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Worlds of Flavor Conference, CIA Graystone Nov 6-8, 2008
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Worlds of Flavor. Just saying that makes me happy. The Worlds of Flavor (WOF) Conference at CIA Graystone was held Nov 6-8; its focus was *A Mediterranean Flavor Odyssey*. It was the eleventh annual conference and I do not believe many were disappointed – unless they could not get tickets.

Chefs, along with food and wine experts from all around the Mediterranean, were present to provide insightful authentic preparations and food ideas for attendees. Working for a Greek food company which specializes in Mediterranean foods, of course means that Greek topics were of high interest to me. The scope of the cuisines involved and the ability to explore the lesser known items and techniques meant that many new perspectives on food were shown and processed.

On the second day of WOF a buffet lunch is traditionally served. The other “meals” are glommed from the samples provided by vendors in a sort of “Tapas Trade Show” format. The lunch this year reflected a number of menu development initiatives at Grecian Delight® Foods: for instance Meze. Indeed almost the entire Mediterranean region has a small plate food category. And now like never before has a trend been embraced by all segments of the food industry at once. In Greece and Spain the small plates are consumed with wine or sherry and become more than a meal. The social aspects of small Tapas bars with many people sharing these hors d’oeuvre (even the French have a word for it), moving on from one bar to the next has few parallels here in the USA.

The incredible popularity of these menu items has increased the demand for Grecian Delight® mini pita breads and pockets. Our 3.5” mini pita folds are perfect for mini burgers, mini sandwiches, or appetizer bases. We have also developed a mini gyro sandwich concept, using our Panini flatbread. This trend doesn’t appear to be going anywhere soon except onto more menus around the world. (Click here for recipe/menu ideas)

The subsequent lectures and demos at WOF expanded the scope to other Mediterranean cuisines. Some of the other notable topics were:

- * Signature Flavors of the Mediterranean – Provence as Inspiration
- * The Italian Vegetable and Legume Kitchen – Seasonal cooking from Sicily and Apulia
- * Savoring Istanbul – Mediterranean Cooking: Bridging East and West
- * The Mediterranean Seafood Kitchen – Flavor insights for American Menus with Cat Cora as the Moderator.

WOF next year's conference will focus on *Street and Comfort Foods of the World*, a nice small topic. If you can attend, it is something that I recommend that you don't miss.

Recipe/Menu Ideas:



Fire Sliders:

Mini burgers made with 3.5" mini pita folds (#00810), topped with Feisty Feta[®] spread (#03030).

Alternative option: Use 3.5" mini pita folds with chicken salad for a mini-sized lunch time classic

Petite Pockets:

Mini pita pockets are great for making a variety of mini sandwiches. A vegetarian favorite is the 4" mini pita pocket (#021) filled with Falafel (#260), tzatziki sauce (#028), lettuce and tomatoes.

Other pocket fillings featured: scrambled eggs, Italian beef (#33055), and Chicken Shawarma (#610)

