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- National Beers

Food Culture: National Cuisine

Overview

The food of Brazil includes a mixture of European, African, Middle Eastern, and indigenous foods and cooking styles. There are strong regional differences in Brazilian cuisine. In the northern part of the country, people tend to eat native foods like river fish and manioc, while African and Portuguese influences are stronger in the northeast.

Dried shrimp, manioc, and tropical fruit are commonly eaten throughout northern Brazil. In the central part of the country, both meat and fish are widely consumed and cultivated crops like rice and corn serve as an important part of the local diet. In southeastern Brazil, European, especially Italian, influences prevail, alongside Middle

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Food Culture: Regional Cuisine

Overview

Brazil, the world's fifth largest country in terms of both area and population, is a melting pot of geographical and cultural influences, giving it cuisine a wide range of tastes, ingredients, and cooking styles. The melting pot is an especially apt metaphor for Brazilian cuisine, especially considering that the national dish of Brazil is in fact a stew: the feijoada is made with black beans, meat, and a mix of regional vegetables.

Culinary Influences

Following the metaphor of the melting pot, indigenous, Portuguese, and African culinary influences are the foundation of this stew, along with prominent flavors from other European, Middle Eastern, and Asian cultures. Historically, the diets of indigenous Brazilians consisted of yuca and yam as staples, complemented by

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Food Culture: Daily Meals

New Zealanders typically eat three meals per day.

Breakfast

Breakfast is usually a light meal of bread or cereal, accompanied by a cup of coffee, tea, juice, or milk. Popular spreads for bread include butter, Nutella, and the yeast paste Marmite. Breakfast is usually eaten between 8am and 9am.

Lunch

Lunch is generally a smaller meal eaten around noon. It is uncommon for workers or schoolchildren to return home during the middle of the day, so lunch is eaten at cafeterias, restaurants, or cafes. Sandwiches and hot savory pies are typical lunch fare.

Dinner

Dinner (sometimes called "tea" though tea may not actually be consumed) is the main family meal of the day. It is usually eaten between 5pm and 8pm. Traditional New Zealand dinner foods include meat or fish with potatoes and a side of vegetables though the national palate has widened considerably since the 1970s with an influx of immigrants from the Mediterranean and Southeast Asia introducing new cuisines to the island nation. Interest in traditional Maori foods and in ethnic cuisines more generally has also grown. Modern New Zealand cuisine combines flavors and ingredients from around the world with indigenous foods and British traditions.

Carly K. Ottenbitt
World Trade Press

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Food Culture: Dining Etiquette

Table Etiquette

Moroccans typically eat at low tables while seated on cushions on the floor. Before the meal, they wash their hands, either with specially warmed damp towels or, more commonly, with water that has been specially scented with rose petals or orange leaves. While eating with the hands is an accepted tradition, Moroccans may also use utensils such as knives, forks, and spoons. If eating with the hands, only the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand are used to avoid the appearance of gluttony.

Bread is used to sop up sauces from the plate, but licking one's fingers is not socially acceptable before the end of the meal. In the meantime, hands are wiped on napkins. The left hand is only used to pass dishes around the table. Bread is passed to everyone at the table, but inside the room.

Before eating, Moroccans wash their hands.

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Food Culture: Special Occasion Foods

There are some fifty festivals, give or take, celebrated in Nepal each year, plus innumerable smaller events commemorating a lost loved one, celebrating a marriage or birth of a child, or marking the changing of the seasons.

Navavarsha

Navavarsha, the start of the new year on the Nepalese calendar (usually around the first week of April), is both a religious and a national holiday. The day is often the occasion for a large feast, usually with a main dish that contains meat, the most popular being gorkol, an intensely flavored lamb dish seasoned with curry. The lamb, usually lamb chops, is typically grilled, then slow-cooked with potatoes, onions, and a spicy chili mixture. Sel roti (a rice flour doughnut) is eaten throughout the year, but especially at festive meals. Deep-fried, it has a crispy and sweet exterior and a puffy, soft interior.

A platter of samayashu to celebrate a New Year festival!

