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## **Peanut Yam Soup**



1 whole yam or sweet potato, peeled and diced 1 whole chicken 3 cups peanut butter 4 onions, quartered 4 fresh tomatoes, quartered 1 teaspoon chili 2 tablespoons Allspice 1 cinnamon stick salt to taste 2 carrots, peeled and diced

### SERVES 4 | PREP 1 hour 30 minutes | COOK 2 hours

Preparation of the Yam or Sweet Potato Place the sweet potato or yam in a pot and cover with cold water. Let it boil until it becomes soft, about 45-50 minutes.

For the Soup Place the whole chicken in a pot and cover it with cold water. Bring to a boil and skim off any foam that rises to the surface during cooking. After the foam subsides add the salt, cinnamon sticks, allspice, onions, and carrots to the chicken. Cook until chicken is tender. Remove the chicken from the water and set it aside. Pass the broth through a sieve and set that aside too.

from heat.

Add the softened/pureed yams or sweet potatoes to the broth, and blend together on high heat till it becomes a smooth sauce. Return broth to low heat and add the tomato paste and chili pepper powder. Stir it well and leave it on low heat until its oil starts rising to the surface.

Add the slices of chicken to the soup or to the individual bowls.

### May El-Khalil

Lebanese from Aley

I am the founder of the Beirut Marathon Association. I spent much of my adult life in Nigeria. There, I established the Lebanese Ladies in Nigeria, an NGO dedicated to assisting the underprivileged citizens of Nigeria. In 2001 I suffered a near-fatal accident that put me in a coma. Two years and dozens of surgeries later, I could walk again. To celebrate the gift of mobility, I founded the marathon. I speak at universities and organizations about the power of perseverance, unity, and making the dream of peace happen through running. @elkhalilmay

Place a big pot on the stove with the peanut butter in it, continuously stirring it until the natural oils start seeping out. Add the chicken broth as well as onions and fresh tomatoes. Once it starts to boil, reduce the heat and keep stirring until the broth thickens. Once it does, remove



# Vermicelli Asian Salad



### SERVES 6 | PREP 30 minutes | COOK 5 minutes

400g vermicelli noodles 5 spring onions, cut into small pieces 2 carrots, shredded 1 red pepper, diced 500g of baby shrimp

### For the sauce

5 tablespoons oil 4 tablespoons soy sauce 2 tablespoons sesame oil 2 tablespoons rice vinegar Pepper, to taste Hot sauce, optional

Meanwhile, cut the broccoli into small pieces, peel and shred the carrots, cut spring onions on a diagonal, and cut the red peppers into long strips. Add the vegetables to the vermicelli noodles in the bowl.

Combine 5 tablespoons of oil, 4 tablespoons of soy sauce, 2 tablespoons of sesame oil, and 2 tablespoons of rice vinegar and mix well until well incorporated. Pepper and hot sauce are optional. Once mixed, pour into the salad bowl and combine until evenly distributed.

Boil the shrimp in water with cinnamon sticks and your herbs of choice until they turn bright pink. Shock in cold water to cool them and stop the cooking. Then add to the salad.



### Sabine Choucair Lebanese from Beirut

I'm a humanitarian clown and performer, working with communities around the world, telling their stories on stage or in film. I co-founded Clown Me In in Lebanon and Mexico to use the art of clowning against social injustice. I'm a member of Clowns Without Borders USA, which spreads joy among disadvantaged communities and refugee camps. I'm the artistic director of The Caravan, a street theatre project which puts life stories on stage for many communities. I'm also the director of the International Institute for Very Very Serious Studies, a training program to develop the talents of artists. Sabouny\_ 🔂 www.sabinechoucair.blogspot.com

Cook the vermicelli noodles according to package directions. When done cooking, place them in a big salad bowl so that they can cool down.

SALAD



# Makhlouta

A Hearty Lebanese Mountain Stew



### 1 cup pearl barley 1/2 cup chickpeas 1 cup red lentils & yellow lentils ½ cup coarse bulgur wheat, dark 1 cup small white or red beans, black beans, such as ayshe khano, (any mixture you have in your dry pantry) 1/4 cup short-grain rice 6-8 large yellow onions, chopped 2 tablespoons tomato paste Cold water 1 bunch of fresh parsley 1 bunch of fresh coriander 6 cloves garlic, minced

### Dry spices

1 tablespoon turmeric 2 tablespoons allspice or 7-spice seasoning 1 tablespoon caraway powder 2 tablespoons ground coriander 1 tablespoon cumin powder 1 tablespoon paprika Salt to taste Black pepper

34 cups cooking oil or more Extra virgin olive oil for final drizzle



The day before water.

