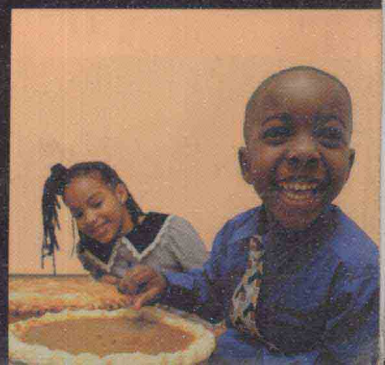
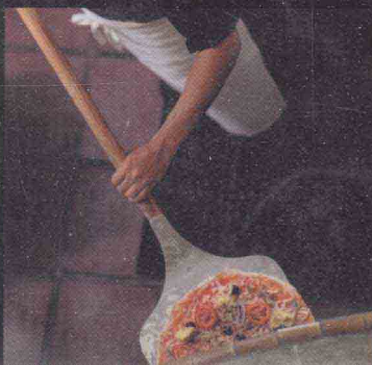
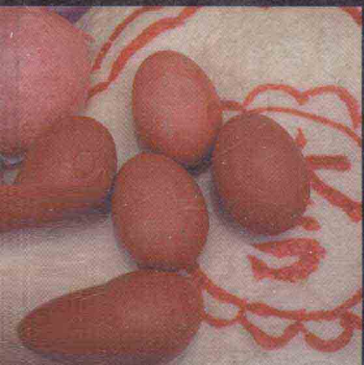
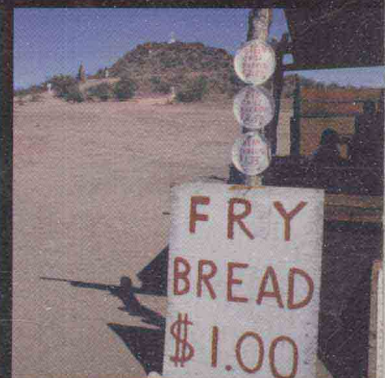
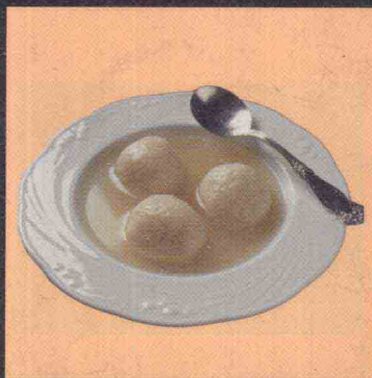
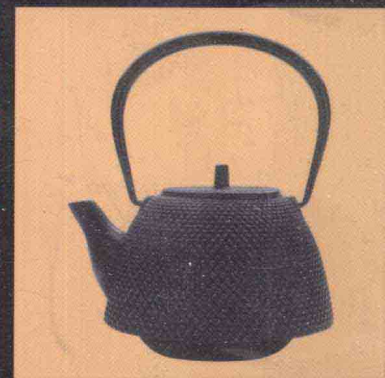


# Food and Culture

Pamela Goyan Kittler and Kathryn P. Sucher

3<sup>RD</sup> EDITION



# Food and Culture

T H I R D E D I T I O N

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4

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**T**he topic of food and culture is both compelling and complex. Anthropologists, folklorists, geographers, historians, psychologists, and sociologists have all been attracted to the subject. Research has varied from anecdotal to academic. Yet despite these efforts, information useful for practicing health and nutrition professionals has been lacking.

The need for cultural nutrition resources is undisputed. The population of the United States is increasingly heterogeneous, moving toward a plurality of uncounted ethnic, religious, and regional groups. Each of these minorities has traditional foods and food habits that may differ significantly from the so-called typical North American diet. Effective nutrition counseling, education, and food service require that these variations be acknowledged—diet is best understood within the context of culture. It is our goal to provide dietitians, nutritionists, and food service professionals with the cultural overview needed to avoid ethnocentric assumptions and the nutritional specifics concerning each group discussed. We have attempted to combine the conceptual with the technical in a way that is useful to other health professionals as well.

## How the Book Is Organized

The first four chapters form an introduction to the study of food and culture. Chapter 1 discusses changing demographics, the ways in which ethnicity may affect nutrition and health status, and methods for understanding food and food habits within the context of culture. Chapter 2 focuses on the role of diet in traditional health beliefs. Some intercultural communication strategies are suggested in Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 outlines the major Eastern and Western religions and reviews their dietary practices in detail.

Chapters 5 through 14 profile North American ethnic groups and their cuisines. We have

chosen breadth over depth, discussing groups with significant populations in the United States, as well as smaller, more recent, immigrant groups who have had an impact on the health care system. Other groups with low numbers of immigrants but notable influences on American cooking are briefly mentioned. Groups are considered in the approximate order of their arrival in North America.

Each chapter begins with a history of the group in the United States and current demographics. Worldview (outlook on life) is then examined, including religion, family structure, and traditional health practices. This background information illuminates the cultural context from which ethnic foods and food habits emerge and evolve. The next section of each chapter outlines the traditional diet, including ingredients, some common dishes, meal patterns, special occasions, the role of food in the society, and therapeutic uses of food. The final section explains the contemporary diet of the group, such as adaptations made by the group after arrival in the United States and influences of the group on the American diet. Reported nutritional status is reviewed, and counseling guidelines are provided.

