

TASTE the EU

An Intercultural Recipe Book

Stories, flavours and traditions from three European kitchens



Austria · España · Türkiye

Co-created by 30 young people in Linz, March 2026

Erasmus+ KA152-YOU · Project: Taste the EU

Coordinated by Love Unity (Linz, Austria)

with BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUTH (Valencia, ES) and Pandemic Generation (Niğde, TR)



Foreword

Food is more than what fills the plate. It is memory passed from grandmother to grandchild, the language we speak when other words fail, and one of the most honest ways a culture can introduce itself to a stranger. This book was born from a simple idea: that thirty young people from Austria, Spain and Türkiye could meet around a table in Linz, cook together, and leave behind something useful for the friends and neighbours they would return to.

Over seven days in March 2026, participants in the Erasmus+ Youth Exchange *Taste the EU* shared not only recipes but the stories behind them — the seasons they belong to, the families who keep them alive, the small acts of sustainability that traditional cooking has always practised long before the word was fashionable. The dishes you will find on the following pages are theirs. So are the chef's tips, the sustainability notes, and the reflections scattered between the chapters.

We hope you cook from this book. We hope you cook badly the first time and better the second. We hope you invite someone whose kitchen is different from yours, and we hope, when you do, you taste a little of what we tasted in Linz.

— *The participants of Taste the EU*

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About the Project

Taste the EU brought together thirty young people aged 16–25 from Austria, Spain and Türkiye for a seven-day Youth Exchange in Linz, Austria, hosted at the Youth Hostel Linz. The exchange used food as a vehicle for intercultural learning, sustainable nutrition education, and active European citizenship. It was coordinated by **Love Unity** (Austria), with **BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUTH** (Spain) and **Pandemic Generation** (Türkiye) as partner organisations.

Half of the participants came from backgrounds with fewer opportunities — economic, cultural, geographical, or social. The project's pedagogy rested on non-formal education: icebreakers, team-building, hands-on cooking workshops, role-plays such as *Stereotypical Food* and *Which Food Am I?*, a Cine Food filmmaking workshop, and visits to the Linz Farmers' Market and a local sustainable food cooperative.

This recipe book is one of three tangible outputs from the exchange, alongside the Cine Food short films and the Food Atelier artworks. It is released as a free, open resource — print it, share it, cook from it.

Project	Taste the EU (KA152-YOU)
Coordinator	Love Unity — Linz, Austria
Partners	BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUTH (ES), Pandemic Generation (TR)
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Participants	30 young people (16–25) + 6 group leaders
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AUSTRIA



Österreichische Küche — comfort, craft, and the four seasons

Austrian cooking is a quiet conversation between empires. Bohemia left dumplings; Hungary left paprika; Italy left polenta and gnocchi reimagined as *Nockerl*; the alpine pastures left butter and cheese that taste of the grass the cows walked over. What unites these borrowings is a respect for craft — the breaded cutlet pounded thin enough to read a newspaper through, the strudel dough stretched until the kitchen table shows beneath it. The four recipes that follow are not exotic. They are domestic, weekly, the kind of food a Linz grandmother would make on a Sunday afternoon.

Wiener Schnitzel mit Kartoffelsalat

A traditional dish from Austria

SERVES
4

PREP
20 min

COOK
15 min

LEVEL
Easy

The Wiener Schnitzel is to Vienna what the bagel is to New York — protected by law, argued over endlessly, and best when nobody is showing off. By Austrian regulation, only veal may be called *Wiener Schnitzel*; everything else is *Schnitzel Wiener Art* (Vienna-style). The breading should puff away from the meat in a wave, never sit flat. Paired with a vinegared potato salad rather than mayonnaise — a habit Austria shares with its Bavarian neighbours.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 veal cutlets (about 150 g each), pounded to 4 mm
- 120 g plain flour
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 180 g fine breadcrumbs (ideally home-dried white bread)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Clarified butter or sunflower oil for frying
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges
- *For the potato salad:*
- 800 g waxy potatoes
- 1 small onion, finely diced
- 200 ml warm beef or vegetable stock
- 3 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard, salt, sugar, chives

