

A photograph of two women in traditional Greek clothing walking down a narrow, white-washed street. They are carrying large, round, golden-brown breads on their heads. The woman in the foreground is wearing a black dress with a pink sash and a striped bag. The woman behind her is wearing a dark blue dress. The street is flanked by white buildings with yellow accents and a stone wall on the right.

# near AND far

A STUDY IN  
*meraki* THROUGH  
CUL-*ture*-INARY  
PURSUITS

2019II



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history

# MINOAN CULTURE

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Crete emerged from a peasant economy only about 50 years ago with a diet known as being one of the healthiest in the world. The temperate climate of this Aegean island, with its short, mild winters and its dry, warm summers, along with the fertility of the Cretan plains produces sufficient food supplies to support an affluent local population. The inhabitants of ancient Crete (Minoans) produced a decentralized culture based on the abundance of the land's natural resources, and on intense commercial activity.

*in this lush culture, everyone shares.  
community eating binds, and they firmly  
believe that no one should eat alone*

But as the once-isolated island becomes more globally connected, its traditional diet faces greater competition. To preserve the recipes and reinforce their importance in the community and wider society, I long to connect with islanders through cooking in old-age methods so I can better understand how ancient Minoan culinary heritage has shaped the rich culture and led to people who are the healthiest and have the longest life spans in the world.

A woman with short, curly grey hair and a warm smile is holding two large, golden-brown, oval-shaped loaves of bread. She is wearing a dark blue patterned top and a grey apron. Behind her is a rustic stone oven with a large, dark, conical chimney pipe extending upwards. The background is a rough stone wall. The overall scene is warm and evokes a sense of traditional craftsmanship.

driver

# μεράκι

*passion or absolute devotion*

One of the hardest words to translate, to do something with *meraki* means to put “a part of your soul” into what you’re doing. The root of this word is merak, a Turkish word borrowed from Arabic, which has various meanings, including “intense love and care for something, especially an activity”.



A map of Greece and its surrounding islands. Three locations are marked with black dots and labeled in a cursive font: 'evrytania' in the northwestern part of the mainland, 'cyclades' in the central Aegean Sea, and 'crete' on the island of Crete in the south.

evrytania

cyclades

crete

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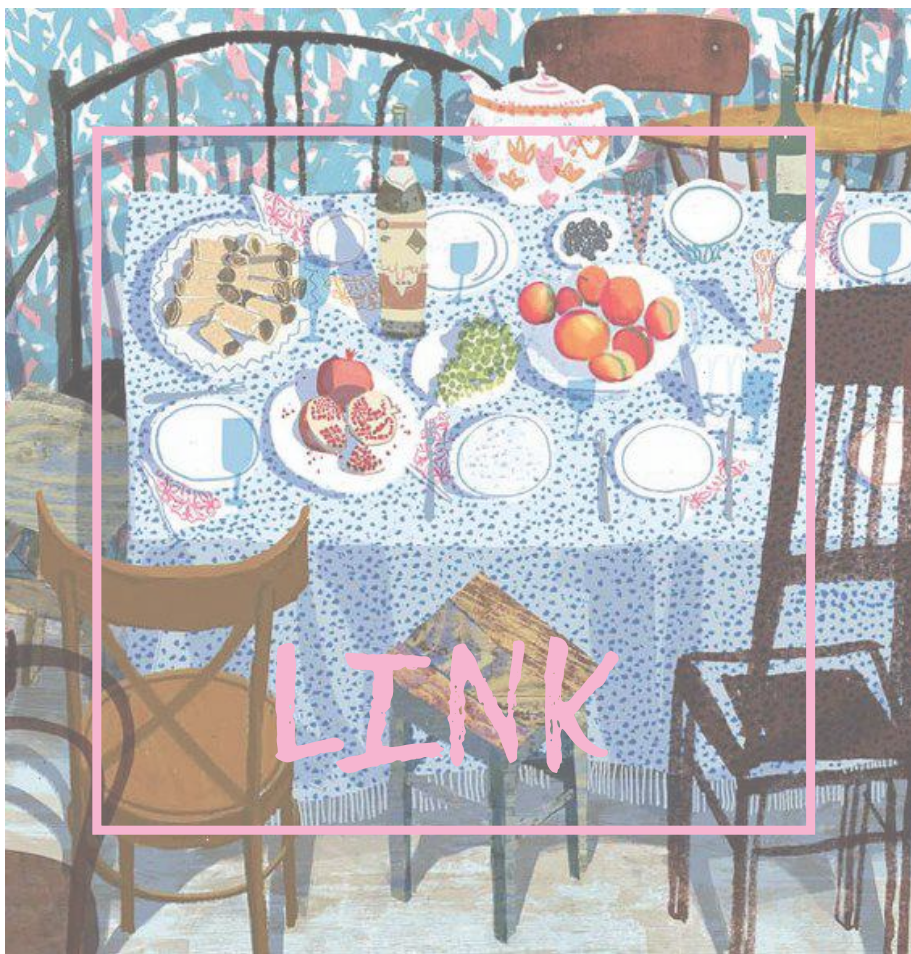
context

