



Azerbaijani Cuisine

1-39546

Kitabxanası



**HEYDAR ALIYEV
FOUNDATION**

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Azərbaycan Milli
Kitabxanası

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The Azerbaijani cuisine is one of the richest, most ancient and delicious cuisines in the world.

Not only is it about meals and techniques of their cooking. The cuisine in Azerbaijan is an integral part of the country's multi-centennial culture, harmoniously absorbing local history, philosophy, dietary and nutritional traditions, culture of feast, physiology, hygiene, ethics, aesthetics, poetry and many other aspects that constitute the basis of the Azerbaijani identity.

Azerbaijani Cuisine has been created for millennia by our ancestors residing in the territories of contemporary Republic of Azerbaijan, the Southern Azerbaijan (nowadays Northern provinces of Iran), Iravan Khanate (duchy), Zangazur and Geoycha regions (nowadays Armenia), Borchaly District (Georgia), Derbend (Autonomous Republic of Daghestan, Russia) and many other areas of the region.

Climate is one of the major natural factors instrumental in the formation of the cuisine. Azerbaijan is truly blessed with an enormous climatic diversity. Nine climatic zones with very diverse and versatile flora and fauna create favorable conditions for rich and diverse cuisine. That said, besides rich flora and fauna development of an affluent cuisine requires traditions of agricultural production and processing which in turn necessitates high level of farming and cattle breeding in the respective society.

Another important aspect in the history of cuisine is that complex dishes from pastry and grain could only appear when agricultural production exceeded vital needs of the population. Surplus in grain created favorable conditions for people to experiment and thus come up with more complicated dishes capable of withstanding the test of time. Their recipes passed from one generation to another became a public asset and formed the basis for the national cuisine. Archaeological discovery of cheten, an archaic type of colander weaved from reed, provided an evidence of grain processing and cooking in the territory of Azerbaijan dating back to the VI-V centuries B.C. On the other hand, this indicates rich grain yields and high level of agricultural production in the area typical for that period.

Large harvests in grain, developed agricultural production and processing supported by ramified system of irrigation provide a clear evidence of the settled lifestyle in Azerbaijan in this period. It should be also noted that deeply-rooted traditions of farming and cattle breeding in Azerbaijan turned the country into one of the major granaries for the whole region of the Caucasus.

Notes by various travelers, scholars, merchants and diplomats backed by archaeological findings provide sufficient evidence of centuries-old traditions of farming and horticulture in Azerbaijan where wheat, oat, rice, sesame, soybeans, beet-roots, melons, water-melons, grapes, apples, pomegranates, quince and other products had been cultivated from times immemorial. Surplus of the products mentioned above, as well as fish, caviar, honey, saffron, etc. was traditionally exported to the neighboring areas.

Thus with tremendous food production and processing traditions the Azerbaijanis were among those Caucasian nations that historically had enormous opportunities for developing a rich and versatile cuisine recognized far beyond the region of the Caucasus. Influence of the Azerbaijani cuisine may be traced even in some Persian and Arabic dishes. E.g. Javad Hoyat in *The Comparison of Two Languages* mentions about 60 culinary definitions of the Azerbaijani origin in the Persian language.



Azərbaycan Milli

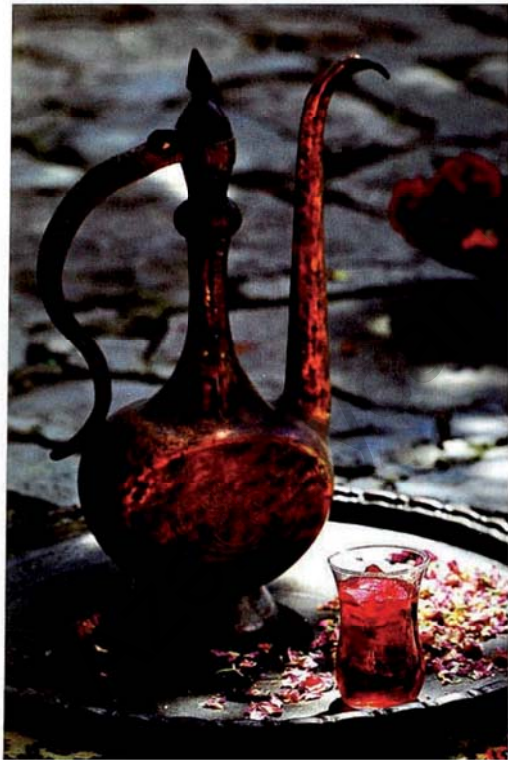
Along with the climate a type of oven is another serious factor influencing any ethnic cuisine. For example, a great number of baked, boiled and stewed dishes in Slavic cuisines (e.g. the Russian cuisine) are this way or another bound with the possibilities of the Russian oven. The very existence and development of the Azerbaijani cuisine is closely linked with various types of open and covered ovens and barbeques such as tandir, kura, buhari, kulfa, chala odjag, sadj, mangal and etc.

Prior to utilizing natural gas and electric power for cooking people use wood, charcoal and dry dung (tezek) as fuel. Use of tezek is of a special interest for it substantially reduces the need to chop trees and bushes and hence prevents deforestation. Apart from this, places of tezek storage have no negative impact on respiratory organs. According to the Indian scientists' research, the smoke of tezek has antiseptic properties as well.

Another indication of the overall level of the culinary culture is the used of clean water and the attitude towards water. Since the very ancient times the Azerbaijanis divided water into the black and the white ones depending on the concentration of metals and minerals. Only so-called white water is used for making drinks and cooking. The Azerbaijanis have a long-time tradition of planting weeping willows on river banks and water channels (aryk) as the roots and branches of this tree are known for their antiseptic effect. Sometimes branches of weeping willow or some pieces of silver were put into water for purifying purposes. Sediments and other impurities were oftentimes treated by apricot kernels. One of the earliest natural ways of cleaning water applied in Azerbaijan is called su dashy (water stone). This is a hollow pyramid made of black and white sandstone installed upside down on a wooden stand with a tank for clean water underneath. While filtering water through stone people could also use willow branches or silver stuff as well. Water leaking through the pores in the stone was collected underneath drop by drop. Not only does the water processed in this way get cleaned, but it is also cooled down due to pressure difference.

Sajichi (meat and vegetables fried on a pan of open hemispherical form)





Clay distillation device of the XVII-XVIII century A.D. discovered in the district of Gabala provides an interesting evidence of alcohol production in the territory of Azerbaijan. From the standpoint of cuisine this means a broad assortment of soft and alcoholic beverages.

