Designing Domestic Dining

A collection of stories from members of the Anatolian communities living in Canada about food, space, memory, and other themes.

A collaborative research project between faculty, curators, and students at Carleton University, Algonquin College, and Ingenium - Canada's Museums of Science and Innovation.

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About the Project

This book evolved out of a series of sketches made during interviews with Anatolian community members, as well as other drawings inspired by the stories, memories, spaces, and material culture they shared with our research team. Each designer graphically responded to the oral interviews utilizing their own expressive technique. The result is a multi-layered visual and textual account of food, heritage, and space. As we move from delicious dolmas to savoury kebap and börek and finally to sweet pakhlava, we also encounter a series of everyday (yet singular) spaces, lived and remembered, together with important insights into the meaning of food at home. We're delighted to extend the generosity of our participants in sharing their food, and all it has to offer, with you.

Introduction and Acknowledgements

Welcome to Designing Domestic Dining, a collaborative research project exploring intersections of food, memory, interior spaces, and domestic technology. Our interdisciplinary research team is comprised of faculty, curators, and students from Carleton University (Public History and School for Studies in Art and Culture), Algonquin College (Interior Design), and Ingenium: Canada's Museums of Science and Innovation. A key goal of our project is to better represent cultural memory and material culture of diasporic communities in the collections, exhibitions, and programming activities of national museums. To this end, we invited members of Anatolian communities in Ottawa and Montreal to create a dish of personal significance and discuss it with us in a series of online interviews. As they made the food before our eyes (over Zoom), they shared with us their culinary techniques, the design and use of their food spaces, and some of the traditions and memories they associate with making and eating the dish. Through our conversations, we learned more about how food shapes cultural and social experience and can engender a sense of belonging. We hope you enjoy the reflections and recipes collected here.

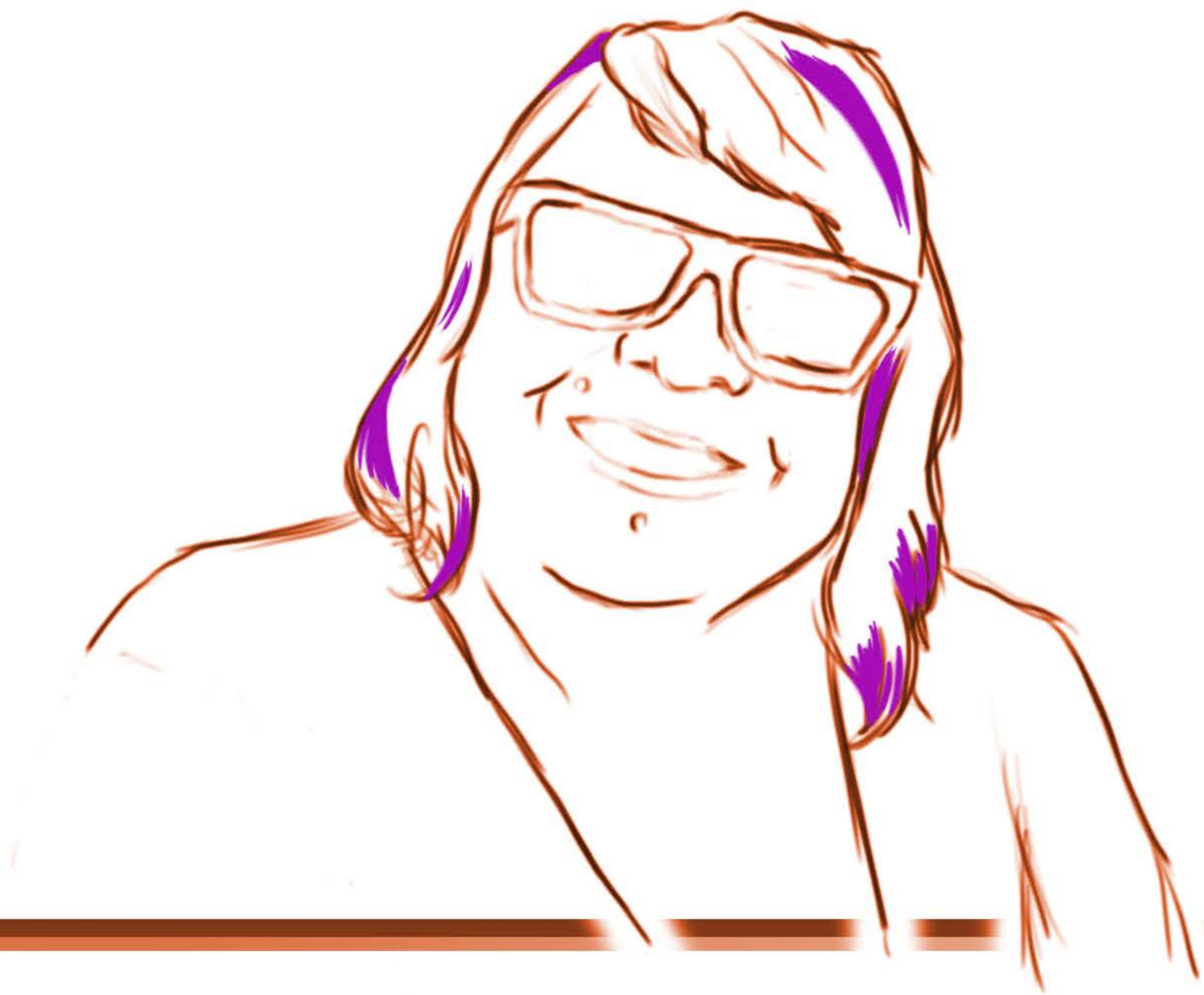
This project was supported by a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Partnership Engage grant, Carleton University's Internship-Carleton University Research Experience for Undergraduate Students (I-CUREUS) program, and the Carleton Centre for Public History. Our team included Anna Adamek, Helin Burkay, David Dean, Rebecca Dolgoy, Charlie Laghi-Ford, Emily Gann, James Knapton, Parker Poole, Isabella Redgate, Jade Scatliffe, Simran Sethi, Dorothy Stern, Anna Verhoeven, and Michael Windover.

Very special thanks go to Oz, Aydin, Yoni, Ariane, and Antoine for sharing their knowledge, stories, and recipes with us.

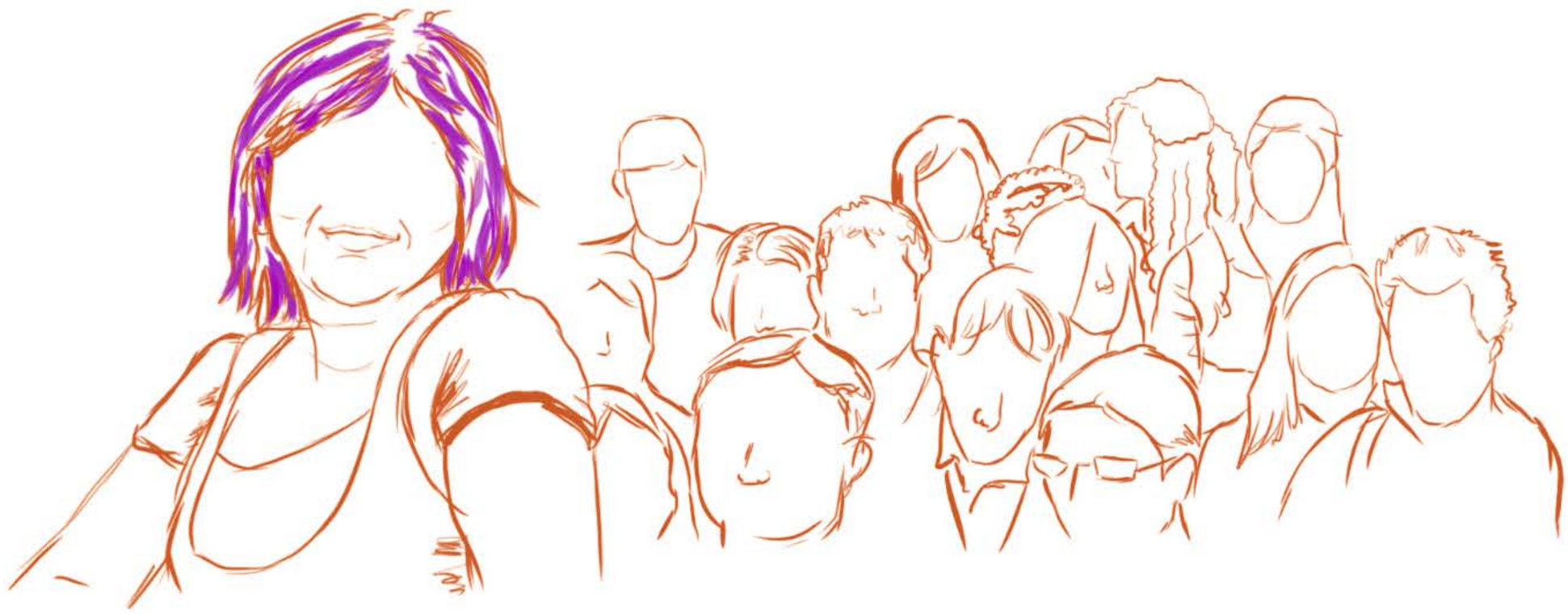
Thanks also goes to Andrea Emery, Professor, Algonquin College Graphic Design for sharing her sketchbook ideas for this booklet with us.

Oz

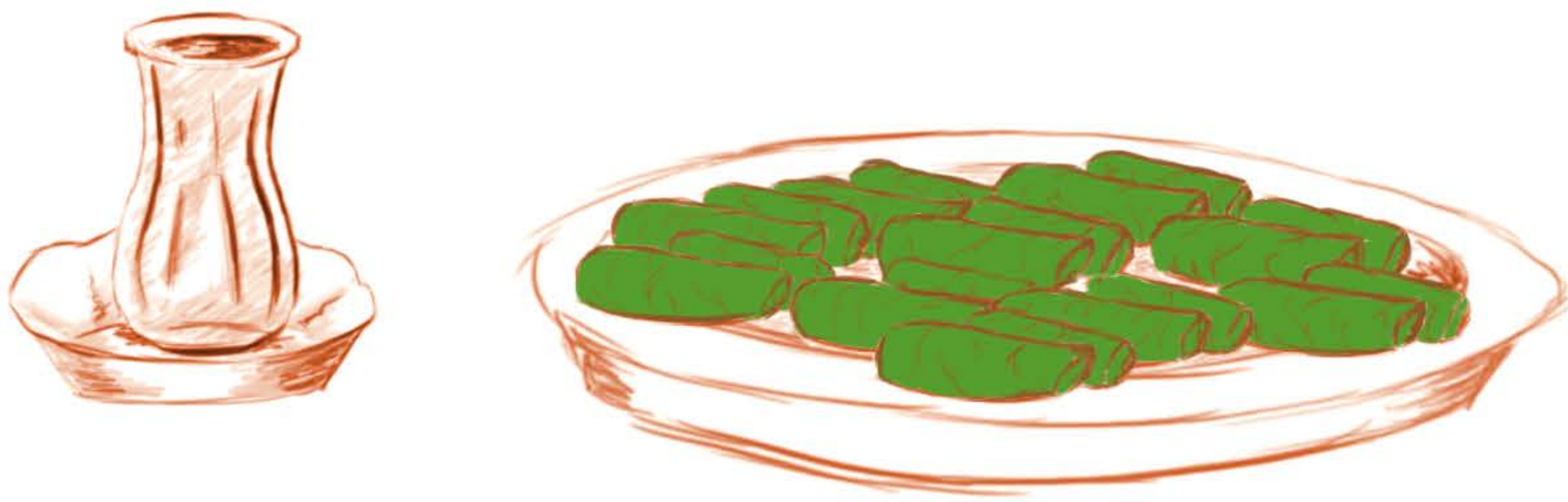
Of Turkish descent, Oz was born and raised in Germany. She immigrated to Canada at the age of ten. Together with her brother, she started Oz Kafe, a seasonal regional restaurant in downtown Ottawa in 2004.



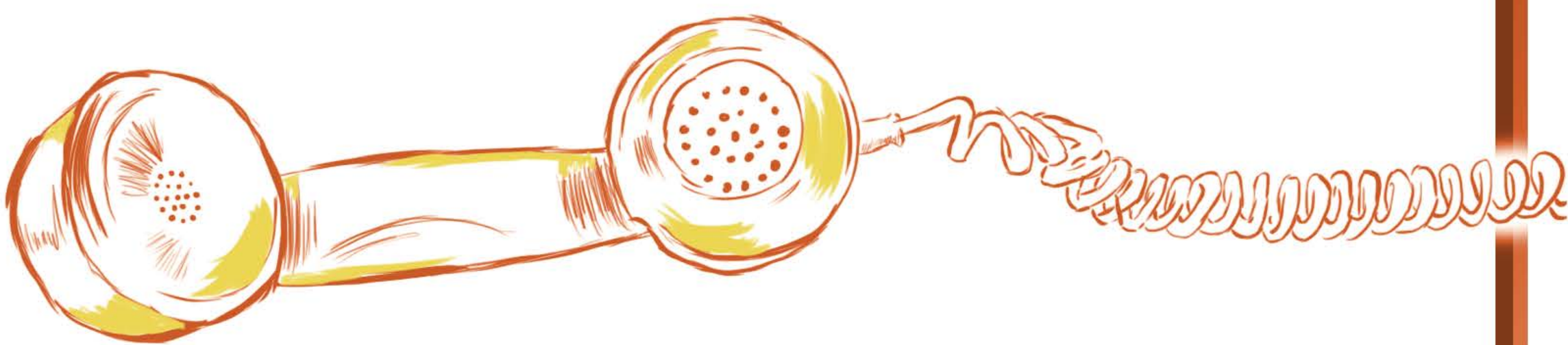
Informal Hospitality



"I think when you're always trying to fit into a new place, it's nice to stand apart and be proud of something that you're bringing to the table."



"I think all that along with the hospitality I saw in our household when people come over – you give them water, and you bring them tea or coffee, you bring out snacks. Even if people are saying that they are not hungry, this is insisted and is almost an insult if someone doesn't touch something that you've put out in front of them."



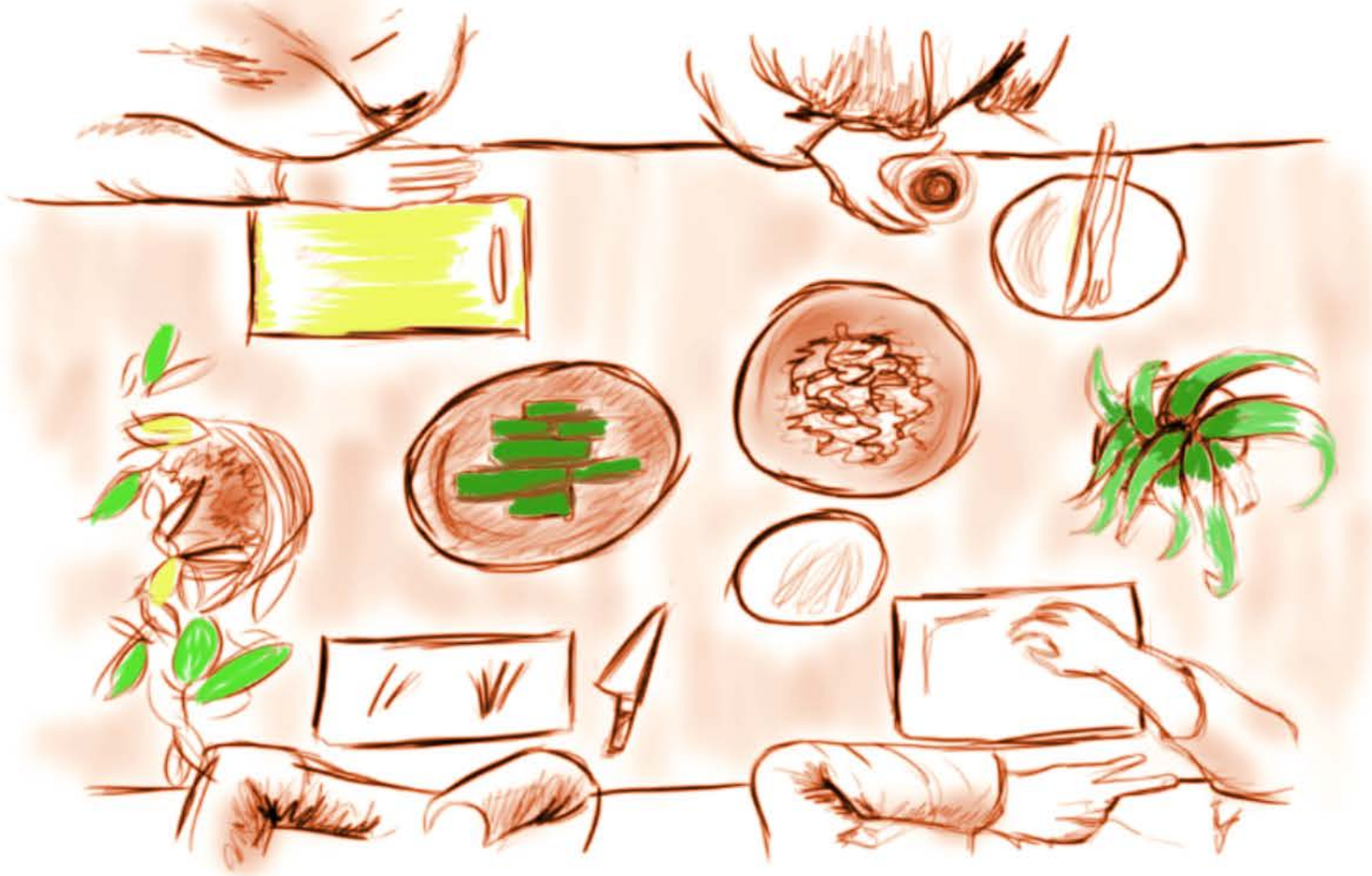
"There was no phoning someone to say you're coming over. People literally would just ring your doorbell and show up. 'We were just in the neighbourhood, and came for tea!' so, 'Welcome. Come on in.' You drop what you're doing and make sure your guests are well taken care of. I think that set the groundwork for not necessarily wanting a restaurant, but being kind of good at hospitality in a way."

Material Culture

"[My mother] has a teapot that her family friend sent. A çaydanlık from Turkey. Basically, they say, 'Oh, there's a nice pattern of this teapot out,' and mom will say, 'Oh, that's so nice,' because you can't buy these things here – that style. And basically, a week later a package shows up....It kind of subdues that longing when you get objects from home."

