



Culinary Institute  
of America

# Global / Plant Forward Cuisine

Day 5



# Learning Objectives

- List the culinary regions within the Mediterranean, Latin America, and Asia.
- Define Plant Forward and discuss the principles of healthy, sustainable cooking.
- Explain the elements of taste in each region.
- List the key ingredients used in each region.
- Explain the common cooking techniques used in each region.
- Describe the popular dishes representative of these global locations.
- Prepare a variety of dishes representative of these global locations and Plant Forward Cooking.

# Mediterranean Countries

- France
- Italy
- Greece
- Turkey
- Tunisia
- Morocco
- Spain
- Slovenia
- Monaco
- Malta
- Cyprus



- Algeria
- Libya
- Egypt
- Israel
- Lebanon
- Syria
- Albania
- Montenegro
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Croatia

# Mediterranean Cuisine

- Seasonal, minimally processed; tied to nature, freshness
- Simple flavors and presentations, regional varieties of top dishes
- Low consumption of animal fats
- Plant foods as focal point of the plate, as opposed to meat
- **Importance of family and religion:** reflected in mealtimes/ eating habits







# Flavor Profiles



## **Lemon + Parsley**

- Found throughout the Mediterranean and Middle East
- Sauce for meat or fish, dip or spread, seasoning for salad
- Ex. Tabbouleh, hummus, gremolata

**Lemon + Oregano:** Greek cuisine

# Flavor Profiles

**Olive Oil + Tomato:** found throughout the Mediterranean

- **Southern Italy:** add garlic
- **Spain and Southern France:** add saffron
- **All Mediterranean (especially Italy and France):** add herbs (thyme, basil, oregano, garlic)
- **Middle East, Greece, and Balkans:** add cinnamon +/- lemon



# Cooking Techniques



- Wood-fired hearths, spits, hardwood grills
- Skewered meat, poultry, fish, vegetables
- Braising, stewing, roasting, grilling
- **Salted meats, fish, vegetables:** capers, anchovies, cod
- **One-pot cooking:** tagines, couscoussières, paelleras popular in North Africa, Morocco, Spain

# Greek Cuisine



- Influenced by Turkey & Balkan states
- **Central elements:** legumes, grains, goats' milk, yogurt, and cheeses
- **Flavor profile:** hearty, comforting, vibrant
- Utilizes olive oil, salt, & lemon to enhance flavor
- **Common dishes:** moussaka, souvlaki, pastitsio

# Tunisian Cuisine

**Flavor Profile:** Strong, pungent, zesty

- **Tabil:** Coriander + garlic + caraway + cayenne
  - "Seasonings"; used for soups, stews, meatballs
- **Harissa:** Chili + garlic + caraway + coriander + olive oil
  - Condiment; chili paste
- **Baharat:** Cinnamon + dried rose petals + black pepper
  - "Mixed spices", flavor meat



# Popular Tunisian Dishes



**Lablabi:**  
dried chickpeas served  
in a thin, garlic &  
cumin-flavored broth



**Kaftaji:**  
fried vegetables mixed  
with fried eggs,  
seasoned with harissa



**Tunisian brik:**  
pastry stuffed with  
potato, tuna, egg



# Spanish Cuisine



- Reliance on fresh, local ingredients
- **Tapas:** small plates
- **Staples:** *jamon*, chorizo, tomatoes, rice, Manchego cheese, peppers, olive oil, citrus, onions, fish, legumes
- **Seasonings:** paprika (*pimentón*), garlic, thyme, saffron
- **Equipment:** *paellera*, *tajine*, *cazuela*
- **Cooking methods:** sautéing, roasting, frying

