

THE CUISINE OF THE LEBANON

Situated between the east and the west, Lebanon is a culinary and cultural crossroads. Lebanon is located on the eastern most shore of the Mediterranean in the Fertile Crescent, where western civilization is said to have begun. The cuisine of this ancient land is diverse and steeped in history; both the eastern and western influences in its cookery are apparent. Though its mainstream popularity is relatively new, the cuisine is not; the cuisine of Lebanon has been in the making since pre-biblical times. The influence that Lebanon has had on the world is totally out of proportion to its size; culinary contributions from this tiny country have had the greatest impact on modern Middle Eastern cuisine. The people and cuisine of Lebanon are known throughout the world and Lebanese cuisine is a true reflection of its welcoming culture.

The cuisine of Lebanon is in essence a Mediterranean diet since it includes starches, fruits, vegetables, fresh fish and seafood in abundance. Poultry is eaten more often than red meat and when red meat is eaten it is usually lamb. It also includes copious amounts of garlic and olive oil; hardly a meal goes by in Lebanon that does not include these two ingredients. Foods are either grilled, baked or sautéed in olive oil, butter or cream is rarely used other than in a few desserts. Vegetables are often eaten raw or pickled as well as cooked. Lebanese cuisine focuses on herbs, spices and the freshness of ingredients; the assortment of dishes and combinations are almost limitless. The meals are full of robust, earthy flavours and, like most Mediterranean countries; much of what the Lebanese eat is dictated by the seasons.

While one may not think of Lebanon as a particularly well-known wine region, there are beautiful Lebanese-made wines; From the Bekaa Valley, for example, you'll find Ksara and Ch'teau Kefraya. Ksara is an excellent, full-bodied red and its winery, founded by Jesuit priests, is the largest in the Middle East. Ch'teau Kefraya produces a light and pleasant rosé. And from the Mount Lebanon region is Ch'teau Musar (this author's personal favourite), which is an outstanding, full-bodied red. Ch'teau Musar is produced by a Frenchman and his son who migrated to Lebanon decades ago; their wine has the rich, fullness of classic Bordeaux.

One of the most healthy and entertaining aspects of Lebanese cuisine is the manner or custom in which their food is often served, it's referred to as mezze. Similar to the tapas of Spain and antipasto of Italy, mezze is an array of small dishes placed before the guests creating an awe-inspiring array of colours, flavours, textures and aromas. Mezze may be as simple as pickled vegetables, hummus and bread, or it may become an entire meal consisting of grilled marinated seafood, skewered meats, a variety of cooked and raw salads and an arrangement of desserts.

The food of the entire Mediterranean region is a celebration of life; it is fresh, flavourful, diverse and invigorating. A celebrated Lebanese chef once commented that the genius of Lebanese cuisine is in its simplicity, and that the food is a product of both the earth and the sea.

SET MENUS (Minimum 2 persons) price per person

Light Set* Menu £27.00

*Hummus , Moutabal, Tabouleh , Falafel, Spinach Fatayer, Kibbeh Kras**

Choice of Kafta Massis, Shish Taouk or Shawarma

*Baklawa
Coffee or tea*

Vegetarian Massis Set Menu £28.00

*Hummus, Moutabal, Tabouleh, Tzatziki,
Falafel, Spinach Fatayer, Cheese Rikakat*

Choice of Bamia or Moussakaa with Rice or Vegetarian Couscous

*Baklawa or Massis ice cream
Coffee or tea*

Gourmet Massis* Set Menu £30.00

*Hummus , Moutabal, Tabouleh, Vine Leaves
Falafel, Spinach Fatayer, Kibbeh Kras*, Cheese Rikakat, Soujouk*

*Choice of: Shawarma, Shish Taouk, Kafta Massis, Grilled Seabass,
Vegetarian Couscous or Moussakaa with Rice.*

*Baklawa or Massis ice cream
Coffee or tea*

*Some of our dishes contain nuts, seeds, gluten, milk or other allergens.
If you have a food allergy please consult your server for assistance with your order. * Contains nuts or seeds*

ENTRÉE

Lentil Soup (v)	4.00
Chicken Soup	4.50
Olives and Pickles (v) A selection of pickled cucumbers, turnips, peppers, green chillies and olives	4.50

COLD STARTERS

Hummus (v) Chickpeas purée, sesame sauce and lemon juice	5.75
Spicy Hummus (v) Hummus with green chilli, garlic and parsley	6.00
Moutabal (v) Smoked aubergine purée, sesame sauce with pomegranate seeds	6.00
Tabouleh (v) Finely chopped parsley, tomato, fresh mint, crushed wheat, lemon juice and olive oil	6.00
Vine Leaves (v) Vine leaves stuffed with fresh herbs, tomato and rice	6.00
Tzatziki (v) A refreshing mix of yogurt, finely chopped cucumber and a hint of mint	5.00
Moussakaa (v) Oven baked aubergine with tomatoes onions and chickpeas	5.75
Labneh (v) Authentic Lebanese soft cream cheese served with olive oil	5.00