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Food Culture: Did You Know?

Spicy Aji

Many Peruvian dishes are very spicy, using hot aji peppers for seasoning. There are two main kinds of aji peppers: yellow-orange ají amarillo, which has a fruit-like smell, and red ají panca, which has a sweet, smoky flavor. In addition to flavoring dishes, aji peppers also lend visual interest to preparations with their bright colors.

Anticuchos

One of the most popular street foods in Peru, anticuchos (spish kabobs of stew meat) are sold from carts and anticucherías, eateries that specialize in the dish. A preparation of spiced, grilled meat, frequently served on a skewer that is topped with a boiled potato, anticuchos date to at least the 16th century, when Spanish explorers added spices like garlic to the mix. The dish is likely much older than that, as a remnant of the Inca Empire. One of the most popular types, anticuchos de cordero, is made with beef hearts.

Picarones

Traditionally prepared alongside anticuchos, picarones are deep-fried pumpkin-flavored pastries with a doughnut shape. Made from squash and sweet potatoes, these pastries are a relatively new twist on a colonial-period dessert, with Peruvian ingredients replacing expensive imported ones to create a popular and unique dessert, served with chocococo syrup made from solidified molasses.

Chifa

The various cuisines eaten in Peru reflect its history, with traditional preparations coming from both Inca and Spanish roots. More recently, the increasing percentage of Peruvians with Chinese ancestry, especially in coastal areas, has led to the creation of chifa—a popular Peruvian-Chinese fusion cuisine that is frequently seen on the menus of new restaurants and eateries.

Carina Savon
World Trade Press

Daily Meals
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Recipes: Main Courses

Ramen

Authentic Japanese ramen noodles were adopted from China. Legend has it that Vice-Shogun Mito (1628–1700) learned to appreciate ramen when he trained with a Chinese scholar. Back then, samurais were schooled in Confucianism to sharpen their discipline. Authentic ramen is very different from today's processed instant ramen. Ramen is typically served in a rich broth that enhances the noodles, along with toppings such as hard-boiled egg, cooked vegetables, and ham or barbecued pork.

Recipe Servings: Serves 4

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
15 minutes	40 minutes	55 minutes

- Vegetarian
- Dairy Free
- Vegan
- Kosher
- Gluten Free
- Halal

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Ingredients

- 1 lb (960 g) fresh or 1/2 lb (480 gm) [ramen noodles](#)
- 4 cups (720 ml) water
- 2 tsp (10 ml) sea [salt](#)
- 1 tsp (5 ml) [dashi](#) (powdered bonito fish flakes)
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) sliced shitake [mushroom](#)
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) chopped green [onions](#)
- 1/2 cup (120 ml) coarsely chopped [bamboo shoots](#) (or [water chestnuts](#))
- 1 cup (240 ml) cleaned [spinach](#)
- 1 cup (240 ml) fresh bean sprouts
- 2 hard-boiled [eggs](#)
- 1/2 cup (120 g) ham, diced

Directions

- 1 To make the mushroom broth, bring 3 cups (720 ml) water, salt, and [dashi](#) to a boil.
- 2 Add mushroom. Lower heat to medium-low and simmer for 20 minutes.
- 3 Add green onions, bamboo shoots, and spinach. Simmer for 10 more minutes.
- 4 Cook ramen according to package instructions (about 5 minutes in boiling water). Be sure noodles remain al dente for a nice chew. Keep warm.
- 5 Quarter hard-boiled eggs, slice barbecued pork (or ham or cooked chicken).



Beverages by Country

Russia

Beverages: Tea Culture

History

In many people's minds, vodka is the drink most often associated with Russia, but hot tea is actually considered by most to be the country's national beverage. It was first introduced to Russia by the Mongolians in the mid-1600s, most likely as a gift to Tsar Michael I of the Romanov dynasty. Because of difficult caravan trade routes from China, tea was originally an extremely expensive luxury. In the late 1700s, the court of Catherine the Great established regular tea imports from China and by the time of her death in 1796, Russia was importing over 3 million pounds of tea by camel caravan. This dramatically reduced the price, and the hot drink soon became a staple among even the poorest Russian families. In 1880, the first leg of the Trans-Siberian Railway opened, dealing a significant blow to the Chinese caravans as the time it took to ship tea was cut from several months to about a week.

