

Gods on the Go: Meet the Big Four!

Get ready to embark on a mythological adventure with the Inquisitive Bear as your guide! We're diving into the stories of Greece's top four gods — powerful, wise, and full of surprises. From thunderbolts to wisdom, seas to weddings, these gods have it all. Let's discover what makes Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, and Athena so unforgettable!



Zeus

The ultimate boss of Mount Olympus — king of the gods and ruler of the sky, thunder, and lightning. Watch out, he throws a mean lightning bolt!



Hera

Queen of the gods and goddess of marriage and family — she's powerful, protective, and knows how to keep things in order.

Poseidon

God of the sea, earthquakes, and horses — if you love the ocean or wild waves, he's your guy with his mighty trident.



Athena

Goddess of wisdom, war strategy, and crafts — smart, fierce, and always ready to help heroes win the day.



QUICK QUIZ TIME WITH THE INQUISITIVE BEAR!

Think you know Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, and Athena?
Let's see how well you connect with the Big Four Greek gods!
Which god would you call if you needed:

**A thunderstorm to clear the skies?
Protection over your family?**

Calm seas for a safe voyage?

Wisdom to ace a tricky problem?

Drop your answers below and see which god matches your vibe! Ready?
Kalimera and go!



Eat like a Minoan: Greek cooking lesson

Join Chef Nektaria as she guides you through the delicious flavors of Greece! Each week, prepare a fresh selection of authentic dishes inspired by the Greek night buffet. From savory appetizers to hearty mains and sweet treats, the menu changes weekly to keep your culinary adventure exciting and full of new tastes. Get ready to cook, learn, and savor the best of Greek cuisine!



Tzatziki

(pronounced *tsah-ZEE-kee*) is a cool and creamy Greek yogurt dip made with cucumber, garlic, olive oil, and fresh herbs. It's a refreshing staple in Mediterranean cuisine—perfect for dipping, dolloping, or drizzling! Not only is it delicious, but it's also a great example of how simple, fresh ingredients can create bold flavor. Plus, it's packed with probiotics and hydrating veggies, making it as healthy as it is tasty!

FUN FACTS:

Tzatziki is deeply rooted in **Greek cuisine**, but its **origins trace back to the Ottoman Empire**, and it shares roots with similar sauces across the Middle East, Balkans, and South Asia.

The word tzatziki comes from the **Turkish word "cacik,"** which describes a yogurt-cucumber dish—though each region has its own twist.

A related dish in **India** is called **raita**, also made with yogurt and cucumber or other vegetables.

It's more than a dip: In Greece, tzatziki is served as a meze (appetizer), a side, or a sauce—especially with **gyros, souvlaki, or grilled meats**.

A summertime staple: Tzatziki is cool and hydrating, thanks to yogurt and cucumber—making it a perfect dish for hot Mediterranean summers.

Probiotic power: Because it's made with Greek yogurt, tzatziki is full of **probiotics** and protein, so it's not just tasty—it's good for your gut!

No two recipes are the same: Some regions or cooks add **mint**, others **dill** or **vinegar** instead of lemon juice. Personal variations are encouraged!

Ancient ties: While tzatziki in its current form is modern, the combination of yogurt and herbs has been enjoyed in the Eastern Mediterranean for **thousands of years**.

Moussaka (moo-SAH-kah)

Is a classic Greek comfort food—think of it as a Mediterranean lasagna, but with layers of eggplant, spiced ground meat, and a rich, creamy béchamel sauce on top. It's baked to golden perfection and served warm, making it a hearty, flavorful dish that showcases traditional Greek flavors and culinary techniques.

FUN FACTS:

Not originally Greek: The word moussaka comes from Arabic, and similar versions exist in the Middle East and the Balkans—but the famous layered version with béchamel is purely Greek!

Chef Tsitsipas made it famous: Greek chef **Nikolaos Tselementes** introduced the French-style béchamel topping in the 1920s to modernize traditional Greek dishes.

It's a layer party: Moussaka typically has **three layers**—sautéed eggplant (or potatoes), a **savory meat sauce**, and **creamy béchamel**—each cooked separately before assembling.