One or more cultural food group tables are found in each of the ethnic group chapters. The emphasis is on ingredients common to the populations of the region. Important variations within regions and unique food habits are listed under the "Comments" column of the table. Known adaptations in the United States are also noted. The tables are intended as references for the reader; they do not replace either the chapter content or an in-depth interview with a client.

Chapter 15 considers the regional American fare of the Northeast, the Midwest, the South, and the West. Each section includes demographic data and an examination of the foods common in the region, followed by state-by-state descriptions of cuisine. This chapter

brings the study of American cultural nutrition full circle, discussing the significant influences of different ethnic and religious groups on regional fare. Canadian regional cooking is also briefly considered.

## New to This Edition

- Chapter 2 has been expanded to include an overview of botanical therapeutics in its discussion of traditional health beliefs.
- New information on nutrition education approaches has been added to Chapter 3, on intercultural communication strategies.
- A new section on South Americans and several shorter discussions of unique cuisines worldwide have been added.
- Several new tables of selected botanical remedies have been added to the chapters on various ethnic groups.
- The glossary of ethnic ingredients, designed for quick referral to foods mentioned in the chapters and cultural food group tables, has been expanded.
- The food and culture resources section has been updated to include Internet sites of interest.

## Before You Begin

Food is so essential to ethnic, religious, and regional identity that dietary descriptions must be as objective as possible to prevent inadvertent criticism of the underlying culture. Yet as members of two Western ethnic and religious groups, we recognize that our own cultural assumptions are unavoidable and, in fact, serve as a starting point for our work. One would be lost without such a cultural footing. Any instances of bias are unintentional.

Any definition of a group's food and food habits implies homogeneity in the described group. In daily life, however, each member of a group has a distinctive diet, combining traditional practices with new influences. We do not want to stereotype the fare of any cultural group. Rather, we strive to generalize common U.S. food and culture trends as a basis for

understanding the personal preferences of individual clients.

We have tried to be sensitive to the designations used by each cultural group, though sometimes there is no consensus among group members regarding the preferred name for the group. Also, there may be some confusion about dates in the book. Nearly all religious traditions adhere to their own calendar of events based on solar or lunar months. These calendars frequently differ from the Gregorian calendar used throughout most of the world in business and government. Religious ceremonies often move around according to Gregorian dates, yet usually they are calculated to occur in the correct season each year. Historical events in the text are listed according to the Gregorian calendar, using the terms before common era (B.C.E.) and common era (C.E.).

We believe this book will do more than introduce the concepts of food and culture. It should also encourage self-examination and individual cultural identification by the reader. We hope that it will help dietitians, nutritionists, other health care providers, and food service professionals work effectively with members of different ethnic, religious, and regional groups. If it sparks a gustatory interest in the foods of the world, we will be personally pleased. *De gustibus non est disputatum!*

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# Contents

## 1 Food and Culture 1

### Food and Culture 2

- What Is Food? 2
- Role of Culture in Food Habits 4

### Factors That Influence Food Habits 6

- Social Dynamics 6
- Lifestyle Factors 8
- The Complexity of Cuisine* 10

### The Study of Cultural Foods 11

- Cultural Perspective 11
- Methodology 12

### Nutrition and Food Habits 15

- The Need for Cultural Competency 15
- The American Melting Pot 21

## 2 Traditional Health Beliefs and Practices 23

### Worldview 23

- Cultural Outlook 23
- Biomedical Worldview 25

### What Is Health? 28

- Cultural Definitions of Health 28
- Health Maintenance 29

### Disease, Illness, and Sickness 31

- Cultural Definitions of Disease, Illness, and Sickness 31
- Healing Practices 34

### Pluralistic Health Care Systems 39

- Medical Pluralism 39
- Biomedical Healing 39

## 3 Intercultural Communication 43

### Role of Communication in Health Care 43

- Purpose of Communication in Health Care 44

### Intercultural Communication

#### Concepts 47

- Verbal Communication 48

- Nonverbal Communication 51

### Successful Intercultural Communication 54

- Intercultural Communication Skills 54
- Intercultural Counseling 58
- Intercultural Nutrition Assessment* 60

### Intercultural Nutrition Education 62

- Culturally Relevant Program Preparation 62
- Implementation Strategies 65

## 4 Food and Religion 67

### Western Religions 68

- Judaism 68
- Christianity 73
- Islam 78

### Eastern Religions 82

- Hinduism 82
- Buddhism 86

## 5 Native Americans 89

### Cultural Perspective 89

- History of Native Americans 89
- Worldview 92

### Traditional Food Habits 94

- Ingredients and Common Foods 94
- Meal Composition and Cycle 103
- Role of Food in Native American Culture 104
- Therapeutic Uses of Food 104

