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NEWSLETTER:



"FOOD PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DIFFERENT CULTURES. THANKS TO ALL OF THE I-HOUSE RESIDENTS & STAFF MEMBERS WHO SHARED THEIR CULTURE IN THIS NEWSLETTER." – CECIL ROBERT & SARAH KYO

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SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE

My family are food sharers. When we go to a restaurant, everyone confers about what each of us will order to make sure that no one duplicates another's order. That way we all get to try more things.

I do not know when this tradition started. My mom, dad, sister, and I have been doing it as long as I can remember. Now my husband has joined in, even though his family would be horrified at the way my family pokes our forks into each other's dinners. My husband is pseudo-vegetarian; he eats fish, but not meat or poultry. When I go out to eat with him, I always order a pescatarian meal, so that we will be able to share.

We do not just steal each other's food willy nilly, although it may look like that to an outsider. One of us will offer, "Would you like a bite?" Or another will ask, "May I have a taste?" Once we get the nod of approval, there are several ways that we might share.

The most common is for each of us to put a couple of bites of our particular dish on a bread plate and pass it around. Each person adds a bite, and the small plates proceed around the table, until we each have a mini smorgasbord to sample.

Another way, which my husband prefers, is to actually pass the dinner plates around. So once you have eaten enough of your dish to feel satisfied — not full,

just happy — you exchange your plate with another person. First, before switching, you have a short discussion about whether or not the right time has arrived for each of you. The person who ordered the dish has the final say about when and how much of "their" dish they will eat.

Occasionally, we just stab our forks into each other's food after getting the go-ahead. This might occur when we are physically close enough to each other.

The final way we sometimes share food is to hand each other a forkful of our meal. Feeding each other is the most intimate of the four options. You select just the right combination of ingredients from your plate and combine them on your fork to feed to another member of your family.

I like to try new foods, so my desire for food sharing extends beyond my immediate family. Recently, for my birthday, I went out for dinner with my five friends. Before I ordered, I conferred with everyone about what they would be ordering. When the food arrived, I offered everyone a bite of mine. To my dismay, no one took me up on the offer. Even worse, no one offered me a bite of theirs. What a disappointment!

– **Kristen Pendleton, United States
Community Operations Manager**



Kristen Pendleton and her husband Vince Murphy eat grasshoppers in Oaxaca, Mexico.

A full English breakfast is one of my favorite meals, and although the title may fool you, it can be eaten at any time of day. The way I would cook mine is similar to the one pictured below.

My mum taught me how to cook the “fry up” and we would normally eat it only on the weekends and it’s not particularly good for you and isn’t the quickest thing to rustle up in the morning. A weekend fry up is quite a common thing in Britain and can be found in lots of cafés and pubs. I have only had one since being in America and this was in a British pub in San Diego. Although it was good, it was not as good as how I make it!

– Helen Auburn, United Kingdom

THE FULL ENGLISH BREAKFAST

SERVES 1

2 sausages
2 rashers of back bacon
2 free-range eggs
2 slices of wheat bread
half a can of Heinz baked beans



Start by frying the sausages, since they take the longest to cook. Meanwhile, you can get the eggs and bacon out of the fridge. You then put the toast in the toaster, but do not press the button down.

Opening the can of baked beans comes next. I split them into two bowls and cover them. I put half in the fridge for another time and put the other bowl into the microwave. The beans normally take about 2 to 3 minutes to cook in the microwave depending on what your microwave wattage is. I leave them waiting in the microwave for later.

By this time the sausages will be slightly cooked, so I add the bacon into the frying pan to join them. Then it’s the perfect moment to either make a cup of good, old English tea or pour a glass of orange juice if you prefer. Here’s the point where the eggs join the party in the pan.

Push the toast down, and turn the microwave on with the beans. Cook your eggs however you would like them. I enjoy mine sunny side up. Leave everything to cook away. Once the microwave and toaster beep, it’s time to take the frying pan off the stove.

Put the toast on the plate first, shortly followed by the beans that should be gently poured over the toast. Next, take the eggs, bacon, and sausage out of the pan, and voila, breakfast for one is ready to be devoured. Ketchup and HP sauce are good accompaniments to the full English breakfast.

SHARK FIN SOUP: DELICACY OR DETRIMENT?

I'm six years old, wearing an itchy, poofy dress, rimmed with lace. Me, my mom, and the rest of the family sit eagerly waiting for the entrees that are to be served at my cousin's wedding. The reception takes place at a lavish Chinese restaurant. We sit at one of those huge circular tables made of marble with a spinning lazy Susan that allows us to grab at whichever dish we'd like to grab. The waiter sets down the usual fried rice in a cabbage bowl and honey-walnut prawns. An extravagant dish of duck dipped in dark sauce is engulfed in blue flames. And preceding all these yummy dishes is the infamous shark fin soup. It is known only to be served at fancy ceremonies, in this case a wedding.

I remember the first time I ladled a spoon of that delicious soup in my mouth. It was savory and salty. My teeth chomped on those mushrooms and clear gelatin-like noodles. For a 6-year old, I was impressed. Nothing had ever tasted so yummy. I haven't had it since. Why, you ask? 1) It's expensive, 2) It's difficult to prepare, 3) Sharks are the leading species of animals that are at risk of becoming extinct in the world (IUCN).

