"Though there are exceptions, tradition rarely honors unhealthy habits … Traditional diets are compatible with the respective ecosystem and are, more often than not, supportive of the local economy." ~ Antonia Trichopoulou, MD, PhD

Anyone that has studied the Mediterranean diet has likely come across the work of the "mother of the Mediterranean diet," Antonia Trichopoulou, MD, PhD, President of the Hellenic Health Foundation and Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre of Nutrition, Medical School at the University of Athens (read Antonia's bio here).

Hailing from the Mediterranean itself, Greece specifically, Antonia has dedicated her scientific work to studying public health nutrition and nutrition epidemiology, with emphasis on the health effects of the Mediterranean diet and traditional foods. She was a leading researcher in the 1980s when interest around the Mediterranean diet resurged, and she is proud to have been "present at the universal recognition" of the Mediterranean diet during Oldways' 1993 conference when we unveiled the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid (you can read her reflection here).

When it comes to the Mediterranean diet, no one has been more passionate about olive oil and its importance in a healthy diet than Antonia. As she says, **"It's the olive oil which makes the vegetables taste so wonderful in Greece."** For our final International Mediterranean Diet Month Q&A, we wanted to highlight and celebrate Antonia Trichopoulou's devotion and expertise in all things Med Diet. An exclusive Med diet presentation, which Antonia gave at our Finding Common Ground Conference last November, is also embedded below the text.

Oldways: *What are some of your favorite traditional Mediterranean foods that show up regularly on your table?*

Antonia Trichopoulou: "Ladera" (from *ladi* — λάδι — the Greek name of olive oil) means mainly plant-based foods (e.g. eggplants, okra, fresh beans, legumes) cooked in plenty of olive oil; garlic, onion, tomato, and various herbs and spices (parsley, oregano, basilica, dill, spearmint, etc.) are added. The "Ladera" provides macronutrients and a wide range of micronutrients that meet many recommended daily allowances.

This website uses cookies to make your website experience better. By using this site, you agree to the Privacy Policy.
I accept

OW: *Which health benefits associated with the Mediterranean diet are most striking, in your opinion?*

This website uses cookies to make your website experience better. By using this site, you agree to the Privacy Policy.

I accept

AT: The fact that this diet has considerable beneficial health effects; is based on studies which have indicated convincing inverse associations with overall mortality and with the incidence of coronary heart disease and thrombotic stroke; compelling inverse associations with incidence of cancer overall (including, possibly, incidence of breast and colorectal cancer); likely inverse association with the incidence of adult-onset diabetes mellitus and possibly with the incidence of hip fractures. There have also been randomized trials supporting a beneficial role of the Mediterranean diet on the incidence of cardiovascular events and of survival from coronary heart disease.

After all, this diet is not only health promoting, as the overwhelming evidence indicates, but also delicious, as many of those who have tried variations of it readily acknowledged.

OW: *Is there any new area of research around the Mediterranean diet and health that seems promising?*

AT: Recent evidence suggest that greater adherence to the Mediterranean diet is associated with longer telomeres. These results further support the benefits of adherence to the Mediterranean diet for promoting health and longevity.

OW: *What advice do you have for people who want to follow a Mediterranean diet but don't think their modern-day lifestyles would support this way of eating and living?*

AT: To try to cook ladera at home.

ADD A COMMENT

YOUR NAME *

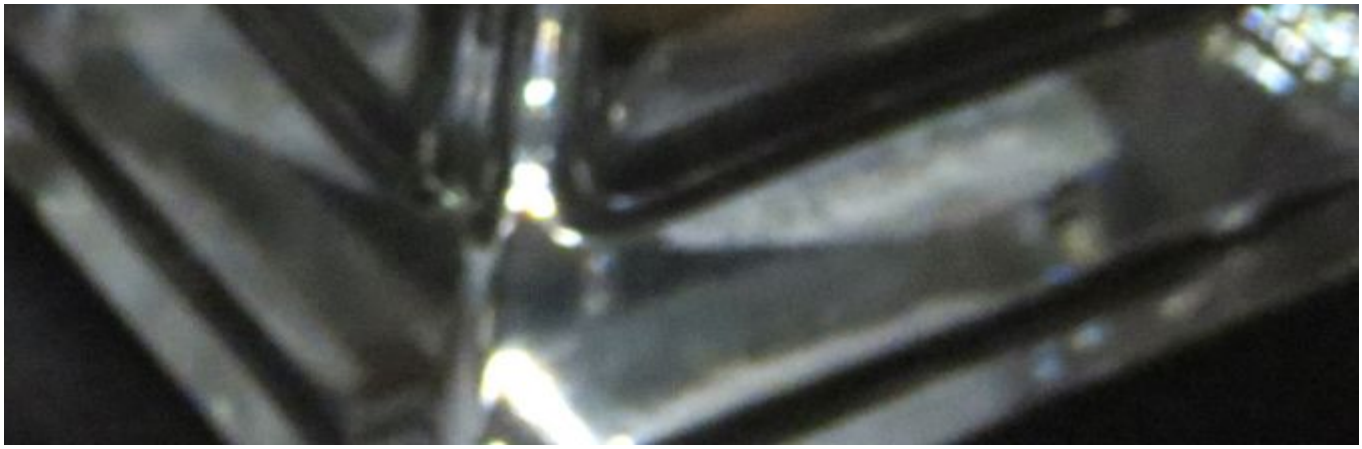
COMMENT *

This website uses cookies to make your website experience better. By using this site, you agree to the Privacy Policy.

I accept

This website uses cookies to make your website experience better. By using this site, you agree to the Privacy Policy.

I accept



I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA
Privacy - Terms

SAVE

This website uses cookies to make your website experience better. By using this site, you agree to the Privacy Policy.

I accept