### Contemporary Food Habits 107

- Adaptation of Food Habits 107
- Nutritional Status 109

## 6 Northern and Southern Europeans 113

### NORTHERN EUROPEANS 113

#### Cultural Perspective 113

	History of Northern Europeans in the United States 113	Adaptations of Food Habits 173
	Worldview 117	Nutritional Status 173
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 119</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 119	
	Meal Composition and Cycle 126	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 128</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 128	
	Nutritional Status 130	
	<b>SOUTHERN EUROPEANS 131</b>	
	<b>Cultural Perspective 132</b>	
	History of Southern Europeans in the United States 132	
	Worldview 133	
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 135</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 135	
	Meal Composition and Cycle 141	
	Therapeutic Uses of Food 143	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 143</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 143	
	Nutritional Status 143	
<b>7</b>	<b>Central Europeans, Russians, and Scandinavians 145</b>	
	<b>CENTRAL EUROPEANS AND RUSSIANS 145</b>	
	<b>Cultural Perspective 145</b>	
	History of Central Europeans and Russians in the United States 145	
	Worldview 151	
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 156</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 156	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 164</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 164	
	Nutritional Status 166	
	<b>SCANDINAVIANS 167</b>	
	<b>Cultural Perspective 167</b>	
	History of Scandinavians in the United States 167	
	Worldview 169	
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 169</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 169	
	Meal Composition and Cycle 172	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 173</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 173	
	Nutritional Status 173	
<b>8</b>	<b>Africans 175</b>	
	<b>Cultural Perspective 175</b>	
	History of Africans in the United States 175	
	Worldview 179	
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 183</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 183	
	Meal Composition and Cycle 188	
	Role of Food in African American Society 189	
	Therapeutic Uses of Food 190	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 192</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 192	
	Nutritional Status 193	
<b>9</b>	<b>Mexicans and Central Americans 199</b>	
	<b>MEXICANS 199</b>	
	<b>Cultural Perspective 199</b>	
	History of Mexicans in the United States 199	
	Worldview 202	
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 204</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 204	
	Meal Composition and Cycle 210	
	Role of Food in Mexican Society 211	
	Therapeutic Uses of Food 211	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 212</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 212	
	Nutritional Status 214	
	<b>CENTRAL AMERICANS 219</b>	
	<b>Cultural Perspective 219</b>	
	History of Central Americans in the United States 219	
	Worldview 220	
	<b>Traditional Food Habits 221</b>	
	Ingredients and Common Foods 221	
	Meal Composition and Cycle 224	
	Therapeutic Uses of Food 225	
	<b>Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 225</b>	
	Adaptations of Food Habits 225	
	Nutritional Status 225	

## 10 Caribbean Islanders and South Americans 227

### CARIBBEAN ISLANDERS 227

#### Cultural Perspective 227

History of Caribbean Islanders in the United States 227

Worldview 231

#### Traditional Food Habits 233

Ingredients and Common Foods 233

Meal Composition and Cycle 235

Therapeutic Uses of Food 238

#### Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 239

Adaptations of Food Habits 239

Nutritional Status 241

### SOUTH AMERICANS 243

#### Cultural Perspective 243

History of South Americans in the United States 243

Worldview 244

#### Traditional Food Habits 246

Ingredients and Common Foods 246

Meal Composition and Cycle 252

#### Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 253

Adaptations of Food Habits 253

Nutritional Status 254

## 11 Chinese, Japanese and Koreans 255

### CHINESE 255

#### Cultural Perspective 256

History of Chinese in the

United States 256

Worldview 258

#### Traditional Food Habits 261

Ingredients and Common Foods 261

Meal Composition and Cycle 269

Therapeutic Uses of Food 270

#### Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 271

Adaptations of Food Habits 271

Nutritional Status 272

### JAPANESE 275

#### Cultural Perspective 275

History of Japanese in the

United States 275

Worldview 277

#### Traditional Food Habits 278

Ingredients and Common Foods 279

Meal Composition and Cycle 282

Therapeutic Use of Food 284

#### Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 284

Adaptations of Food Habits 284

Nutritional Status 284

### KOREANS 286

#### Cultural Perspective 287

History of Koreans in the

United States 287

Worldview 288

#### Traditional Food Habits 290

Ingredients and Common Foods 290

Meal Composition and Cycle 291

Therapeutic Uses of Food 294

#### Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 295

Adaptations of Food Habits 295

Nutritional Status 295

## 12 Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders 299

### SOUTHEAST ASIANS 299

#### Cultural Perspective 299

History of Southeast Asians in the United States 299

Worldview 302

#### Traditional Food Habits 307

Ingredients and Common Foods 308

Meal Composition and Cycle 316

Therapeutic Uses of Food 318

#### Contemporary Food Habits in the United States 320

Adaptations of Food Habits 320

Nutritional Status 321

### PACIFIC ISLANDERS 325

#### Cultural Perspective 325

History of Pacific Islanders in the United States 325

Worldview 327

#### Traditional Food Habits 328

Ingredients and Common Foods 328

Meal Composition and Cycle 332

Role of Food 334

Therapeutic Uses of Foods 334



Contemporary Food Habits in the  
United States 334  
Adaptations of Food Habits 334  
Nutritional Status 335

