

RECIPES FOR DISHES EATEN AT THE COURT OF SULTAN MEHMED II (1451-1481)

Yogurt Soup with Chard

(We know only that chard and yogurt were ingredients of yogurt soup made for Sultan Mehmed. The following recipe is from Tijen İnaltong's recipe book for traditional Turkish dishes, *Mevsimlerle Gelen Lezzetler*, “Ekşili Pazı Çorbası”, p 165)

1 cup boiled chickpeas
1 demet pazı (4 cups finely shredded)
1 cup yogurt
1 egg
1 tblsp flour
2 tblsp butter
red pepper

Boil chickpeas until tender then drain. Boil chickpeas and chopped chard for 10 minutes in 4 cups of water. Blend yogurt, egg and flour, dilute with water and stir in. Simmer for 5 minutes. Serve and splash some melted butter mixed with red pepper on top of each bowl.

Mustard Sauce with Strained Yogurt

(from Şirvani p. 247)

Grind mustard seeds, tie them in a cloth and boil, then squeeze well. The idea is to remove the bitter flavour. Then mix with vinegar and eat it with meat. You can add drained thick yogurt.

Pide Topped with Cheese

(from Mahmud Nedim, *Aşçıbaşı*, Istanbul, 1900, recipe no. 309)

“Crumble fresh cheese and mix with a handful of chopped parsley. Beat in two eggs, salt and seasoning and take this filling to the bakery. Fill each uncooked pide with this mixture and fold the sides over. Brush with beaten egg. When it is ready brush with clarified butter. It will be delicious.”



Pide topped with cheese.



Pide with a spinach and white cheese filling.



Heritage varieties of edible bottle gourd (*Lagenaria vulgaris*). The one on the left is called “uzun kabak” in Turkish and “zucchini longa” in Italian. The Turkish variety on the left is called “haylan kabağı”. These would have been used on *pide* for Sultan Mehmed and other dishes made with gourd. They have a hard rind that needs to be peeled and the flesh has a firm texture.

Bulgur Pilav with Chestnuts

My recreation of this recipe:

- 1 2/3 cups coarse bulgur (Kastamonu siyez bulguru)
- 2 medium onions
- 3/4 cup chestnuts cut into chickpea sized pieces (boil chestnuts in water for 10 minutes then peel)
- 2 flat tblsp butter
- salt and plenty of black pepper

Finely chop onions and fry slowly in butter, stirring frequently, for 10-15 minutes. Stir in chestnuts. Add bulgur, seasoning and water sufficient to cover the bulgur by about 1 cm. Close the lid and cook over a low heat until the bulgur is tender (about 20 minutes).

Manti (stuffed noodles with garlic yogurt)

(from Şirvani, 1440s p. 232)

Make a plain dough. Roll out thinly and cut into 4 cm squares.

Make a stuffing of minced meat, chickpeas, cinnamon, salt and vinegar.

Place 2 teaspoonfuls of stuffing onto each square. Pinch the sides together to make a bundle with a small opening at the top. Place in a steamer and steam until cooked. Serve topped with garlic yogurt.

Börek with chicken or minced meat filling

(roughly recreated based on 16th and 18th century recipes)

Make a dough with 500 g flour, 2 eggs, 2-3 tblsp of melted butter or oil, salt and water. Divide into 20 pieces. Roll each out thinly to fit a large oven tray. OR Buy ready made phyllo sheets.

Chicken filling: Boil a chicken and chop into small pieces. Gently fry 500 g of thinly sliced onions in butter until soft and coloured. Mix and season.

Minced meat filling: Put 500 g of minced meat and 500 g of chopped onions in a pan. Stir constantly over a medium heat until well cooked and the minced meat is crumbly. Season

Lay half the sheets of pastry in a baking tray, brushing each with some melted butter. Spread the filling over them. Then lay the remaining sheets on top. Bake until golden.

Eggs cooked in onions (cılbur)

Add a teaspoon of sugar, a teaspoon of vinegar, some cinnamon and black pepper, pour into a frying pan. Make six hollows in the mixture with the back of a wooden spoon, break an egg into each, cover and cook over a medium heat until the egg whites are just cooked.

Soğanlar büyük olmayacak ve orta boy dişi soğan olacak. Ortadan ikiye bölünüp halka halka doğranır. Üzerine tuz ekilerek sade yağda ve hafif ateşte devamlı tahta kaşıkla karıştırılarak nar gibi oluncaya kadar kızartılır. (Kavrulmaz). Bu iş iyi yapılmak isteniyorsa üç saat kadar sürer. Sonra yağı süzülür ve nar gibi kızarmış soğan yayvan bir kaba (küçük tepsiye) alınır. Üzerine bir kaşık toz şeker serpilir. Bir kaşık sirke, bir miktar bahar ve tarçın da serpildikten sonra tepsiye bir kaşığın tersiyle itinalı bir şekilde yayılır, yuvalar açılır. Yumurtalar kırılıp, ateş kuvvetli olmayacak ve yumurtaların aklarının hemen pişmemesine dikkat edilecektir. Sarılarının pişmesinde yardımcı olmak için tepsinin kenarlarından kahve kaşığı ile yağlı su alınıp bunların üzerine dökülecektir. Yumurtaların üzerine tarçın ve karabiber de serpilir."

Carrot Kalye

(recipe from Günay Kut and Musa Dağdeviren, *Kitâb-ı Me'kûlât: Bilinmeyen bir Osmanlı yemek kitabı*, İstanbul: Ruhun Gıdası Kitaplar, 2017, on the linguistic evidence this probably dates from the 16th century)

Cut meat into cubes and fry. Prepare some meat balls. Lay half of the meat in a pan, and on top arrange sliced carrots, sliced onion, boiled chickpeas and red raisins. Sprinkle with black pepper and

salt. Dilute some honey (the recipe warns not to use too much) with water and pour over. Over this arrange the rest of the meat and the meatballs. Sprinkle with a little ground clove and cinnamon. Cover and cook gently until the carrots are tender.

Lalanga

(based on an 18th century recipe but adding fried vegetables for the version made for Sultan Mehmed)

Dice a turnip or some edible bottle gourd (substitute zucchini or winter squash) and fry gently in some butter until tender.

Beat 4 or 5 eggs in a bowl, adding some flour a little at a time, beating until you have a smooth thick mixture. Beat in a small amount of sour bread dough (perhaps some dry yeast could be substituted?). Add the fried vegetables and two handfuls of crumbled strong cheese. Cover and leave to rise for an hour. Melt plenty of butter in a frying pan and drop tablespoonfuls of the mixture into the pan. When browned underneath turn over.

Zırva or Ekşi Aş

This is a pudding made from dried fruit and rice. It was made at Sultan Mehmed's charity kitchen in Istanbul, and the endowment deed fortunately gives the quantities: 75 g of rice, 400 g of black raisins, and 75 g each of red raisins, figs and prunes. These ingredients are cooked altogether in water until soft, then poured into bowls.