Suvlaki: An Athenian Grill

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Launched in July 2015, **Suvlaki** is a sleek, modern, fast casual restaurant serving delicious Greek street food suvlaki. The Athenian grill house will provide Soho with a unique new concept from lunch to dinner, take away to delivery and for late night bites.

"*The perception of Greek food in the UK is often outdated. Greek street food in particular, which revolves around 'suvlaki', a grilled meat skewer eaten plain or inside a wrap, has a very limited presence outside Greece, yet can be a great substitute and competitor to burgers, burritos and hotdogs. Our vision is to bring suvlaki to Soho's discerning food lovers and, more generally, to educate the London audience with regard to the product. We aim to show how suvlaki can be fresh, tasty and healthy, fast and casual, sexy and trendy,*"comments Yannis Theodorakakos who co-owns the restaurant with his Greek business partner Michael Kantartzis.

Acclaimed Greek chef Elias Mamalakis, has been brought onboard permanently as a consultant chef, starting with the main menu. The much loved Greek culinary figure who appears frequently on TV in Greece has also designed several signature dishes for **Suvlaki**.The restaurant will offer options including lamb, chicken, pork and vegetables wrapped in pita bread or served on skewers. All meat is delivered fresh and prepared daily, with the best cuts chosen for the best tasting suvlaki. The suvlakis will be cooked on a robata-style grill with top quality charcoal – no chemicals/additives, just pure, highly carbonized wood. The menu will also include sides such as Elias' Fresh Herb and Vegetable Salad and Baked Feta. A fully Greek wine menu is also offered alongside rare bottled craft beers from selected microbreweries in Greece.

Athens' notorious, satirical graffiti has provided inspirations for the brand's design, reflecting the authentic urban side of Greece that is far removed from the touristic clichés of Greek eateries worldwide. London-based, Greek interior designer Afroditi Krassa says "*In the past year there has been a massive wave of Greek innovative hospitality concepts opening in London. As a Greek designer, I am fascinated by Athens' culinary reinvention and its representation within the UK. Gone are the days of the Greek tavern, bouzouki dancing and plate smashing. Greece is currently presenting itself as one of the creative powerhouses of Europe and our brand and interior design is picking up on this energy: raw, witty and idiosyncratic. The small restaurant will be buzzing with energy and pace, show off grilling, large communal tables and bold colours.*"

The restaurant seats 34 and includes casual dining tables. The interior design is based on a palette of blues, from inky petrol blues to bright turquoise hues, which have been used throughout the scheme in a myriad of rich textures, finishes and patterns. The result is dark and classic; resourceful and understated. The feature grill has been positioned prominently to the shop front to create theatre and showcase the provenance of ingredients and specialist grilling. Products from Afroditi Krassa's signature collection *AKollection* have been used throughout the interior, including the Moroccan made Piano Tiles and beveled glass Pentagon pendant lamps, creating a warm and bold feature reflecting light along the ceiling. Furniture and bric-a-brac are sourced and made in Greece, alongside Greek marble table tops and Italian lava stone worktops. The feature Greek column cladded wall is produced by a repetition of over 80 reclaimed, vintage Italian terrazzo fluted column sections.

Suvlaki will introduce this popular Greek street food to the British public, turning it into a respected, quality snack to join other popular examples in the high end fast food market.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Suvlaki

21, Bateman Street

London

W1D 3AL

***Suvlaki* opening times**

Monday to Thursday: midday -11:30pm

Friday and Saturday: midday - midnight

Sunday: midday – 10:30pm

Yannis Theodorakakos came to the UK in 1997 from his home town Athens to work in London straight after graduating high school. He had a vision of introducing London to this famous Greek food. He recently left his job in finance to engage full time with Suvlaki and his Greek business partner Michael Kantartzis who is a well-respected heart surgeon.

Afroditi Krassa has led her eponymous design studio from strength to strength in its 12 years of operation. Taking design as a practical methodology, Krassa established the studio on graduation from the RCA and has increased the potential of design and branding manifold, adding depth to creative processes and realising that brands need to look beyond interior spaces to get their message communicated, a challenge she relishes with intense passion and commitment. This holistic approach to design means that the studio has worked with leading hospitality brands including Itsu, Sketch, Café Rouge, Dishoom, Heston Blumenthal and Curzon Cinemas, where the involvement stretches way beyond design as an environmental element, incorporating product design, ambient intention and brand philosophy.

Elias Mamalakis was born in Athens and originally studied Economics. It was in his mid-forties that he decided to pursue his passion for cooking on a professional level. Elias has written 9 books (one of which is a novel) that relate to cooking and his signature "bon viveur" credo, in addition to producing a CD featuring recipes and short stories. In April 2007 he became the Editor in Chief of "Olive" magazine's Greek edition. For the past four years, Elias has been hosting Mega Channel's "*Boukia kai Sychorio"* (which loosely translates into "So Delicious"). The show is a virtual tour through Greece, the Mediterranean and Europe that focuses on local cuisine and culture. In 2007, after a nationwide vote by the leading lifestyle magazine in Greece, he was awarded as the most popular TV persona in Greece.

www.suvlaki.co.uk

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