METHOD

1. Boil the potatoes whole in salted water until just tender, about 20 minutes. Drain, peel while warm, slice 4 mm thick.
2. Whisk warm stock with vinegar, oil, mustard, a pinch of sugar and salt; pour over potatoes and onion. Toss gently — the potatoes should drink the dressing, not swim in it. Rest 30 minutes.
3. Season the veal generously. Set up three shallow plates: flour, beaten egg, breadcrumbs.
4. Dredge each cutlet in flour (shake off excess), dip in egg, then press into breadcrumbs without compacting. Do not refrigerate — fry immediately.
5. Heat 1.5 cm of clarified butter in a wide pan to 170 °C. Lay the schnitzel in away from you and immediately spoon hot fat over the top — this is what makes the breading lift in a wave.
6. Fry 60–90 seconds per side until golden. Drain briefly on paper. Serve with the potato salad, a lemon wedge, and a sprinkle of chives.

CHEF'S TIP — The pan must be wide enough for the schnitzel to float, not touch the bottom. If it touches the bottom, the breading sets flat instead of puffing.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — A vegetable schnitzel made with celeriac or kohlrabi (sliced 1 cm thick, blanched, then breaded the same way) carries the technique without the meat — a popular weekday version in many Austrian households.

Apfelstrudel

A traditional dish from Austria

SERVES
8

PREP
40 min

COOK
40 min

LEVEL
Medium

Strudel arrived in Austria through Hungary, which got it from the Ottoman *baklava* tradition — a reminder that no national dish is ever quite national. The dough is the test: stretched on a floured cloth until you can read a newspaper through it. The filling is humble — apples, breadcrumbs toasted in butter, raisins, a whisper of cinnamon — but the thinness of the wrapping is what turns peasant food into something that gets served in Vienna's most expensive coffee houses.

INGREDIENTS

- *Dough:* 250 g strong flour, 1 egg, 30 ml sunflower oil, 125 ml lukewarm water, pinch of salt
- *Filling:* 1 kg tart apples (Boskoop or Bramley)
- 100 g raisins, soaked in 2 tbsp rum (optional)
- 80 g breadcrumbs
- 60 g butter (for toasting the crumbs)
- 80 g sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- Zest of 1 lemon, juice of half
- 50 g chopped walnuts
- Extra butter, melted, for brushing
- Icing sugar, for dusting

METHOD

1. Knead the dough ingredients until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Brush with oil, cover, rest at room temperature 1 hour minimum (warmth makes it stretch).
2. Peel, core and slice the apples thinly. Toss with lemon juice, zest, sugar, cinnamon and the soaked raisins.
3. Toast the breadcrumbs in the butter until golden and fragrant. Set aside.
4. Flour a clean cloth (a tablecloth works). Roll the dough out, then stretch it from underneath with the backs of your hands until almost transparent and roughly 60 × 80 cm. Trim thick edges.
5. Brush the sheet with melted butter. Scatter breadcrumbs over two-thirds, leaving a margin. Spread the apple filling on the breadcrumb side. Sprinkle walnuts.
6. Using the cloth, roll the strudel away from you tightly. Tuck in the ends. Transfer seam-side down to a baking tray lined with parchment.
7. Brush generously with melted butter. Bake at 190 °C for 35–40 minutes, brushing twice more with butter during baking. Dust with icing sugar. Serve warm with vanilla sauce or whipped cream.

CHEF'S TIP — If stretching the dough intimidates you, ready-made *Strudelteig* (filo-style Austrian dough) is sold in supermarkets and is what most Austrian home cooks use on a

weekday. No shame in that.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Apple peels and cores need not be wasted. Simmer them with sugar and water for 20 minutes, strain, and reduce to a syrup for pancakes or yoghurt — a traditional household trick for using the whole fruit.

Kaiserschmarrn

A traditional dish from Austria

SERVES
4

PREP
10 min

COOK
15 min

LEVEL
Easy

Schmarrn means roughly 'a mess' or 'something not worth fussing over' — and yet the dish is named after Emperor Franz Joseph, who supposedly loved it. The story goes that a flat pancake intended for the Empress Sissi was torn apart by the clumsy chef; the Emperor ate it instead and declared it better than the original. Whether the tale is true or not, the lesson holds: things that look broken are sometimes exactly what they should be.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 eggs, separated
- 250 ml whole milk
- 150 g plain flour
- 30 g sugar, plus more for caramelising
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 60 g raisins, soaked in rum or apple juice (optional)
- 40 g butter
- Icing sugar, for dusting
- Plum or apple compote, to serve