Many people aren't aware of the fact that sharks are endangered, and many people aren't aware of the fact that they are being viciously slaughtered and killed all over the world. They are in high demand due to their fins, which provide us the main ingredient in shark fin

soup. Over 100 million sharks are killed annually solely for their fins (IUCN). The act of shark finning occurs at sea where fishermen capture the shark, cut the fins off, and dump the rest of the shark's body into the ocean to die. Sharks of all sizes and types are caught.

Why is this important? Many have self-proclaimed fears of sharks, believing that they target humans as prey (mainly notarized by the popularity of "Jaws"). Because of this fear, sharks are not protected, and even more people don't care that their population is diminishing. Fact: Soda machines have crushed and killed more people in a given year than sharks do. Fact: Half of the planet's oxygen is produced by ocean ecosystems. Fact: Sharks play one of the largest roles in ocean ecosystems. They have been one of the very few species that have survived time and time again through periods of large extinctions Fact: Homo sapiens have been on planet earth for only 200 thousand years; sharks have been around for over 400 million years. That's 2000 times longer!

I guess my whole point to this article is that we as a society need to become informed on what we eat, whether it be chorizo laced with pork eyeballs or tequila made with an endangered plant. The most luxurious meal can also be the largest detriment to our ecosystems.

– Jacqueline Huynh, United States



Source: International Union for Conservation of Nature Shark Specialist Group. "IUCN Information Paper. Shark Finning." 2003. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Shark Specialist Group. "Shark Specialist Group Finning Statement." Photo by cephalopodcast, www.flickr.com

Have you ever tried pho – traditional food of Vietnam? I believe you will never forget it if you just try one time. After one week in the U.S., I really missed Vietnamese food. And the first time eating pho here, it was really good and made me surprised because it was exactly the same in Vietnam when I usually ate. Especially, it made me full, and was worth my money which I paid although it was very cheap, just more than 7 dollars.

There are many kinds of pho such as beef noodle soup, chicken noodle soup, and also noodle soup for vegetarians. In this article, I just mention beef noodle soup because I think it is the most popular.

– Tuan Nguyen, Vietnam

PHO (VIETNAMESE NOODLE SOUP)

Broth:

- 2 onions, halved
- 4 “ nubs of ginger, halved lengthwise
- 5-6 lbs of good beef bones, preferably leg and knuckle
- 1 lb of beef meat – chuck, brisket, rump, cut into large slices (optional)
- 6 quarts of water
- 1 package of pho spices (1 cinnamon stick, 1 tbl coriander seeds, 1 tbl fennel seeds, 5 star anise, 1 cardamom pod, 6 whole cloves - in mesh bag)
- 1 1/2 tbl salt
- 1/4 cup fish sauce
- 1-inch chunk of yellow rock sugar (about 1 oz) – or 1oz of regular sugar

For the bowls:

- 2 lbs rice noodles (dried or fresh)
- cooked beef from the broth
- 1/2 lb flank, London broil, sirloin or eye of round, sliced as thin as possible.
- big handful of each: mint, cilantro, basil
- 2 limes, cut into wedges
- 2-3 chili peppers, sliced
- 2 big handfuls of bean sprouts



Turn broiler high and move rack to the highest spot. Place ginger and onions on baking sheet. Brush a bit of cooking oil on the cut side. Broil high until ginger and onions begin to char. Turn over and continue to char for 10-15 minutes.

Fill large pot with cool water. Boil water, and then add the bones, keeping the heat on high. Boil vigorously for 10 minutes. Drain, rinse the bones and rinse out the pot. Refill pot with bones and 6 qts of cool water. Bring to boil over high heat and lower to simmer. Using a ladle or a fine mesh strainer, remove any scum that rises to the top.

Add ginger, onion, spice packet, beef, sugar, fish sauce, salt and simmer uncovered for 1 1/2 hours. Remove the beef meat and set aside. Simmer for 1 1/2 hours. Strain broth and return to the pot. Taste broth and adjust seasoning.

Slice your flank/ London broil/sirloin as thin as possible. Remember the cooked beef meat that was part of your broth? Cut or shred the meat and set aside. Arrange ingredients on a platter. Your guests will “assemble” their own bowls. Follow the directions on your package of noodles.

Bring your broth back to a boil. Line up your soup bowls next to the stove. Fill each bowl with rice noodles, shredded cooked beef, and raw meat slices. As soon as the broth comes back to a boil, ladle into each bowl. The hot broth will cook your raw beef slices. Serve immediately. Guests can garnish their own bowls as they wish.

Sinigang is a common Filipino soup originally made with fish heads in an effort to not waste any part of the caught fish. The recipe is different for each family, which makes for a unique taste every time. So, when someone serves you Sinigang, he or she is sharing part of his or her family with you. This concept reflects the philosophy of Filipino hospitality – if you’re with us, you’re family, your stomach should be full, and you’ll always have food to take home. The meat, vegetables, and the type of peppers are three parts of the soup that change most often from recipe to recipe. In my family, we use pork meat, broccoli, spinach, and wax peppers. We like to make Sinigang for special occasions like birthdays and holidays, but we also make it when we’re just in the mood for it.