Historic links and ties with neighboring or distant cultures is another important factor impacting ethnic cuisines. Very advantageous geographic location of Azerbaijan at the intersection of trading routes led to intense contacts with numerous cultures, both neighboring and distant. Long-term contacts with the Arabic merchants made the Azerbaijanis familiar with coffee. The Chinese tradesmen using the Great Silk Route introduced the culture of tea. Contacts with the Russian and other Slavic cultures left the legacy of famous vegetable soups like schi and borsch. Rapid development of the oil industry in Baku in late XIX-early XX centuries and huge influx of newcomers created conditions for a greater exposure to the European cuisine, still prevalent in the restaurant culture.

That said, being part and parcel of the Turkic culture the Azerbaijani cuisine has certain commonalities with cuisines of certain Turkic nations. Cuisine of Seljuk Turks, particularly that of the Anatolia region of Turkey is the closest to us so far.

Religion and traditional beliefs constitute another important factor influencing the cuisine. Zoroastrian (fire-worshipper) cults professed in Azerbaijan since the times immemorial left an indelible imprint in the people's philosophy, mentality, customs and cuisine. Traditional reverence towards fire and hearth (ojag) as a symbol of a household has this very origin. Dissemination of Christianity in Azerbaijan in the first centuries of our era left an obvious impact on the national cuisine, and the influence of Islam is something that goes without saying.



“Gutabs” (thin cookies made of dough with minced meat inside)

Refusal of golden utensils, pork, prohibition of alcohol are but a few of the traditions introduced by Islam. The cuisine was also heavily influenced by a number of religious holidays and fasts. In fact, dietary traditions related to certain religious prohibitions and taboo are a subject of a separate research. What should be hereby admitted is that dietary requirements of Islam, no matter how rigorous, were scientifically substantiated. For instance, one of the Islamic recommendations is to abstain from eating peeled off fruit and grains. Recent researches proved that majority of vitamins and microelements are found in peel.

Beef has been a part of nutrition in Azerbaijan since very olden times. Some sources indicate the use of horseflesh at certain periods of initial cuisine development. Nowadays no horseflesh is used in the Azerbaijani diet any more. Some elderly people may recall the taste of camel meat, especially used for gutabs (flat cakes stuffed with either meat or other filling).

Meat of wild animals is not infrequent in the Azerbaijani cuisine today. That said, meat of young female and emasculated animals is given preference for being softer and more delicious. Meat of animals from mountain areas is highly valued. Unfrozen meat is considered preferable. The advantages are given to fresh meat in comparison with frozen one. Besides meat, fatty tails of sheep and certain internal organs are used as well.

For centuries people developed techniques of storing fresh meat. Sheep fat was used for frying meat on clay jugs. Besides this, storage of dried meat (duhuj at) was widely practiced. The Azerbaijani cuisine uses a lot of eggs of both wild and domesticated birds. Poultry, such as geese, ducks, turkey and chicken is also popular. As far as wild birds are concerned, the fall is considered the most appropriate season for hunting them.

Domesticated birds are bred in special conditions with limited capacities to move and special fodder leading to fast fattening. Meat of fattened birds is considered to be of higher quality than that of animals. The culture of diet in Azerbaijan has a long tradition of using ground meat, like in dolma, kufte, etc.





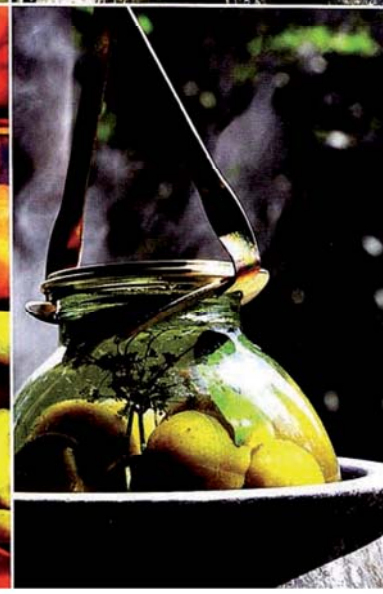
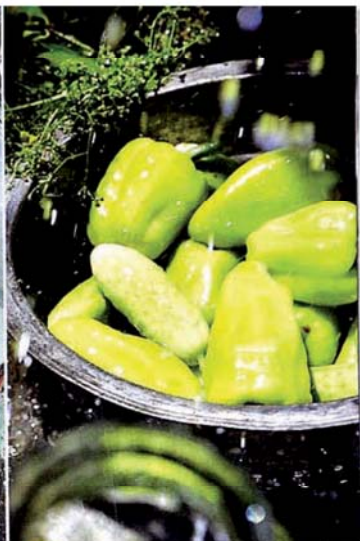
The skin of animals is used for food storage and processing up to now. Some types of feta and cottage cheese (motal pendir and motal shor) are prepared in sheepskin. Choban basdyrmasy is another famous dish cooked in sheepskin when meat cut into small pieces, mixed with salt, thyme and other seasoning is wrapped into a piece of lamb skin and stewed either in smoldering charcoal or in traditional ovens like tendir or kure.

In the northern areas of Azerbaijan, such as Gabala and Sheki, stones are still used for certain types of cooking. Fire is set underneath a flat stone with size 1.5 to 2 meters. Once the stone gets hot enough, lamb fat is spread upon it and the meat (goat, mutton, veal, chicken, fish, etc.) is laid upon it and pressed by another flat stone. The dish cooked in this manner is called dasharasy, i.e. something in-between stones.

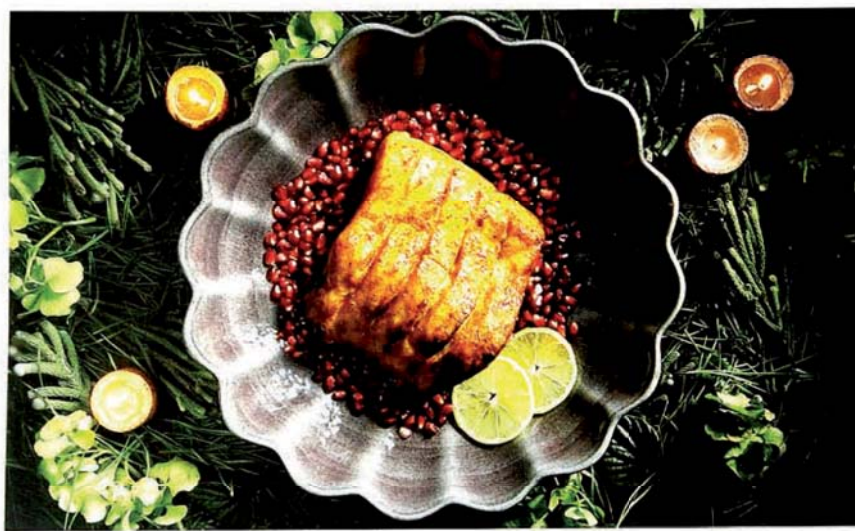
Tools and utensils made of animal skin, stone, wood, clay, glass and metal are still widely used in the Azerbaijani cuisine. Even today shepherds of Ismayilly district use sheepskin as a sort of a frying pan, particularly in summer grasslands in some remote highland areas like Laghyj.