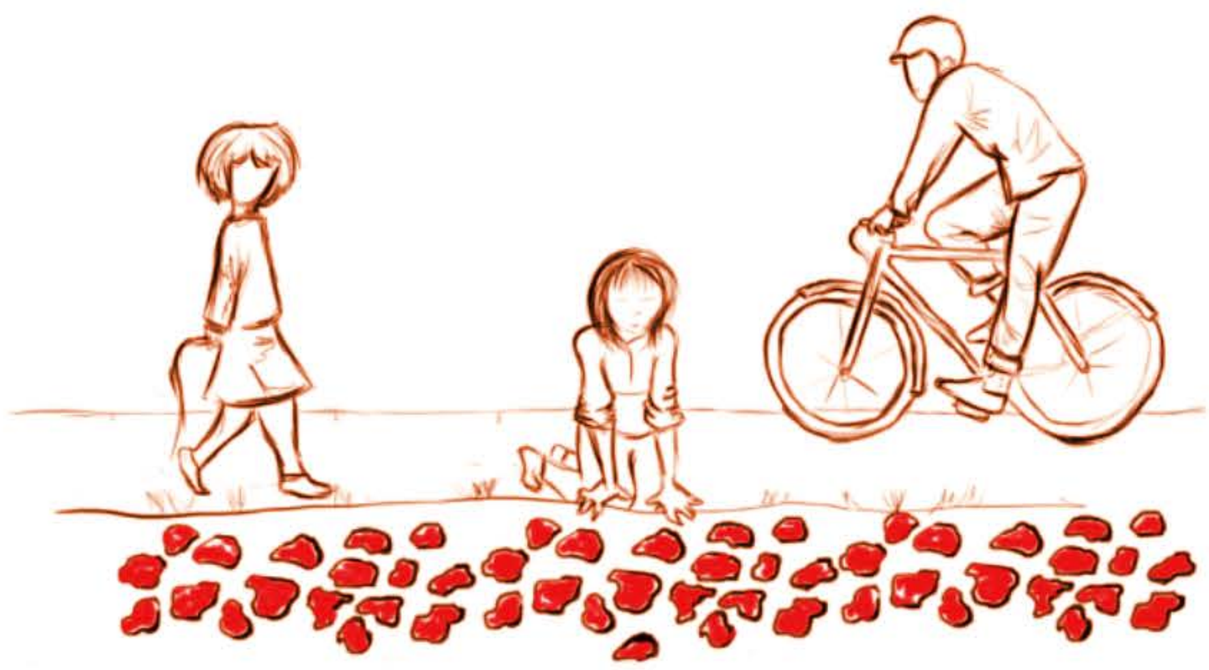
"[My mother] likes to grow things from a single leaf or one cutting so a lot of them were a lot smaller – but over the years had grown, so we don't necessarily go out and buy a big plant. She likes the process of growing from little to watch them grow...she's a nurturer all around."

Memory



"It evokes a lot of childhood memories of sitting around the kitchen table with my mom and my grandma ... it's a bit of a laborious process and it would just become sort of like an afternoon thing of just making the stuffing for it and then sitting there after having blanched your grape leaves, getting them all ready, and then individually rolling them, hand rolling each one and filling a big pot and putting it on the stove and cooking it and then leaving it in the fridge and enjoying it for a few days afterwards and passing it on to family, friends, and neighbours."

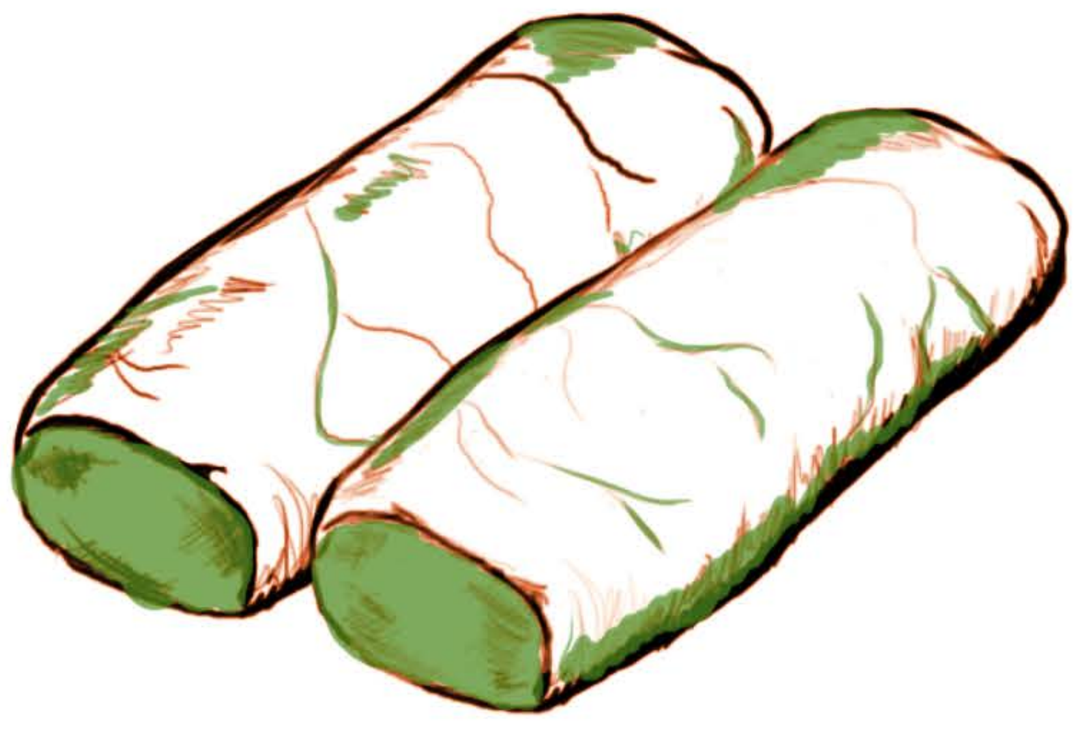
"One of my fondest memories is definitely making - when my parents first got this house, in the front yard laying out a big clean sheet and drying tarhana - a soup... Friends in the neighbourhood biking by would be like, "What are you guys doing?", "We're making this fermented soup," but on the lawn, in a sunny afternoon and your grandma's telling stories about her growing up. It was such a bonding thing. To hear your own history unfolding when people are cooking and talking together. It's a nice feeling. It's that connected feeling with your family and your roots."



Labour of Love

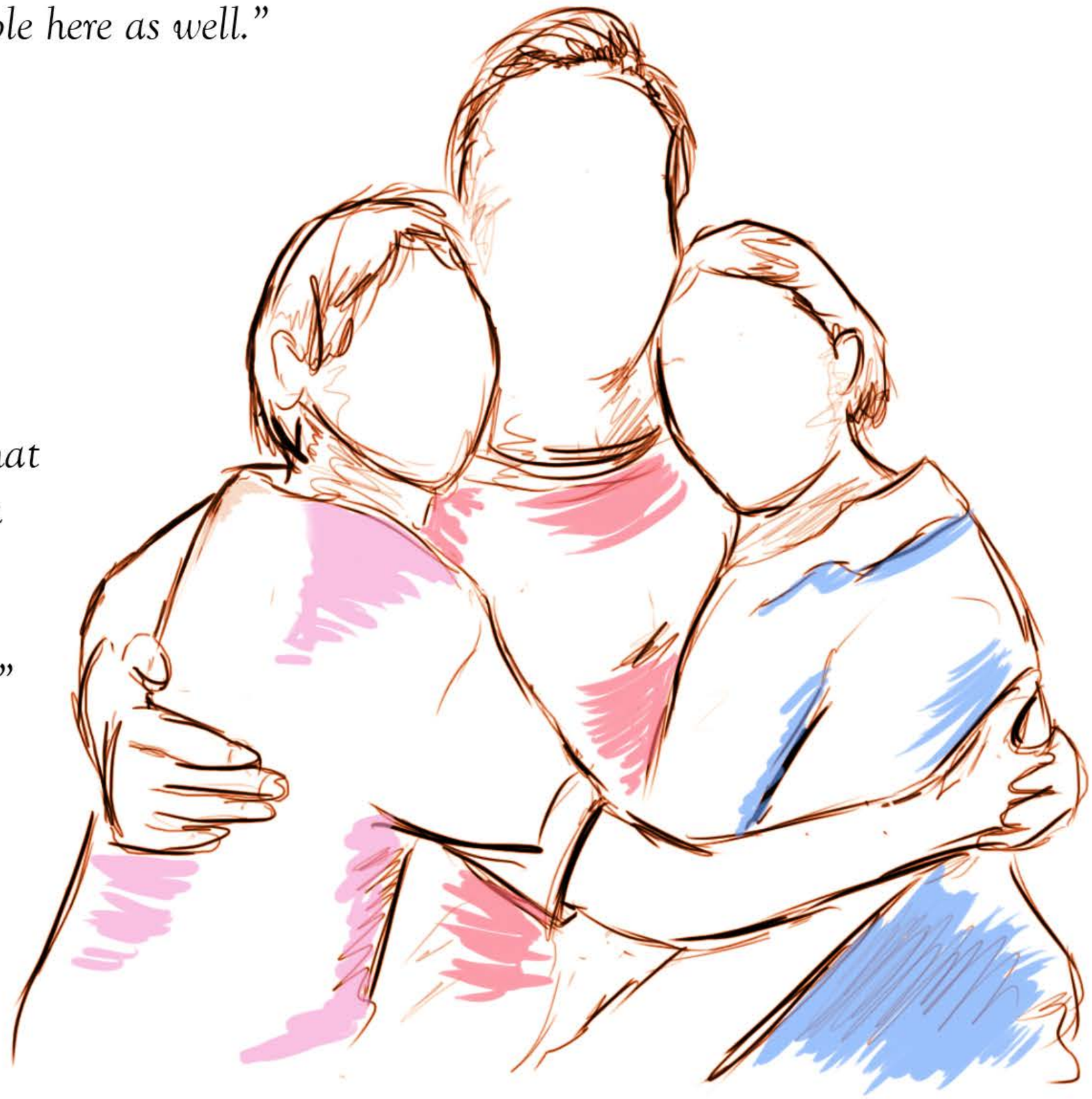
"My mom would jump in and be like, 'Oh, I'll do this' and help [my grandma] out... my mom would go over and help tidy the house, and also go and make a few kinds of things for my uncles and grandma to have as she got older."

"When my brother and I first opened our restaurant in 2004, we'd never worked in restaurants. Neither of us are a chef or restaurateur and we thought it would be fun to have a little place... We had a plate that included these dolmas and my mom started making [them] for us, and over the years she must've made tens of thousands of them... She made a pot everyday because the dish became so popular, and they were on the mezze platter–they were actually called 'Mom's Dolmas '... People still talk about them."



Space

"The cooking happens at my mom's as my grandmother was a bit older. We made meals out of her house too, but it was always mom's kitchen, just sitting around and chatting, and talking and she was always busy-busy making everything, and prepping everything, and it's just a lot of warmth and nurturing that gets passed along with food and just something different... I think it was like bringing a piece of home with us to here, and introducing it to people here as well."



"It's the people that make the house... you gotta build with something, you gotta start with something."

Recipe

Oz recipe - Dolma

Traditionally from Ankara

Ingredients

- *4-7 onions*
- *Olives*
- *Roasted pine nuts*
- *Olive oil*
- *1.5 to 2 "water cups" of rice (baldo or basmati)*
- *Dried mint*
- *1 and a half "dessert spoon" of black pepper*
- *Cinnamon*
- *Sugar*
- *Currants (presoaked in water)*
- *Parsley*
- *Dill fresh*
- *Salt*
- *Grape leaves*
- *Pomegranate vinaigrette*
- *Juice of half a lemon*
- *Lemon slices (for serving)*

Steps

1. *Chop and saute the onions in olive oil.*
2. *Brown the pine nuts.*
3. *Place onions, olives, pine nuts, rice, spices, and herbs into a pot with one "water class" worth of water. Boil cook on low and cover as it cooks.*
4. *Cook until rice it absorbs the water and rice gets plump and fragrant.*
5. *Place into a large bowl and let cool.*
6. *Begin wrapping the dolma by scooping the filling in a line in the centre of the grape leaf, veiny side up.*
7. *Roll in sides, then roll in bottom of the leaf. Keep the roll tight as you roll it up to the top of the leaf.*
8. *Repeat until all the filling is wrapped.*
9. *Prep large pot or wok with the extra/ torn/ too small grape leaves, cleaned dill and parsley stems, and olive oil arranged around the bottom of the pot.*
10. *Top with lemon juice, pomegranate vinaigrette, and salt.*
11. *Layer all the rolls into the pot and place a heavy heat-safe plate on top to weigh them down as they cook.*
12. *Cook until rice is cooked and smells herby, about an hour.*
13. *Serve with lemon slices. This dish tastes best when served the next day.*

Notes

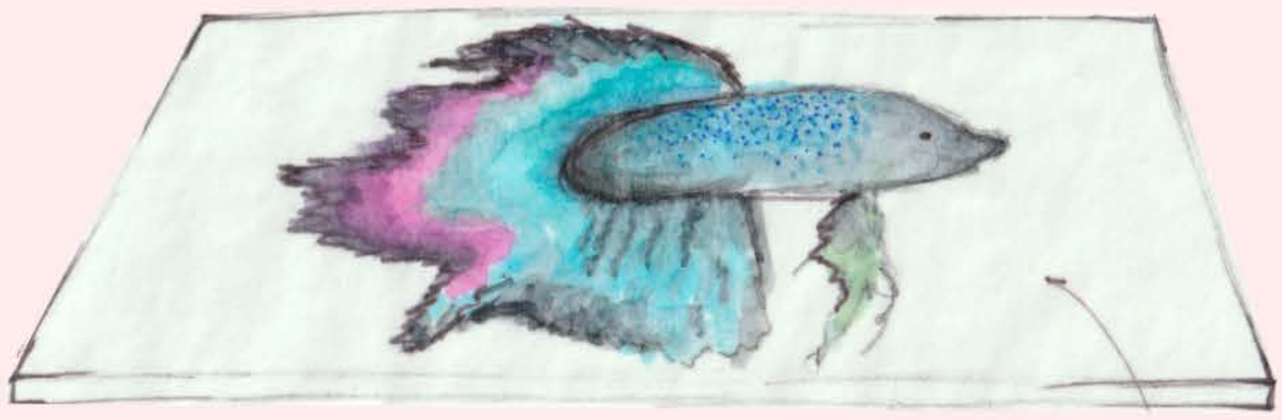
AYDIN

Aydin Canatar is a chef who currently lives in Ottawa. He was born and raised in Mersin, Turkey. After graduating from high school, he migrated to Canada by himself. He started his journey in Toronto. His dream was to become a nurse at that point in his life. While he was studying nursing, he continued working at restaurants. It was a tough road, working and studying full time. Ultimately, he decided to continue working at restaurants.

After a while, and with friends' support, he started culinary school at George Brown College and he graduated successfully. He slowly built up his experience in the industry, working with the city's best chefs. After gaining a good deal of experience with different cuisines, he wanted to focus on the Middle Eastern food. Opportunity arrived when one of the best chefs in Ottawa offered him a position in Ottawa and he moved there to start the project with him. After working as a chef for many years in Ottawa, he has decided to take a break. Now he cooks for himself at home and is still learning each and every day.

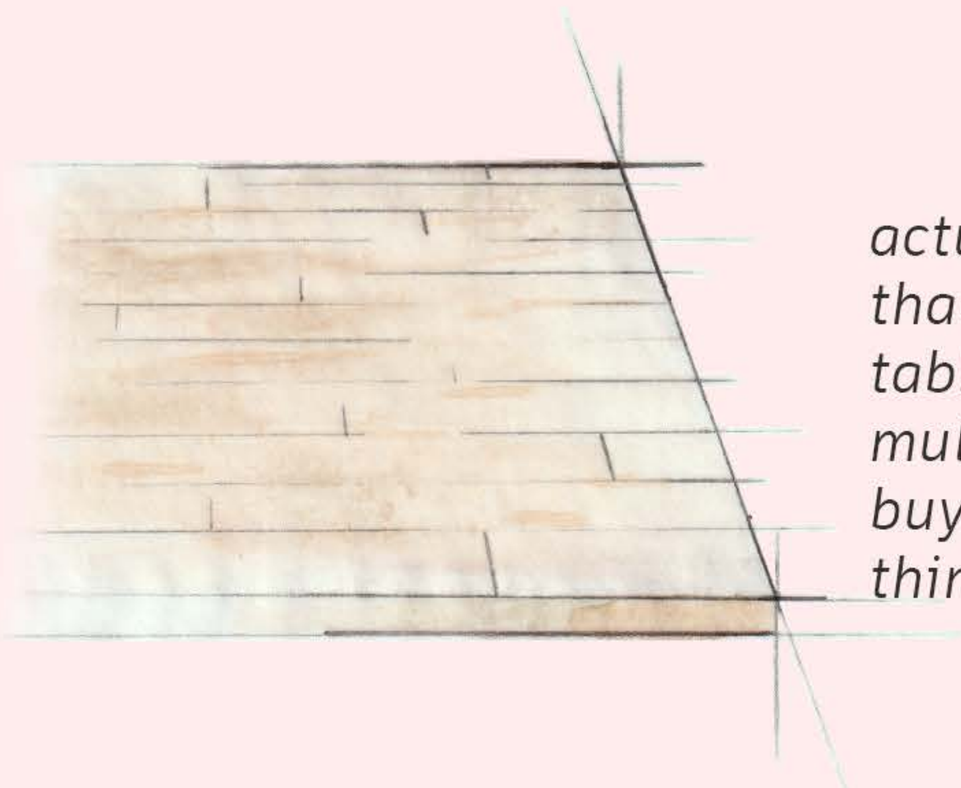
MATERIAL CULTURE

"Ottawa in wintertime, it's dark and it can get depressive, and that's why I like to have colourful things inside of the house. Even though outside is dark and depressive, staying inside gives me some excitement... It kind of boosts my energy."



"When I was looking for a high-top table from IKEA... you can buy them separately; you buy the tabletop and then you buy the legs. At that time, I saw this one and I love colourful things, I'm like this is beautiful. I'm buying this. And since then, I think they removed it from their stock so whenever people go to check they cannot find this table... So I think I'm the lucky one."

"I really like these colourful corns because I've never seen them before back home. I think it adds to the space - something colourful. Whenever I talk with my mum she'll say, 'Those corns are beautiful,' because we never had something like this back home."



"Later on I'm planning to get an actual worktable, all wood, and I think that would make like much useful for a table like this. I like one thing to be multifunctional, I think that way you can buy one thing and use it for many things. That is something I like."

MATERIAL CULTURE

"That's kind of like my personality as well – colourful, something unique, something real. I really love it."

"I really like handmade stuff... If I have a really big group of people and they want Turkish coffee, I use this one."

"The colour is all kinds, and just amazing."

"This shelf here, this is so me– because I have all the kitchen equipment in there and all the useful stuff for a chef. Whenever I look at this I think, 'I like this. I did a good job.'"

