

# RESTAURANT SPOTLIGHT

*Remembering the classic Joburg tapas restaurant  
at Mezepoli - Melrose Arch*

In the mood for fresh hummus and a big, drippy falafel pita sandwich in a warm pita slathered with tzatziki? Hungry for a meze smorgasbord and juicy, slow-cooked lamb? Fortunately, when it comes to deeply satisfying Mediterranean and fine Greek fare, not to mention sticky-sweet baklava drenched in a lemon zest and cinnamon syrup, the casually elegant Mezepoli in Melrose Arch will satisfy all your cravings with some of the most delicious options.



It's clear that Mezepoli - Melrose Arch trusts in the value of minimal but exceptional ingredients, so as to elevate its straightforward fare. Simple small plates like grilled halloumi, spanakopita, pickled octopus and souvlaki are executed so sublimely you might have to return a second time to venture onto the pita side of the menu (although the chicken and halloumi schwarma is well worth your first visit). The extensive meze menu, which translates to traditional, no-shortcuts cooking, offers delicately-prepared and perfectly-spiced options for all palates. There are few surprises here, only delicious stalwarts: You'll find authentic soutzoukakia - Greek baked meatballs in a tomato sauce - loads of dishes spiced with oregano, mint, garlic, onion, dill and bay leaf plus all kinds of nutty desserts.

Meat eaters will be assuaged by the spicy chorizo, bifteki topped with grilled tomato and fresh onion as well as the lamb chops seasoned with salt and oregano. We also recommend the gyros with thick and freshly griddled pita bread overflowing with piping-hot meat. Then there's the seafood: Dreamy offerings such as cod goujons, calamari tubes stuffed with feta and peppers or grilled octopus doused in an olive oil and lemon dressing will have you wanting more. Vegetarians have a bounty of meatless

options to choose from too, including marinated peppers, grilled exotic mushrooms, crispy fried baby marrows and an addictive Greek salad that comes with plenty of feta. The food will open up your eyes to the fragrant flavours and seasonal ingredients of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Asian cooking.

Even if you haven't saved room, dessert is a must here. The extra-thick Greek-style yoghurt topped with honey and crushed nuts is heavenly, and the Macedonian halva - a sweet indulgence grilled in foil with fresh apple slices - is a must. The conviviality doesn't stop at the food, either: Cocktails like the Aegean Breeze, made with Tanqueray, Blue Curaçao, elderflower, lime juice and fresh mint, boast eclectic ingredients and are as inventive as the food. After dinner, stick around for a glass of wine and gaze at the Melrose Arch Piazza to mentally transport yourself to Santorini.

***The Piazza, Melrose Arch, Whiteley Road, Birnam  
011 684 1162  
[www.mezepoli.co.za](http://www.mezepoli.co.za)***