

An introduction of british cuisin



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British cuisine is the specific set of cooking traditions and practices associated with the United Kingdom. Historically, British cuisine means “ unfussy dishes made with quality local ingredients, matched with simple sauces to accentuate flavour, rather than disguise it.” However, British cuisine has absorbed the cultural influence of those that have settled in Britain, producing hybrid dishes, such as the South Asian chicken tikka masala, hailed as “ Britain’s true national dish”.

Sunday roast consisting of roast beef, roast potatoes, vegetables and Yorkshire pudding

Vilified as “ unimaginative and heavy”, British cuisine has traditionally been limited in its international recognition to the full breakfast and the Christmas dinner. However, Celtic agriculture and animal breeding produced a wide variety of foodstuffs for indigenous Celts and Britons. Anglo-Saxon England developed meat and savoury herb stewing techniques before the practice became common in Europe. The Norman conquest introduced exotic spices into England in the Middle Ages. The British Empire facilitated a knowledge of India’s elaborate food tradition of “ strong, penetrating spices and herbs”. Food rationing policies, put in place by the British government during wartime periods of the 20th century, are said to have been the stimulus for British cuisine’s poor international reputation.

British dishes include fish and chips, the Sunday roast, steak and kidney pie, and bangers and mash. British cuisine has several national and regional varieties, including English, Scottish and Welsh cuisine, which each have developed their own regional or local dishes, many of which are

geographically indicated foods such as Cheshire cheese, the Yorkshire pudding, Arbroath Smokier, and Welsh cakes.

British cuisine speciality

Dishes made with quality local ingredients

Simple sauces to accentuate flavour

British cuisine has absorbed the cultural influence

Anglo-Saxon England developed meat and savoury herb

The Norman conquest introduced exotic spices into England in the Middle Ages

Regional varieties, including English, Scottish and Welsh cuisine

Geographically indicated foods

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History

Romano-British agriculture, highly fertile soils and advanced animal breeding produced a wide variety of very high quality foodstuffs for indigenous Romano-British people. Anglo-Saxon England developed meat and savoury

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herb stewing techniques and the Norman conquest reintroduced exotic spices and continental influences back into Great Britain in the Middle Ages as maritime Britain became a major player in the transcontinental spice trade for many centuries after. Following the Protestant Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries “ plain and robust” food remained the mainstay of the British diet, reflecting tastes which are still shared with neighbouring north European countries and traditional North American Cuisine. In the 18th and 19th centuries, as the Colonial British Empire began to be influenced by India’s elaborate food tradition of “ strong, penetrating spices and herbs”, the United Kingdom developed a worldwide reputation for the quality of British beef and pedigree bulls were exported to form the bloodline of major modern beef herds in the New World.

Fish and chips, a popular take-away food of the United Kingdom.

During the World Wars of the 20th century difficulties of food supply were countered by official measures which included rationing. The problem was worse in the second World War and the Ministry of Food was established to address the problems. See Rationing in the United Kingdom during and after World War II. Due to the economic problems following the war rationing continued for some years afterwards. Food rationing policies, put in place by the British government during wartime periods of the 20th century, are often claimed as the stimulus for the decline of British cuisine in the twentieth century.

In common with many advanced economies, rapid urbanisation and the early industrialisation of food production as well as female emancipation have

resulted in a highly modern consumer society with reduced connection to the rural environment and adherence to traditional household roles.

Consequently food security has increasingly become a major popular concern. Concerns over the quality and nutritional value of industrialised food production led to the creation of the Soil Association in 1946. Its principles of organic farming are now widely promoted and accepted as an essential element of contemporary food culture by many sections of the UK population, and animal welfare in farming is amongst the most advanced in the world. The last half of the 20th century saw an increase in the availability of a greater range of good quality fresh products and greater willingness by many sections of the British population to vary their diets and select dishes from other cultures such as those of Italy and India.

Modern British cuisine

Modern British (or New British) cuisine is a style of British cooking which fully emerged in the late 1970s, and has become increasingly popular. It uses high-quality local ingredients, preparing them in ways which combine traditional British recipes with modern innovations, and has an affinity with the Slow Food movement.

It is not generally a nostalgic movement, although there are some efforts to re-introduce pre-twentieth-century recipes. Ingredients not native to the islands, particularly herbs and spices, are frequently added to traditional dishes (echoing the highly spiced nature of much British food in the medieval era).

The custom of afternoon tea and scones has its origins in Imperial Britain.

Much Modern British cooking also draws heavily on influences from Mediterranean cuisines, and more recently, Middle Eastern, South Asian, East Asian and Southeast Asian cuisines. The traditional influence of northern and central European cuisines is significant but fading.