– Ace Antazo, United States

SINIGANG

Pork (use a marbled cut; lean cuts become too tough with boiling)

Tomatoes (use fresh, soft or use 1 large can of whole or diced tomatoes)

- 1 medium yellow onions, sliced
- 2” piece ginger root, sliced thin on the diagonal
- 3-4 light green wax chili peppers (puncture once, for more flavor)
approx. ¼ cup lemon juice, or to taste
- Broccoli, cut into florets
- 2 bunches spinach, wash well
- Optional: green beans

Fill the large soup pot to half capacity with water. Add to water tomatoes, onions, ginger (wash first), and wax peppers (washed). Wash and cut meat into cubes; then add to soup pot.

Bring to a hard boil, turn down, and simmer until tender, approximately 40 minutes. Half way through boil, add lemon juice (if fresh squeezed, can add some of the inside pulp. Taste to check if lemony enough. If not, add more lemon juice now. Salt to taste.

Add broccoli and spinach. Bring back up to boil, approximately 8 minutes.

Serve over white, steamed rice. Add soy sauce to taste.



Photo from shawcute.wordpress.com/

The history and origins of this Irish stew are thought to be from the famine because people from all over the country fled to Dublin and this was a cheap yet nutritious meal. The ingredients for the meal at that time were cheapest cuts from the pig. This is a favourite of mine as I had this for dinner when I was kid when I would come home from school and watch TV before I started my homework. This is an easy dinner to cook and it is nice to cook as college student now.

- Sean Murphy, Ireland

DUBLIN CODDLE (CODAL DUIBNLINNEACH)

SERVES 4

1lb/ 500g best sausages
8oz/ 250g streaky bacon
1/2pt/ 300ml/ 1 cup stock or water
6 medium potatoes
2 medium onions
salt and pepper

P.S. Instead of the stock I use a packet of my favourite vegetable soup and it is delicious. You can also add carrots or other vegetables that you like. This is the original recipe but you can play around with it to suit your own taste buds.

Cut the bacon into 1in/ 3cm squares and cut the sausage into four or five pieces. Bring the stock to a boil in a medium saucepan which has a well-fitting lid, add the sausages and the bacon and simmer for about 5 minutes. Remove the sausages and bacon and save the liquid.

Peel the potatoes and cut into thick slices. Skin the onions and slice them.

Assemble a layer of potatoes in the saucepan, followed by a layer of onions and then half the sausages and bacon. Repeat the process once more and then finish off with a layer of potatoes.

Pour the reserved stock over and season lightly to taste. Cover and simmer gently for about an hour. Adjust the seasoning and serve piping hot. Enjoy!



Thié bou yapp is a Senegalese traditional dish. It is composed of a beef ragout cooked to which one adds rice. It can be cooked with any type of rice. However, broken rice seems to be the one many Senegalese prefer. Contrarily to the other type of rice, which grain is bigger – commonly known as “caroline” – broken rice can be described as small and slim grains easy to cook. I chose this recipe for the newsletter because it is one of the most common meals in Senegal and constitutes an icon of the country throughout the world, particularly in France. Many tourists enjoy it. They like both Thie-bou yapp and Thie-bou jenn. The difference between them is that the latter is cooked with fish instead of meat. Most of the Senegalese people prepare it for lunch if they have guests or important event ssuch as wedding ceremonies, newborns’ birthday ceremony, religious feats (Tabaski, Korite). Surprisingly, it is also cooked for lunch when someone passes away and neighbors, relatives, family friends and members from everywhere come to visit the bereaved family because people love it.

It has become a tradition to such a point that whenever someone has a guest, they most of the time think of cooking it for him or her. It is actually a prestigious meal especially when one digests with warm tea, fresh juice or drink depending on what one likes. For many Senegalese, the rest of the day becomes enjoyable or even perfect after eating “Thie-yapp” accompanied with tea or coke.

– Ousmane Cisse, Senegal

THIÉ BOU YAPP

SERVES 4, PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES, COOK TIME: 1 HOUR & 15 MINUTES

- 700 g. of beef
- 1 braised onion
- 2 soup spoons of oil
- 500 g. of rice
- 1 clove of garlic
- 2 soup spoons of mustard
- Salt
- Pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 ¼ pieces of cabbage

Cut the meat into pieces (not too small). Then peel and cut the onions. In a pot, heat oil on the stove. When the oil is heated, add the meat with a bit of mustard, onion, salt, pepper, and mashed garlic.

Let them cook for 5 minutes and then add 1.5 l. water, cover and let it simmer for 45 mins. In the meantime, wash rice and put it into the bouillon bubbling with the meat. Look from time to time whether it is cooked enough in order to be served.

Serve this dish when it is a bit hot (accompanied with a little bit pepper for those who like spicy taste). Enjoy it with your preferred drink (Soft drink, warm tea or Juice).



I used to eat meat pies for lunch as a treat when I was in primary school and also I would always have them as a traditional snack at the football game with my dad and brother. My mum taught me how to make my own Australian meat pies when I was 13 and I have enjoyed cooking them ever since.

Australians consume an average of 12 meat pies each per year! The meat pie is heavily associated with Australian Rules Football as one of the most popularly consumed food items whilst watching a game! This is a tasty meal often eaten for lunch or dinner and tastes nice accompanied with peas and carrots!

