

Taverna Plaka

Description: Authentic Greek Cuisine

Location:

2196 Cheshire Bridge Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30324
Phone: 404-636-2284

Owner: Yanni Kasarais

Executive Chef: Mary Kasarais

Head Chef: Tony Kalotinis

Recipes

Arni Souvlas

(Marinated Rotisserie Lamb)

Ingredients:

- 1 shoulder or leg of lamb
- Kosher salt and pepper
- Oregano
- Chopped garlic cloves
- 3 whole lemons
- 2 carrots sliced
- 2 stalks of celery

Sprinkle the lamb heavily with salt, black pepper, oregano, and chopped garlic and rub deep into the meat. Be sure to cover all surfaces. Squeeze the lemons and pour the juice over the meat. Marinate 1-2 hours.

At Taverna Plaka, the meat is roasted over a wood fire. You can grill the lamb, or roast it in the oven. If oven-roasting, place leg of lamb or shoulder in a pan with the carrots and celery. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350° for 1-2 hours until cooked through. Pour off the pan juices and strain. Use drippings and cornstarch to make gravy.

Taverna Plaka serves 15 - 18 whole rotisserie lambs per week.

Youvetsi (Lamb Shank with Tomato Orzo)

Ingredients:

- Olive oil
- Chopped onions
- Chopped garlic
- Chopped fresh tomatoes

Chopped dill
Boneless lamb shanks
White wine
Salt and pepper
Orzo
Grated Kasser cheese

Cover bottom of pan with olive oil. Sauté onions and garlic in olive oil for 5-6 minutes until brown. Add tomatoes and dill. Add meat and brown for 5-12 minutes; add white wine, and then water to cover. Cook the lamb shanks 2 ½ - 3 hours at 350° or until lamb is completely cooked. Add orzo and cook 5 – 10 more minutes, or until orzo is done. Serve with cheese on top.

Melintsanes Papoutsaki

(Baked Eggplant Stuffed with Bechamel and Herbs)

Eggplant:

A serving is a half eggplant. Prepare the eggplants by cutting them in half and hollowing out. Reserve the insides for the filling. Brush the eggplant with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and bake at 350° for 6-7 minutes. Put eggplant halves in roasting pan and set aside.

Filling:

Inside of eggplants, cubed small
Chopped onions
Olive oil
Ground beef
Tomato puree or crushed tomatoes
Salt and pepper
Chopped garlic

Sauté cubed eggplant and onions in olive oil 2-3 minutes. Add ground beef and cook until meat is brown. Add remainder of ingredients and cook 15-20 minutes or until filling is thickened. Fill eggplants just to the top and cover with béchamel being sure all filling is covered. Surround eggplants in roasting pan with tomato puree, salt and pepper, garlic, and water to cover. Bake at 350° until béchamel is golden brown.

Béchamel sauce:

Yogurt
Milk
Salt and pepper
Nutmeg
Butter
Flour
4 egg yolks

Combine the yogurt and milk and bring to a boil. Then reduce to a simmer and add salt, pepper, and a little nutmeg. Melt 4-5 ounces of butter in a separate pan. Stir in flour and cook 3-4 minutes. Blend in the milk/yogurt mixture and stir to combine. Whisk egg yolks and add to the hot milk to thicken the sauce.

Dolmadakia

(Stuffed Grape Leaves filled with Herbs and Rice)

Filling:

- 2 cups of uncooked rice
- Chopped dill
- Chopped onions
- Olive oil
- Lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

Grape leaves

Olive oil and lemon juice

Mix filling ingredients thoroughly. Top each grape leaf with a spoonful of filling. Don't put too much or the grape leaf will burst while cooking. Roll the grape leaf around the filling, tucking in both ends. Place rolled leaves in a pot and cover with water. Add a little more olive oil and lemon juice. Simmer over a low flame for 3 – 3 ½ hours. If the fire is too hot, the rolls will break and will stick to the bottom of the pot.

Xtaphodi

(Grilled Octopus Marinated in Herbs and Red Wine Vinegar)

Ingredients:

- Octopus
- Red wine
- Olive oil
- Oregano
- Red wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper

Boil octopus in 4 hours in a mixture of water and red wine. Cool the octopus, and then cover with a mixture of olive oil, oregano, red wine vinegar, salt and pepper. Marinate at least an hour before serving. This dish is great with ouzo.

Kotopoulo Souvlaki

(Skewered Marinated Chicken served with tomatoes and pita bread)

Skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into cubes

Marinade:

- Chopped garlic
- Chopped onions
- Chopped garlic
- Olive oil
- Lemon juice
- Oregano
- Salt and pepper

Tzatziki sauce:

- Yogurt
- Cucumbers, finely chopped
- Chopped garlic
- Salt and pepper
- Vinegar

Combine marinade ingredients and pour over chicken. Leave the chicken to marinate for at least an hour. Skewer the chicken along the grain of the meat. Brush with a mixture of lemon juice, olive oil, oregano, and salt, and grill. Serve with Tzatziki sauce, tomatoes, and pita bread.

Sinagrída (Grilled Red Snapper)

- Lemon juice
- Olive oil
- Oregano
- Salt and pepper
- Garlic, chopped
- Whole snapper

Combine lemon juice, olive oil, oregano, salt and pepper, and garlic. Brush over fish. Grill fish on charcoal for 17 – 20 minutes for each side.

Spankapitakia

(Crispy filo crust stuffed with spinach and feta)

Filling:

- 2 ½ pounds frozen chopped spinach, completely drained
- 1 pound feta cheese, crumbled into small pieces
- Chopped dill, as much as you like
- Chopped garlic

Chopped onions
Salt and pepper
Olive oil to moisten mixture

Filo dough

Combine filling ingredients. Cut each sheet of filo into thirds. At the short end, put a spoonful of filling. Roll filo around filling, tucking in ends so filling will not spill out. Bake at 350° until golden brown.