### The day of

Cook each pulse in a separate pot, until soft. Turn the heat off, season with salt, and allow each pulse to absorb the salt for 30 minutes. Rinse and discard cooking liquid.

Saute chopped onions in the cooking oil until golden and soft for 25-30 minutes, on medium heat, while constantly stirring. Add the minced garlic and all the dry spices, and sautee with onions for a few minutes. Add finely chopped parsley and cilantro to the onion mix and saute until slightly wilted. Add tomato paste and cook for 3 minutes. Set aside.

In a large stockpot, add all the pre-cooked pulses and cover with fresh water, at least 6 liters. Bring to a boil and lower the heat. Add the onion and herb mixture. Mix well with a spoon and keep it on a very gentle simmer for at least 2 hours. If it looks too thick, add a little hot water and stir well.

When the soup looks thickened, taste, and adjust seasoning. Drizzle fresh olive oil off the heat. Sprinkle some finishing salt, a crack of black pepper, a big squeeze of lemon juice, and chili flakes or finely diced bird's eye chili.

Ladle in big bowls, enjoy hot as a soup, or at room temperature.

### Reem E. Azoury

Lebanese American

Born in Lebanon, I grew up in a tiny village filled with big-hearted people who loved to cook and eat. I moved a lot, settling down in Washington D.C, where I married and had two beautiful children, Tamara and Tarek. There, I established my first restaurant, Figs Fine Food. Now, I've returned to Lebanon, working as a partner and chef at Maryool, SKIRT, Meat the Fish, and currently launching my new brand " Laymoon", a food delivery concept. This stew was a staple in my household, cooked by my grandma Raoufa during the cold winter months to warm our spirits, which I hope it does for you too. 10 @reemazoury 💦 www.meatthefish.com

### SERVES 12 | PREP 24 hours | COOK 1:30-2 hours

Sort through & pre-soak all pulses for 24 hours prior to cooking in cold



## **Vegetable Tagine with Couscous**

Moroccan Stew with Couscous or Rice

## (VP)

5 garlic cloves, minced 1 onion, cut into wings 2 tablespoons olive oil 3 courgettes, slices 2 carrots, peeled and sliced 2 sweet potatoes peeled and cubed 1 cup pumpkin, peeled and cubed 1 eggplant, peeled and cubed 3 tablespoons canola oil 2 tomatoes peeled and diced 1 tablespoons tomato paste 1 teaspoons cumin 1 teaspoons ras al hanout spice 1 teaspoons dried coriander <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> teaspoons chilli powder 2 cups vegetable broth 1 teaspoons sea salt plus more for the 1/2 teaspoons fresh black pepper <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup cooked and drained chickpeas 1 teaspoons chopped parsley (optional)



Place the cubed eggplant in a strainer and sprinkle a teaspoon of salt on top. Leave on the side for 30 minutes. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil on medium heat in a heavy bottomed pot and add the onion wings. Cook until the onion is soft (about 5 minutes). Add the cumin, ras al hanout, coriander and chili powder. Next add the minced garlic then the carrots, stirring for 2 minutes.

Add the sweet potatoes to the pan then add the tomatoes and tomato paste, and the broth. Simmer covered until the carrot is half cooked.

In the meantime, in a separate pan, heat the canola oil and fry the eggplant until lightly golden. Add the courgette and the pumpkin to the stew and cook until it cooked but still has some crunch. Remove from the heat and add the eggplant and chickpeas salt and pepper.

parsley.

eggplant

Nahla Bibi Lebanese from Beirut

I attended school at the American University of Beirut and then went on to study pastry at Le Cordon Bleu Paris. I have lived most of my life in Beirut, traveling to several beautiful countries around the world when the opportunity arises. I am also a loving mother of 3 children, and I enjoy making healthy yet delicious dishes for them. This vegetarian recipe uses all the root vegetables that are abundant during Lebanon's autumn season. This recipe is also dear to my heart as it was passed down to me by my great aunt who lived in Morocco.

