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# Think outside the box: traditional meat desserts in the culture of Turkish cuisine

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## Abstract

Traditional culinary practices have the ethnic codes of the societies they belong to in terms of form and content features. These codes, which are shaped by many factors such as migration, war, famine, disaster, drought, social interaction, and religion from past to present, are also social indicators that separate cultures from each other. In traditional Turkish cuisine, there are many specific products that distinguish Anatolian society from other societies. One of them is the desserts made with meat. This study aims to identify the meat desserts in traditional Turkish cuisine and to make inferences on the content characteristics of the determined desserts. For the objectives of the study, firstly the Ottoman archives were examined and old cookbooks were reviewed. In this context, it has been determined that six desserts containing chicken, lamb, and fish (chicken breast pudding, neck dessert, anchovy dessert, quince dessert with minced meat) and fish and lamb glue (diamante dessert, diamante dessert with mutton legs) are included in traditional Turkish cuisine. As a result of the evaluations made on the current literature and old cookbooks, it has been understood that the desserts in question are on the verge of being forgotten and that ready-made jelly desserts have taken the place of diamante desserts. It is important for these desserts, which reflect the traditional taste of the Turkish nation, to be popularized and transformed into tourism products, in terms of protecting the ethnic and cultural heritage, adopting a sustainable structure, and promoting and marketing them.

**Keywords** Dessert, Meat dessert, Gastronomy, Tourism, Turkish cuisine

## Introduction

Gastronomic tourism, which focuses on the culinary culture of societies, is seen as an ideal marketing tool with its supply diversity, low-cost investment opportunities, and sustainable economic dimension [1]. This tool, which offers opportunities to tourists who are trying to get to know and experience the ethnic cuisine practices of different cultures, also has an important effect on shaping the behavioral intentions of individuals regarding their visits [2]. The degree of the mentioned effect is in a linear

relationship with the diversity and distinctness of the gastronomic value offered as a touristic product. This situation makes local cuisine practices a strategic element that increases the competitive advantage of destinations [3].

Turkish cuisine, with its roots dating back to ancient times and having a wide range of food variety, is among the most important cuisines of the world [4]. Cultural interaction, geographical conditions, belief systems, ecological balance, economic situation, and traditional structure constitute the basis of the variety of dishes that Turkish cuisine has [5]. Turkish cuisine generally has a richness shaped by meat, fermented milk, and cereal products [6]. This richness is supported by elements such as vegetables, fruits, olives, and olive oil. Meat has an important place among these product groups. In particular, mutton and beef are the main elements of many dishes, from soups to vegetable dishes, from pastries to

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desserts. Among them, the uses of meat in making desserts are quite remarkable.

This study aims to identify the forgotten meat desserts in traditional Turkish cuisine and to contribute to the sustainability of the identified desserts. The research questions that the study focuses on are listed below.

- What are the meat desserts in traditional Turkish cuisine?
- What are the form and content features of meat desserts in traditional Turkish cuisine?

## Method

The data used in this study, which was carried out to determine the meat desserts in traditional Turkish cuisine, were obtained through a systematic literature review. In this context, between 06.08.2022 and 09.30.2022, five databases focusing on elements related to Turkish culture were examined using six Turkish keywords that matched the study's topic. As a result of the examination, four desserts containing chicken, fish, and lamb and two desserts containing fish and lamb glue were determined. The criteria for the content of the databases are listed below.