### 13 Greeks and Middle Easterners 339

Cultural Perspective 339  
History of Greeks and Middle Easterners  
in the United States 339  
Worldview 343  
Traditional Food Habits 345  
Ingredients and Common Foods 345  
Meal Composition and Cycle 353  
Contemporary Food Habits in the  
United States 357  
Adaptations of Food Habits 357  
Nutritional Status 357

### 14 Asian Indians 361

Cultural Perspective 361  
History of Asian Indians in the  
United States 361  
Worldview 363  
Traditional Food Habits 366  
Ingredients and Common Foods 366  
Meal Composition and Cycle 373  
Role of Food in Indian Society 375  
Therapeutic Uses of Food 376  
Contemporary Food Habits in the  
United States 377

Adaptations of Food Habits 377  
Nutritional Status 379

## 15 Regional Americans 381

American Regional Food Habits 381  
What Is Regional Fare? 381  
Regional Divisions 383  
The Northeast 383  
Regional Profile 383  
Traditional Fare 385  
State Specialties 390  
The Midwest 395  
Regional Profile 395  
Traditional Fare 397  
State Specialties 399  
The South 406  
Regional Profile 406  
Traditional Fare 408  
State Specialties 413  
The West 426  
Regional Profile 426  
Traditional Fare 427  
State Specialties 429

*Glossary of Ethnic Ingredients 443*

*Resources 451*

*References 457*

*Index 482*

# Food and Culture

**W**hat do Americans eat? Meat and potatoes, according to popular myth. There's no denying that more beef is consumed than any other protein food in the United States and that franchise restaurants sell more than \$5 billion worth of hamburgers and french fries each year. Yet the American diet cannot be so simply described. Just as the population of the United States contains many different ethnic and cultural groups, so are the foods and food habits of Americans equally diverse. It can no more be said that the typical U.S. citizen is white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant than it can be stated that meat and potatoes are what this typical citizen eats.

U.S. census and other demographic data show that one in every four Americans is of non-European heritage. These figures greatly underestimate the number and diversity of North American cultural groups, however. For instance, data often do not list members of white ethnic or religious groups, nor do they account for mixed ancestry. Census terminology, such as the category "Hispanics" (which may be defined as persons who were born in Latin America, whose parents were born in Latin America, who have a Spanish surname, or who speak Spanish), is sometimes ambiguous and confusing to census respondents. Furthermore, the census does not survey the millions of U.S. residents who are not citizens (it is estimated 200,000

arrive in America each year). Thus, the proportion of American ethnic group members is larger than statistics indicate, and, more important, it is rapidly increasing.

Asians are the fastest-growing ethnic group in America. Their population more than doubled between 1980 and 1990; four out of every ten immigrants to the United States in 1993 were born in Asia. African Americans are numerically the largest ethnic group (approximately 12 percent of the total U.S. population), although Latinos, with a growth rate of more than 50 percent between 1980 and 1990, are expected to surpass blacks by the middle of the 21st century.

Each American ethnic group has its own culturally based foods and food habits. Many of these traditions have been influenced and modified through contact with the majority culture. The foods and food habits of the majority culture have, in turn, been affected by those of the many diverse ethnic groups. Today a fast-food restaurant or street stand is just as likely to offer pizza, tacos, egg rolls, or falafel as it is to offer hamburgers. The American diet encompasses the numerous varied cuisines of the U.S. population. To understand this diet fully, one must study not only the traditional foods and food habits of the many ethnic groups but also the interactions between these traditions and those of the majority culture.

■ As suggested by their names, not even hamburgers and french fries are American in origin. Chopped beef steaks were introduced to the United States from the German city of Hamburg in the late nineteenth century and were popularized at the St. Louis World's Fair. Although the potato is a New World vegetable, it was brought to America by the Irish in 1719. The term *french fried potatoes* first appeared in the 1860s and may have come from the way the potatoes were cut or cooked. Other foods considered typically American also have foreign origins, such as hot dogs (*frankfurters*), apple pie, and ice cream.

■ Data from the 1996 Canadian census indicate that 15 percent of the population is of non-European heritage. The largest ethnic group is Native Americans (called *Aboriginals* in the report), followed by the Chinese and South Asians (mostly Asian Indians and Sri Lankans). Asians and Middle Easterners are the fastest-growing minorities.

■ Americans collectively consume approximately 900 billion calories each day.

■ Drinking rituals, such as making a toast and participating in the round of drinks, date back to ancient magical rites of communal inebriation.

■ A recent survey reports that the top three comfort foods for women are ice cream, chocolate, and cookies; men prefer ice cream, soup and pizza or pasta (Wansink & Sangerman, 2000).

## Food and Culture

### What Is Food?

#### Feeding versus Eating

*Food*, as defined in the dictionary, is any substance that provides the nutrients necessary to maintain life and growth when ingested. When animals feed, they repeatedly consume those foods necessary for their well-being, and they do so in a similar manner at each feeding.