METHOD

- 1.** Whisk yolks with milk, flour, sugar, salt, vanilla and lemon zest until smooth. Beat whites to soft peaks. Fold whites gently into the batter.
- 2.** Melt butter in a heavy 26 cm pan over medium heat. Pour in the batter, scatter the raisins on top. Cook undisturbed 3–4 minutes until the underside is golden.
- 3.** Now the moment of faith: tear the pancake apart with two forks or spatulas into rough bite-sized pieces. Don't be neat.
- 4.** Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of sugar over the torn pieces and continue cooking, turning often, until edges caramelize — 4–5 more minutes.
- 5.** Pile onto warm plates, dust heavily with icing sugar, and serve with cold plum or apple compote.

CHEF'S TIP — Don't be tempted to flip the whole pancake before tearing. The point is unevenness — thick custardy bits next to crisp caramelised edges.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Use stale bread instead of flour in a related dish called *Scheiterhaufen* (literally 'pyre') — layered with apples and the same egg-milk mixture, baked in the oven. A waste-reducing cousin of Kaiserschmarrn.

Tafelspitz

A traditional dish from Austria

SERVES
6

PREP
20 min

COOK
3 hours

LEVEL
Medium

Boiled beef sounds, to anyone outside Austria, like an apology rather than a dish. But *Tafelspitz* — the tip of the top sirloin, simmered in broth with root vegetables — was the favourite meal of Emperor Franz Joseph, who ate it almost every day for sixty years. It is served with the broth as soup, then the meat sliced against the grain with two traditional accompaniments: apple-horseradish (*Apfelkren*) and chive sauce.

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 kg beef top sirloin cap (Tafelspitz cut)
- Beef bones (about 500 g), blanched
- 2 carrots, halved
- 1 small celeriac, peeled and quartered
- 1 leek, white part
- 1 onion, halved and charred cut-side-down in a dry pan
- 1 bunch parsley, 5 peppercorns, 2 bay leaves, 1 tsp salt
- *Apfelkren*: 2 tart apples, grated; 4 tbsp fresh horseradish, grated; 1 tbsp lemon juice; pinch of salt
- *Chive sauce*: 2 hard-boiled egg yolks, 1 raw yolk, 2 tbsp white bread soaked in milk, 150 ml sunflower oil, 1 tbsp mustard, bunch of chives, salt and white pepper

METHOD

1. Place the bones in a large pot, cover with cold water, bring to a boil and skim thoroughly. Add the charred onion, peppercorns, bay leaves and parsley stems. Simmer 1 hour.
2. Add the beef whole; the liquid should cover it. Simmer very gently (never boil) for 2 to 2.5 hours, skimming as needed, until a skewer slides in with no resistance.
3. Add carrots, celeriac and leek 30 minutes before the meat is done. They should be tender but hold shape.
4. For the *Apfelkren*: combine grated apple and horseradish with lemon juice and salt. Serve immediately — it darkens quickly.
5. For the chive sauce: blend the cooked yolks, raw yolk, soaked bread (squeezed) and mustard. Stream in the oil to emulsify. Fold in finely chopped chives. Season.
6. To serve: strain the broth and serve as a clear soup with chives and bread cubes. Then slice the meat against the grain, arrange with the vegetables, and bring the two sauces to the table.

CHEF'S TIP — Never let the broth boil — only tremble. Hard boiling toughens the meat and clouds the broth. The Austrian word for this gentle simmer is *ziehen lassen*: 'letting it draw'.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — The strained broth is gold — freeze it in jars or ice cube trays for risotto, soups and braises. Nothing about Tafelspitz needs to be thrown away.

ESPAÑA



La cocina española — sun, salt, and the patience of an afternoon

Spanish cooking is regional before it is national. Andalusia drinks gazpacho cold because summer demands it. Valencia argues, sometimes furiously, about what may and may not enter a paella (the answer involves rabbit and snails, not chorizo, and you will be corrected if you get this wrong). Catalonia caramelises sugar on custard. The Basque coast salts its fish. What the regions share is a respect for ingredients allowed to be themselves — olive oil, tomatoes ripened on the vine, paprika smoked over oak. The recipes below come from different corners of a single, generous peninsula.

