

Versatility in Hospitality Industry around the Globe Case study on Cuisines and Culture of Syria

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Abstract: Food is central to the cultural and religious practices of most communities. For this reason, understanding and appreciating the food and food practices of another culture is part of building your own cultural competence. The family is the heart of Syrian social life. Frequent visits and exchanges of invitations for meals among family members are integral to daily living. Syria, as a country that was under a situation of a Civil War for almost a decade, has never forgotten its traditional culture, cuisine and way of life. What people eat is also important to their long-term health. [2] Syrian cuisine mainly uses eggplant, zucchini, garlic, meat (mostly from lamb and sheep), sesame seeds, rice, chickpeas, lentils, cabbage, cauliflower, leaves, pickled turnips, cucumbers, tomatoes, olive oil, lemon juice, mint, pistachios, honey and fruits. [2] At the beginning of the 21st century, selections of appetizers known as mezze are customarily served along with Arabic bread before the Syrian meal's main course, which is followed by coffee, with sweet confections or fruits at will. Many recipes date from at least the 13th century. With the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, Syria and its culinary skills, which were influenced by the caravans and expeditions that once travelled the Silk Road, have thrived and developed as part of the cultural and social expressions of Syria's ethnically and culturally diverse communities. A heterogeneous mixture of Muslims, Christians, Armenians, Kurds, Circassians, and others lends extreme importance to preserving these traditional skills and knowledge and a tool for socioeconomic development. The diversity of Syria's ethnic, religious, and cultural fabric is complemented by its fertile natural environment. Traditionally, Syrians do not consume canned or processed goods—their food relies on fresh local ingredients and spices free from artificial additives, as there is an abundant supply of vegetables, fruits, and grains produced from family-owned gardens and orchards, milk from their own livestock, and fresh yogurt and cheese prepared at home. With these essential and easily accessible food products, most families in rural areas are nutritionally self-sufficient, and certain dishes are especially associated with particular cities and villages, favors, and colors as symbolic markers of their cultural identity.

Keywords: Product, Industry, Service, Guest

I. INTRODUCTION

The history of Syria covers events which occurred on the territory of the present Syrian Arab Republic and events which occurred in the region of Syria. Throughout ancient times the territory of present Syrian Arab Republic was occupied and ruled by several empires, including the Sumerians, Mitanni, Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Hittites, Canaanites, Phoenicians, Arameans, Amorites, Persians, Greeks and Romans. In 1936, France and Syria negotiated a treaty of independence, which allowed Syria to remain independent but gave France military and economic power. During World War II, British and Free French troops occupied Syria—but shortly after the war ended, Syria officially became an independent country in 1946.[1]

Syria is considered to have emerged as an independent country for the first time on 24 October 1945, upon the signing of the United Nations Charter by the Syrian government, effectively ending France's mandate by the League of Nations to "render administrative advice and assistance to the population" of Syria, which came in effect in April 1946. On 21 February 1958, however, Syria merged with Egypt to create the United Arab Republic after plebiscitary ratification of the merger by both countries' nations, but seceded from it in 1961, thereby recovering its full



independence. Since 1963, the Syrian Arab Republic has been ruled by the Ba'ath Party, run by the Assad family exclusively since 1970. At present, Syria is fractured between rival forces due to the Syrian Civil War.

Syria is a traditional society with a long cultural history. Importance is placed on family, religion, education and self-discipline and respect. The Syrian's taste for the traditional arts is expressed in dances such as the al-Samah, the Dabke in all their variations and the sword dance.[1]



Traditional Syrian male attire is the long gown called a “kaftan.” Women wear long robes that cover everything except hands and feet. Men and women wear head wraps.

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Archaeologists have discovered extensive writings and evidence of a culture rivaling those of Iraq, and Egypt in and around the ancient city of Ebla (modern Tell Mardikh). Later Syrian scholars and artists contributed to Hellenistic and Roman thought and culture. Cicero was a pupil of Antiochus of Ascalon at Athens; and the writings of Posidonius of Apamea influenced Livy and Plutarch.