Humans, however, do not feed. They eat. Eating is distinguished from feeding by the ways in which humans use food. Humans not only gather or hunt food, but they also cultivate plants and raise livestock. Food is thus regularly available to most humans, permitting the development of food habits, such as the setting of mealtimes. In addition, humans cook food, which greatly expands the number and variety of edible substances available. Choice of what to eat follows. Humans use utensils to eat food and create complex rules, commonly called manners, about how food is actually ingested. Humans share food. Standards for who may dine with whom in each eating situation are well defined.

### Development of Food Habits

The term *food habits* refers to the ways in which humans use food, including how food is obtained and stored, how it is prepared, how it is served and to whom, and how it is consumed. A. H. Maslow's theory of human maturation as applied to food habits (Lowenberg, 1970) explains how food use progresses from eating for existence to eating for self-actualization:

1. *Physical needs for survival*: This is the most basic use of food, nearly equivalent to feeding. Daily nutrient needs must be met before more complex food use can occur.
2. *Social needs for security*: Once the immediate need for food is satisfied, future needs can be considered. The storage of food, in a granary or in a refrigerator, represents security.
3. *Belongingness*: This use of food shows that an individual belongs to a group. The need to belong is satisfied by consuming the foods that are eaten by the social group as a whole. These foods represent comfort and happiness for many people; during periods of stress or illness, people often want the foods they ate during childhood.



Humans create complex rules, commonly called manners, as to how food is actually eaten.

(© Tom and DeeAnn McCarthy/PhotoEdit.)

Sometimes people adopt a special diet to demonstrate belongingness. For example, African Americans who live outside the South may choose to eat what is called *soul food* (typically southern black cuisine, such as pork ribs and greens) on certain occasions as an expression of ethnic identity.

*Etiquette*, the appropriate use of food, is also a way of demonstrating belonging. Entirely different manners are required when lunching with business associates at an expensive restaurant, when attending a tea, when eating in the school cafeteria, when drinking with friends at a bar, or when picnicking with a date.

4. *Status*: Food can be used to define social position. Champagne and caviar imply wealth; mesquite-grilled foods and goat cheese suggest upward mobility; beans or potatoes are traditionally associated with the poor. Status foods are used for social interaction. When a man picks up his date, he brings her chocolates, not broccoli. Wine is considered an appropriate gift to a hostess; a gallon of milk is not.

In general, eating with someone connotes social equality with that person. Many societies regulate who can dine together as a means of establishing class relationships. Women and children may eat separately from men, or servants may eat in the kitchen, away from their employers. This separation by class was also seen in some U.S. restaurants that excluded blacks before the civil rights legislation of the 1960s.

5. *Self-realization*: This stage of food use occurs when all previous stages have been achieved to the individual's satisfaction. Personal preference takes precedence, and the individual may experiment with the foods of different ethnic or economic groups.

## Food as Self-Expression

The correlation between what people eat, how others perceive them, and how they characterize themselves is striking. In one study, researchers listed foods typical of five diets: vegetarian (broccoli quiche, brown rice, avocado and bean sprout sandwich), gourmet

(oysters, caviar, French roast coffee), health food (protein shake, wheat germ, yogurt), fast food (Kentucky Fried Chicken, Big Mac, pizza), and synthetic food (Carnation Instant Breakfast, Cheez Whiz). It was found that each category was associated with a certain personality type. Vegetarians were considered to be pacifists and likely to drive foreign cars. Gourmets were believed to be liberal, and sophisticated. Health food fans were described as antinuclear activists, and Democrats. Fast-food and synthetic food eaters were believed to be religious, conservative, and wearers of polyester clothing. These stereotypes were confirmed by self-description and personality tests completed by persons whose diets fell within the five categories (Sadella & Burroughs, 1981).

Another study asked college students to rate profiles of people based on their diets. The persons who ate "good" foods were judged thinner, more fit, and more active than persons with the identical physical characteristics and exercise habits who ate "bad" foods. Furthermore, the people who ate good foods were perceived by some students as being more attractive, likable, practical, methodical, quiet, and analytical than people who ate bad foods. The researchers attribute the strong morality-food effect to several factors, including the concept that "you are what you eat" and a prevailing Puritan ethic that espouses self-discipline (Stein & Nemeroff, 1995).

Food choice is, in fact, influenced by self-identity, a process whereby the food likes or dislikes of someone else are accepted and internalized as personal preferences. Research suggests that children choose foods that are eaten by admired adults (e.g., teachers), fictional characters, peers, and especially older siblings. Group approval or disapproval of a food can also condition a person's acceptance or rejection. This may explain why certain relatively unpalatable items, such as chile peppers or unsweetened coffee, are enjoyed if introduced through socially mediated events, such as family meals or workplace snack breaks. Though the mechanism for the internalization of food preference and self-identity are not well understood, it is considered a significant factor in the development of food habits (Rozin, 1996). A study on the consumption of organic vegetables,

■ The status of food can change over time. In the early years of the United States, lobster was so plentiful it was considered fit only for the poor (Root & deRochemont, 1976).

