

MULTICULTURAL CUISINE IN TORONTO



The unique multicultural atmosphere of Toronto is reflected in the cuisine of the city. Food is the most distinctive way that communities express their way of living. Not always people can cook familiar foods as they had in their homelands because they would need ingredients that are not available in Canada. Some people find other ingredients they could use as substitutes for the ones that are available. Many people also created new recipes based upon their traditional ones using ingredients that can be found in Canada. Various ethnic food can be found in the neighborhoods of Toronto.

PORTUGUESE

Portuguese cuisine is characterized by rich, filling and full-flavoured dishes. Olive oil is one of the bases of Portuguese cuisine both for cooking and flavouring meals. Caldeirada is a typical Portuguese stew consisting of a large variety of fish, and sometimes shellfish, with potatoes, tomato and onion. It requires only a little white wine and olive oil to supplement whatever liquid the heat of cooking renders from the fish and vegetables. Caldo verde is a popular soup of Portuguese cuisine. The basic ingredients are mashed potatoes and minced collard greens, savoy cabbage, or kale. Onions and slices of sausage are also often added. Common flavoring ingredients are garlic, salt, and olive oil.



INDIAN

Indian cuisine is distinguished by its sophisticated use of spices and herbs. Sambar or sambhar is a dish common in southern India and Sri Lanka, made of lentils and vegetables in a spicy tamarind and lentil flour soup base. Sambar is usually poured over or alongside steamed rice. Bajji is a snack item that is popular all over India. It is basically cut vegetable dipped in gram flour batter and deep fried in oil. Potato slices, egg plant, onions and chili peppers are the most common.

PAKISTANI

Meat including beef, chicken, and lamb are prominent in Pakistani cuisine. Kababs made out of lamb and chicken such as Seekh kebab, Shami kebab and Chapli kebab are especially popular. Pork is virtually never eaten in Pakistan. Biryani is a rice dish from the Indian Subcontinent made from a mixture of spices, basmati rice, meat and yogurt. The spices and condiments used in biryani are what primarily contribute to the taste; these are generally cloves, cardamom, cinnamon, bay leaves, coriander and mint leaves, apart from ghee, ginger, onions, garlic and yoghurt. Haleem is a soup-like Pakistani dish. Haleem is made of wheat, meat (usually mutton) lentils and spices, this dish is cooked for seven to eight hours before it is ready to be served. As a result of being cooked for so long, the dish is in a form of a paste with the taste of spices and meat blending in the wheat.

CHINESE

In Canada there are two kinds of Chinese cuisine: original Chinese food and Canadian Chinese cuisine. For most non-chinese people original Chinese food may taste very unusual and even unpalatable. Therefore, many local Chinese restaurant adopt their food to local customs. For example, Cantonese style chow mein - fried egg noodles, green peppers, pea pods, bok choy, bam-



boo shoots, water chestnuts, shrimp, Chinese pork chicken, and beef served in a thick sauce. Chop suey is a Chinese dish which literally means mixed pieces. It usually consists of meats, cooked quickly with vegetables such as bean sprouts, cabbage, and celery and bound in a starch-thickened sauce. Kung Pao chicken commonly consists of diced marinated chicken stir-fried with skinless unsalted roasted peanuts, red bell peppers, sherry or rice wine, hoisin sauce, and chili peppers. It can also be prepared with tofu instead of meat.

ARABIC

There is a strong emphasis on the following items in Arabian cuisine: lamb, yogurt, mint, sesame, curry powder, saffron, turmeric, garlic, cumin, cinnamon, rice. In addition, the cuisine is heavily dosed with anything hot, from hot sauces to every variety of pepper, to tea drunk the hotter the better. Arabic Bread (pita) is popular not only in Arab countries but all over the world. Manakish is a uniquely baked Arabic meal with classical or fancy toppings, and it is either served for breakfast or lunch depending on its topping. The most popular topping is thyme topping, which is a vegetarian nutrient obtained from ground thyme leaves, and this powder with tiny edible sesame seeds is mixed with olive oil to finalize the paste to put on the dough.

MULTICULTURAL CUISINE IN TORONTO

ITALIAN

Cannoli are Italian pastry desserts. Cannoli consist of tube-shaped shells of fried pasta, filled with a sweet, creamy filling called "cannoli cream" and commonly containing mascarpone or sweetened ricotta cheese blended with some combination of vanilla, chocolate, pistachio, Marsala wine, rosewater or other flavorings. Eggplant parmesan is a common Italian dish originated from Naples. It typically includes sliced eggplant, marinara sauce, mozzarella cheese, and Parmesan cheese, layered repeatedly. It is sometimes served on or with spaghetti. Some variations leave out the mozzarella, although this is rare.

CARIBBEAN

Callaloo or pepperpot is a Caribbean dish, the main ingredient of which is a leaf vegetable, traditionally either amaranth, or taro or Xanthosoma species. Outside of the Caribbean, spinach is occasionally used. There are many variations of callaloo which may include coconut milk, crab, Caribbean lobster, meats, chile peppers, and other seasonings. The ingredients are added and simmered down to a soup or stew consistency. Jerk is a style of cooking native to Jamaica in which meats are dry-rubbed with a fiery spice mixture called Jamaican jerk spice. This jerk seasoning typically relies upon two items: allspice and Scotch Bonnet peppers. Traditionally, the meat is wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in an earth covered pit over smoldering Pimento wood. A grill over an open fire will suffice for a modern rendition, and pre-made jerk seasoning mixes are available.