SPACE

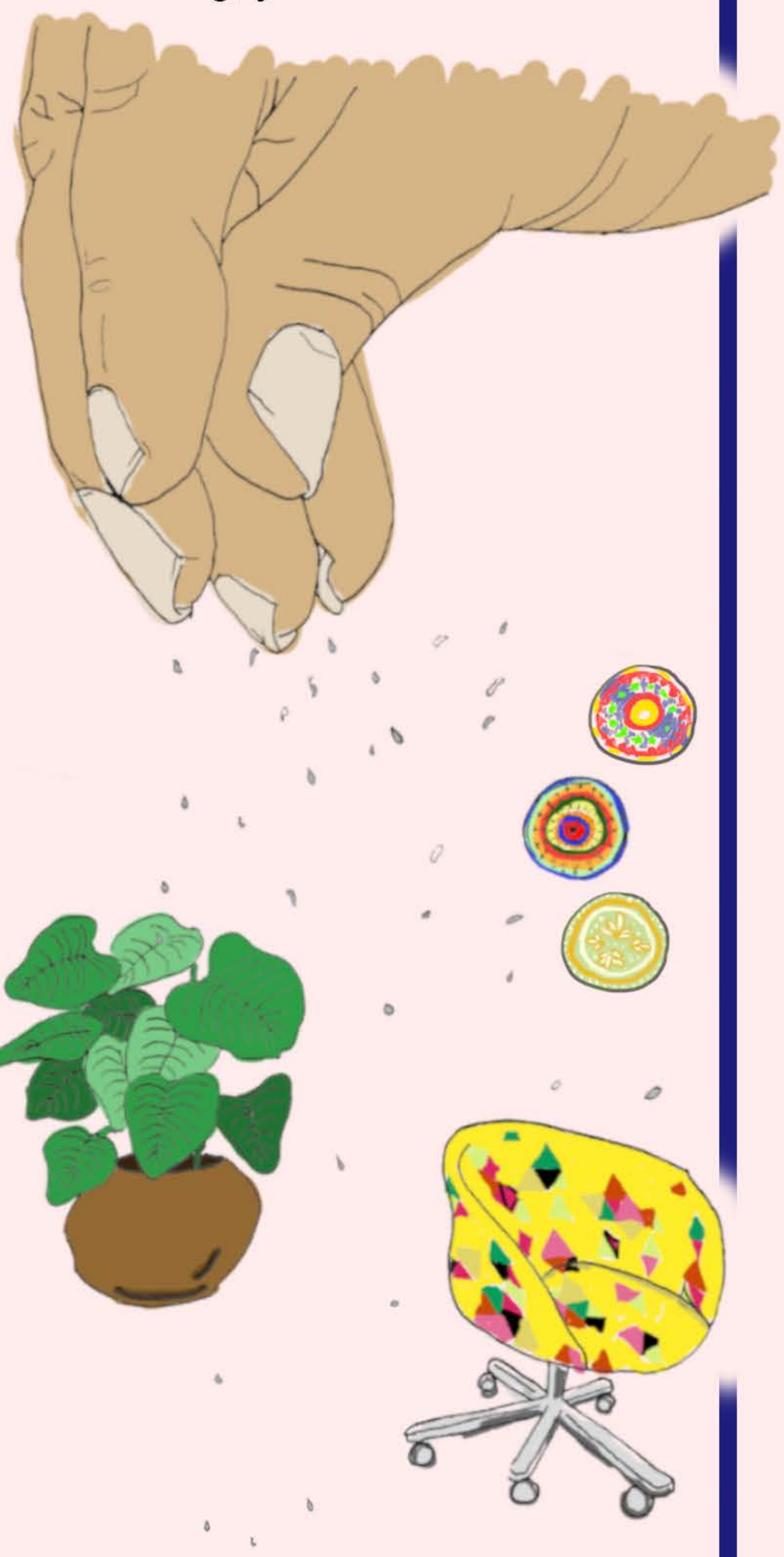
"This is something I really like, these metal shelves. This is very solid, this is like metal, you can jump on it it's not gonna break. I think this opens up the space a lot, and I have a lot of equipment, like my blender, I have a juicer, I have this Robot Coupe, I have a kettle, a coffee grinder, all that. If I didn't have this shelf, I don't know where I'd cook. I wouldn't have any of this equipment... and I like everything open like this, and I know exactly where things are."

"But adding a kitchen island, adding those shelves, it made my space like an actual kitchen– like a functional kitchen."

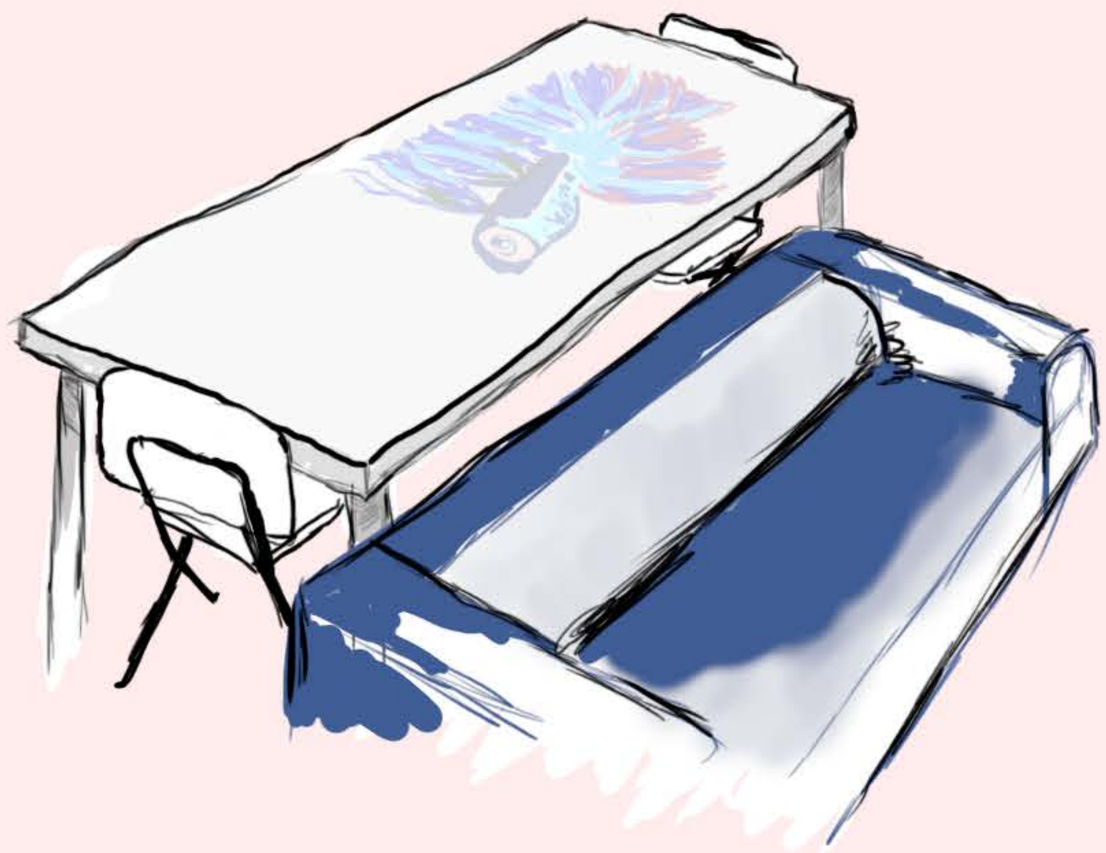
SPACE

"I really like what I did with my space. I have space for everything in this small apartment."

"If you don't season, you'll have something bland—so whatever you're making, you want to season it."



"My dream is to own a smaller house – like one of those container houses. So this is a really good project for me to learn how to live in a smaller space. I feel like I don't need a lot of stuff to enjoy my life."



"I thought, 'How can I maximize my kitchen to make it bigger?' – so to do that, I really wanted a kitchen island, so I went for a higher table... so I created a kitchen island but... this is also my dining table."

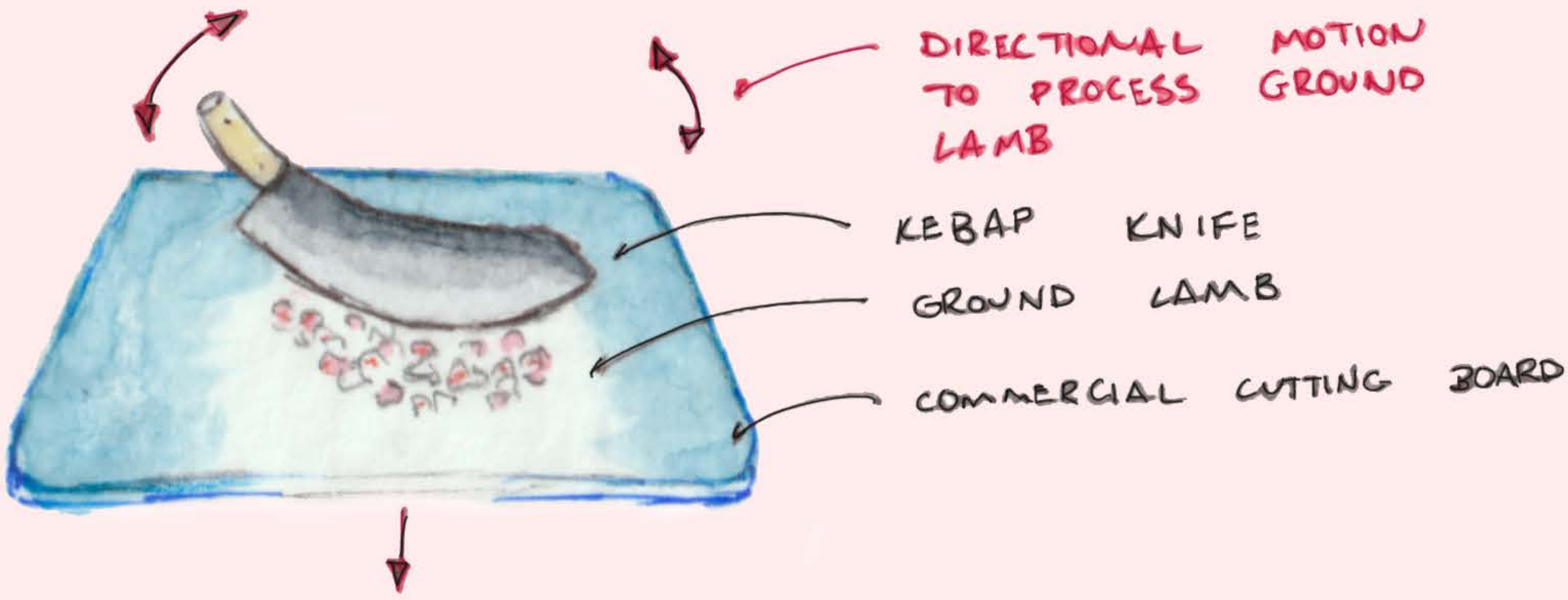
TECHNIQUE

A.

B.

A. KEBAP TRAY WITH TOMATOES + SHISHITO PEPPERS

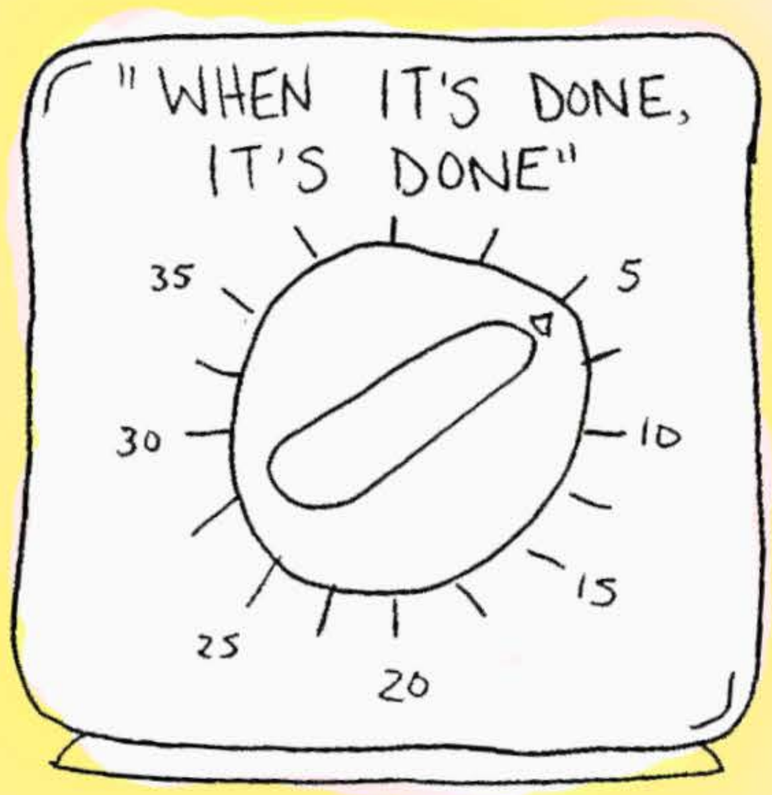
B. BAKING TRAY FILLED WITH STONES AND WATER TO INCREASE TEMPERATURE / HUMIDITY

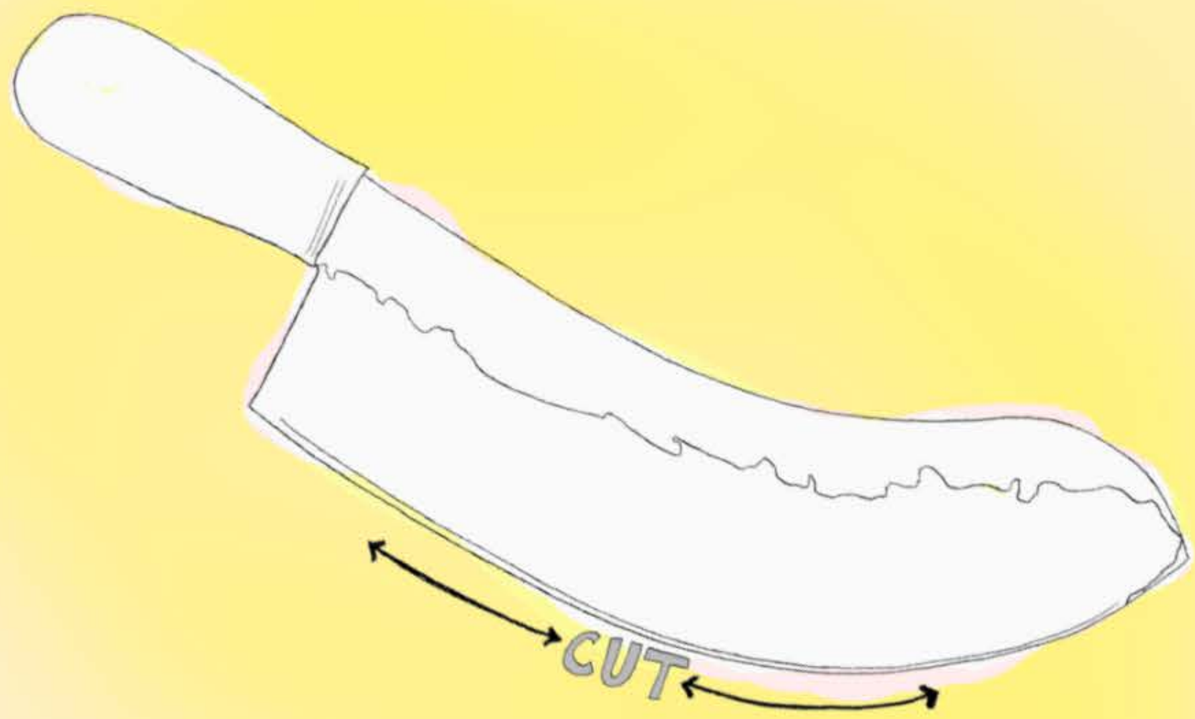


TECHNIQUE

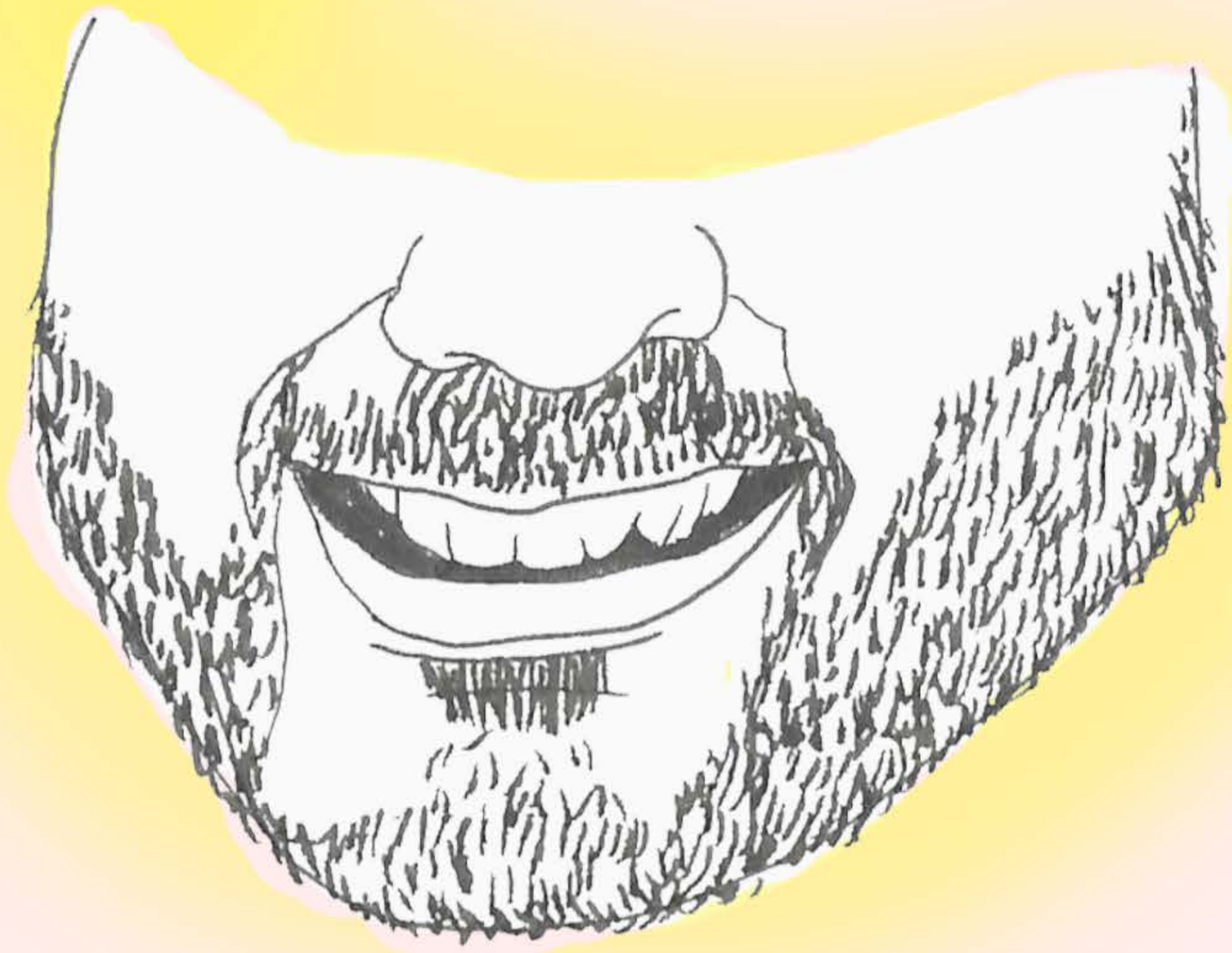
"When it's done, it's done"

"It's about experience. You need to know everything about your vegetables, your meats—everything depends... I can smell when it starts to begin to cook, and it's ready, and it's not burnt but getting closer to overdone, because the smell changes... The senses are very important... There are a lot of senses we use in the kitchen."