Gazpacho Andaluz

A traditional dish from Spain

SERVES
4

PREP
15 min

COOK
0 min

LEVEL
Easy

On a 40 °C afternoon in Sevilla, gazpacho is not a starter; it is a survival strategy. Drunk straight from the glass or eaten with a spoon, this cold soup of tomato, cucumber, pepper and stale bread is older than the tomato itself — the Romans made versions with just bread, water and vinegar. Today it is a barometer of summer: when local tomatoes are not ripe enough, no Andalusian will serve it.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg ripe tomatoes (the riper, the better — never store-bought-firm)
- 1 small cucumber, peeled
- 1 green Italian pepper
- 1 small clove garlic
- 80 g day-old white bread, crust removed
- 60 ml extra virgin olive oil, plus more to finish
- 30 ml sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- Cold water as needed
- *To serve:* diced cucumber, pepper, hard-boiled egg, croutons

METHOD

- 1.** Soak the bread in a little water for 5 minutes; squeeze gently to remove excess.
- 2.** Roughly chop tomatoes, cucumber and pepper. Add to a blender with garlic, soaked bread, oil, vinegar and salt.
- 3.** Blend on high for at least 2 minutes — much longer than feels right. The colour will lighten from red to coral-pink, which is the sign that the emulsion has come together.
- 4.** Pass through a fine sieve for the silkiest texture (skip this for a rustic version). Adjust seasoning. Thin with cold water if needed.
- 5.** Chill at least 2 hours. Serve very cold, finishing each bowl with a thread of olive oil and the diced garnishes alongside.

CHEF'S TIP — Make it the day before. Gazpacho is one of the few dishes that genuinely improves overnight — the flavours marry, the acidity rounds.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Gazpacho is the original waste-reducing recipe — invented to use stale bread and tomatoes too soft for the table. Lean into this: the slightly bruised tomatoes from the bottom of the box make the best version.

Paella Valenciana

A traditional dish from Spain

SERVES
4

PREP
20 min

COOK
35 min

LEVEL
Medium

Paella is not seafood rice. Paella is not chorizo rice. Paella is a Valencian field dish, cooked over orange-wood fire by farmers and hunters with what was at hand: rabbit, chicken, snails, flat green beans, butter beans, saffron, rice. The seafood version exists too, but born along the coast — it is called *paella de marisco*. Adding chorizo, a Valencian will tell you, is a crime punishable by exile from the region. The crisp layer at the bottom of the pan is called *socarrat* and is the point of the dish.

INGREDIENTS

- 300 g bomba or Calasparra rice (round, short-grain)
- 400 g rabbit, jointed (or substitute chicken thighs)
- 200 g chicken thighs, bone in
- 150 g flat green beans (*ferradura* or romano), trimmed and cut
- 100 g cooked butter beans (*garrofó*, or large white beans)
- 2 ripe tomatoes, grated
- 1 tsp sweet smoked paprika (*pimentón dulce*)
- Generous pinch of saffron threads, lightly toasted
- 1 sprig fresh rosemary
- 60 ml extra virgin olive oil
- 900 ml hot chicken or vegetable stock
- Salt, lemon wedges to serve

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a 32–38 cm paella pan (or wide shallow pan). Brown the rabbit and chicken pieces well on all sides — 8–10 minutes. Push them to the rim.
2. Add the green beans and cook 4 minutes. Push to the rim. Add the grated tomato, cook until it turns dark and oil reappears (this is the *sofrito*, the flavour base).
3. Stir in the paprika, take off the heat for 10 seconds (paprika burns fast), then return and add the hot stock and saffron. Bring to a boil and season generously.
4. Scatter the rice evenly across the pan — do not stir again after this point. Add the butter beans and rosemary. Cook on high heat 8 minutes, then medium for 8–10 more.
5. When the liquid is almost absorbed, increase the heat for 1–2 minutes to form the *socarrat* — you'll hear a faint crackle and smell something just shy of burnt. That's correct.
6. Cover with a clean cloth and rest off the heat 5 minutes. Serve with lemon wedges, straight from the pan.

CHEF'S TIP — Do not stir the rice once it goes in. The crust at the bottom — the *socarrat* — is the soul of the dish, and stirring destroys it. If unsure whether it is forming, tip the pan slightly and listen.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Paella is by tradition a use-up dish — Sunday lunch made from whatever the week left behind. The vegetables can flex with the season: artichokes in spring, mushrooms in autumn. The frame stays the same.

