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Tyrini, Cheesfare Week



Cheese lovers rejoice! Today marks the beginning of ‘Tyrini’ the week where Greeks worldwide enjoy loads of dairy, cheese and cheese-based dishes, as it is the last week before Great Lent begins.

Tyrini is the last full week for eating dairy products before the fasting period begins and this lasts for around 49 to 50 days prior to Pascha.

Otherwise known as Cheesefare Week, it begins immediately after Meatfare Sunday, the final day of eating meat before Pascha.

This Sunday is known as Cheese Sunday and households traditionally make all sorts of cheese pies and other types of pasta dishes with cheese and butter. It’s the last big indulgence before a 40 day period of abstention from all animal products, which many people still follow in Greece and the Diaspora.

Greece produces a lot of cheese, at least 70 different regional kinds. They fall into several broad categories, such as brine cheeses; naturally fermented soft, sour cheeses; yellow cheeses; goats, sheep, and cow’s milk cheeses. Each region of Greece has its own kind of cheese preference however the most popular seems to

be Feta, Kefalograviera, Kaseri and Mizithra.

Cheese is also used in many popular Greek recipes including Tiropita, prawn saganaki, spanakopita, Galatopita and Galaktoboureko. Greeks are actually known as being amongst the greatest consumers of cheese in Europe.

Tyrini is an “in-between” week liturgically in the Orthodox Church. Each day prepares the faithful for Great Lent.

During Tyrini, the custom is to eat and make dishes using dairy products like milk, yogurt, and of course cheese! Because this is the period right before Great Lent, it is also the time to eat all dairy products in your fridge before going into Sarakosti.

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