■ In a study of the morality-food effect, researchers found consistent agreement among subjects that "good" foods were healthy and unfattening, especially fruit, salad, home-made whole-wheat bread, chicken, and potatoes. "Bad" foods were identified as unhealthy and fattening, in particular, steak, hamburgers, french fries, doughnuts, and double-fudge ice cream sundaes (Stein & Nemeroff, 1995).

■ Studies suggest that contrary to popular assumption, parents have little lasting influence on the food preferences of their children.

for example, found that people who identified themselves as “green” (one who is concerned with ecology and makes consumer decisions based on this concern) predicted an intention to eat organic items independent of other attitudes, such as perceived flavor and health benefits (Shepard & Raats, 1996).

Food as self-expression is especially evident in the experience of dining out. Researchers suggest that restaurants often serve more than food; they also meet emotional needs such as belongingness, status, and self-realization. In Japan, for example, homes are private; therefore, guests are entertained in the homelike environment of a restaurant. The host chooses and pays for the meal ahead of time, the guests are all served the same dishes, and the servers are expected to be part of the conversation. Although some segments of the American restaurant business also cater to the family meal experience (i.e., those that offer playgrounds or children’s entertainment), others emphasize other dining functions—the business club for financial transactions, or the candlelit neighborhood restaurant for romantic interactions (Wood, 1995). The newest restaurant, with an acclaimed chef and a need to make reservations a month in advance, represents status to some people. Ethnic restaurants appeal to those individuals seeking authenticity in the foods of their homeland or are a novelty to those interested in culinary adventure. Conversely, exposure to different foods in restaurants is sometimes the first step in adopting new food items at home (McComber & Postel, 1992).

### Symbolic Use of Food

It is clear from the various uses of food that, for humans, food is more than simply nutrients. Humans use foods symbolically. A *symbol* is something that suggests something else due to relationship, association, or convention. Bread is an excellent example of food symbolism. Bread is the “staff” of life; one “breaks bread” with friends; bread represents the body of Christ in the Christian sacrament of communion. White bread was traditionally eaten by the upper classes, dark bread by the poor. A person of wealth has a lot of “bread,” and whole-wheat

bread is eaten by people in the United States who are concerned more with health than with status. It is the symbolic use of food that is important to each cultural group. The foods and food habits of each group are often associated with religious beliefs or ethnic behaviors. Eating, like dressing in traditional clothing or speaking in a native language, is a daily reaffirmation of cultural identity (Figure 1.1).

## Role of Culture in Food Habits

### Definition of Culture

*Culture* is broadly defined as the values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices accepted by a community of individuals. Cultural behavior patterns are reinforced when a group is isolated by geography or segregated by socioeconomic status. Culture is learned, not inherited; it is passed from generation to generation through a process called *enculturation* (Plawewski, 1992).

Cultural membership is defined by the term *ethnicity*. Unlike national origin or race (which may include numerous ethnic groups), it is a social identity associated with shared behavior patterns, including food habits, dress, language, family structure, and often religious affiliation. Members of the same ethnic group usually have a common heritage through locality or history and participate together with other cultural groups in a larger social system. As part of this greater community, each ethnic group may have different status or positions of power. Diversity within each cultural group, called *intraethnic variation*, is also common due to racial, regional, or economic divisions as well as differing rates of acculturation to the majority culture (Harwood, 1981).

When people from one ethnicity move to an area with different cultural norms, adaptation to the new majority society begins. This process is known as *acculturation*, and it takes place along a continuum of behavior patterns. Typically, first-generation immigrants remain emotionally connected to their culture of origin. They integrate into their new society by adopting some majority culture values and practices, but generally surround themselves with a reference group of family and friends

■ The symbolic importance of bread can be seen in some of the superstitions associated with it: Greek soldiers took a piece from home to ensure their safe, victorious return; English midwives placed a loaf at the foot of the mother’s bed to prevent the woman and her baby from being stolen.



**Figure 1.1**

An edible map—food-related names of cities and towns in the United States. Food often means more than simply nutrients.



Source: Excerpted from *All Over the Map*, copyright 1994 by David Jouris, with permission from Ten Speed Press, P.O. Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707. Reprinted with permission.

who are from their ethnic background. For example, Asian Indians living in the United States who consider themselves to be “mostly or very Asian Indian” may encourage their children to speak English and allow them to celebrate American holidays, but they do not permit them to date non-Asian Indian peers (Sodowsky & Carey, 1988). Other immigrants become *bicultural*, which happens when the new majority culture is seen as complementing, rather than competing with, an individual’s ethnicity. The positive aspects of both societies are embraced and the individual develops the skills needed to operate within either culture (Brookins, 1993). Asian Indians who call themselves Indo-Americans or Asian Indian Americans fall into this category, eating equal

amounts of Indian and American foods, thinking and reading equally in an Indian language and in English (Sodowsky & Carey, 1988).

*Assimilation* occurs when people from one cultural group shed their ethnic identity and fully merge into the majority culture. Although some first-generation immigrants strive toward assimilation due perhaps to personal determination to survive in a foreign country or to take advantage of opportunities, most often assimilation takes place in subsequent generations. Asian Indians who identify themselves as being “mostly American” do not consider Asian Indian culture superior to American culture, and they are willing to let their children date non-Indians. It is believed that ethnic pride is reawakened in some immigrants if they



Typically, first-generation immigrants remain emotionally connected to their ethnicity, surrounding themselves with a reference group of family and friends who share their cultural background. (© Peter Mengel/Stock, Boston.)