– Ebony Flett, Australia

AUSSIE BEEF PIES

- 3 pounds beef chuck, diced 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup flour
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon ground coriander
- 1 tablespoon celery seed
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 4 cups beef or chicken stock
- 4 sheets puff pastry
- 1 egg, beaten, to glaze crust
- Black pepper

Dredge beef in flour and sear in oil in a hot pan. Add the garlic and onion and sauté for 4 more minutes. Add the spices, Worcestershire, and soy sauce, and cook until the liquid is almost dissolved. Add the stock and cook until the meat is coated in thick gravy. Transfer to a container and cool.

Roll 2 sheets of pastry to 1/2-inch thickness. Line 8-inch tart molds with the rolled pastry. Line the pastry with tin foil and prebake for about 8 minutes. Let cool.

Roll out the remaining pastry sheets and cut lids for the pies. Fill baked shells with the meat mixture and cover with the cut pastry lids. Attach lids with egg wash. Brush the tops with the remaining egg wash and sprinkle with black pepper.

Bake for 8 minutes or until golden brown.



One of my most favorite foods from Pakistan is the Chicken\Mutton Karahi. This is one of the most famous chicken preparations in most restaurants and take-outs. With its exotic fragrance of fresh ginger, whole black pepper and bountiful of tomatoes this is one dish all curry lovers must taste. “Karahi” is gravy with the main base as tomatoes mixed with onions to which either chicken, mutton, lamb or veal can be added. Vegetarians can try this pannier (cheese).

– Schehrbano Khan, Pakistan

CHICKEN KARAHI

- 500 gm chicken (small pieces)
- 1/4 tablespoon crushed black pepper
- 3 tomatoes, roughly ground
- 2 tablespoons ginger, finely sliced
- 2 tablespoons garlic and ginger paste
- 4-5 green chilies
- 1 bunch fresh green coriander
- 1 tablespoon crushed dry coriander
- 1 teaspoon crushed cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon crushed red chili
- 1/2 tablespoon turmeric powder
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 cup oil
- Sprinkle garam masala

Heat the oil and add the garlic and ginger paste. Stir-fry for few seconds, and then add crushed coriander and cumin; mix it well.

Now add chicken, and cook on high heat for 1-2 minutes. Then add 3 green chilies (one cut in center only) and half bunch of coriander, and mix it well.

Add roughly ground tomatoes, salt, crushed red chili, and turmeric. Cook covered with lid until the chicken is done and water dries up.

Garnish with sliced ginger, green chilies, and fresh coriander.

Serve hot with chapatti or naan.



This is a famous Egyptian food, which might be Mediterranean as well, and it tastes fantastic. Once you start eating it, you cannot stop. The ingredients are very simple but it needs certain skills to be prepared as it is not easy to get the final perfect shape shown in the picture.

This dish brings back to me a lot of good and warm memories. It reminds me of my family and our dinner table. My mum usually cooks this dish when we are having family members coming over for dinner because everyone loves it. Stuffing the leaves usually takes a long time, so I always sit with her in the kitchen, help her and we have our nice chit chats which I miss so much when I am away from home.

It's such a great feeling when I close my eyes, imagine this dish, its taste, its smell and see my family gathering, laughing, eating and exchanging stories. This instantaneously creates a desire within me that I have to cook this dish for my second family that I currently have, my I-House family. Since I like to share what I love with the people I love, very soon I am going to share this dish with my new family. So, when they eat it, they will never forget me and they will always have a reason to come visit me in Egypt and eat the lovely stuffed grape leaves.

- Nancy Seyam, Egypt

STUFFED GRAPE LEAVES

Grape leaves
Ground lamb
Rice
Salt
Allspice
Dried spearmint
Melted butter

Start with mixing all of the ingredients and then start stuffing the leaves.

Line the bottom of the pot with large leaves. Stuff the leaves on wrong side. Place a little stuffing on stem side. Fold leaf over stuffing - bring one side over, then the other side and then roll. Place in pot with stem side down.

When all stuffed leaves are placed in the pot, cover with large leaves. Pour seasoned water (with salt and allspice) over the stuffed leaves. Place hand over leaves and press down to avoid leaves opening.

Bring to boil, foam may come to the top. Skim it off. Lower to simmer for 1 hour. Take 1 stuffed leaf, cut and check to see if rice is cooked. And enjoy!!!!



Mirza Ghassemi is a popular vegetarian dish coming from north of Iran where eggplant is plentiful and garlic is an essential ingredient of every other food. This dish is popular as appetizer as well as main course, is prepared in a short time, and can be enjoyed with flat (Lavash) bread, plain white rice, or all by itself.

– Arash Motamedi, Iran

MIRZA GHASSEMI (PERSIAN EGGPLANT CASSEROLE)

- 2 medium sized eggplants
- 2 chopped onions
- 8 cloves of grated garlic
- ¼ cup butter
- 1 peeled and chopped tomato
- 4 lightly beaten eggs
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Roast the eggplants on a charcoal grill until brown; or roast them in a 400 degree oven until brown on the outside and soft on the inside.

Cool and peel, and mash the pulp of the eggplants. Meanwhile, drop the tomato in hot water for a few seconds until the skin loosens. Peel and chop the tomato.

