

# The history of sauces essay sample

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The word “sauce” is a French word that means a relish to make our food more appetizing. Sauces are liquid or semi-liquid foods devised to make other foods look, smell, and taste better, and hence be more easily digested and more beneficial. Because of the lack of refrigeration in the early days of cooking, meat, poultry, fish, and seafood didn’t last long. Sauces and gravies were used to mask the flavor of tainted foods. Throughout culinary history, sauces were created to make a variety of foods more pleasing to the palate and increase their natural flavors. With the advent of fire, sauces and seasonings became more widely used to flavor, moisten and mask the flavors of meat that became dry, burned, and chewy. As new cooking methods and more sophisticated cooking vessels were being invented, seasoning, marinating and more creative ways of finishing food became increasingly more important. The reliance on natural and seasonal ingredients created regional differences in flavor and methods of cooking. As trade among peoples of various regions began to take shape a variety of spices and seasonings became increasingly more important in the way food was eaten.

Wars and pirating even took place, as some ingredients were rare and difficult to come by. Certain spices became prized possessions and gifts for the wealthy and the most powerful. The French have been credited with refining the sauce making process into an art form. It was a nineteenth century French chef, Antonin Carème who was considered to be the most prolific food writer of his time. And it was he who developed a system into which hundreds of sauces were categorized into several major sauce groups.

This system, which remains today, has enabled chefs to invent derivative sauces using his foundation as a base for sauce making.

The four basic groups that Crème used were: Espagnole, Veloute, Allemande, and Béchamel. In the early 1900's a French sauce called demi-glace was created and literally means half sauce. It soon became a classic among sauce makers and chefs of the time and one of the most popular sauces used for meats like steak, chops, and roasts. Even today it remains one of the most sought after sauces on the market and extensively used by top chefs around the world. It's a highly concentrated sauce form that combines brown stock (usually beef, veal, wine, Mirepoix, and seasonings) reduced to a glace and Espagnole sauce that has been thickened with roux and reduced to a light syrupy consistency. It is now considered a pantry staple by most chefs today.