

A TOUR AROUND THE WORLD'S GASTRONOMY



Uzbekistan

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A TASTE OF UZBEKISTAN'S GASTRONOMY



A NATION'S GASTRONOMY IS ITS BEST AMBASSADOR

The territory of Uzbekistan is located in the very center of Central Asia between the two rivers Syrdarya and Amudarya.

At the crossroads of the historic Silk Roads, the History of Uzbek cuisine is characterized by being rich and colorful, as well as by its exuberant use of meat.

Each region of the Republic uses different methods of cooking the same dishes, which have evolved over the centuries. For example, pilaf is cooked all over Uzbekistan but its recipe varies across the regions, and there are now over 1200 recipes.

Since the conquest of the territory by the Arabs in the 7th century, dried fruits and dishes made of lamb and vegetables became popular.

During the reign of the Mongols in the 12th century, fermented milk drinks such as ayran, koumiss and Uzbek's favorite delicacy, kurt, appeared in the country.

During the 14th century, ruler Amir Timur's favorite healing dish was lamb soup, which the Uzbeks call "shurpa" and is now a staple everywhere in the country.

In the 19th century, Uzbekistan's cuisine became more diverse as foreign ingredients were introduced, like potatoes, tomatoes and cabbage.

TAKE YOUR PALATE ON A TOUR

SPICE UP YOUR LIFE WITH PRODUCTS FROM UZBEKISTAN



Zira

Enhances the taste of food, making it a little spicier. Used to prepare the main Uzbek dishes: pilaf, manti, soups, kebab and marinade.



Black pepper

Added to almost all main dishes and soups - even only a small pinch gives the food a special flavor.



Basil (Uzbek people call it "Raykhon")

A fragrant herb that, when blooming, exudes a spicy aroma around it. This herb not only improves the taste of dishes, but it is also very good for health.



Dried raisins

A delicious dried fruit that is beneficial for health and may be used as an ingredient for pilaf.



Bay leaf

Used in dried form. Commonly used for soups and meat dishes.

WANT TO BRING SOME BACK HOME?

These spices can be found fresh at the Uzbek bazaars (open-air-markets). The most popular and iconic ones - "Chorsu" and "Alay bazaar", which are located in the capital of Uzbekistan - Tashkent. In Samarkand the "Siab Bazaar" is where you can buy famous Samarkand bread, fresh dairy products, aromatic spices etc.

TOP 5 LOCAL BITES TO SAMPLE



SAMSA

Course: Appetizer

The pride of Uzbekistan's people. Baked in a tandoor and filled with meat, potato, vegetables or even pumpkin, making the samsas puff pastry dough requires a lot of skill and experience. Its preparation varies depending on the region.

MASTAVA

Course: First Course

Mastava finds its origins in Chimgan, a beautiful mountainous area surrounding Tashkent, and more precisely in the area of Lake Charvak. The thick, hearty soup of rice, meat, potatoes, and other vegetables is served with uezbek bread. Mastava is also said to be the song of the oriental dishes.



PILAF

Course: Main Course

Pilaf is the culinary culmination of Uzbek cuisine. Usually prepared for family celebrations like weddings, childbirth and religious holidays, its cooking process is laborious, requiring skill, dexterity and a knack. The essential ingredients of pilaf are rice, meat, carrot, chickpeas, barberry, dried raisins and pepper, and it is served with a tomato salad called "achik-chuchuk".



KAZAN KABOB

Course: Main Course

Classics of Uzbek national cuisine. An insanely delicious dish in which juicy meat is saturated with spices, meat aromas, and fried potatoes. It is impossible to resist the temptation to taste it. Served with fresh onions and herbs on large slices of potatoes and meat. Simple ingredients, when cooked correctly in a "kazan" (pot), can work miracles.



SUMALAK

Course: Dessert

This ritual and festive dish is prepared for the Nowruz holiday. Sumalak is cooked in a large cauldron for 24 hours and must constantly be stirred with a large slotted spoon to prevent it from burning. As it is long and laborious, this cooking process usually involves several people.

DID YOU KNOW?

Uzbekistan has its special ritual of brewing and serving tea, which has its meaning and traditions. Before serving, the tea is poured 3 times from the teapot to the teacup, so that the tea is properly infused and served in another clean teacup so the guests can enjoy the pure taste and aroma of tea.

BAKHRIDDIN CHUSTIY

World-renowned chef, owner of several restaurants, winner of many international culinary championships, author of numerous books on cooking and Guinness book record holder.

Many people call him the Uzbek Jamie Oliver.

He has been cooking since he was a teenager. Having matured, he left for Russia, and then returned to his homeland to make Uzbek food famous all over the world.

He is known for preparing the world's largest pilaf - a seven-ton dish in 2017 got into the Guinness World Records.



«My goal is to develop Uzbek cuisine and gastronomy.

My trick is in the unusual restaurant serving of traditional Uzbek dishes. Often unexpected...».

In the early 2000s, I successfully worked in one of the prestigious Moscow restaurants, specializing in Arabic cuisine. But I felt that I had exhausted myself in this area. Therefore, I decided to return home and develop Uzbek cuisine. So I went from a bread baker to a restaurateur. Gastronomic tourism is what often attracts guests coming to Uzbekistan. Today we have many restaurants specializing in national cuisine. But it is always interesting to create something original, to experiment with recipes, taking into account world trends. A dish that you should definitely try in our restaurants is Namangan kanzakabob. And the product I especially like to work with is dough. Uzbek people can't imagine life without meat or without dough. Also in Uzbek cuisine, spices play a huge role, especially I can single out zira, as it gives a special taste to the dish.

One of my favourite national dishes is "chuzma lagman", which appeared in Uzbekistan during the era of the Great Silk Road. "Chuzma lagman" means stretched noodles. It requires two main spices - star anise and Sichuan pepper. Noodles are served with sauce consisting of fried meat and vegetables. The most important thing when choosing the vegetables is to have different colours in the sauce that combine well, that's what whets the appetite. Vegetables need to be fried very quickly so that they crunch and don't lose their beneficial properties. Noodles al dente, crunchy vegetables, and exquisite spicy aroma - just an incredible combination, very tasty.

LAGMAN

UZBEK NOODLE SOUP



INGREDIENTS

- Dough: 1 kg flour, 2 eggs, 400 ml water, 1 tsp salt
- For gravy: Meat - 800 gr, 2 colored bell pepper, 1 big or 2 small tomatoes, 1 big or 2 small onions
- ½ bonsai Chinese cabbage, 1 head of garlic, celery, wild garlic, dzhusai (one bunch of eac), 350 ml vegetable oil, 4½ tbsp of bell pepper sauce
- Spices: hoju (Sichuan pepper), star anise, cumin, ground black pepper, ginger, cilantro seeds – to taste
- Marinade: 2 eggs, ½ tsp starch, 2 tbsp soy sauce

STEP BY STEP

- 1 Pour water, eggs and salt into the bowl, mix well, add flour, and knead the dough. Let the dough rest for 20-30 minutes.
- 2 Then knead the dough with your hands, cut it into strips and form “sausages”, stretching a little. Spread each “sausage” with oil and fold it into a container, cover it with cling film and set aside for 20-30 minutes.
- 3 Next, fry the meat with onions and vegetables in the order indicated in the recipe ingredients list, add all the spices and make a marinade.
- 4 Pour in water; bring to a boil. Season water with salt. Reduce heat to low and simmer soup about 40 minutes.
- 5 Serve the noodles with cooked sauce.

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