

# Family-tested recipes offer a taste of Greece

See related story on Taste front. Recipes from "Yassou: An Adventure in Greek Cooking," published by the Livonia Society of St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Bloomfield Hills.

## SPINACH AND RICE

2 large onions, chopped fine  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1/2 hot pepper, minced  
1/4 cup olive oil  
3-4 ripe tomatoes, chopped  
1 large can tomato sauce (8 ounces)  
1 cup rice  
1 pound fresh spinach, washed, dried and chopped  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Lemon wedges

Saute onion, garlic, and hot pepper in oil. Add tomato products and water and simmer for 6 minutes. Add rice and cook until almost tender. Season with salt and pepper. Add chopped spinach to rice and continue cooking until rice is fully done. Add more water 1/2 cup at a time to prevent rice from sticking to the pan. Serve with lemon wedges.

Variation: This recipe is vegetarian.

ian as it is, but for a different taste add chicken broth instead of water.

## PASTICHIO

2 pounds ground chuck  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste  
1/2 cup red wine  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon pepper  
1/8 teaspoon allspice  
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg  
1/8 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 teaspoon oregano  
1 pound ziti  
1/4 pound butter  
3 eggs, slightly beaten  
6 ounces Romano cheese, grated  
Béchamel Sauce  
1/4 pound butter  
1 cup flour  
8 cups milk  
1 teaspoon salt  
4 eggs beaten

To make Pastichio: In a frying pan, brown meat, drain off fat and add onion, garlic, and spices.

Saute for 6 minutes. Add tomato paste and wine, simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. Roll pasta using directions on package, drain and rinse.

Mix pasta with melted butter, beaten eggs and cheese. Put 1/2 of pasta on bottom of a baking dish, cover with meat sauce and add the other 1/2 of pasta on top of this. To make Béchamel sauce: Melt butter in saucepan, add flour and mix well. Slowly add milk and salt and cook on low heat until thickened to consistency of heavy white sauce. Stir continuously to prevent scorching. Remove thickened sauce from heat. Beat eggs well and slowly add to white sauce, whisking quickly. Cover with Pastichio with Béchamel Sauce, sprinkle with a little more cheese and bake for 45 minutes at 325°F until golden brown. Serves 8.

## MOUSSAKA

1 1/2 pounds ground beef  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
4 tablespoons tomato paste  
4 ounces tomato sauce  
1/2 cup red wine

1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon pepper  
1/8 teaspoon allspice  
1/8 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon oregano  
2 large eggplants  
2-3 potatoes  
1/2 cup Romano cheese

Brown meat in a skillet and add onion and garlic. Add tomato paste, tomato sauce, wine and spices. Cook for 10 minutes, set aside.

Slice potatoes and eggplant in 1/4-inch slices. Salt eggplant and allow to sweat; wipe with paper towels. Place eggplant under broiler and brown on each side. Line bottom of an oiled baking dish with potato slices, then layer eggplant slices. Sprinkle with cheese and layer with meat sauce. Continue layering eggplant and meat sauce until baking dish is 3/4 full.

Top with Béchamel Sauce (see recipe above), sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 375°F for 45 minutes until golden brown. Serves 6.

## SPINACH PIE

2 pounds spinach or 4 packages of frozen or chopped spinach, thawed  
1 bunch of green onions, finely chopped  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1 pound feta cheese  
3 ounce package cream cheese

6 eggs, separated  
1 teaspoon dill, chopped  
White pepper to taste  
1 pound phyllo pastry sheets  
1/2 cup butter, melted

If using fresh spinach, wash well and dry well by using a salad spinner or by rolling washed spinach in a large clean kitchen towel. Sauté onion in oil for 5 minutes, and add it to the dry chopped spinach.

Blend egg yolks and cream cheese in a mixer or blender. Add to the spinach mixture. Add green onions, dill, white pepper and feta cheese to the mixture.