# Popular Dishes



**Tortilla Española:**  
Spanish omelet



**Paella a la Marinara:**  
Seafood paella



**Tapas:**  
Small plates served  
individually or as meal

# Mexico

**Seven main regions:** North, Baja, Bajío, Central, Gulf, Yucatan, Pacific Coast

- Made up of 32 states

**Influences:** Spain, France, Africa, Middle East

**Seasonings:** garlic, onions, oregano, cumin, chili peppers/powder, chipotle, epazote, cilantro, marjoram, Hoja Santa

**Cooking methods:** roasting/charring, frying, boiling, simmering

**Equipment:** metate (grinder), molcajete (mortar/pestle), comal (griddle) cazuela (clay pot)





# Popular Dishes



**Pozole:**  
hearty meat and corn  
soup with various  
vegetables/toppings



**Tamale:**  
steamed masa  
dough with a savory  
filling, wrapped in a  
corn husk



**Enchilada:**  
rolled tortillas  
filled with savory  
ingredients and  
covered in sauce

# China: Culinary Regions

## Xin Jiang

- Muslim influence
- Stewed lamb dishes
- Kebabs
- Millet

## Sichuan

- Hot/spicy food
- Szechwan "fagara" peppercorns
- Foo Young-Hibiscus Egg

## North

- Wheat
- Corn
- Millet

## South

- Rice

## Beijing

- Steamed buns
- Peking duck
- Table bbq
- Mongolian fire-pot

## Shanghai

- Red cooking
- Bird's nest soup
- Chingkiang vinegar

## GuangDon (Canton)

- Lacquer roasting
- Cha shiu "cha shao"
- Fruits in cooking "Sweet and sour"
- Black bean sauces



# Elements of Taste

**Aroma:** 4 key ingredients: green onions, ginger, garlic, wine

**Key aromatic pairings:**

- Ginger + garlic + green onion
- Green & red chiles
- Hot chili paste + fermented soybeans
- Five spice powder: star anise, Szechwan pepper, cinnamon, clove, fennel
- Fermented black beans

**Flavors:** sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent/spicy

**Textures:** each dish offers one or several



# Popular Dishes



**Biang Biang noodles:**  
thick, broad, hand-pulled noodles seasoned with chili, garlic, Sichuan pepper



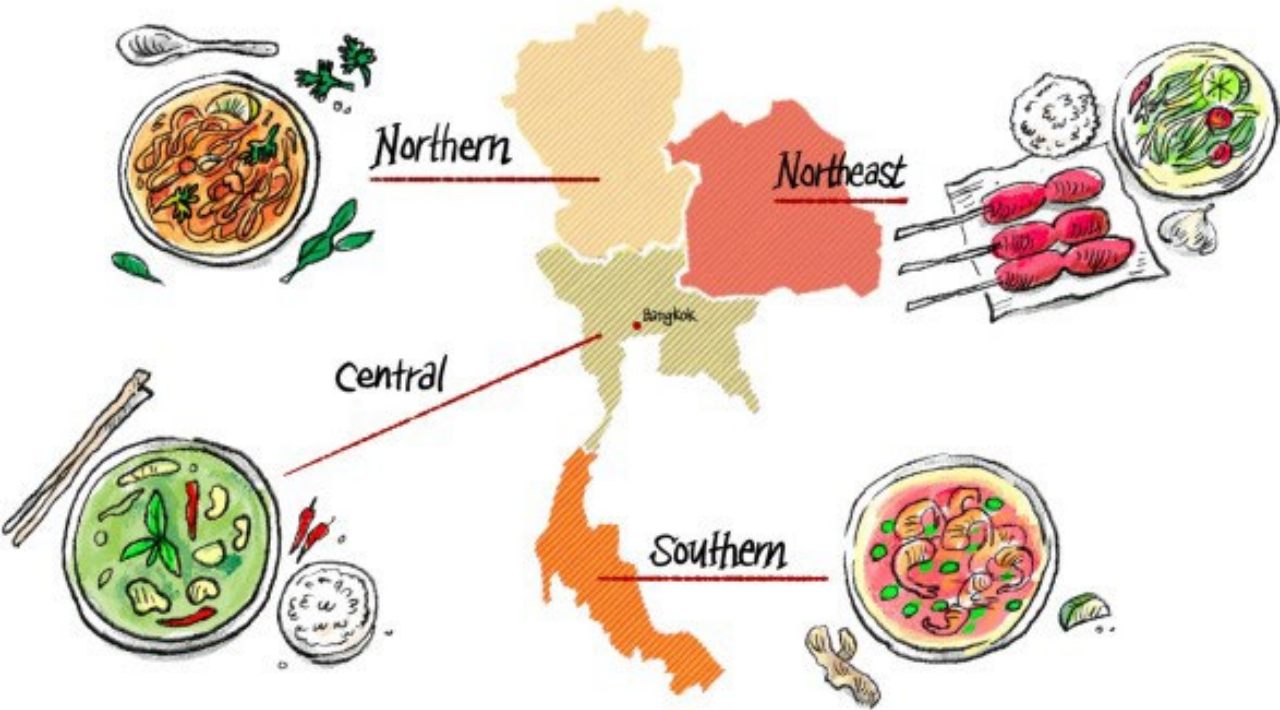
**Dim Sum:**  
a variety of small, steamed or fried dishes, including dumplings, buns, pastries