The Modern British style of cooking emerged as a response to the depressing food rationing that persisted for several years after the Second World War, along with restrictions on foreign currency exchange, making travel difficult. A hunger for exotic cooking was satisfied by writers such as Elizabeth David, who from 1950 produced evocative books whose recipes (mostly French and Mediterranean) were then often impossible to produce in Britain, where even olive oil could only normally be found in chemists rather than food stores. By the 1960s foreign holidays, and foreign-style restaurants in Britain, further widened the popularity of foreign cuisine. Recent Modern British cuisine has been very much influenced and popularised by TV chefs, all also writing books, such as Fanny Craddock, Robert Carrier, Delia Smith, Gordon Ramsay, Nigella Lawson and Jamie Oliver, alongside the Food Programme, made by BBC Radio 4.

Anglo-Indian cuisine

Anglo-Indian cuisine is the often distinct cuisine of the Anglo-Indian community in both Britain and India.

Some Anglo-Indian dishes involve traditional British cuisine, such as roast beef, with cloves, red chillies, and other Indian spices. Fish or meat is often cooked in curry form with Indian vegetables. Anglo-Indian food often involves

use of coconut, yogurt and almonds. Roasts and curries, rice dishes, and breads all have a distinctive flavour.

Some well-known Anglo-Indian dishes are salted beef tongue, kedgerree, fish rissoles, and mulligatawny. The cuisine's sweetmeats include seasonal favourites like the "kul-kuls" and "rose-cookies" traditionally made at Christmas time. There is also a great deal of innovation to be seen in their soups, entrees, side dishes, sauces and salads.

Some early restaurants in England served Anglo-Indian food, such as Veeraswamy in Regent Street, London, and their sister restaurant, Chutney Mary. They have however, largely reverted to the standard Indian dishes that are better known to the British public.

The term is also used for the Indian dishes adapted during the British Raj in India, some of which later became fashionable in Britain.

The British also introduced some European foods to India which are still eaten now, such as beetroot.

The fusion cuisine between Indian ingredients or spices and British ingredients - such as bread, bacon and baked beans - is also known as Brit Indi cuisine. This term was popularised by Manju Malhi.

English cuisine

English cuisine is shaped by the climate of England, its island geography and its history. The latter includes interactions with other European countries, and the importing of ingredients and ideas from places such as North

America, China and southern Asia during the time of the British Empire and as a result of immigration.

Gibraltarian cuisine

This article is part of the series:

Culture of Gibraltar

Gibraltarian cuisine is the result of a long relationship between the Andalucian Spaniards and the British, as well as the many foreigners who made Gibraltar their home over the past three centuries. The culinary influences include those from Malta, Genoa, Portugal, Andalusia and England. This marriage of tastes has given Gibraltar an eclectic mix of Mediterranean and British cuisine.

Below are some examples of typical Gibraltarian dishes.

Pasta

Rosto

Fideos al horno

Bread

Savoury

Calentita

Panissa

Sweet

Bollo de hornasso

Pan dulce

Meat

Rolitos

Pastries

Japonesa

Northern Irish cuisine

Irish cuisine is a style of cooking originating from Ireland or developed by Irish people. It evolved from centuries of social and political change. The cuisine takes its influence from the crops grown and animals farmed in its temperate climate. The introduction of the potato in the second half of the sixteenth century heavily influenced cuisine thereafter. Irish beef is exported worldwide and renowned for its high quality. Representative Irish dishes are Irish stew, bacon and cabbage, boxty, coddle, and colcannon.

Scottish cuisine

Scottish cuisine is the specific set of cooking traditions and practices associated with Scotland. It shares much with British cuisine, but has distinctive attributes and recipes of its own. Traditional Scottish dishes such as haggis and shortbread exist alongside international foodstuffs brought about by migration. Scotland is known for the high quality of its beef, potatoes and oats. In addition to foodstuffs, Scotland produces a variety of whiskies.

Welsh cuisine

Welsh cuisine has influenced, and been influenced by, other British cuisine. Although both beef and dairy cattle are raised widely, especially in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, Wales is best known for its sheep, and thus lamb is the meat traditionally associated with Welsh cooking.

Cured meats and vegetables

Bacon and kippers

Northern European countries generally have a tradition of salting, smoking, pickling and otherwise preserving foods. Kippers, bloaters, ham, and bacon are some of the varieties of preserved meat and fish known in England.