Tinned vegetables (tutma) made with the help of sour base and salt (turshular and shorbalar) are very popular in Azerbaijan as well.

Medicinal and dietary meals have a special place in the Azerbaijan cuisine. Dishes like umaj, hash, horra, guymag have been used for treating various diseases for ages.



Azerbaijan



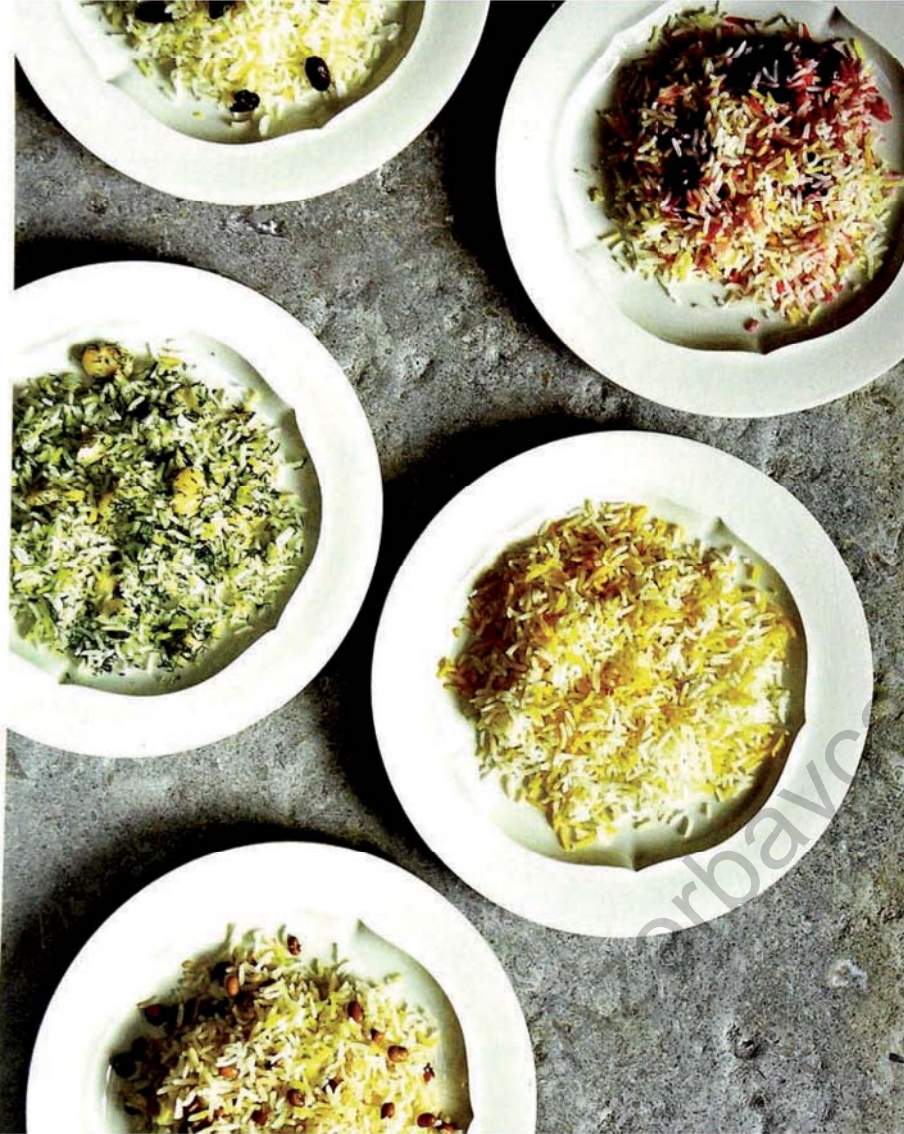
• Fish 'bastyрма' (Marinated fish)

Presence of large water basins such as the Caspian Sea, the Kura and the Araz rivers, lakes and water reservoirs (Goygol, Jeyranbatan, Geoycha, etc.) has enriched the Azerbaijani cuisine with lots of fish. Fish is cooked both whole and in parts, and may be also served minced. Black and red caviar have been traditionally popular.

Eggs are another important component of the local diet. Chicken and quail eggs are widely used in the daily meals, as well as in such popular dishes as gayghanag, chalhama, kuku and chyghyrtma. Multiple dairy products of the Azerbaijani cuisine include agizsud, boulama, karamaz, gatyg, pendir, doog, gaymag, chiya, ayran, shor, etc. which are used as main ingredients in dairy dishes like dovga, dogramach, ayranashi, atilama, sudlu sayig, etc.

The Azerbaijanis have a particular reverence to bread in its very various forms and types, such as yukha, fetir, lavash, sengah, hamrali tendir-chorek. A usual course of meals in an Azerbaijani family starts with bread as the staple food. An oath on bread is considered equally powerful as swearing on Holy Qur'an.





Pastry products occupy a special place in our cuisine. As it was noted before, combination of pastry with meat is generally typical for the Turkic cuisines.

With the weather getting warmer, the share of meals cooked of flour and meat in the daily diet is gradually decreasing giving way to more vegetal meals made of both cultivated and wild plants, such as kyata, soyug, dovga, ajab-sandal and others. Numerous salads are made using wood louse, spinach, beet-root, mint, eggplants, tomatoes, etc.

Dishes cooked from grain and beans have a special role in the local diet. Sayig, plov (pilaff), chilov, govurga and hadig are just a few to mention. Plov (pilaff) is considered the most delicious among them. Since Azerbaijan has a very old tradition of rice cultivation, there are about 200 various types of plov (pilaff). In some areas of Azerbaijan rice was used as a substitute of bread. For instance, in old-days Lankaran, south Azerbaijan, bread was not used at all.

'Doghramaj' (cold soup made of yoghurt with chopped cucumber and greens)

Various types of plov



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'Nabat' (type of crystal sugar)

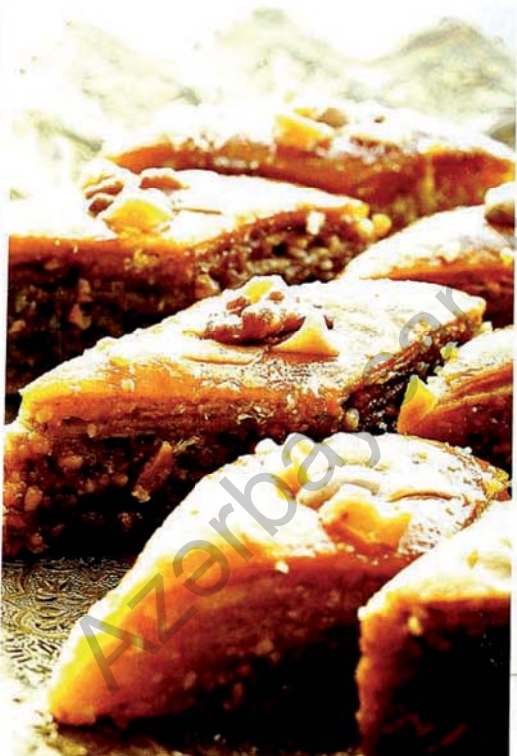
Substantial production of sugar in Azerbaijan explains a significant place of pastry and confectionery in the local cuisine. Initially sugar was manufactured from sugar cane promoted by Count Potyemkin following the order of Russian Empress Catherine II. This type of sugar was called takhta gand (wooden sugar). The other type of sugar was extracted from sugar beets. This kind of sugar was considered raw and non-refined even though the historical sources mentioned the process of sugar refinement in the territory of Azerbaijan back in the X century A. D. Nizami Ganjavi, the famous poet of the XII century, reported of this raw sugar produced from sugar cane and beet.

