

Written by Bobby M. Reyes
Tuesday, 17 December 2019 16:29 -

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The Consulate General of the Republic of Azerbaijan presents a culinary-and-cultural event called "THE FLAVORS OF AZERBAIJAN."

The event features a Special Focus on Azerbaijan's Dolma-Making & Sharing Tradition, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The event features also an Azerbaijani Musical Performance.

It will be held tomorrow, December 18, 2019, at 6:45 p.m. The venue is the [Olympic Collection Banquet & Conference Center](#), 11301 W. Olympic Blvd, #204, Los Angeles, CA 90064.

A Historical Background of the Dolma -- according to the Wikipedia.

QUOTE. □ Names and etymology

The word *dolma* is of [Turkish](#) origin from the word *dolmak* (to fill).

[4]

The plural form in

Greek

is

dolmades

and this is sometimes preferred in English usage instead of "dolmas".

[5]

The origins of dolma are unknown, but the dish is found in the cuisines of the Turkic countries, the Balkans, South Caucasus, Iraq, Iran, Central Asia, Egypt, Arabia, and the Middle East. The word varies between

Turkic

dialects called

dolama

in

Turkmen

and

tulma

in the

[Tatar language](#)

. The word dolma most likely comes from

[Ottoman palace cuisine](#)

, but stuffed vegetables have other names as well like

yemistos

in Greek and

mahshi

in

[Arabic](#)

.

[6]

History.

Dolma have been a part of [Middle Eastern cuisine](#)

for centuries.

[7]

Though the word
dolma

itself most likely has its roots in
the cuisine of the Ottoman

[Topkapı Palace](#)

, stuffed vegetables are attested to
in pre-Ottoman Arabic cookbooks
that include recipes like eggplants
stuffed with meat. Likewise, in

[Ancient Greece](#)

, fig leaf stuffed with sweetened
cheese was called
thrion

▪

[6]

The exact origins are unknown, but the Persian variety has been traced to at least the 17th century and in the 19th century [Naser al-Din Shah Qajar](#),

his chef records several varieties including stuffed grape leaves, cabbage leaves,

[cucumbers](#)

, eggplants,

[apples](#)

, and

[quinces](#)

. The recorded stuffings

included ground meat, sauteed
mint, rice and
[saffron](#)

▪

[\[8\]](#)

Dolma is a common dish in [Ir
aqi cuisine](#)

, which includes a version of
stuffed cabbage leaves,
onions in aubergines cooked
in tomato sauce.

[\[9\]](#)

Syrians, Lebanese, Palestinians, Iraqis and Iranians have been making stuffed grape leaves for centuries. Over time, regional variations developed. In the Persian Gulf, [basmati](#) rice is preferred, and the flavor of the stuffing may be enhanced using tomatoes, onions and [cumin](#)

▪

[7]

Muslim families often serve dolma as part of the

iftar

meal during

Ramadan

and during the

Eid al-Fitr

celebrations that mark the end of the holy month.

Assyrians

prepare meatless dolmas for

Lent

. Large pots of dolma are prepared during the

Norouz

festival.

[10]



Stuffed green pepper and zucchini

Dolma are part of [cuisine of the Sephardic Jews](#) as well.

[\[11\]](#)

There are some variations in Jewish family dishes that are not found in other versions.

[Iraqi Jewish](#)

families had a version of dolma with sweet and sour flavors that were not found in other versions.

[\[12\]](#)

During winter months cabbage was a staple food for peasants in Persia and the Ottoman Empire, and it spread to the Balkans as well.

[Jews in the Ottoman Empire](#)

used locally grown grape leaves and adopted the Turkish names of the dish.
Jews in Eastern Europe

prepared variations of
stuffed cabbage rolls with
[kosher](#)

meat—this dish is called
golubtsy

in Russian,
holubtsi

in Ukrainian,
[gołąbki](#)

in Polish and
[holishkes](#)

or
teibel

in Yiddish. As meat was expensive, rice was sometimes mixed in with the meat. Jews in Europe would sometimes substitute

[barley](#)

, bread or

[kasha](#)

for the rice.

[\[13\]](#)

Dolma in [India](#) is limited within [Ben](#)
[gali Cuisine](#)

. The bengali dish
potoler dorma

or stuffed

[pointed gourd](#)

is the most common
example of all.

[\[14\]](#)

UNQUOTE.

A Brief Historical Profile of Azerbaijan.

To my limited knowledge as a serious student of history, the Western Roman Empire fell in 476 AD. The result was the then-Old World was no longer divided between the Western-and-Eastern parts of the Roman

Empire, which basically was in the Mediterranean Sea and neighboring lands. New kingdoms emerged and soon some merged or were forced to become parts of new empires. To cut the story short, the powers at that time decided to create a new

dividing line between
the West and the East.

Countries west of the
Caucasus Mountains

formed the West. And countries east of the Caucasus composed the Eastern World. The East was in turn divided into three sections: The Near East, the Middle East and the Far East.

Azerbaijan is one of the countries in the Near East. When it regained its independence in 1991 from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR), its leaders decided to continue with its tradition of being a secular country that

practices freedom of religion. Its 10-million population is 90% Muslim that is composed of the majority Shiite and the Sunni minority. It has also a small Jewish population that has existed in the mountains near the

capital of Baku for more-than two millennia. The rest is composed of Christians, mainly of the Orthodox denomination. But all the members of the world's three main religions that trace their ancestry to the prophet

Abraham live in peace.
And wonders of
wonder, the Shiites and
the Sunnis of
Azerbaijan intermarry
among them. The
country is perhaps the
leading secular
Muslim-majority country
and is considered one
of the most-progressive

and developed-nations
in the Islamic World.

Being almost in the
center of the traditional

dividing line between
the West and the East
explains why
Azerbaijan sponsors
events like the Dolma-"
Making & Sharing
Tradition."

(To be continued by next week -- after the Azerbaijani culinary-and-cultural event.)

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