



CONTENTS

Marinated Olives	22
Tzatziki	24
Rusks with Tomato & Feta Cheese	26
Fried Cheese.....	28
Stuffed Peppers.....	30
Mizithra Cheese Balls.....	32
Cabbage Salad.....	34
Fried Mussels.....	36
Spicy Cheese Dip.....	38
Anchovy Fritters	40
Scrambled Eggs with Tomatoes.....	42
Stuffed Vine Leaves	44
Tomato Fritters.....	46
Marinated Peppers.....	48
Aubergine Salad.....	50
Steamed Anchovies.....	52
Octopus in Red Wine	54
Pan-Fried Sausage	56

Pelion-Style Spicy Sausages.....	60
Tarama Fritters	62
Parsley Salad	64
Mussels with Feta Cheese & Mustard	66
Tomato & Paprika Dip.....	68
Fried Peppers	70
Fried Squid.....	72
Fried Feta Cheese in Filo Pastry	74
Potato Salad.....	76
Meatballs with Ouzo	78
Creamy "Milk Cheese"	80
Beetroot Salad.....	82
Oregano Fritters	84
Fried Courgettes	86
Fried Aubergines	86
Garlic Dip.....	88
Stuffed Courgette Flowers.....	90



CONTENTS

Marinated Anchovy Fillets.....	92
Pan-Fried Pastourma & Eggs.....	94
Octopus Baked in Parchment Paper	98
Yellow Split Pea Purée & Caramelised Onions.....	100
Greek White Bean Salad.....	102
Herring Salad.....	104
Oven-Baked Feta Cheese with Tomato & Green Pepper	106
Octopus Fritters	108
Steamed Mussels.....	110
Skopelos Cheese Pie	112
Veggie Fritters.....	114
Fried Eggs with Peppers & Tomatoes	116
French Fries.....	118
Prawns with Tomato & Feta Cheese.....	120
Chickpea Fritters.....	124

Snails with Olive Oil, Vinegar & Rosemary.....	126
Baked Giant Beans.....	128
Black-Eyed Bean Salad & Greens	130
Pickled Baby Aubergines.....	132
Fried School Shark with Garlic Dip	134
Braised Lamb in Tomato Sauce.....	136
Fried Beef Liver.....	138
Fish Roe Dip.....	140
Crispy Prawns in "String" Pastry	142
Fried Picarel.....	144
Cod Croquettes.....	146
Courgette Omelette.....	148
Pan-Fried Pork.....	150
Meze in a Parcel.....	152
Courgette Fritters	154

DEDICATED TO
our carefree, blissful summers!

Mezedes on the beach

As a child, I spent every summer with my brother and sister in Mytilene, birthplace of my mother and capital of my father's beloved island, Lesvos. Every morning I would get up and go fishing in the harbour until around noon, when I would join the rest of the family to go swimming at Tsamakia beach.

This was the meeting place where young and old alike could relax and enjoy the warm sun, cool sea and carefree atmosphere. The grown-ups would sit in the shade of the tamarisks, gossiping and playing backgammon, while we kids happily played and splashed about in the water... until meze time!

Out came the plastic food boxes, as small white tables gradually filled with culinary gems in a blaze of colour. Kyria Afroula brought her famous meatballs; Kyria Melpo, salted sardines from Kalloni; Kyria Myrna, fragrant courgette flowers; Kyria Maroula, chopped cucumbers and tomatoes freshly picked from her vegetable garden, along with olives and large chunks of kefalotiri cheese; Dad, his strong but amazing garlic dip; Mum, her divine succulent octopus in wine sauce; while Kyria Nika would tantalise our taste buds with the roe of sea urchins she had just gathered from the sea. My job was to run to the canteen to fetch ouzo and ice cubes.

Temporarily laid out on small plates, mezedes are the epitome of the laid-back Greek summer lifestyle, the necessary accompaniment to the time-honoured ouzo ritual. They appear at exactly the right moment, after a refreshing dip in the sea, when you feel the salt on your skin, when the gentle caress of the sun is just perfect and you want to wet your lips with a sip of ouzo, accompanied by one or two finger-licking bites. They are savoured beside the sea, in the shade of the plane tree in the village square, but also at home, always shared with good company. More than just food, it is a ceremony that brings together friends and family around a table.

"My Greek Meze" is a collection of the tastiest and best known meze recipes that we enjoy in Greece, written by the queen of mezedes, Eleni Psychouli. It is a book that aspires to bring -again and again- the carefree spirit of the Greek summer into your home, no matter where you are in the world, even on the cloudiest winter days. The recipes are easy to make. The secret to their success is, quite simply, the love you put into their preparation.

For mezedes are all about cheerfulness and sharing... an occasion for filling our hearts and minds with sunshine.

Ioanna M. Pavlaki

