Brian Tonnessen 11/9/14

World Cuisines 3 points and 3 questions

World Cuisines have shown the representation of diversity around the world. My favorite dish or cuisine is Chinese dishes because I’ve been growing up eating different kinds of Chinese foods all my life. I love the different textures and smells of the cuisines. My favorite dish is the Rice Cakes because they have a salt but delicious taste to it. This isn’t a significant dish, but a lot of people do like this with most of their soups. Indian, Chinese and Italian Cuisines have changed and have that one special dish that is used for traditions. I will be informing you on the history of the different cuisines, the special dish used for the tradition and the ingredients/ how to make that dish.

The history of Indian Cuisine has changed a lot over the years. The snacks and food at India are not only tasty, but they are also low in fat. Most of their dishes are based on a number of spices and herbs, such as ginger, cinnamon, garlic, cloves, asafetida, aniseed or coriander, rather than then the fattening foods you find mostly everywhere else in the world. The history of Indian food is that most are made out of mashed potatoes, coriander and onions. An appetizer that has been around since the Raj period was the Samosa which the British people really enjoyed. Also a main part in Indian dishes are that they are all spicy because of the tradition that all foods mainly have to be either spicy and that’s where they get their curry from or they make their food sweet. For example, if you go to Punjab in the North of India they will supply yogurt with their dishes because of how spicy their dishes are. Depending on where you are in India there will be a variety of dishes with different textures and flavors. When the British came to India, their cooks were dazzled by the sheer number of variations of the same dishes. So this legend of British chef William Harold stepped in and was quite successful. Because there was a lot of small dishes and the same dishes that Harold worked in India and went from door to door to find the recipe for the Bhel Puri, which is a great appetizer still today. After finally acquiring the recipe he expanded on that and tried new spices with different foods. Today, we have created and learned many different Indian Food recipes to make and taste. There is a difference between the food and the desert. The Rasgulla for example is a most popular sweetmeat in India which originated from the eastern part of the country.

The Payasam is an essential and tasty is part of many traditions such as ceremonies, feasts and celebrations. These are used for traditions to tell that a wedding is not fully blessed if Payasam is not served at the wedding feast. The best and most popular Payasum dishes are found in the temples of Guruvayoor and Ambalappuzha. In the Ambalappuzha temple, Payasum is served as a tradition, based on an ancient legend. The legend states that Lord Krishna took the form of an old sage and challenged the great kind who ruled over that region to a game of chess. Being a true chess player and a master, the king gladly accepted. If the sage won then he would get a lot of rice from the king. The king was shocked. He soon realized that the sage’s demand was not entirely what he thought of, when the number reached one million grains of rice by the 20th square. By the 40th or so square, the entire kingdom’s rice reserve was depleted and when he got to the last square he calculated that he would have to pay the sage 18,447,744 trillions of tons of rice, which he could have never paid off. The sage then revealed his true form, that of Lord Krishna, and said that the debt does not have to be paid immediately, but the king will have to serve Payasam freely in the temple of Ambalappuzha, to pilgrims, homeless or whoever comes there for peace of mind and prayer or for those seeking shelter. This is how the Payasam became famous, integrating in the Hindu culture. The tradition of freely serving Payasam in Ambalappuzha still lives today and pilgrims all over India have an easier ride knowing that a hot bowl of the sweet dessert awaits them at the end of their journey.

Payasam has many different ingredients. A main ingredient that is hard to find is something called Ghee which is clarified butter. It is hard to find because it’s an Indian ingredient, so you could probably find it in an Indian store. You will also need the simple ingredients such as 1 cup of angel hair pasta, 4 cups of whole milk, 2 cups of water, ¾ cup of sugar, ½ cup of golden raisins, ½ cup of broken raw cashews and ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom. You could find those at your local supermarket. Ghee is a main ingredient because it gives the food its flavor and texture. Everyone should try to make Payasam and taste the different cuisines of India.

The history of Italian Cuisine/ food is one of the most popular ethnic foods in America. Authentic Italian food that’s imported from Italy accounts for only about one- third of Italian food purchased in the United States. Authentic Italian food products are available at specialty food stores in the United States. People say that Italian food started in the late nineteenth century as Italian immigrants began to make their homes in America. The waves of immigrants from Italy continued passing through Ellis Island. The culture of Italy established more than 2,000 years ago, which started during the Roman Empire. The spread of Italian food diversity began after the fall of the Roman Empire when individual city states began to uphold separate traditions and more. Each religion began to display their own unique ways of cooking. There we so many different types of breads, pastas, and food preparation techniques. One difference between the north and the south was the north prefers and used soft egg noodles while the south embraced and used hard-boiled spaghetti. Pizza and pasta may be the most foods that people know about Italian Cuisine, but the country’s culinary history is much more open and diverse, and is reflected in the great variety of its regional cuisines. Some dishes and ingredients have their roots in Italy’s ancient Etruscan and Roman civilizations, while others were bought from merchants and other people. But, as northern cities like Florence, Siena, Milan and Venice grew in power and influence, the rich and comfortable enjoyed sumptuous banquets with dishes flavored with garlic, honey, nuts and exotic imported spices. Contrary to legend, noodles were not introduced to Italy by Marco Polo, although he is thought to have brought rice to the region, now celebrated in Italy's famed risotto dish. Pasta, some food historians believe, was introduced in the south by the Arabs in the eighth century. Over the years, Italian cuisine has greatly evolved in part because of a wealth of outside influences that have added to its characteristic flavor and appeal. Still today, the differences in Italian cooking still show through in the distinctions between the north and the south. Each region carries their own traditions in cooking that reflects on their history and culture with a never ending supply of main courses, appetizers and desserts.