# ISOLATED ISLANDS

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# Opportunity

*After my grandmother lost her memory...  
the first thing that really felt different was the dinner table*



The true ingredient of connection is uniquely specialized to every family.

My small group of nearest and dearest found respite in our weekly gatherings over garlic glazed yuca, maduros and whatever traditional Cuban specialty my grandmother, Aya, had tenderly prepared for us.

*When her memory dissipated,  
so did our connection*

Through her carefully crafted recipes we decompressed from the day and strengthened our relationship.

## ◉ INGREDIENTS ◉

👤 1 CUP locally sourced community

👨 2.5 LBS fresh perspective

There was something special about setting time aside to doodle with my little sister, learn what new baseball team my grandfather was rooting for and hear my parents complain about the neighbors in avid detail.

None of us learned the meals that Aya made. We no longer impart our days together. There's food but it's not shared. Eating together was a small act, and yet it was one of the happiest parts of my day.

## PURSUIT

🌿  
*Preserving the culinary secrets that  
connect families*

THE STORY THAT INSPIRED INFLUENCE ◉

# Destination

*"Good food is very often, even most often, simple food"*  
Anthony Bourdain

In Greece, eating out and sharing a meal with family and friends is as important as food itself. This lifestyle values hospitality, neighbourliness and respect for diversity.

## *Eat simply and eat together*

Food takes a back seat to the whole sensory experience of sharing knowledge, culture and connection in an almost festive atmosphere.

### ◉ INGREDIENTS ◉

🥄 4 TBS adventure, minced

🍴 12 OZ simple well-being



## MEDITERRANEAN WAY

*Part ambience, part attitude,  
part great produce*

It is in this atmosphere that I aim to immerse myself and learn what makes Mediterraneans the coveted 'Blue Zone' people, who are the healthiest and have the longest life spans in the world.



# Purpose

"Food is symbolic of love when words are inadequate"  
Alan D. Wolfelt

Given the importance of the family and the influence it has on food and eating practices, exploring this support system amidst strong mediterranean models of lasting connection will provide insight on the methods that are successful and how these practices can be incorporated and enrich our daily lives.

## Family dinners build relationships

Making time to eat together radically shifts perspectives and more often than not our favorite foods are associated with family memories. As the only mammals that cook our food, it provides an important link to our cultural heritage and is an entry point.

I want to explore and embrace how food brings families together, what different emotions recipes draw out. Goal is to preserve those and embrace that way of life to influence my immediate circle of friends and family.

## FOOD IN THE FAMILY



Dinner table acts as unifier and place of community

### INGREDIENTS

3 TSP glazed curiosity

2 C sweet memories

# GOALS



CONCEPT TO SOLVE A PROBLEM

# Process

## RESULTS



3 RECIPES

shared via blog to inspire firm family to participate in cooking



POSTINGS

sketches and recipe cards filled in and recorded with fellow Grecian townspeople

*"Cooking is an expression that crosses boundaries"*  
Kamnier Paray



## CYCLADES

Experience a guided tour through an old olive oil factory and through the new, hypermodern facilities, where you can see the whole oil-making process from start to finish. The tour ends with a tasting and advice from the experts on how to recognize good olive oil.



## EVRYTANIA

Secret behind loukoumia (Turkish delight) of Syros is the semi-salty water from the Aghios Athanasios spring and the copper cauldrons in which they were cooked. The Sikourtis family makes them in this traditional way. Will watch the loukoumia being made and sample the various flavors



## CRETE

Cook local dishes in home inspired by delicious, locally produced foods such as katiki and tsalafouti cheese, handmade hilopites pasta, a prosciutto that has put the area on the national map, quality pulses, as well as top quality honey and a mulberry tsipouro (a pomace brandy)