

Food Prepared with Family

Saturnina Rosa

I want to write about food. It is a true story. We sometimes do this in my family.

The first thing we do is plan where we are going to gather and on what date.

Each family prepares different food. We prepare roast pork and chicken and different meat. Another person brings rice and beans and vegetables. We prepare pastelon of yucca and pastelon of potatoes. We also make different dessert. We make flan pudding, corn cake, and fruit cocktails. All of it is homemade.

We also play different games. We play dominoes, children and adults. My brother plays guitar and sings and another person plays the piano and drums. We sing and dance.

We rest the next day.

Foods of Eden

Rebecca Kong

I remember that all meats, fruits, eggs, vegetables, and grains tasted very delicious when I was a child. My grandmother just used some oil to fry eggs with rice and added some salt. It tasted very good. Most of our food came from the countryside. They were organic foods; nothing was added.

After I grew up, the food changed. I liked chicken soup when I was a kid. It was a great healthy food. A chicken was fully grown after six to eight months. But now it is just two or three months. The new chicken tastes so awful. People do not give chicken their time, so the chicken tastes artificial.

Many times I worry about what I am eating. I have a dream: my church members and my family have a farm in the countryside. We have many different fruit trees, animals, and vegetables. We can give the farm the name “Eden.”

Actually, I can do a part-time job on the farm. I do not want to be a full-time farmer. I can do marketing for selling the food to the city and other places in the state with a sales team. That way many people can enjoy our food and pay less money.

Good food is love from God. I love to have organic foods, and enjoy working on the farm. That would be a great life.

Health Habits

Gina Zhang

I like to eat junk food, so I've gained a lot of weight and my body looks fat.

One day, I met my friends. They were so surprised to see my huge body and round face. I wasn't happy anymore.

I had to lose weight, so I made a plan. First, I ate less for breakfast and dinner than before. For breakfast, I drank milk and ate bread and I had a bowl of soup and some vegetables for my dinner. I didn't eat fried food anymore because it made me fatter. I also kept doing exercises twice a week. On the weekend, I did a lot of housework.

After a month of hard work, I lost four pounds, but it wasn't enough. I still had to keep to my plan, because bad eating habits in our life cause weight problems.

Long term eating habits are very important.

My First Meal

Olivia Medina

When I was a kid, my mother cooked such delicious food. I never cooked when I lived with my parents. I usually helped my mom cook.

But one day my mom had an appointment, so she said, “Oly, you need to cook for your brothers.”

I said, “What? Why? I can’t! I’ve never cooked. I don’t want to cook for my brothers.”

“Never mind,” she said. “The refrigerator has everything you need.”

Well, I started cooking. I chopped vegetables and I prepared tomato sauce. I cooked vegetable soup. My brothers ate what was prepared and I was shocked when they finished it all.

My brothers said, “Thanks, Oly. It was so delicious. You are the best sister. Never change.” They cleaned the table and washed the dishes. And from that day I cooked every Thursday for my brothers.

Spicy Food

Ping Ting Guan

My mother does not like eating fish that comes from a pond. Neither do I.

When I graduated from high school, my friend didn't go to college; she got a job. One day, she gave me a call. She invited me to have lunch the next day. She told me that she found out something new. I was very happy and expectant.

On that day, I spent a lot of time looking for the restaurant. Many people were waiting outside when I arrived at the restaurant. The smell was intense. I felt very hungry at that moment. I found my friends and sat with them. They told me they had already ordered the dishes.

After a while, the dishes came. A pot, a very big pot, contained a lot of red pepper and white slices of fish meat. It looked beautiful and delicious. My friend told me that the fish was grass carp, a kind of fish which comes from a pond. My mind was fighting with itself. Eat or don't eat? I didn't like eating pond fish, but my mind wanted to try. It smelled delicious. My friend encouraged me and told me the taste was different. So I tried.

Wow. So delicious! I ate slice after slice. I could not stop eating. But when you eat this kind of food, you need to use a lot of tissue. My left hand was holding the tissue and my right hand was holding the chopsticks. When I ate a slice of fish meat, I had to blow my nose and wipe my tears and perspiration. My sense organ was stimulated by this food. I could not control myself.

This kind of food is called Chinese sauerkraut fish. In the pot, everything tasted spicy and hot. I could not eat food that was spicy at that time, but I forgot it. I did not like eating the fish from a pond, but I forgot it. I was very happy and excited. Since that time, I like spicy food. I have recommended this kind of food to my friends.

Wine with Chicken

Stephan Lew

When I was five to fifteen years old, I used to live with my grandmother. She was friendly and kind but she didn't like to smile. I don't know why, she usually woke up at 6:30 in the morning every day, after that she'd start making coffee and rice for me for breakfast. I liked this food very much. She used to make my favorite dish for me all the time, and I appreciated that.

