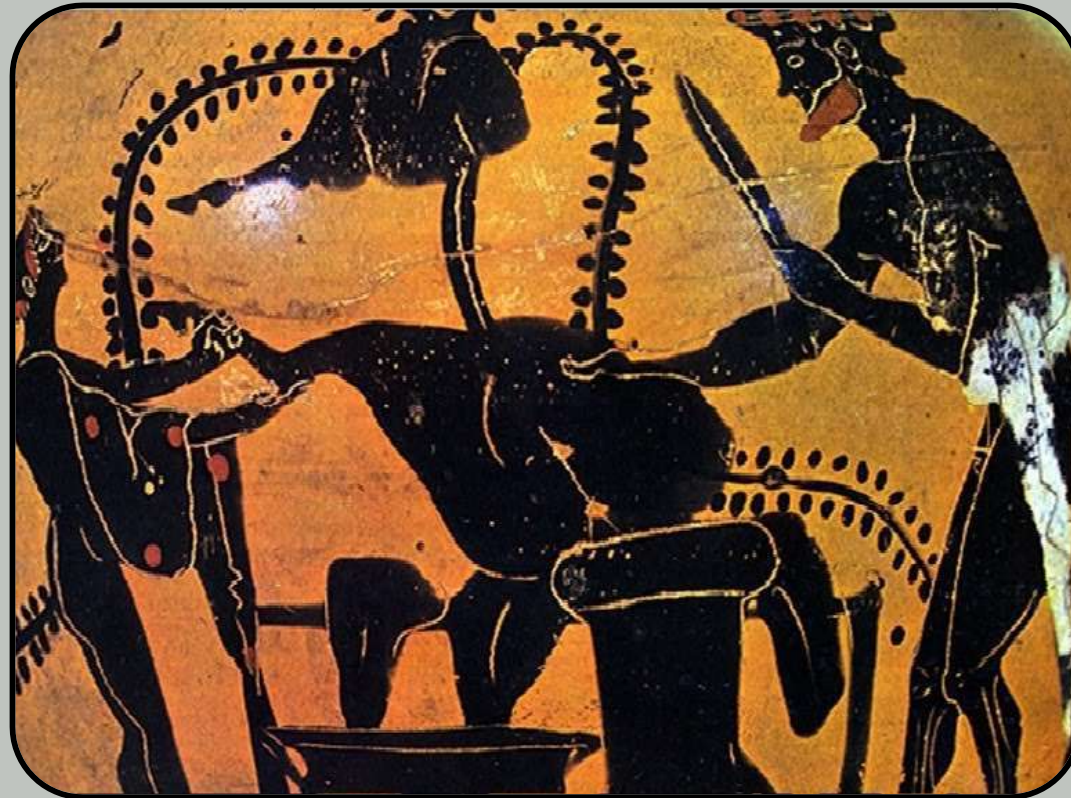


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Taste of Europe / Taste of the world 2021

- The traditional cold cuts of Greece



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History of traditional preserved meat preparations



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It is believed that sausages were invented by the Sumerians in 3000 BC.

In the works of Homer there are references to processed meat, during the 5th century BC. in Athens the first butcher, Harinos, prepared mainly sausages and smoked meats.

The Romans took over the art of butchering, developed it even more and passed it on to other peoples.

In ancient Rome the word "salumen" meant salted food and it is believed that this is the root of the word "salami".



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Roman butcher shop



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Domestic animals.

Until the end of the 20th century.

Each family in the countryside was supplied with a small pig, a goat or even a cow and hens to raise them and meet the family's need for protein during the year.

Especially from the pig he made the various preparations that he would use all year round.

The slaughter of the pig took place between Christmas and Epiphany and was a big event. Relatives and friends gathered early in the morning at the householder's house to assist in the whole process.



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Pig carcasses



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Home production and maintenance

Until about the middle of the 20th century, the production of cold cuts was an absolute necessity of a household.

The lack of a way to preserve fresh meat has forced people to devise techniques to preserve it.

Knowing that fat and salt are good preservatives, they used them in various ways, thus creating the art of butchering.

Today, the production of cold cuts is mainly done on a craft and industrial level, while domestic production has almost disappeared.



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Homemade traditional cold cuts



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Types of home-made sausages

The household economy forced the use of the whole carcass (Nose to Tail). The ingenuity of the people of old times very great.

The products developed and the means of maintenance utilized were very important for the annual living and access to protein in each family.



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The slaughter of the pig was mainly a big celebration because it yielded the meat of the year was done on a special wooden table, the "tabla" as it was called, with knives especially for this purpose.

This was followed by the separation of the various members of the animal from experts in this field.