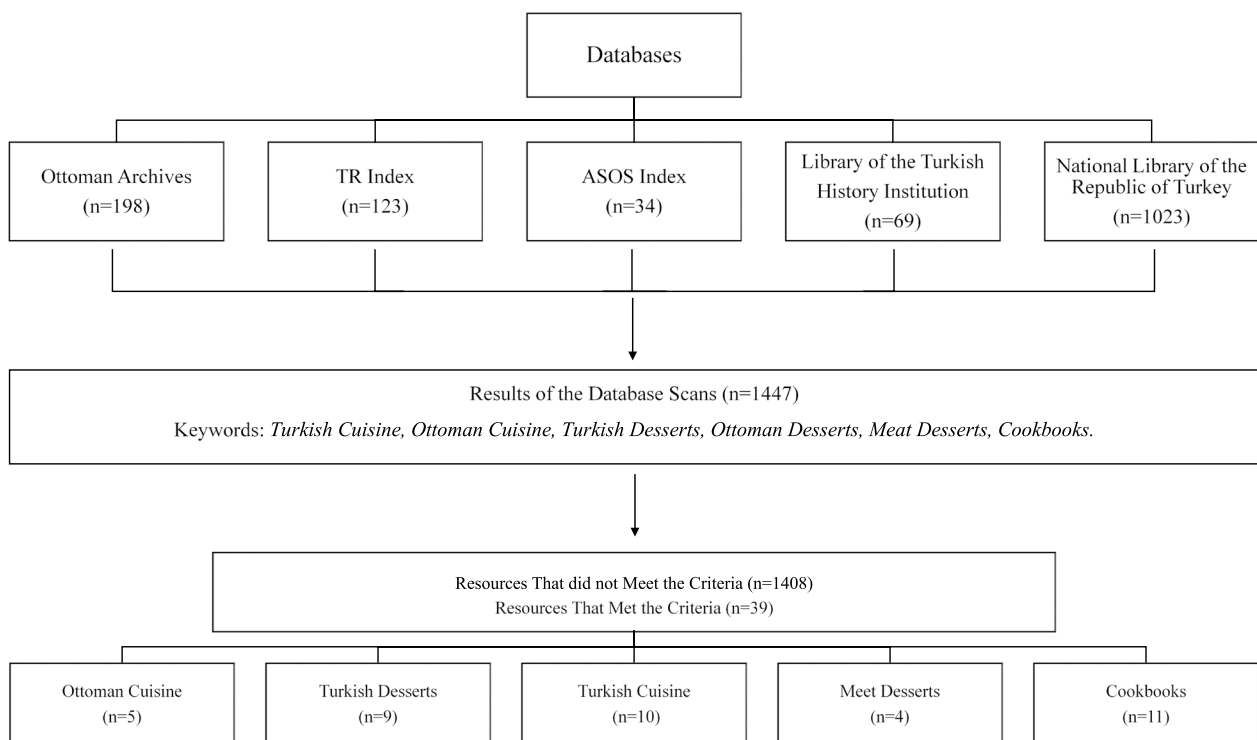
Inclusion criteria:

- Databases that include specific elements of Turkish culture.
- Archive documents should contain specified keywords.
- The articles should be published in scientific journals.

## Excluded resources

- Databases that do not include enough specific elements of Turkish culture.
- The studies which were carried out in fields, such as health and nutrition dietetics.
- The articles which were not published in scientific journals.
- Studies whose full texts could not be accessed.

As it is presented in Fig. 1, five different databases were used in the present study. As a result of the searches made on these databases, 1447 sources including the keywords: Turkish cuisine, Ottoman cuisine, Turkish desserts, Ottoman desserts, meat desserts and cookbooks were reached. Then the contents of these resources were checked. As a result of the controls, it was determined that 39 of these resources fully met the inclusion criteria and did not overlap among themselves.



**Fig. 1** The procedure of the database scans

After this determination, the same Turkish keywords were written to search engines (Google and Yandex). As a result of the searches, thousands of websites containing the keywords partially or completely were evaluated for approximately two days within the determined criteria. The criteria taken into account in the selection of website are listed below.

Inclusion criteria:

- Websites that directly match the research topic
- Websites should contain specified keywords
- Institutional and official websites

Excluded websites

- Websites designed for recreational purposes
- Personal blogs
- Social sharing platforms

In this context, 24 official and institutional websites which fully met the specified criteria were determined. Due to the partial repetition of the information on the mentioned sites, 10 websites were taken as reference in the research.

All sources included in the study were subjected to content analysis. In addition, after the analysis, the findings related to the research topic were marked and classified according to the content characteristics. In the conclusion part of the study, these findings were evaluated in the context of gastronomy tourism.

## Conceptual framework

### *Culture of the Turkish desserts*

The word sweet, which is defined by the Turkish Language Association (TLA) as foods made with sugar that taste like sugar or sugary things [7], is the general name of the foods served after lunch and dinner. This type of food, which is loved and consumed by almost all nations, is one of the specific components of traditional Turkish cuisine. The relevant literature traces the origin of this component to Central Asia, the homeland of the Turks. The main point of the aforementioned basis is that the Turks made multi-layered dumplings by putting various mixtures such as cream and honey between the thin pieces of bread (phyllos) that were prepared and baked one by one [8]. These desserts, generally called *katmer*, are also seen as the ancestors of *baklava*, one of the traditional desserts of Turkish cuisine [9].

With the arrival of the Turks, who led a nomadic and scattered life in Central Asia, to Anatolia, there have been important changes in the culture of Turkish desserts. In addition to pastry desserts, the introduction of fruit, milk, honey, molasses, and meat desserts into the

kitchen is one of these changes. The main reasons for these changes are the soil characteristics of Anatolia and the fact that the climate and vegetation have a different structure compared to Central Asia [10]. Along with the Anatolian Seljuks, a significant increase is seen in the varieties of desserts in the culture of Turkish cuisine [11].

