



ΜΕΣΟΓΕΙΑΚΗ ΔΙΑΤΡΟΦΗ
LA DIETA MEDITERRANEA
LA DIETA MEDITERRÁNEA

الطَّبْخُ أَخِيَّةُ الْمَدِينَةِ وَسَطِيَّةُ

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO

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The 16th of November, 2010 can be regarded as a historical day for the Mediterranean region.

UNESCO announced its final decision for the inscription of the Mediterranean Diet to the list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The common nomination submitted by **Greece, Italy, Spain and Morocco** in 2008 reached a successful conclusion, due to collective and coordinated efforts.

However, prior to this, a long term exchange of social, scientific and policy making experience had been achieved.



Social background

For centuries, the farmers have kept alive the rural areas of our countries, cultivating the Mediterranean land and producing three main products:

- ✓ Wheat
- ✓ Olive oil
- ✓ Wine

The triad of the bible and the ancient Greece



The Mediterranean people and rural communities, in their turn, were following the dietary habits of their ancestors and all the customs and traditions, related with the agriculture

imagine the picture

The land, the farmers, the agricultural products and all around: the family, the friends, the community sharing the food, the myth, beliefs and tradition.



Scientific background

- Development brought a “fast and easy” way, not only in agriculture, but in every aspect of economic activity
- Dietary models reflected the radical changes, both social and economic
- The rise in heart attack rates, in obesity, cancer and other diseases, led the scientists to explore the causes and to find ways to face them



- Starting from the 60's to the present, many scientists have been conducting studies about the relation between the dietary habits and the diseases. Among them, the Seven Countries Study of Professor Ancel Keys
- The research was conducted in specific regions of Former Yugoslavia, Italy, Greece, Finland, Netherlands, United States of America and Japan



- Ancel Keys and his team found that the population of the Greek island of Crete, although it consumed up to 40 percent of the calories from fat, it had the lowest rate of heart attack and the highest average life expectancy in the world
- It was also noticed that most of the fat in the Cretan diet was coming from olive oil and fish, foods rich in non saturated fats

- The first Mediterranean Pyramid was presented at the International Conference on the diets of the Mediterranean, 1993 (Oldways, the Harvard School of Public Health & the European Office of the World Health Organization, Cambridge)
- The Mediterranean Diet Pyramid was based on the food patterns of Crete, much of the rest of Greece, and southern Italy in the early 1960s
- Response to the food pyramid presented by US Department of Agriculture in 1992

MEDITERRANEAN DIET

MONTHLY

Red meat
4 servings

WEEKLY

Sweets, 3 servings

Eggs, 3 servings

Potatoes, 3 servings

Olives, pulses, nuts
3 - 4 servings

Poultry
4 servings

Fish
5 - 6 servings

DAILY

Dairy products
2 servings

physical
activity



Olive oil
as the main added lipid

wine in moderation



Fruit
3 servings

Vegetables
(including wild greens)
6 servings

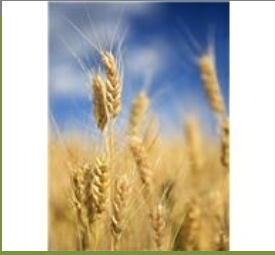
Non-refined cereals and products
(whole grain bread, whole grain pasta, brown rice, etc)
8 servings

One serving equals approximately half of the portions as defined in the Greek market regulations (portions served in restaurants)

Also remember to:

- drink plenty of water
- avoid salt and replace it by herbs (e.g. oregano, basil, thyme, etc)

Source: Supreme Scientific Health Council, Hellenic Ministry of Health

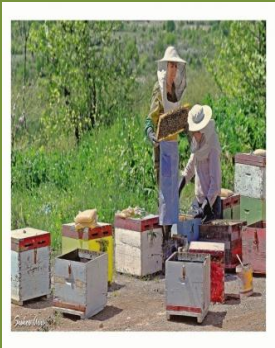


Which products characterize the Mediterranean diet?

- Fruits, vegetables, cereals, potatoes, beans, nuts, and seeds, in large amounts
- Olive oil, the main added liquid
- Dairy products, fish and poultry, in low to moderate amounts
- Red meat in low amounts
- Wine in low to moderate amounts, always with the meal, with respect to the various beliefs of each community

Policy decision making

- From the early 90's, the reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy put an emphasis on sustainability, environmental protection, preservation of natural resources, healthy and high quality products.
- Ministers of Agriculture perceived the significance of the Mediterranean Diet
- Ministers of Agriculture of CIHEAM, welcomed wisely the Greek Minister's proposal 'to promote the virtues of the Mediterranean Diet'(Athens, 2001).