@nahlazeidan

### SERVES 6 | PREP 1 hour | COOK 1 hour

Serve with some steamed couscous or rice and garnish with chopped



# **Squid Ink Linguini**



2kg squid, cleaned and skinned (with ink pouches) 1 large onion, thinly sliced 4 leeks, cleaned and cut lengthwise very thinly 2 bay leaves 2 cinnamon sticks ½ cup olive oil ½ orange zest 2 bitter oranges, juiced 1 lemon, juiced Salt Pepper, freshly ground 500g linguini pasta

### SERVES 4 | PREP 10-15 minutes | COOK 30 minutes

Combine all ingredients together in a pot and put on a stovetop until it boils, then lower the heat and continue cooking until the squid is completely cooked. Lower ink pouches using a sieve in the liquid and crush them with a fork until all the ink is released into the pot, leaving only the skin in the sieve. Add salt, freshly ground pepper, and lemon juice to taste. Allow to boil for 10-15 min. Meanwhile, cook the linguini in salted water until al dente. Pour a little olive oil into a skillet. When the oil is hot, add some of the squid with its sauce, then add linguini. Add salt, pepper, and lemon juice to taste.

I chose Squid ink because it is a traditional Beiruti recipe, using seasonal ingredients from the coast of Lebanon. The dish is easily whipped up as soon as squid and bitter oranges are in season. My grandmother used to do it for us and I grew up having it, not really thinking much of it, until I realized not many people or restaurants do it as well.

The recipe I shared was originally my grandmother's, and then slightly amended by my godmother.

For an additional Mediterranean twist; use it as Linguini Pasta sauce.



### Nour Najem Lebanese from Beirut

ebanese from Beirut

Born and raised in Beirut. I am a serial social entrepreneur and believe design's true purpose is to draw change and out of the box solutions. Through my luxury design label. I have consulted and partnered up with Caritas, L'Artisan du Liban, Phenomenal Women, as well as other vulnerable communities. In 2013, I founded Kenzah in parallel to my brand, to preserve, develop and transmit traditional craftsmanship, and more recently Lebanon Needs, to provide vulnerable populations with essential survival requirements. I tackle what it means to be a modern and independent woman by designing and activating social-led change for Lebanon.

FISH

### Success Story - Mymoune

by Sally Hurst



 @mvmounenatural ★ www.mymoune.com

Sitting in the dappled light of a mulberry tree, its leaves just turning golden in the autumn sun, sisters Youmna Ghorayeb and Layla Maalouf enthusiastically and proudly share the stories of Mymoune. After 30 years of creating beautiful Lebanese pantry items for sale in both Lebanon and around the world, they bask in their achievements here in Ain El Kabou, the stone house their grandfather built just next to us and where they spent every summer. As the daughters of a diplomat they grew up traveling around the world, but the beautiful stone house held their hearts and is where every summer they watched their grandmother preserve fruits and flowers- the bounty of the Lebanese fields.

Youmna and Layla started their business when this part of Lebanon was isolated from Beirut by the Civil War in 1989. It was a bit of an accident and a bit of madness, is how Layla remembers their business coming to life. Recipes were gathered by word of mouth from friends or family. An aunt who had spent time in Egypt taught them how to make the perfect almond stuffed dates. Layla's husband came up with the idea for mulberry preserves. And Uncle Timothy, who happened to be writing his memoirs around the time they began, was able to advise them on all of the logistics and chemistry involved in canning since he had a degree from Cornell in nutrition chemistry.

More than just a story of tasty products, this is a story of family and community. Rasheed was the man who helped the sister's grandfather maintain the land here. His son Abdu helped their father and is still working in the factory today. And Abdu's three daughters, Marlene, Norma, and Nada all are integral parts of the Mymoune team. The sisters also employ women from the surrounding area to help do the work, some of these women being the sole breadwinners in their families. The work is still all by hand and is tedious, meticulous. A deaf/mute woman spends all of her days



Sisters Youmna Ghorayeb and Layla Maalouf, and Chef Sally Hurst sharing stories under the mulberry tree at Mymoune



The family house in the village of Ain el Kabou

making the beautiful candied orange and lemon peels that Mymoune sells. She has her own workspace and carefully slices each piece of rind to the right size, making sure the bitterness is gone and sugaring it at just the right moment before allowing it to dry on racks in the sun.