Onions, cabbage and some other vegetables may be pickled. Smoked cheese is not common or traditional, although apple-wood smoked cheddar has become available in many supermarkets.[citation needed] Meats other than pork are generally not cured. The “ three breakfasts a day” principle can be implemented by eating bacon sandwiches at any time. (In parts of northern England these have local names such as “ bacon sarnies” or “ bacon butties”.)

Sandwiches

England can claim to have given the world the word “ sandwich”, although the eponymous John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich was not the first to add a filling to bread. Fillings such as pickled relishes and Gentleman’s Relish could also be considered distinctively English. Common types of sandwich are ham, cheese, salad and non-traditional forms such as the “ ploughman’s lunch” (cheese and pickle).

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Curing (food preservation)

Curing refers to various food preservation and flavouring processes, especially of meat or fish, by the addition of a combination of salt, sugar, nitrates or nitrite. Many curing processes also involve smoking.

Chemical actions

The chemical actions of curing are highly complex with slow reactions of proteins and fats through autolysis and oxidation. These reactions can be driven by auto-oxidation alone though it is typically accompanied by enzymes in the curing food as well as beneficial fungi and bacteria.

To enable these slow curing reactions and prevent rapid decomposition through rotting, water is extracted from the food and the food is made inhospitable to micro-organisms. This is usually done by applying salt and a combination of other ingredients to cure the food.

Salt

Table salt, which consists primarily of sodium chloride, is the most important ingredient for curing food and is used in relatively large quantities. Salt kills and inhibits the growth of microorganisms by drawing water out of the cells of both microbe and food alike through osmosis. Concentrations of salt up to 20% are required to kill most species of unwanted bacteria.

Once properly salted, the food's interior contains enough salt to exert osmotic pressures that prevent or retard the growth of many undesirable microbes.

Sugar

Although often used in curing to give a pleasant taste, sugar can also be used to encourage the growth of beneficial bacteria such as those of the Lactobacillus genus. Dextrose or sucrose that is used in this fashion ferments the food.

As the unwanted bacterial growth is delayed, the salt tolerant lactobacillus out competes them and further prevents their growth by generating an acidic environment (around 4.5 pH) through production of lactic acid. This inhibits the growth of other microbes and accounts for the tangy flavour of some cured products.

Nitrates and nitrites

Nyrosyl-heme

Nitrates and nitrites not only help kill bacteria, but also produce a characteristic flavour and give meat a pink or red colour.

The use of Nitrates in food preservation is controversial, though, due to the potential for the formation of nitrosamines when the preserved food is cooked at high temperature. The usage of either compound is therefore carefully regulated; for example, in the United States, the concentration of Nitrates and Nitrites is generally limited to 200 ppm or lower. However, they are considered irreplaceable in the prevention of botulinum poisoning from consumption of dry-cured sausages by preventing spore germination.

A 2007 study by Columbia University suggests a link between eating cured meats and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Nitrites were posited as a possible cause.

Smoke

Although more frequently used for flavor than preservation, smoke is an antimicrobial and antioxidant. The smoke particles adhere to the outer surfaces of food, inhibiting bacterial growth and oxidation.

History of curing

The practice of curing meat was widespread among historical civilizations, as a safeguard against wasting food and the possibility of a poor harvest.

Although a salt-rich diet is currently implicated in risk for heart disease, in the past food shortage was the greater problem.

Salt cod, which was air-dried in cool northern Europe, was a civilization-changing food product, in that a bountiful but perishable food supply could be converted to a form that allowed for wide travel and thus exploration.

Salted meat was widely used as a food source on ships during the Age of Sail, as it is non-perishable and easily stored. Eric Newby wrote that salted meats constituted the majority of shipboard diet even as late as his cruise aboard Moshulu (which lacked any refrigeration) in 1938.

Salted meat and fish are commonly eaten as a staple of the diet in North Africa, Southern China and in the Arctic.

Some cured food products

Cured animal products:

Beef

Biltong

Corned beef

Bresaola

Tapa

Lomo

Pork

Ham

Prosciutto

Jambon de Bayonne

Jamón serrano

Jinhua ham

Coppa

Capicola

Lardon

Bacon and Pancetta

Elenski but

Sausage

Salami

Pepperoni

Chorizo

Linguiça

Chinese Sausage (lap cheung)

Fish

Anchovy

Salt cod

Lox (salmon)

Pickled herring

Cured vegetable products:

Tofu

Sauerkraut

Kimchi

Pickled cucumbers

Pickled beets

Olive (fruit)

Salt-cured meat

A bagel containing salt beef and mustard

A packet of salted fish sold in a Singapore supermarket

Salt-cured meat or salted meat, for example bacon and kippered herring, is meat or fish preserved or cured with salt. Salting, either with dry salt or brine, was the only widely available method of preserving food until the 19th century.

