

Serpme Kahvalti (Turkish Breakfast Spread)

Turkish · Breakfast · Easy · 35 min total · Serves 4

Serpme kahvalti, or 'spread-out breakfast', is Turkey's celebrated weekend table: cheeses, olives, tomato and cucumber, boiled eggs, honey and butter, jam, simit and tea, all served at once and shared.

Ingredients

- 2 simit (sesame bread rings) (or a crusty bread loaf; warmed before serving)
- 8 oz white cheese (beyaz peynir) (brined Turkish-style white cheese; feta is a close swap)
- 4 oz kasar cheese (sliced; mozzarella or provolone is a swap)
- 1 cup mixed olives (black and green, brine-cured)
- 3 medium tomato (cut into wedges)
- 2 medium cucumber (sliced)
- 4 small Turkish green peppers (sivri biber) (served whole; cubanelle or pepperoncini are swaps)
- 4 large eggs (hard-boiled)
- 3 tbsp honey (a drizzle over butter is classic)
- 2 tbsp butter (softened, to spread on warm simit)
- 0.5 cup strawberry or cherry jam (a fruit preserve (reçel style))
- 1 tsp pul biber (Aleppo pepper) (to sprinkle on tomato and cucumber)
- 2 tbsp black tea (loose leaf, for çay)

Method

1. Boil the eggs by placing them in a saucepan, covering with cold water by 1 inch, bringing to a boil, then covering, removing from the heat and resting for 10 minutes before cooling in ice water and peeling; the yolks should be firm with no green ring.
2. Warm the simit in a 350°F (175°C) oven for 5 minutes, until the crust is crisp and the inside is warm.
3. Brew the tea by steeping the loose black tea in 2 cups of boiling water in a small teapot for 10 to 15 minutes, until it is a dark, strong amber, and keep it warm on a low burner.
4. Season the tomato wedges and cucumber slices with a pinch of salt and a little of the pul biber about 5 minutes before serving.
5. Take the white cheese and kasar out of the refrigerator 20 minutes before serving so they taste fuller, crumble the white cheese into a shallow dish, and arrange the kasar slices in an overlapping row.
6. Put the olives in a small bowl, set the green peppers on the board, spoon the honey into a small dish, and leave the butter out to soften for spreading on the warm simit.
7. Spoon the jam into a small bowl and halve the eggs lengthwise, placing them cut-side up on the platter.
8. Assemble everything on one large board or platter, serve the tea in small tulip glasses with a jug of hot water to dilute it, and let everyone build their own bites.