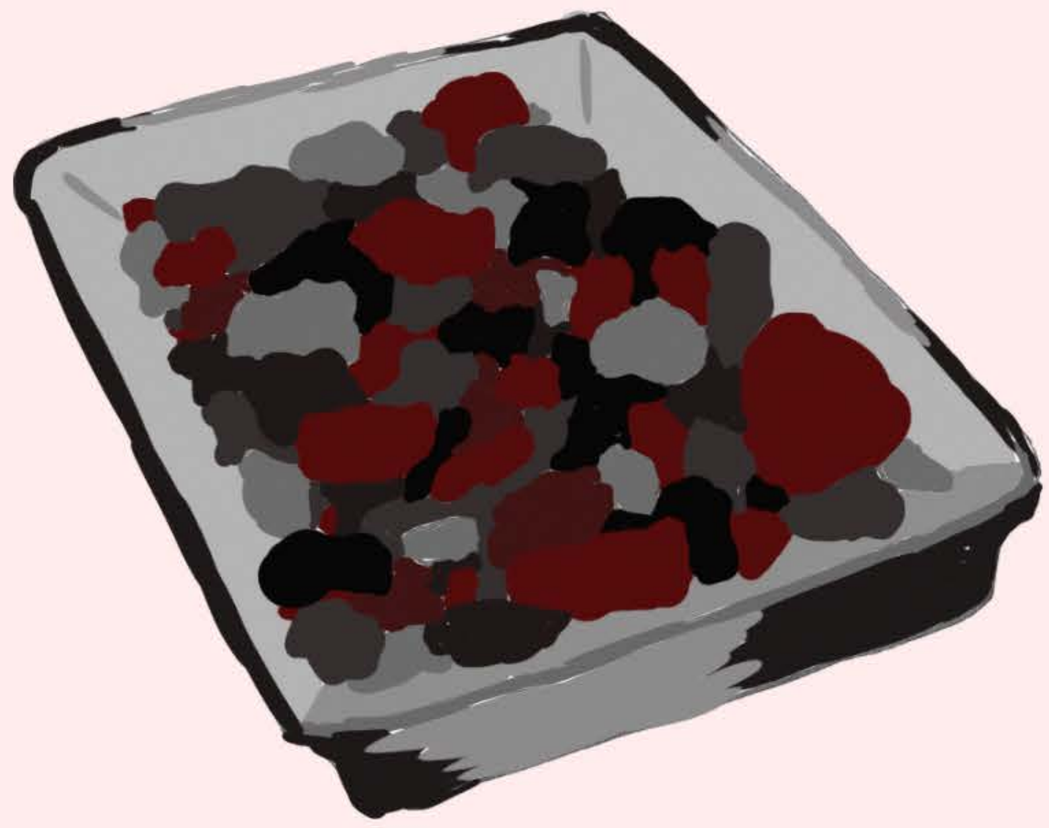
"This is very traditional kebap knife... I'll be making kebap with this [because] a lot of kebaps are made like this; cut by hand with a knife... You cut the meat this way and you're keeping in all the juices. If you're grinding the meat, what happens is you're squeezing the meat and you don't get the same texture... or the same taste."

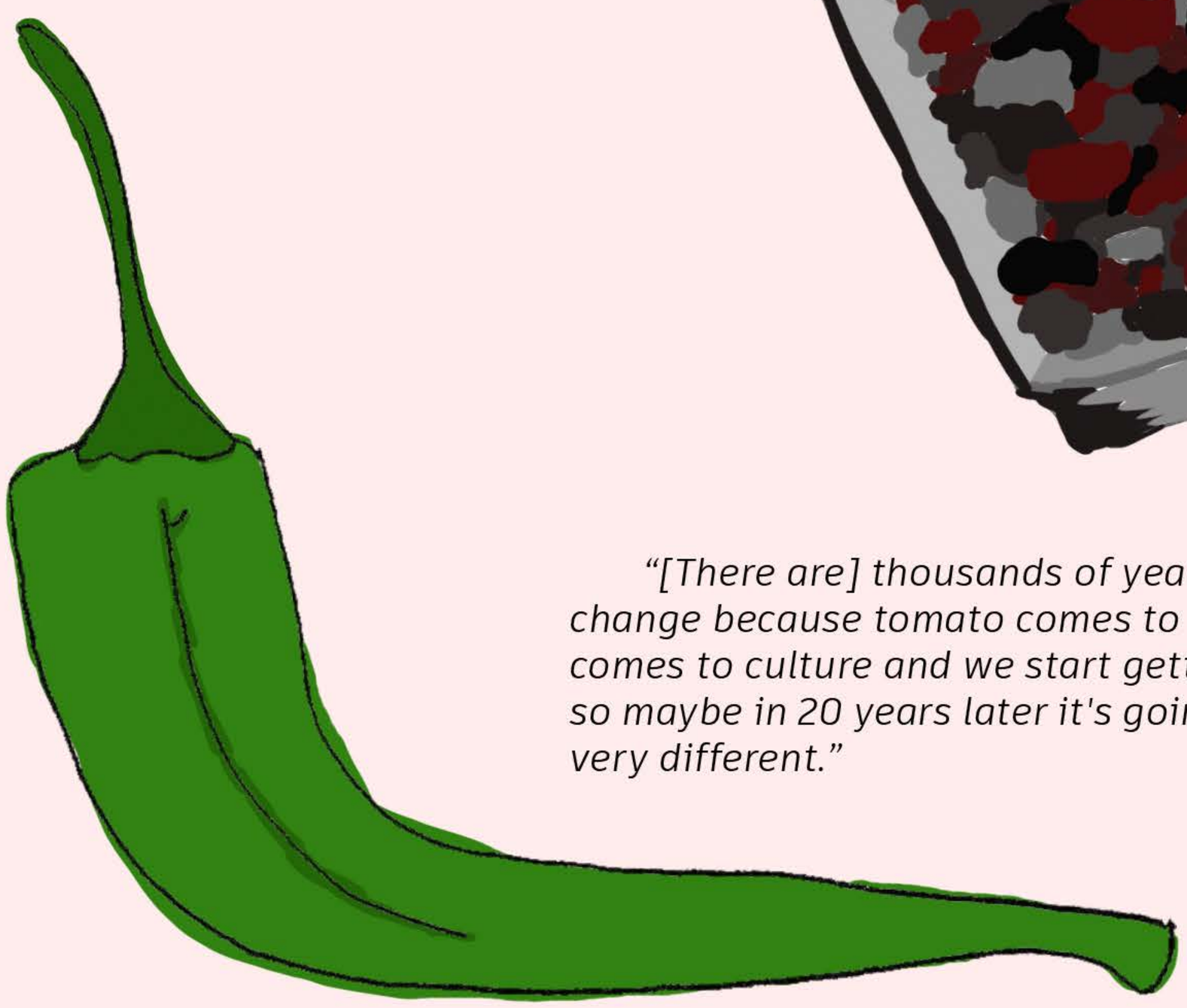


"It's all about having fun, and enjoying, and celebrating the food we are making. Food brings people together and culture together, and that's why it's a beautiful thing to work with food."

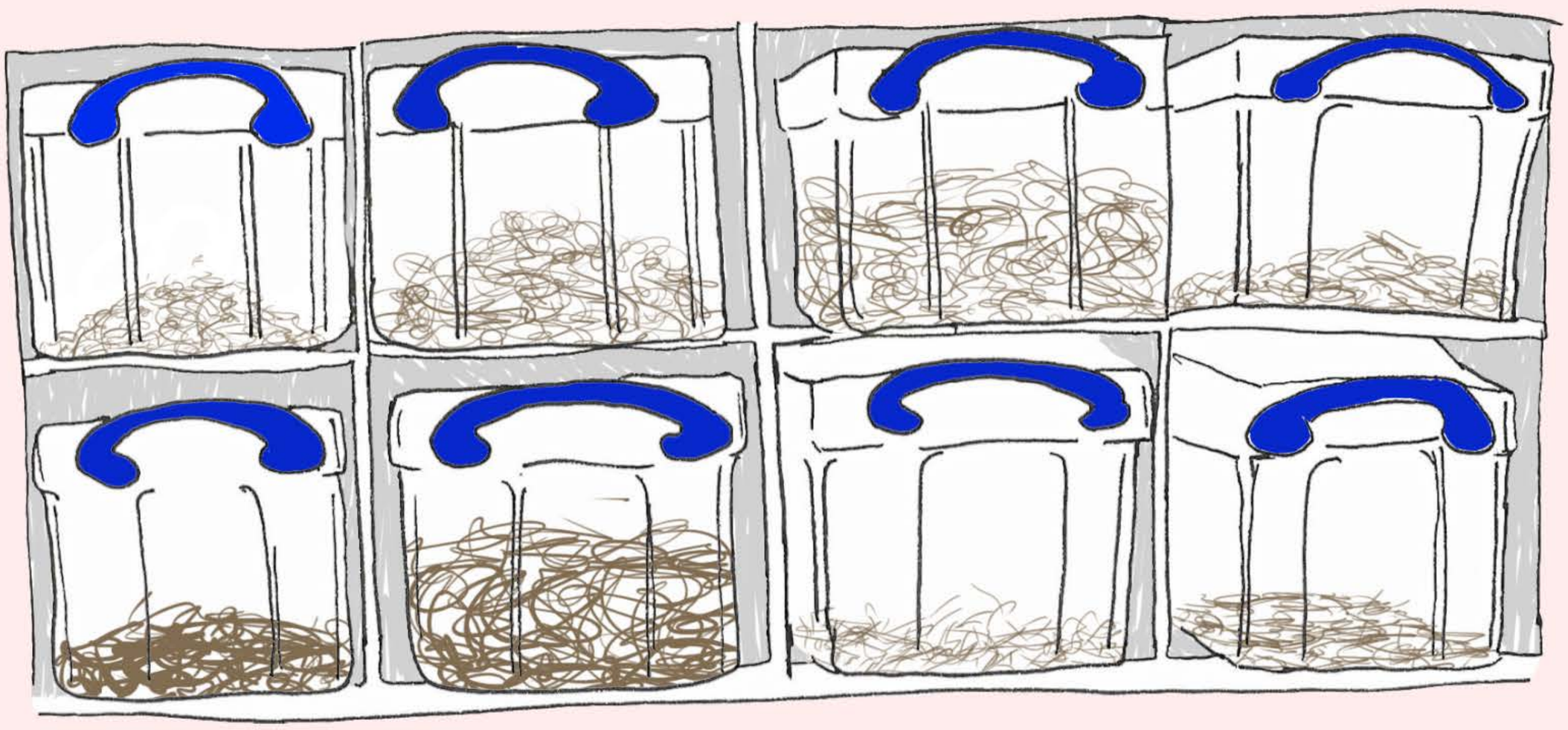
INNOVATION

"We are constantly adapting and recipes change, but to keep our culture we stick with the same ideas—we just play around with some ingredients."





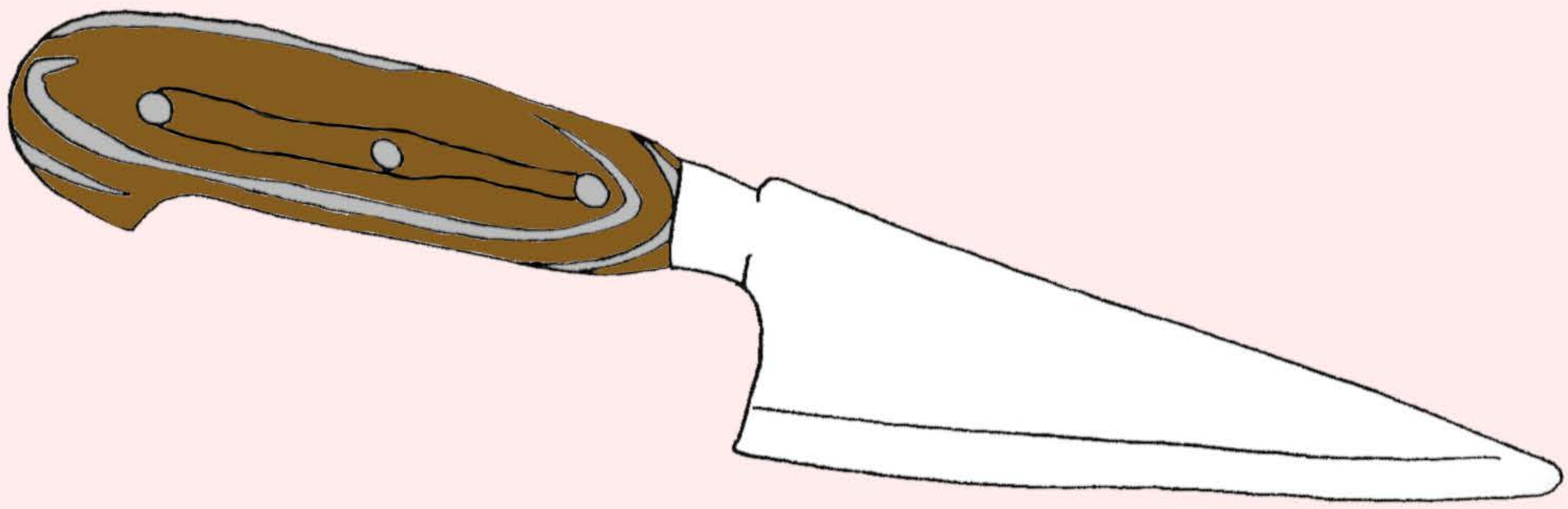
"[There are] thousands of years of recipes, [so recipes] change because tomato comes to culture and eggplant comes to culture and we start getting all of these things, so maybe in 20 years later it's going to be something very different."



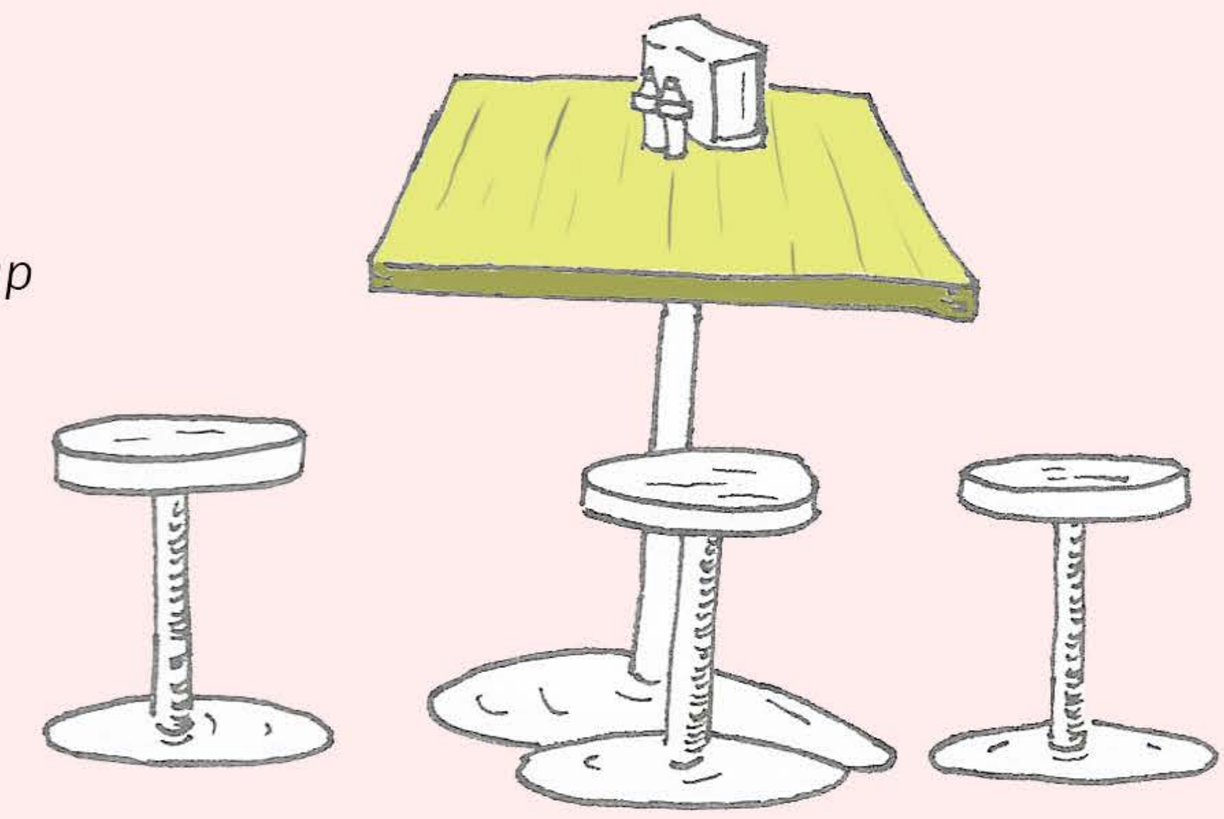
"I made this one myself. It was a DIY project, so I bought this from Staples. It's basically for you to put your clips and stuff [in], so I want [it to] put my spices... I thought it would be an easy one, but [it was] definitely challenging. I think it worked because now I can store my spices and it's very easy to take it, open it, and I know exactly where things are."

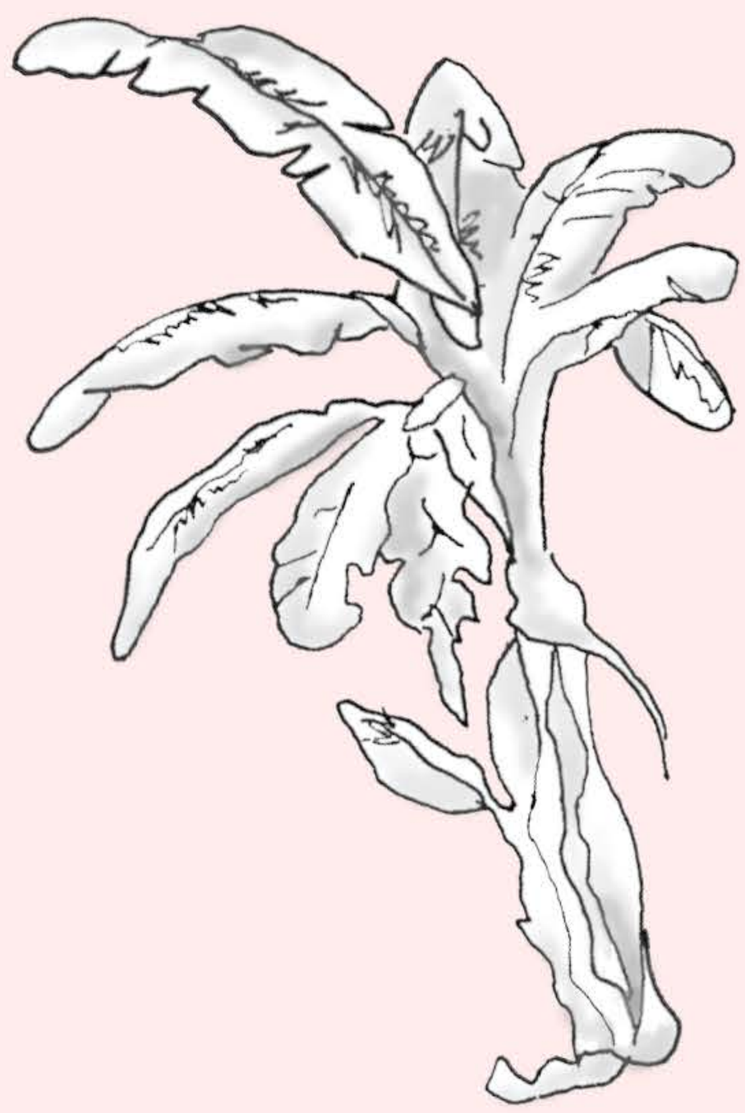
MEMORY

“Once I got the knife in my hand, I'm like, 'This is fun!'”