Tortilla Española

A traditional dish from Spain

SERVES
6

PREP
15 min

COOK
25 min

LEVEL
Easy

Five ingredients. Two pieces of equipment. One question that has divided Spain for two hundred years: with onion, or without? (Most agree, quietly, that with onion is better.) The Spanish omelette is a national snack, a tapas-bar standard, a packed-lunch hero, a midnight rescue. Done well, the centre wobbles slightly and the potatoes are silken from their slow bath in olive oil. Done poorly, it is a dry brick. The line between the two is thinner than it looks.

INGREDIENTS

- 600 g waxy potatoes, peeled
- 1 large onion (the great debate)
- 6 large eggs
- 300 ml extra virgin olive oil (most will be reused)
- 1 tsp fine salt

METHOD

- 1.** Slice potatoes into 3 mm half-moons. Slice the onion thinly. Salt both lightly.
- 2.** Heat the oil in a 24 cm non-stick pan to medium-low — it should sizzle gently around a slice but not brown anything. Add potatoes and onion. Cook 20–25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft but pale (this is poaching, not frying).
- 3.** Drain through a sieve, reserving the oil (which can be reused 2–3 times for the same dish). Press the potatoes gently.
- 4.** Beat the eggs in a large bowl with the remaining salt. Add the warm potatoes and onion; stir gently to coat. Rest 5 minutes — the eggs will start to thicken.
- 5.** Heat 1 tablespoon of the reserved oil in the same pan over medium heat. Pour in the egg mixture and shake the pan to settle it. Cook 3–4 minutes until the edges set but the centre is still loose.
- 6.** The flip: place a flat plate larger than the pan over the top. Hold firm; invert in one motion. Slide the tortilla back into the pan, uncooked side down. Cook 2 more minutes for a wobbly centre, 4 for fully set.
- 7.** Slide onto a clean plate. Rest 5 minutes before cutting — it firms as it cools. Serve warm or at room temperature, with bread.

CHEF'S TIP — The flip is the moment everyone fears. Use a plate *larger* than the pan — not equal. And commit. Hesitation is what causes accidents.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — The olive oil used to poach the potatoes is fragrant with their flavour. Strain and store it — it is excellent for roasting vegetables or making the next tortilla. Three uses are common in Spanish kitchens.

Crema Catalana

A traditional dish from Spain

SERVES
6

PREP
15 min

COOK
10 min + cooling

LEVEL
Easy

Crema Catalana predates the French *crème brûlée* by a few centuries, though both countries claim ancestry. The Catalan version is made on the stovetop (not in the oven), thickened with cornflour rather than baked into a custard, and flavoured with lemon zest and cinnamon instead of vanilla. It is traditionally served on the feast of Saint Joseph, 19 March — the Catalan father's day — but appears year-round on dessert menus from Girona to Tarragona.

INGREDIENTS

- 500 ml whole milk
- 1 strip lemon peel (no pith)
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 5 large egg yolks
- 120 g sugar, plus more for caramelising
- 30 g cornflour

METHOD

1. Heat the milk with the lemon peel and cinnamon stick until just steaming. Off the heat, infuse 15 minutes; remove the peel and stick.
2. Whisk the yolks with sugar until pale. Sift in the cornflour and whisk smooth.
3. Pour the warm milk gradually over the yolk mixture, whisking constantly to prevent scrambling.
4. Return the mixture to the pan over medium-low heat. Stir continuously with a wooden spoon — in a figure-eight, reaching the corners — for 4–6 minutes until thickened to a custard that coats the spoon.
5. Divide between six shallow earthenware dishes (the traditional vessel). Press cling film directly on the surface to prevent a skin. Chill at least 4 hours.
6. Just before serving, sprinkle each surface evenly with 1 teaspoon of sugar. Caramelize with a kitchen blowtorch until amber and crackling — or, traditionally, with a red-hot iron *cremador*. Serve immediately while the contrast of hot crust and cold cream is at its sharpest.

CHEF'S TIP — The crust should crack under a spoon like ice on a puddle. If the sugar layer is too thick, it stays soft; too thin, it burns. One level teaspoon per dish is the rule.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — The infused milk is fragrant after removing the cinnamon and peel — save and freeze leftover infused milk for porridge or a small batch of rice

pudding. Egg whites freeze well for meringues or financiers.

