

Imagining California as an Island in the East of the Mediterranean

Tawla; Arabic for 'Backgammon.' Like our cuisine, backgammon is shared among the whole East of the Mediterranean region, going by 'Tavla' in Turkey, and 'Tavli' in Greece, and 'Tabula' in Byzantine Greek. In addition to 'Tawla,' the Arabs sometimes refer to the game as 'Shesh Besh.' The exact naming clearly reflects how widely shared this game is in the region as the word 'Shesh' is Farsi for the number '6' and 'Besh' is Turkish for the number '5'. Now what makes this name most exciting is the fact that Tawla also means table which brings it back to the concept behind our restaurant.

Despite a political history rich with shifting centers and borders, uncompromising climate and geography contributed to a common Eastern Mediterranean culinary identity. Its food is the product of millennia of cultural cross-pollination across Greece, Turkey, the Levant, and Iran. Yet, the cuisine of each of these regions has evolved its unique versions of the same dishes due to religions, the ebb and flow of empires, and its interaction with neighboring cultures.

Tawla weaves together these culinary connections without losing the diverse colors of each thread. We think of our restaurant as a mythical island that places Northern California at the culinary epicenter of the cosmopolitan Eastern Mediterranean coastal cities of Athens, Istanbul, Izmir, Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli, Beirut, Haifa and Alexandria.

We hope you enjoy the Tawla experience.

Azhar Hashem
Proprietor





BITES

IFTAR medjool date	1 ea
LOUZA cured pork, spicy kousa	3
BURNT GREEN CHICKPEAS cumin, vinegar	3
WARM OLIVES citrus, herbs	3
WILD PECANS aniseed, fennel pollen	4

BREAD + ACCOMPANIMENTS

HOUSE BREAD wheat bran crust	4
SEEDED BREAD sesame, nigella	5
CHEESE BOREK za'atar, sumac, feta, kashkaval	4
LAMB BOREK pine nuts, currants, baharat	5
THREE LABNEHS maras pepper and dried mint, za'atar and olive oil, hazelnut dukkah	8
SPRING PEA CHERMOULA coriander, cumin	7
TARATOR tahini, lemon, green garlic	6
ARTICHOKE SKORDALIA dry mint, mint oil	8

MEZE

8/14

FATTOUSH arugula, pita rusks, sumac onions, almonds, date vinaigrette
SPRING ONION ZEYTINYAGLI coriander, preserved lemon, green garlic
MARINATED ANCHOVIES olives, capers, za'atar, meyer lemon

10/16

BABY FAVAS almond skordalia
SMOKED WINGS date molasses, pistachios
CHARRED SNAP PEAS za'atar, feta

12/19

DELTA ASPARAGUS tarator, caramelized onion vinaigrette
WILD MORELS hummus balila, fiddleheads
MEATBALLS beef, pork and lamb, labneh, almond, spicy turmeric oil

21

LOUKANIKO pork sausage, spring vegetable stew, meyer lemon, sorrel
MUSHROOM MAQLUBA tomato, baharat

ILNA

MUSAKHAN allspice chicken, sumac onion bread, pine nuts 29
SAMAKEH HARRAH whole rockfish, spicy walnut stuffing, fig leaves 55

OUR FAMILY TABLE

A SPRING FEAST

44 per person*

Allow us to create a menu for you highlighting the best local produce through the lens of hospitality as practiced in homes throughout the Eastern Mediterranean. Each menu is unique according to availability, as well as any dietary restrictions or special requests you may have.

Below is a sample of what you may try tonight.

BREAD SERVICE + ACCOMPANIMENTS

LOUZA
BURNT GREEN CHICKPEAS
SPRING ONION ZEYTINYAGLI
FATTOUSH

DELTS ASPARAGUS
SMOKED WINGS

LOUKANIKO

THE TAWLA SOFRA

64 per person*

A *sofra* is the bountiful spread served at a celebratory feast marking a special occasion. This menu expands on the above with a greater emphasis on large-format dishes, meat, and fish. The *sofra* is for those who brought their appetite and would like to experience us at our best.

WINE PAIRING

three ounce pours | 36

2017 Tre Monti | Doppio - Frizzante | PIGNOLETTO
Emilia-Romagna, Italy

2017 Tessier Winery - Kristie Tacey | RIESLING
Zabala Vineyard | Arroyo Seco | Monterrey, California

2016 Cremisan | DABOUKI
Bethlehem | West Bank, Palestine

2012 Ouled Thaleb | Ait Souala | ARINARNOA, TANNAT, MALBEC
Zenata | Casablanca, Morocco

* Participation by the entire table is required.

We append a 6% service charge to every check to offer our staff full benefits.
Consuming raw or undercooked meat, poultry, eggs, or seafood may increase risk of food-borne illness.