They distinguished the two "lountzes", which is lean meat from the frames along the spine, the front legs to use them for sausages, the hind legs of the animal from which the ham was made, the lower part of the abdomen where it was the pancetta, the pig intestines were washed very well and used for sausages.

The fat was stored in special containers and used to preserve certain cold cuts, for cooking or to cut it into small pieces and fry it and make cigarettes, a semi-cooked meat that was a delicious meze.

From the head and legs of the pig they made the gel.

The rest of the pieces were fried and stored in fat, the so-called convergent.



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Types of home-made sausages

The blood, the bellies, the entrails, the small pieces of meat were used for dishes such as the kavourmades, the omaties, the tripe, the pastes of Messinia, stuffed stomachs of the animal or intestines (Babo Thrace), spleens...



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Main types of cold cuts on the market

Cold cuts are classified into different types, depending on whether the meat for their preparation is with chopped meat (cutton) or not and depending on their processing, ie if they undergo heat treatment, mature in the air or are pickled.

Products made from whole pieces of meat are divided into categories:

- Maturation products. Whole pieces of meat under controlled ripening conditions for a period of 2 to 24 months. Examples of such products are prosciutto and pasturma.
- Heat treatment products. Whole pieces of meat are heat treated (cooked or smoked).
- Such cold cuts are the ham and the smoked steak.

Products made from chopped meat are divided into four subcategories:

- Raw products. Chopped pieces of meat are slightly dried, salted, seasoned and inserted into an intestinal casing. A typical example is the traditional sausage or as we call it the butcher.
- Maturation products - air. Chopped, salted and seasoned meat, enters an artificial or animal casing (intestine), in some cases smoked and finally put to maturity for 4 to 8 weeks.
- Such cold cuts are air salami and soutzouki.



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Greek cold cuts

- The ingenuity and passion of the older generations led to the creation of unique cold cuts in each region that although their raw material is almost the same everywhere, their processing and name differ from place to place.
- The nouveau. He is of Corfiot origin. It is prepared from the brisket of the pig that is initially pickled, wrapped in salt and whole peppers, put whole in a piece of intestine and smoked.
- The apaki. It comes from Anogia, Crete and is made from lean pork cut into strips and marinated in vinegar and cumin. It is then smoked on aromatic sage branches.
- The louza or loutza. It has Cycladic origin. The best known is produced in Mykonos, Syros and Tinos. It is made from pork fillet that is first salted in salt and spices, then passed into the intestine and hung to dry well. Sometimes it is immersed in wine.
- Lefkada salami. The most famous air salami in Greece is that of Lefkada. It is prepared by mixing small cubes of meat and fat with spices, garlic and whole peppers. The mixture is then placed in the intestine and allowed to mature naturally for 8 to 18 days.
- Singlino. It is made from pork smoked or boiled in wine or water. It is kept in its clay (Crete-Mani) or in olive oil (Arcadia).



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Greek cold cuts



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Greek cold cuts

The sausages are prepared all over Greece with variations in the filling or in the combination of spices and aromatics.

- In Thessaly they have leeks and a sweeter taste.
- In the Cyclades they are flavored with aromatic plants and herbs.
- In the Peloponnese with orange.
- In Andros with anise and they are smoked.
- The Vinegar sausage of Crete, a special village sausage, with a characteristic representative La "Xidiko".
- In Syros with fennel, in Thrace they look like soutzouki or in a small intestine with minimal fat.

Kavourmas & Santirmas.

- A methodology for preserving pieces of meat from the depths of the centuries and the wisdom of our ancestors. It is made with various carcasses, depending on what each region has, mainly in Northern Greece & Thrace.
- With the exception of Pontian Santirma which looks somewhat like curd.
- The other species have taken their name from the way of cooking which is roasting.



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Greek cold cuts

- Salted ham (Melan acrokolion), was made in our country from native black pig as the piglets we all know today came to Greece after World War II to deal with the food crisis.

- Cypriot tsamarella is a pickled goat sausage that dries in the sun and is reminiscent of the completely dehydrated cold cuts of America.

- Cypriot sausages are fresh. They are produced from minced pork, coarse salt, coriander, dry red wine and black pepper in pork intestines. In addition to pork, beef can also be used.



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Greek cold cuts



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Ways to use Greek traditional cold cuts.

- The sausages are eaten alone as wine appetizers (grilled or fried) or in combination with another food or become the main food themselves.

- Cold cuts that are pieces of meat heat-treated such as siglina, kavourmades etc. are also used to cook a food that is combined with some vegetables, pasta etc.

- Natural ripening products are usually cut into thin slices and eaten with wine, beer or tsipouro and ouzo.
- The intensity, the herbs or the spices contained in the sausage play a role in this.



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time

With appreciation
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