Even better the next day: Like lasagna, Moussaka tastes even better after the flavors have had time to meld overnight.

Vegetarian versions exist: Modern cooks often swap the meat for lentils or mushrooms to make a vegetarian twist on the classic.



Greek Cheese Balls (Tirokroketes)

(tee-roh-KROH-keh-tehs) are crispy, golden **cheese balls** made with a mix of Greek cheeses, herbs, and sometimes mashed potatoes or béchamel. They're rolled, breaded, and fried until melty on the inside and crunchy on the outside—perfect as an appetizer or party snack!

FUN FACTS:

“Tiro” means cheese: The name literally means cheese croquettes in Greek.

A cheese lover’s dream: They often include a mix of cheeses like feta, kasseri, or graviera, giving them a rich and tangy flavor.

Island favorite: Tirokroketes are especially popular on **Greek islands** like Crete and Santorini, often served as part of a meze platter.

Crispy outside, creamy inside: The contrast in texture is what makes them so addictive—crispy coating with a warm, gooey center.

Great for leftovers: Some recipes use leftover mashed potatoes or cheese bits, making it a fun way to reduce food waste!



Greek Gemista (yeh-MEE-stah)

are colorful vegetables—like tomatoes, peppers, and zucchinis—stuffed with a flavorful mix of rice, herbs, and sometimes ground meat, then baked until tender and aromatic. This classic Greek dish is a delicious way to enjoy fresh, seasonal produce packed with Mediterranean flavors.

FUN FACTS:

Name meaning: “Gemista” means **“stuffed”** in Greek, referring to the filled vegetables.

Seasonal favorite: Traditionally made in summer, when fresh tomatoes, peppers, and zucchinis are abundant.

Vegetarian or meaty: Can be stuffed with just rice and herbs or with added ground meat for extra richness.

Family dish: Often made in big batches to share with family and friends at gatherings.

Healthy and hearty: Combines fresh veggies with wholesome grains, making it both nutritious and satisfying.



Kalimera 101: Greek Surviving Phrases

Ready to explore some essential Greek words that will help you survive and thrive on your next adventure? Whether you're greeting locals, or ordering your favorite Greek dish, we've got you covered! Let's dive into simple, fun phrases that make your trip easier and way more enjoyable. Kalimera — good morning — and let's get started!

GREETINGS & BASICS

1. What does “**Kalimera**” mean? (**Good morning**)
2. How do you say “Hello” in Greek? (**Yassas / Yassou**)
3. What's the Greek word for “Goodbye”? (**Antio**)
4. How do you say “Thank you”? (**Efharisto**)
5. What's the word for “Please” or “You're welcome”? (**Parakalo**)
6. How do you ask “How are you?” (**Ti kanis?**)
7. What's the Greek word for “Yes”? (**Nai**)
8. And how do you say “No”? (**Ohi**)
9. What phrase means “Excuse me” or “Sorry”? (**Signomi**)
10. What's the Greek way to toast? (**Yammas!**)

FOOD & DRINKS

1. How do you say “Wine” in Greek? (**Krasi**)
2. What's the word for “Beer”? (**Bira**)
3. How do you say “Water”? (**Nero**)
4. You're ordering coffee—what's “Coffee” in Greek? (**Kafe**)
5. How do you ask “Where is the bathroom?” (**Pou ine i toualeta?**)
6. What's the word for “Tavern” or restaurant? (**Taverna**)
7. How do you ask “How much does it cost?” (**Poso kani?**)
8. What's the Greek word for “Delicious”? (**Nostimo**)
9. How do you say “Cheers” in Greek? (**Stin ygeia mas!**)
10. What's the word for “Bread”? (**Psomi**)

FUN & FLIRTY GREEK

1. How do you say “My name is...” (**Me lene...**)
2. How do you ask “What's your name?” (**Pos se lene?**)
3. What's the word for “Beautiful”? (**Omorfos/Omorfi**)
4. How do you say “I love Greece”? (**Agapo tin Ellada**)
5. What does “**Kefi**” mean? (**Joy, spirit, fun!**)
6. How do you say “Let's dance”? (**Pame na horépsoume**)
7. How do you ask “Do you speak English?” (**Milate Anglika?**)
8. What's the Greek word for “Friend”? (**Filos/Fili**)
9. How do you say “Have a nice day”? (**Kali mera**)
10. Finally, what does “Kalimera” mean again? :) (**Good morning!**)

Guess the cocktail: Greek spirits

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YAMAS!