Cultivation

Russia relies on imports for most of its tea, but there are a few local producers like Krasnodarsky Tea, the most common Russian-grown brand, that operate tea plantations near the city of Sochi. Tea plantations were first established in Russia in the early 1800s, and true industrial plantations were created in the 1880s. There are few places in Russia where the weather conditions allow for mass tea production. The area around Sochi, however, has a humid subtropical climate with moderate temperatures and substantial rainfall well suited for the cultivation of tea. These fields are some of the northernmost tea plantations in the world.

Popular Varieties

Although Russians tend to enjoy all types of tea, strong black teas are most often served at tea gatherings. In a nod to the history of tea in Russia, another popular

Krasnodar tea plantations in Sochi

Spring tea party with a Russian samovar

Angola

Beverages: National Beers

The African country of Angola has a rather unique history with beer. In the 1980s, despite having the continent's third-largest economy and being one of the largest oil producers, Angola was suffering significant economic turmoil for ongoing wars. Angola's currency was near valueless, so many Angolans used beer as a type of currency. In fact, government workers could buy foreign beers and sell them on the black market, making enough money even to buy a plane ticket out of Africa.

One of the biggest beer producers in the country is the brewery Cuca, which was founded in the mid-1900s. In the 1970s the government took over the privately-owned brand and nationalized it, and it was around this same time that Cuca beer became illegal in neighboring Namibia. Yet, sales of Cuca in Namibia remained steady, and bars in Namibia became known as "Cuca shops." It is even rumored that competing parties vying for governmental power in Namibia have used Cuca as a bribe to earn public sentiment.

Nova Cuca

Style: Pale lager

Alcohol Content (Alcohol by Volume): 4.5 percent ABV

Description: Nova Cuca pours blonde and light, and has a very small, quickly-disappearing white head. The scent is grainy, but very difficult to detect. The taste is just lightly skunky, with some sweet maltiness. The aftertaste is grainy. The mouthfeel is soft and thin, with a tiny amount of carbonation.

Brewer: Pela Cuca
Luanda
Angola

Nova Cuca

Cuba

Beverages: National Liqueur(s)

Rum

Rum—a distilled liquor made from sugarcane juice or sugarcane by-products—has its roots in either ancient India or China, where fermented drinks were made from sugarcane juice. Rum as we know it today dates to the 17th-century Caribbean and has a rather infamous history, being a key driver of the "slave triangle": the sugarcane grown in the Caribbean would be shipped to the Americas to make rum, the proceeds from the sale of that rum would be used to purchase slaves in Africa, and those African slaves would then be shipped to the Caribbean to work on plantations producing sugarcane for rum. Almost immediately, rum became a popular liquor for divergent groups of people, from pirates to seamen and from wealthy Europeans to America's first colonists. Though rum is the national liquor of many Caribbean and South American countries, Cuba is probably its best-known producer. It was only recently, however, that Cuban rum became widely available internationally, as embargoes placed upon Cuba have only begun to be lifted.

Alcohol Content (Alcohol by Volume)

Although some rums have a higher ABV than others, they generally average around 40 ABV, no matter the country of origin.

Color

Rum is generally categorized according to its color: light, dark, and even black. Light rum is clear and sometimes referred to as white rum. Dark rum gets its color from the barrel aging process and may be anywhere from a light gold to deep, dark amber.

How It's Made

Producing sugar from sugarcane creates molasses as a by-product of the processing procedure. The resulting molasses is fermented and then distilled, creating rum. Despite its sugary conception, not all rum is sweet. The basic process of making rum involves adding water and yeast to molasses before fermenting and distilling. Variations include using fresh sugarcane juice, as is the process in some other Caribbean countries. The color and flavor change according to any additives used and how long the rum is left to age in barrels. The longer the time in the barrel, the darker the color of the rum.