“We go out with friends to kebap shops, sit in front of the grill, gather with friends, drink, eat, talk. Kebap brings back memories.”





“I love plants. This [tattoo] reminds me whenever I have hard times in life [to] keep me calm. It reminds me of calmness... Life can be hard sometimes, it can go sideways, but you need to stay calm and keep doing what you're doing.”

“I really like banana trees because in my city there are a lot of banana trees, so it reminds me of my city, and they are beautiful.”

RECIPE

Aydin Recipe- Tray Kebap

Traditional meat and vegetable kebap

Special Tools
- Shallow round aluminium cake pan or cast iron pan (a shallow metal round pan that can go in the oven)
- Traditional kebap knife (large curved knife)

Ingredients
- Lamb shoulder (fatty pieces) or ground meat
- Poblano or kapello peppers
- Spanish Onion (chopped)
- Parsley
- 2 Tomatoes
- 3 Garlic cloves (or as many as you like)
- Shishito or siribinha pepper (to garnish)
- Kosher salt (not table salt)
- Urfa pepper (a smoky ground pepper)

Steps
1. Dice the meat as small as possible if not using ground meat.
2. Finely chop garlic and vegetables.
3. Puree one tomato into a juice and season with Urfa pepper and salt.
4. Work the chopped meat into the chopped vegetables by working them together as you chop it smaller, folding them together until it is ground together.
5. Season mixture with Urfa pepper and continue mixing by chopping.
6. Grease the pan with olive oil.
7. Massage mixture with your hands into a ball the size of your hand and place the ball in the tray and press down, spreading the mixture to fill the bottom of the pan. Do not overload your tray, spread about 2/3rds up the depth of the tray.
8. With a small knife, push the edges of the mixture away from the side of the pan, and then indent with the knife across the mixture into 4 triangles, as if you were slicing a pizza to make four quarter slices. This is done so when it cooks it will shrink into serving sizes.
9. Pour tomato puree over the mixture in the pan, just enough to cover it.
10. Slice tomato into wedges and place them around the edges of the pan. Place whole shishito peppers on top.
11. Season whole pan with salt.
12. (Optional) Preheat your oven with a pizza stone, or stones placed on a baking sheet underneath the rack that you will place the kebab tray on. Spray water onto the hot stones to create steam in the oven while cooking.
13. Cook until it is golden brown on top. When meat is cooked, finish on the broiler to give some colour on top.
14. Serve with flatbread or naan.

NOTES

Yoni and Ariane

We are Ariane & Yoni, musicians and partners in life based in Montreal. Turkish cuisine is an essential element in our household. Yoni grew up with Turkish grandparents so Turkish cuisine has been in his life since the beginning and brings him to this day sweet nostalgia of his childhood. Ariane is a Quebecois Montrealer who has developed a fascination and a special connection with Turkish cuisine. Through the years, she has learned recipes through her partner Yoni, her travels to Istanbul and numerous cookbooks and it has become her cooking specialty. We love hosting and offering a full table with a variety of mezzes, served with raki and turkish coffee, to our guests. We are both musicians, involved in Balkan and Turkish music traditions, and believe that food is best enjoyed around the table with live music in an attempt to recreate the memorable meyhane evenings that we had in Istanbul. Yoni's favorite meals are turlu, fasulye, kuzu and güveç. Ariane's favorites are manti, böreks, and anything dolma. On the sweet side, we both share a common love for Irmik Helvasi.

Ariane & Yoni

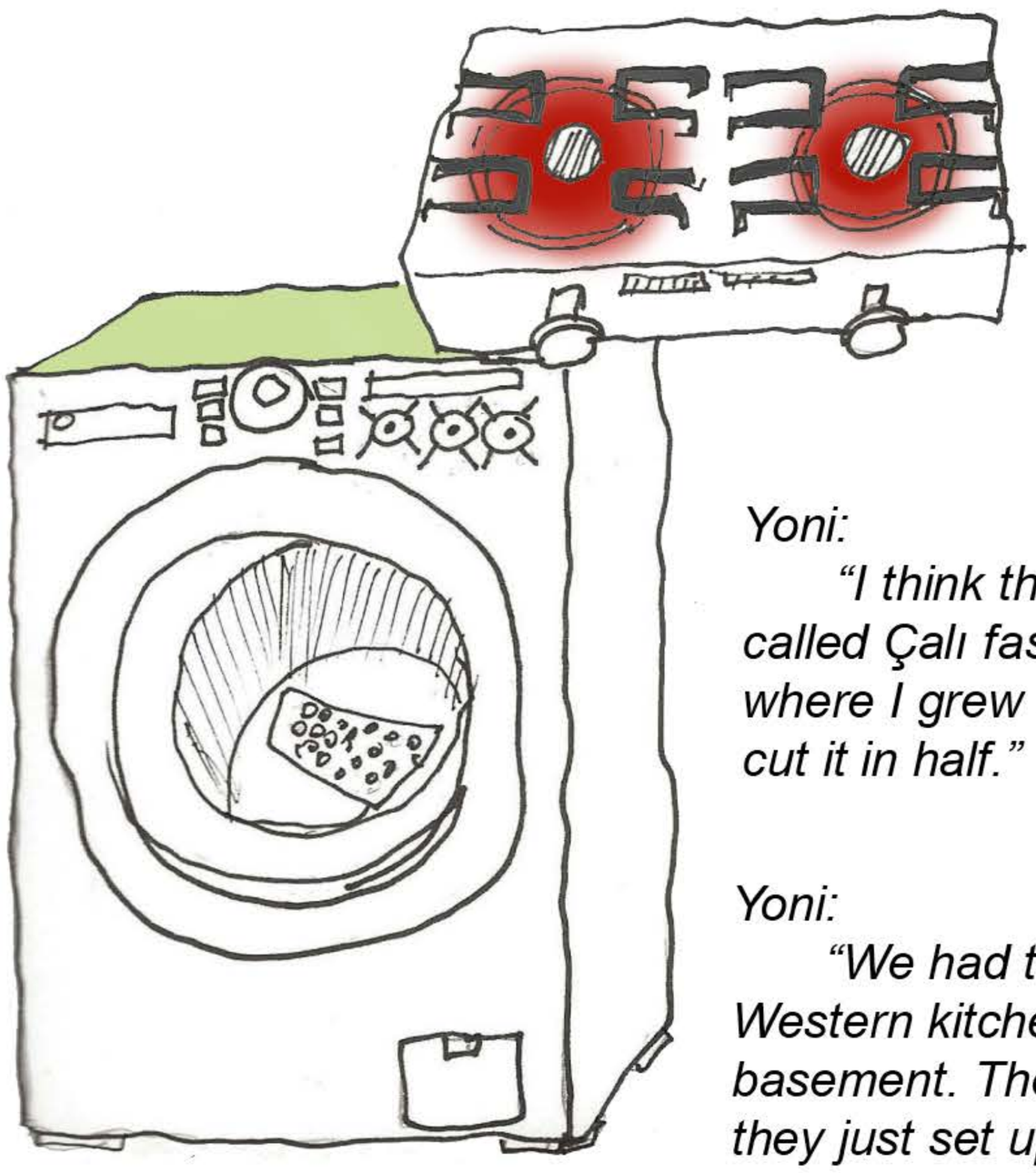
Adaptation

Ariane:

"It's just IKEA furniture -Turkish IKEA - I guess what's Turkish around it is the shelves and my pictures... and those little things all around. It's not very Turkish, but we make it Turkish by highlighting the Turkish stuff."

Yoni:

"My grandmother used to make green bean stew... but funnily enough, my grandmother, what she used to do, is take the green bean and cut it down the middle like this... and called it 'Çalı fasulye'."



Yoni:

"I think there's actually a flat bean that is actually called Çalı fasulye, but this is what we had in Calgary where I grew up so she just took what she had and cut it in half."

Yoni:

"We had the house in Calgary with a pretty normal Western kitchen upstairs... and then grandparents in the basement. There was a laundry room... where they lived and they just set up a portable two-burner electric stove and fridge... That's where they cooked all the big feasts for me and my brother... a two-burner stove with seven pots always rotating."

Adaptation

Ariane:

"It depends on how I feel. Now I have my butter. Sometimes I will use olive oil or sometimes I will use milk. Sometimes if I want it very crispy, I'll just use olive oil, but because we are a Jewish-Turkish house, we have a kosher kitchen so if I was to cook meat - which is not often - I would use olive oil and some eggs, or maybe sometimes almond milk."

Ariane:

"We have these curtain hangers because unfortunately we don't live in a super sunny-always place, so we can't dry things outside. So if we make fresh pasta or want to dry vegetables, this is our sunniest window - so we can hang it from this bar."

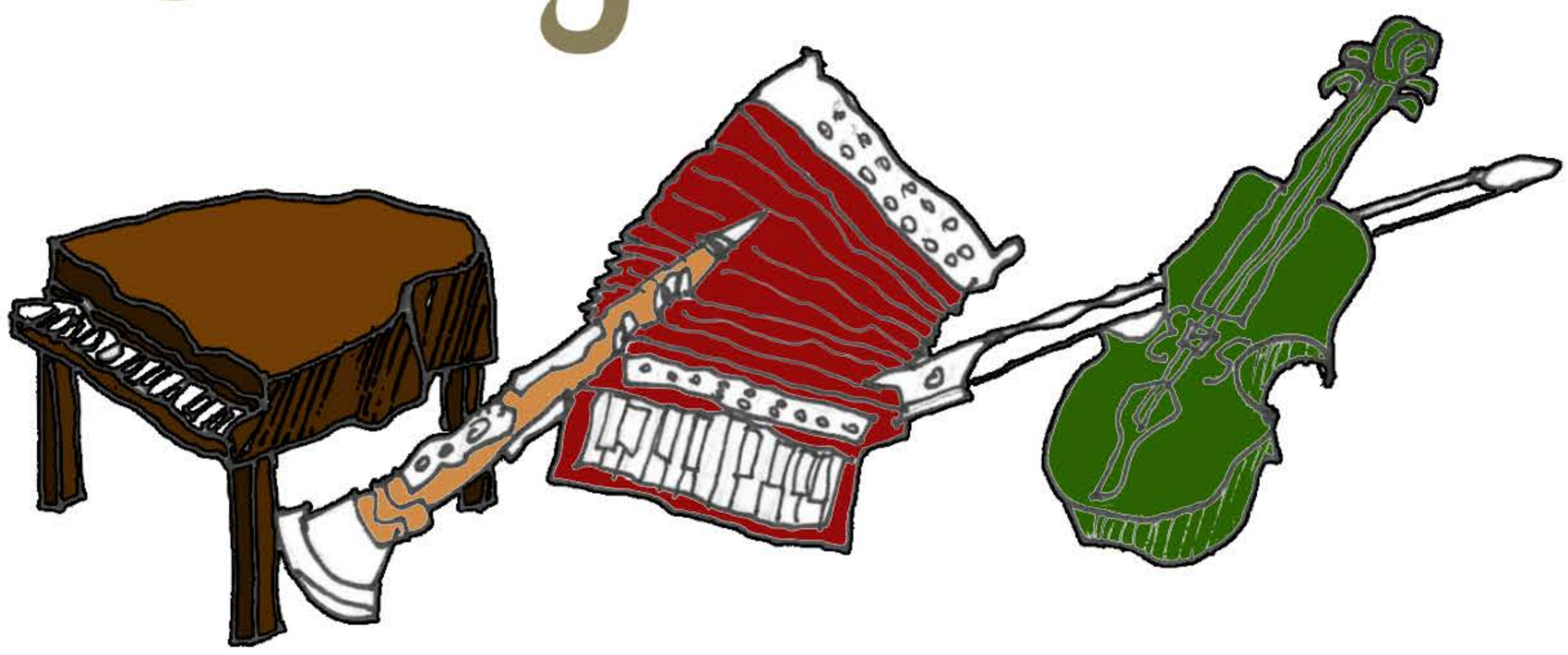
Ariane:

"We bought this when we got here because we have limited space for the dishes and stuff, and we like having some nice dishes."

Ariane:

"This side is meat, and this side is milk."

Giving To Others



Ariane:

"We invited over 30 friends to play live music and it was wonderful!"

Ariane:

"I have a bunch of friends over for Turkish music and I highly encourage my musician friends to bring instruments so they can play around the table."

Yoni:

"For me, socialization is me standing at the stove and people there hanging out!"

Yoni:

"We would have 30 people or sometimes 20 people sitting together, and for me, that was very important."

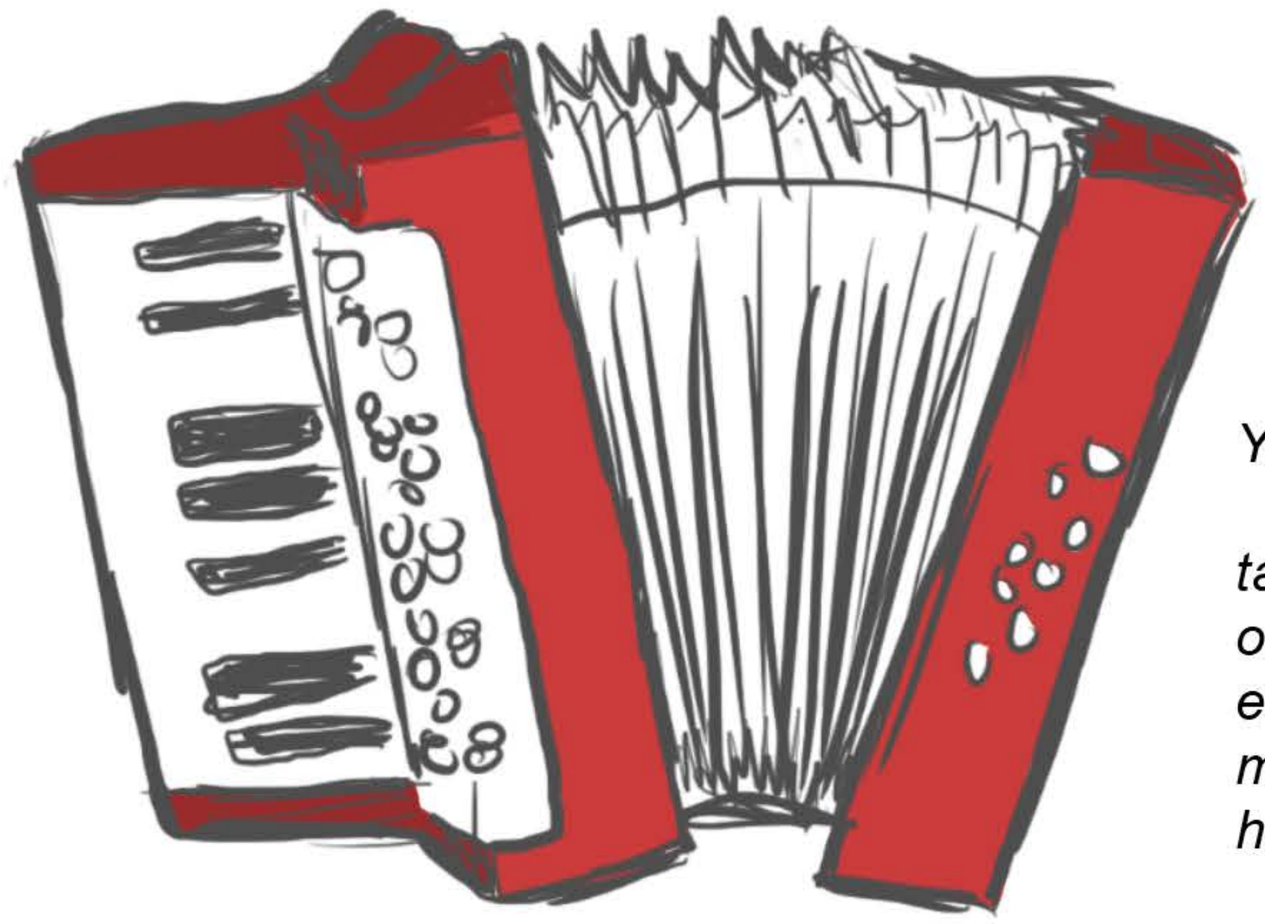
Yoni:

"The food is always super colourful and beautiful."

Ariane:

"I will put tiny plates of servings and 'please help yourselves'... usually everyone tastes everything and... 'I don't know what this is, but it is SO GOOD!' "

Giving To Others

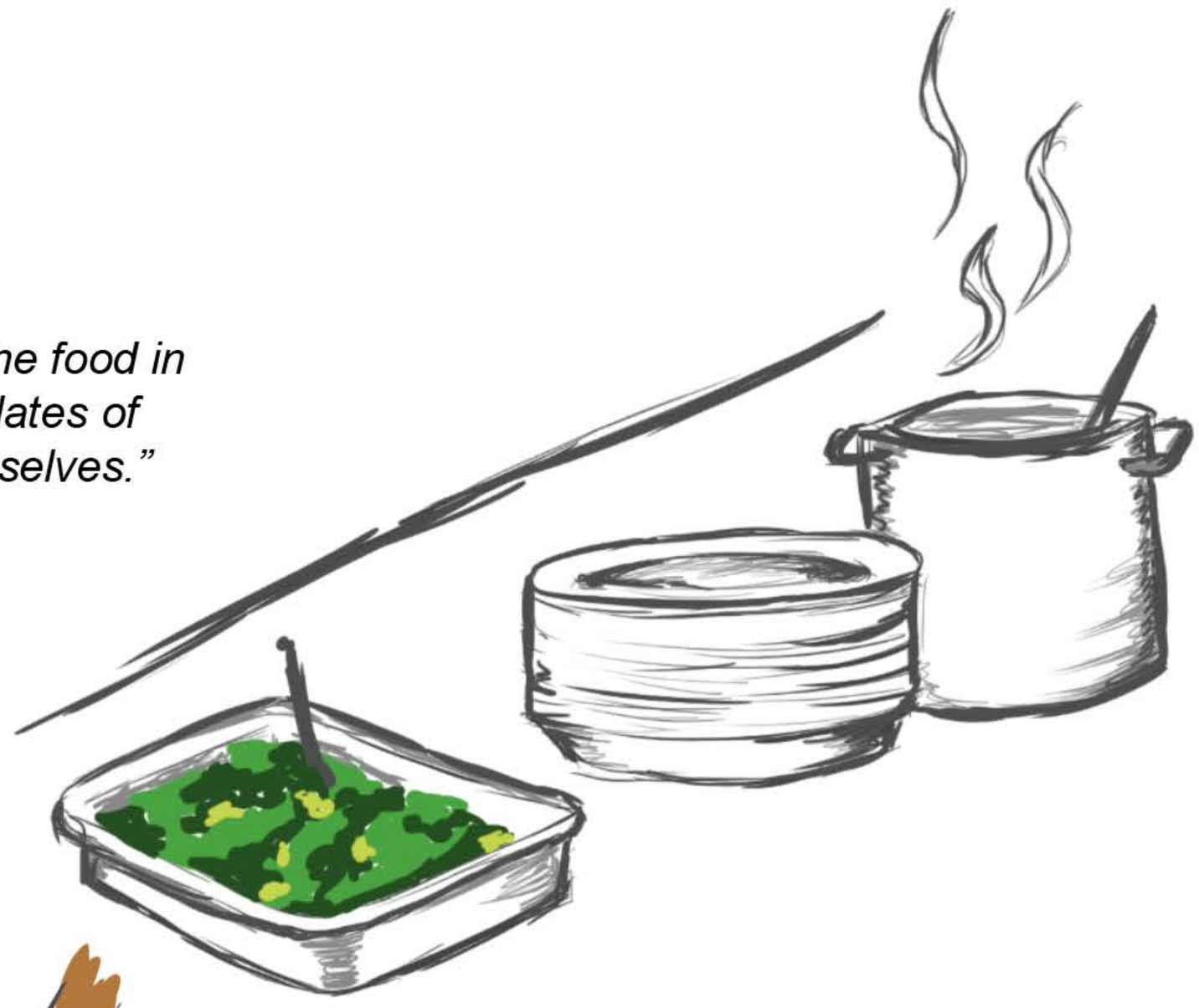


Yoni:

"We are really lucky to have very talented, musical friends, so when they pull out their instruments it's very blissful… everyone is in a food coma, listening to music at the table – and that's one of the happiest feelings for me."