- On the 16th of July, 2007, Ministers of Agriculture of Spain, Greece, Italy and France announced at the Council of the Ministers' of Agriculture of EU, their initiative regarding Mediterranean Diet to be included on the list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO
- In the meantime, the Mediterranean Diet and its multifunctional relation with agriculture, environment, public health, culture and tradition, was an issue for discussion and consideration at various national, European and international fora



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

A transnational nomination to UNESCO

- The transnational nomination file was submitted to UNESCO, in 2008
- Result of close and fruitful cooperation of Greece, Spain, Italy, and Morocco
- The final decision of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO was announced in 2010 (November, Nairobi)

Main elements of the Intangible Cultural Heritage



Apart from the agricultural products that consist the Med Diet Pyramid, UNESCO recognizes that:

- The Mediterranean Diet, from the Greek word “diaita”, is a way of life
- It is more than just food
- It comprises of a set of skills, knowledge, practices and traditions ranging from the landscape to the table, including the crops, harvesting and fishing
- It is passed on from generation to generation, giving a sense of belonging and continuity to the communities

- It is a nutritional model that has remained constant over time and space
- It promotes social interaction, since communal meals are the cornerstone of social customs and festive events.
- It is connected with the territory and biodiversity
- It ensures the conservation and development of traditional activities and crafts and
- Last but not least, women play a vital role in the transmission of expertise, knowledge of rituals, traditional celebrations


Emblematic communities

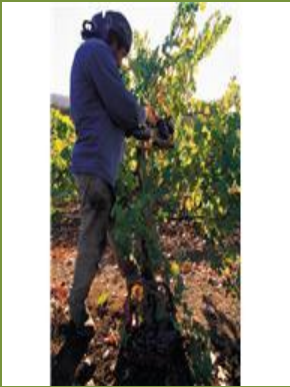
Intangible heritage has to be connected with certain communities, groups or individuals that recognize the intangible element as a part of their cultural heritage

- Four **emblematic communities** were chosen, in a symbolic way, as the communities that maintain and preserve the Mediterranean Diet

- Set up a **Network of communities**

- ✓ Koroni , Greece
- ✓ Cilento , Italy
- ✓ Soria, Spain
- ✓ Chefchaouen,
Morocco

- 
- Desiring to strengthen the ties and the dialogue between countries and communities, festivities and meetings were organized in the emblematic communities.
 - Opportunity to the local communities and authorities to share dietary models, traditional food and recipes, habits, and to discuss and determine targets and goals for the post inscription era.



Enlargement of the Mediterranean Diet

- The Convention of UNESCO provides the enlargement of the Mediterranean Diet, since it is a multinational nomination
- The interest of Cyprus, Portugal, Algeria and Croatia to participate to this cultural heritage was accepted with great satisfaction
- The increase of interest of Non Mediterranean communities is also strong



The reasons

- Consumers request a healthy, safe, quality and traditional diet
- Immigrants from Mediterranean countries, remain attached to the traditional Mediterranean Diet of their country

Greek proposal

To set up a **Network of Non Mediterranean Communities**, which follow and support the Mediterranean Diet. It can serve the common goal to raise participation and awareness of the Mediterranean Diet



The day after inscription

After the inscription, the involved countries should develop a policy and direct the efforts aiming to:

- Disseminate the Mediterranean Diet
- Integrate its values to other policies
- Broaden visibility of the heritage
- Foster intercultural dialogue at regional and international level
- Ensure transmission to younger generations
- Promote awareness of the Mediterranean diet



- A policy with these targets complies with the principles and guidelines of the Common Agricultural Policy
- EU interest in the Mediterranean Diet is reflected in the recent Commission's proposal for a program designed by Mediterranean Member States targeting in Northern Europe about the benefits of the Mediterranean diet
(Green Paper on promotion measures and information provision for agricultural products: a reinforced value-added European strategy for promoting the tastes of Europe)



- Look for a synergy of actions for a sustainable agriculture and for the dissemination and preservation of the Mediterranean Diet
- Measures under both pillars of CAP regarding the young and small farmers, the mountain areas, the short supply chains, the pilot projects and cooperation crossing regional and national borders, the local production and local markets can be linked with the Mediterranean Diet
- Activate and benefit local communities, national institutions, farmers, producers' groups and organizations, women cooperatives, small and medium rural enterprises



**Thank you!
Let's be the followers
of the Mediterranean Diet**

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- 3° Euro-Mediterranean Forum-Dialogues between civilizations and people: The Food Cultures (30/9 – 1/10/2005, University of Rome La Sapienza)
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