Urban Housing Style

Traditional Houses of the Old Cities in Damascus, Aleppo and some other Syrian cities are preserved and traditionally the living quarters are arranged around one or more courtyards, typically with a fountain in the middle supplied by spring water, and decorated with citrus trees, grape vines, and flowers.



Cuisine Origins and Influences

One of Earth's most ancient civilizations, Syria has been governed over the centuries by Persians, Greeks, Romans, Umayyads, Ottomans and the French. This rich history and neighboring countries have contributed to the variety of Syrian cuisine. Further, Syria's Middle Eastern location and weather provide rich fertile lands, allowing for many foods to be produced locally and eaten seasonally.

Syrian cuisine differs slightly among its regions such as Damascus, Aleppo and the coastal city of Latakia. Syria is home to many religions, with Islam being the predominant faith. As such, all meat is halal (animals must be killed in a specific ritual manner to be halal, meaning permissible) and pork and alcohol are avoided.

Essential Foods and Ingredients. [1]

The Mediterranean region is associated with an eating pattern considered to be one of the healthiest in the world. A typical Syrian kitchen has essential food staples such as olives, za'atar and olive oil. Za'atar is a spice mix made with thyme, marjoram, sumac and sesame seeds and usually is eaten with pita bread dipped in olive oil. Fresh vegetables such as eggplant, zucchini, cauliflower and green beans are the center of most main dishes. Radishes, parsley, tomato and cucumber are used to make a variety of salads including fattoush (salad with toasted or fried flatbread) and tabbouleh (salad of parsley, tomato, onion and grains).

1) Other common ingredients are tahini, yogurt, pomegranate syrup, garlic, almonds, pistachios and pine nuts. The main fats used for cooking are olive oil and ghee. Commonly used to give dishes a distinct flavor and aroma, bahārāt is a spice mix consisting of allspice, cumin, coriander, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon and cardamom.

Syrian cuisine is a diffusion of the cultures of civilizations that settled in Syria, particularly during and after the Islamic era beginning with the Arab Umayyad conquest, then the eventual Persian-influenced Abbasids and ending with the strong influences of Turkish cuisine, resulting from the coming of the Ottoman Turks. It is in many ways similar to other (Greater Syria) Levantine cuisines, mainly Lebanese, Palestinian, Jordanian and Iraqi.

Syrian cuisine includes dishes like kibbeh, kebab *halabi*, *warraq`inab*, hummus, tabbouleh, *fattoush*, labneh, *shawarma*, *mujaddara*, shanklish, bastirma, sujuk and baklava. Syrians often serve selections of appetizers, known as "*meze* ", before the main course, and *za`atar*, minced beef, and cheese *manakish* as hors d'oeuvres. Arabic flat bread is always eaten together with *meze*. Syrians also make cookies called "*ka`ak*", to usually accompany their cheese. These are made of farina and other ingredients, rolled out, shaped into rings and baked. Another form of a similar cookie is to fill with crushed dates mixed with butter to eat with their jibneh mashallah[*clarification needed*], a string cheese made of curd cheese pulled and twisted together. A spice mixture called "*baharat mushakalah*" is endemic to Syrian cuisine. [4]

2) Mezze Kubbeh Mahshi (Stuffed squash)



3) Kousa mahshi

A famous dish served in Syria is made from vegetables (usually zucchini—كوسا / *kūsā*, or eggplant—بادنجان / *bādhinjān*) which are stuffed (محشي / *maḥshī*) with ground beef or lamb or mutton, nuts, and rice.

4) Street food Falafel and hummus in a Syrian breakfast



Baking flat bread in the 1910s

Shawarma Booza



Syrian street food includes:



Name	Description
Booza (بوظة)	Ice cream known for its elastic texture, which is caused by the presence of mastic
Falafil (فلافل)	Fried balls or patties of spiced, mashed chickpeas, most often served in Arabic bread, with pickles, tahina, hummus, sumac, cut-vegetable salad and often, shattah, a hot sauce, the type used depending on the falafel maker
Ka'ak (كعك)	Rings of bread, made from farina and other ingredients, commonly sprinkled with sesame seeds, occasionally served on the table to accompany Syrian cheese; a buttery and sweetened version, filled with crushed dates or walnuts, is eaten as a dessert, usually served to eat with string cheese shaped into a braid (jibneh mashallah)
Manakish (مناقيش)	Dough topped with za'atar, cheese or ground meat; it can be sliced or folded, and it can be served either for breakfast or lunch
Shawarma (شاورما)	Sliced and marinated meat shaved off a roasting skewer and stuffed into Arabic bread or sometimes baguette, alone with hummus, or with additional trimmings such as fresh onion, French fries, salads and pickles