Mymoune is a play on words - taking from the Arabic mouneh (the pantry) but also meaning blessed by God. "But you've got to know how to catch those blessings," Youmna quickly said. They have been blessed, but they've also worked hard and that work has paid off as their 30-some products are recognized in the UK for their outstanding quality and chefs like Yottam Ottolenghi and Annisa Hellou recommend them. Their mulberry jam took the gold medal in the annual Good Taste Awards there in its first year on the market. It was one of their first products when they started in 1989, mulberries (or toot as they are known here) being bountiful and delicious on their family's land. Not all of the ingredients Mymoune uses are from this region. They proudly source the best products from where they are grown the best. One crop they imported specially for its "bestness" was Damascus Rose bushes which they now grown on their land for their delicious rose jam, rose water, and rose syrup. There's nothing like the fragrance of Damascus roses they repeated over and over.

There was a time when women only had power through their pantry, Youmna tells me. The only right they had was to build their pantries, fill them, and lock them up at night. Only the woman had the key. They decided how to distribute their precious food, to whom, how much. Their power, their only power was through food. These sisters have capitalized on this idea and are now passing it down to the next generation of women. Layla's daughter Randa is working on the development of new items, a process that takes full year from idea to shelf. Mymoune indeed.





The employees of Mymoune



Hand-made candied orange and lemon zest

### **Success Story - Mint Basil**

by Sally Hurst



### Success Story - Furn El Sabaya

by Sally Hurst

Furn El Sabava

@FurnElSabava

Furns or ovens are a dime a dozen in Lebanon. Every village, every neighborhood has its own space for gathering in the morning to retrieve a manooshe' piping hot from the oven. Tall thin chimneys still poke out from between buildings in crowded cities, hinting at what delicacies are being baked below, and their followings are dedicated. From what I've seen, customers rarely deviate from their preferred furn and its owner.

But sometimes there's a furn worth traveling for. In this case, it's a little furn in the seaside village of Amchit, halfway between Byblos and Batroun, it's run by the women of the Zgheib family and they do it with such love, such pride, and such elegance that their furn has gained notoriety across the country. It's an immaculately clean, simple restaurant with a little terrace surrounded by tropical flowers on a small alley not far from the gargantuan oil tanks, just around the corner on the sea. Dressed in white and guietly moving through their orders, their love of what they do is echoed in their words, and certainly evident in the delicious food that results.

Furn el Sabaya translates to, The Young Woman's Oven, which they opened 26 years ago. In Amchit their family home was known as "The Young Woman's house" since there were so many girls, and so when they opened the furn the name stuck. The women inherited their love of cooking from their mother who they worked in the kitchen with for years growing up. Now, Lorenza and Martha are the main team behind the bakery, but they are just two of six sisters and two brothers in the family. Their family home remains upstairs from the bakery and when business gets hectic during holidays, women from the entire family pitch in to help.

Lorenza tells me that their dough is a straightforward, common recipe with just egg, salt, and flour, but it's the way it's done, with love and attention to detail that makes it special to them. All of the products they use, from the

During holidays, they are particularly busy preparing special orders for celebrations and their most famous specialty, a dessert particular to Amchit. Mwarka is a sweet snailshaped pastry filled with chopped almonds, walnuts, sugar, rose and orange blossom waters. "We have tried to make it with many other fillings, sweet and salty," Lorenza tells me. "But this recipe is the one that works, that keeps it crunchy and delicious." I watch as Martha rolls out the dough so thin that you could see someone's facial features clearly through it. She mixes together the filling before spreading it on the dough and then, cutting a small opening in the center, she rolls the dough from the inside, from that center hole, until she has a snake-like roll which she then forms into a spiral. It's baked in the oven for several minutes, dusted with powdered sugar and more almonds, before she deftly chops it into bite-sized pieces. The crunching sound of the knife as it hits the pastry makes my mouth water. It's heaven...and tastes just like Lebanon.



f Mint Basil Market

♠ www.mintbasilmarket.com

You can bet that when Vanessa Zubai was diagnosed with an auto-immune disorder ten years ago, she never considered that it would be the impetus for her to open an online healthy market in Lebanon. In fact, as someone who was at the time living in Washington D.C. and working in the economic and public policy world, her move to Beirut was really just a period in time for her to transition into the next phase of her life, not start a thriving e-commerce site and foster a community focused on wellness and healthy living. And yet, here she is!