One day she said she wanted to cook chicken with wine for me, but this had to take some time, like a couple months. I was surprised; I didn't know what kind of dish she wanted to cook for me. The next day grandmother and I went to the supermarket to find all the ingredients we needed. She bought a rum cake, red yeast rice, high grain white rice, spicy wine cake, and glutinous rice. When we got home she put all the items into a big jar. She told me to let the glutinous rice ferment for at least two months, so that it could become alcoholic. After that she had to filter it and put it in bottle.

Three months later, my grandmother wanted me to buy some black fungus, some ginger, and a chicken. "I'll cook the wine with chicken for dinner," she said. I was watching her in the kitchen; she looked very busy. I tried to help her, but she wouldn't let me help and I just stood there.

Finally the dish was done. She put the dish on the table. "Why does the dish look watery?" I said.

She told me, "This isn't water, only wine."

I was confused, so I started to try it. It tasted very good and delicious. I ate all the chicken and drank the wine. I asked her, "Grandmother, when you have time, please cook it again for me. I love it so much."

I was very thankful for my grandmother. She was the greatest and most perfect grandma. I wanted to say, "This is the best dish I've ever had."

Vacation Time at My Grandmother's Sister's Farm

Emma Martinez

My grandmother and her sister were very good cooks. I remember my grandmother's sister had a big farm, so during vacation time my grandmother always took us to spend a couple of weeks with her sister. When we went there we enjoyed eating farm food.

The males used to go hunting—sometimes rabbits, sometimes iguana or armadillos. Whatever they cooked was delicious, but my sister and I never saw what we were eating. My grandmother and her sister were always in the kitchen cooking.

But one day we were about to leave and my sister was very curious, so she went to the kitchen. She saw the dead iguana on the kitchen counter. She was so scared about it and she asked me “Do you know what we are eating?”

I said “No! Why?”

And she said “You've to go to the kitchen to see it!”

But I didn't go because I was afraid. I just stayed quiet and enjoyed eating. I told my sister whatever it is it's good.

On the farm we also enjoyed drinking milk directly from the cows. The cheese was awesome. I can say that I enjoyed eating good food at my grandmother's sister's farm. Sometimes they killed a whole pig or calf and cooked it on the open fire. There were also a lot of kinds of fruit and vegetables. She had a big orchard, a cocoa bean tree, and coffee beans. We also enjoyed going to the beach because her farm was near Managua Lake. They used to go fishing there.

My grandmother cannot cook anymore because she passed away a couple years ago. I miss her cooking. Some people in my family said that I inherited my grandmother's cooking skill. That makes me feel so proud, but I don't cook iguanas or armadillos. Sometimes I cook rabbit, but my kids don't like that.

Those were very good times eating my grandmother's and her sister's food.

The Cuisine of My Country

Diana Valenzuela

I was born in Colombia. That country has millions of delicious dishes to try, and Colombian food has many flavors.

For example, on the Caribbean Coast of Colombia, the people are experts at cooking seafood and at drinking water with panela and lemon. You can try tropical fruit cocktails there.

In Antioquia, Caldas, Quindio, and Risaralda, the most famous dish is the Bandeja Paisa. It is a homemade meal with rice, red beans, beef, pork, eggs, sweet plantain, and avocado. You can drink panela (derived from sugar) with ice water and lemon.

In the Santanderes the most famous dish is ant ass. The ants have a big ass and the people pull off the asses and then fry them and eat them. It has a good taste.

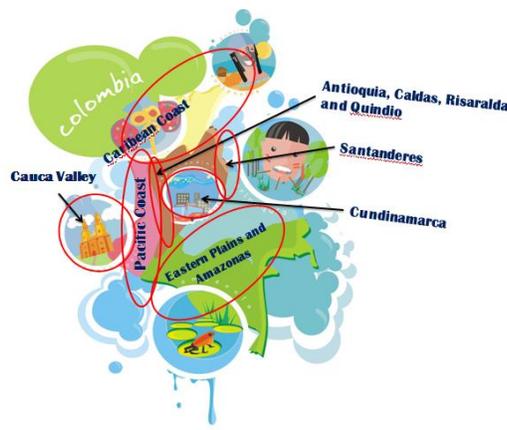
In the Eastern plains and Amazonas, people eat beef, snakes, monkeys, iguanas, and fish.

In Cundinamarca, the soups are famous, especially ajiaco, changua, and rib soup.

On the Pacific Coast, people cook fish, coconut rice, coconut candies, and egg arepas.

Finally, in the Cauca Valley, where I was born, typical dishes include sancocho, chicken stew, valluna chop (a lean cut of tenderloin pork, beef, or breaded chicken), and the cholado (popularly known as “cholao,” a fruit salad with a base of crushed ice, fruits, syrups of different flavors, and condensed milk). Among the fruits used are bananas, green apples, kiwis, strawberries, coconuts, papayas, and pineapples. Some people love borojo juice and eat chontaduro with lemon and salt.

So this concludes my account of the cuisine of my country.