Yoni:

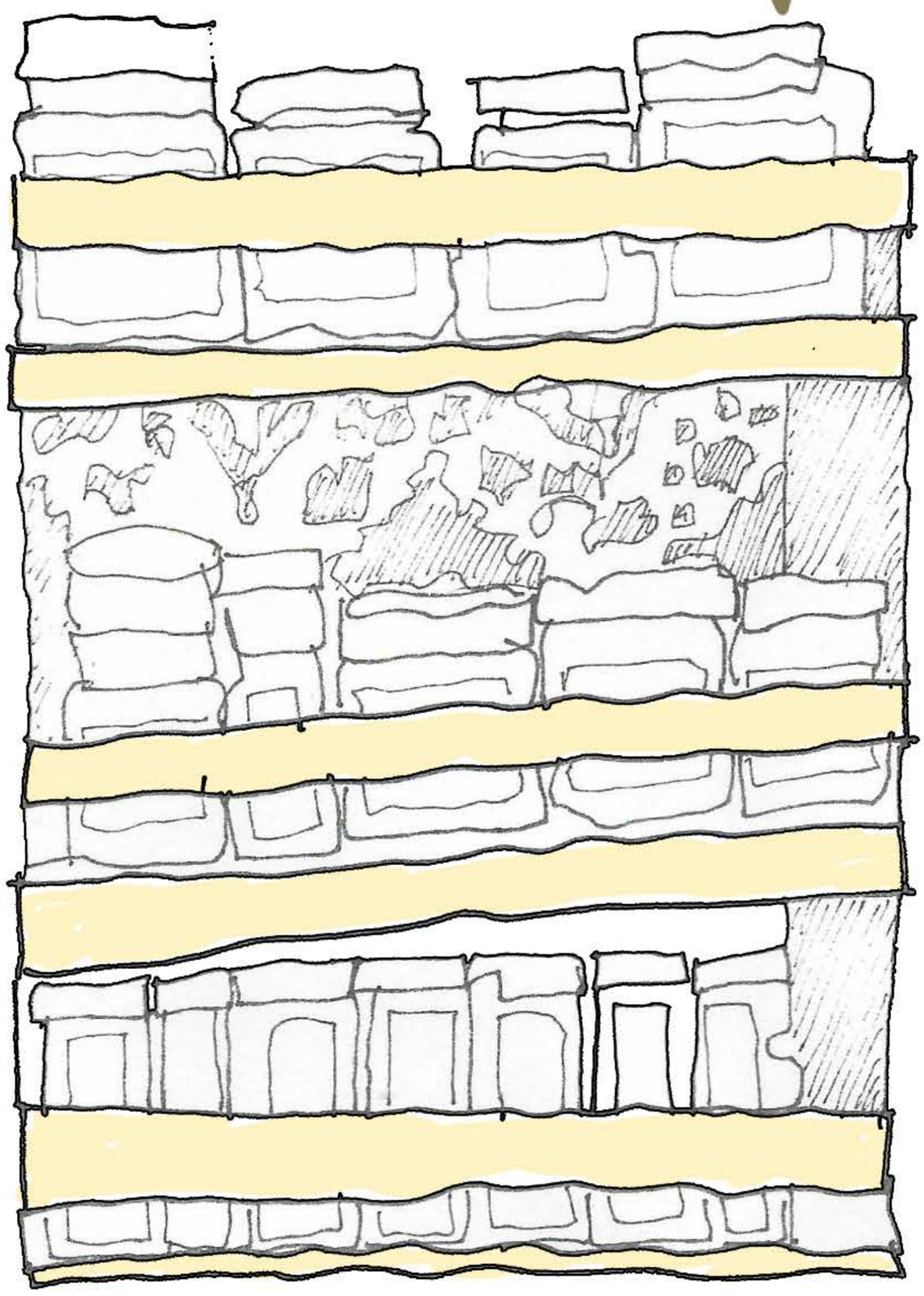
"The way I do it is I just put the food in the middle of the table with tiny plates of servings, so they can serve themselves."



Yoni:

"Me, I take care of cooking all the food. I like it – I love cooking for my family, and sometimes they try something new and they are very curious and happy to try new stuff… so it's a nice experience."

Space



Ariane:

"I can show you spice shelves here... I put some kind of stickers behind it... which is all our spices."

Ariane:

"This here is a little view of our garden... we like to take some seeds from the garden. There is a little table where we eat when it is just the two of us."

Ariane:

"We have limited space for dishes and stuff and we like having nice dishes... The kitchen is really the heart of the house. It's where we spend a lot of the time... where a lot of the good feelings are. It's little objects here and there that make it a little bit tied to the past."

Ariane:

"The two main things that we changed... [one is that] we have this station here, and this is where I make most of my bread."

Space

Ariane:

"We like to feature some very special things on top of it which is Turkish coffee cups… I always wanted [Turkish coffee cups], but Yoni already owned some, so we put them inside." (Referring to displaying Turkish coffee cups in a glass display in the dining area)

Ariane:

"What makes it Turkish is all the shelves around it and my pictures - but this is IKEA, this is IKEA, this is IKEA - so it's not very Turkish, but we make it Turkish by highlighting."

Yoni:

"It looks not so big, but it has two huge leaves so it basically doubles in size, so we have a nice big table… This is from friends that gave it to me who needed a new table… It's not necessarily one I would've chosen on its looks or anything, but the fact that it's so huge is just so awesome."

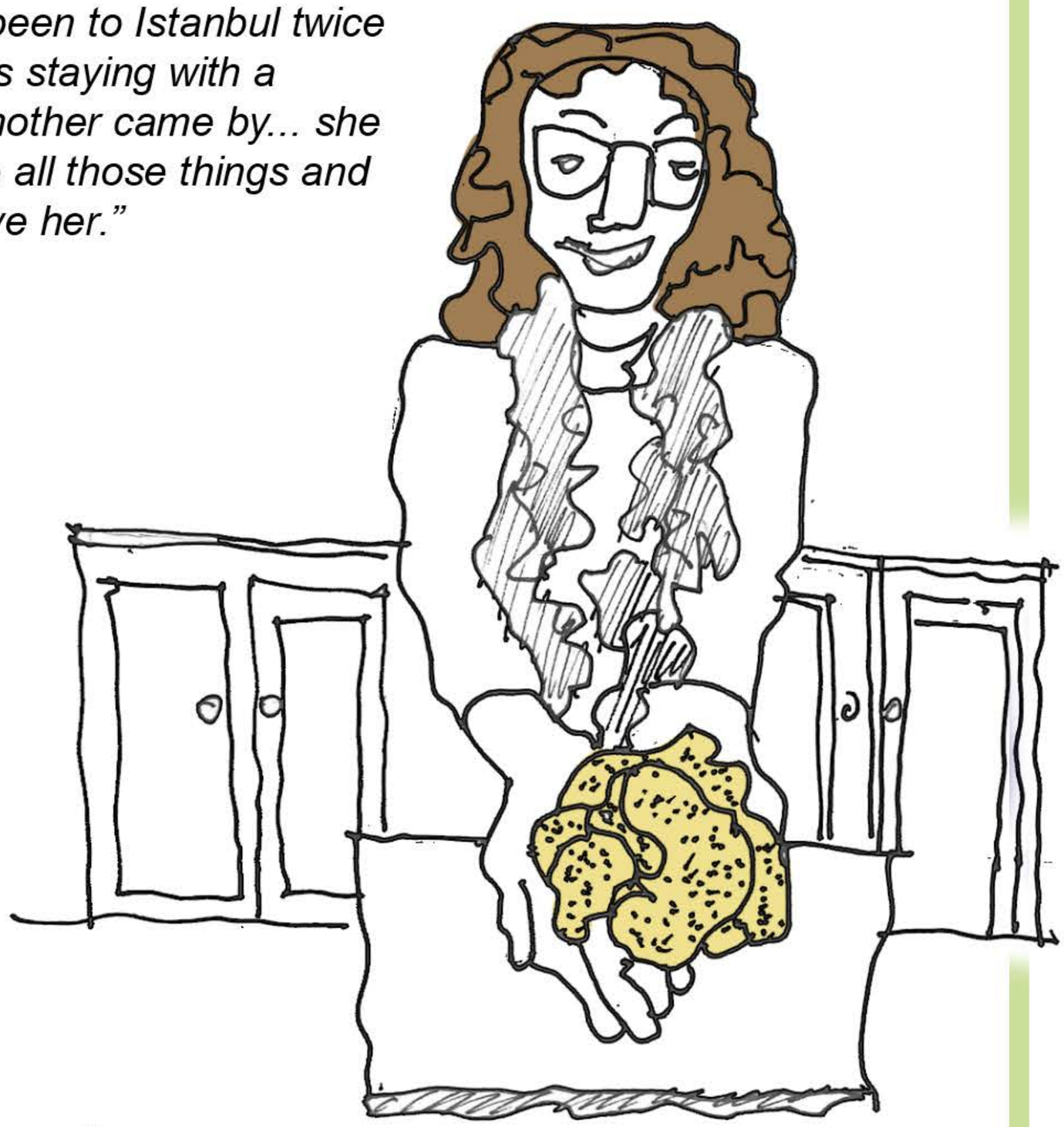
Tradition

Ariane:

"These are real staples... I don't make them as much as my grandparents. There would always be a pot of this when I was growing up... almost every sit-down meal. Every Friday night we had it and sometimes through the week... it was almost like bread."

Ariane:

"I will be making bourekas... I have been to Istanbul twice for a couple of months. My first trip, I was staying with a Turkish woman, and one day her grandmother came by... she was the one cooking for us. I got to taste all those things and I would come into the kitchen and observe her."



Yoni:

"So... three cezve; the big one for more than two guests; the middle one... more traditional for two people and when I used to live at my place... a single one."

Tradition

Ariane:

"I would have my little booklet – and I think I still have it around – but I would have my little booklet and I would observe her and note the ingredients that she was using."

Ariane:

"And then I'm just rolling like this, and then the way that the Turkish mother showed me, you just rolling very carefully and then I will tuck it, and then it's a cute, little börek."

Yoni:

"What my grandmother used to do is she would take the green bean and cut it down the middle like this... so we would cut it like that and she would call is 'çalı fasulye' which, if I ever asked her what that meant, she would say it means 'special beans', and only recently I looked it up and I think there's a flat bean that's called çalı fasulye. So this is what we had in Calgary where I grew up, so she just took what she had and cut it in half to make it flat."

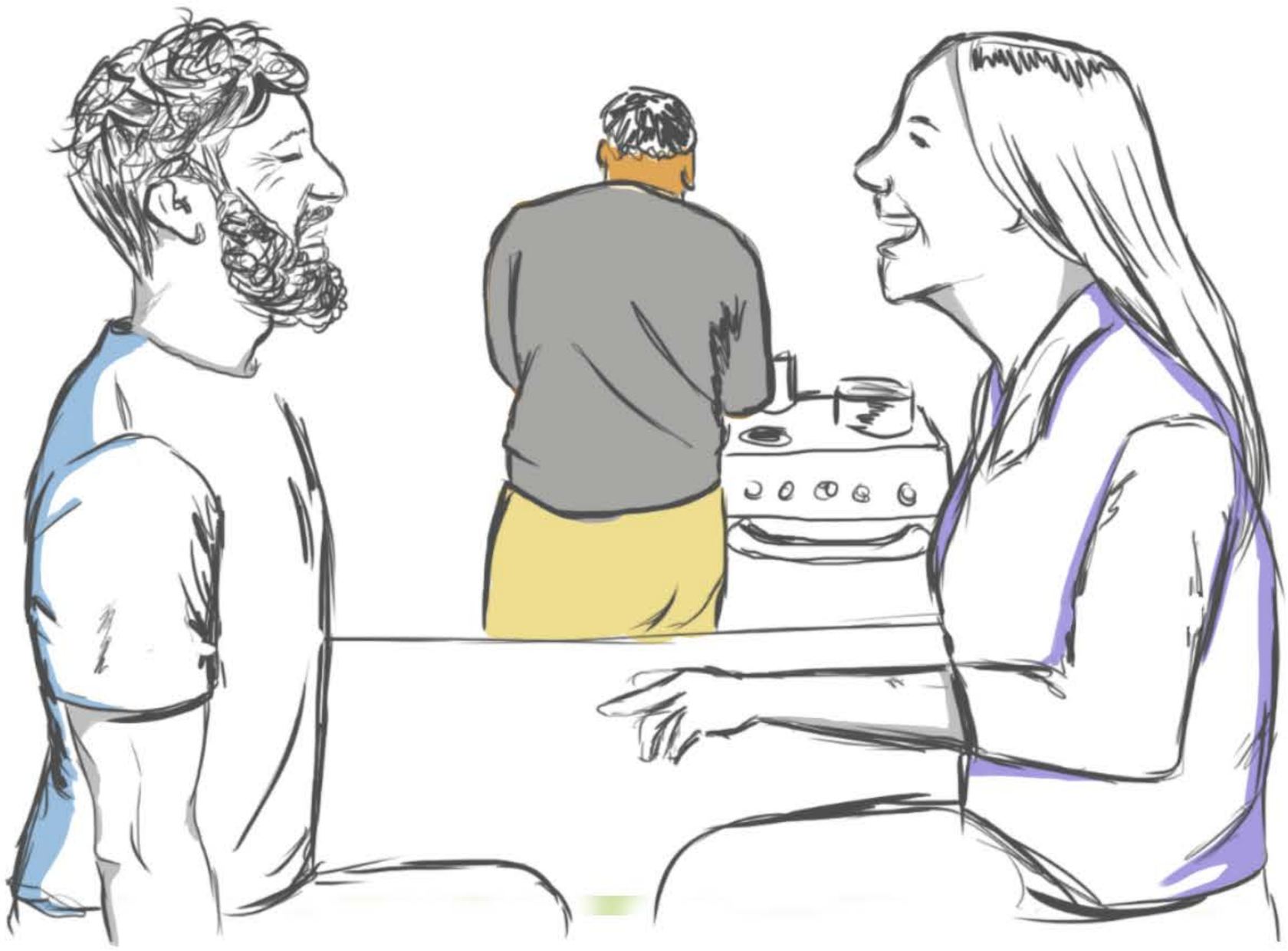
Informal Hospitality

Ariane:

"If I have guests, or if I have a meal with my family, I will always cook a börek. Lately, I tend to do a full one, so I do a spiral and then go around that spiral until my dish is like one big square."

Yoni:

"I'm a little bit introverted, but we like to have people over to play music and whatever, and that's always kind of where I feel comfortable – by the stove – and people are at the table and I can draw in a word here and there. And it's just such a pleasure to make something, and someone is eating it and they're enjoying it… It's the best feeling."

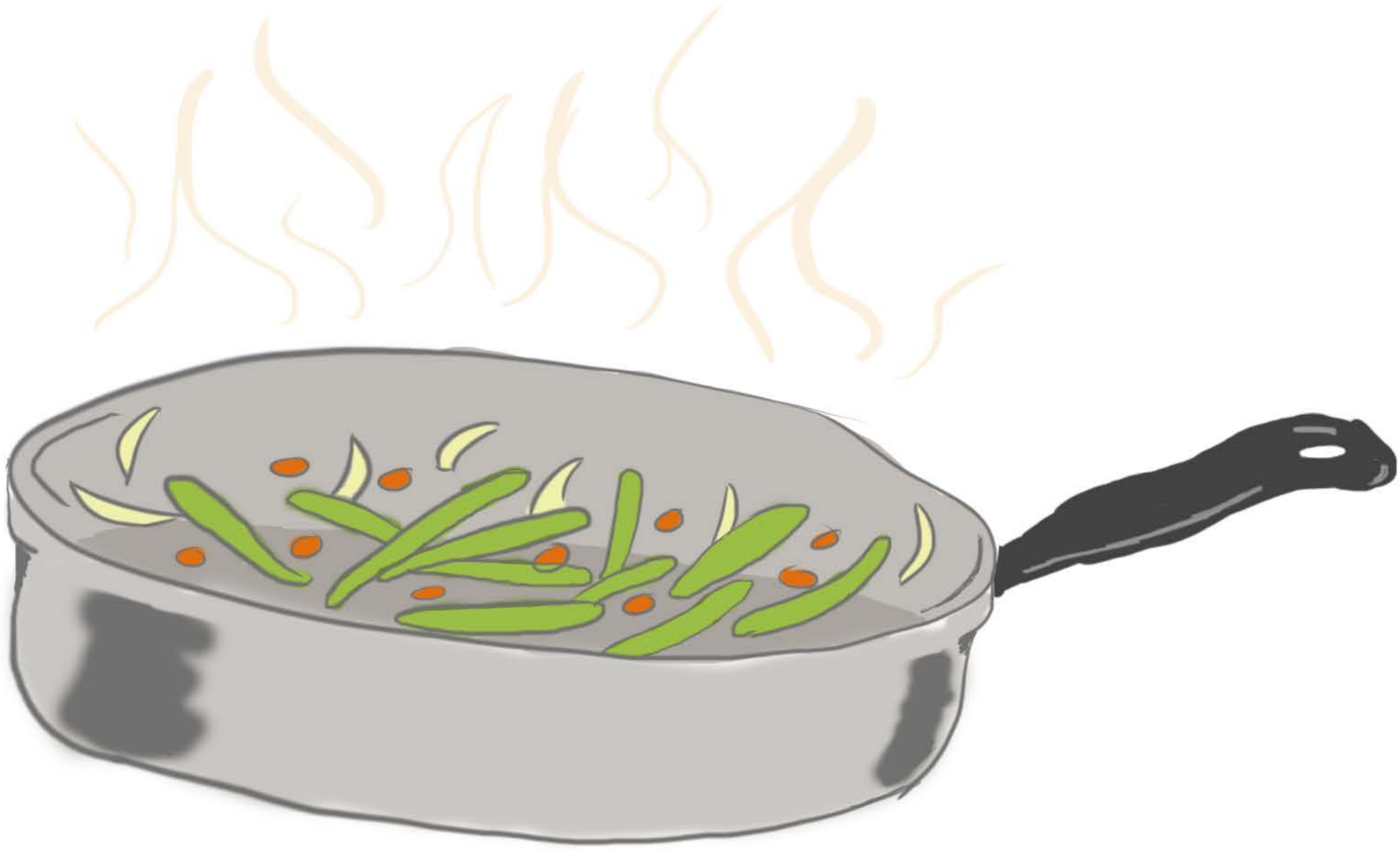


Recipe

Yoni's Recipe - Fasulye
Green Bean Stew

Ingredients
- Green beans
- 1 Tomato (grated)
- Onion
- Garlic
- Olive Oil
- Salt
- Pepper

Steps
1. Slice green beans up the middle.
2. Prep a saucepan with olive oil and put on medium heat.
3. Once the oil is hot, add the grated tomato, chopped onion and garlic and stir gently.
4. Add green beans and stir.
5. Cover and cook on medium heat for 10-15 minutes depending on preference.



