

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO COOKERY

Cookery is defined as a “chemical process”, the mixing of ingredients; the application and withdrawal of heat; decision making, technical knowledge, and manipulative skills. In the more advanced stages, a further element occurs- that of creativity. Cookery is considered to be both an art and technology. Food preparation is a modern term in professional cookery. It denotes preparation and cooking. It follows a flow pattern which commences with the purchasing and selection materials, their handling, processing and the ultimate presentation of dishes to customers, where “food service” takes over. In French, the word cuisine denotes –the art of cooking-preparing dishes and the place kitchen in which they are prepared.

Today’s “food-savvy” customers are a widely travelled group. They have increased exposure to other countries food and restaurants and this has spurred them to have an interest in having these cuisines available at home. The result is growth in food outlets specializing in previously ‘unknown’ foods’. The public’s growing interest in grain, legumes, fish, vegetables, and fruits, along with a desire to reduce overconsumption of animal fat, protein and sodium have helped popularize nutritional cooking. Furthermore, they have spurred fundamental changes in the preparation and presentation of traditional foods. An evening out for dinner to a restaurant has become a form of entertainment – a restaurant is a destination where one can savour a quality experience. To provide this experience a number of things go hand in hand. At the front of the house, it’s the manager and his team who provide impeccable service in a beautiful and apt restaurant setup, but the most important figure is the chef who with his brigade of staff churns out exquisite food to satisfy every palate.

Although cooking may have once been considered a less desirable job, today chefs are a new breed- respected, even admired, for their skill, craftsmanship and even artistry. Some chefs have received so much press coverage that their names are household words. The elevation of the status of the chef helps attract bright and talented people to the industry.

Culinary History

Culinary history takes us back to the times when man first discovered the use of fire. This epoch-making discovery of fire brought about the refinement of mankind in all sphere of life. The biggest impact was felt in the preparation of cooked food which eventually over the centuries has now matured into a full-fledged science. The history of cooking is undoubtedly as old as mankind itself. Earlier on, people were most accustomed to food preparation in the countries & regions where they lived, but with the passage of time, and travel becoming an integral part of one's lifestyle, eating habits have changed rapidly. Culinary history can be observed to have been influenced by the following factors that have all contributed to the development of modern-day cuisine.

- The accidental discovery of fire
- Origin of simple methods of cooking
- The invention of simple cooking appliances
- Geographical influences & the growth of regional cuisines
- Regional cuisines

Origin of Professional Cookery

The professionalism of cookery came about, with the efforts of several European chefs, such as Escoffier, Brillat Savarin & Paul Bocuse. All of them wrote several books and helped bring about a proper organization of continental cuisine. Paul Bocuse is also credited with the creation of the Nouvelle Cuisine. Escoffier formulated Partie System of kitchen staff organization and also classified stocks and sauces which are the foundation of continental cookery. The French cuisine was also classified by these chefs. The purpose of this classification was to make it easier to study and refine the cuisine and also to provide a means of training cooks in these areas. In fact, any national cuisine can be classified according to this method of identifying its different components.

The classification of all national cuisines is as follows:

- **HAUTE CUISINE**: the exotic and high-class cuisine
- **PROVINCIAL CUISINE**: Regional cuisines
- **BOURGEOISE CUISINE**: Middle-class cuisine
- **NOUVELLE CUISINE**: Modern or New Cuisine

This is a modern innovation that eliminates the use of high-calorie items in menus. Emphasis is laid on the pre-plated and decorated foods. Glass, black ceramic plates are used to create good colour contrast and make food more presentable. The origin of this cuisine is attributed to Paul Bocuse. However, the term simply means “New Cuisine” the idea being to suit the modern needs of low-calorie foods that are good for the cardio-vascular system 4 Hotel Operations of the human body. The cuisine answers the needs of the modern generation which is very health conscious.

A Career in Food Service

This is an exciting time to begin a career in food service. Interest in dining and curiosity about new foods are greater than ever. More new restaurants open every year. Many restaurants are busy every night and restaurant chains number among the nation's largest corporations. The chef, once considered a domestic servant, is now respected as an artist and skilled craftsperson. The growth of the foodservice industry creates a demand for thousands of skilled people every year. Many people are attracted by a career that is challenging and exciting and, above all, provides the chance to find real satisfaction in doing a job well.

Conclusion

Cooks have attained a celebrity status due to the importance; food preparation has gained over a period of time. Cooking has turned into a lucrative career and many people are aspiring to become chefs today.

Personal / Kitchen Hygiene

Most of the food-borne disease is caused by bacteria, spread by food workers or handlers. Hence the first step in preventing food-borne disease is good personal –hygiene.