Guess a Cocktail with Stelios & the FB Team!

GREEK FEATURED SPIRITS

Local Vodka Blunar from Kritsa village

Feature : Region

Detail : Kritsa, near Agios Nikolaos, Crete

Feature : Distillers

Detail : Yiannis (a mechanical engineer)
& Michalis (an economist), childhood friends

Feature : Base Spirit

Detail : Corn distillate

Feature : Water

Detail : Springs of Kritsa Village

Feature : Flavor Notes

Detail : Citrus—orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit

Feature : Name Blunar Meaning

Detail : Inspired by the August blue full moon

Feature : Best Served

Detail : Neat, on ice, or in light citrus cocktails



Mastiha

“Tears of Chios” — The resin droplets are called “tears” because of how they look when they drip and harden on the tree bark.

Ancient gum — Mastiha is considered one of the oldest natural chewing gums, enjoyed since ancient Greek and Roman times!

Royal treat — It was so prized in history that it was once reserved exclusively for royalty and nobility.

Medicinal marvel — Ancient Greeks believed chewing mastiha freshened breath, helped digestion, and even healed wounds.

Festive harvest — Collecting mastiha is a cultural event in Chios, involving special tools, songs, and family traditions.

Multi-purpose magic — Besides food and drink, mastiha is used in cosmetics, perfumes, and even toothpaste!



Greek gin Mataroa

Inspired by Nature: Mataroa Gin is crafted using native Greek botanicals from the island of Crete, including herbs like sage, thyme, and coriander, giving it a uniquely Mediterranean flavor.

Name Meaning: “Mataroa” means “eye opener” in Greek, reflecting the gin’s fresh, vibrant taste that wakes up your senses.

Small Batch & Artisanal: It’s produced in small batches with careful attention to detail, emphasizing quality over quantity.

Local Water Source: The distillery uses pure, mineral-rich mountain water from Crete, which contributes to the gin’s smoothness.

Botanical Balance: Unlike some gins that focus heavily on juniper, Mataroa balances juniper with an array of Greek herbs and citrus, resulting in a well-rounded and refreshing profile.



Greek Raki (Tsikoudia)

Ancient Roots: Raki's origins date back to Byzantine and even earlier times, evolving from traditional grape distillation methods that have been around for centuries in Greece.

Cretan Specialty: While raki is made in various parts of Greece, tsikoudia is the Cretan version—often stronger and purer, made from the leftover grape skins after wine production.

Name Game: In Crete, it's called tsikoudia, elsewhere in Greece and Turkey, similar spirits are called raki or rakia. Despite the different names, the drink is very similar.

Fruit of the Vine: Raki is a pomace brandy, distilled from grape pomace—the solid remains of grapes after pressing for wine, including skins, seeds, and stems.

Cultural Ritual: It's a symbol of Greek hospitality, often served neat in small glasses at family gatherings, celebrations, and social events — usually with meze (small plates).

Strong Stuff: Typically, raki has about 40-50% alcohol by volume, so it packs a punch!



Ouzo

Clear to milky: When mixed with water or ice, ouzo turns from clear to a milky white — called the “ouzo effect” caused by the anise oils emulsifying.

National drink: Ouzo is often called Greece's national drink and is a staple at social gatherings and celebrations.

Meze magnet: It's almost always paired with meze — small plates of seafood, cheese, olives, and more — making every sip part of a tasty experience.

Historic rival: Ouzo's closest relatives are anise-flavored spirits from the Mediterranean and Middle East, like arak and pastis.

Name origin: Some say the name “ouzo” came from an acronym or from the Italian phrase “uso di bacco” meaning “use of Bacchus,” the god of wine.

