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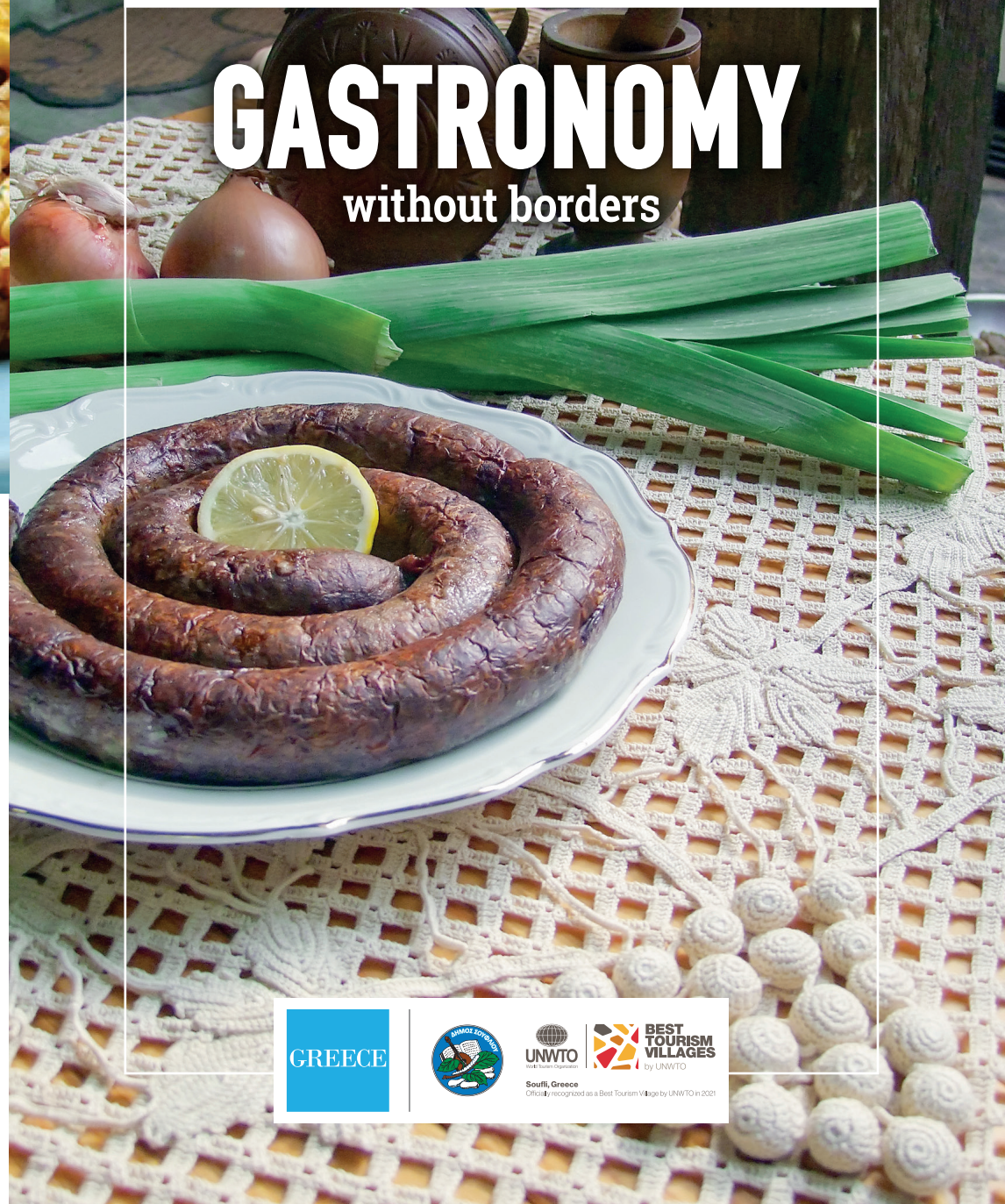
Cover: Babo • Back cover: Bulgur dish



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# GASTRONOMY

without borders



Soufli, Greece  
Officially recognized as a Best Tourism Village by UNWTO in 2021





Gastronomy is a manifestation of culture which goes far and beyond the simple art of satisfying taste. In Thrace, a crossroads of peoples and cultures, the local uniqueness is formed through the osmosis of the coexistence of locals and refugees, Christians and Muslims and it manifests on the table set with tasteful, fragrant dishes. The traditional gastronomy of Evros was based on **local produce**, vegetables in the summer and pork in winter, after Christmas, and above all the kavourmas (pousiourti), the preserved meat that was roasted and covered with fat in pots and which has been now enriched with new materials and techniques.

**Basic flavors** are sauerkraut, chicken, oatmeal, couscous and trachanas, sausage and other cold cuts, legumes, soups, various pies with cheese, zucchini, milk, spinach, leek or minced meat, cabbage stuffing, the gioslemedes, the giofkades, the langites and the mikikia, the katsamak(i), the ariani, the taratori and sweets such as ritselia, baklavades, semolina halva and tsirlohalva, saragli and kazan dipi. The region boasts all kinds of wine, ouzo and raki-tsipouro – a field where the tradition of Soufli excels, as local products were exported to France, Italy and beyond. The special flavors during important religious holidays are equally important: we can try the Christmas babo and 'varvara', a unique mingle of flavors offered on the day of celebrating Agia Varvara.

In addition to the common dishes that make up the majority of local cuisine, **each cultural group** presents its own suggestions. The cuisine of the Muslims of the mountain zone is one of the oldest in the Balkans and it offers delicacies, such as gaigana, tikva (pumpkin soup), mushrooms and potatoes, pitar, made of animal fat, and patatnik.

1. Legumes, 2. Cabbage with meat, 3. Patetnik, 4. Mushrooms from Dadia



2



3



4

For the Sarakatsans, meat, be it from sheep or goat and cheese, are important: cheese pies, twisted phyllo pies, gravari, pie in local pretzels, the blanos, boukvala, stachtokouloura or kousmaropita are some of the dishes we can try.

**Refugees** from Eastern Thrace and Eastern Romylia have enriched the local cuisine with the aromas of their lost homelands and the spices of the Near East. Thus, the people of Eastern Romylia make the New Year's pie with the 'simadia' (marks) or oven-baked lamb. Arvanites prepare the bourani, the prses from Agios Georgios or the pet(ou)-pet(ou) bougatsa, made with buffalo butter. Populations having returned from Eastern countries have added their own touch to popular cuisine, such as beans or dolma with black cabbage, the Pontian borscht, the manti pasta, perek pie, pisia and otia.

Local restaurants and small taverns offer their **gastronomic treasures**, creating a conversation with the region and its destinations.