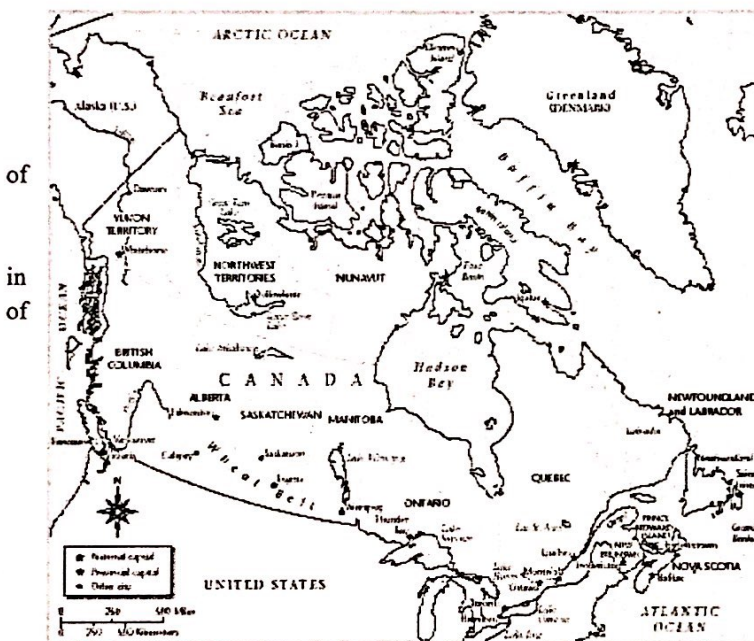


Cultural Origins of Food in Canada (Encyclopedia of Food & Culture)

CANADA. Canada is a vast country touched by three oceans, and it holds within its boundaries prairies, hills, mountains, semidesert and desert country, rocky thin-soiled lands, a multitude of lakes, enormous forests, and Arctic tundra. While the terrain varies greatly, there is a commonality across Canada, and that is the severity of winter. Few European immigrants in Canada's early history were prepared for the cold, and from the beginning, Canadians struggled with the elements for their survival. This was a defining factor in the development of Canadian cuisine. But it is the people of Canada who, more than the land and weather, created Canada's cookery. From the First Nations people to the waves of immigrants from every country in the world, Canada's cuisine became distinctly regional.

Diversity has been a characteristic of Canadian cuisine from the beginning of settlement. In the seventeenth century, the first Europeans in Canada encountered a highly varied population of Native Peoples, for example, hunters and gatherers including the Inuit in the Arctic; agricultural people in parts of southern Quebec and Ontario; buffalo hunters on the plains; and fishermen on the West Coast among the nearly sedentary Pacific North Coastal people.



By the end of the eighteenth century, the dominant groups in Canada were British (particularly English and Scots), French, and American Loyalists. The cuisine that developed during the nineteenth and first half the twentieth century reflected these influences. There were strong overtones of French cookery in Quebec, British influences in English-speaking Canada, and a strong import of culinary culture from the United States. While there were many ethnic groups in Canada by the end of World War II, British-American cookery dominated Canadian cookery. A partial exception to this generalization was the Chinese influence. Peasants from southern China immigrated to "Golden Mountain" (Canada or, more specifically, British Columbia) beginning in the 1850s. Many were employed in construction and the building of the railroad. As with other cultural groups,

they were discriminated against, but they introduced Canadians to Chinese cuisine by opening Chinese restaurants in nearly every village and city across Canada.

In spite of the cultural dominance of English-speaking Canadians, other ethnic immigrant groups often settled in regional pockets where they maintained their language and their culinary traditions. Coming from different regions in their home countries, they melded traditions together. For example, in the Ukraine, women made *pysanky* (eggs decorated with ritualistic symbols) according to their local traditions, but in Canada, they drew designs from many regions of Ukraine. Northern and Southern Italian foods such as pasta and polenta, likewise, were simply "Italian" in Canada.

Until after World War II, ethnic foods were rarely written about in Canadian food magazines or cookbooks, and ethnic recipes were highly modified. In a 1920s community cookbook, for example, a chop suey recipe was a mixture of fried hamburger, rice, tomatoes, and onions, baked for an hour; and spaghetti was cooked meat, spaghetti, onion, butter, green pepper, and canned tomato soup, baked with buttered bread crumbs; both were seasoned only with salt and pepper. In the 1970s the milieu changed when, under the leadership of Pierre Trudeau, Canada adopted a policy of multiculturalism. It then became the fashion to share ethnicity, and the easiest way was through cookery. The foods that ethnic groups had eaten in the privacy of their homes became *de rigueur*.



