turkish coffee:

1. Pour in cold water in the coffee pot. You should use one cup of cold water for each cup you are making and then add an extra half cup "for the pot". Add a teaspoonful of the ground Turkish coffee per cup in the water while the water is cold and stir. The amount of coffee may be varied to taste, but do not forget, there will be a thick layer of coffee grounds left at the bottom of your cup for properly made Turkish coffee. Don't fill the pot too much. If you need to add sugar this is the time to do it.

2. Heat the pot as slowly as you can. The slower the heat the better it is. Make sure you watch it to prevent overflowing when the water boils.

3. When the water boils pour some (not all) of the coffee equally between the cups, filling each cup about a quarter to a third of the way. This will make sure that everybody gets a fair share of the foam forming on top of the pot, without which coffee loses much of its taste. Continue heating until coffee boils again (which will be very short now that it has already boiled). Then distribute the rest of the coffee between the cups.

Since there is no filtering of coffee at any time during this process, you should wait for a few minutes before drinking your delicious Turkish coffee while the coffee grounds settle at the bottom of the cup.

Turkish coffee pot is designed specifically to make Turkish coffee. The long handle is particularly useful to avoid burning hands, and the brim is designed to serve the coffee. Please note that the most important element in choosing the coffee pot is its size. You should neither use a too big nor a too small pot. Depending upon how many servings you need, you need to choose the appropriate size. Please note that many Turkish households do have a variety of sizes for different occasions.

Be sure you serve with sugar and cream.

You can purchase turkish coffee and a pot if desired at the Sunnyvale Market & Deli, 1512 Sunnyvale Ave, Walnut Creek, CA, (925) 932-8404. Roseann has one available.

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Turkish Baklava - Dessert Turkish Baklava is a very popular Dessert Sweet pastry and Delight in Turkish, Albanian, Arab, Persian, and Greek cuisines with a high sugar content, making it extremely rich.



#### BAKLAVA

1/2 c melted butter

1 c of ground walnuts or pistachios  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1 lemon  
1 package of filo dough (defrost)

**Remove the dough from the package and cover with a damp cloth. Place one sheet of dough in a tray (9x12), brush with melted butter, and repeat this process until you have a 9 piece layer.**

**Spread a mixture of the nuts and cinnamon evenly on it and place the remaining layers with butter between one upon the other until you have 9 layers. Cut into squares. Pour the remaining butter evenly on the baklava. Bake in medium hot oven (350 degrees) for about 45 minutes.**

**In the meantime put sugar in a saucepan, cover with water, add one tablespoon lemon juice and boil to a heavy syrup (do not let it harden). Pour it upon the lukewarm baklava, a little at a time, so that baklava absorbs the entire syrup.**

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