Funny Exotic

Zoryana Gutsulyak

It was more than ten years ago that I rented an apartment in Kyiv, Ukraine together with one girl who lived before in India or Thailand. She liked Asian food. After a while she moved to another apartment.

There were a lot of exotic products in my apartment that she left behind. I found a nice box with a plant in it. I read the instructions very carefully and I followed them. I put this plant in a bowl with water for two days.

My brother came to visit from another city. He was a student and studied marketing in the East of Ukraine. After two days we took out this plant. It looked incredible! It was Laminaria. It was brownish green. This product is very good for health, but I didn't like it very much. The smell reminded me of fish.

My brother and I started joking. We covered ourselves with this plant like it was an umbrella. We had fun.

Finally we decided to finish our dish. Because it was so big we needed large portions of all ingredients. We made salad. There were eggs, potatoes, onions, sausage, and cucumbers. I don't remember all the ingredients, but I remember the whole big bowl with salad.

The next question was what to do with it? We invited a lot of friends and had a Laminaria party. It was an unforgettable day. I mentioned before my brother was a student, and all our guests were students too. Students are cheerful and carefree people. They brought a guitar. We sang, joked, and ate salad. It was the beginning of my friendship with these people in Kyiv.

Free Lunch

Yongsheng Zhang

One day fifteen years ago, my friends and I visited a new department store called Asia Department store in Zhenzhou City. It was the biggest department store in Henan province.

We first saw an elevator and we went into it. We were excited and took it up and down a few times. We just window shopped; we didn't want to buy anything. We looked all over the department store. We were tired and hungry; everyone wanted to eat a big lunch.

We went to the food court. There were restaurants; we didn't know which one was better. I saw one that was not crowded and it was cheap and clean. We went into it and sat at a table. A waiter gave us menus and we quickly ordered some good dishes.

The cooks cooked very fast. We just drank a half cup of tea, and the waiter served all the dishes. We ate eagerly because we were very hungry. One of us said, "The dishes were great! We should eat slowly and savor the taste. We also should drink some beer."

We ordered some beer. We were eating and chatting; we were very happy. Suddenly, one of us shouted, "My teeth!"

"What happened?" we asked him.

"I bit a stone! My teeth hurt!" he said.

We called the waiter and asked him what to do. He didn't know, so we asked to speak to his boss. He apologized with sincerity and gave my friend five yuan to buy some painkiller and asked us not to talk more about it, just pay the bill then go.

We were angry, we told him, "We will call 110!"

He was very scared. "Please don't call 110. What do you want?"

We didn't know what to do. One of us said, "Don't pay the bill for the lunch."

The boss said, "No problem, it's my treat."

We didn't pay for lunch and didn't take the five yuan either.

Ukrainian Kutia

Galyna Nyzhnyk

Ukraine has a special Christmas tradition. We have a vegetarian dinner in the evening before Christmas*. Ukrainians always cook twelve dishes. Our main dish is “kutia.” We cook it only twice a year.

I cook kutia this way. I boil wheat and cool it. Then I add frayed poppy seeds, honey, and nuts. Some people can add raisins and candied fruit. I mix the wheat with the other ingredients and add some warm water. Kutia should not be too thick.

It's delicious. We like it very much.

**Ukrainians have a vegetarian dinner on January 6 and celebrate Christmas on January 7-9.*

Fruits and Dishes

Natalia Briceno

When I came here to the United States, one of the things that surprised me was to see so many fruits and vegetables that I had never seen in my life. So many shapes, colors, and aromas. Yummy!

One that seemed to me spectacular in taste was the mango. Delicious!

Since then I have tried many fruits that come from all around the world and of course I've loved some more than others.

One day my family and some friends went to Astoria, Queens to eat Greek food. The menu was in their language, so I couldn't understand anything that was offered.

Thank God! One of our friends who was with us that day was from Greece, so he was commissioned to translate and recommend the best dishes of his country. I ordered a Greek salad and something like lamb stew. From that time I fell in love with Greek food.

All this time my taste buds have also been tasting different dishes from different countries such as Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Greece, Vietnam, Thailand, China, Japan, and India.

I feel very fortunate to be in this great metropolis and experience many things.

Char Siu Bao

Stacy Situ

Have you ever tried *char siu bao*? This is also known as roast pork bun. The first time I ate *char siu bao* was when I was five years old. My mom took me to a dim sum restaurant when I was still living in China.

When I walked into the restaurant, there were waitresses wearing *qi pao* pushing carts around with dim sum in them. My mom and dad told me to look in the cart every time the waitresses came around. I would get excited every time because there was so much dim sum to choose from! There were chicken feet, dumplings, *shu mai*, custard buns, sticky rice, *soboro* buns and of course *char siu bao*!

I chose the *char siu bao* because I loved buns and roast pork. When I first bit into it, the roast pork was layered in a sweet and salty red sauce. Ever since then it has become my favorite bun. If you have never tried *char siu bao*, I recommend you try it!