**Peking duck:**  
crispy-skinned duck served with thin pancakes, scallions, and a sweet bean sauce

# Thailand: Culinary Regions

## Thailand's Regional Cuisines



Regional variations correlate to neighboring countries, climate, geography

**Northern:** cool valleys/ forested mountains; shares dishes with Burma, Laos, Yunnan China

**Northeast:** arid plateau; influenced by Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam

**Central:** flat, wet, rice-growing plains; coconut milk

**Southern:** bordered by seas; curries, chiles, spices; elements of India, Malaysia, Indonesia



# Elements of Taste

## Flavors

- **Sweet:** mild contrast to bold flavors (palm sugar, coconut milk, fruit)
- **Sour:** tangy, adds depth (lime, unripe fruit)
- **Salty:** balances sweetness, acidity (fish/soy sauce)
- **Spicy:** adds intensity; Thai chilies

**Textures:** varied; crispy, soft, chewy

**Colors:** vibrant, from chilies, basil, turmeric

**Aroma:** lemongrass, galangal, garlic, coriander, basil, cardamom, nutmeg





# Popular Dishes



## **Pad Thai:**

Stir fry with rice noodles, eggs, tofu (or other protein) and a sweet and savory sauce



## **Thai Curry:**

Spiced coconut milk-based sauce with vegetables and meat



## **Mee Krob:**

Deep fried rice noodles with sweet and sour sauce

# Vietnam: Culinary Regions

## Northern

- Less spicy, sour flavors: tamarind, limes
- Light + balanced flavors highlight natural taste of ingredients

## Central

- Intensely spicy: chili peppers, shrimp sauces

## Southern/ Mekong Delta

- Pronounced sweetness: palm sugar, coconut milk
- Melting pot of regional, foreign flavors



