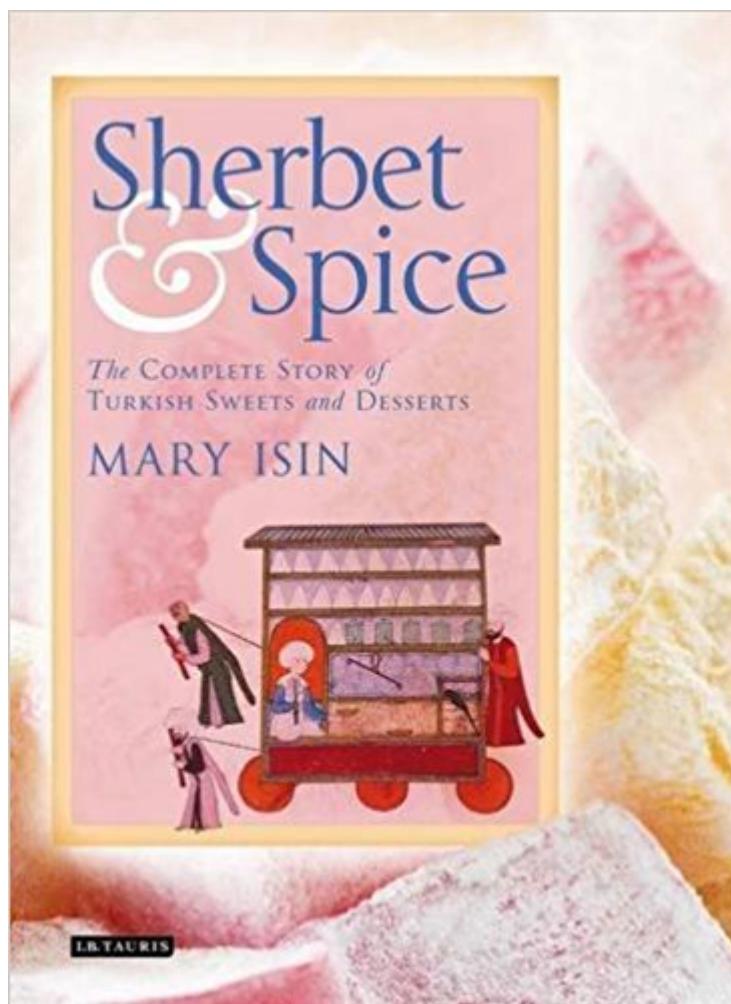


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# **Sherbet And Spice: The Complete Story Of Turkish Sweets And Desserts**



## Synopsis

One hundred sculpted sugar lions, baklava the size of cartwheels a thousand layers thick, helva made in memory of the dead, rose jam in a hundred pots of Dresden china, violet sherbet for the sultan, and parrots addicted to sugar . . . the stories behind Turkey's huge variety of sweets and puddings, valued not only for their taste but as symbols of happiness, good fortune, and goodwill, are as fascinating as their flavor. This riveting exploration of their history and role in Turkish culture is a voyage of adventure, taking us from the sultan's palace to the homes of ordinary people in Turkey's villages and towns, and beyond to Central Asia, Persia, Arabia, and Egypt.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Mary Isin has penned a masterpiece in its field. This is a dizzying book that carries us into daily life, social life, and the world of customs and traditions." (Selim Ileri, Zaman)"A fascinating and informative exploration of the role of sweetness in Turkish culture over the centuries." (Laura Mason, food historian and author of Sugar-plums and Sherbet)"The Turks have been famous for their sweet tooth since the days when so many confectioners worked at the Topkapi Palace that they had their own mosque. Sweets permeate Turkish life. Mary Isin has gathered a mountain of information on this rich subject--recipes from the Middle Ages to the present, science, history, and folkways. It's a sweet read." (Charles Perry, food historian)

Mary Isin has lived in Turkey since 1973. She has translated over 150 books on Turkish history,

culture, and archaeology, and in 1983 she started researching Ottoman cuisine and learned Ottoman Turkish so as to be able to read old cookbooks. She is the author of *The Turkish Kitchen* and a forthcoming encyclopedic dictionary of Ottoman cuisine.

interesting book, not what I expected, but had wonderful historical stories.

The title promises a "complete story of Turkish sweets" and it does indeed deliver as much. Extensively researched, fully documented, but not in a dry scholarly fashion. The introduction and the first four chapters masterfully handle the subject of sweeteners including cane-sugar. Each chapter is opened with a comprehensive introduction and period recipes usually conclude it. A very successful formula. When you finish the book, you will definitely have a clear sense of the origin and development of the Turkish sweets, handled in a very approachable manner. Added pleasures are the many charming period sketches and illustrations, 14 of them are high-quality colored ones, bunched in the middle on beautiful glossy paper. A pleasure to read, highly recommended.

Wonderful Turkish food.

Delightful and fascinating, particularly if you have ever visited the extraordinary city of Istanbul and love its culture (not referring to the present political party in power). I do wish there were more recipes adapted for present day use.

Unless you are Turkish or have spent a lot of time in that country, you might be forgiven for not really knowing much about Turkish sweets and deserts, and perhaps assume that "Turkish Delight" is a prime example of a Turkish delicacy. This book will jump to your aid. This is a fairly thick mixture of recipe book and reference book, presenting to the reader the complete history of Turkish sweets and desserts. The book's publicity information claims that it is the first-ever study of Turkish confectionery and examines the role that food plays within the country's social, political and religious life. Oh, and you get over 70 authentic recipes as well. Certainly the comprehensiveness of this book cannot be in doubt. It feels that everything has been thought of (perhaps, with the exclusion of lots of full-colour photographs). From a glossary and a guide to pronouncing certain Turkish characters to a VERY comprehensive series of notes and a detailed bibliography, readers of all levels are likely to be accommodated here. And at a great price too. Clearly for many the recipes, rather than the history and social significances might be key. For others they might only ever focus on book

learning and never try one recipe. Maybe some will do both? To be fair, this is not your usual cookbook. It is more academically-minded and the recipes are presented perhaps as an afterthought or more as an example to back up the rest of the information, rather than being first and foremost a cookbook with a bit of supporting information thrown in for good measure. It would be wrong to suggest that the book is misleading or attempting to deceive, but the prospective reader should be aware that this is more reference work than cookbook. It might have been nice if the book could have been more modularly designed so separate the recipes from the deep reference material, making it even more appealing and accessible to both audiences, without compromising things. It is a shame if prospective readers may sideline this book due to it being a bit too "text heavy". As it is, you might need to be a bit more of a dedicated Turkophile to get the most out of this book. It is not a book you would just pick up to add another country to your recipe book collection. It is important not to get the wrong impression from this review. This is a very comprehensive, great, informative book but you need to manage your expectations to avoid disappointment. If this book is what you are expecting then you will not be disappointed. The only real disappointment is if you buy this foremost as a recipe book and a means to just get cooking Turkish recipes, perhaps inspired by a holiday or a restaurant visit. This would not be a beginner's book for you in that case.

As a re-creationist studying pre-1600 Turkey, this book is amazing. Great notes and several pre-1600 recipes. Got it from the library and ordered it the next day. Too awesome not to own. This book also has precise definitions of measurement terms, which will assist in understanding other books on Turkish Cooking. I can't wait to make period taffy!!!

A sweet and well-documented masterpiece on the immense history of Turkish sweets and desserts. Helva, salep, zerde and gÄ±llaÄ±fÄ§ will have no secrets after you read this wonderful book!

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