Sauté the onions and garlic in the butter until golden brown. Stir in the turmeric. Add the eggplant pulp and sauté briefly, stirring well. Add the salt and pepper. Stir tomato into the eggplant.

Cook over a low heat for 5 minutes. Pour eggs over the eggplant. When the eggs start to solidify, stir briefly, and serve.



There are two main reasons to choose this Spanish recipe. First, I have heard a lot of people calling some rice recipes “Spanish rice” when they’re meant to be this paella, but they’re totally different, so I would like people to know the real recipe.

On the other hand, I think this is one of the best traditional recipes from Spain because it allows a lot of different variations, depending on personal tastes. So what I present here is the very basic version, but there are a lot of ingredients that you can add (or remove) to make your own paella. Don’t hesitate to experiment with it!!!

– Alejandro Casal da Silva, Spain

PAELLA VALENCIANA

SERVES 4 PREP & COOK TIME: 2 HOURS

320 grs. of rice
700 grs. of chicken
400 grs. of rabbit
60 grs. of white kidney bean
5 tablespoons of grated fresh tomato
350 grs. of wide green kidney bean
2 or 3 artichokes
18 cl. of virgin olive oil
Red ground sweet paprika
70 grs. of garrofón (Spanish variety of beans)
300 mgrs. of saffron
Salt
Water

We will use a big pan called “paellera.” We start pouring the oil in the paellera and warm it up. When it starts smoking, we add the chicken and the rabbit (chopped and slightly salted). The meat has to be cooked at medium heat until it is browned. Then we can add all the vegetables.

Few minutes later, we make a hole in the center between the meat and the vegetables to place the tomato and the paprika, now cook it over very low heat for 5 minutes. Then we can add water up to the edge of the paellera. We add salt and let it cook for 30 minutes.

Now it’s time to add the rice and the saffron, and wait for it to cook for 7 minutes over maximum heat. After that, we lower the heat and wait for another 5 minutes.

In the end, if there is not much water left, just cook for 4 more minutes over minimum heat. If there is too much water, then cook it over medium heat for 4 minutes. It is also recommended to let the paella stand for 10 minutes before it is served.



Though I am a South Indian, born and brought up in Ooty, when it comes to comfort food, my mind - rather tongue - doesn't just stop with South Indian food. I might say avial, rasam (South Indian dishes), are my comfort foods but that doesn't exclude rotis/pulav. With grey weathers in this part of the world, people tend to crave for comfort food rather than a rich/exotic diet. It was January, 2009, a cold day, when I thought how would it feel to have some jeera pulav with rajma. When it comes to food, I have no second thoughts and went ahead soaking some rajma for dinner. Good that I had the craving early in the day giving me sufficient time for soaking the rajma. Talk about planning and foresightedness! That always works well between me and my food. So, here I present to you my comfort food that is sure to please your palate as well.

- Cecil Robert, India

JEERA PULAV

- 1 cup basmati rice soaked in 1.5 cups water for 15 to 30 min
- 1.5 tablespoon jeera (cumin seeds)
- 3 tsp ghee
- 1 tsp oil
- 2 slit green chilis
- 2 each cloves and cardamom
- small piece of cinnamon
- salt to taste

Add 2 tsp of butter/ghee/oil (a combination of this or just one), add 3 pieces of cloves, cinnamon, cardamom, and fry for 15 sec. Add jeera, green chilies, and fry for 10 sec.

Add rice and fry for a min. Pour the water in which you soaked the rice. Cover the pan and cook for 3 min. Add salt to boiling water.

Cover again and cook till the water is absorbed and the rice gets cooked (will not take more than 10 min over medium flame). Switch off the flame.

Add a little ghee. Wait for some time and mix well without breaking the rice. You can garnish with chopped cilantro. Serve hot with rajma or any gravy of your choice. Plain curd (yogurt) will also suffice.



RAJMA KIDNEY BEAN CURRY)

- 1 cup rajma soaked overnight
- 2 onions
- 4 tomatoes, blanched and pureed
- 2 garlic pods
- small piece ginger
- 4 green chilies
- small piece cinnamon sticks
- 2 each cloves, cardamom
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1-2 tsp each turmeric powder, chili powder, dhania powder (coriander powder)
- 3 cups water
- Ghee/ Oil (a combination would be nice)
- Salt to taste
- Cilantro to garnish

Add a little oil. Fry cloves, cardamom, and cinnamon. Add sliced onions, and fry until dark brown. Grind with ginger, green chilies, and garlic. While grinding, make sure that you get a smooth paste. Fry the spices separately, make a fine powder, and add it to the gravy.

Heat ghee & oil in a pressure pan, season with jeera, and add the ground paste. Fry well. Once it turns golden brown, add the tomato puree. Add turmeric, dhania powder, and chili powder. Now add rajma with water and pressure cook for 6 to 8 whistles.

Add salt and spice powder. Boil for 2 min. You can add more water if you think you need it. In that case boil till everything comes together. Garnish with chopped cilantro.

It turns out that this semester I also need to share a recipe for my son's 3rd grade class, which is currently taking a virtual tour around the world as they learn about continents, countries, geography, history, and culture. I'll share with you the recipe that he has asked me to share with his class.

We eat Potato Latkes every year in December around the holiday of Channukah, the Jewish Festival of Lights. The potato latkes, or potato pancakes, are fried in oil, a reminder of the miracle of the small pot of oil that miraculously burned for 8 days as the Temple was cleaned and re-dedicated.

