

Dairy Pernille Paulsen, Erasmus exchange Melis Butcher Shop May 2019

Monday 13th of May

The project partner were so kind to pick me up in the morning from the Airbnb I had rented for my stay during the two weeks of my Erasmus exchange at Melis butcher shop in Nicosia. Most of the remaining days I took the bus to and from work.

Upon arrival at the butcher shop I was well received and introduced to all of the owners and staff. Melis Butcher shop was established by Mr. Spirolini approximately 40 years ago. Today his two sons Stefano and Stelios run the butcher shop together. Stelios is primarily running the B2B facing part of the business while Stefano oversees the operations of the shop, cutting room and the meat processing.

We started the day by deboning legs of lamb. Melis butcher shop receives whole animals, both pigs, lamb and mutton. In Cyprus there is not a lot of domestic cattle farming and most of the beef in the case at the shop was imported. Some of the local dairy cattle available was used for mined beef products.

The guys showed me how they usually de-bone hams as well as pork shoulders. I got the chance to shop them how we de-bone those respective parts of the pig in Denmark.



Tuesday 14th of May

I was shown how to cut souvlaki. Most beloved cuts of meat for souvlaki are pork picnic (the pork neck or the coppa if you may) and pork breast/belly. The butchers were very adamant that the sizes of the cubes, which were all cut by hand were cut the same and cut in a manner fit to be skewered.

Other cubed products were also made and some from the ham of the pig.



Wednesday 15th of May

Pork chops are very popular in Cyprus and at Melis they have a bunch of B2B customers who are restaurants and sportsbars whom are very fond of buying large pork chops where the whole rib bone is still on the loin chop from the middle piece of the pig. The chops are cut and cleavered and the part of the spine is removed. They are not cut like tomahawk steaks which means that the meat remains on the rib bone for these types of chops. Approximately 8 chops are made from the middle piece. The rest is broken down and trimmed almost to a filet royal.



Thursday 16th of May

After getting an insight into how the butchers of the shop de-boned and cut the different kinds of meat for further processing it was time to get an insight in to the many processed meat products that Melis butchershop produces daily. On average the shop makes 200 kilo of a wide variety of processed meat products such as burgers, kebas, meatballs and of course sheftalia which is a national

stable of minced meat with breadcrumbs and spices rolled in a fatnet



Friday 17th of May

The minced meat/processed meat products which had been in the freezer over night were packages for both retail sales and whole sale customers.



Monday 20th of May

I started the second week at Melis helping the butcher in the front end of the shop. He showed me how to de-boned whole chicken for a chicken roast which was filled with gyros spice, slices of halloumi, bacon and bell peppers.



Tuesday 21st of May

I had the chance to practice some of the newly learned cutting routines of the shop. Breaking down half a hog into primals, de-boning hams and shoulders. Removing and trimming the filet from the spine and of course cut souvlaki.



Wednesday 22nd of May

The butcher shop had received a massive order for souvlaki for an upcoming festival. All hands were on deck and two butchers from outside were brought in to cut up a very large amount of pork neck.

I had the chance to tag along with the butcher shops delivery person, who would drive around Nicosia to the regular b2b clients and deliver customized orders. The customers ranged from sportsbars, local tavernas, and schools.

The project partner A&E solutions visited to do a few test runs on a few sausages that the butcher is interested in carrying in it's product line in the future. We made, nurnberger sausage, a premium frankfurter, a fresh style chorizo, and I was asked to make a Danish sausage and went with an improvised version of a grill medister with added fresh parsley.



Thursday 23rd of May

The sausages were stuffed with the respective minced which had been refrigerated overnight. Unfortunately they were sent off to one of their business partners late in the afternoon and be smoked and I did not have the chance to try the sausages before my departure.

Every day 20 half hogs arrived at the shop in the morning during summer season and were broken down into primals and further cut into retail cuts and sorted according to what would also be used for the processed meat products.



Friday 24th of May

On the last day at the butcher shop, I felt like I had learned some of the weekly routines and could initiate work on my own, such as separating the remaining pork loin from the ribs and the spine and trim it for further use. Breaking down a half a hog into primals, cut decent sized souvlaki and also roll nice looking sheftalias and roll identically looking meat balls.

