



## From old-woman's fava to fava ice-cream

The island of Santorini has recently officially received a "Protected Designation of Origin" for its famed fava bean from the EU, which is now designated as "fava Santorinis".

The fava bean has been growing on the volcanic island for more than 3,500 years, according to historical sources, and the local housewives have developed a plethora of ways for cooking it.

The most recent addition to Santorini's fava recipes is fava ice-cream. This is an ice-cream like no other, as it is not sweet but salty, and as such is not served as a desert but as an appetizer. And, naturally, it can be found only in Santorini.

Fava ice-cream, created about a month ago by a local restaurateur who wanted to come up with something "extreme" to show the prospects of this local staple product, will be the showcase item of a culinary event to be held on the island this weekend, titled "From old woman's fava to fava ice-cream" featuring the numerous traditional and imaginative recipes the locals have devised.

"Old woman's fava" (fava tis grias) is one of the oldest recipes passed down through tradition, and is a winter recipe that also used lard from the locally bred pits and tomato paste made from the local small-size tomatoes. Local fava recipes include meatless 'fava meatballs', fava soup, fava porridge, fava with rice and fava omelettes, to more modern dishes such as fava quiches and fava crepes, and a variety of meat and fish dishes topped with a creamy fava sauce.

## Young Greeks look abroad

Half of young people aged between 18 and 30 in Thessaloniki want to pursue careers abroad due to dwindling opportunities at home, and the same proportion are not interested in a job in the public sector, according to the results of a new survey.

The study, carried out by research firm *To The Point* on a sample of 590 people, challenges several stereotypes regarding the priorities of young Greeks. It showed that just 15 percent of respondents want to pursue the same profession as their parents.

Asked what they would most like to do, half of those questioned said that they would like to set up their own new technology company, while four out of 10 said they would like to work for a large private company.

Commenting on the findings, *To The Point's* managing director Dimitris Katsantonis said, "Young people are breaking with the past."

# Greece pays off drug makers

The government of debt-ridden Greece said it had struck a preliminary deal to pay off billions owed to drug and medical suppliers, ending a standoff that caused severe shortages at state hospitals and forced operations to be suspended.

Finance Minister George Papaconstantinou said a meeting with suppliers "led to an agreement in principle" regarding payment of euro 5.7 billion (\$A8.11 billion) in debts accrued since 2005. He said he expected companies to resume suspended supplies immediately.

Doctors say the dispute has caused a lack of vital materials at state hospitals, including drugs, and orthopedic and microbiologic equipment, and some hospitals even faced difficulties with food supplies. They stressed that patients' lives were not immediately at risk.

The head of an association representing Greek kidney patients warned that protracted delays in supplies might endanger 5,500 people undergoing dialysis at public hospitals.

"Currently, stocks should last for about a week, but any delay could set lives at risk," Giorgos Kastrinakis said.

Greece is in the throes of a debt crisis and narrowly avoided bankruptcy last month using the first installment of a euro110 billion European Union and International Monetary Fund bailout.

The country is under tight EU and IMF supervision, with a team of inspectors in Athens this week to review implementation of painful spending cuts made to secure the rescue loans.

Hospital loans contributed significantly to the exacerbation of Greece's budget deficit, which soared last year to 13.6 per cent of annual output. The centre-left government has pledged to cut budget overspending to 2.6 per cent of gross domestic product in 2014.

Papaconstantinou said hospital suppliers - 500 companies - would get euro 350 million (\$A498.19 million) in cash, and the rest through interest-free government bonds with a duration of up to three years. He said the government has already paid off euro 1.2 billion (\$A1.71 billion) in cash, mainly for debts from 2005 and 2006.

The announcement came a day after international agency Moody's Investors Service slashed its rating for Greek government bonds



Finance Minister George Papaconstantinou

to junk status due to risks associated with the EU and IMF rescue package.

The downgrade reflects concern the country could fail to meet its obligations to cut its deficit and pay down its debt.

Prime Minister George Papandreou said the downgrade was "unjustifiable," adding that deficit cuts so far are well on target, at around 40 per cent.

"It is extremely important to stay dedicated to meeting our commitments," Papandreou said.

"Our target is to attain a viable economy. So that one never even has to think of new sacrifices again, and not only that but so we can also replace what the Greek people have lost."

Government spokesman George Petalotis said the downgrade was "odd, to say the least."

"There was no sense or reason in this downgrade," Petalotis said.

On Tuesday, Moody's also downgraded Greek lenders National Bank of Greece, EFG Eurobank Ergasias, Alpha, Agricultural Bank of Greece, Emporiki and General.

AP

## Adult death rates lowest in Iceland, Cyprus

Study finds widening gap between highest, lowest premature death rates

Men in Iceland and women in Cyprus have the lowest risk of dying worldwide, a new study says.

In a survey from 1970 to 2010, researchers found a widening gap between countries with the highest and lowest premature death rates in adults aged 15 to 60.

The study was published in the medical journal *Lancet*.

The findings are in contrast to the trends in child and maternal mortality, where rates are mostly dropping worldwide. Health officials have long thought if child deaths were decreasing and health systems were improving, adult deaths would similarly decline. But that's not what researchers found.