Like the United States, Canada is home to many ethnic communities. These Greek Canadians are preparing traditional Easter pastries in Vancouver, British Columbia. © ANNIE GRIFFITHS BELT/CORBIS.

After World War II, fast-food eateries and chain restaurants serving inexpensive, mass-produced foods swept across North America. Franchises on the U.S. model were adopted and Canadians quickly developed their own fast food restaurants for hamburgers, fried chicken, and pizza. A favorite fast-food chain is Tim Horton Donuts, a coffee and donut shop. Popular Canadian restaurant chains that developed were "road houses" serving grilled foods and pasta. The Americanization of Canadian foods and foodways was influenced also by food articles in American magazines and by television food shows.

Canadian cuisine is strongly regional in character with American influences. The eating pattern of three meals a day, the popularity of many foods, the importation of fresh produce and manufactured foods, and the eating of particular foods at the feasts of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter are common denominators of the cuisine of both the United States and Canada. The real difference is the highly visible regional cuisines of Canada, based on the available ingredients and the ethnic groups who settled in these regions. Canadian cuisine cannot be understood without examining these regional traditions.

THE ORDER OF GOOD CHEER

The small band of French explorers at Port Royal, Nova Scotia, anticipated the winter of 1606 with dread. The previous winter many of their men had died from a mysterious "land-sickness." The illness was thought to be caused by ill-temper, idleness, and discontent. Samuel de Champlain, a member of the band, founded *L'ordre de bon temps* (the Order of Good Cheer) to prevent the illness. The object of the society was to go hunting and fishing for wild game and seafood that could be served up in a series of feasts held throughout the winter.

The feasting was met with great enthusiasm by Chief Henri Membertou and his Mi'kmaq followers, who joined the hunting forays and were invited to the grand dinners. It was the custom of the Mi'kmaq to share their food with whoever was in the vicinity, and the French reciprocated this generosity. The variety of raw ingredients for their meals was extensive venison, moose, beaver, ducks and geese, salmon and trout caught through the ice, scallops, cockles, sea urchin, crabs, and lobster. In addition to these foods, there was plenty of wine and provisions from France.

Although we do not know the dishes prepared for the feasts, the gentlemen in the group were accustomed to sophisticated food. Champlain had been a visitor to the court of Henry IV; one of the men wrote in his diary that their food was as good as roast meats from the cook shops of Paris. As well, Champlain kept stocked fish ponds near the Habitation. The Order did help to fend off the illness (scurvy) during the winter. More than anything else, however, the lasting benefit of the dinners was an enduring friendship between the Mi'kmaq and the French. As others have found, the dining table is much better than a negotiating table for mediating conflicts between cultures. The spirit of the Order of Good Cheer is a culinary legacy to Canadians.

POOR MAN'S FARE

Pâté à la râpure (or rappie pie, the English name) is a traditional Acadian dish with its roots in the frugality of French women. After the British victory in Nova Scotia in the late eighteenth century, some families who had been expelled from the fertile Annapolis Valley returned, but to fishing or to farming marginal land. Times were extremely hard, but they were able to cultivate potatoes and the men liked their white shirts starched. The women made starch by grating potatoes, squeezing out the starch, and boiling the white shirts in the extract. Since they couldn't waste the potato gratings, they put them into a pan with lobster or fish and baked this mixture. The result, distinctly different from sliced and baked potatoes, was a gelatinous, translucent mixture flavored with seafood, called *râpure*. Today the tradition continues and, although they still squeeze out the starch to give *râpure* its distinct character, the starch is seldom used for stiffening white shirts.

CABIN AU SUCRE

Where the sugar maples grow in Quebec, there will be "sugar shacks." From the beginning of settlement, colonists tapped the clear maple sap to produce sugar for the year's use as a sweetener. "Spiles," originally wooden tubes with sharpened ends and now metal tubes with hooks for buckets or tubing, were placed in holes drilled into the sugar maple trees. When the nights were cold and days warm, the sap flowed. In the old days, horses hauled tubs of the clear liquid to a covered shed where the sap was boiled down day and night. It took thirty to forty buckets of sap to produce one bucket of golden maple syrup. Men and boys stayed for weeks in the bush tending the fires and watching the syrup so that it would not burn. Today, when one drives through Quebec in the early spring before the snow melts, buckets adorning maple trees and smoke billowing from the bush are a common sight. From this, today's *cabin au sucre*, or sugar shack, has become a Quebec feature that anyone can enjoy. City folk today flock to the *cabins au sucre* to feast on maple-drenched dishes, to dance, and to drink. Outdoors, children are treated to *la tire*, syrup boiled down to a taffy and hardened on snow, and horses draw wagons of fun-seekers into the bush to view the miles of plastic tubing collecting the clear sapuebec "gold."

