International Foods

★ The Culture & Cuisine of:

• Latin America
  - Mexico
  - Central America
  - South America
  - Caribbean
Influencing Factors

★ What factors influence the cuisine of different cultures?

• Land
• Religion
• Cultures & Lifestyles
• Economics
The food that is available and bountiful in a particular region of the world will determine part of a person’s diet.

★ **Surrounded by water?**
  • Seafood is available.

★ **Warm climate?**
  • Fruits, vegetables and herbs are grown year around.

★ **Cold weather?**
  • Root vegetables and wheat are grown.

★ **Grasslands?**
  • Grain products and beef are available.
Countries throughout the world have a mix of ethnic groups that have influenced their cuisine.

Early explorers brought their foods, traditions, and eating habits with them.
Lifestyles

★ Families in these areas are traditionally close-knit. Children helping parents at home with the care of the family and providing an income is often needed.

★ Old & new economies and technologies have influenced lifestyles. Industry, businesses and skyscrapers in contrast to rural farming.

★ Great wealth and great poverty creates lifestyles of contrast.
Economics

★ A country’s economy influences food production and availability.

★ Family income influences what types of foods are prepared by the income available.

★ Purchasing locally grown food is convenient and economical.
Latin American Region

★ Mexico
★ Central America
★ South America
★ Caribbean
Early history was dominated by three native cultures.

• Aztec
• Incan
• Mayan
Mexico

Mexican cuisine has developed from an abundance of native foods and the influence of the Aztec and Spanish population.

★ Characteristics of Cuisine:

• Corn, beans, and peppers are grown locally and are staple ingredients.

• Vegetables, fruits, and protein foods such as meat and seafood are used to create flavorful dishes.
Mexican Foods

⭐ **Corn:** since Aztec civilization, corn has been the basis of Mexican cuisine.

- Tortillas: made from cornmeal and water.
- Tamales: made from corn husks.

⭐ **Beans:**

- Numerous varieties
- Most common bean dish is frijoles refritos (refried beans).

⭐ **Peppers:**

- 30 different varieties from mild to hot.
**Tacos:**

- Folded tortillas filled with meat, beans, vegetables, and a spicy tomato sauce.

**Tostados:**

- A crispy fried tortilla spread with the same ingredients used in tacos.

**Enchiladas:**

- Flour tortillas rolled around meat, beans, cheese, and topped with salsa and grated cheese.
This region is where the early Mayan Empire flourished.

The cooking has Mayan and Aztec Indian origins with Spanish and Caribbean influence.
Central America

★ Characteristics of Cuisine:

- Rice, corn, red and black beans, and fruits and vegetables are locally grown.
- Chicken is prepared in a variety of ways with pineapple, pumpkin and tomato sauces.
- Fish is abundant and used in soups, stews, and main dishes.
Central American Foods

★ **Chayote:**
  - Crisp, delicately flavored vegetable that is often sliced and simmered.

★ **Red Beans & Rice:**
  - Cooked with a spicy salsa.

★ **Plantain:**
  - Starchy food that looks like a large green banana.

★ **Fish Stew**
The Caribbean

These tropical islands have a rich heritage starting with Columbus, who landed there when he was looking for the spice route to India. Later came the Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese, British, and French.
The Caribbean

★ Characteristics of Cuisine:

- A mix of all the island nationalities’ cooking styles with the following common ingredients:
  - Rice
  - Fish & shellfish (surrounded by water)
  - Fruits & vegetables (grow in abundance)
  - Chili peppers
  - Coconut milk
Caribbean Foods

★ Moros y Christianoz:
  • The Cuban national dish made with black beans and rice.

★ Djon-djon:
  • Black mushrooms found in Haiti.

★ Jamaican Saturday Soups:
  • Carrots, hot peppers, turnips, and pumpkin added to beef stock.

★ Seafood:
  • Cooked in coconut milk and seasoned with chili peppers.
South America is the southern half of the western hemisphere.

Native South Americans were the Incas, who settled in the Andes Mountains and were known for their advanced farming and building techniques.

The Spanish invaded the area in search of gold. Later came the Europeans and Africans. All have contributed to the culture and cuisine of South America.
Characteristics of Cuisine:

- Potatoes, beans, wheat and corn are the staple foods in much of South America.
- The northern countries grow an abundance of fruits and vegetables.
- The common meats are chicken, sheep, goats, guinea pigs, and beef.
South American Foods

★ Feijoada:
  • National dish of Brazil made from black beans, smoked sausage, beef, pork, onions, rice, greens, and sliced oranges.

★ Churrasco:
  • Marinated, grilled beef.

★ Mariscada:
  • Fish stew.

★ Empanadas:
  • Meat and vegetable turnovers (pies).

★ Tortillas de Maiz:
  • Corn pancakes.

★ Platanos Tumulto:
  • Broiled bananas.
Applying What You’ve Learned

Choose one of the following activities to complete:

★ Create a travel poster for one of the countries covered. Identify the geography of the region as well as the highlights of the local cuisine.

★ Design a menu for a complete meal in one of the countries covered. Research what beverages, appetizers, main dishes, bread and desserts would be typical for the country and include them in your menu.

★ Find a recipe for one of the country dishes covered in a magazine or on the internet. Prepare the dish for your family and write a review about it.
Check Your Knowledge

★ Name three factors that influence a country’s cuisine.

★ Give two examples of how land/geography influences a country’s cuisine.

★ Give two examples of how culture & lifestyles influence the cuisine of a country.

★ List two characteristics of South American Cuisine.

★ List two characteristics of British Cuisine.

★ Choose a country in Western Europe and describe what factors have influenced its cuisine.
Web Resources

★ www.bpe.com (Food - ethnic cuisine)
★ www.cuisinenet.com (lower right - “Cuisines of the World”)
★ www.e-commkitchen.com (Recipes – scroll down to country)
★ www.globalgourmet.com (Departments - “Global Destinations”)
★ www.wtg-online.com (Click on a country, then choose “Social Profile”)
★ www.about.com (Food & Drink — world/regional cuisines - left hand column “subjects”) Warning: This site has unwelcome pop-up ads, but does have educational content.
★ www.lonelyplanet.com (general info about climate/topography and other quick statistics)
★ For recipes of the country try:
  • www.recipesource.com (“SOAR” Searchable Online Archive of Recipes — classified by type or by country)
  • www.recipegoldmine.com (Home and Family – Cooking and Recipes)

Please note that web addresses are constantly changing and being updated. You may need to revise this list.