One of the earliest dishes attributed to an Italian dish and is popular still today is Chicken Tetrazzini. It was created in the early 1900s in honor of Luisa Tetrazzini who is the operatic soprano or also known as The Florentine Nightingale. Soldiers returning from Italy after World War II brought with them their desire for the foods they had developed a craving and introduced the families of the soldiers to spaghetti and meatballs and the best Chicken Tetrazzini. A few historians claim that master French chef George Auguste Escoffier invented Chicken Tetrazzini. In 1908 readers from a magazine called the Good Housekeeping published a word about the chicken tetrazzini saying that “the dish of cooked turkey in a cream sauce, with spaghetti, grated cheese, sliced mushrooms and bread crumbs on top is one of the best dishes in Italian Restaurants”. Chicken Tetrazzini is used in many ceremonies and many Italian holidays. It is a big part of the tradition because it is a famous dish in Italy. If you haven’t tried it yet you definitely should.

To make this delicious and most used in Italian tradition is very easy to make. The main ingredient in this dish is spaghetti. Most dishes in Italian dishes use spaghetti and or various types of pasta. For this dish you need 1 package of Spaghetti, ¼ cup of butter, ¼ cup of all purpose flour, ¾ teaspoon of salt, ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper, 1 cup chicken broth, 1 cup of heavy cream, 2 tablespoons of sherry, 1 can of sliced mushrooms, 2 cups of chopped cooked chicken and ½ cup of grated Parmesan cheese. Spaghetti is of course a requirement for this dish especially because most of this dish is the texture and flavor on the spaghetti. This is a great and simple dish.

The history of Chinese cuisine is marked by both variety and change. A main ingredient used in all dishes is soy sauce. Soy sauce makes the foods have more flavors and more of a salty taste to it. The expansion of Han culture from the upland stretches of the Yellow River across a huge and expanding geographical area with climate zones ranging from the tropical to the subarctic, each providing new ingredients and new cooking traditions. Chinese cuisines have evolved gradually over the centuries as new food sources and techniques were introduced, discovered and invented. The first chop sticks were used for cooking, stirring the fire and serving bits of foods. This took a role during the Han Dynasty. Over the years people started to use it as utensils to eat anything. During the Ming Dynasty they found new plants such as corn, peanuts and tobacco. China has made a huge and great contributions starting from the Ming Dynasty to now/ currently. Also, Chinese imperial food dates back to the slave society. Ever since there were emperors and palaces. Yi Yin had been a famous cook before he became prime minister. He was a slave back then. He wanted to convince the king of his good ideas, but he lacked in a way. So he tried to bring his kitchen utensils with him and won the masters trust by demonstrating his cooking skills. The master Tang described him as cooking delicious dishes and having the ability to govern the country, so he appointed Yi Yin as his prime minister. Unlike many cultures the Chinese believe that the preparation of food is an art and not simply a craft. The art of cooking Chinese food can include dishes and many different kinds of food preparation which are difficult in Chinese culture to develop and many require the expertise of a chef with a lot of experience. One technique used back then was noodle pulling. Noodle pulling requires skills and lots of practice and results in a delicious noodle dish. Confucianism and Taoism are famous and influenced the Chinese in many ways. They both influenced the way that people cook and the way that they should enjoy their food. Confucius was the man behind the Confucianism beliefs. This was established for proper table etiquettes and for the appearance and taste of Chinese food. Taoism beliefs focus on the health benefits of particular foods vs the presentation of the same. Taoists search for foods that will increase their health and longevity. They also search for foods that have healing power. Chinese food, when its authentic is the healthiest. Most restaurants that you eat at use saturated fats or meats that contain unhealthy amounts of animal fat. These Chinese restaurants are unhealthy and nor healthy. Chinese food is mainly cooked in Poly-unsaturated oils. Authentic Chinese food doesn’t require the use of milk-fat ingredients such as cream and butter. Chinese food is supposed to be authentic or it will not be as good as a flavor or texture.

A famous fish used in Chinese tradition is Chow Mein. People would eat this during Chinese New Year and takes a huge part in Chinese culture. The dish is popular throughout the Chinese diaspora where it will appear on the menu of Chinese restaurants. In Chinese cuisine the Chow Mein consists of noodles, meat, onions and celery. It is often served as a specific dish at westernized Chinese restaurants. There are two types of Chow Mein which are steamed Chow Mein and Crispy Chow Mein, also known as Hong Kong style chow Mein. The steamed Chow Mein has a softer texture, while the latter is crispier and drier. Chow Mein is mentioned as early as the 1920s. You should go out and try authentic Chinese food.

The main ingredient for Chow Mein is the noodles. This is a very easy and traditional dish. You need 3 ounces dried chuka soba noodles or Chinese egg noodles, ¼ cup, plus 2 tablespoons peanut oil, kosher salt, ½ chicken brother, 3 tablespoons oyster sauce, 1 tablespoon of dark soy sauce, 2 teaspoons cornstarch, 1 teaspoon of sugar, 1 boneless, skinless chicken breast, 1 teaspoon dark Asian sesame oil, 1 tablespoon minced peeled fresh ginger, 3 cloves of garlic, 1 scallion, fresh ground black pepper, ½ medium yellow onion, 1 stalk of celery, 10 dried shitake mushrooms, and 1/3 cup of thinly sliced canned water chestnuts. For this dish you do need a lot of ingredients and can find most of these only at a Chinese restaurant because they are mostly all Chinese related ingredients.

In conclusion, I believe that Chinese food is the best cuisine and food that you could try. Well, that’s my opinion, but it’s because I’ve grown up eating Chinese food. I eat this every day and is very tasty with the different kinds of dishes that I could try to make. I hope you learned a lot about the Indian, Italian and Chinese Cuisines and hope you go out and try them all.