How It's Enjoyed

Rum can be sipped neat or on the rocks. It is also used as the spirit base for classic cocktails that originate from Cuba including the mojito, the palta colada, and the daiquiri. It has also found its way into the Dark 'n Stormy and the mai tai, classic rum-based drinks from outside of Cuba. Rum and Coke, which may be the simplest preparation, is also known as the Cuba Libre.

Havana Club Rum

A sugarcane plantation in rural Cuba

The classic Cuba Libre

Italy

Beverages: Mixed Drinks

Americano

Created in 19th century Milan, the Americano is a bitter and light cocktail that was originally named the Milano-Torino, as its ingredients Campari and Punt e Mes hail from Milan and Turin, respectively. According to popular belief, the drink was renamed "Americano" a few years later as a salute to the masses of Americans who enjoyed the drink. The cocktail is a popular choice for the Italian aperitivo (Italy's version of happy hour), and legend says that once one tries an Americano, it will be low at first sip.

Ingredients

- 1 oz Campari
- 1 oz Punt e Mes
- 1 oz soda water
- ½ orange slice or orange curd

Directions

Place ice in a lowball glass and pour in Campari and Punt e Mes. Top with soda water and gently stir. Garnish simply with a half slice of orange or, for a more sophisticated look, an orange curd.

Aperol Spritz

The word "spritz" (meaning "splash" in German) is linked to the 19th-century Austro-Hungarian practice of adding water to wine. According to legend, the bold wines of Northern Italy were too strong for the refined Habsburg palate, so water acted as a diluent. Nowadays, "spritz" refers to any wine-based cocktail with bitters and soda—but perhaps none is more popular or well-known than the Aperol spritz, featuring prosecco and the Italian aperitif Aperol.

The iconic cocktail first appeared on the Italian aperitivo scene in the 1950s. Aperol, created in Padua in 1935, contained a lowly 11 percent alcohol by volume—unheard of for an aperitif of the time. Despite the low alcohol content, Italians enjoyed Aperol's bitter-sweet taste, made from a secret recipe of bitters, fruits, and herbs. It wasn't until the distinctive orange beverage was combined with prosecco, however, that its popularity skyrocketed.

The Aperol spritz now ranks as one of Italy's most popular cocktails, with a reported 300,000 consumed daily in the Veneto region alone. Perfect for summertime, enjoy this bitter and bubbly cocktail Italian-style: leisurely, while

Americano

Aperol Spritz

National Liqueur(s)