TÜRKİYE



Türk mutfağı — a kitchen at the crossroads of three continents

Turkish cuisine is what happens when Central Asian nomads, Byzantine Greeks, Persian courts, Arab traders and Balkan villagers cook in the same kitchen for a thousand years. Lentil soup is breakfast in Antep, lunch in Istanbul, and supper anywhere a guest arrives unannounced. Bread is sacred — picked up, never thrown away, kissed before being placed in the bin if it must be discarded. The four recipes here come from different regions but share a quiet rule: feed whoever is at the table, and feed them generously.

Mercimek Çorbası

A traditional dish from Türkiye

SERVES
6

PREP
10 min

COOK
30 min

LEVEL
Easy

Ask any Turk what their mother makes when they come home from a long trip, and the answer is almost always red lentil soup. It is breakfast at workers' canteens, the first course at wedding banquets, hospital food, airline food, hangover food. The dried mint and red pepper butter spooned on top at the last minute is non-negotiable — without it, the soup is just lentils.

INGREDIENTS

- 250 g red lentils, rinsed until water runs clear
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 medium carrot, diced
- 1 medium potato, diced
- 2 tbsp tomato paste (or 1 tbsp tomato + 1 tbsp red pepper paste)
- 1.5 litres water or vegetable stock
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt, black pepper to taste
- *To finish:* 30 g butter, 1 tsp dried mint, 1 tsp Aleppo pepper (pul biber), lemon wedges

METHOD

- 1.** Heat oil in a heavy pot. Soften the onion 5 minutes without colouring. Add carrot and potato; cook 3 minutes.
- 2.** Stir in the tomato paste and cook 1 minute. Add the rinsed lentils, water, salt and pepper.
- 3.** Bring to a boil, then reduce and simmer 25–30 minutes, until lentils have collapsed and vegetables are very soft.
- 4.** Blend until silky smooth — an immersion blender works well. Check seasoning; the soup should taste alive, not flat. Add water if too thick.
- 5.** Just before serving, melt the butter in a small pan. When it foams, remove from the heat and stir in the dried mint and Aleppo pepper. Listen for the sizzle.
- 6.** Ladle the soup into bowls and spoon the red pepper butter over the surface. Serve hot with lemon wedges and bread.

CHEF'S TIP — The mint-and-pepper butter is added at the very end, off the heat. If the butter is too hot when the spices go in, they burn and turn bitter.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Lentils are one of the most water-efficient protein crops on earth — producing a tenth of the water footprint of equivalent beef protein. Soup like this fed Anatolia for centuries before anyone needed to call it 'sustainable'.

Karniyarık

A traditional dish from Türkiye

SERVES
4

PREP
20 min

COOK
45 min

LEVEL
Medium

Karniyarık means 'split belly' — aubergines slit open and stuffed with spiced meat, tomato and pepper, then baked until the filling sets and the aubergines collapse around it. It is the meat-and-potatoes (well, meat-and-aubergine) of Turkish home cooking. Every household has its own version. Some add pine nuts and currants in the Ottoman court style; some keep it austere with just onion and parsley. Serve with rice pilaf.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 medium aubergines, long thin shape if possible
- Sunflower oil for shallow frying
- 400 g lean ground beef or lamb
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 ripe tomatoes — 1 chopped fine, 1 sliced for topping
- 1 green pointed pepper (sivri biber), sliced
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 small bunch flat parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp salt, black pepper, ½ tsp Aleppo pepper
- 100 ml hot water

METHOD

- 1.** Peel the aubergines in stripes (lengthwise, leaving alternating strips of skin). Salt and rest in cold water 20 minutes to draw out bitterness. Pat dry.
- 2.** Shallow-fry in hot oil until golden on all sides and tender to a fork, about 8 minutes total. Drain on paper.
- 3.** In another pan, brown the meat in a little oil, breaking it up. Once it releases its water and the water evaporates, add onion. Cook until soft, 6 minutes. Add garlic, chopped tomato, tomato paste and spices. Cook 5 minutes more. Off the heat, fold in the parsley.
- 4.** Arrange the fried aubergines in a baking dish. Make a deep slit lengthwise in each, pressing the sides to open a pocket — but not cutting all the way through.
- 5.** Stuff each aubergine generously with the meat mixture. Top each with a slice of tomato and a piece of green pepper.
- 6.** Pour the hot water around the base of the dish (not over the aubergines). Bake at 200 °C for 25–30 minutes. Serve with rice pilaf and a yoghurt-cucumber salad (*cacık*).