Recipe

Ariane's Recipe - Gül Börek

Spinach and feta "roses"

Ingredients

- Spinach
- Feta
- (Optional) Green onions
- 2 Eggs
- Mint
- Oregano
- Whole cumin seed
- Paprika
- Allspice
- Olive oil
- Black pepper
- Store-bought phyllo pastry sheets
- Butter, milk, almond milk, or olive oil
- Sesame seeds
- Nigella seeds

Steps

1. Preheat Oven to 350°F.
2. Chop and mix spinach, feta, one egg, spices, and olive oil in a large bowl.
3. Spread pastry dough on a flat surface.
4. Spread a third of the mixture in a line lengthways in the centre of the phyllo pastry sheets.
5. Mix butter, milk, almond milk, or olive oil with the second egg.
6. Brush egg mixture gently onto the pastry around the spinach mixture.
7. Fold the pastry around the spinach mixture and roll into a long tube.
8. For multiple small servings, wrap the tube around itself into a spiral and tuck the end underneath. Repeat steps 4 - 6 with the rest of the mixture.
9. For one large sharable rose, wrap the tube around itself into a spiral. Repeat steps 4 - 6 with the rest of the mixture and add the other tubes to the spirals until you have one large spiral.
10. Place onto a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or silicone baking mat.
11. Brush again with egg mixture, top with sesame seeds, nigella seeds, and chopped nuts.
12. Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes until golden and crispy.

Notes

Antoine

Antoine is an Ag-economist, Statistician, Geomatician and a member of the Armenian Cultural Association of Ottawa. He loves music and dance and has taught Armenian folk dances in many countries around the world. He also hosts outdoors camps and celebrations in the family's farm in Gatineau.

He now works part-time as a consultant for international organizations and also plans, finances, and operates charitable development-oriented projects in Armenia.

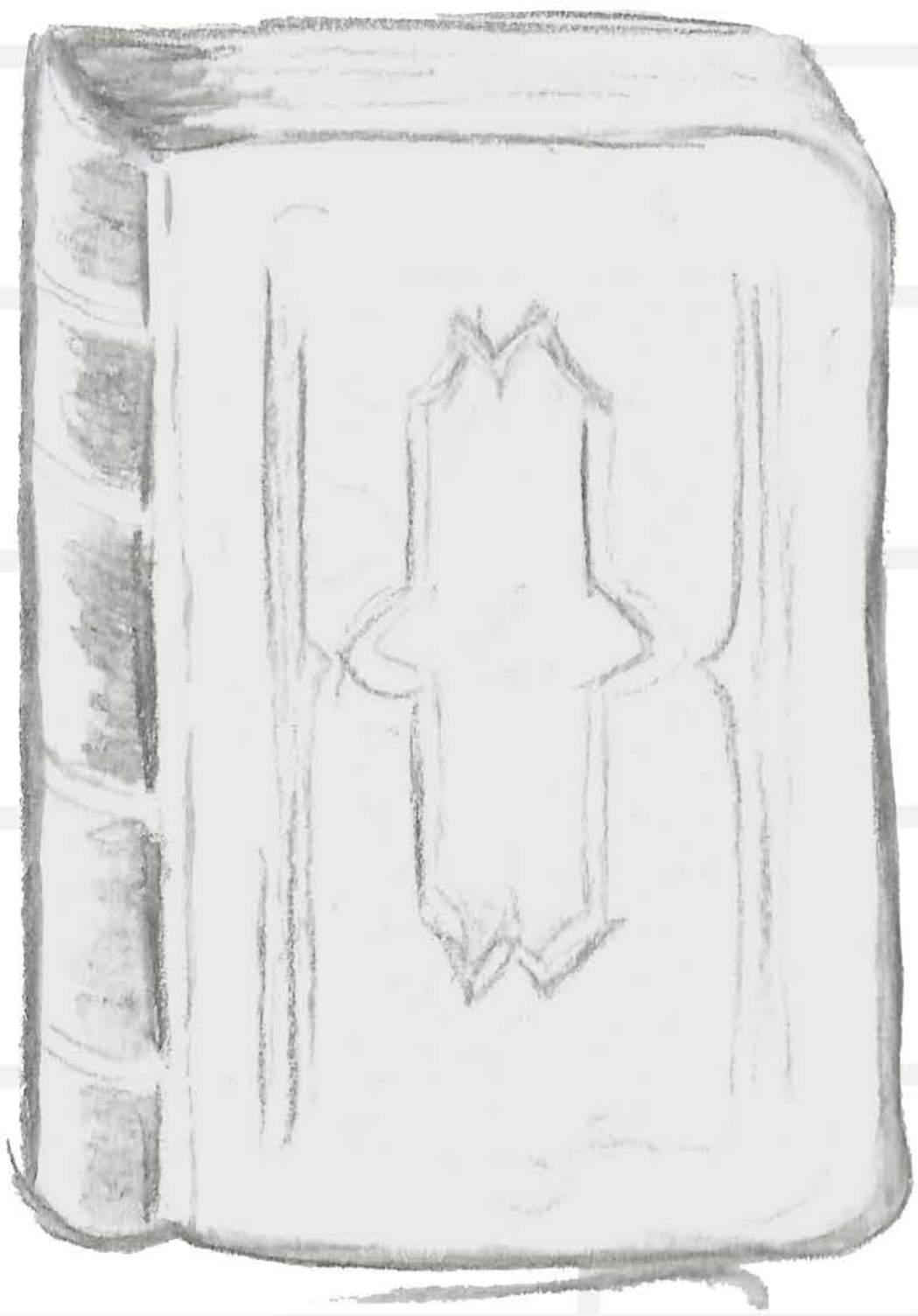
Emotional Attachments

"For the Bible, it's a very precious thing, its probably one of the most precious things we have in the house... It's the only thing they brought over with them. When they were robbed, nobody stole a book. It's what stayed with them. It has been in the family since 1860."

"I'm the eldest boy in the family, so I for some reason get to keep it and I try to preserve it as best as I can... As is the tradition, they mark in the Bible different dates, like the birth of children."

"I think it's a bowl that was given to someone for their baptism, and they got their name inscribed on it. I guess this is the dish he would eat in... Actually, it says 'Movses Emanu' –Little Moses'. I just bought it in 1970 or '71 from a professor who had been teaching in Turkey, and he had picked up some old copper things that he was selling, so I picked up the one that had the Armenian inscription on it."

Emotional Attachments

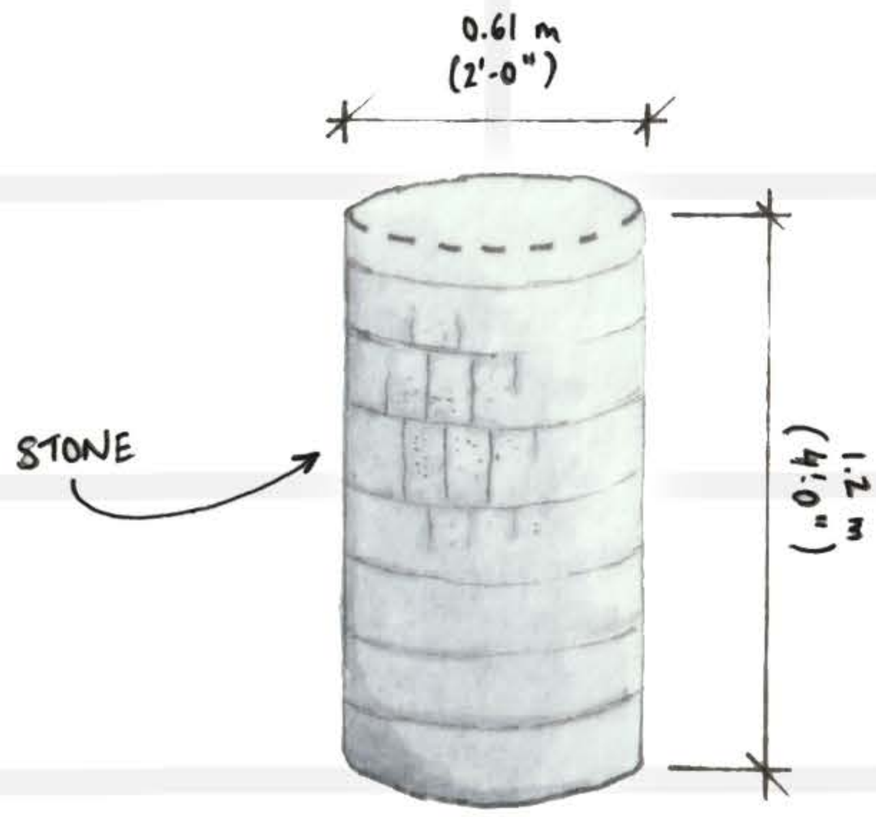


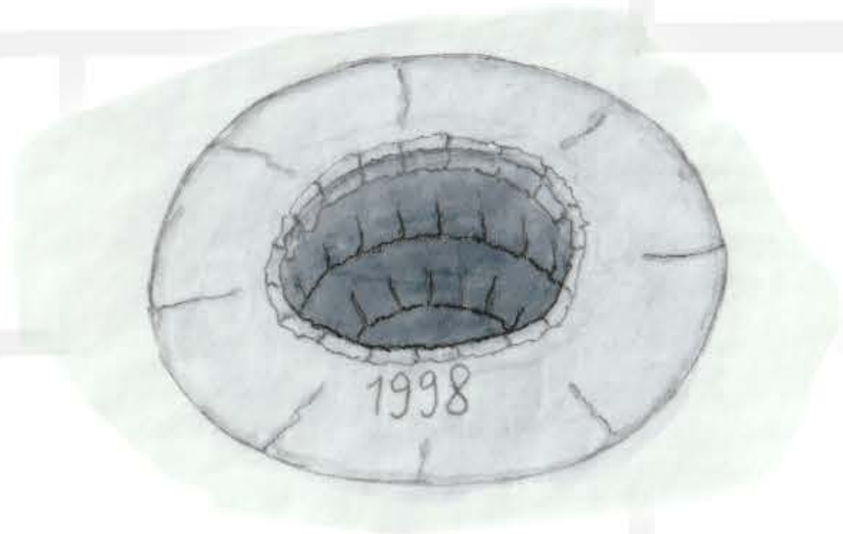
"It's a very precious thing. It's probably one of the most precious things we have in the house for me. There are birthdays... and [as] is the tradition, we mark the bible with different dates of the birth of the family's children... Sometimes I think [about] what they went through to carry this over but I'm sure they were carrying a lot of other things but when they were robbed, nobody cared [to rob] a book so that's what stayed with them."

"It's always protected. I somehow feel the responsibility to preserve it."

"It's something from my part of Armenia. To me it has an emotional value... My family never got back there. My father never went back to where he was born."

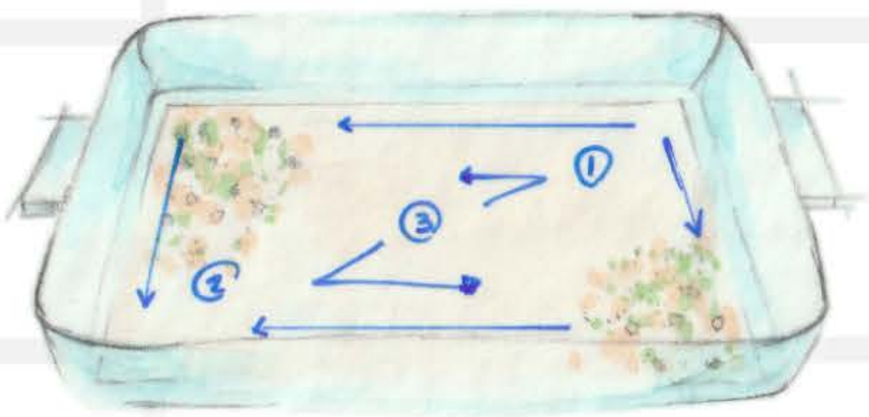
Technique

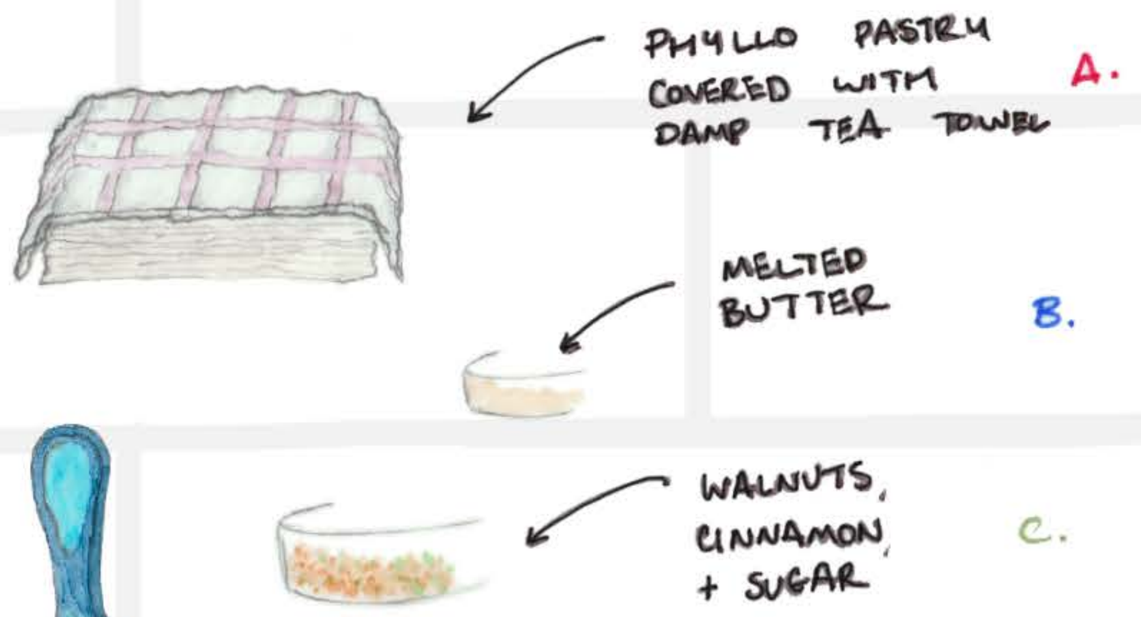




"Lavash bread is unleavened bread and it is made very, very thin, and traditionally it is cooked in a tonir... Tandoor is a hole in the ground and is about 4 feet deep and 2 feet in diameter... The recipe that Movses taught me was to use an oven... but today, because it's a heat wave, I am making an innovation—I'm going to cook it in my barbecue outside."

"What I'm doing now, I'm separating the pieces because I probably have not cut them very well... I rush, but they separate easily... It's for painting and renovations, but this is what they use in Halab... This is the easiest way to separate and serve."