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Ingredients

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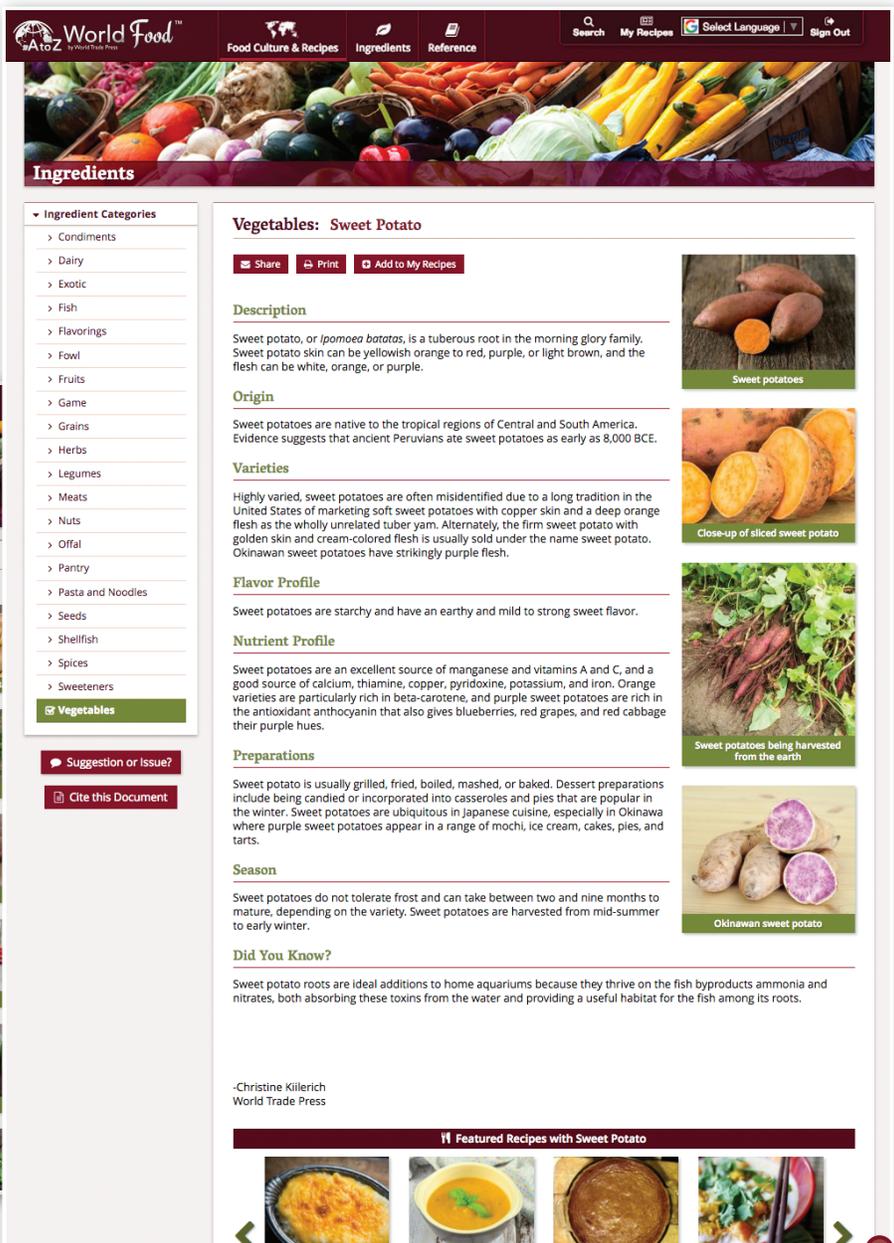
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Ingredients

Vegetables: Sweet Potato

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Description

Sweet potato, or *Ipomoea batatas*, is a tuberous root in the morning glory family. Sweet potato skin can be yellowish orange to red, purple, or light brown, and the flesh can be white, orange, or purple.

Origin

Sweet potatoes are native to the tropical regions of Central and South America. Evidence suggests that ancient Peruvians ate sweet potatoes as early as 8,000 BCE.

Varieties

Highly varied, sweet potatoes are often misidentified due to a long tradition in the United States of marketing soft sweet potatoes with copper skin and a deep orange flesh as the wholly unrelated tuber yam. Alternately, the firm sweet potato with golden skin and cream-colored flesh is usually sold under the name sweet potato. Okinawan sweet potatoes have strikingly purple flesh.

Flavor Profile

Sweet potatoes are starchy and have an earthy and mild to strong sweet flavor.

Nutrient Profile

Sweet potatoes are an excellent source of manganese and vitamins A and C, and a good source of calcium, thiamine, copper, pyridoxine, potassium, and iron. Orange varieties are particularly rich in beta-carotene, and purple sweet potatoes are rich in the antioxidant anthocyanin that also gives blueberries, red grapes, and red cabbage their purple hues.

Preparations

Sweet potato is usually grilled, fried, boiled, mashed, or baked. Dessert preparations include being candied or incorporated into casseroles and pies that are popular in the winter. Sweet potatoes are ubiquitous in Japanese cuisine, especially in Okinawa where purple sweet potatoes appear in a range of mochi, ice cream, cakes, pies, and tarts.

Season

Sweet potatoes do not tolerate frost and can take between two and nine months to mature, depending on the variety. Sweet potatoes are harvested from mid-summer to early winter.

Did You Know?

Sweet potato roots are ideal additions to home aquariums because they thrive on the fish byproducts ammonia and nitrates, both absorbing these toxins from the water and providing a useful habitat for the fish among its roots.