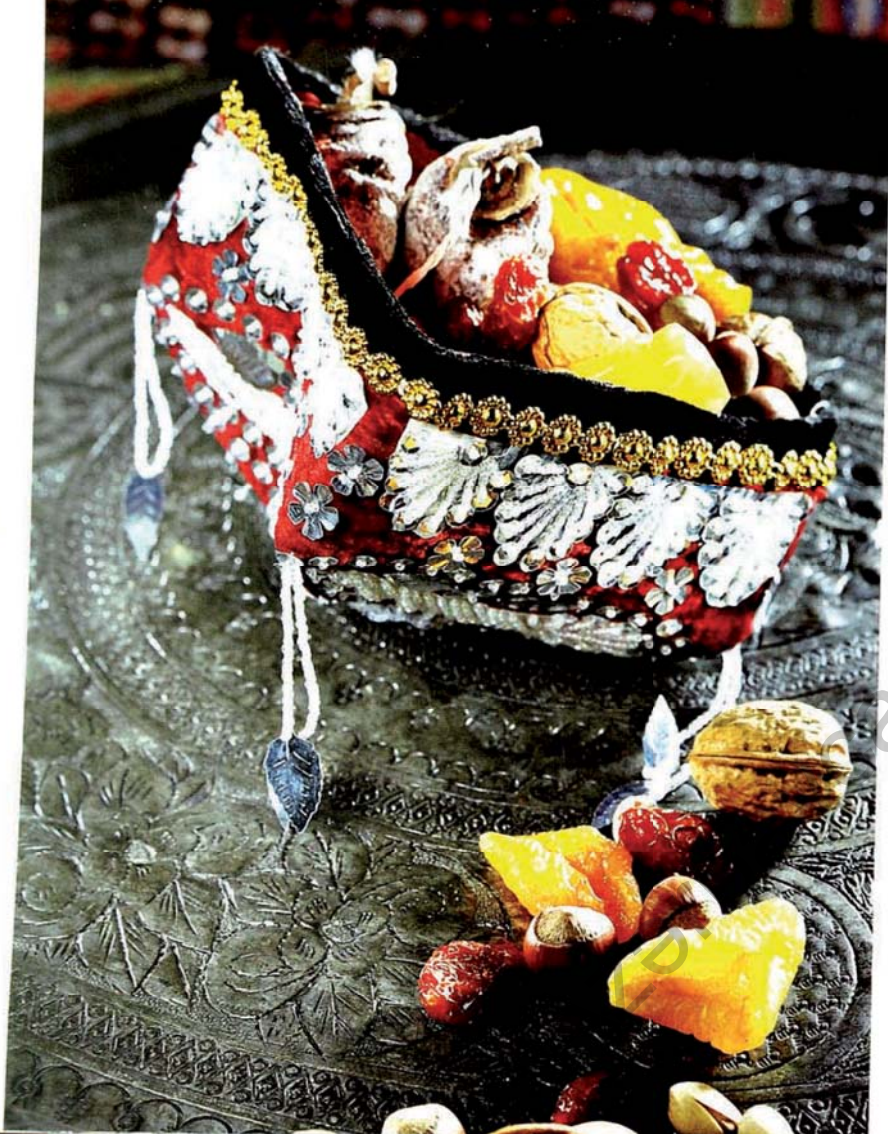
Besides this, another type of sugar called nabat was extracted from fruit. A number of honeys and sweet drinks like bekmez, doshab were used either as deserts or for medicinal purposes. Traditional sweets and baked confectionery included pakhlava, shakarburra, rahatlukum, richal, sudjuk, peshmek, peshvenk, ter halvasy, guymag, gatlama, yukha halvasy, etc. Most of them constitute a true pride of the Azerbaijani cuisine. Using honey, sugar, bekmez and fruits the Azerbaijanis succeeded in creating some truly outstanding jams, marmalades and other confections with cornelian cherry, quince, cherry, figs, nuts, rose petals, etc.

Drinks constitute a special part of the national cuisine. Arag, i.e. vodka infused on mulberry, cornelian cherry and some other plants is used mainly for treatment. The word 'arag' means 'white drink'. In some sources it is interpreted as 'pure drink'. By means of distillation of various plants, numerous medical and alcoholic extracts and arags were produced, such as aragsyz mint, gulyabi, chal arag, etc. Specific type of beer known as buza beer was brewed in Azerbaijan since the very ancient times. Like other Turkic nations the Azerbaijanis also use various kinds of drinks made of sour milk, like ayran, atlama, bulama, etc. Soft drinks (sherbet) are prepared from fruit juices, extracts of plants, sugar and its derivatives. Sherbets are served with plov (pilaff) during the holidays and ritual meals. Some soft drinks like ovshara, gyandab, mushmuli, sal'ab, were also used for medicinal purposes.

The role of tea in the Azerbaijani cuisine is second to none indeed. Not a single meal can ever be served without tea. Use of coffee and cocoa is less frequent. In the morning boiled warm milk, dairy drinks and products are served. In the meantime Azerbaijan is known for some famous brands of mineral waters like Badamly, Sirab, Istisu, etc.

Pakhlava in Baku style.





Some drinks with medicinal use like bekmez (doshab) are produced by boiling mulberry, water-melon, sugar-cane, beer-roots, grapes, wild persimmon, etc. to a very dense condition. Another drink of this sort, iskenderjebi, is used with main courses to relieve thirst and promote digestion. The drink is a mixture of honey and vinegar. In some cases sugar is used instead of honey. Traditional Azerbaijani drinks like hoshab and paludi may be compared with the Russian compote and kissel. Soft drinks are usually served cool.

A large portion of the national cuisine is related to various rites and holidays. Dishes from semeni (wheat seeds) are made only during Khydyr Nebi Holiday, whereas hedik and go-vurga are served for the first tooth of a baby and the last tooth of a centenarian. During Kichik chilli, one of the winter holidays celebrated as a forerunner of the spring holiday of Novruz (50 days prior to the vernal equinox on March 21), people serve water-melons specially stored for this day since summer.

