F00D THROU GH THE AGES: THE GLOBAL EPICURUS

DESCRIPTION:
Since the beginning of time, food has been associated with sustenance but also with pleasure. This course will focus on how food has bounded families, nations, and ethnic minorities together, and has, in many ways, reflected the accomplishments and tensions of a given historical period. The course will survey the history of food beginning with the first cooked dishes of right and magic, and the bacchanalian festivals of the classic world. We will then move to transformations in taste that arose as a result the "Old World" exchanges between Christian Europe, Islamic North Africa, and Asia, and the "New World" exchanges following the discovery of the Americas. The rise of haute cuisine in Renaissance courts was supported by an imperial system that brought sugar from slave plantations and spices from the colonies. An increasingly globalized market for food accentuated inequalities leading to over-abundance and famine. At the same time, food has been a source of comfort and identification for immigrants who have introduced some of the most innovative cuisine, inventing "fusion" before it was fashionable. The final sessions will address contemporary phenomena such as industrial food, fast food, and global high cuisine and celebrity chefs. Along the way, we will pay particular attention to Barcelona and the Mediterranean world.

INSTRUCTOR: Marina Díaz Cristóbal, Ph.D.

MEETING TIMES:

LEARNING METHOD:

• Lectures: The instructor will present lectures designed primarily to contextualize the readings within a given historical period, and to broaden the subject of the reading into a wider framework.

• Class discussions and debates: Students will lead class discussions and debates in which the challenge will be to discuss how the readings help illuminate and serve to questions the broad themes of a given historical period.

• Field studies: Students will attend two field studies. We will visit the Roman ruins at the Museu d'Història de Barcelona, which reveal some of the culinary choices of the classical inhabitants of Barcelona. We will also take a tour of two markets in order to explore the provisioning of food from medieval to contemporary times -- The Mercat de Santa Caterina and the Mercat del Born.

• Student presentations: The final two sessions of class will be dedicated to short presentations. Presentations should promote debate and discussion, in order to enhance collective and individual learning.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT
The final grade will be determined as follows:

• Class preparation and participation: Readings are assigned for almost every class session, including the field studies. The student is expected to attend regularly, come to
class prepared, actively participate, and demonstrate the ability to think critically about the issues raised in the readings. **25%**

- **Midterm exam:** This is an in-class exam that covers lectures, readings, and field studies. The exam may include short answers and essays. **25%**

- **Final Paper and oral presentation:** The student will select a topic after discussing options with the professor. The list of additional readings provides a good starting point for the student to explore potential topics. Students should prepare short powerpoint presentations that discuss the main theme and conclusion of the paper, and be sure to finish within allotted time period. **25%**

- **Final exam:** This is a non-cumulative exam that assesses the student's mastery of the topics covered during the second half of the course. The exam will include short answers and brief essays. **25%**

**Additional Notes about the final paper:** In general, students are free to choose their own topic approved by the professor. They are encouraged to choose from the following topics: (1) The history of a national cuisine (French, Mexican, Korean, etc.); (2) The history of an immigrant cuisine (Chinese Americans, Italian Americans; Mexican Americans; Jewish cooking) or a cuisine associated with a minority ("soul food"); (3) The history of a contemporary phenomenon associated with the contemporary world or globalization - slow food, street food, fast food, high cuisine; cuisine based on fad diets. The papers must be based on printed sources but incorporate the concepts developed in class.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a survey-knowledge of the history of food from hunter-gather societies to the contemporary world.
- Critically reflect on the subjective nature of taste and how it is used to emphasize social difference within a society while appreciating the importance of food to the identity of peoples and minorities.
- Evaluate the evolutions of national cuisines based on the relationship of a country to production, trade, and colonization.
- Appraise how the history of food helps illuminate processes of globalization.
- Engage in debates concerning contemporary problems of a consumer society (abundance and depravity; industrial food and high cuisine) based on historical precedent.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**
Attendance is mandatory for all classes, including course-related trips. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. If a student misses more than three classes in any course, three percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Seven absences in any course will result in a failing grade.