Source: Encyclopedia of Food & Culture, ©2003 Gale Cengage. All Rights Reserved

The North: Finding Food for Survival

Canada's agricultural belt as well as its population is concentrated in approximately the lower one-third of its land mass. The "North" includes the territories of the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and the newest territory, Nunavut. For purposes of describing the regional cuisines of Canada, the forest land south of the tundra and north of the agricultural belt are also included, as are parts of the Prairie provinces, Ontario, Quebec and Labrador.

Indigenous ingredients distinguish the cuisine of northern Canada from other regions. Because food supplies are difficult to transport, there is more of an emphasis upon local foods than in southern Canada. Caribou, muskoxen, moose, deer, ptarmigan, and arctic char are hunted or fished. Today aboriginal people supply wild game to restaurants and the luxury market, particularly caribou, muskoxen, and arctic char. Migratory ducks and geese provide variety to the larder in the fall. Berries grow profusely blueberries, partridge berries, cranberries, and black currants are made into pies, preserves, jellies, and sauces. These foods all have local habitats or all are found in every part of Canada's north.

The aboriginal population comprises about two thirds of the northern population. Before European settlement, the Inuit occupied the Arctic, that is, the tundra beyond the tree line that encompasses the northern third of Canada's land mass. The aboriginal tribes of the Mackenzie and Yukon River basins and the Northern Cree occupy the northern wooded areas. Before contact with Europeans, these Peoples of the First Nations were self-sufficient and lived seasonally, either following herds of caribou or moving from place to place where food could be found. Their diet was rich in protein, with plant materials making up an estimated five percent of their food. This diet was healthy and supplied all their nutritional needs. In the twentieth century, attempts to assimilate Native Peoples into white society changed the native culture dramatically. Many were moved to permanent settlements (especially the Inuit) and were no longer able to resume their migratory food patterns. They began to live on foods that could be transported into their villages, usually by plane. These foods were much different from their traditional diet. Carbohydrates were introduced, particularly white flour and refined sugar. Manufactured foods like potato chips and soft drinks became popular, especially because the traditional pattern was to eat when hungry rather than at set mealtimes. Rich in fat and starch, these new foods were detrimental to the health of Native Peoples, leading to diabetes and other dietary diseases. While there is a trend among Native Peoples to return to their traditional diet, permanent settlements make this difficult.

The largest white settlements in the north are in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Dawson and Whitehorse were settled during the gold rush, and Yellowknife was established as the capital of the Northwest Territories. The Yukon today has predominantly British roots. The center of the gold rush beginning in 1897, Dawson drew miners, honky-tonk girls, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). To prevent starvation, miners were required to pack in a year's supply of food before they were allowed into the territory. Provisions were basic and affected the cuisine of the territory: beans, flour, dried fruit, sugar, bacon, and tea were common items. Wild game supplemented their plain diets, but if they struck it rich they could buy luxury foods such as chocolate, champagne, and fresh eggs. Prospectors became known as "sour-doughs" because they craved white bread so much they baked it in their camps. Legend has it that they kept the yeast starter alive by carrying it in their armpits when traveling in the bitter cold.

Today procurement of food for the north still requires a great deal of planning. Winter is unpredictable, and even where there are logging trails or water access to northern communities, food supplies are sometimes delayed. Nearly any food can be shipped in by air, but that option is expensive. With modern communications with the rest of the world, there is demand for many more food products, especially in increasingly popular luxury fly-in hunting and fishing lodges. Overall, diets in the North are simpler than elsewhere, but definitely Canadian in style.

From coast to coast, diverse regional cuisines dominate Canadian cooking. Canadians today value their ethnic origins highly and take pride in preserving their culture, particularly their cuisine. Overlying these regional cuisines is a dominant North American influence, which is not surprising since there was American immigration into Canada early in its history, the language is understood by most Canadians, and the cultural influence of the media has brought trends and new foods to Canada. Canadians also take advantage of fruits and vegetables grown south of the border that lend variety to winter meals. One cannot say that there is a national cuisine, as there is in Mexico, but one must experience and enjoy the diverse regional cuisines of Canada, which together create a diversity of foodways that reflect Canadian society.

British Columbia: Aboriginal, English, Chinese, and California Fusion

Because of settlement patterns in British Columbia, Canada's westernmost province, its cuisine is different from the rest of Canada. The aboriginal people included many bands of North Coastal and Interior Coastal Peoples living in small villages along the Pacific Ocean and in the interior mountainous areas. By the 1860s there was a genteel English colony on Vancouver Island enjoying garden parties and afternoon tea. Chinese laborers arrived in the last half of the nineteenth century, and in addition to opening restaurants, frequently became cooks in English homes. In the twentieth century, the Californian free-spirited cookery spread up the coast, espousing the use of fresh local ingredients and healthy cooking, including vegetarianism. Many other cultural groups added to this mix but the dominant cuisine is Aboriginal, English, Chinese, and Californian.