During the Ottoman Empire, this increase enhanced exponentially. When old cookbooks are examined, it is seen that there are many Turkish desserts that were shaped in the mentioned periods, especially baklava made from phyllo, walnut, honey, molasses, and sugar; rose sugar made with rose, honey, and lemon; halvah made with sugar, oil, and peanuts; paluze made with molasses, honey, starch, and sugar; zerde prepared using saffron, sugar, and rice [12–15]. Halvah has an important place among the desserts in question. In the Ottoman palace, there was a special section called helvahane (the place where different types of halvah were prepared). In this section, in addition to the dessert, medicine was also produced by applying the prescriptions given by the master physician. Sources indicate that Topkapı Palace's helvahane is the first place in the world's culinary history to be designed separately from the main kitchen for confectionery and dessert making [16].

There are also old records that give information about the religious days when some desserts in Turkish cuisine culture were dished out and the ceremonies held on these days. These records also emphasize the intangible cultural aspect of the desserts in question (traditions, social perceptions and practices etc.). A few of these records are listed in Table 1 [17–23].

This situation makes dessert a dynamic metaphor at the center of social practices in Turkish culture. For example, the serving of fifty-three kinds of desserts at the circumcision wedding organized by Suleiman the Magnificent, the 10th Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, for his sons Cihangir and Bayezid in 1539 [24, 25] can be considered as a metaphor for the state's hard and soft power, wealth, generosity and pride. Another version of this reflection is the baklava processions. Baklava processions consisted of soldiers carrying the baklava offered by the sultan to the soldiers. On the day of the Hirka-i Saadet (cardigan of the Prophet Mohammed) visit, trays of baklava were lined up in front of Matbah-ı Âmire (palace's kitchen), wrapped in futa, to be given to every ten soldiers of the sultan's household troops on the account of one tray. The first tray was taken by the Silahdar Ağa to be presented to the sultan, who was the number one Janissary. Then, two people from each group would take a tray, the chiefs of the division would fall in front of them and in this way, they would go to their barracks among the applause of the Istanbulites lined up on both sides of the road of military ceremony. Baklava trays and futas were delivered to

**Table 1** Religious days when some desserts in Turkish culture are dished out

Desserts	Religious days	The meaning and significance of the day
Baklava	Qadr night	The night when the verses of the Quran began to descent
	Mawlif An-nabi	The day when Muhammad was born
	Hirka-i Serif day	The day when Muhammad's cardigan is opened to visitors
Halvah	Bara'at night	An important night when prayers are accepted
Zerde	Ramadan feast	Feast celebrated after Ramadan
	Bara'at night	An important night when prayers are accepted
Ashura	Muharram month	The month when fighting is considered haram

the palace the next day. [26]. This practice, which caused the applause and prestige of the sultanate and the soldier in the eyes of the people, ended with the abolition of the Janissaries [27] but it is kept alive as a representative in today's Turkey.

There is also information about the culture of Turkish desserts in literary sources. These works, which are generally in the type of Divan poetry, are important in terms of revealing the sweet variety of the culture of Turkish cuisine, which were written in the sixteenth century. It is a common trend to use these desserts as a means of simile in poems. The comparison such as sugar candy, rosemary, and senbuse on the lips of your lover; paluden to the lover's skin; almond sugar to the lover's tongue and eyes; flax halvah to the lovers' skin; rose jam to the lips and words of a lover are the most obvious example of this trend [28].

Evliya Çelebi, one of the leading travelers of the seventeenth century, also includes notes that shed light on the traditional culture of Turkish desserts in his work called *Seyahatname*. Celebi, who bases the dessert eating habits of Turks on a religious basis, mentions various desserts and sweeteners in Ottoman cuisine in his work [29]. Palude, zerde, ashura, baklava, perverde, and halvah have an important place among these desserts, which are usually made using honey, molasses, nuts, sugar types and fruit. Çelebi states that palude is a dessert sweetened with honey and relieves the throat. There is also information in the *Seyahatname* that ashura, which is prepared using cereals, fruits, nuts, and various sweeteners, was a meal cooked by the prophet Noah after the Flood [30]. Among the information Çelebi conveyed about the culture of Turkish desserts, the most interesting one is about baklava. He associated the quality of the baklava with the thinness of the rolled pastry and stated that the coin left on good baklava should pierce the pastry and sink into the dessert [31]. It is also possible to evaluate this application as one of the classical sensory analysis methods used to determine whether the thinness and crispness levels of baklava phyllo are in accordance with the standards.

Ağdiye Risalesi, which is known as the first cookbook written in Turkish by Dürrîzâde Nurullah Mehmed between 1775 and 1778, is important in terms of revealing the period's fondness for sweets, especially kadayif and halvah [13]. Studies have indicated that kadayif, which has an ancient history, was included in the list of dishes given in kitchens during the Seljuk and Anatolian Principalities [32]. The works of Muhammed Bin Mahmud Şirvani, one of the important physicians of the fifteenth century, and an archive document dated 973 in the Islamic Calendar (1566 in the Gregorian Calendar) can be considered as the oldest official records of halvah [14, 33].