RUSSIAN

Soups have always played an important role in the Russian meal. One of the popular Russian soup is okroshka which is a cold soup based on the bread drink kvass. The main ingredients are vegetables that can be mixed with cold boiled meat or fish. Pelmeni are a traditional Russian dish, which is usually made with minced meat filling, wrapped in thin

dough. Pelmeni are especially popular in Siberia, where they are made in large quantities and stored safely frozen outside for several winter months. Pelmeni belong to the family of dumplings. Blini are thin pancakes which can be made from wheat, buckwheat, or other grains. They are slathered with butter and may be topped with sour cream or caviar, but never with two of them together on a same blin.

ISRAELI

The Israeli cuisine is incredibly diverse due to the diversity of the country's population. Israeli cuisine is based greatly around Jewish cuisine. Some foods, including falafel and hummus, have now become synonymous with Israeli cuisine. The Israeli-Mizrahi cuisine is based around Arab cuisine. The most common dishes include: salads like Hummus, Tahini, Matbucha, mayonnaise salad and grilled meat. Pastries such as Bourekas were brought to Israel by the Jews of the Balkans. Pita has been called the national bread of Israel, popular due to its soft and pleasant texture. Grilling is the most popular style of cooking in Israel. Dishes which are created in this way include the Kebab and the Shashlik. Shawarma arrived in Israel from Turkey. Shawarma is incredibly popular in Israel and is most commonly made of chicken.

GREEK

A Greek food, trahanas contains grain and yoghurt and it is consumed as a soup by mixing it with stock or water. This dish is considered to be a useful high-protein dietary supplement with average 15% protein content. Tzatziki is a Greek meze, or appetizer also used as a sauce or dip. Tzatziki is made of yoghurt,

cucumbers, onion, and garlic for taste. In Cyprus the dish is known colloquially as talattouri, and recipes often include less garlic and more mint than the Greek counterpart. Moussaka is a traditional Greek dish, which consists of layers of ground lamb or beef, sliced aubergine, and tomato, topped with a white sauce and baked.

PERSIAN/IRANIAN

Iranian food is inventive, rich and varied. It is exotic yet simple, healthy and colorful. Herbs are used a lot, as is fruit from plums and pomegranates to quince, prunes, and raisins. To achieve a delicious taste and a balanced diet, unique Persian spices such as saffron, diced limes, cinnamon, and parsley are mixed delicately



and used in some special dishes. Chelow is a method of cooking rice, that is carefully prepared through soaking and parboiling, at which point the water is drained and the rice is steamed. This method results in an exceptionally fluffy rice with the grains separated, and not sticky, and also results in a golden rice crust at the bottom of the pot called tah-digh. Kabab Torsh is a traditional kebab from Gilan province in Iran. It is made with beef - usually sirloin or tenderloin - marinated in a paste made of crushed walnuts, pomegranate juice, chopped parsley, olive oil, and crushed garlic.

MULTICULTURAL CUISINE IN TORONTO



LATIN AMERICAN CUISINE

A tamale or tamal is a traditional Latin American food that begins with a corn meal dough called masa mixed with water. This mixture is then filled with meats, cheese and sliced chiles or any preparation according to taste. The tamale is wrapped in a corn husk for before cooking. Salsa is tomato-based sauces typical of Mexican cuisine, particularly those used as dips. Mexican salsas were traditionally produced using the mortar and pestle-like molcajete, although blenders are now more commonly used.

Dulce de leche is a traditional caramel-like candy popular in Latin American countries. Its most basic recipe mixes boiled milk and sugar. Dulce de leche is used to flavour candies or other sweet foods, such as cakes, cookies or ice cream, as well as flan. It is also popular spread on toast.

Festivals:

A few culinary festivals take place in Toronto where you can participate in delicious culinary experiences. The Taste of the Danforth is a yearly festival held in The Danforth area for a period of three days in August. At the Winterlicious, the culinary element of the WinterCity festival, more than 100 of Toronto's top dining establishments present their menus.

Neighborhoods with prominent ethnic food

Chinese and Vietnamese food - Chinatown is centred around the intersection of Dundas Street West and Spadina Avenue, and extends outward from this point along both streets.

Latin American food - Kensington Market is roughly bounded by College St. on the North, Spadina on the

East, Dundas to the South, and Bellevue to the West.

Italian food - Little Italy, sometimes referred to as College Street West or College and Clinton, is bounded by Bathurst Street to the east, College Street to the north, Ossington Avenue to the west, and Dundas Street to the south.

- Corso Italia is situated on St. Clair Avenue West, between Westmount Avenue (just east of Dufferin Street) and Lansdowne Avenue.

East Indian, Punjabi, Pakistani food - Rexdale is located in the north-west corner of the city.

Rexdale, also known as Etobicoke North or North Etobicoke, forms the top third of the Etobicoke District in the City of Toronto.

- Gerrard Street, the portion between Greenwood and Coxwell Avenues is commonly referred to as "Little India" or "Gerrard India Bazaar", or "South Asian Bazaar".

Portuguese food - Portugal Village is bounded by Bathurst Street, Dundas, and Queen Street West, and by Trinity Bellwoods Park, around which the community is centred.

Caribbean food - Eglinton West, also known as Little Jamaica, is situated along Eglinton Avenue West from Allen Road to Dufferin St. and from Caledonia Road to Keele Street.

Greek food - Greektown, also known as Greektown on the Danforth, is located on Danforth Avenue, between Chester Avenue and Dewhurst Blvd.

Korean food - Korea Town is centred along Bloor Street between Christie and Bathurst Streets.

Not leaving Canada you can taste various ethnic cuisines and experience new cultures. This is one of the advantages of Toronto: all cuisines are different, original and in one city.