As the cuisine in British Columbia developed, locally grown or harvested ingredients from land and sea respectively were adopted by all groups and each modified them according to their backgrounds. The Pacific harvest focuses on salmon: coho, chinook, pink, chum, and red sockeye salmon. Halibut, black cod, lingcod, tuna, rockfish, and eulachon are also favored fish. Shellfish include crabs (especially Dungeness) oysters, scallops, shrimp, prawns, abalone, and many varieties of clams. Agricultural areas in the beginning were developed in the Fraser River delta, supplying produce for Victoria and Chinese vegetables for early Chinese immigrants. Further inland, microclimates characterize the agricultural areas of the Okanagan and Similkimen Valleys, the fruit-growing regions of British Columbia. This climate is ideal for viticulture, and some grapes left on the vine until January are made into Eiswein. Soapberries, thimble-berries, salmonberries, huckleberries, and many other berries are harvested from the wild, as are pine mushrooms growing in evergreen forests.

The first inhabitants who influenced British Columbian cookery were the North Coast Native Peoples. Salmon was and continues to be their primary foodstuff: it is baked, poached, barbecued, and smoked. Family smokehouses are common in the coastal villages. Women also preserve salmon by canning for times when it is not in season. Eulachon oil and herring eggs are prized foods. Eulachon, a small oily fish (also called "candle fish" because when dried it can be lighted), can be eaten fried or baked, but is prized more for its oil, used as a dip for foods and as a seasoning. Spruce boughs are placed in the ocean water and become a spawning site for herring. The branches are harvested with the eggs still clinging to them and are then dried. It is not uncommon to see these boughs drying on the sides of houses. Roots were gathered in the past but are not as commonly used today with the exception of roasted camas bulbs. Indian ice cream is made by whipping the indigenous soapberries into a froth. These local ingredients still dominate aboriginal cooking, particularly since food must be brought to many native villages by ferry. However, the overall cuisine of the Native Peoples has been affected by Canadian culinary culture and their daily menus are as likely to include pizza, burgers, donuts and coffee, stews, pies and cakes as that of any other Canadian. But they value their distinct culinary traditions.

Victoria on Vancouver Island, more than any other Canadian city, has a decidedly English character. Afternoon tea is still a tradition, and locally brewed ales can be found at English-style pubs. In the warm climate (by French Canada is noted for its distinctive cookery, and the Old City of Quebec has capitalized on food tourism. Shown here is the Auberge du Tresor, a restaurant and hotel in the historic part of the city. © WOLFGANG KAEHLER/CORBIS. Canadian standards), growers around Victoria are able to successfully harvest such fruits as kiwi and figs. Their small farms are often organic, and herbs are grown year-round.

Vancouver, the largest city in British Columbia, although multicultural, has a character all its own. Here there are English, Chinese, Pacific Coast Native, Italian, and Japanese, as well as Californian influences. The Chinese influence is strongest in Vancouver. The Chinese community demands fresh produce and fish evident in Vancouver food stores. Chinese vegetables such as *gai lohn* have long been grown in the Fraser River delta. Live fish and shellfish from the Pacific are kept in tanks (geoduck clams, Dungeness crabs, and rockfish). Recent wealthy immigrants from Hong Kong created a demand for imported Chinese foods and medicines such as ginseng (grown commercially in British Columbia and Ontario), dried abalone, shark's fin, and bird's nest.

Young, well-trained chefs are combining this cooking in various adaptations, creating a fusion cuisine. These young people revere local ingredients, ethnic ideas and styles, organically grown foods, herbs, edible flowers, whole grains, and enjoy the good life.

The Prairies: Bread and Beef

Traveling west through the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, seemingly endless fields of wheat dominate the landscape. The wheat belt runs through all three prairie provinces, and wheat is an important economic export. Canadian cuisine has been affected by this bountiful crop since it was first planted on the Prairies in the last half of the nineteenth century. Canadians have a history of baking. In 1913 Five Roses Flour Company published a cookbook of recipes collected from women across Canada. By 1915 this book was found in 950,000 or nearly half of the homes in Canada. In addition to bread and pastry flours, durum wheat that is made into semolina flour for making pastas is grown here.