It can be said that the fondness for desserts and sugary foods and drinks made from fruit juices in Ottoman cuisine continued in the nineteenth century as well. Desserts, which are seen as a symbol of happiness, gained a ceremonial nature in this period. It is seen that serving baklava and kadayif on special occasions such as marriage and circumcision feasts has become a tradition. Again, it is understood that sherbet dumplings, halvah, milk puddings, fruit desserts, sherbets, and jams were very popular in the cuisine of Istanbul in this period [29].

## Results

When the cookbooks written in the Ottoman period are examined, it is seen that the culture of Turkish desserts is not only formed around the dough, milk, semolina, and fruit varieties; besides, it is seen that chicken, mutton, and lamb and fish gelatin, which is called glue, are also used in dessert making. In today's Turkey, it is possible to come across some local desserts made from minced meat and fish. Within the scope of the study, information and images are presented about chicken breast pudding, neck dessert, quince dessert with minced meat, anchovy dessert, diamante desert, and diamante dessert with mutton legs below. The images were taken by the researcher during the production of the desserts in the Kilis University, Vocational School of Tourism and Hotel Management, Cookery Program's Application Kitchen.

### Chicken breast pudding

Chicken breast pudding is a kind of milk dessert prepared using milk, sugar, rice flour, and chicken meat. It is rumored that chicken breast passed from Rome to Byzantium and from Byzantium to the Ottoman Empire. Sources also mention the existence of a dessert made from chicken meat in Apicius' cookbook known as *De re Coquinaria*, and that there were many types of custard with chicken breast in Medieval Arabian cuisine. Chicken breast, which has an important place in the Ottoman palace cuisine and is known to be frequently cooked for the Conqueror of Istanbul, Mehmet II (1432–1481), is included in the records of the circumcision feast of the children of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (1494–1566), Princes Bayezid and Cihangir, and it is known that Friedrich Unger, the German Confectioner of King Otto of Greece, who visited Istanbul in 1835, added information about chicken breast to his notes. It is possible to say that Turkey is the only country where this dessert, maintains its popularity [34–36].

The basic ingredients of chicken breast pudding, which is one of the traditional pudding types of Turkish cuisine, are chicken meat (chicken tenderloin), milk, sugar, vanilla, butter, starch, and rice flour [37]. The preference for the tenderloin portion of the chicken in dessert is related to the suitability of its texture for making pudding. The starch used to increase the consistency is crucial, which is made from corn (Fig. 2).

Mehmet Kamil's book called *Melceü't-Tabbâhîn* (The Cooks' Shelter), which was published in 1844, contains

some details about the meat used in the desserts and the service of them. Some of these details are washing the meat crushed in a mortar twice in cold water after boiling in order to tolerate the dominant taste of meat and sprinkling cinnamon powder on the dessert during service [12].

The most important point to be considered in the preparation of chicken breast pudding is boiling the meat thoroughly, crushing it in a mortar until it becomes stringy, pouring it into the boiling pudding, and cooking it over low heat until it becomes like gum [38]. Chicken breast pudding, the production stage of which is more complex than other pudding types, is still produced by commercial enterprises in Turkey. There is also a meatless version of the dessert called fake chicken breast pudding, which is often made at home (Fig. 3).