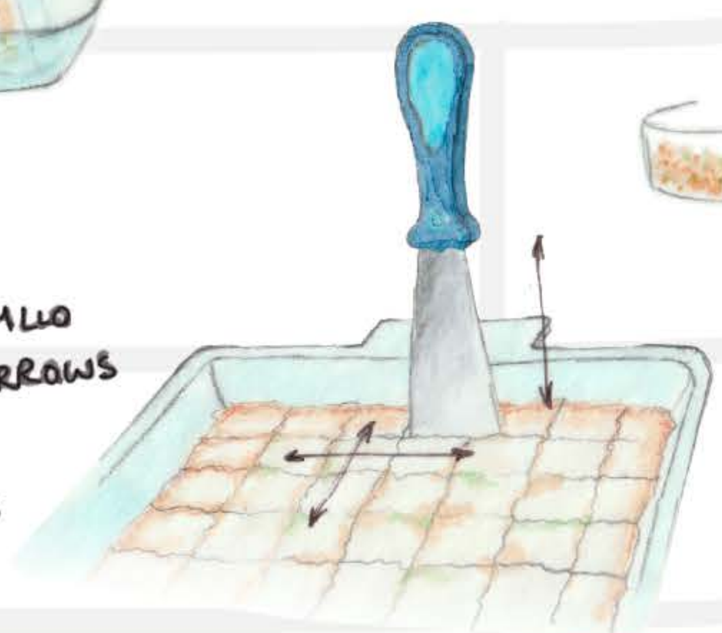




A. LAYER SHEET OF PHYLLO PASTRY.

B. BRUSH BUTTER OVER PHYLLO FOLLOWING DIRECTIONAL ARROWS

C. EVENLY SPREAD SOME OF THE MIXTURE OVER THE PHYLLO AND BUTTER.



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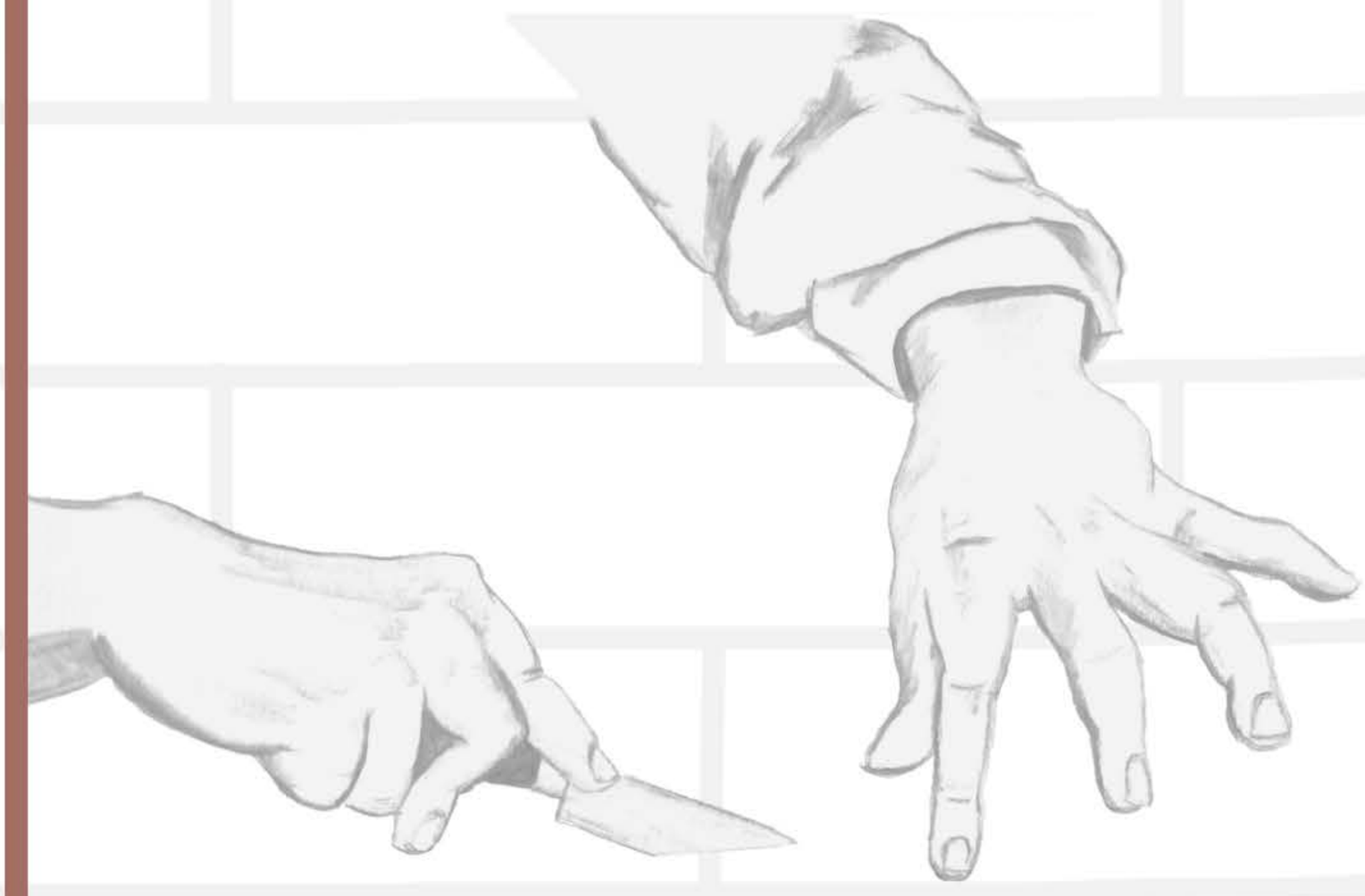
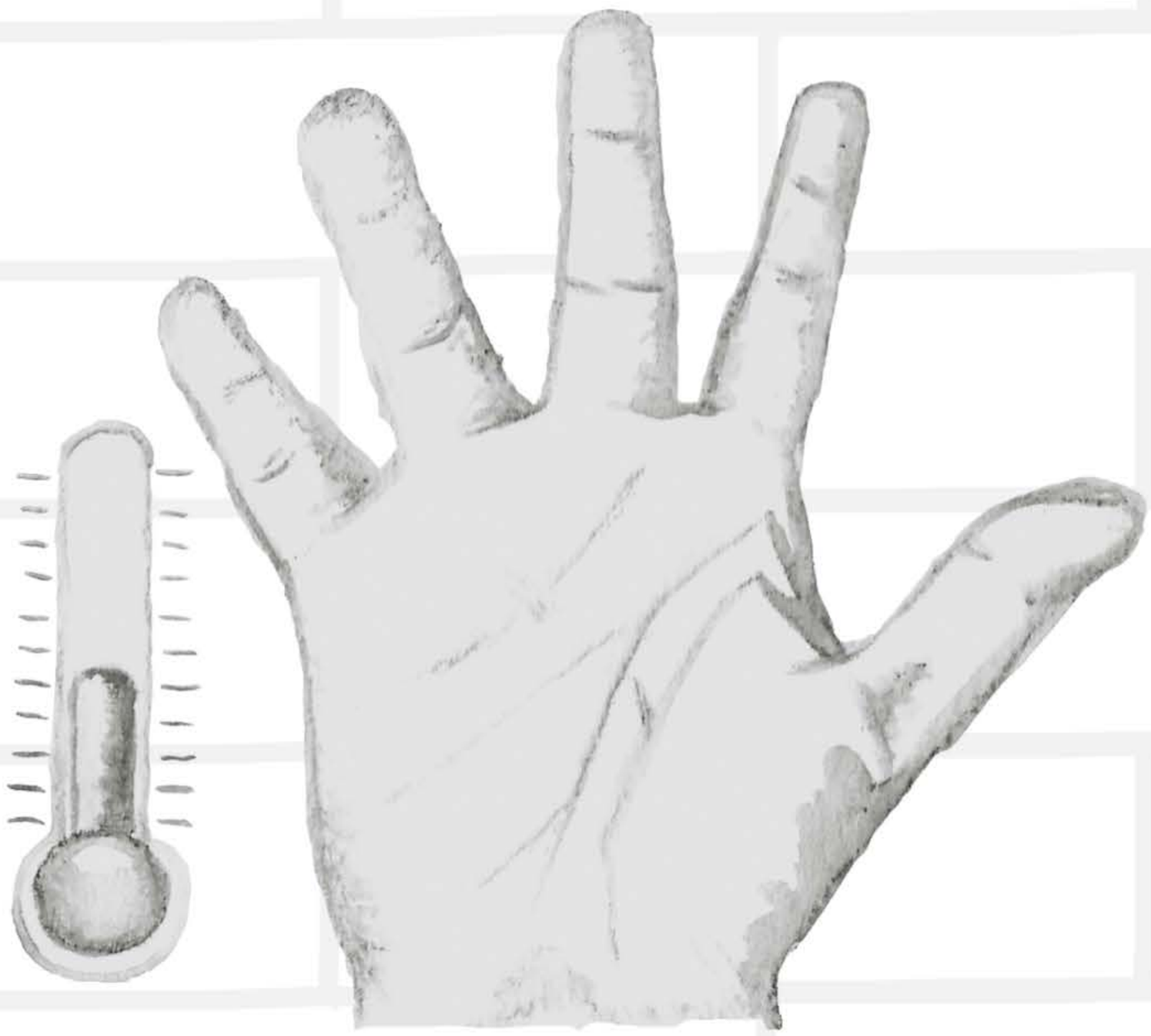


"Some people do it in lozenges but I make it into small squares. I find it easier. I make it into small shape so not too big so people can eat it with one hand and usually I take it to community events and if people need more than one, it's easy to eat; it's a mouthful."

"If you want more, you can eat more but you don't have to get a big piece and if you're watching your weight or don't like it or you're not hungry, you don't have to eat more than one."



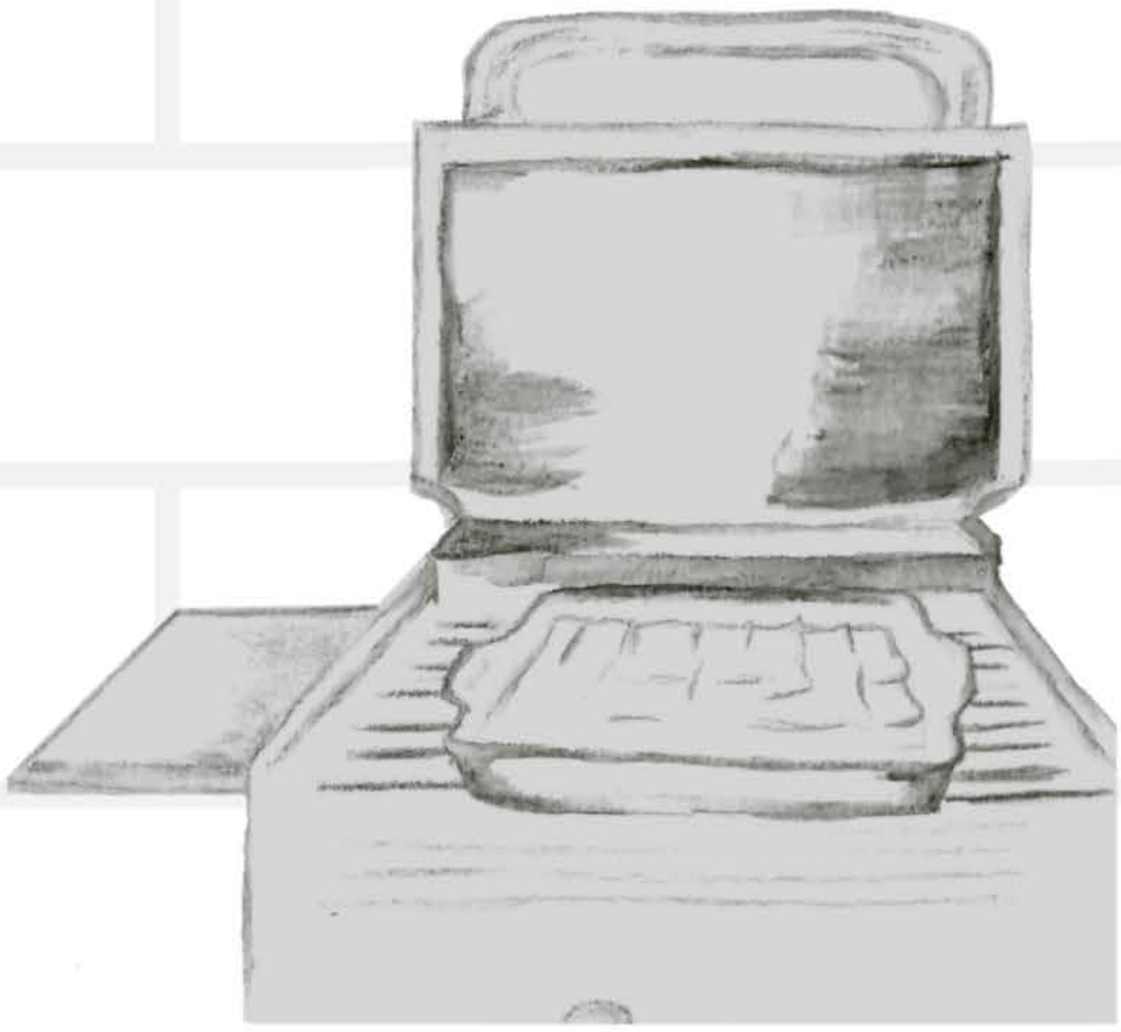
"When I'm cooking on a tonir or cooking a sheep for instance, I don't use a thermometer. I put my hands near the thing I want to cook and if I can count to ten without lifting my hand, it means it's not hot enough. If I can't count to five, than it's too hot... It is hot but if your hand starts cooking, it means you're cooking the meat!"

Innovation

"This was a recipe adapted by my friend, Movses. He taught me how to do it the easy way."

"The original recipe was to not fold the phyllo like I'm folding it, but to make in a larger pan which I modified because I don't want to make that much. I found the phyllo fits exactly in this Pyrex pan that I have."

"Instead of using the traditional recipe, or honey, or syrup made with sugar cane, I'm going to use—to make it a Canadian thing—maple syrup, which is made in our village where our family farm is in Quebec... It makes it uniquely Canadian when you serve pakhlava with maple syrup as opposed to honey, which is a lot more expensive, or with what they usually do in Syrian pastry shops. They do it with sugar cane now."



"Movses taught me to use an oven... but today, because it's a heatwave, I am making an innovation; I am cooking on my barbecue outside ... that's only a practical thing, so I don't heat up the house."

"I try to be very environmentally conscious. I don't pretend to be a guru, but I try when I learn something to make it so that we save this planet."

Memory

"Remember your name without losing it whether you are poor or whether you are wealthy."

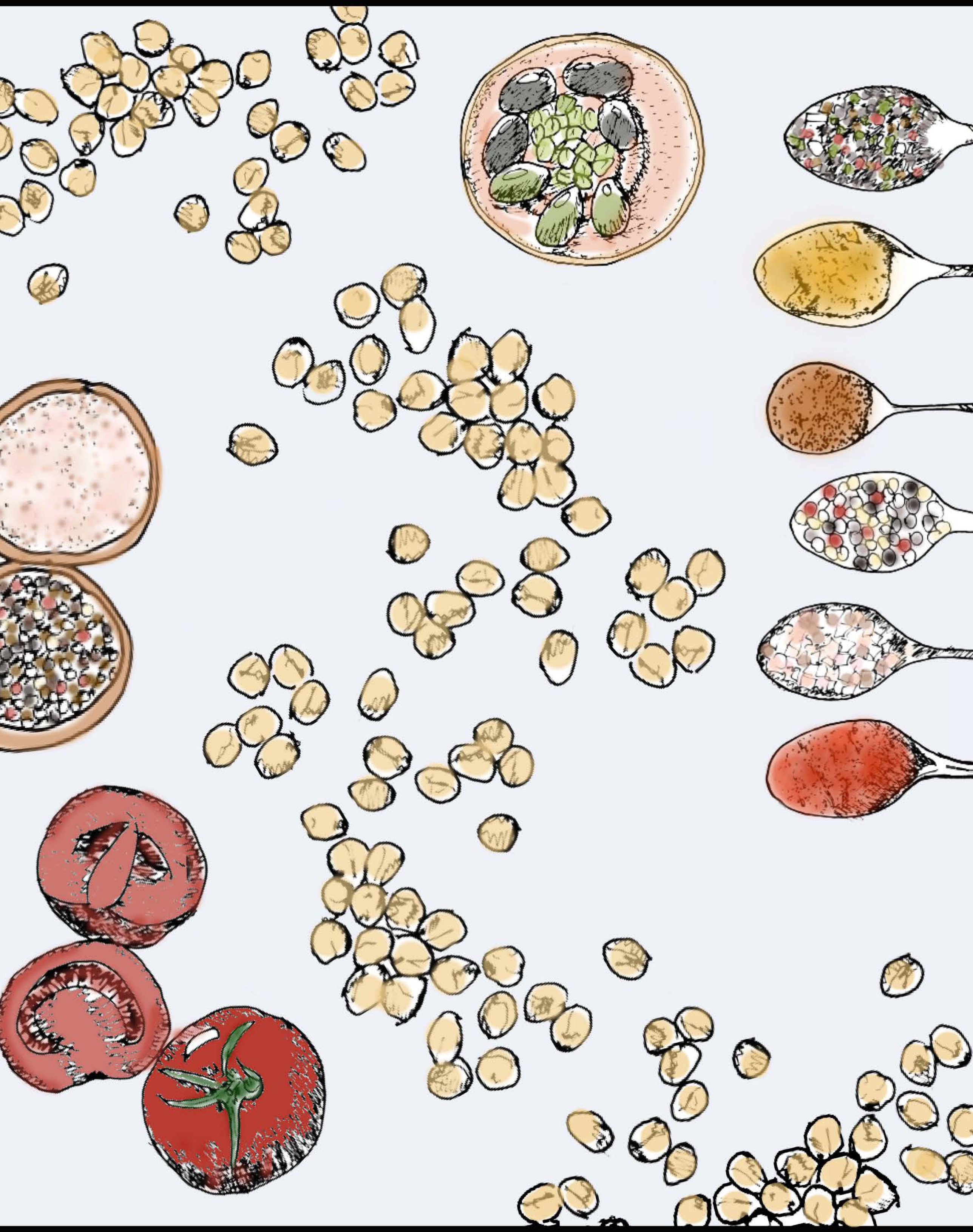
"I found out later on that my father had never told our sad story to any of my brothers and sisters... there was a historian who was writing testimonies from survivors of the genocide, and she asked me if I could write a little bit, so I wrote a four-page story of what it is, and at that time I sent it to my nieces and nephew and my children."

"I worked internationally a lot and lived in different countries... this is from the Musee d'Orsay, a reproduction that we bought. Those are messages that people sent my daughter for her birthday, and I printed them out."

Recipe

Պախլավա - Pakhlava (from Պախլավունի) – by Movses, adjusted by Antoine

Ingredients for half original size prescribed by Movses: *fold phyllo in 2 for 13x9.5"*
250 gr shelled walnuts - Ընկույզ 1/2 tsp. Cinnamon – Դարչին կինամոն 11/2 cups sugar - Շաքար 1 cup water - Ջուր 1/4 Lemon – Լիմոն 1 tsp orange blossom water-Նարինջի ծաղկի ջուր 1/8 kg (125 gr.) Unsalted Butter – Կարաք 1 package (454 gr.) frozen Phyllo (defrosted for 24 hours in fridge) PC 18 sheets.

1) Clean the (250 gr) nuts from any shells and put in Cuisinart with 1/2 tbsp. sugar and 1/2 tsp. Cinnamon and blend to coarse grind.
2) Melt 1/8 kg (125 gr.) unsalted butter (45 sec. in microwave - high).
3) Preheat oven to 325°F (gas oven - 350°F for electric).
4) With pastry brush coat cooking tray with melted butter.
5) Put half-sheet of phyllo flat in tray and paint over quickly with butter brush, then fold-over and coat with butter brush and continue adding, folding and coating with melted butter four out of 18 sheets;
   Hint: cover the phyllo sheets with a damp cloth while brushing so they don't dry-up!
6) Add 1/3 of the ground walnut mixture (1) in even layer in the fold of 5th sheet, then another 1/3 on top of folded sheet and then the remainder in the fold of 6th sheet;
7) Continue adding, folding and coating new layers of phyllo and butter each as in (4).
8) Use a sharp knife to cut (all the way to bottom of pan) lozenges or rectangles (3 cm x 3 cm);
9) Bake for 20 minutes at 325°F, then increase heat to 350°F for another 15 minutes (has to turn golden reddish - watch you don't burn it).
10) Take tray out of oven and let cool down (to room temperature or less) (in winter can take 40 minutes in garage - in summer leave overnight to cool down). It is important that pastry is cool while you pour the 'hot-boiling' syrup. Otherwise pakhlava becomes soggy. (or vice-versa, ie cool syrup on oven-hot pastry.).
11) While the pastry is cooling, (20 minutes before it is cool enough) bring to a boil while stirring 1 1/2 cups of sugar with 1 cup filtered water. Add the filtered juice of a quarter large lemon; continue stirring until it starts boiling. Then simmer while stirring for another 5 minutes. The syrup will start boiling with slight explosive splashes. It is now ready to be poured on the pastry. Or prepare the syrup ahead, let it cool and pour it over the oven-hot pakhlava. Or use maple syrup.
12) Make sure the lozenges/rectangles in the pastry tray are clearly cut to the bottom (otherwise go over the cuts again with the sharp knife or a putty-knife).
13) Pour syrup little by little covering row by row the pakhlava (I use ¾ of the prepared syrup I prefer it less sweet).
14) Can be kept for 2 weeks in the fridge.

Notes