Prairie history, however, was not one of farming. Native Americans who dominated the plains lived primarily on buffalo, which they preserved by drying and mixing it with buffalo fat and berries, usually Saskatoon berries, and storing the mixture, known as pemmican, in containers made of buffalo skin. French and Scottish voyagers of the fur trade were provisioned with pemmican by Native People, and early settlers relied upon it. When overhunting led to the demise of the huge buffalo herds, beef took its place. A favored method of beef cookery is grilling, and some cook it outdoors year round. For community barbecues, a hole is dug with a backhoe large enough for several cords of wood and an entire beef animal. After twelve hours of underground cooking, the beef is sliced and served with baked beans, fresh breads, salads, pickles and relishes, pies and cakes. Calgary, the home of the Canadian cowboy, glorifies the chuck wagon at "stampede," the annual rodeo. Chuck wagon races are an awaited event; the wagons dash pell-mell around a circle and at the finish line the cowboy "cook" must be the first to light the campfire. Chuck wagon expressions humorously included "baked wind pills" (baked beans), "CPR (Canadian Pacific Railroad) strawberries" (prunes), "dough-gods" (dumplings), "paperweights" (hot biscuits), and "yesterday, today and forever" (hash).

Until the 1950s, British settlers strongly influenced prairie cuisine. Stews, roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, and cakes named after British royalty (Prince of Wales, Prince Albert, King George and King Edward cakes) were popular. Today, Alberta is dotted with English tea houses, in as unlikely locations as a grain elevator.

While British cookery dominated the great wave of immigration (over a million) in the early part of the twentieth century, immigrant groups did not sacrifice their culinary traditions. Russian Mennonites settling in Manitoba, Icelandic immigrants in Grimli, Manitoba, Hutterites in Alberta, and the French who came early in settlement, particularly in Winnipeg, continued to cook their favorite recipes, as had their families before them.

Ukrainians, however, influenced prairie cookery. From the time they arrived at the end of the nineteenth century, they brought with them a tradition of wheat farming and cuisine. Mothers taught daughters the ancient art of making traditional breads and pysanky. They introduced *varenyky* or pierogies (flour-based rounds of dough stuffed with a unique Canadian potato and cheddar cheese mixture), stuffed cabbage rolls, *psyryzhky* (baked stuffed buns), and *paska* (Easter bread).

Newer immigration waves have made their mark on Prairie cuisine, particularly in the cities. In Winnipeg there is the largest Filipino population outside of that country. West Indian *roti* shops, Middle Eastern foods, and other ethnic foods add to the culinary flavors of Winnipeg, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Calgary.

Ontario: A Dynamic Cuisine

The French and then the British and, shortly thereafter, American Loyalist immigrants had close contact with members of the Iroquoian tribes. From these original farming inhabitants, the immigrants learned how to plant corn, beans, squash, Jerusalem artichokes, and sunflowers, and to tap the maple trees for their sweet sugar. In the early days of settlement, wild game and fresh fish from the streams and the many lakes in Ontario were plentiful. The French left little impact upon Ontario's cuisine, but the English foodways became dominant: their style of eating and especially their love of sweets, roasted beef and pork, cooked root vegetables, white bread, and tea. One of the first tasks the settlers had was to build grist mills to grind wheat for their cakes and breads. They found the farmland in southern Ontario to be fertile, and most of the crops from their homelands flourished. Dairy herds were established, which led in the nineteenth century to a significant trade in cheddar cheese with England and the popularity of this cheese in Ontario.

There were two influential groups who came north with the Loyalists at the end of the eighteenth century. The Iroquois under the leadership of Joseph Brant settled near Brantford to form the Six Nations. An agricultural people, they grew the "Three Sisters" corn, beans, and squashed reinforced the growth and use of these crops in Ontario. The other group was the Pennsylvania German Mennonites who took up farming in the Waterloo area. When the Ontario Mennonites chose their food preparations from the Pennsylvania German recipe repertoire, a difference appeared. While the recipes they loved best were still distinctly Mennonite, the choices of foods changed. In Ontario, they are known for summer sausages, *Nusschinken* (cool-smoked ham), smoked pork chops, *Koch Käse* (a runny cooked whey cheese flavored with caraway seed, smeared on bread with apple butter), shoofly pie made with maple syrup, Dutch apple pie, doughnuts, and mint tea.

In the nineteenth century, southern Ontario was the terminus of the "underground railroad," offering shelter to American blacks escaping slavery. They brought Southern American cookery to Ontario. Irish, Scots, English, and other groups streamed into Ontario during this century, reinforcing British cuisine. Rutabagas (called turnips) were standard winter fare. Steamed carrot pudding became a Christmas tradition. China tea cups were given to brides, and the prescribed wedding cake was a dark fruit cake.

Some ethnic groups entering Ontario in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries formed communities around Ontario: the Poles in Wilno, the Portuguese in Strathroy, the Italians in Guelph, the Scots in the Renfrew valley near Ottawa, the Finns in Thunder Bay, and Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans in Hamilton. This is not to say that myriad cultural groups are not found in these areas; the point is that in these areas, the home cuisine and the language of these settlers was maintained.