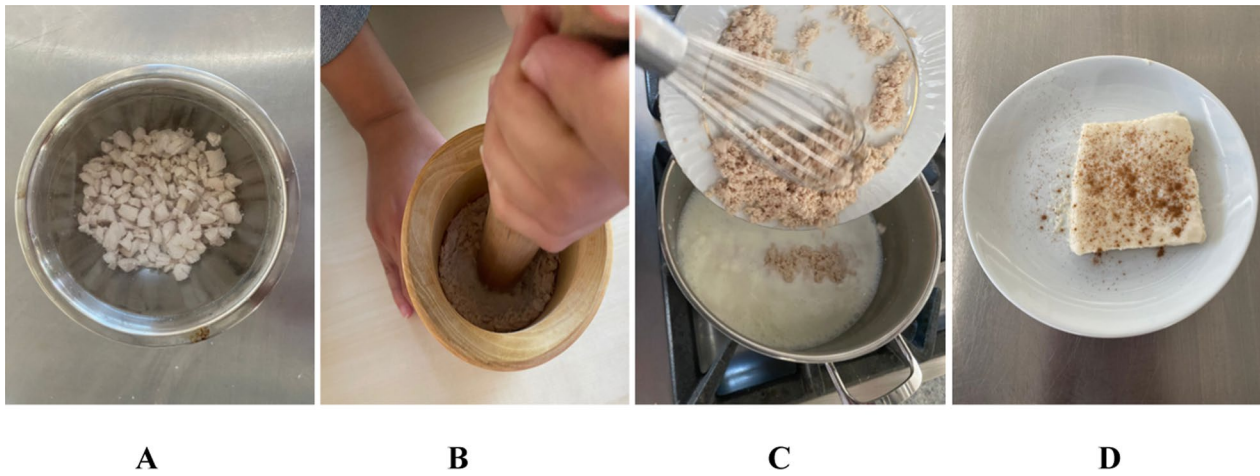
### Neck dessert

One of the leading flavors of Ottoman Palace's Cuisine, neck dessert is a traditional product prepared using mutton, sugar, and fruits. The most specific feature of the product is the use of neck meat, which gives the dessert its name. The fact that the neck meat is soft and unnerved can be considered as the main reason for this approach. At first glance, the product, which resembles *mutancana*, an Ottoman dish with meat and fruits, differs from *mutancana* because it contains six glasses of sugar and fruit (plum, apricot) [39]. It is also stated that the neck



**Fig. 2** Ingredients of the chicken breast pudding





**Fig. 3** Preparation process of the chicken breast pudding. **A** boiled chicken meat, **B** crushing process of the chicken meat, **C** cooking process, **D** presentation

dessert, which is described as one of the unique flavors of the Aegean region, is made from sacrificial meat [40].

Neck dessert has a wide range of ingredients. The main ingredients of the dessert are lamb neck, sugar, almonds, plums, pine nuts, apricots, cinnamon, and cloves. Regularly removing the foam, called kefi, that accumulates on the surface of the water while the neck meat is boiled, is essential for obtaining the desired

flavor. The amount of sugar used in dessert varies according to the amount of neck meat used. About six cups of sugar are used for the dessert made using one lamb neck [39] (Fig. 4).

Neck dessert has a complex structure in terms of shape and content. The main reason for this is the excess of the type of content and the details that shape the cooking process. Some of these details include draining the boiled



**Fig. 4** Ingredients of the neck dessert

meat thoroughly, rinsing it with cold water many times, shredding it by hand, cooking it first on high and then on low heat, stirring the mixture in the pot with a wooden spoon at regular intervals during cooking, and mashing the meat for at least 10 min after cooking [39].

The most specific ingredient of the neck dessert is lamb. Since bovine meat is harder than lamb meat, it is not preferred in this dessert. The use of cinnamon and cloves during cooking is to tolerate the dominant taste of meat. For this purpose, sometimes mastic gum is added to the dessert. Prunes and apricots, which are among the main ingredients of the dessert, are used to enrich the aromatic structure of the product [39]. The popularity of this dessert, in which different dried fruits can be added during the cooking process, is decreasing day by day. Today, it is possible to find neck dessert in the Aegean region [40] (Fig. 5).