Syrians are renowned for producing Halawet el-jibn
dried-apricot paste (qamar ad-din)



Cheeses

- Halloumi - a semi-hard, unripened, brined cheese
- Jibneh baida—a white hard cheese with a pronounced salty taste
- Jibne khadra—a form of string cheese, originated in Syria, also known as Jibneh mshallah
- Shanklish—a type of blue cheese made from cow's or sheep's milk and often served topped with dried thyme and olive oil.

Beverages



Special edition of 5-year-aged Arak al-Hayat ('ara') from Homs, Syria



Name	Description
Al-match (المته)	A caffeine-infused drink produced from ground yerba mate leaves and served hot
'Ara' (عرق)	A distilled alcoholic spirit, transparent in color, made from grapes and spiced with anise seeds
'Ayran (عيران)	A yogurt-based beverage mixed with salt and water
Jallab (جلاب)	A fruit syrup which can be combined with liquid to form a hot or warm beverage
Polo (بولو)	Mint lemonade
Ahweh bayda' (قهوة بيضاء meaning "white coffee")	A caffeine-free drink made from water and orange blossom water, sweetened with sugar at will, usually served in lieu of coffee
Qamar al-din (قمر الدين)	A thick apricot juice, typically served for Iftar during Ramadan
Salep (سحلب)	A traditional winter beverage, made with a flour from the tubers of the orchid genus Orchis; salep flour is consumed in beverages and desserts
Syrian beer (البيرة السورية)	A beverage prepared from yeast-fermented malt, flavored with hops
Syrian coffee (قهوة)	A beverage made from lightly roasted coffee beans along with cardamom, and served in small cups (as with Turkish coffee)
Wine (نبيذ)	An alcoholic beverage made from fermented grapes

Traditional Dishes and Food Hospitality Syrians are known for their love of food and hospitality with family and guests. Gatherings usually last for hours, with an abundance of food served and shared.

For breakfast, Syrians typically eat a variety of foods including cheese, labneh (yogurt spread), za'atar, olives, fruit jams, makdous (oil-cured eggplant) and fresh pita bread. Other specialty breakfast dishes are a fava bean salad known as ful-mudammas and fattah, a dish made with tahini, yogurt, pita bread and chickpeas.

Lunch, commonly served mid to late afternoon, is the largest meal of the day and includes a few dishes: a soup or dip, such as hummus or baba ghanouj (mashed cooked eggplant), a salad and the main entree. One of Syria's national dishes is kibbeh, ground meat mixed with burghul (bulgur) prepared in a variety of ways. Freekeh is another popular dish cooked with lamb or chicken and sprinkled with nuts. Mahashee is a delicacy dish prepared with stuffed zucchini, eggplant or peppers and cooked in a tomato-based sauce.

In the evening, Syrians enjoy a lighter meal, consisting of appetizers similar to breakfast, shawarma (roasted meat), falafel (chickpea fritters) and fresh seasonal fruit or dessert.

Most popular desserts are made with pistachios and walnuts using kataifi (shredded dough) or phyllo pastry for baklava. Other desserts are made with a rich clotted cream called ashta, used in kunafa (pastry soaked in sweet syrup) and halawet el jibn (sweet cheese rolls). Syrup made with rose water is drizzled on most desserts as the final touch. Tea and Turkish coffee are always offered at the end of a meal as family and guests sit back and relax for the night.

Basic Etiquette

- If you are offered something, decline the gesture initially before accepting after the host has insisted. This exchange is polite; the person's insistence to extend the invitation shows their hospitality and one's initial refusal shows humbleness.
- Stand up when someone older than you enters the room and offer them your seat if there are none available. Men also stand for women, especially those with children.
- Syrian men rarely swear in the presence of women.
- Spitting in one's face or in front of them is a sign of disrespect.
- Syrians often visit each other without invitation. In Syria, if someone visits you without prior notice, it is expected that you will stop what you are doing and make every effort to be as hospitable as possible.
- It is common to smoke cigarettes in public places in Syria, including indoors.

