

Culinary Arts; The dry, the soggy and the juicy.

Monday – Friday, 10am-12pm.

Week: TBD

Grades: 7-12

In this ONLINE version of culinary arts, we will watch carefully curated videos on topics that build knowledge of both the basics of culinary arts, and also regional and ethnic variations of traditional dishes.

We use Rouxbe online cooking school which can be dry, but answers all of your “why”s in thoughtful detail. We then watch a related episode of either The French Chef (Julia Child), Good Eats (Alton Brown), Cooked (Michael Pollan) or other videos that might best showcase a cooking method as it applies around the world.

Students are encouraged to make these dishes or use these cooking methods at home and post photos, but are never required. Anyone who does, is able to explain their process, their trials and tribulation, and most importantly to celebrate their success with the group.

Food & Identity

Monday – Friday, 10am-12pm.

June 8 - 19

Grades: 9-12

In this course, students will read 1-2 selected essays per night and be prepared to respond to prompts and to discuss themes woven throughout. Each week, there will be a short, personal, writing assignment to complete and turn in by Sunday night.

June 8 – June 12 Food & Ethnicity, Race and National Identity

Written Assignment

Where is your family from? What is your own food narrative? Do you eat a dish or meal that makes you feel connected to your family, your people or your heritage?

Reading for the Week (selection to be assigned)

Mintz, Sidney, “Eating American”

Gabaccia, Donna, “What Do We Eat?”

Wilk, Richard, “Real Belizean Food”

Bentley, Amy, “Islands of Serenity: Gender, Race, and Ordered Meals

During World War II” (Poe, Tracey, “The Origins of Soul Food in Black Urban Identity: Chicago, 1915-1947”

Williams-Forsom, Psyche, “More than Just the ‘Big Piece of Chicken’”

IMMIGRANT LUNCH STORIES (podcast or gastronomica article)

Frank, Louis Ellen , Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations

Pilcher, Jeffrey “Global History of Mexican Food”

June 15-19th Food Memory & Nostalgia

Written Assignment:

Describe a food memory that meant a lot to you. That moment you were sitting in your grandmother's kitchen and she finally let you put the tortilla on the comal. The bland meal you were eating when your guardians told you that the whole family was moving somewhere new, or the dish you make to remember someone who died.

Example 1:

The first time I had pozole, I was working really really hard. I had a two day event leading up to a massive one that would be the culmination of months of preparation for myself and the students with whom I was serving. This two day event was a practice in which we were able to assess how the students were coming along and get a sense of what the final product would look like. It always went hours late into the night, it was always terrible, everything always looked awful, and I would inevitably think “when the chefs see this crap, I will be fired.” And then I would have to wake up at 5:00 the next morning and do it again. Round 2. It was like getting hit with a steam roller.

My assistant for the season had been through this process a ton of times. She was a former student competitor so she knew what the experience looked like from both sides. She knew how awful I would feel before I did. She also made amazing Mexican food at home in Queens with her mother. I mean, salsas and ponches and stuff that could blow your mind. She knew I studied Mexican food whenever I had vacation time and we talked about books and traditions often.

Day one of the horrible event, she brought me pozole. I did my best to show gratitude and to make it look like I had some idea what the hell pozole was. Oh yes, pozole. Love pozole. Thanks. Now let's focus on this day that might be difficult.

That night, I dragged my steamrolled ass home with no idea of what had happened to me, no idea how I could possibly get up and do it again tomorrow. How I would keep this job. How I would ever have a job of any kind ever again. My husband at the time was away so it was just me in the apartment. I unwrapped my packet and paused to appreciate the care with which they took putting it together. One container for the stew. White pozole with thick broth, huge hominy corn kernels and pork floating in it. Then another container for the oregano and chile spice blend, a lime wedge, a tostada, chopped onion, radish and cilantro, salt and even a spoon. I did not have to think at all. Everything was individually wrapped, folded and re-wrapped. I

heated up the soup, added the fixin's, used the lovingly provided spoon, and tasted it while standing unceremoniously over my sink.

A tear fell down my face. I am not joking. In one bite, my assistant and her mother reached through the night and embraced me. They gave me a nap and hope. It was a hug for the soul. I could make it through another one. I might not survive to the end, but I would make it through tomorrow. Strength and courage and love.

Reading for the Week:

Fischer, MFK "Define this Word"

Sutton, David, "Cooking Skills, the Senses and Memory"

Siskind, Janet, "The Invention of Thanksgiving: A Ritual of American Nationality"

Berzok, Linda Murray, "My Mother's Recipes: The Diary of a Swedish American Daughter and Mother"