CHEF'S TIP — The aubergines should be soft enough to cut with a fork before stuffing. If they resist, they will resist later too. Fry them properly the first time.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — A vegetarian version is traditional in Anatolian villages during summer fasts: replace the meat with green lentils cooked with the same aromatics. It is called *imam bayıldı* when stuffed cold with olive oil instead.

Pide

A traditional dish from Türkiye

SERVES

4

PREP

20 min (+ 1 hr proofing)

COOK

12 min

LEVEL

Medium

Often called 'Turkish pizza', though the comparison is unfair to both. *Pide* is boat-shaped flatbread with the toppings tucked inside crimped edges. The classic fillings are *kıymalı* (spiced minced meat), *kuşbaşı* (diced meat), *kaşarlı* (cheese), *ıspanaklı* (spinach) and *sucuklu yumurtalı* (sucuk and egg). It is the food of *iftar* tables during Ramadan, but eaten year-round at lunchtime from the thousands of *pideci* shops across Turkey.

INGREDIENTS

- **Dough:** 400 g strong flour, 250 ml warm water, 7 g instant yeast, 1 tsp salt, 1 tsp sugar, 2 tbsp olive oil
- **Filling (*kıymalı*):** 300 g minced beef or lamb
- 1 onion, very finely chopped
- 1 small green pepper, finely chopped
- 1 tomato, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp red pepper paste (*biber salçası*)
- Bunch parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp salt, ½ tsp each cumin, Aleppo pepper, black pepper
- 1 egg yolk + 1 tbsp milk, for brushing
- Butter, for finishing

METHOD

1. Whisk the yeast and sugar into warm water; rest 5 minutes until foamy. Mix with flour, salt and oil. Knead 10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Cover, prove until doubled (1 hour).
2. For the filling, combine all filling ingredients in a bowl. Do not cook — it bakes inside the pide.
3. Divide the dough into 4 pieces. Roll each into a long oval, 25 × 12 cm.
4. Spread a quarter of the filling along the centre of each, leaving 2 cm clear at the edges. Fold the long sides up to enclose the filling slightly. Pinch the two ends to form points — the boat shape.
5. Transfer to a baking tray lined with parchment. Brush the dough rims with egg yolk mixture.
6. Bake at 240 °C (or as hot as your oven goes) for 10–12 minutes until the edges are deep golden and the filling has cooked through.
7. Brush the hot pide with a little butter as soon as they come out. Cut crosswise into pieces and eat immediately with sliced tomato, parsley and lemon.

CHEF'S TIP — The oven cannot be too hot. Authentic pide is baked in wood-fired stone ovens at 400 °C; in a home oven, preheat at maximum for at least 30 minutes with a pizza stone or heavy baking sheet inside.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Yesterday's pide, sliced and toasted, makes the basis of a Turkish breakfast plate. The dough also accepts seasonal vegetables: spinach in winter,

courgette flowers in late spring, mushrooms in autumn.

Sütlaç

A traditional dish from Türkiye

SERVES
6

PREP
10 min

COOK
50 min

LEVEL
Easy

Rice pudding in Turkey is two desserts in one. *Sütlaç* can be served cool and simple from a bowl, or — more famously — baked under a broiler in small earthenware ramekins until the top is freckled brown and slightly bitter. The contrast of cold, sweet, milky centre against burnt-sugar surface is what makes it iconic. It is sold at every Turkish pudding shop (*muhallebici*) and is one of the few desserts that crosses every regional cuisine without variation worth arguing about.

INGREDIENTS

- 100 g short-grain rice (the same kind used for risotto)
- 1.2 litres whole milk
- 150 g sugar
- 1 tbsp cornflour, mixed with 3 tbsp cold milk
- 1 tsp vanilla or a strip of lemon peel
- Cinnamon, for dusting (optional)