We look forward to eating the latkes all year, and do occasionally make them as a special breakfast or dinner treat. This recipe comes from a Rochester, NY Hadassah cookbook passed on to me from my mother.

- **Leann Cherkasky Makhni, Director,**
United States

POTATO LATKES

6 medium potatoes
1 small onion
2 tbls. sour cream
2 eggs
¼ cup flour
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp pepper
½ cup bread crumbs
Oil or shortening

Grate potatoes with onion, either by hand or blender. Drain excess water. Add sour cream quickly to keep the potatoes white. Add eggs, flour and crumbs, salt and pepper. Mix well.

Fry in hot oil, turning when golden brown. Serve with applesauce, cinnamon, sugar, or sour cream. Can be frozen and reheated in low oven for about 15-20 minutes.

Note: Be sure to drain the latkes on paper toweling before serving or freezing.



The Pavlova is a meringue-based dessert, named after the Russian ballet dancer Anna Pavlova. It is a cake of meringue with a crispy crust and soft, light inner.

The dessert is believed to have been created to honor the dancer during or after one of her tours to Australia and New Zealand, in the 1920s. Where it was created and the nationality of its creator has been a source of argument between the two nations for many years. Research indicates New Zealand as the source.

The dessert is a popular dish and an important part of the national cuisine of both countries. It is frequently served during celebratory or holiday meals such as Christmas dinner.

Some find the dessert hard to make, as the consistency is neither hard nor soft. But this recipe should be easy and achievable by everyone.

– Patrice Dodd, Australia

PAVLOVA

SERVES 12 PREP & COOK TIME: 2 HOURS & 10 MINUTES

- 6 egg whites
- 1 ½ cups caster sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornflower
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 300 ml thickened cream
- 1 tablespoon icing sugar
- 1 cup blueberries
- 125 g strawberries, sliced thinly
- 1 medium kiwifruit halved, sliced thinly
- ¼ cup passion fruit pulp

Preheat oven to 120°C/100°C fan-forced. Grease 22cm-round spring form tin; line base and side with baking paper.

Beat egg whites in medium bowl with electric mixer until soft peaks form; gradually add caster sugar, one tablespoon at a time, beating until sugar dissolves between additions. Fold in corn flour, extract and vinegar.

Spread mixture into tin; bake for about 1¾ hours. Cool pavlova in oven with door ajar.

Meanwhile, beat cream and icing sugar in small bowl with electric mixer until firm peaks form.

Remove pavlova from tin: peel baking paper from side. Carefully lift top crust from pavlova; set aside. Spread pavlova with half the cream; top with half the berries and half the kiwifruit. Place crust back on top of pavlova; top with remaining cream, berries and kiwifruit. Drizzle with passion fruit.

Serve pavlova dusted with extra sifted icing sugar.



Finland is a relatively small country in Northern Europe. Thanks to its location between Sweden and Russia, the history of Finns has been greatly influenced by the major powers in Northern Europe. Finland was under Swedish rule for 600 years and a part of the Russian Empire from 1809 to 1917. Finland has been independent since 1917, and today the Finns share a dual identity as the most western of the Eastern European countries. Therefore, the Finnish cuisine is a mix of Western and Eastern European tradition.

The Finnish eating habits are greatly influenced by the cycle of the seasons, and there are many specialty foods associated with certain seasons or holidays. In January, after feasting throughout the Christmas season, people traditionally eat lightly, and seafood such as burbot and fish roe are served with Russian-style blini pancakes. February is the official pea soup month, and delicious cream buns are served as dessert in order to celebrate the Shrovetide.

Easter brings a number of specialties enjoyed in March or April, such as the malted grain mixture known as mämmi, an assortment of chocolate eggs, and the traditional Orthodox Easter foods such as roast mutton and a variety of desserts. The typical foods for May Day celebrated on the first of May are herring and tippaleipä, a dessert made of deep fried doughnut batter washed down with a mead-like drink known as sima.

150 g. butter or margarine
1.5 dl. sugar
1 egg
0.5 dl. water
3 dl. wheat flour
2 teaspoons cardamom or vanillin sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder

Stuffing:

5 dl. rhubarb cubes
0.5 dl. sugar
2 eggs
200 g. vanilla-flavoured cream cheese

dl-Decilitre

Summer is the time to enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables. The Finns are fond of domestic fruit and vegetables, but during the winter, the prices often get so high that many people have to be satisfied with fruit and vegetables that come from warmer countries. During the summer, Finns therefore enjoy freshly dug, new potatoes with butter and dill, as well as cucumbers, tomatoes, strawberries, rhubarb and currants, and wild berries from the forests.

In August, it is time to have rapujuhlat, parties with crayfish and schnapps. Finns also eat a lot of wild mushrooms that can be found from the forests in the fall, and in September, when apples can be harvested, a variety of apple desserts are served throughout the country. In October, many towns and cities hold Baltic herring markets offering a variety of traditional seafood treats.

The Christmas season seems to start earlier and earlier every year, and today November is treated as the beginning of the season of Christmas parties held at workplaces and among friends serving festive food and mulled wine, glögi. Christmas is traditionally a time that the Finns spend at home with family. At the Christmas table, there is plenty of food to choose from, the traditional dishes being ham, a variety of seafood, different casseroles, rice pudding, gingerbreads, and confections.