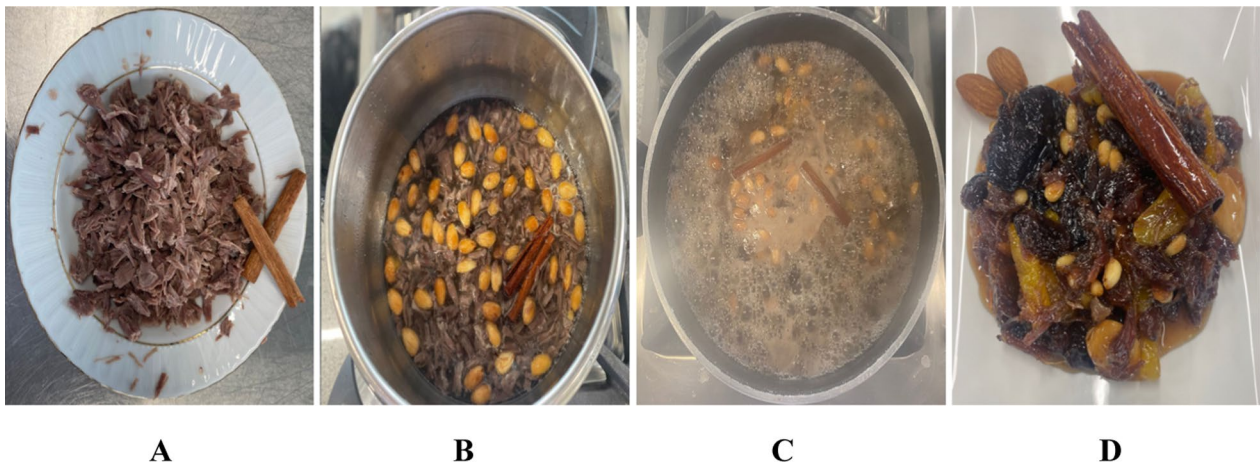
#### Quince dessert with minced meat

Quince, whose homeland is known as Northwest Iran, Turkistan, and Anatolia, is one of the fruits that is used quite frequently in Turkish cuisine [41]. Cookbooks written in the Ottoman period reveal that this fruit was especially used in making meat dishes and desserts [12, 14]. *Terkib-i seveciliye* (meat with quince), lamb kebab with quince, rice with quince, quince borani, and Caucasian-style quince galle are some of the meat dishes in question [41]. The most famous dessert made with quince is the quince dessert. Quince dessert, which does not have a complex structure, is known in almost every region of Turkey, and it is widely consumed especially in Bursa, the first capital of the Ottoman Empire [42]. There are also versions of this dessert made in pots and ovens for our day. The variety of the dessert made using minced meat is remarkable.

Quince dessert with minced meat is usually made in autumn and winter when fresh quince can be found. This dessert has seven main ingredients: quince, raisins, currants, peanuts, cinnamon sticks, granulated sugar, butter, and minced meat. A type of quince called bread quince is used in the dessert. This quince is distinguished from other species by its large size, durability, and light hairy structure. The type of meat used in the dessert is ground beef [43, 44]. The main reason for this preference is that ground beef is odorless. Molasses can also be added to the dessert (Fig. 6).

The first thing to do while preparing quince dessert with minced meat is to remove the seeds from the quince by carving method. Thanks to this process, both the hard part called the core house is removed and space is made for the filling material of the dessert. The filling material, which is generally prepared by using lamb, grapes, stuffed grapes, and molasses, can also be prepared by adding other ingredients (rice, powdered cinnamon, etc.) upon request. The lamb meat used must have gone through the roasting process. It is possible to say that this dessert [44], which is thought to have passed into the Ottoman cuisine from the Arab culture, is on the verge of being forgotten.

In quince dessert with minced meat, which is generally prepared in the same way as the classic quince dessert, the mixture prepared by using roasted minced meat is placed in quinces with a cut in the middle, and then baked for a while or cooked in a pot. The main sweetener used in dessert is sucrose. In addition to sucrose, molasses and puerperal sugar can be added to the dessert. Quince seeds, which are extracted during the carving stage, are put into the pot during cooking to add color and consistency to the dessert. Neck dessert is served optionally with milk cream [42, 44] (Fig. 7).

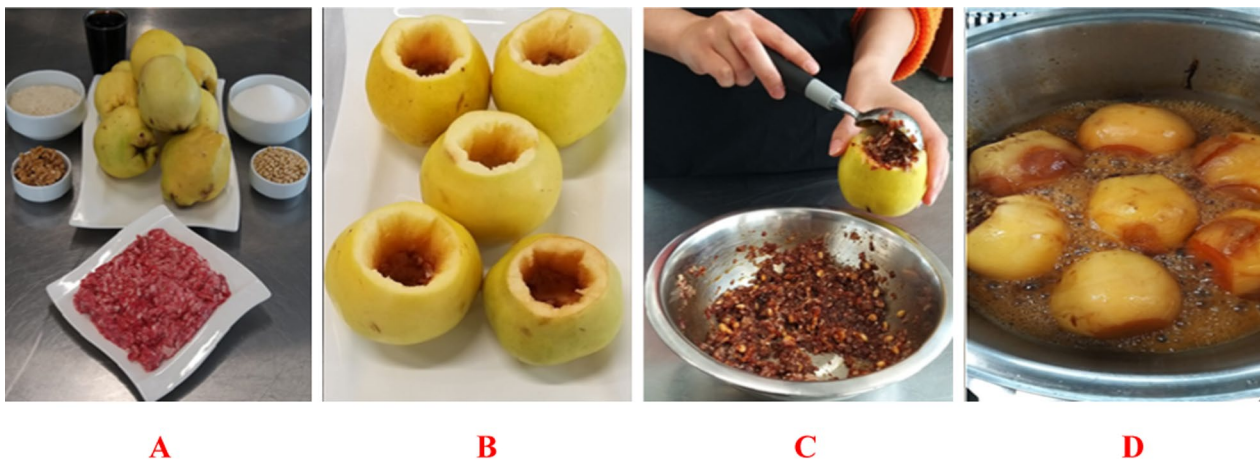


**Fig. 5** Preparation process of the neck dessert. **A** boiled neck meat, **B** and **C** cooking process, **D** presentation





**Fig. 6** Quince dessert with minced meat



**Fig. 7** Preparation process of the quince dessert with minced meat. **A** Ingredients of the quince dessert with minced meat, **B** and **C** preparation steps, **D** cooking phase

### Anchovy dessert

Surrounded by seas on three sides, Turkey is a country rich in fish diversity. This situation increased the number of fish dishes in Turkish cuisine in the process and laid the groundwork for the development of innovative recipes that put fish in the center. Among these recipes, which are generally designed as a main course, there is also a dessert made from fish. The main ingredient of this dessert is anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*), which has a very high protein value [45]. It is possible to list the side

ingredients of the dessert as sherbet made of sugar, fruit varieties, and flour (Fig. 8).

