



Bake in tradition...(far left) the family, sitting from left, Rita and Helen Constantinou, Maria and Patricia Lathourakis; standing, James Vatiliotis, Peter and Mary Latourakis; (clockwise from top left) preparing the feast; pressing the dough; flaounes, fresh out of the oven. Photos: Fiona Morris

for lunch. This year, lunch is at my house (we alternate with my thea Betty every second year). It is not a small affair - and I'm not talking about guests. We generally have two dining tables laden with food to feed 15 people. Lamb souvlaki, Greek salad, tzatziki, pastitio, spanakopita, oliopita and haloumi bread, baklava, daktyla and galaktoboureko are just some of the dishes we enjoy. In addition, theo (uncle) Nick (Nicholas Lathourakis) can also always

be relied on to bring two kilograms of fresh prawns. I love watching my mother sweetly ask my father to peel them all for her. During lunch we crack brightly coloured red eggs, which my yiayia always insists on giving us at least two dozen of. As children, my cousins and I devised a way to win this game by freezing them so when we hit the adults' eggs, ours would not crack. The last person left with an uncracked egg is the overall winner and has good luck

for a year. Lunch isn't quite finished because there is always room for dessert. After enjoying coffee and waiting for yiayia to read my coffee cup and tell my fortune, I bite into another flaouna. Then, I try to convince my mother we should bake falounes twice-yearly, as I have always wanted to try them fresh from the oven when I'm not fasting but she simply laughs and says: "Find someone else to help you - once a year is enough for all of

us!" The Constantinou family's flaounes baking usually takes place on Good Friday, as it's a public holiday. This year, Orthodox Easter is the following weekend, April 18-19, so the flaounes will be frozen until the big day. Patricia Lathourakis, 21, is an architecture graduate who is passionate about food and wants to pursue a career in restaurant design.

Article from Good Living

Kastoria: The World's Producer of Fur

Have you ever wondered where that magnificent fur coat comes from? How such a faithful re-creation of natural beauty was ever made? The answers lie in two little Greek towns: Kastoria and Siatista. Located in Greece's Northwestern Macedonia, they are one of the three world's centers (Milan and Hong Kong being the other two) for treating, manufacturing and trading fur. Kastoria has the unique advantage of covering all stages of production from the reception of scraps to the delivery of the final product, offering many different types of fur in large quantities. Fur manufacturing has existed in Kastoria for over 700 years, starting around the 13th century, during the Byzantium, to satisfy the needs of the Imperial Court's wealthy families. Fur has been considered as a luxury item ever since: a determining factor of so-

cial prestige and a 'must' of elegance. Kastoria's reputation is based on the secrets and artistry of its specialized workers, developed during that time and passed on from generation to generation, from father to son. Nineteen processes in total are needed to make a fur garment including: separating the raw scraps of fur in terms of specific characteristics such as tones of colour (what an experienced professional eye would call "reds and blues"), opening, cutting, stretching, drying, cleaning, adjusting to a particular pattern, and hand sewing... to name a few. Today, fur manufacturing is the basic occupation for the locals of Kastoria as there are 2800 companies employing 5000 workers. Businesses are organized into three separate categories: 60% of fur production is made from cheaper, small fur parts, only 20% from most selective whole fur skins and a very

small 14% is dedicated to the production of fur "ô façon", for Fashion Houses abroad. Eighty-five percent of the world production comes from strictly controlled breeding farms. Under the pressure of environmentalists through the years, these farms have improved the breeding conditions of the animals in order to avoid the destruction of our ecosystem. There are 6500 farms in the European Union alone, Denmark and Finland being the biggest suppliers of raw scraps of mink and fox skins respectively. These two types of fur are in the highest demand, being more affordable than the very expensive and rare ermine, sable and chinchilla. The remaining 15% of wild animals such as the raccoon from America and the red fox from Australia are hunted with tightly regulated quotas each year.