

Virtual

June 2021



Cookbook Club

June 7 Meeting Notes — Exploring Cuisine of the Mediterranean Region

Participants: Gladys, Joan, Elissa, Judy, Elsie, Amanda, Sandy

Elissa made several recipes during this month's exploration. She brought home a number of books from the Mediterranean cookbook display, but ended up using recipes on eatingwell.com.

The first dish, **Greek Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms**, called for olive oil, minced garlic, feta cheese, cherry tomatoes, chopped spinach, pepper, salt, oregano, Kalamata olives, and portobello mushrooms. Elissa was able to get most of the ingredients from Aldi's, including the mushrooms.

After wiping the mushrooms and removing the stems and gills, she brushed them with a mixture of oil, garlic, pepper and salt. She baked them on a baking sheet in a 400° oven until they were soft. She mixed the other ingredients and filled the softened mushrooms with the mixture, then baked them for 10 to 15 more minutes.



Elissa's Greek Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms



Next, Elissa made **Chicken and Spinach Pasta**. This recipe used lots of fresh, chopped spinach, penne pasta, 1 boneless, skinless chicken breast, cubed and sautéed in olive oil, white wine, salt, pepper, one lemon, and Parmesan cheese. She said this dish was very good and very light. She will absolutely use this recipe again.

Elissa also tried the **Garlic Hummus** recipe. She said it was more bland-tasting than the hummus she gets from the store. She served it with pita chips or bread or vegetables. Her grandson loved the hummus. She had leftover pasta and chicken.

Elissa's Chicken and Spinach Pasta along with Garlic Hummus and pita chips

Judy prepared Chicken Salad Wrap, which she found online at goodeats.com. She just did a search for “Mediterranean” and found the recipe which will appear at the end of these notes.

She sautéed in olive oil 1 chicken breast cut into cubes. Instead of using the apple that the recipe called for, Judy used red and green grapes, feeling they would look better longer than a cut up apple. She also used diced celery, green onions, and slivered almonds, which she toasted. Instead of using mayo in this recipe, Judy used yogurt. She added salt and pepper. Judy mixed the cubed sautéed chicken with the other ingredients and spread them on a lettuce leaf, which she then wrapped in a tortilla. The recipe serves 4. It was very filling, Judy reported. She was so pleased with this dish, that she said she will definitely repeat it.

Elsie made Mediterranean Quinoa Salad from a recipe on the quinoa package. Elsie is always looking for easy-to-fix lunches. Her granddaughter introduced her to quinoa. For this salad Elsie used 2 cups of water and 1 cup of quinoa, which she brought to a boil, then simmered for 15 minutes. After letting it sit for 5 minutes, she fluffed it with a fork. This was the second time Elsie had prepared this dish, so she knew she wanted lots of veggies in it. She cut up the following in a big bowl: tomato, cucumber, onion, orange pepper, celery, and black olives. She poured 1/4 cup Italian dressing over the top, sprinkled a little lemon juice on it, tucked some lettuce leaves around it and mixed in chopped parsley. She added the feta cheese to the top. Elsie said everybody at this and enjoyed it. The recipe serves 4.



Elsie's Mediterranean Quinoa Salad

Iveta could not join us on June 7, since she was on vacation then. She sent ahead a photo of her creation, Whole Roasted Cauliflower. This dish is from Greece, Iveta said. “It was really good and tasty. I put some carrots around it so the space is not wasted.” Iveta also sent an image of the recipe, which will be in the recipe section of these notes.

**Iveta's Whole
Roasted
Cauliflower**



Amanda cooked Lebanese cuisine all during the month of May, using *Julie Taboulie's Lebanese kitchen: Authentic recipes for fresh and flavorful Mediterranean home cooking* by Julie Ann Sageer and Leah Bhabha. This is the first time she tried making bread.

Amanda wrote about this experience. "I highly recommend watching a YouTube video before trying to make bread for the first time as trying to figure out when the bread has been kneaded enough is challenging! This recipe used ground lamb, all spice, pomegranate molasses, tahini, red pepper, onion, parsley, and mint. The bread was made from flour, water, yeast, olive oil, and a teaspoon of sugar.

"If it weren't so time consuming, I would make this again. A couple things I would say about Lebanese cuisine is that the spices are mild, letting the ingredients speak for Themselves, and allspice and garlic are the most common spices used. If a recipe calls for ground lamb, you could probably use beef because lamb is so mild."

Amanda's Sfiha Baalbakiyeh Meat Pastry



Sandy has known for a long time about the health benefits of Mediterranean cooking. She looked at the cookbooks, but decided to do something simpler than she found in the books. She googled Mediterranean Stir Fry and found themediterraneandish.com site and the recipe for Mediterranean-Style Garlic Shrimp with Bell Peppers.

Sandy used coriander, which she almost never uses, in this recipe. Instead of the can of diced tomato called for, she used Ro-tel brand diced tomato with chilis. She used basmati rice for serving the finished dish. Sandy used olive oil and butter to fry the vegetables. She used pre-cooked shrimp that still had the tails on from Festival Foods. She was careful not to overcook them, (something the recipe cautioned about), sauteing them for 2 or 3 minutes on each side.

The finished dish had a fabulous taste, she said, and she would make this recipe again. "It was very enticing."



Sandy's Mediterranean –Style Garlic Shrimp with Bell Peppers

Pamela also could not join us on June 7, but sent this message: I enjoy reading all the food club newsletters but my evenings get busy so I probably won't join the virtual meeting. I did make a new recipe I found online that came up as this month's food - pineapple teriyaki chicken. I forgot to take a picture but it was good. Please continue to include me so I can look up ideas each month and maybe remember to take a picture next time!

Explore Cuisine from India for Our July Meeting

Our July Virtual Cookbook Club meeting is at 6 PM on Monday, July 5.