Mint Basil Market is that very market that Vanessa and her partner Lara Noujaim officially launched in January 2018. After having lived in Lebanon for about two years, she was tired of searching high and low for products that were suitable for her illness. After researching a bit, she found there were many options for her on the market, but not much content on them, no transparency, and she often had to go to several different shops around town to get everything she needed.

Vanessa took all of that research and with the help of Lara, who brought her tech-savvy background to the project, they created an online platform where all of the products were consolidated into one space along with information on how and why to use the products. Mint Basil Market delivers their healthy products all across Lebanon for free. The first six months were slow but focused, Vanessa says. However they used that time to partner with chefs, nutritionists, and health experts to help build the content necessary to differentiate themselves. Their hope has always been to build a community of consumers who are made more confident in their shopping choices because of the information Mint Basil Market provides. It's paid off. Since June 2018 they've experienced 20% month-overmonth growth.

Authentic all-natural ingredients is the philosophy that Mint Basil Market lives by. They stringently vet all of their

products and look for items that are good for the body and appeal to consumers with wide-ranging dietary and medical concerns. For the first two years, they have focused on products with an extended shelf-life, including beauty and household essentials. However, going forward they plan on including similarly highly-vetted fresh vegetables, meat and poultry, and dairy products. And with health and community as their primary focus, Mint Basil Market hosts workshops in conjunction with the brands they sell and the wellness experts on their site. Education is a crucial part of their ideology.

And what's good for Mint Basil Market is good for Lebanese producers. 70% of the items on the site are locally produced and a strong representation of the Lebanese healthy food industry. Even better, 75% of their suppliers are womenled companies. But Vanesssa cites this as one of their challenges too. Bringing the largely off-line Lebanese health and wellness sector into the tech/e-commerce space hasn't always been easy. She says women are a growing minority in the tech world of Lebanon - they are included but are also quick to be judged more harshly. On the flip side, this has ushered in a new space for a female-driven industry in the technical arena of Lebanon, a softer, more transparent, more consumer-friendly, values-driven zone, which has to be a benefit to everyone.





eggs to the gawarma to vegetables, come from their own land. The manooshe', which was their first claim to fame, are supremely delicious. Mine with egg and gawarma, like nothing I've tasted here in Lebanon, crispy, chewy dough with fresh, perfectly seasoned toppings.



### Success Story - Souk El Tayeb

An interview with Kamal Mouzawak



### f Souk El Tayeb 👩 www.soukeltayeb.com 🖸 @soukeltayeb

No book about empowering women through cooking in Lebanon would be complete without mention of Kamal Mouzawak and the tireless work he's undertaken over the past 16 years to support the producers, farmers, and cooks of Lebanon. With his many successful undertakings around this country, not only is he supporting individuals, he has, in the process, promoted, preserved, and celebrated the traditional food of this diverse country. He's taken groups of his cooks to events around the world where they have shown off the cuisine and hospitality of the Lebanese table, and, importantly, he is championing home cooking traditions. Home cooking elevated and glorified and valued. No more mezze cooked by men in restaurant kitchens. This is cooking from the heart and with the soul of each woman attached and reflects true Lebanese food.

Crucially, the Capacity Building Programs Souk el Tayeb has offered since 2012, have helped other success stories like the ladies of Soufra and Atayeb Falastine and Afkar learn everything from the culinary to the business sides of making a living off of the agricultural bounty of Lebanon and using their own talents. Many of these women sell their products at the farmers' market or continue to be supported in their catering or culinary ambitions.

### I'll let him tell you in his own words the road that led him to this success.

"Our philosophy from the beginning has been the same until now. Nothing has changed. It's like wearing blinders and following ---- The idea was the same from the beginning. We're not a food market, we're not a restaurant, the most important part is human development. It's not about how to support products, but how to support producers, farmers, men, women who are planting, harvesting and cooking, producing mooneh, and doing it better and perpetuating their identity through a bottle of jam or pickles. Whatever it is agricultural, preserving food, or cuisine.