- Displaying the soles of one's feet to another person is improper. Similarly, placing one's feet on top of the table is not acceptable.
- Many Syrians observe a separation between the functions of the hands. This custom is tied to Islamic principles that prescribe the left hand should only be used for removal of dirt and for cleaning. It should not be used for functions such as waving, eating or offering items. Therefore, one should gesture, touch people, or offer items using only the right hand or both hands together. This may not be strictly followed but it is best not to use the left hand unless the action is inevitable.

Eating

- If in the middle of eating when encountering someone, it is courtesy to always offer them some of that food. The person is then expected to politely decline the initial invitation regardless of whether they actually would like to eat some or not.
- Lunch is eaten in the early afternoon at around 2:00 or 3:00pm. It is usually the largest meal of the day whilst dinner is eaten late and is a similar size to breakfast.
- Observant Muslims will not eat food that contains traces of pork or alcohol. However, it is common for many secular Muslims to consume things that are typically prohibited by the Islamic script. For example, it is normal for some Syrian Muslims to drink alcohol.
- Bills at restaurants and cafes are never divided. Men customarily pay for women's meals and fight over paying the bill with each other. In a polite argument over paying, it is best to insist on offering a contribution before conceding to allow the oldest or wealthiest person to pay. However, close friends who dine together often will take turns.

Burghul wa Hummus Burghul wa hommus, or bulgur with chickpeas, is a traditional dish passed down through generations of Syrians hailing from Syria's coast. Meat and chickpeas are boiled in water with laurel leaves, rosemary, and dried lemon. After this, the meat and chickpeas are removed from the water to cool, only to be put back in for a second time to slow cook with the dried burghul until so"ends. Before eaten, servings are drizzled with pure home-pressed olive oil, accentuating earthy flavors of this homey meal.

II. SUMMARY

The first difference is that Indian foods usually have very spicy dishes but the Syrian dishes only have a little bit of spice added to their dishes but not a lot. Difference is that usually you can't go and buy syrian food from a store because usually they are homemade but Indian foods can be bought from allot of foods stores like at Wholesome Choice you can buy Indian foods from there. And the last difference is that you can find more Indian restaurants than Syrian restaurants because they don't have a lot of Syrian restaurants in America. The third idea for this essay is the spices that both the Syrian and Indian foods have in them. There are many spices in Indian foods such as red chilli, Black cardamom, White pepper, peppercorns, and many more. And then syria with not as many spices as india but the ones they have which very common are called black pepper, allspice, paprika, sumac, cinnamon, nutmeg, cassia bark, coriander, cumin, and cardamom. These are the most common spices india but not all. And these are also all the spices that are in Syria but again, not all.

This fourth and final idea for this essay is that it is going to say how these two different cultures prepare their foods. First, the Syrian culture prepares their foods in many ways, like they use the stove to cook many of their foods and another common option they use to prepare their foods is by putting it in the oven to heat it up. They also usually use big platters to serve or put their delicacies in. The indian culture prepares their foods by, usually buying it and serving it on a plate or, if it is made homemade then they usually use a oven to preheat or re-heat or heat their meals and they are very common in a way to the syrian culture because, they also use the stove to cook their foods. They also use the microwave to make their foods or they just re-heat their divine meals. This is how the Indians and the Syrians prepare their delicacies.

This is my essay about Indian culture and Syrian culture. It's main topics about these two cultures were the similarities and differences, the spices the people there used, and how the food was prepared there.