Anchovy dessert, one of the iconic flavors of the Black Sea region, is prepared by frying dough balls containing fish and dipping them in sugar syrup. If desired, the dough balls can also be baked in the oven. During the service, a mixture of cooked fruit is added to the dessert to suppress the dominant smell of fish and flavor the dessert. The materials used as decoration materials are generally crushed hazelnuts, and pistachios [46].





**Fig. 8** Anchovy dessert

There are various types of anchovy fish used in the dessert. The preferred variety in anchovy dessert is the Black Sea anchovy, which is caught from the cool and less salty waters of the Black Sea. In the eastern Black Sea region, in the second week of October, fishermen go out to sea by praying and sacrificing, and they hunt anchovies with purse seines [47].

The most important point to be considered while preparing anchovy dessert is fish cleaning. The fish to be used should first be washed by rubbing in cold water,

the internal organs should be removed, and the head and awn parts should be removed and made into fillets. The dough for the dessert should have the consistency of an earlobe. Filleted anchovies are imprisoned in this dough and subjected to frying. The frying process continues until the dough balls turn pink. Apple, orange, and peach are generally used in the production of the fruit mixture that will be poured into the dessert during service. If desired, different fruits can be added [46]. This mixture poured over the dessert is an important



**A**

**B**

**C**

**D**

**Fig. 9** Preparation process of the anchovy dessert. **A** anchovy fillet, **B** covering anchovies with dough, **C** cooking process, **D** sherbeting phase

step that distinguishes the dessert from other sherbet desserts (Fig. 9).

#### Diamante dessert

Diamante dessert is one of the jelly desserts in the Ottoman palace's cuisine. It is the animal gelatin released during boiling that gives the desired consistency to this dessert, in which boiled trotter or shank juice is used instead of meat in its production. Sources indicated that fish glue is used in the cooking process of diamante dessert. Fish glue is a type of gelatin obtained from a membrane-like bag located under the backbone of a sturgeon. This gelatin, which the Ottoman people called *isrişem* and *tutkal-ı mahi*, was one of the expensive materials of the period. It is stated in an Ottoman document dated 1260 in the Islamic calendar (1844 in the Gregorian calendar) that Tavernier, one of the 17th-century French travelers, admired the fish glue [48]. The traditional recipe of diamante dessert, whose basic ingredients are sugar, fruit syrups, rose water, flower water, fish glue, milk cream, is given in *Melceü't-Tabbâhin* (1844) as follows [12]:

*“Three to five dirhams of fish glue are soaked in warm water. The syrup made from sugar and fruit syrup is transferred to a clean pot. Melted fish glue is added to the pot and boiled until it thickens. The diamante dessert that reaches the desired consistency is put on the plates. After this process, the plates are placed in water or on snow to allow them to freeze. Diamante dessert is served in various shapes.”*

Diamante dessert, which we can describe as the version of the fruit jelly made in today's kitchens hundreds of years ago, differs from its counterparts in terms of taste.

#### Diamante dessert with mutton legs

Diamante dessert with mutton legs is the version of diamante dessert made with a broth of the mutton legs. The traditional recipe of this dessert, which has no differences from the diamante dessert in terms of shape, can be found in *Melceü't-Tabbâhin*. Due to the technological developments in the culinary field, diamante dessert with mutton legs has been replaced by jelly desserts made with industrial gelatins, such as desserts made with fish glue. Diamante desserts were not prepared by the researcher as natural fish glue and sheep gelatin could not be obtained. Therefore, the images of these desserts were not included in the study.

## Discussion

Desserts, which have been one of the basic components of the tables from past to present, are usually made using milk, sugar, dough, and various fruits. It can be said that the shape and content characteristics of desserts vary according to the geography and the ethnic structures of the societies they belong to. For example, Turkish society, who lived a nomadic life in Central Asia in the past and mostly engaged in animal husbandry, frequently used meat and fermented dairy products in their daily diets [50], and also used meat products in some desserts.