Remember that we love to see your photos of your cooking process and your finished dishes!



Discussion on cooking adventures and explorations:

Gladys commented that it sounds like everyone liked these dishes more than those from the other months. Judy said this cuisine offers a lot of variety. Sandy reminded us that it is one of the healthiest ways we can eat.

Gladys reported that her kitchen is getting closer to being finished. Her washer and dryer are back in action, which is a relief. Amanda said she had tried Israeli cuisine in the past and noticed that it differs from Lebanese cooking in that the Israeli dishes involve burning ingredients rather than cooking them gently, as was the case for the Lebanese dishes she tried. She has also done a lot of Moroccan cooking, with a predominance of sweet and bitter tastes. She strongly recommends the dish, Crock Pot Tagine.

Amanda and Elsie discussed using teff (or Neff) flour for bread. Teff is a flour made from the seeds of a grass native to Ethiopia. People in Ethiopia and Eritrea use it for, among other things, making Injira, a sourdough-risen flatbread (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teff>).

The group discussed sources for ingredients for Indian dishes. One store—**Maharaja Grocery**—is located at 1701 Thierer Rd. on the east side of Madison. **Namaste India Grocery Store** is located at 805 S Gammon Rd A, Madison. Another is **Bombay Bazaar** at 753 S Gammon Rd, Madison

Recipes From Explorations

Good Eats - Serves 4

Chicken Salad Wrap

- 2 cups cooked cut up chicken
- One apple or fruit of choice, I used green and red grapes
- 2 rib of celery
- 2 green onions
- ¼ cup almonds I use slivered toasted
- 2 tbsp of Mayo (I used yogurt)
- Salt & Pepper
- ⅓ teaspoon paprika
- Lettuce leaves

Mix all together and place in Pita or on lettuce leaf or cabbage leaves.
Can shred carrot for top

Judy's Chicken Salad Wrap

Mediterranean Shrimp Recipe with Bell Peppers - The Mediterranean Dish

1. Pat the shrimp dry and place it in a large bowl. Add the flour, smoked paprika, salt and pepper, coriander, cayenne, and sugar. Toss until the shrimp is well-coated.
2. In a large cast iron skillet, melt the butter with the olive oil over medium heat. Add the shallots and garlic. Cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring regularly, until fragrant (be sure not to burn the garlic.) Add the bell peppers and cook another 4 minutes or so, tossing occasionally.
3. Now add the shrimp. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, then add the diced tomatoes, broth, white wine and lemon juice. Cook for a couple more minutes, or until the shrimp turns bright orange.
4. Finally, stir in the chopped fresh parsley and serve!

NOTES

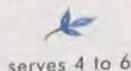
- **Cook's Tip:** Shrimp cook so very quickly, so don't take your eyes off the skillet. Shrimp are ready when their color turns from grey to orange with bright red tails. When you see that one side is starting to turn pink, you are so close. Use your wooden spoon to toss the shrimp quick so that it turns color on the other side. Remember your skillet is still hot even if you've turned the heat off. Shrimp will continue to cook a little bit longer.
- **Serve with** plain orzo, [couscous](#) or your favorite grain. [Lebanese rice](#) is a great option. For salads and starters: [Baba Ganoush](#), [Roasted Red Pepper Hummus](#), [Balela Salad](#), [3-Ingredient Mediterranean Salad](#), [Fresh Herbs and Tomato Salad](#)
- **Visit our shop** to browse quality Mediterranean ingredients including [olive oils](#) and [spices](#) used in this recipe.

NUTRITION

Calories: 284 kcal	Carbohydrates: 9.9g	Protein: 30.6g	Saturated Fat: 1.8g
Cholesterol: 357.6mg	Sodium: 1258.1mg	Potassium: 336mg	Fiber: 1.8g
Vitamin A: 155.1IU	Vitamin C: 20mg	Calcium: 247.7mg	Iron: 4.2mg

Sandy's Mediterranean-Style Garlic Shrimp with Bell Peppers

Kounoupidi Olokliro Psito me Meli kai Feta WHOLE ROASTED CAULIFLOWER slathered with feta and greek honey



This is divine. And dramatic. And easy. This dish is a thoroughly modern take on an oft misunderstood vegetable, and calls into action two beloved Greek ingredients, feta and honey.

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| 1 large head cauliflower | 1 tablespoon Greek balsamic vinegar |
| 4 garlic cloves, cut into slivers | Salt and freshly ground black pepper |
| ½ cup (120 ml) extra-virgin Greek olive oil | ½ cup (25 g) chopped fresh parsley leaves |
| 4 tablespoons (60 ml) Dijon mustard | ½ cup (75 g) crumbled Greek feta |
| 2 teaspoons Greek honey | Lemon wedges, for serving |

Preheat the oven to 450°F (230°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Remove the leaves from the cauliflower and cut off enough of the stem so that it is level with the bottom of the head, enabling the cauliflower to stand upright on the baking sheet.

Gently stuff the garlic slivers between the florets all around the cauliflower head.

Whisk together the olive oil, 2 tablespoons of the mustard, the honey, and the vinegar in a small bowl and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Put the cauliflower on the prepared baking sheet and brush the entire surface with the olive oil mixture. Roast the cauliflower until beautifully browned and tender, 50 minutes to 1 hour. You can insert a long skewer into the cauliflower to see if it's done. It should pass through smoothly. Keep the oven on.

Meanwhile, combine the parsley and feta in a small bowl. Brush the remaining 2 tablespoons mustard all over the surface of the roasted cauliflower and rub with the parsley-feta mixture. Roast for 5 minutes more, or until the feta melts. Remove from the oven and serve with lemon wedges.

Iveta's Whole Roasted Cauliflower