■ The concept *conservatism of cuisine* suggests that most people are reluctant to try new foods. Acceptance occurs if, after being introduced to the item, a person determines that it is tasty, nontoxic and nutritive, and compatible with other food habits (Rozin, 1991).

become disillusioned with life in America, particularly if the disappointment is attributed to prejudice from the majority society (Sodowsky & Carey, 1988). A few immigrants exist at the edges of the acculturation process, either maintaining total ethnic identity or rejecting both their culture of origin and that of the majority culture (Meleis et al., 1992).

Culturally based food habits are often one of the last traditions people change through acculturation. Unlike speaking a foreign language or wearing traditional clothing, eating is usually done in the privacy of the home, hidden from observation by majority culture members. Adoption of new food items does not generally develop linearly as a steady progression from traditional diet to diet of the majority culture. Instead, research indicates that consumption of new items is often independent of traditional food habits (Dewey et al., 1984; Pelto et al., 1981; Szathmary et al., 1987). The lack of available native ingredients may force immediate acculturation, or convenience or cost factors may speed change. Samoans may be unable to find the coconut cream needed to prepare favorite dishes, for instance. Foods that are tasty are easily accepted, such as pastries, candies, and soft drinks; conversely, unpopular traditional foods may be the first to go. Mexican children living in America quickly reject the variety cuts of meat, such as tripe, that their parents still enjoy. It is the foods that are most associated with ethnic identity that are most resistant to acculturation. Muslims will proba-

bly never eat pork, regardless of where they live. People from China may insist on eating rice with every meal, even if it is the only Asian food on the table.

## Factors That Influence Food Habits

Numerous cultural factors affect the diet of each person within a society. Experts in the field have systematically analyzed these influences to delineate the interrelationships and predict food habits. Two approaches are especially helpful in understanding individual dietary practices within the context of culture. First is the *developmental perspective of food culture* (Table 1.1), which suggests how social dynamics are paralleled by trends in food, eating, and nutrition (Sobal, 1999). Second is the *lifestyle model of dietary habits* (Figure 1.2), which outlines how specific food behaviors may result from the interaction of social factors with lifestyle factors (Pelto, 1981).

## Social Dynamics

The developmental perspective of food culture is useful in conceptualizing broad trends in cultural food habits that emerge during structural changes in a society.

**Table 1.1**  
Developmental Perspective of Food Culture

Structural Change	Food Culture Change
Globalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local to unrestricted</li></ul>	Consumerization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indigenous to mass foods</li></ul>
Modernization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Muscle to fueled power</li></ul>	Commoditization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homemade to manufactured</li></ul>
Urbanization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural to urban residence</li></ul>	Delocalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Producers to only consumers</li></ul>
Migration <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Original to new settings</li></ul>	Acculturation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Traditional to adopted foods</li></ul>

Source: Adapted from Sobal (1999).

As described by Sobal (1999), *globalization* is the integration of local, regional, and national phenomena into an unrestricted, worldwide organization. The parallel change in cultural food habits is *consumerization*, the transition of a society from producers of indigenous foods to consumers of mass-produced foods. Limited, seasonal ingredients such as strawberries are replaced by items grown worldwide, available any time of year. Specialty products, such as ham and other deli meats, that were at one time prepared annually or only for festive occasions can now be bought presliced, precooked, and prepackaged for immediate consumption.

The social dynamic of *modernization* encompasses new technologies and the socioeconomic shifts that result, such as during the industrial revolution when muscle power was replaced by fuel-generated engine power or during the past decade with the information age. Cultural beliefs, values, and behaviors modify in response to the dramatic structural changes that take place. *Commoditization* typifies food habits, with foods becoming processed, marketed commodities instead of home-prepared sustenance. The fresh milk from the cow in the barn becomes the plastic gallon container of pasteurized milk shipped to another part of the country and sold on-line over the Internet to a consumer limited in time (and access to dairy cows) but not money.

*Urbanization* occurs when a large percentage of the population abandons the low density of rural residence in favor of higher-density suburban and urban residence. Often income levels do not change in the move, but families who previously survived on subsistence farming become dependent on others for food. Delocalization occurs when the connection between growing, harvesting, cooking, and eating food is lost as meals prepared by anonymous workers are purchased from convenience markets and fast-food restaurants.

Finally, *migration* of populations from their original homes to new settlements creates significant structural change as we shift from a home-bound, culture-bound society to one in which global travel is prevalent and immigration common. Traditional food habits are in flux during *acculturation* to the diet of a new culture and as novel foods are introduced and

accepted into a majority cuisine. Often wholly new traditions emerge from the contact between diverse cultural food habits.

## Lifestyle Influences

The construction of a model to describe societal trends in cultural food habits is by necessity so broad that the preferences and selections of each individual are obscured. Peltó's (1981) lifestyle model of dietary habits proposes that the social factors outlined in the developmentalist model of food culture interact directly with lifestyle influences to produce specific food behaviors.