HOT STARTERS

Hummus Shawarma* Hummus with lamb or chicken shawarma topped with almonds* and pine nuts*	7.00
Falafel* (v) Chickpea and fava bean croquettes served with tahini sauce	5.75
Soujouk Spicy Armenian lamb sausages pan fried with cherry tomatoes	6.50
Chicken Wings Char-grilled marinated chicken wings served with mild garlic sauce	5.75
Prawn Kataifi Tiger prawns wrapped in Kataifi pastry finished with a hint of coriander	7.00
Grilled Halloumi (v) Traditional halloumi cheese charcoal grilled	6.50
Falafel Massis* (v) Falafel crust filled with mixed vegetables and pickle, drizzled with tahini sauce	6.25
Batata Harah (v) Spicy sautéed potatoes with garlic and coriander	5.75
Calamari Lightly battered deep fried squid served with tartar sauce	6.00
White Bait Lightly fried and served with lemon mayo	5.75
Chicken Liver Sautéed with pomegranate sauce and served with fresh garlic, coriander and lemon juice	7.00

PASTRY & OVEN

Cheese Rikakat (v) Filo pastry filled with Halloumi cheese, feta cheese and herbs	5.75
Spinach Fatayer* (v) Lebanese pastry stuffed with seasoned spinach, onion, sumac and pine nuts*	5.75
Arayes* Char-grilled pita bread filled with minced lamb and pine nuts*	6.00
Cheese Kellaj (v) Char-grilled pita bread filled with halloumi cheese	5.75
Kibbeh Kras* Minced lamb meatballs mixed with cracked wheat, onion and pine nuts*	6.00
Lamb Sambousek* Lebanese pastries stuffed with seasoned minced lamb, parsley and pine nuts*	6.00
Cheese Sambousek* Lebanese pastries stuffed with halloumi and feta cheese, parsley and pine nuts*	5.75
Sfeeha* Lebanese pie topped with minced lamb, parsley and pine nuts*	6.00

SALADS

Fattoush Salad (v) Tomato, cucumber, radish, onion and mint finished with crispy bread and fresh thyme	7.50
Taouk Salad Massis salad topped with tender char-grilled cubes of chicken	9.50
Mediterranean Feta Salad (v) Tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, olives, feta, oregano and virgin olive oil	7.95

MAIN COURSES - GRILL

MEAT & POULTRY

Shawarma Tender slices of marinated roast lamb, chicken or both served with tahini or garlic sauce	14.50
Shish Taouk Char-grilled skewered cubes of marinated chicken breast served with mild garlic sauce	15.00
Kafta Massis Skewers of charcoal grilled ground lamb finely spiced	15.00
Lahem Meshwi Char-grilled skewered cubes of marinated lamb served with chilli sauce	15.50
Yogurt Kafta* Kafta Massis topped with creamy yogurt, pine nuts*, crispy pita bread with tomato sauce	15.50
Kafta Khashkhash Skewers of charcoal grilled minced lamb topped with spicy tomato sauce	15.50
Farouj Meshwi Marinated baby chicken charcoal grilled and served with garlic sauce	16.00
Lamb Cutlets Tender lamb cutlets marinated in Lebanese spices char-grilled served with rice	17.00
Kharouf Mehshi* Oven roasted prime lamb on a bed of rice topped with almonds* and Massis gravy	15.00
Massis Grill Selection A selection of shish taouk, kafta massis, lahem meshwi and a lamb cutlet	18.00

FISH & SEAFOOD

Seabass Fillet Pan fried sea bass fillet served with roast vegetables	16.00
Grilled King Prawns Char-grilled king prawns served with rice, and coriander garlic sauce	18.50
Sayadieh* Cod fish fillet roasted with tahini sauce served with fried onions and almonds*	17.00
Mixed Fish Platter- A selection of calamari, whitebait, seabass fillet and prawns served with salad	19.00

STEWES & COUSCOUS

Halloumi Couscous(v) Couscous with grilled halloumi and roasted vegetables	9.50
Bamia (v) A traditional stew with okra in tomato sauce, served with rice	Vegetarian 13.00 Lamb 14.00
Aubergine Stew (v) Slow cooked aubergine, chickpeas and tomato served with rice	14.00
Lamb Shank Couscous* Oven roasted lamb shank served with couscous, gravy and almonds*	16.00
Roast Chicken Couscous* Oven roasted chicken served with couscous, gravy and almonds*	16.00
Vegetarian Couscous (v) Potatoes, carrots, cabbage and pumpkin stew served with couscous and harissa	14.00

SHARING MEZZE PLATTERS

(not available after 6pm, For 2 people)

Vegetarian Massis (v) Hummus, Moutabal, Pickles, Tabouleh, Cheese Rikakat, Fatayer Spinach, Vine Leaves, Falafel and Batata Harra	26.50
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The Massis Hummus, Moutabal, Pickles, Tabouleh, Tzatziki, Falafel, Vine Leaves, Chicken or Lamb Shawarma	27.50
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Gourmet Massis Hummus, Moutabal, Pickles, Tabouleh, Falafel, Vine Leaves, Tzatziki, Kibbeh Kras, Choice of Chicken or Lamb Shawarma or Kafta Massis	31.50
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SIDE DISHES

Chips	3.50
Vermicelli rice	3.75
Couscous	3.75
Mixed Roast Vegetables	4.75

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