– Niina Natunen, Finland

RHUBARB PIE

Heat up the oven till 200 degrees (C). Add the egg, water and the flours (mix the cardamom or the vanillin sugar with the flours). Lay out the batter in a pie tin.

Pour the rhubarb cubes on top of the batter and spice them with sugar. Mix eggs and vanillin sugar with the cream cheese and pour it on the rhubarb cubes. Bake the pie for 30 minutes in the 200-degree oven.



This dessert is a tradition at my family's Thanksgiving celebration. The recipe was first given to me to prepare when I was in high school, and I have been making it for my family every year since then. To the best of my knowledge, it is something that has been apart of my family for many generations.

An Icebox was the common appliance for providing refrigeration in the home before safe refrigerators came into place. Iceboxes tended to be made of wood because of the ease of construction, insulation, and as well as aesthetics since many were handsome pieces of furniture. They had hollow walls that were lined with tin or zinc and were packed with various insulating materials such as cork, sawdust, straw, or seaweed.

A large block of ice was held in a tray or compartment near the top of the box so that cold air could circulate down and around the storage compartments in the lower section. Some finer models had spigots for draining ice water from a catch pan or holding tank. In

cheaper models, a drip pan was placed under the box and had to be emptied at least once a day. The user had to replenish the melted ice, normally by obtaining new ice from an iceman (Information gathered from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice_box).

Although the icebox is not used today to refrigerate this easily made dessert, the concept is still the same and just as easy to make.

This dessert is one of my favorites because it is only made during Thanksgiving. This time of the year is the only one in my family where my grandma goes all out and prepares a plethora of food. During Thanksgiving of 2009, I was able to share my favorite holiday with some of the International House residents. It was their first Thanksgiving since it is a holiday only celebrated in the United States. They were also able to taste the Lemon Icebox Pie I prepared.

– **Natasha Bradley, United States**

LEMON ICEBOX CAKE

PREP TIME: 10-20 MINUTES BAKE TIME: 3-24 HOURS IN REFRIGERATOR

- 1 can Eagle Brand milk
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1/2 cup fresh or bottled lemon juice
- 1 graham cracker crust
- 1 container of Cool Whip

Mix Eagle Brand milk, egg yolk, vanilla extract, lemon extract, and lemon juice until fully blended. Pour into graham cracker crust. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours; refrigerate for 24 hours for best results. Once mix has hardened, spread Cool Whip over entire pie and serve.



Cookies seem to play an important role in many countries' celebration of Christmas, including in the United States. For instance, children may leave some cookies and a glass of milk near the Christmas tree as a treat for Santa Claus. Cookies and other baked goods also make great gifts during the holiday season.

When I was in high school, I found this recipe in a magazine advertisement for Land O'Lakes butter. I baked these cookies, wrapped a couple of them in plastic wrap, and tied a ribbon to give to my friends. What I like about these cookies is how they're light and soft. From my experience, these cookies stay chewy no matter how many days old. One of the ingredients is a favorite of mine: toffee, which is a hard candy made of sugar or molasses and butter.

Last December, I baked these cookies for the first time since high school. I used the I-House student kitchen to bake a batch for a Christmas gift. Once I filled up the container, I put the remaining cookies (at least 20) on a plate in the I-House lobby, and they disappeared fast! I baked these cookies again this semester for a Coffee Night with a Valentine's Day theme. To fit the theme, I shaped each cookie into a heart with my hands. It was time-consuming, but a lot of love went into it, and the yummy results were worth it.

– Sarah Kyo, United States

SPARKLING BUTTER TOFFEE COOKIES

MAKES 5 DOZEN PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES

1 cup sugar
3/4 cup butter, softened
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup English or almond toffee bits
(I've found these in the baking section of super-
markets. You can also make your own toffee —
without a chocolate coating or nuts — and then
break them into tiny pieces.)

Sugar

Heat oven to 350°F. Combine sugar, butter, egg, and vanilla in a large bowl. Beat mixture until creamy. Add flour, baking powder, and baking soda. Beat until well mixed. Stir in toffee bits by hand.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in sugar. Place 2 inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheet. Flatten each with bottom of glass to 1 1/2-inch circles.

Bake for 9 to 11 minutes or until edges are just lightly browned. Sprinkle with sugar while warm. Cool completely.



LETTER TO THE DINING COMMONS

Dear DC,

You made me make fun of my own university food corner. In my university, they only serve healthy sandwiches and coffee. The sandwiches are small and the coffee is so thin as water. Sometimes, if we were lucky, they offered the hard working students a bowl of soup and a meal at a really high price according to the low student's budget. After three years at that University, I could not see, smell or taste that food at the Mensa anymore. And then, I met you.

DC, you brought me joy and happiness during the first week. During the second week, I was still excited about the menu. Every minute, every hour, I was wondering what the DC would serve for breakfast, lunch, dinner and after party. I hardly slept, because I was thinking about the big variety of salads, sandwiches, burritos, sushi and soups the DC cooked for its precious customers, the SJSU students. I entered your building with a big smile on my face. You made my day, day after day.