Coming primarily from politically troubled parts of the world, approximately 175,000 immigrants annually enter Canada. Of these, about half locate in Ontario, the majority moving into the Toronto area. Immediately after World War II came Italians, Eastern Europeans, British war brides, and many others. In the 1970s, after Canada's newly entrenched multicultural policy, immigrants streamed in from Hong Kong, Vietnam, Somalia, Ethiopia, Croatia, Serbia, India, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, and other countries. Ontario had long served up a meat, potato, and root vegetable table, but the influx of new people and their culinary traditions meant a developing and rapidly changing gastronomy in Ontario, led by Toronto.

Toronto, the most culturally diverse city in Canada, is a reflection of Canadian multiculturalism in the makeup of its population and in its cuisine. There are five Chinatowns in the Toronto area, most recently settled by affluent Chinese from Hong Kong, and Chinese restaurants represent every region in China. Upscale restaurants serve Italian, Portuguese, Greek, Indian, Lebanese, Caribbean, and American cuisine, but the neighborhood dining spots are the best places to find the comfort food of nearly every nation in the world and at a reasonable price.

As a result of this diversity, Ontario is somewhat fragmented in its cuisine, but people in Ontario pride themselves on a receptivity to the flavors of the world. Hoisin sauce, *garam masala*, *baba ghanoush*, phyllo pastry, flat breads, *tzatziki*, pierogies, rice and beans, Jamaican meat patties, and espresso are, if not daily fare, part of Ontario's food repertoire.

Quebec: A Distinct Cuisine

Quebecois consider themselves a distinct society, and this is reflected in their cuisine. Restaurant menus are written in French, and the cuisine is distinctly French, but with a difference: most of all, the love often obsession with food and its celebration, the use of flavorful sauces, the elaboration of courses, the use of fresh ingredients, and the respect for their chefs. The first European settlers in Canada in the early seventeenth century were French. They maintained close ties with their mother country until after the English conquest in the mid-eighteenth century. At that time, communication with France was cut off.

Thus, many traditional Quebec dishes resemble those prepared in medieval and early Renaissance France. Well-known favorites across Quebec are *cretons* (a rich pork pâté), *tourtière* (meat pie), *ragoût de pattes et de boulettes* (pigs' feet and meatball stew), *les cipaille* or *cipâte* (baked casserole made by layering pastry with meat, poultry, and/or seafood), and *galettes de sarrasin* (buckwheat pancakes). A hearty fare, originally cooked for fishermen, farmers, and loggers, they are today reserved for family gatherings and holidays.

The abundance of wild game and the land available to provide forage for it probably influenced Quebec's cuisine more than any other factor. This provided ordinary settlers with meat and gave them an equality with royalty unknown to the seventeenth-century French peasant. Indeed, in France at that time, food was frequently scarce. It is not surprising that the Quebecois' diet was rich in meat, poultry, and fish and that regional dishes were made with these ingredients.

Although maintaining their French heritage, the Quebecois incorporated ingredients and dishes from other cultures. From the beginning, the French had close ties with aboriginal peoples whose culture dictated that they share game and fish with their friends. The Native Peoples showed them the edible wild flora and fauna, and the French were quick to incorporate wild game, berries, and maple sugar into their diet. It should be noted that corn, beans, and squash had already been introduced into France before Quebec was colonized, and potatoes are thought to have been introduced by the British. American Loyalists and British immigrants after 1755 also influenced Quebec cookery; the French especially liked sweet British desserts, many of them made with molasses. Cultural influences continue today as with the Middle Eastern innovation *mechoui*, a popular party at which a whole animal is barbecued, usually wild game like buffalo or wild boar. Quebec cities, like other Canadian centers, have a multicultural character. This is especially true of Montreal, where there are more French-speaking immigrants than in other major Canadian cities: Haitians, Lebanese, and Vietnamese have all influenced Quebec's cookery, particularly in their family-owned restaurants and their ingredients in small grocery stores. Moreover, Montreal's population contains a mix of people speaking a multitude of languages who have contributed their foodways to the cultural mix of this city.

Quebec's cuisine is a highly regional one. The Institut de Tourisme et d'Hôtellerie du Québec has identified at least seventeen gastronomical regions within the province and has searched out more than 30,000 regional recipes. In the Gaspé, for instance, salt is used liberally and salmon layered with pastry is their version of *cipâte*. People from the Lac Saint-Jean area are called "*les Bluets*" (blueberries), and these berries are made into *grandpères* (dumplings cooked in blueberry sauce) or a blueberry *cipaille*. Gourgane beans brought from Europe are unique to this area and are often made into *soupe aux gourganes*, a filling bean, barley, and vegetable potage.

