



The Future  
of Food



Designing  
for the Human  
Microbiome



# CULINARY YOGURT

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Stacking yogurt vessel  
by Yiyi Mendoza

Happy accidents have defined the development of the human culinary experience since the early days of our hunting, gathering and cooking. It is for this reason that some of the most mystical and alchemical transformations that take place in our kitchens cannot be traced back to a single discoverer or architect.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
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INTRODUCTION BY  
ADAM ELABD







# FROM THE DIVINE HAND

TEXT BY DANAE TSEKOURA (GREECE)

DESIGN BY GREECE IS FOR LOVERS

5 FOLLOWING  
SPREAD  
Jordan: 3D-printed  
Jameed Press  
by Hashem Joucka

Like every story, this story starts with a seed.

About 80% of Greek heirloom seeds have become extinct so to fulfill my dream of populating a little plot of land with real food, I was on the hunt for real seeds. By divine hand I was led to The Holy Monastery of St. John the Forerunner in Anatoli. The monastery was founded by the Holy Martyr Damianos in the 16th century and revived by a group of female monastics in 2000. Although the monastery is Greek Orthodox, the 22 nuns that reside there are from all over the world. The countries represented by flag at the entrance of the building are of Russia, Japan, Estonia, Cyprus, United States, Lebanon, Finland, England and Germany.

The monastery is located on the mountain Kissavos (Ossa) at an altitude of 1080 meters. The ride was long and winding but the reward was bountiful. Inspired by each of their country's culinary traditions, the nuns make vegetable and fruit chutney, kefir and cheeses, not to mention potions and lotions, from the wild herbs they gather on the mountain. They are most proud of their beehives and the heirloom seed gardens. The nuns see their gardens as seed banks and they give seeds to anyone that asks.

The nuns also raise animals; companions and friends with names often derived from ancient Greek mythology — there's a lamb called Calliope and a sheep called Kallysto. Amongst all the female cows there's a single male bull and Tony (the bull) is particularly beloved. Tony keeps the cows happy and happy cows make happy yogurt.

We have all heard of Greek yogurt but very few people, even Greeks, have actually tasted the real thing. Greek yogurt has become a sort of brand but what makes Greek yogurt unique? To begin with, it is the milk.

Unlike most yogurt, the Greek yogurt from The Holy Monastery doesn't travel. The cows are milked and the yogurt is made on the spot. From where I stood, I could see the animals grazing on wild herbs that grow on the mountain—oregano, thyme and marjoram. The water on the mountain is also considered one of the best sources of water in Europe—it's actually gotten an official EU rating! At The Holy Monastery, the distance from farm to table had never been so immediate for me. When asked about the secret to the most delicious yogurt in the world, Mother Superior Theodekti's answer is simple: They treat the animals with love and respect, ensuring the animals' happiness.

On a more practical level, the nuns use a natural organic vegetable rennet and their own yogurt starter. They also employ a very old method of slow pasteurization — maintaining the temperature at 65 degrees and then cooling the walls of the pot slowly to keep all of the flavors from evaporating. Another great secret is that the nuns strain the yogurt in the *tsantila*, a shepherd's cheesecloth, for one day and one night until the *tyrogalo* (buttermilk) drips slowly. Despite available technologies, to this day only the divine hands of nuns guide the yogurt making process at The Holy Monastery of St. John the Forerunner.

*Danae Tsekoura is the founder of Troo Food Liberation, a food collective in Athens, Greece.*

*Greece is for Lovers is the design studio of Thanos Karampatsos and Christina Kotsilelou. Their designs narrate an alternative home country and comment on ritual.*