Arabic food and American food are two completely different cuisines. Therefore, when it comes to comparing these two types of cuisine, there are many characteristics that set them apart from each other. Arabic food is one of the most

diverse cuisines in the world. It originated from a blend of Persian, Turkish, Indian, and African cuisine and has evolved over centuries to suit the tastes and needs of its inhabitants. [3]

Arabic cuisine places more emphasis on the use of spices while American cuisine relies heavily on salt and pepper. Arabic recipes generally use more spices to enhance flavor. Their dishes usually call for garlic, onion, chili pepper, cumin, cilantro, coriander, cinnamon, and many others. These condiments can be used in fresh, dried, or powdered form to create a vibrant color to Arabic food as well as a flavorful taste. Meanwhile, Americans simply marinate or season their dishes with salt and pepper, or sugar. [3]

III. CONCLUSION

One of the countries most affected by the global wave of migration that occurred beginning in 2011 in Syria after the war is undoubtedly Turkey. Turkey, being geographically the neighbour of Syria, has become a popular place for immigrants. The city of Mardin, located in the Southeastern Region of Turkey, has become one of the stopping points in the immigration route of immigrants as it is a border town neighboring the city of Qamishli in Syria. Migration is not only spatial displacement of migrants but also a phenomenon which involves social and cultural change and transformation.

Migration separates the individuals both from the physical environment where they live and from the social circle comprising family, friends and relatives. At the same time, the individual has to abandon the language and culture of the society in which he or she lives. Individuals also suffer status loss when they have to abandon the professions that determined their status, and these losses make it quite difficult for the individual. They make it hard for them to adapt to the culture of the country they migrated to.

Moreover, in addition to all the aforementioned difficulties, the individual has a hard time because the dietary culture of the host country is unfamiliar and they cannot find the tastes they are used to. However, immigrants, who abandon their social situations, such as the physical environment, social relationships, language and status, migrate with their own dietary habits. Most of the time, they bring and continue their dietary habits in the new country. Food, as a basic necessity, is the main issue that immigrants have difficulty with most often after they have migrated and it is an issue they try to solve first. For the Syrian immigrants who were forced to emigrate due to the war which broke out in their own country, their food choices have a sudden change in trajectory, as well as in their socio-economic conditions, status and lifestyle.

These radical changes in the dietary habits of immigrants, which occupy an important place in their daily practices, may result in new personal food systems formed by the immigrant individuals. Just as the food landscapes of the immigrants differ, there are different trajectories in these food landscapes. In this study based on fieldwork in Mardin, it was clearly observed that there have been changes in the dietary habits of Syrian immigrants due to the experience of immigration. The most important of these changes, in parallel with changing socio-economic situations, is access to good food. The apparent fall in the economic capital of migrants who experienced a loss of status with immigration is one of the main causes of a change in dietary habits. In our study, we can say that changes in the dietary habits of immigrants after migration and their strategies against them emerge in three different categories of diet.

These are the maintenance of traditional dietary habits, the adaptation to the new country, that is, the adoption of the food habits of the new country, and bi-cultural dietary habits, i.e. hybridization. In interviews, it was seen that for some immigrants, food can turn into a symbol of identity as a means to protect and maintain identity, and it can become a tool to express identity. Some participants even stated that they have never had Turkish food since they came to Turkey and they maintain their own traditional food culture.

Especially the appearance of the meal and differences in taste due to changes in the use of spices are the two areas with the most transformation. Unavailability of some food and spices in Turkey which form the main ingredients of the traditional Syrian dishes resulted in the opening of small shops which sell Syrian food products, leading to the re-shaping of the city's food market. As a result of the kitchen acculturation which defines the immigrant groups' dietary experiences in the host country, the problems they encounter and their process of adaptation to the food culture of the new country, adoption of new dietary habits, or kitchen hybridization may emerge. In our study, it was observed that university students staying in the dormitories in particular are more likely to interact with the host culture and tend to achieve integration with the culture they are new to, and also tend to be hybrid in their dietary habits. Although in

general immigrants face ethnic, linguistic and religious borders in the country to which they migrated, one can assert that both linguistic and religious borders did not give Syrian immigrants who immigrated to Mardin a very hard time. Mardin shows a resemblance to a great extent in terms of ethnicity, culture, language and religion with the culture of the immigrants.

Therefore, the lack of cultural distance accelerates the process of adaptation of the immigrants to the host culture's food culture. The geographical proximity of both countries, the similarities in food ingredients, similarities in religious beliefs, the closeness of having a shared history, the post-immigration relation with Turkey and the continuing relationship by affinity in the region, and the familiarity with the Turkish food culture also impacts this case.[1]

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