

SUN PRESS



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008

FOR COMMUNITY NEWS ALL DAY, EVERY DAY



CLEVELAND.COM/SUN

Page B4 cleveland.com/sun

Thursday, September 11, 2008

SCOOP DU JOUR

 READ MORE SCOOP AT  CLEVELAND.COM/SUN

Savor a Middle East feast at Antalya Red Square


 Barbara
Collier

"What's your favorite nationality food?" That's a question I'm frequently asked — and it's not easy to answer.

I always have loved Italian food, but my tastes over the years have broadened. One reason, I think, is because Cleveland has very good ethnic restaurants.

One of my recent pleasures was visiting **Antalya Red Square**, at 5131 Mayfield Road in Lyndhurst. The entire meal was filled with beautifully prepared dishes by chef **Sonmez Bozkurt**, who hails from Elazia, Turkey.

Bozkurt began cooking when he was 14 years old, learning from grandfather **Alaverdi**. Bozkurt eventually moved to Istanbul where he operated *Rose*, a 24-hour restaurant.

He emigrated to the United States in 1997, spending time at kitchens in New York City and Cincinnati. He has been in Cleveland for a little more than five years, preparing his homeland cuisine at **Anatolia Café** in Cleveland Heights.

Bozkurt and **Emil Mardakhayev**, from Azerbaijan, opened **Antalya Red Square** in September. Happily, they've fashioned a restaurant where you can enjoy authentic Mediterranean-Turkish cuisine.

The warm dining room is decorated with rich colors. Tables are clothed in white, and heavily carved dark-wood chairs are comfortable.

I have come to notice the names of Turkish foods. To most of us, borscht simply is cold red-beet soup. Actually, the ingredients can vary.



JIM OLEXA/SUN NEWS

Chef Sonmez Bozkurt, left, and Emil Mardakhayev serve up the Mediterranean delicacies at Red Square.

was fork-tender, absolutely delicious and succulent.

Of four kebabs on the menu, the chicken shish kebab was meaty slivers of well-seasoned chicken atop a mound of Mediterranean Romaine greens. It, too, was remarkably tasty.

That luncheon special is a bargain, large enough to provide a take-home meal. The other popular lunch special is soup and pita sandwich for \$6.50.

We sampled several appetizers, including wonderfully crispy falafel patties (\$4.95), delicate flaky pastries filled with feta and fresh parsley, then gently fried. Lovely and light.

Vegetarians will love **Antalya Red Square**. The kitchen will mix and match as desired, but there are great choices, such as vegetarian okra stew with rice and that great Mediterranean salad with falafel.

Try one of the pure, healthy fruit juices (\$1.75) from Turkey. The pomegranate is light and refreshing.

Rosehip tea (\$1.50), served in a dainty gold-rimmed cup, is guaranteed to bring you peace. On the other hand, the bold Turkish coffee is certain to keep you awake for hours.

A party room in back is styled in Turkish décor, blending puffy pillow stools with a wide-screen television. Beyond the main dining room is a curtained area with stage for music and occasional belly dancers. Call (440) 461-0818 for more details.

Hours at **Antalya Red Square** are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday, noon to 11 p.m. Saturday and noon to 10 p.m. Sunday.

Make suggestions to food/restaurant editor Barbara Collier at (216) 986-2367.

SCOOP DU JOUR



FLAVORS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

Another fooler: kebabs. Americans think of them simply as foods threaded on a skewer, then grilled or broiled. That's not necessarily so with Turkish cuisine.

For lunch, we ordered the Mediterranean salad with kebab and soup (\$9.95).

For the soup, we had borscht and red lentil soup.

The delicious **Red Square** borscht is a thick mixture of vegetables and beef with beets. The lentil soup was good but not special.

We choose lamb adana with Mediterranean Romaine mixed salad. The long slab of freshly ground lamb is mixed with Bozkurt's special seasoning, then grilled. The lamb