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So this is the whole project: to support small-scale farmers and producers. Instead of them being in rural areas of production and not being able to sell their produce we started in 2004, providing the Souk, which is a platform where farmers can come and they can sell their produce. It's a place where they had a demand for their products and the purchasing power for their produce and it's a place where they meet every Saturday or every Wednesday to bring a little bit of the countryside to the city. Development is not just about building more buildings in the city. As much as we invest in urban development we must invest in rural development too because the city is fed from rural areas. This is especially important now as we're dealing with this pandemic with the closing of the borders and the whole world busy with their own food supplies.

We brought all of these ideas together at an event in 2004 at the Garden Show, a five day event that was very successful. It wasn't called Souk el Tayeb at the time, it was called the Garden Fruits, like the fruits, the wealth of the Earth. After the success of the show I thought, ok, I can't let this go now, I will continue at a regular time and place. And this is how, ten days later, in early June 2004 I created something called Souk el Tayeb. Tayeb means good as in taste, but also good in ethics and alive. And this is how the farmers market started.

Then, in 2007 I thought, why are we only bringing the farmer, the producers from rural communities to urban areas? Why don't we go to his or her place of production from time to time? So in 2007 I created something called Food and Feast where we used to go to Hammana to celebrate the cherries of Hammana or celebrate kibbeh in Ehden or celebrate fish in Batroun. Like a regional food festival and during these food festivals it was about celebrating local produce, creating a small local market, having eco-visits that celebrates this village or this region or small city. And of course, we were going to have to offer lunch. We're not going to eat generic Lebanese food and eat only tabbouleh and hummus. We're going to eat typical food of that village or town or region. Who's cooking this typical food? Of course it's not the men of the mezze restaurants, it's the women in their homes who are perpetuating the traditional, regional cuisine at home. Home cooking. So we started to find cooks ladies from the village – one lady was

traditional, regional cuisine at home. Home cooking. So we started to find cooks, ladies from the village – one lady was known for her bean dish, another one was known for her fattayer. They came with their typical food and we started doing these buffets at the food festivals in the summer of 2007.

These lunches started to be a big success, so in 2009 we asked why do we have to only go to a particular village one day a year and eat that village's food? Why don't we do it on a more regular basis? Like every day, in a more accessible place, like the city? Like Beirut? So this is how Tawlet, Mar Mikhael was created on November 5, 2009. And until today, every day it's a different woman who comes from a different village or region and cooks a buffet of traditional food of her region. It's like getting to know her and her region through the typical cuisine of that village, town, or region.

When we started Tawlet Beirut in 2009, people asked for regional tawlets and we launched Tawlet Ammiq in 2012. It was the food and the ingredients and the ladies of Ammiq. It was typical for that region. As of 2012 we started doing regional Tawlets in different parts of Lebanon. And if Beirut's Tawlet was a national Tawlet, the regional ones were local to the ladies, the ingredients, and the food. There's a Tawlet Ammiq today, Deir el Ammar and Saida



f launch I

> All along we understood the importance of supporting the farmers and the cooks and helping them to do their jobs better so we created something we called the Capacity Building Programs where we identified the needs or problems of the cooks or the farmers and tried to come up with solutions, training. When we saw the importance and help these programs offered we thought, why should we keep this only for ourselves? Why not take it to other needy cases? So this is how we started working with people in Palestinian camps or Syrian refugees or migrant domestic workers, supporting these ladies to create professional kitchens where they could create and have an income from what they do every day which is cuisine and cooking.

> and Biomass (we closed Tawlet Hamra which was about urban Beiruti food), there's Tawlet Mar Mikhael and we just launched Tawlet Douma.

> With the economic crisis ongoing in Lebanon we created a soup kitchen at our own Tawlet in Beirut and at some Tawlets around the country. After October 17 (the start of the Revolution), we saw a need to go outside our Tawlet and go into the neediest neighborhoods of Beirut so we started taking women from different areas and these ladies were cooking together and serving people in Bourj Hammoud and elsewhere. This had to stop too with the Coronavirus so we created a different soup kitchen where we were cooking for more than 100 people every day who were the front line workers, Red Cross volunteers, health care workers and doctors. We were cooking and distributing food to them. So we've adapted to every situation."