METHOD

- 1.** Rinse the rice. Cover with 300 ml water in a heavy pan, simmer covered 15 minutes until tender and the water absorbed.
- 2.** Add the milk and bring slowly to a simmer, stirring often to prevent the rice from catching. Cook gently 25 minutes — the rice will swell and the milk should reduce slightly.
- 3.** Stir in the sugar and vanilla (or lemon peel). Cook 5 more minutes. Stir in the cornflour slurry and cook 3 minutes more until just thickened. The pudding should coat a spoon but still fall.
- 4.** Divide between 6 oven-safe earthenware or ceramic ramekins. For cold *sütlaç*: chill 3 hours, serve dusted with cinnamon. For baked *sütlaç* (the famous version):
- 5.** Arrange the ramekins in a deep tray. Pour cold water into the tray to come halfway up the sides. Place under a hot broiler (or in a 250 °C oven near the top) for 8–10 minutes until the tops are freckled dark brown — almost burnt in places. That contrast is the point.
- 6.** Cool to room temperature, then chill at least 2 hours before serving. Eat with a small spoon, going through the dark crust into the cold cream below.

CHEF'S TIP — Use whole milk, never reduced-fat — *sütlaç* is one of those dishes that physics will punish you for compromising. The fat is what gives the body and the gentle clinginess.

SUSTAINABILITY NOTE — Excellent use for leftover boiled rice from a meal the day before. Reduce the initial cooking water step and add the cooked rice directly to the warmed milk.

Sustainability in Our Kitchens

Long before sustainability became a word that fitted on a poster, the three cuisines in this book practised it quietly. Stale bread became gazpacho or Scheiterhaufen. The water from boiled potatoes seasoned the next soup. The peels of apples were simmered into syrup. The oil from poaching tortilla potatoes was reused two or three times. Lentils fed villages through winters because they keep, travel, and produce protein with a fraction of the water demanded by meat.

During the exchange, we visited the Linz Farmers' Market and a local sustainable food cooperative. Conversations with producers reminded us that food has a footprint — a chain of decisions from soil to plate that the supermarket label rarely makes visible. The chart below summarises the principles that emerged in our discussions and that you will find echoed in the *Sustainability Notes* through this book.

Principle	In practice
Eat seasonally	A March asparagus from Peru carries more emissions than the meal it sits in. B
Eat locally	Direct sale at markets keeps money with farmers and supports varieties that s
Eat less, better meat	A small portion of well-raised meat costs more, leaves a smaller footprint, and
Use the whole	Peels, stems, bones, fat: every traditional kitchen built its repertoire around us
Cook what travels well	Lentils, dried beans, root vegetables, grains — pantry food fed Europe for cent
Waste nothing	In Turkey, bread is kissed before being thrown out, when throwing it out canno

Voices from the Exchange

What follows are short reflections from participants, collected on the final day during the Youthpass session. They appear here as written, lightly edited only for length.

“I came to Linz thinking I would learn three new recipes. I left with a cookbook of twelve and a group chat that still has not gone quiet. The thing nobody warned me about: how much a kitchen can teach you about a country in seven days.”

— Participant, Türkiye

“My grandmother made Wiener Schnitzel every Sunday until she could not anymore. Cooking it with people from Spain and Türkiye in the same kitchen — explaining why the breading has to puff, hearing them argue about whether onion belongs in tortilla — I understood for the first time that the recipe was never just hers. Every family everywhere has a Sunday dish.”

— Participant, Austria

“The Cine Food workshop changed how I see my phone. I have always filmed food for Instagram, but never thought about what the food was saying. Now I cannot unsee it.”

— Participant, Spain

“The role-play Stereotypical Food hit me harder than I expected. I realised how many things I had assumed about Spanish food were wrong — paella with chorizo, Spanish people eating only tapas. And how many things they had assumed about Turkish food were wrong too. Stereotypes go in both directions.”

— Participant, Türkiye

“I had never been outside my country before this project. Eight days later I have applied for two more Erasmus+ exchanges. Whoever invented this programme: thank you.”

— Participant, Spain

“I am vegetarian. I was nervous about a project so focused on food, expecting to feel left out at every meal. Instead I left with the best vegetarian version of Karniyarık I have ever eaten, and friends who now tease me about it. Inclusion is small things, done often.”

— Participant, Austria

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COORDINATOR	Love Unity Linz, Austria OID: E10375582
PARTNER	BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUTH Valencia, Spain OID: E10373484
PARTNER	Pandemic Generation Niğde, Türkiye OID: E10260730

PHOTO ARCHIVE Photographs taken during the exchange in Linz are available in an open shared archive: drive.google.com/drive/folders/109CmGudqHQq4HFzjwIDL47wXK4Gcs_A5



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