Just before pouring into the prepared pan, whip egg whites until foamy and then add to the spinach mixture. Mix well. Line a 12 by 19-

inch oblong pan with 10 buttered sheets of phyllo. Pour in spinach mixture. Top with eight buttered sheets of phyllo. Cut through the top layers to mark the pieces. Bake at 350°F for 45-60 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan in pieces to serve. Makes approximately 40 pieces.

## YOGURT SALAD

1 cup yogurt  
1 cup sour cream  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
1 tablespoon vinegar  
2 cloves garlic, chopped  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon white pepper  
2 cucumbers, peeled, seeded and diced  
1 teaspoon fresh mint or dill, chopped

In a bowl blend together yogurt and sour cream. Add oil, vinegar, garlic, salt, pepper and cucumbers and mix thoroughly. Chill and sprinkle with dill.

Health Hint: Omit oil and substitute yogurt and sour cream with 2 cups of plain fat-free premium yogurt.

## Grecian from page B1

## Spectacular from page B1

bowls and lick up every drop. I encourage this behavior, gladly. It's perfect, as perfect a dish as I have ever prepared. I couldn't be more content. This is why I love what I do. I realize that it's not often one can be so rewarded by their work. I am really a lucky guy.

### Extra effort

Not every dish can be "the dish," but when you are entertaining it's worth a little extra time and effort to create one dish that stands from the rest. Think of the dish as an expression of yourself, the kind of food you really love.

What is your best dish? Think about textures, colors, contrasts and flavor, and then tweak it even more. Your passion will make "the dish" a memorable one.

My favorite summertime dinner for friends is herb skewered seafood served with a great salad and an easy pasta with an uncooked sauce. It's simple, rustic and flavor packed.

It can be assembled ahead of time so all you have to do is the last minute grilling, and toss the ingredients together for the pasta and salad. Your guests will be cooing and ahing.

### HERB SKEWERED SHRIMP AND SCALLOPS

8 (6-inch) sprigs of rosemary  
8 (6-inch) sprigs of thyme (you may have to bunch a few sprigs together if they are very thin)  
16 medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

16 medium sea scallops, preferably natural and uncooked, side muscle removed and discarded  
Mushrooms, the type and size will depend on availability. Look for fresh porcini, chanterelle or cremini. They should be about the same size as the scallops and shrimp  
Sun-dried tomato paste  
Black olive paste  
Cracked black pepper to taste  
Kosher salt to taste

Strip the sprigs of herbs from their leaves, leaving about 1-inch still at the top. Alternate the mushrooms and scallops on the thyme sprigs and do the same with the shrimp and rosemary sprigs. Brush the scallops with the sun-

dried tomato paste and the shrimp with the black olive paste.

Prepare a medium fire on a charcoal grill, season the skewers with a generous amount of cracked black pepper and kosher salt to taste.

Grill over the fire for just a couple of minutes on each side, until cooked through. Serve with a fresh green salad with a simple dressing and room temperature angel hair pasta tossed with lots of fresh chopped tomatoes, capers, a bit of garlic, and chopped fresh basil. Serves 6.

**Rick Halberg** chef/owner of *Emily's Restaurant* in Northville lives in Farmington Hills with his family. He has established a reputation as one of Michigan's outstanding chefs. Rick is known for his fine French inspired Mediterranean and Italian cuisine. You can call Rick at Emily's (248) 349-0505, or e-mail [pigrick@aol.com](mailto:pigrick@aol.com)

you're cooking for more than one day. I come home from work everyday and start dinner. I want my family to eat well.

What's the secret to being a good cook? "We always use good ingredients," said Kentros.

With all that olive oil, phyllo dough, butter, nuts and honey, Greek food can be a bit rich.

"We cook with a lot of olive oil," said Sekles. "We reduced some of the calories in the recipes."

Health Hints sprinkled throughout the cookbook like fine herbs offer tips for people counting calories and fat grams.

Helpful diagrams accompany many recipes. There's also a glossary that explains what all those "Greek" cooking terms mean.

Illustrated throughout, this

cookbook truly is an adventure in Greek cooking. You'll find recipes for all your favorites—Lemon Rice Soup, Spinach Kabob, Spinach Pie, and Baklava.