Yeah, you MADE my day. It seems ages ago. My love is all gone; it even feels like I have never adored you. I try to avoid you and your food. I walk all the way from 11th street and San Carlos and San Salvador, just to

ignore you, because you make me feel horrible. During the first two lovely weeks, I ate so much that I was about to explode within a few days.

Besides that, you made me feel lonely too. My co-residents still love you; they want to be with you all the time. I don't see them around the House anymore because they choose meeting with you over me. They even meet you before midnight to say goodbye to you. I never had that privilege.

Thank you, dear DC. Thank you for everything!

– Azina Saeidi, The Netherlands



Photo of Azina Saeidi at the Dining Commons

THE BEST WAY TO EXPERIENCE AMERICAN CULTURE

From 18th December-22nd January, I went across over 20 states in the U.S.! I'm sure this month was the happiest, most amazing, most unforgettable one month in my life until now!!!

I mainly went to San Jose, Sacramento, Reno, Denver, Iowa, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, New York, Niagara Falls, Washington D.C., Orlando, Miami, New Orleans, Arizona, Los Angeles, and back to San Jose. When I did the trip, I always thought about one sentence as my motto: "Enjoy what you can see, don't worry what you can't see!" — Prof. Jiang (Chair of Business Department)

First time taking the American train Amtrak

It was so comfortable, much more comfortable than airplanes, cars, or buses! You have a big seat, and you can lay down. There's a big sightseeing car: The window is very big, and you can sit in front of the window, enjoying the beautiful view outside!

The California Zephyr was especially so wonderful. It is considered one of the most beautiful scenic railway routes in North America. We were going across beaches, deserts, red rocks, snow mountains, Mississippi River, pastures, and flats in two days. The people on the train are very nice, too. You never feel lonely, and it's very easy to make a lot of friends.

Chicago: Best popcorn and pizza

The Garrett popcorn in Chicago is so amazing. It's a Chicago tradition, since 1949. It looks like the common popcorn, but the taste is different. Garrett Popcorn Shops uses high-quality ingredients, and Garrett Popcorn Shops never uses fat or oils in the popping process. When I talk about it, the yummy taste is still in my month.

The Chicago pizza is very unforgettable, too. It's

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thick. It's cheesy. It takes 45 minutes to make. Oh, yeah — it's a Chicago Pizza. It's best executed by places like Lou Malnati's and Gino's East. The Chicago pizza is a key slice of the city's identity.

First Christmas in the U.S. and the Christmas food

It was my first time to have my Christmas and New Year's in the U.S.! I visited one of my best friends in Iowa. It was so unforgettable. We had so much fun there, and I think it was the best way for me to experience American culture ... traditional American Christmas food, like Roast turkey

When I was in China, I had dumplings on New Year's. When I was in Japan, I had mochi on New Year's. For my first Christmas in the U.S., I had roast turkey. It's not very difficult to cook, but the taste is so good!

First time to sleep in the train station

It was my first time to sleep in the train station: I missed one train from Orlando and had to take the next one. So when I arrived at the Miami station, it was 3 a.m. I thought it would be a waste to go to the hotel, so I just studied in the Amtrak station until daybreak. Then I met two French friends who were at the same station as me. We became friends; we talked, laughed, and fell asleep at the station.

Travel is just like life: We can plan, but there are also a lot of unexpected things that may be difficult and complicated, but also can be lucky or pleasantly surprising. I think this is the glamour of traveling.

Florida: Stone crab

You can only find the stone crabs in Florida. The stone crab's carapace is 3 to 3½ inches (7 to 9 cm) long

and about 4 inches (10 cm) wide. They are brownish red with gray spots and a tan underside, and have large and unequally-sized chelae with black tips. It is very fresh and different than other crabs. It is more tender, and you feel it really melt in your mouth.

The special American food in New Orleans:

Because of the history in New Orleans, the food in New Orleans is different than the other states in the U.S. If you go to New Orleans, you have to go the Acme Oyster House. It started in 1910. When I went there, I was surprised: There was a long line to enter the restaurant. When I was in Japan, the Japanese really like to wait in a line in front the restaurant. Since I came to the U.S., it was my first time to see this kind of situation.

After I had the oysters there, I understood why the people were in a line: the oysters are so fresh, they're served ice cold on the half shell. With lemon sauce, they're the best oysters I have had!

I think the most important factor for why I enjoyed the trip so much is because of my friends.

Thanks to all of the people who helped and supported me! That was my road trip in the U.S. This is just my personal plan, but I think the idea of studying foreign culture is the same.

And there's a famous Chinese proverb : Traveling ten thousand miles is more eye-opening than reading ten thousand books.

However, I think we should not only read books or travel. We should read some books, do some research, and then go travel to as many states as we can and talk to as many people as we can. I think that is the best way to experience American or foreign culture!!!

– Sky Ming Li, China





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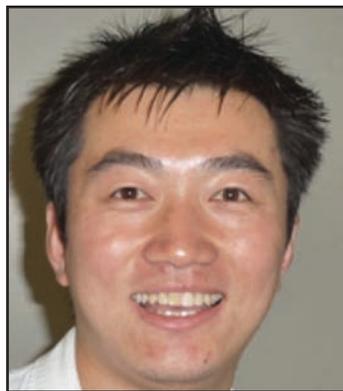
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