Today, young Quebec-trained chefs search out local ingredients, experiment with them, and to some extent are turning to France for inspiration. Artisanal breads, soft cheeses, goat cheeses, Normandy-style apple cider, local wines, organically grown vegetables, white asparagus, fresh herbs (especially summer savory), wild mushrooms, rabbits, caribou, and wild game birds are some of the ingredients finding their way onto the Quebec table. The Quebec diet is changing but the accent remains distinctly French Quebec.

Newfoundland: A Survival Cuisine

From the early sixteenth century, the huge and lucrative cod fisheries on the coasts surrounding this island province and the Grand Banks offshore attracted fishing vessels manned by Basque, Portuguese, French, and British sailors. Before settlement, these groups salted cod in summer fish-drying camps, and then dried it on "flakes." A product that could keep indefinitely, salt cod was eaten in Europe for centuries. Eventually the English settled in the north and west, followed by the Irish, in St. John's and the east coast, and French along the south shore. Newfoundland's environment is harsh and demanding with deceptively warm but short summers. The cuisine that developed was simple and entrenched.

Only a few ingredients are needed to make ribsticking, hearty, and soul-satisfying meals. Fish (cod) and root vegetables form the basis of the Newfoundlanders' diet. There is little agriculture on the island, but root vegetables can be grown there, and tiny vegetable garden plots are often found along the roadside on the western coast. Potatoes, carrots, onions, turnips, parsnips, and cabbage are mainstays.

In 1992 the cod stocks crashed on the Grand Banks, and a moratorium was placed on commercial fishing in Canadian waters on the Banks. Although a way of life for Newfoundlanders seemed to have been lost, cod remains their favorite food. While the major cod fisheries are still closed, some fish is available on the southern coast, and local inhabitants are allowed to "jig" for cod two weekends a year. When a Newfoundlander says the word "fish," he or she means "cod," which, over the centuries, has been the preferred dish. A fresh cod dinner is Newfoundland comfort food. A thick piece of cod, usually grilled or poached, is served with mashed potatoes, mixed peas and carrots, coleslaw and fluffy white rolls. Delicacies are cod tongues and cheeks, either sautéed or deep-fried. Salt cod is prepared most commonly as fish 'n' brewis (also called "fisherman's brewis"). The salted fish is soaked, shredded, and cooked with dried bread chunks (hardtack) until thick, and schruncheons (fried diced salt pork) with its fat is poured over the mixture.

Pea soup (a thick potage of yellow split peas with diced turnips, carrots, and potatoes) can be traced back to the daily fare of sixteenth-century fishermen with salt beef added on Sundays. Split peas are also used to make pease pudding by dropping a pudding bag of peas into Jigg's dinner, a boiled dinner of salt beef, onions, potatoes, carrots, and turnips. To supplement and vary the fish and salt-beef diet, many men hunt partridge, ptarmigan, rabbits, turr (a seabird), moose, caribou, and deer. Moose is preferred only because it will fill the hunter's freezer and his neighbors' and last through the winter. A traditional wild-game dish is flipper pie made from seal flippers, carefully prepared and cooked in a pastry. The wilds also provide berries in abundance, eaten fresh and preserved for the long winter, either frozen for pies and other desserts or made into jams. Favorites are blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, partridgeberries (lingnon berries), and yellow baking apples (cloud berries).

More than anything else, Newfoundlanders are known for fun: parties, Newfoundland fiddling, and rum. Screech, a dark rum, was named because American servicemen during World War II found it made them "screech." Those "from away" may undergo a Newfoundland initiation by tossing back Screech and reciting an intonation, always with good humor, and sometimes accompanied by kissing a cod.

The Maritime Provinces: An Entrenched Cuisine

The cuisine of the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.) is a bittersweet one because so many people were dislocated, either within the Maritimes or because they had to leave their homelands, sweet because the Maritime cuisine was a result. Early migration into the Atlantic provinces generally took place of necessity. Power struggles between France and England led to the forced displacement of the French Acadians in 1755, and American planters took over their rich farmlands. Scattered to many countries, some Acadians returned after 1763, not to their rich farmlands but to less desirable land, or they turned to fishing. Settling in parts of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Quebec, they developed a distinct cuisine in each area: buckwheat pancakes, *poutine râpée* (dumpling stuffed with salt pork), *râpure* (grated potato and chicken or seafood pie), *fricots* (stews), rabbit pies, and many other traditional dishes.