Salt inhibits the growth of micro organisms by drawing water out of microbial cells through osmosis. Concentrations of salt up to 20% are required to kill most species of unwanted bacteria. Smoking, often used in the process of curing meat, adds chemicals to the surface of meat that reduce the concentration of salt required.

Salted meat and fish are a staple of the diet in North Africa, Southern China, and in the Arctic. Salted meat was a staple of the mariner's diet in the Age of Sail. It was stored in barrels, and often had to last for months spent out of sight of land. The basic Royal Navy diet consisted of salted beef, salted pork, ship's biscuit, and oatmeal, supplemented with smaller quantities of peas, cheese and butter. [1] Even in 1938, Eric Newby found the diet on the tall ship Moshulu to consist almost entirely of salted meat. Moshulu's lack of refrigeration left little choice as the ship made voyages which could exceed 100 days passage between ports.

Salt beef in the UK and Commonwealth as a cured and boiled foodstuff is sometimes known as corned beef elsewhere, though traditional salt beef is different in taste and preparation. The use of the term corned comes from the fact that the Middle English word corn could refer to grains of salt as well as cereal grains.

Bacon

Uncooked pork belly bacon strips

Bacon is a cured meat prepared from a pig. It is first cured in a brine or in a dry packing, both containing large amounts of salt; the result is fresh bacon (also green bacon). Fresh bacon may then be further dried for weeks or months (usually in cold air), boiled, or smoked. Fresh and dried bacon must be cooked before eating. Boiled bacon is ready to eat, as is some smoked bacon, but either may be cooked further before eating.

Meat from other animals, such as beef, lamb, chicken, goat, or turkey, may also be cut, cured, or otherwise prepared to resemble bacon, and may even be referred to as “bacon”. Such use is common in areas with significant Jewish and Muslim populations. The USDA defines bacon as “the cured belly of a swine carcass”; other cuts and characteristics must be separately qualified (e. g., “smoked pork loin bacon”). For safety, bacon must be treated for trichinella, a parasitic roundworm which can be destroyed by heating, freezing, drying, or smoking.

Pork

Pork tenderloin served French-style

Pork is the culinary name for meat from the domestic pig (*Sus domesticus*), which is eaten in many countries. The word pork denotes specifically the fresh meat of the pig, but it is often mistakenly used as an all-inclusive term which includes cured, smoked, or processed meats (ham, bacon, prosciutto, etc.) It is one of the most-commonly consumed meats worldwide, with evidence of pig husbandry dating back to 5000 BC.

Pork is eaten in various forms, including cooked (as roast pork), cured (some hams, including the Italian prosciutto) or smoked or a combination of these methods (other hams, gammon, bacon or Pancetta). It is also a common ingredient of sausages. Charcuterie is the branch of cooking devoted to prepared meat products, many from pork. Pork is a taboo food item in Islam and Judaism, and its consumption is forbidden in some sects of these two religions.

Curing Storage Vegetables

Some of your storage vegetables need to be cured before storage; some don't. If you cure vegetables that don't need to be cured, they'll rot. And if you don't cure vegetables that do need to be cured, they'll rot too. Time for a good list!

Vegetable

Curing method

Beet

none

Cabbage

none

Carrot

none

Garlic

1 – 2 weeks in a warm, dry place

Onion

2 – 3 weeks in a warm, dry place

Parsnip

none

Potato

2 weeks at 50 – 60 degrees Fahrenheit and 95% humidity (slightly warmer than a root cellar)

Sweet Potato

2 weeks at 80 – 85 degrees Fahrenheit (dry)

Turnip

none

Winter Squash (including Pumpkins)

2 weeks in a warm, dry place. (Don't cure acorn squash!)

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Curing serves a couple of purposes. In all crops except white potatoes, a primary purpose is to dry the vegetable up so that it won't rot in storage. White and sweet potatoes and winter squashes develop a hard skin during curing that will protect the crop during storage.

The cheapest and easiest method come up with for curing vegetables is to lay them out on some old window screens by the side of the road. the first screen on four cinderblocks, cover the screen with drying vegetables, then put bricks on the four corners of the frame to let put another screen on top for a second drying layer. The trick is to get good air circulation all the way around your vegetables, so don't pile the roots on top of each other.

People with more space will get away with drying their vegetables inside, but our trailer just isn't big enough to handle that type of operation. Instead, Harvest my crops a bit earlier than other folks might and put drying racks under a tarp or roof outside to cure storage vegetables before the frost hits.