-Christine Killelich
World Trade Press

Featured Recipes with Sweet Potato





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Sauces: Velouté

Velouté

Velouté is a smooth and versatile white sauce. Similar to béchamel, velouté is also thickened with roux, but uses a meat stock rather than milk as its base. It has a light color because the ingredients put in the stock are not root-based. The name derives from the French adjective *velour*, meaning "velvet," in reference to the sauce's smooth, silky texture.

Velouté is one of the five original "mother" sauces of French cuisine, as defined by influential French chef Auguste Escoffier in the 20th century. Recipes for the simple, versatile sauce, however, have been around for centuries, with the first printed velouté recipe appearing in the landmark 1651 cookbook *Le Cuisinier François* by French chef to the royal court, François Pierre de La Varenne.

The mild white sauce pairs well with light ingredients and is most often used in soups and with fish, seafood, poultry, or vegetable dishes. It is generally not served on its own, but as a foundation for other "daughter" or secondary sauces.

Recipe Servings: Makes 4 cups

Prep Time 5 minutes	Cook Time 25-30 minutes	Total Time 30-35 minutes
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Vegetarian Dairy Free Vegan Gluten Free Paleo

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Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) butter

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Term	Definition	Image
ABV	Acronym for "alcohol by volume," a measure expressed as a percentage of the amount of ethyl alcohol contained in wine.	
acidity	A flavor component perceived on the palate as sharpness. Important to the longevity of a wine.	
Albariño	A Spanish white wine grape used to make white wines that are refreshing, crisp, and generally light-bodied.	
alcohol	In wine, the substance which is the result of grape fermentation, in which grape sugar is converted by yeast. It is usually 12.5 percent or higher of total volume.	

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Historical Timelines: Bread

Prehistory

Date	Event
c. 23,000 BCE	Prehistoric humans in the Fertile Crescent make proto bread dough by pounding wild plants with stones into a mash and adding water. The thick gruel is then heated on hot stones. Humans cannot digest raw grains unless they are further processed by sprouting, fermenting, roasting, baking, or boiling, and Paleolithic tools help render some wild grains edible, providing an important source of nutrition.
9600-8800 BCE	Humans begin domesticating and harvesting the first cereal crops in the Fertile Crescent, including emmer wheat, which drives the shift from nomadic hunter-gathering lifestyles to settled agriculture.
c. 6500 BCE	Cultivation of wheat and other grains begins spreading from the Near East west to Greece and Cyprus, and east to India.

Ancient History

Date	Event
c. 3500 BCE	Maize cultivation spreads from Mexico throughout Central America. Combined becomes an important part of the Mesoamerican diet.
c. 3000-1200 BCE	During the Bronze Age, spelt, a hearty species of wheat with a high fiber and mineral content, becomes a staple in the European diet.
c. 2500-1800 BCE	Bread and beer made from emmer wheat form the basis of the Egyptian diet. Open-topped, side-loading clay ovens are invented in Egypt and become the standard technology for baking bread.
c. 700-100 BCE	During the heights of the ancient Greek civilization, bread becomes the staple food. Meals consist of maza, a cheap and filling fat-based, and opson, meat or vegetable accompaniments which are served directly on top of the maza in a kind of proto-pizza. Greek philosophers mention at least 70 different bread recipes, indicating a vibrant baking tradition. The Greeks also invent the first preheatable dome-shaped oven. One of the twelve Olympians in the Greek pantheon is Demeter, the goddess of bread, the harvest, and fertility.
168 BCE	With the establishment of the Collegium Pistorum, the first baker's guild, pastry baker becomes an officially recognized and esteemed occupation in the Roman Empire. Bakers are the only

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Quotes: Happiness

Teaching kids how to feed themselves and how to live in a community responsibly is the center of an education.
— Alice Waters

Hunger of the heart is much stranger than hunger for food.
— Amanda Comer

To me, life without veal stock, pork fat, sausage, organ meat, demi-glace, or even stinky cheese is a life not worth living.
— Anthony Bourdain

Early moralists who believed that taking too much pleasure at the table led inexorably to bad character—or worse, to sex—were (in the best-case scenario, anyway) absolutely right.
— Auguste Escoffier

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