Snacks include yakhma (non-covered sandwiches) and durmek (stuff rolled into flat bread). Along with flat bread like lavash or yakhma oven bread (tendir choreyi) may be used as well. Durmeks are oftentimes made in the shape of a pocket, hence their name jibbi or bukme (wrapped or pocket stuff), and may be served both cold and hot.

Salads constitute another type of snacks. Chara, a kind of desert comprising fresh and dried fruit, nuts and sweet meals is usually served at the end of meals. Another interesting feature revealing richness of the Azerbaijani cuisine is multiplicity of sauces (zvar). Back in the XII century the Turkish traveler Evliya Chelebi mentioned about a dozen of various sauces in Azerbaijan made of yogurt (gatyg), vinegar, garlic, juices of fruit, etc. Some sauces were made of pastila and lavashana (types of marshmallow). One of the most famous Azerbaijani sauces, narsharab, made of pomegranate juice is particularly good with fish.

Typical menu of an Azerbaijani family depends on season, weather, age, life-style, traditions, area etc. Hence there are various types of dishes and meals, e.g. Aran meals (meals of lowland areas), dietary meals for woman in childbirth, meals for fiancée, meals for children, youngsters and elderly ones, etc.

It may be also assumed that the Azerbaijani cuisine and traditions of healthy nutrition were among the causes of a high life expectancy in Azerbaijan and a very large number of centenarians in the country.

Travellers about the Azerbaijani cuisine

The music of aromas, poetry, tastes, the game of rich color gammas... You may continue this nice list and it will still not be enough to characterize our cuisine.

The Azerbaijani cuisine is one of the most ancient, delicious and varied cuisines of the world. There are about 2000 dishes that comprise the foundation of the Caucasian Cuisine.

From ancient times Azerbaijan supplied markets of the neighboring countries with meat products, fish, grains, fruits, vegetables, flour, dairy products, sugar, salt and many other products. As a matter of fact, many the Caucasian cuisines are based on the cuisine of Azerbaijan. Dishes such as dolma, sudjuk, basash, hapama, gayzaba, basdyrma, borany, nazik, asuda, chilov, plov, shashlyk, pakhlava, bozartma, arishta, kufta, harisa, kata, gata, lavash, jad, ojab, sarelal, hangah bekmez, doshab, alani and many others that are widespread dishes of the Caucasian peoples were originated by a genius of Azerbaijan people, with the help of the God, on flourishing lands of Azerbaijan.



But it's not good to be praised by ourselves. It would be better to give a word to our guests.

Antonio Jenickson - an English sea sailor (XVI Century), who visited Shamakhy, described the meal at Abdulla Khan's house: "Tablecloths were laid on the floor and various dishes were served. They were put by row in accordance with the kinds of the dishes: according to my reckoning there were 140 dishes. Then the dishes together with the tablecloths were taken away, and new tablecloths were laid and 150 dishes with fruits and other feast food brought. So, 290 dishes were served by 2 servings".

Baron Fyodor Korf visited Azerbaijan in 1834-1835. "Fruits are good in general, grapes, peaches, apricots, cherry, melons and watermelons grow in plenty ... juicy and aroma fruits gilded by the glorious East Sun... Servants entered, carrying many kinds of bread on their shoulders. The first dish consisted of mutton cheese, onion, radishes, aromatic greens and so on. After that, different kinds of fried eggs, bozbash, soup, fisindjan, sour-sweet sauces made from meats and almonds, fried meats, plov (pilaff) with meat, sultana and saffron with almonds were served. At the end, whole mutons with heads and legs fried on spit were delivered. I found ninety nine dishes at our table, so the quantity and variety of every dish served could be determined. There were plenty of wines and sherbets."



Stuffed cabbage rolls with lamb

Ambrosio Kontorini was the Ambassador of Venice (XV century). "We were served many different viands, cooked according to local traditions and generally, they were very tasty."

Tomas Benister and Jeffry Dsket were English merchants of the XVI century. "An incredible number of nuts of the same kind and quality of our forest nuts, is collected at Zegam, which are tasty and have thin nutshell. Mutton is very good there... The Caspian Sea is astonishingly rich in fish, there are special kinds of fish which can't be found in other parts of the world".

Marco Polo – Venician traveller (XVIII c): "it is surrounded by wonderful gardens, from which nice fruit is gathered."

Adam Oleari, Holstein ambassador (XVII c): "Suggacht – a smoked fish is wrapped with a piece of cloth, put on the hearth, covered with cinders and roasted in this order. It has such a pleasant taste..."

32 big dishes, full of food were brought to us. Firstly, boiled rice of different colors and fried chickens, ducks, beef, mutton, fish were placed on all dishes. These dishes were cooked nicely and were tasty enough..."

Evliya Chelebi – The Turkish traveller (XVII c). "They Served 11 sorts of plov, with mayoran, chicken, musaffar plov, plov with aloe, plov with origans, chosh plov, chilav plov with ginger, garlic, kese plov, dyusei plov, fried vegetables with rice, fragrant like a beautiful lady's lips, soup of mastaba and nice herisa. Everything was tasty... 26 kinds of juicy pear were brought. Tasting the "maladja abbasi", "ordubadi" one can feel like there's candy in one's mouth.

40 kinds of fragrant plov, herise, and soup from egg-plants. Local cooks have 12 more kinds of soups and sauces in store. 7 kinds of nutmeg grape juice enjoy popularity, koknas, the pomegranates juice, made from the flowers of pomegranate, winter drinks from honey, buza from millet and rice, divine wine from grape meleki."

This is only a small part of the admiration for the food, which different travellers, merchants, diplomats and guests expressed when they visited our country.