## Social Factors

The food production and distribution system is responsible for the availability of foods, which differs from region to region and country to country. Individuals may have access only to homegrown food, or they may be able to purchase exotic products from around the world. Food availability influences, and in turn is influenced by, the socioeconomic and political systems. These serve to control the production and distribution of food in the culture. In the public sector, for example, farm subsidies both in the United States and in Europe promote the production of dairy and grain foods far in excess of what can be used by their populations, while deprivations during wartime required that food be strictly rationed. Government policy may also be involved with the purchasing power of consumers through programs such as food subsidies for the poor, as well as the oversight of food quality through safety standards, nutrition labeling requirements, and other production programs (Josling & Ritson, 1986).

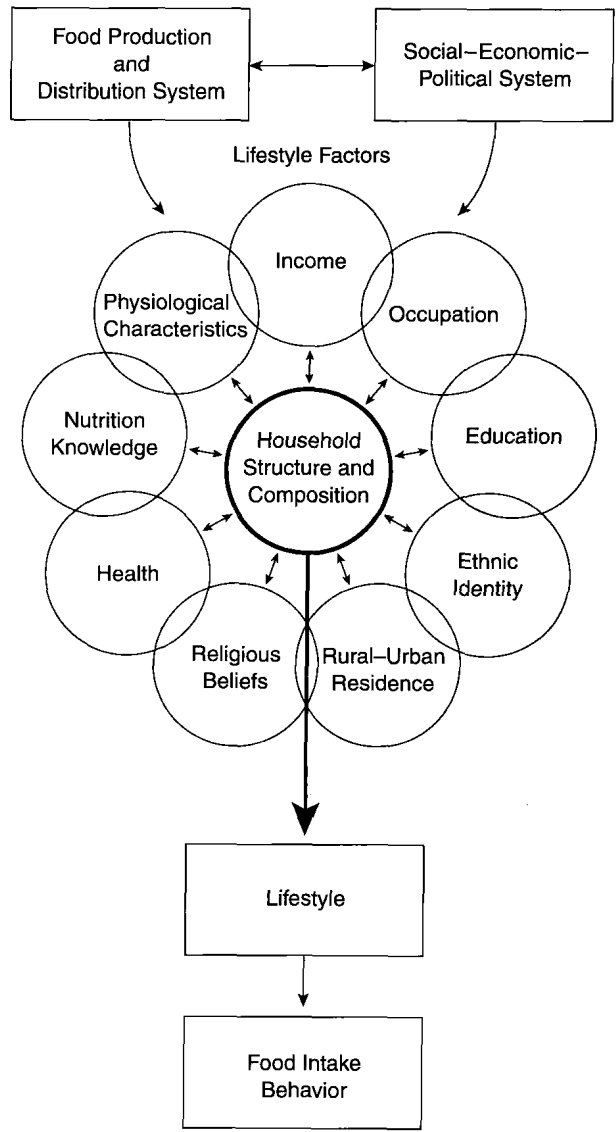
In the private sector, advertising is another form of control, greatly influencing some food habits, such as cereal, snack, and beverage preferences. Research indicates that, in blind taste tests, people often have difficulty discriminating between different brands of the same food item. Consumer loyalty to a particular brand is believed to be more related to the sensual and emotional appeal of the name and packaging (Lannon, 1986); after all, purchase of food is a form of self-expression.

■ The developmentalist model of food culture assumes that cultures progress from underdeveloped to developed through the structural changes listed. Deliberate efforts to reverse that trend can be seen in the renewed popularity of farmer's markets in the United States and recent attacks on fast-food franchises in Europe (Sobal, 1999).

■ The governments in most developed nations often manipulate food pricing to meet agricultural objectives but are more reluctant to use food prices to meet nutrition goals (Josling & Ritson, 1986).

**Figure 1.2**  
Lifestyle model of dietary habits.

Source: From G. H. Peltó (1981). "Anthropological Contributions to Nutrition Education Research," *Journal of Nutrition Education*, 13 (Suppl.), S4. Reprinted with permission.



For example, similar-tasting flake cereals such as Wheaties ("breakfast of champions"), Special K™, and Total™ target sports enthusiasts, dieters, and the health-conscious, respectively. Mass media images have increasing influence; television programming models nutrition beliefs and behaviors, as well as provides general health information. There is often substantial distortion. In content studies, snacking was found to be as prevalent as eating meals, and only 2 to 6 percent of television characters were overweight as compared to approximately 33 percent of the total American adult population (Neuendorf, 1990).

### Lifestyle Factors

Both availability and control of food at the societal level affect the lifestyle factors of individuals. These influences include income, which limits what foods can be purchased. Even when nutritious food is abundantly available, the prestige of certain food items, such as lobster or truffles, is often linked to affordability. Occupation influences food habits in several ways. The amount of activity involved in a job affects the actual number of calories a person requires each day, for example. The location of the job also influences meal patterns. In some cultures everyone's job is near home and the whole fam-