

# lebanese takeaways

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In October 2007, my friend Gigi Frassanito traveled to Lebanon for Slow Food's *Mercati della Terra* project, actualizing some farmers' market research that the two of us had done a year earlier during our master program in Italy. For a little over two weeks, Gigi narrowcast a series of short emails, informal impressions of his time there. I found these snapshots hypnotizing, both lyrical and a troubling wake-up to the fact that I clearly knew almost nothing about food in Lebanon. In Montreal, I frequently buy tabbouleh, shish taouk, and baba ghanouj from the cheap-and-cheerful take-out place on the corner: tasty, decontextualized, and translated. Gigi's emails are also removed in time and space (as well as mediated by my English renderings), yet their framing as electronic postcards makes both their origin and interpretation more evident. As documentarian Liz Miller has said, what's interesting about translation is what gets added, and what gets taken away.

*Grateful acknowledgement for funding is made to the FQRSC and the Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship.*