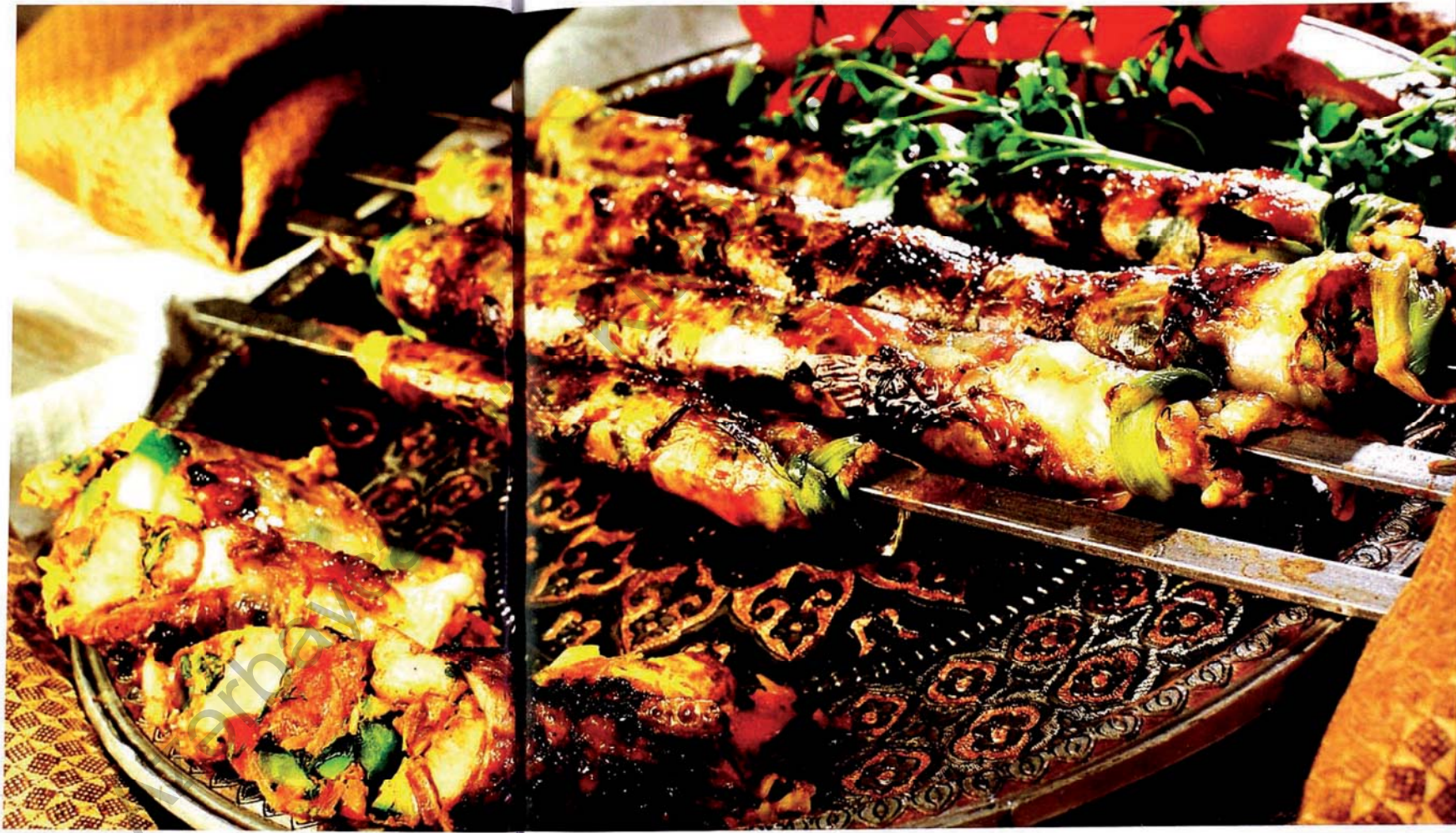
Fish 'lavangi' (stuffed fish with chopped nut and onion)



Jakut Al-Hamavi (Arabian traveller of XII c) writes: "Azerbaijan... great number of fruit trees. I've never seen so many gardens and so many rivers like here...there grow the best peas, nice pomegranates, which have no equal in the whole world, and amazing figs... I've never seen such tasty apricots... Here fine grapes, grain and cotton grow ripe. Many fruits, especially nuts and chestnuts are the best in the world. Ar – Rass (the Arax River) – so lots of various fish are found here. The fish known as Shurmachi is found only here".

Alexandre Dumas (father) the French cook and writer of the XIX c. "Kebab is the tastiest dish that I've ever seen. It's necessary to include it into the list of the popular dishes of France. Now I'm going to tell you, how to cook it, and I'm sure when you cook it and eat, you'll remember me with gratitude..."

'Khan kebabs' (shashlyk made of lamb's liver on a special recipe)



*RECIPES OF
THE AZERBAIJANI
CUISINE*

Azərbaycan M.





Gutchabs with greens

Ingredients:

Spinach 600 g, green onion 200 g, coriander 200 g, cheese (dry curds) 60 g, dill 200 g, wheat flour 600 g, lavashana 20 g, butter 300 g, salt.

Method of preparation:

Make dough from flour, shred greens and mix them with cheese or curd, roll 3-4mm-thick layers, cut the dough into circles 20-25 cm in diameter, put the stuffing on one half of each dough layer, cover with another half and press the edges. Fry on both sides. Upon taking out of the oven, butter both sides. Serve with yoghurt.

Dolma with wine leaves

Ingredients:

Fresh wine leaves - 47 g, for stuffing - 100 g, mutton - 164 g, fat of sheep - 25 g, onion - 20 g, coriander or mint - 24 g, rice - 30 g, mass of stuff - 202 g, mass of half ready product - 240 g, mass of ready dolma - 225 g, cinnamon - 0,2 g.

Method of preparation:

Clean wine leaves, cut the stalks, scald. Remove all waste from fresh leaves, and also put aside leaves with ferment spots. Blanch fresh leaves, during 20-25 minutes. Wrap the stuffing into every leaf, put into the pot, pour water to cover all dish and stew for 50-60 min.

For stuffing, take minced mutton with sheep fat and onion, add finely shredded greens, salt, black pepper, cleaned rice and mix.

For 1 portion take 6-8 pieces of dolma, pour the sauce, in which dolma was stewed, sprinkle with cinnamon. Separately serve yogurt (150 g), with pressed garlic (3 g).



Piti in Sbeki style (for 1 person)

Ingredients:

Mutton 160 g, sheep fatty tail 25 g, nuts (peas) 1 table spoon, cleaned chestnuts 1 piece, quince 1 slice (25-30 g), onion 1 piece, cherry-plums 5-6 pieces, dry mint 1 dessert spoon, salt, pepper (personal choice).

Method of preparation:

Piti is cooked in one – portion clay pots (kupa), with 0,8 l capacity. Put meat-bone pieces of mutton, chest. back neck parts cut into a small pieces, together with the pieces of sheep fat and peas, soaked in cold water for 4-5 hours, put in a pot, pour 0,5 l of cold water, and put in an oven. After boiling the broth, put finely cut onion, chestnut, quince, alycha, salt to taste. When ready, put spices and saffron infusion. When serving, sprinkle with finely cut dry mint.



Tomato & egg-plant dolma

Ingredients:

Egg plants – 269 g, mutton (chop meat) – 164, melted butter – 20 g, mass of stuff – 142 g, tomato – 163 g, onion – 300 g, yogurt – 50 g, greens (basilica, coriander, dill) – 15 g, cinnamon – 0,2 g, mass of half-ready food – 340 g.