Meat desserts are among the specific elements of traditional Turkish cuisine. Fish and lamb gelatins obtained by traditional methods are sometimes used in the production of these desserts, which are usually prepared using chicken, lamb, and fish. In world cuisines, the use of meat in dessert making is almost negligible. Therefore, the literature on meat desserts is also very limited. The results of the present study point to the existence of puddings similar to chicken breast pudding in the past. The type of pudding, called *ma'muniyya* (chicken breast pudding-like dessert) in the Arab world, is one of them. Krondl stated that *ma'muniyya*, which dates back to the seventh century, was made with whole rice sweetened with honey and cooked chicken breast meat [51]. Boyle stated that the chicken breast pudding-like dessert of Medieval Europe was “*blancmange*”, and in his cookbook: “The Art of Cookery” written in the thirteenth century by the famous Italian chef Maestro Martino, he emphasized that “*blancmange*” is a dessert consisting of five ingredients (almond milk, chicken breast meat, sugar, white bread, and rose water) [52]. The *ma'muniyya* in today's Syria has changed in terms of content. *Ma'muniyya*, whose meat version is completely forgotten, has turned into a kind of semolina halva. Likewise, a meaty version of the *blancmange* is not found today. In the current study, no evidence was found regarding the use of red meat and fish in making desserts other than Turkish cuisine. However, there are some dessert-like foods, such as the Moroccan chicken bastille. Moroccan chicken bastille, which has a rich content (chicken meat, chicken broth, phyllo, onion, egg, coriander, turmeric, black pepper, ginger, honey, almonds, pistachios, etc.), resembles a pie because it is served by sprinkling powdered sugar on it. It is seen as the holy symbol of religious festivals [53]. Additionally, it can be mentioned that there are some applications regarding the use of chocolate and sugar in meals. Candied bacon and chocolate-covered bacon are some of these applications [54]. Developed with an innovative approach, these products may draw attention in terms of using contrasting flavors together.

## Conclusion

In this study, meat desserts, which are one of the specific components of Turkish dessert culture, are focused on. The main reason for this approach is that these desserts, which we can describe as extraordinary due to their ingredients, are about to be forgotten and their sustainability is in danger. In this context, firstly, five databases with rich content about Turkish culture were scanned using the keywords "Turkish cuisine, Ottoman cuisine, Turkish desserts, Ottoman desserts, meat desserts, cookbooks". As a result of the content analysis made on the sources reached, the data that overlapped with the research topic were marked and included in the scope of the study. In addition to these, twenty-four Web sites with the same keywords written in search engines and containing content related to the research questions were scrutinized. As a result of the review, it was determined that six desserts containing meat, fish glue, and broth (chicken breast pudding, neck dessert, quince dessert with minced meat, diamante dessert, diamante dessert with mutton legs, and anchovy dessert) were found in Turkish cuisine. The results also revealed that diamante dessert and diamante dessert with mutton legs were made in the period of the Ottoman Empire, while chicken breast pudding, neck dessert, and quince dessert with minced meat were made in both the periods of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey. Anchovy dessert, on the other hand, is among the desserts of the period of the Republic of Turkey.

In addition to these, it has been found that diamante dessert and diamante dessert with mutton legs made using fish and lamb glue have been replaced by jelly desserts in the process, and there are some websites that feature different forms of quince dessert with minced meat. Likewise, it has been determined that the neck dessert is on a restaurant menu, and the anchovy dessert is a new type of dessert unique to the Black Sea region. It has been determined that the chicken breast pudding, which is stated to have passed into Turkish cuisine from Rome and Byzantium, is still popular in Turkey and is still produced by some commercial enterprises [35, 36]. There is also a meatless version of the dessert called fake chicken breast pudding, which is often made by housewives.

Ethnic foods, which are accepted as one of the most important arguments of gastronomic tourism today, have become an attraction for tourists who are in search of different tastes. Savarin's saying of "The discovery of a new food contributes more to the happiness of the human race than the discovery of a star" [49] supports this conclusion. In this context, it is possible to say that the transformation of meat desserts in Turkish cuisine into touristic products is necessary both for tourism marketing and for the protection of ethnic and cultural heritage.

Therefore, it is an important issue to plan and effectively manage the activities related to the promotion of these desserts. From this point of view, it can be said that it would be beneficial to include the meat desserts identified during the research on restaurant menus and to present them as ethnic varieties in international gastronomy festivals. Likewise, the uses of related desserts as the tools of gastro diplomacy in diplomatic negotiations are also important in terms of representing Turkey's culinary-themed soft power and promoting it internationally.

A significant part of Turkish desserts, which have a wide range in terms of variety, are not prepared today. This situation causes some desserts to face the danger of being forgotten in the process. The neglect of the recipes in the Ottoman cookbooks also triggers this situation. It has become a necessity to examine the archive documents and historical manuscripts found in Anatolia, especially in the geography where the Ottomans ruled in the past (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Arabia, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, etc.) for the detection of forgotten desserts. In addition to these, it is thought that interviews with intangible cultural heritage transmitters residing in various regions of Turkey may prepare the ground for the identification of many desserts that differ in form and content, and their recording and transfer to future generations.

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## Authors' contributions

All the authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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