

Celebrate A World Of Flavors

The 2022 National Nutrition Month theme this year is *Celebrate a World of Flavors*. The theme highlights the unique, cultural variety of foods available to people from around the world. When learning about a new culture, food is a major component.

Trying different cuisine from around the world gives us a chance to learn about our own food culture as well as others. Different preparations of familiar ingredients can bring new meals into our lives that will become new favorites. Don't be afraid to try ingredients and flavors you have never heard of or seen before. Trying new foods is a simple way to experience an important piece of another culture.

Food had no borders or boundaries and thanks to food imports/exports, no cuisine is unachievable in our own kitchens. Incorporate your favorite cultural foods and traditions, and try new ones as you "Celebrate a World of Flavors" throughout this month and the whole year with some of the hundreds of types of cuisines available from around the world. Most countries and cultures have their own ingredients, spices, food preparation techniques, and traditional meals. Be aware of cultural, national, and regional varieties of cuisines when you are sampling new foods.

If you are unsure of which foods you want to try, it's a good idea to research and learn about the foods before attempting to cook them or finding a restaurant to try the foods. The basics of each culture can be summarized, but remember there are many variations based on region and preference.

Here is a look at some cuisines:

Thai: Thai food uses lots of broths, noodle dishes, and fresh herbs. Thai dishes also use a lot of vegetables in a thick sauce for extra flavors. The main flavors of Thai food are hot, sour, bitter, and sweet.

French: French food ranges from rustic and hearty to the very finest, classic style. Bread, cheese, and wine accompany almost every French meal.

Lebanese: Lebanese food contains a lot of vegetable dishes, loads of fresh fruit, fresh fish and seafood, lamb, and goat meat. Like Greek and Turkish cuisine, the mezze is a major feature - a selection of salads, vegetable dips, pickles, and Arabic bread.

Spanish: Spanish cuisine is defined by region. Spaniards do not tend to eat much beef and lamb, preferring pork and game meats and particularly, the fabulous array

of seafood readily available around the coast. Probably the most famous feature of Spanish cuisine is tapas.

Caribbean: Heavily influenced by African cuisine, Caribbean food is spicy, comforting, and soulful. Food staples include peppers, sweet potato, coconut, plantain, goat, plenty of tropical fruits and lots of leafy green vegetables.

Scottish: The food is more hearty and makes full use of the local produce. Venison and game, raspberries, and wonderful seafood are all major menu items. Plus, you can't forget the kippers, oatcakes, porridge, shortbread, and haggis.

Indian: The basis of Indian cuisine is highly complex spice blends designed for maximum flavor. The amazing range of spices, chilies, and herbs combine to make some of the spiciest foods you can eat. As well as loving hot and spicy, Indians also have a very sweet palate and all special occasions are marked by piles of delicious sweet treats. There's also a massive street food culture.

Personalize your plate to include foods from other cultures. Variety IS the spice of life!

(Sources: www.eatrightpro.org; food.allwomenstalk.com; newsroom.unl.edu; whatscookingamerica.net)