

The Ottomans | Table Culture

‘Charity foundations called imarethanes were built by the rich to serve food to the poor.’

Charity foundations called imarethanes were built by the rich to serve food to the poor. The food was cooked in big cauldrons and served in large bowls called imarets. For the people who were not able to come to imaret, food was sent in lunch boxes, mess-kits, or perhaps some other vessel. In general the people consumed flat bread baked on a convex metal plate over an open fire, or in tandoor ovens. They would begin eating with the right hand, calling the name of God, and finish with a prayer of thanksgiving. On a textile laid out on the floor a tray would be placed on a wooden stand. A family would eat with wooden spoons sitting around the tray.



Name:

Basin

Dynasty:

Hegira 12th century / AD 18th century Husaynid Beys (Ottoman)

Details:

Sidi Qasim al-Jalizi Museum
Tunis, Tunisia

Justification:

A basin or maajna which is used to knead or roll-out dough.



Name:

'Imara al-'Amira (Flourishing Edifice)

Dynasty:

Built in around hegira 964 / AD 1557 Ottoman

Details:

Jerusalem

Justification:

The kitchen which was, and still is, used for the preparation of food for the poor.



Name:

Cauldron

Dynasty:

Hegira 10th century / AD 16th century Ottoman

Details:

Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif
Jerusalem

Justification:

A cauldron for cooking in the imaret.



Name:

Large tray (s'ni)

Dynasty:

Hegira 1156 / AD 1743 Ottoman

Details:

National Museum of Antiquities and Islamic Arts

Algiers, Algeria

Justification:

A tray around which people sat to eat.



Name:

Lunch box (m'raq)

Dynasty:

Hegira 925–1245 / AD 1519–1830 Ottoman

Details:

National Museum of Antiquities and Islamic Arts

Algiers, Algeria

Justification:

A mess-kit used to carry different types of food from the imaret.