"We have different ways of preparing eggplant," said Kentros. "Our Stuffed Grape Leaves are number one," said Sekles. "And the sweets are outstanding."

All proceeds from "Yassou: An Adventure in Greek Cooking," benefit various charities supported by the St. George Greek Orthodox Church chapter of the Philoptochos Society, and the national chapter.

The Philoptochos Society is one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the United States. It is made up of women who are dedicated to the church and to the needs of their community.

## Salads from page B1

1/3 cup mayonnaise (Anne uses Hellman's)  
1 cup grated Cheddar cheese  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1/4 teaspoon oregano  
Pinch of sage

To make bread. Preheat oven to 400°F. Butter a 9 by 13 by 2-inch baking dish. Stir milk into Bisquick to make a soft dough. Turn dough onto a well floured board and knead lightly 10-12 strokes.

Put dough over bottom of buttered baking dish, pushing dough up sides of dish to form a shallow rim. Arrange tomato slices over dough.

To make Sour Cream Topping, sauté onion in butter until soft. Blend with remaining topping ingredients. Spoon Sour Cream Topping over bread and sprinkle with paprika. Bake 20-25 minutes. Let stand about 10 minutes before cutting. Makes 12 servings.

What's your most requested recipe? Everyone knows the best

recipes are ones you share. Send your favorite recipe to: Keely Wygonik, Taste Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. If your recipe is chosen, you'll receive an apron and newly published cookbook along with our thanks. Be sure to include a daytime phone number with your recipe.

Look for Recipe to Share on the fourth Sunday of the month in Taste.

## Keep food on ice until power's restored

Tuesday's thunderstorms knocked power out in a lot of homes. Hopefully, your power's been restored, and you're clean up.

"If you know your power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time you need to take precautions," said Sylvia Treitman, home economist for the MSU Extension, Oakland County. "Group large items together in the refrigerator. Go out and buy a couple of bags of ice, and put the ice next to them."

Generally, a full free-standing freezer will keep things cold for about two days. The freezer section of a fridge will stay cold 10-12 hours.

"After two hours of no power, milk, eggs, cheese, leftovers and other perishables will spoil. Food must be kept at 40°F," said Treitman.

Turkeys and other large pieces of meat that are partially thawed can be refrozen. "If the food in the freezer is still hard, has ice crystals on the outside, or is refrigerator cold to the touch, you can refreeze it," said Treitman. "Thaw out frozen fish, seafood and leftovers. Check small packages of meat, TV dinners and vegetables, which thaw faster. Ground meat is pretty risky, throw it out if it's not frozen. Frozen vegetables that are ice cold, but not frozen, can be used in soup.

There's a quality loss."

Condiments such as mustard, ketchup and jelly will keep without refrigeration for a few days. "Check the jelly for mold. If there's no mold, it's ok," said Treitman.

When in doubt, throw it out. "They tell you to keep your refrigerator and freezer closed when there's a power outage, but you need to check it. Some people haven't opened their freezer for three days. The crucial time to check is before the power goes back on so you know what's frozen and what isn't."

If you have questions, call the food and nutrition hotline, weekdays at (248) 658-0904.

## Hot weather food safety tips

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Serve hot foods hot. Keep the marinated foods in the refrigerator until just before grilling. Then cook and serve straight from the grill.

■ Serve cold foods cold. Set perishable items such as potato and pasta salads in bowls, allied deli meat and cheese in rimmed platters, then place the bowls

and platters in a large container filled with ice.

■ For outdoor meals, sturdy desserts such as fruit pies, cookies, plain poundcakes and fruit-filled watermelon baskets are the best choices. Avoid creamy puddings, meringue pies and whipped cream frostings that can spoil easily in the heat.

■ Refrigerate perishable left-

overs promptly, within 30 minutes or no more than one hour after serving, depending on the outdoor temperature.

■ If you are planning to use marinade as a sauce, or to brush it on grilled foods during the last 5 minutes of cooking, be sure to boil the marinade for at least 1 minute.

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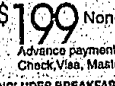
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