Later in the century, in 1783, United Empire Loyalists, scorned in the United States, made their way into the Maritimes. These American Loyalists brought New England food traditions, popularizing corn in many forms (corn-on-the-cob, johnnycakes, corn puddings, and Anadama or Yankee bread), and the Saturday night custom of baked beans and brown bread. Freed African loyalists and others of African descent also came north. Blacks settling in the Shelburne area brought Southern American cooking: deep-fat frying, barbecued meat, the use of corn meal and hominy, pork, rice, and fish. Germans left for Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, in 1753 and contributed Solomon Gundy (pickled herring), soused eels, and sauerkraut. Scots in Cape Breton brought oat cakes and porridge bread. These early settlers created distinct regional cuisines. But the one traditional meal common to the Maritimes is Dutch mess, also called hugger-in-buff, fish and schrunchions, or house bankin, depending upon where one lives. Salt cod is soaked, then cooked; potatoes are boiled in the fish broth; salt pork and onions are fried, vinegar and cream added and poured over the cod and potatoes. The next day, leftovers are mashed and made into fish cakes.

The abundant fish and shellfish were the key ingredients defining early Maritime cuisine, and they continue to do so today. These seafoods, along with root vegetables, dried peas, cabbage, and trade goods from Britain formed the basic components used in early eastern Canadian cookery. Early English colonists were dependent upon Great Britain for food, and these supplies grew into a thriving trade of tea, sugar, spices (ginger was a favorite), and dried fruits. The triangular trade between England, New England, and the Caribbean brought molasses, rum, and ginger from the Caribbean. Halifax, the early center of British social life, retains a distinct English character. Gaily signed pubs serve meat pies and fish and chips. British dishes linger on: roast beef with Yorkshire pudding, trifle, and gingerbread.

Each Maritime province has vast coastal areas, and cod is common to all. Products of the sea vary somewhat in each province. Prince Edward Island is associated with lobster fisheries, aqua-cultured blue mussels, Malpeque oysters, and Irish moss. Nova Scotia is known for Digby scallops and dulse (a reddish seaweed). New Brunswick fishes for Fundy salmon, smelt, trout, and shad. Samphire greens (eaten locally) are harvested from the shores of each of these provinces. In countryside Nova Scotia, roadside "canteens," one-room buildings, sell some of the region's best seafood: lobster or clam rolls, fried scallops, or fried fish & seafoods cooked fresh from the sea.

The harvest from the land is also regional. Nova Scotia is known for its Annapolis Valley apple orchards, New Brunswick for its maple syrup and wild chanterelles, and P.E.I. for its potatoes. New Brunswick fiddleheads from the Ostrich fern are a gourmet delicacy picked in early spring before the fronds open, and are cooked as a vegetable. By the early 1800s, established food traditions had become associated with a way of life, and to a great extent, have remained impervious to change. Even the large migrations of ethnic groups after World War II were insufficient to displace these three-hundred-year-old culinary traditions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aitken, Julia, and Anita Stewart. *The Ontario Harvest Cookbook: An Exploration of Feasts and Flavours*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1996.

Armstrong, Julian. *A Taste of Quebec*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1990.

Barer-Stein, Thelma. *You Eat What You Are: People, Culture and Food Traditions*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Firefly Books, 1999.

Canadian Historical Association. *Canada's Ethnic Groups*, series of booklets. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1982-1991.

Driver, Elizabeth. *A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks (1825-1949)*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, forthcoming.

Ferguson, Carol, and Margaret Fraser. *A Century of Canadian Home Cooking: 1900 through the '90s*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall, 1992.

Five Roses Cook Book. Montreal: Lake of the Woods Milling Co., 1913.

Institut de Tourisme et d'Hôtellerie du Québec. *Cuisine du Québec*. Montreal: Les Éditions TransMo, 1985.

Lafrance, Marc, and Yvon Desloges. *A Taste of History: The Origins of Québec's Gastronomy*. Montreal: Les Éditions de la Chenelière, 1989.

Nightingale, Marie. *Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens*. New York: Scribners, 1971.

Ontario Historical Society. *Consuming Passions: Eating and Drinking Traditions in Ontario*. Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1990.

Powers, Jo Marie, ed. *Buon appetito! Italian Foodways in Ontario*. Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 2000.

Powers, Jo Marie, ed. *From Cathay to Canada: Chinese Cuisine in Transition*. Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1998.

Powers, Jo Marie, and Anita Stewart, eds. *Northern Bounty: A Celebration of Canadian Cuisine*. Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1995.

Stechishin, Savella. *Traditional Ukrainian Cookery*. Winnipeg: Trident Press, 1957.

Stewart, Anita. *The Flavours of Canada: A Celebration of the Finest Regional Foods*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2000.

Turner, Nancy J. *Food Plants of Interior First Peoples*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997.

Jo Marie Powers