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<tr>
<th>Session No.</th>
<th>Detailed Description:</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1:</td>
<td>Overview of syllabus, explanation of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session</td>
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<td>Session 2: Food and Taste</td>
<td>Are food and taste compatible or antagonistic concepts? Does the focus on &quot;taste&quot; conflict with the function of food as sustenance or are they compatible? Is &quot;taste&quot; a merely subjective concept dependent on coincidences in history?</td>
<td>Paul Freedman, &quot;Introduction: A New History of Cuisine,&quot; <em>Food: The History of Taste</em>, ed. Paul Freedman (London: Thames and Hudson, 2019), PAGE NUMBERS MISSING.</td>
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| Session 6: Food and Wine in Roman Barcelona | Field Study: Visit to the Roman ruins at the Museu d'Història de Barcelona: Plaça del Rei

Students should focus on those parts of the Roman neighborhood dedicated to forms of distinction and sustenance, such as food, wine, and beauty. | The readings for this field study are the same as above. The student should do the above two readings for sessions five and six. |
| Session 7: World Cuisines | The development of distinct world cuisines in centers of civilization that distinguish themselves from the west. How are cuisines of imperial China and the Islamic empires similar or different to that of the classical world? Do they share the same tension between sustenance and taste? | Joanna Waley-Cohon, "Taste and Gastronomy in Imperial China: The Quest for Perfect Balance," and H.D. Miller, "The Birth of Medieval Islamic Cuisine" in Food: The History of Taste, PAGE NUMBERS MISSING |
| Session 8: The "Old World Exchange" | How did European cuisine change as a result of the "first globalization"? How did the opening up of the silk road and new passages between East and West affect the development of cuisine in both hemispheres? | Paul Freedman, Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 1-49. C.M. Woolgar, "Feasting and Fasting: Food and Taste in Europe of the Middle Ages in Food: The History of Taste, PAGE NUMBERS MISSING. |
| Session 12: Revision for midterm and discussion of final paper guidelines. | Recovery of pending subjects and review of topics discussed until this point. Students should come to class prepared to discuss with the professor the subject of their final paper. | |
| Session 13: | **Midterm Exam** | |
## Session 16: The Great Injustice: Food and Famine

How free-market principles applied in imperial settings lead to malnutrition and famine. To what extent does the same problem exist today?


### Available on:
http://www.esp.org/books/malthus/population/malthus.pdf

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## Session 17: Provisioning Cities in the Age of Urbanization

Field Study: Visit to the Mercat de Santa Caterina and the Mercat del Born.

Visit to two of the "historic" markets in Barcelona. Santa Caterina was one of the first markets in industrial Barcelona created as a result of the disentailing of church properties. The Born market was the first wrought iron modern structure of its kind. Both markets show how food became provisioned in an industrial city suffering from population explosion.


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## Session 18: Bourgeois Culture and the Rise of the Restaurant

Food as entertainment: The Restaurant or the French invention that transformed the world


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## Session 19: National Cuisines

How is food linked to identity? How is the identity of a nation determined by its typical foods and its high cuisines?

H. Rosi Song and Anna Riera, "Cooking up a Nation" and "Traditional Catalan Dishes Today," in *A Taste of*
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<td>Session 22: food entrepreneurship cont.</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
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<td>Session 23:</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
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<td>Session 24:</td>
<td>Course conclusions and review for final</td>
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**Final Exam**
REQUIRED READING:


**Recommended Reading:**


Carol Counihan, Penny Van Esterick, and Alice Juiler, eds. *Food and Culture: A Reader*, 4th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2018)


*Foods and Nations*, This series published by Reaktion books contains multiple recently published volumes on the histories of Mexican food, Vietnamese Food, German Food, Italian Food, Indian food etc.


