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Turkish Delight

Dupont's new Ezmè rocks the meze dishes



After interminable road construction and the subsequent shuttering of nearly half of its restaurants, Dupont Circle's P Street is bouncing back with a robust spread of restaurants. And its newest, Ezmè, combines a well-priced wine bar and a bazaar of well-spiced Turkish small plates.

Owners (and brothers) Harun and Yavuz Bolukbasi--who also operate Meze and Bistro Cacao--updated the old [Pesce](#) space by dimming the lights and artfully lining the brick walls with wine bottles.

Their menu aims to please with ample "garden," "land" and "sea" categories, and clear markings for vegan diners.

Mercimek köfte (\$5) are nutty vegan lentil patties made with bulgur and onions, with optional yogurt sauce. Stuffed grape leaves (\$5) have a subtler tartness than most versions, thanks to sweet caramelized onions and pine nuts.

On the meaty side, *mantı* (\$8)--tiny dumplings cradling a morsel of ground beef--are a house specialty. The delicate, pea-size nuggets give a burst of spicy pepper that's quickly cooled by the tangy yogurt sauce. *Hünkar beğendi* (\$8) offers a hunk of slow-braised beef served over creamy eggplant purée with melted Gruyère.

The wine list travels near and far, but enthusiastic Turkish servers often recommend trying a bottle from their native country to augment the experience. Sure enough, a glass of *Boğazkere* (\$10) is the perfect pairing for döner kebab.

Ezmè, 2016 P St. NW, between 20th and 21st sts.; 202-223-4303 or ezmedc.com

DOWNLOAD *Ezmè's Dinner Menu (pdf)*

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