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Πολίτικη κουζίνα *A touch of spice*

Director: Tassos Boulmetis

A **Touch of Spice** is a 2003 Greek film directed by **Tassos Boulmetis** and starring **Georges Corraface** as the character of the adult *Fanis Iakovides*. The character of Fanis Iakovides as a child is played by **Markos Osse** and the supporting role of Fanis's grandfather, *Vassilis*, is played by **Tassos Bandis**. The original Greek title is **Πολίτικη Κουζίνα (Politiki Kouzina)** which means *Cuisine of the City* and refers to the *Cuisine of Constantinople*. However, in the film's promotional material, the word *Politiki* of the title is depicted in capital letters, therefore allowing an alternative reading of the title, as Πολιτική Κουζίνα (*Politiki Kouzina*) which means *Political Cuisine* signifying the important role that politics played in the lives of the main characters.

Fanis will realize that contrary to what his grandfather had taught him, he forgot to put a little bit of spice in his own life. Consequently, he returns to Istanbul after three decades to visit his near-death grandfather. The main characters fit into a parallel metaphor - *Saime*, the old love of Fanis, a beautiful Turkish girl and tour guide, represents *Istanbul* (a cosmopolitan city called a "she" in Greek), Fanis is modern *Greece*, one that is still deeply in love with Istanbul and nostalgic for the past, while *Saime's* husband is a Turkish military doctor who represents a modern, pragmatic *Turkey*.



Exercise 1

■ **Talk about the herbs and spices mentioned in the film. Write down as many as you can.**

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■ **Can spices improve our mood? Do you believe that spices have a true pharmaceutical effect on people?**

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■ **Could you make a comparison between Greek and Oriental cuisine? Find similarities and differences.**

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■ **Do you like spices? Do you use them extensively when you cook? Do you think they improve / deteriorate the taste of our food?**

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Exercise 3

■ Match the two columns.

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| 1. turmeric | a. μαχλέπι |
| 2. saffron | b. μαστίχα |
| 3. pepper | c. κάρι |
| 4. garam masala | d. μοσχοκάρυδο |
| 5. mahlepi | e. τούρμερικ |
| 6. nutmeg | f. κόλιανδρος |
| 7. mace | g. πιπέρι |
| 8. curry | h. γκαράμ μασάλα |
| 9. mastic | i. μοσχοκάρυδο (αποξηραμένη φλούδα) |
| 10. coriander / cilantro | j. σαφράν / κρόκος |



Exercise 4

■ Translate into English the following savoury herbs.

- βασιλικός =
 δυόσμος =
 θρούμπι =
 δενδρολίβανο =
 άνηθος =
 εστραγκόν =
 μάραθος =
 μέντα =
 ρίγανη =
 φασκόμηλο =
 νεροκάρδαμο =
 μαντζουράνα =
 κάπαρη =
 θυμάρι =
 φύλλο δάφνης =
 μελισσόχορτο =
 μαϊντανός =