Method of preparation:

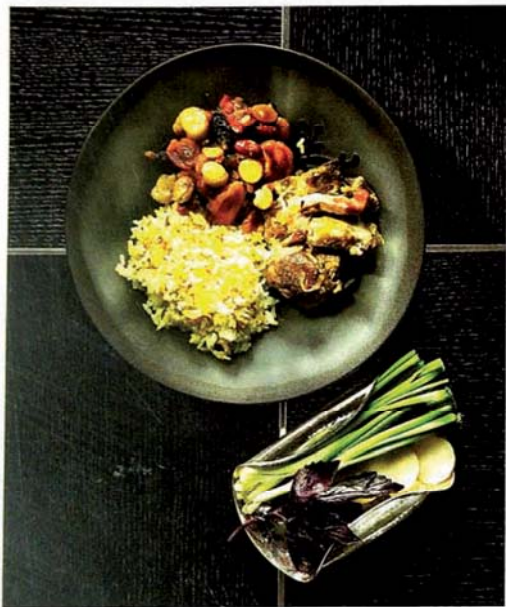
Take out seeds from the insides of egg-plants, blanch for 1-2 minutes, stuff, put into a pot, put aside slices of tomatoes, pour little water or broth, and stew 25-30 minutes.

Method of stuffing preparation:

For stuffing, take meat, onion, mince everything, add pepper and salt, fry on butter for 20-30, minutes, constantly mixing, till the minced meat is ready. Cool it, mix till unique consistence, add shredded greens and mix. Grind mutton with onion, add pepper and salt. Fry it on butter, cool and mix with greens. Choose average size and hard tomatoes, cut the tops and put out a core. Stuff ready tomatoes and cover with cut tops. Put the stuffed tomatoes on a frying pan. Fry the taken-out parts of tomato on butter, add broth and stew under close cover for 15-20 minutes till readiness.

Serve with its own gravy stewed in the course of cooking. Yogurt and cinnamon to be added.





Shakh plov (for 30 persons)

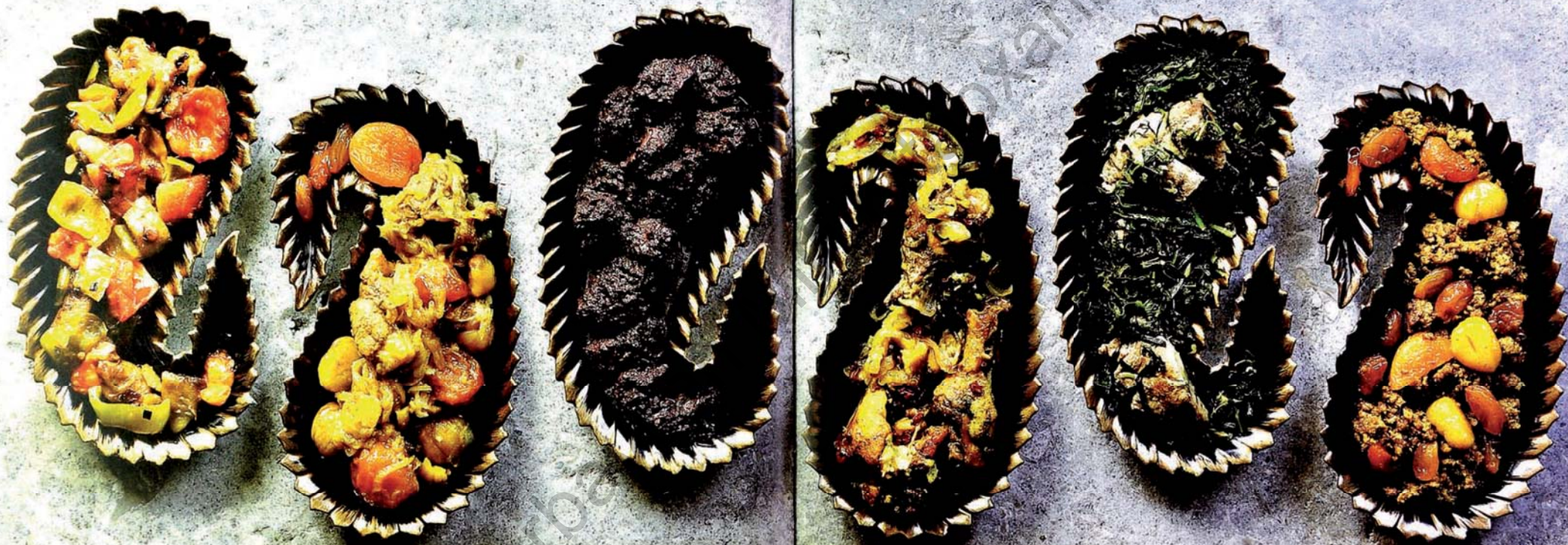
Ingredients:

Rice 3 kg, saffron 0,01 g, lavash 250 pieces, melted butter 3 kg, boneless lamb 1 kg, albukhara (dried cherry-plum, no kernels) 250 g, white raisin -300 g, dried apricot-200 g, cleaned chestnut-0,15 kg, salt and pepper.

Method of preparation:

Boil rice in salt water till half readiness. Salt and pepper the meat and cover it with alycha paste. Butter the bottom of the pot and the sides, (of the pot), put 5 buttered lavash, and then cover the sides of the pot with lavash, 5 cm from each other (also buttered on both sides). Lavash should come out of the pot at 5 cm.

Put boiled rice rinsed through colander on the bottom of the pot so that the thickness of the rice layer was 5 cm, then add boiled chest nut, albukhara, raisin, then a layer of rice boiled again, then meat and everything again – rice, chest nut, albukhara, raisin and rice. After, roll the outer sides of the lavashes inside, cover rice with them, top it with 5 buttered lavashes and put into oven. After 40 minutes pour the plov with melted butter. Bring to readiness in the oven at 130°C. Plov is cooked for 3 hours. The Azerbaijani plov (pilaff) is served with different types of garnish, such as chestnut, greens, alycha (turshu), vegetables, mutton, chicken or turkey.



The Azerbaijani plov is served to a table with various mixes to rice; meat with chestnuts, meat with greens, meat with dried fruits etc. Lamb, chicken or turkey is used as meat to plov.

SWEETS AND
PASTRY IN
THE AZERBAIJANI
CUISINE

Azərbaycan Mə





Shekerbura

Ingredients:

Wheat flour high grade 560 g, melted butter 240 g, cream 250 g, 2 eggs, dry yeast 10 g

Method of preparation:

Stuffing: 260 g almond and nuts, 260 g sugar. Heat the cream till 30-35°C; add yeast, salt, eggs, knead hard dough adding flour. Leave for 1-1.5 hour. Then form 30-gr. balls and roll them into 3-4 mm-thick round layers. Put the stuffing in the middle, press the edges. Pattern by means of special tongs. Bake at 180°C for 25-20 minutes. Walnuts or other nuts used as stuffing are washed and properly cleaned (peeled off).