# Elements of Taste

## Flavors

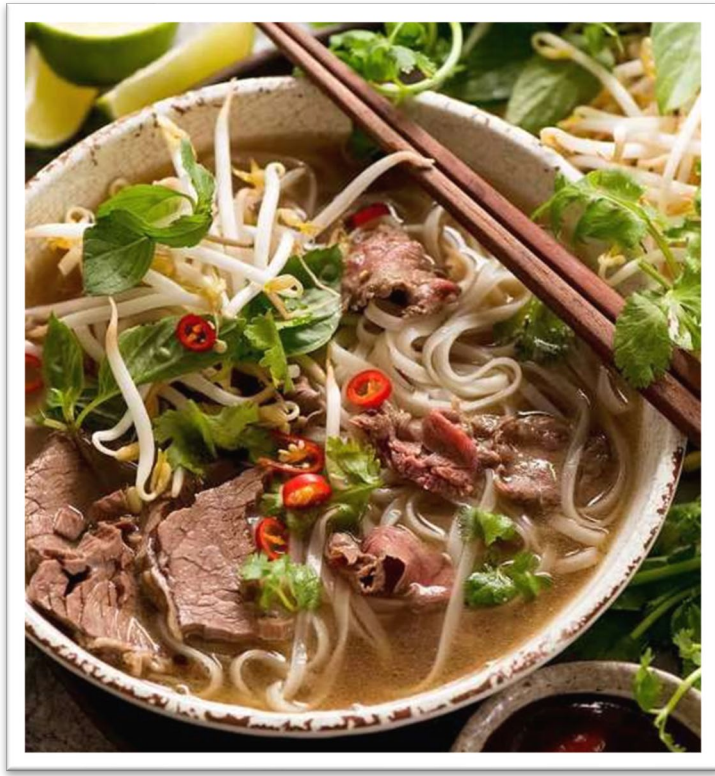
- **Sweet:** balance sour/bitter (sugar, fruits, certain vegetables)
- **Sour:** tangy (vinegar, tamarind, unripe mangoes)
- **Salty:** depth, enhances flavors; fish/soy sauce
- **Spicy:** pungency (chili peppers, ginger, garlic)
- **Bitter:** cleanses the palate (cilantro, bitter melon, dark chocolate)

**Textures:** contrasting in a single dish

**Colors:** vibrant hues from turmeric, pandan, beetroot, ramie leaves



# Popular Dishes



## **Pho:**

salty broth with rice noodles, herbs, meat



## **Cha Ca:**

Firm white fish marinated in galangal, turmeric, fish sauce, lemon juice



## **Summer Rolls**

(*Gỏi cuốn, Nem cuốn*): rice paper wrappers filled with fresh herbs, vegetables, protein, vermicelli noodles

# Plant Forward

- Look to global cuisines for inspiration
- Many cuisines follow the tenants of plant-forward cooking
- Focus on plant-based ingredients
- Limited dairy
- Use of healthier oils
- Smaller portions of Animal Protein
- Diverse flavors





# WE LARGELY MISS OUT ON A WHOLE WORLD OF PLANT PROTEINS



# Purchasing Plant Forward



- Buy Local
- Locally-produced food is fresher and tastier when it reaches your table
- Buying from local farms supports nearby communities
- Shorter shipping distances allow farmers to produce high-quality heritage and heirloom varieties

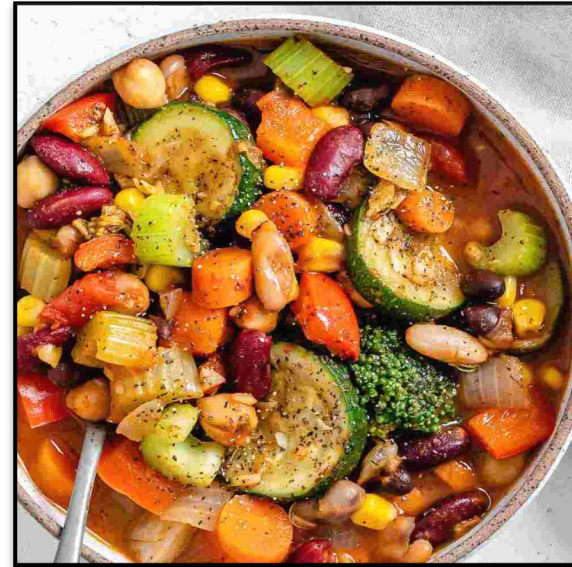


# Preparing Plant Forward Dishes

- Choose methods that introduce a minimal addition of fats and oil

## Examples:

- Grilling
- Roasting
- Steaming
- Stewing and Braising



# Blended Dishes

- Incorporate vegetables into blended dishes
- Eat more vegetables in every dish
- Burgers, with beef and mushroom
- Mashies, with potato and cauliflower
- Cake, with chocolate and beets