Pakhlava in Guba style

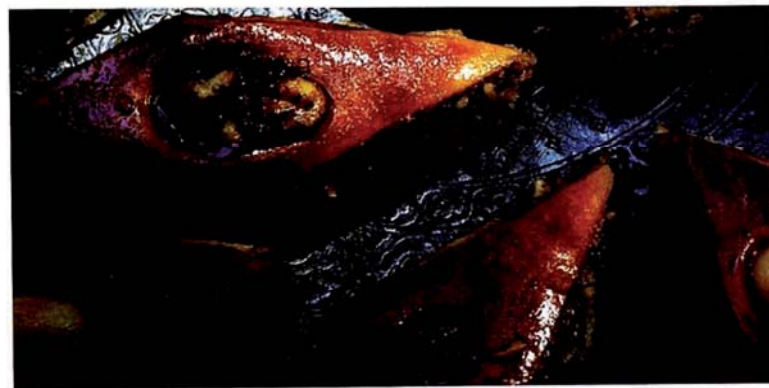
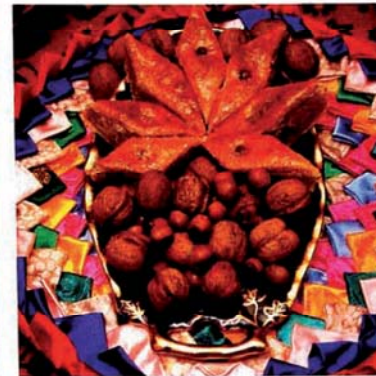
Ingredients:

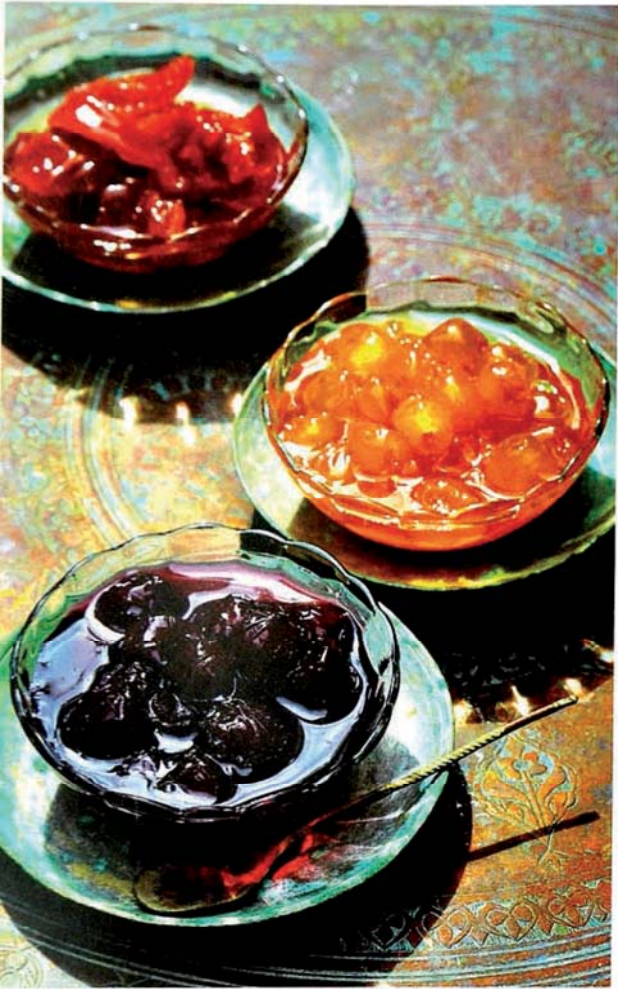
Rice flour 280 g, sugar 420 g, walnut 140 g, lemon acid 1 g, coriander seeds 2 g, cardamom 0.5 g, saffron 0.2 g.

Method of preparation:

Knead thin dough from rice flour, add 120 g of water. The dough is poured out with the help of special tool, which has 11 holes and bake reticular rishta (cells of dough). Add ground walnuts to grated cardamom and coriander seeds. Put 8 layers of rishta on a copper tray, then put the stuff on it. Then put 5 layers of rishta again, make a round shape. Decorate with saffron in the form of square and bake during 15-20 minutes over burning coals, on both sides.

Prepare syrup from sugar, citric acid and 100 g of water, pour on pakhlava. Keep for 8-10 hours to make pakhalava soft.





Cornelian cherry jam

Ingredients:

Cornelian cherry 1kg, sugar 1.3 kg, water 300 g

Method of preparation:

Pour syrup on cornelian cherry, bring to readiness. Then remove from fire. Cool and again bring to boiling. Repeat until ready. At the end of the process take away the foam.

Cherry or sweet cherry jam

Ingredients:

Cherry or sweet cherry (no kernels) 1 kg, sugar 1.5 kg.

Method of preparation:

Put sugar on fruit and keep for 3-5 hours until it takes the appearance of juice. Boil slowly till readiness.

Fig jam

Ingredients:

Fig 1 kg, sugar 1 kg, citric acid 1-2 g, a pinch of vanilla.

Method of preparation:

Peel off the fig's skin, add sugar and leave for 10 hours to produce juice. Then boil on slow fire for an hour. At the end of boiling add diluted citric acid in 1 spoon of water.



Lemon sherbet

Ingredients:

Lemons 4 pieces, sugar 250 g, water 1 liter

Method of preparation:

Clean a lemon, grate it, pour 2 glasses of water, boil during 3 minutes, then cool. Squeeze the juice from peeled lemons, put in a separate dish, the rest part of lemons pour on hot water (80-85°C), cool, filter, join with the broth of citron. Prepare syrup from water and sugar. When boiling put the juice and cool till 18-20°C. When serving cool or serve with pieces of ice.

Sherbet from basil (reyhan)

Ingredients:

Basil 100 g, sugar 100 g, water 1 liter, 2 g citric acid.

Method of preparation:

Cut basil, pour 1 liter of water in a pot, bring it to boiling, add sugar and citric acid dissolved in a little quantity of water, put on a colander and get it cooled down.





Ordubad rolls

Ingredients:

400 gr wheat flour of high sort, 250 gr sour cream, 100 gr butter.

Method of preparation:

Stuffing: 200 gr walnuts, 180 gr sugar, 40 gr honey, cinnamon, clove, coriander, 1 yolk of an egg for decoration. Knead dough from butter, sour – cream and flour. Mix the ground nuts, sugar, honey (thin consistency), and spices. Cut ready dough into portions of 40 gr.

Roll each portion into 4-5 mm - thick oblong forms. One end is wider than another. On a wider end put 30 gr of stuff and roll into the shape of a tube. Cover the pipes with yolk and bake on buttered griddle, at 190-200°C for 20-30 minutes.

Azərbaycan Milli

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