Do's for Personal Hygiene

- Bath or shower daily.
- Wear clean uniforms and aprons.
- Keep hair neat and clean. Always wear a hat or hairnet.
- Keep moustaches and beards trimmed and clean. Better yet, be cleanly shaven.
- Wash hands and exposed parts of arms before work and as often as necessary during work, including:
 - After eating, drinking, or smoking.
 - After using the toilet.
 - After touching or handling anything that may be contaminated with bacteria.
- Cover cough and sneezes, and then wash hands.
- Keep your hands away from your face, eyes, hair, and arms.
- Cover cuts or sores with clean bandages.
- Use spoons for a tasting, not your finger.

Don'ts for Personal Hygiene

- Do not work with food if you have any communicable disease or infection.
- Keep fingernails clean and short. Do not wear nail polish.
- Do not smoke or chew gum or tobacco while on duty.
- Do not sit on worktables.
- Avoid wearing jewellery in the kitchen.
- Do not use kitchen sinks for personal washing or for spitting.



Procedure for Washing Hands

- Wet your hands with hot running water. Use water as hot as you can comfortably stand, but at least 100°F (38°C).
- Apply enough soap to make a good lather.
- Rub hands together thoroughly for 20 seconds or longer, washing not only the hands but the wrists and the lower part of the forearms.
- Using a nail brush, clean beneath the fingernails and between the fingers.
- Rinse hands well under hot running water. If possible, use a clean paper towel to turn off the water to avoid contaminating the hands by contact with soiled faucets.
- Dry hands with clean single-use paper towels or a warm-air hand dryer

Guidelines for Using Disposable Gloves

- Wash hands before putting on gloves or when changing to another pair. Gloves are not a substitute for proper hand-washing.
- Remove and discard gloves, wash hands, and change to a clean pair of gloves after handling one food item and before starting work on another.
- In particular, never to fail to change gloves after handling raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Gloves are for single use only.
- Remember that the purpose of using gloves is to avoid cross-contamination.
- Change to a clean pair of gloves whenever gloves become torn, soiled, or contaminated by contact with an unsanitary surface.

Uniforms and Protective Clothing

“More of protective clothing than uniform.” The chef’s uniform consists of the following:

Toque/Headwear

- Keeps the head cool and prevents the hair from falling into the food.
- Cotton/cloth caps are difficult to maintain whereas, paper caps are disposable hence they are neat.
- The number of pleats on the chef cap indicates the number of ways in which an egg can be prepared.

Scarf/Neckerchief

- Absorbs sweat.
- Identification/designation.

Double-breasted jacket

- Protects the chest and front.
- Easy to remove overhead or sideways.
- Cotton cloth buttons – heat resistant.

Apron

- Below knee level.
- Double protection prevents the jacket & trousers from becoming dirty.

Cotton checked trousers

- Double shade hides the dirt.
- Identifies designation.



Shoes and Socks

- Clogs can be used but it is expensive
- Metal frame in front protects the toes.
- Easy to remove legs.
- Socks
- Absorbs sweat.
- Provides good grip.
- Steady steps while walking

Safety Procedure in Handling Equipment

- Kitchen work usually considered safe in comparison with industrial jobs.
- Minor injuries from cuts and burns are very common.
- Serious injuries too are possible.

Safe Work Place

It is much easier to develop and practice habits that prevent accidents if safety is built into the workplace.

- Structure, equipment, and electric wiring in good repair.
- Non-slip floors.
- Adequate lighting on work surfaces and in corridors.
- Clearly marked exits.
- Equipment supplied with necessary safety devices.
- Heat-activated fire extinguishers over cooking equipment, especially deep fryers.
- Conveniently posted emergency equipment, such as fire extinguishers.
- Clearly posted emergency telephone numbers
- Smooth traffic patterns to avoid collisions



Preventing Cuts

Do's

- Keep knives sharp
- Use a cutting board
- Pay attention to your work
- Cutaway from yourself and other workers
- Use knives only for cutting
- Clean knives carefully
- Store knives in a safe place
- Carry knives properly
- Keep breakable items out of the food production area
- Sweep up, don't pick up, broken glass
- Discard chipped or cracked dishes and glasses
- Use a special container for broken dishes and glasses
- If there is broken glass in the sink, drain the sink
- Remove all nails and staples when opening crates and cartons

Don'ts

- Don't try to catch a falling knife
- Don't put knives in a sink, underwater
- Don't put breakable items in a pot sink.

Preventing Burns

- Always assume a pot handle is hot
- Use dry pads or towels to handle hot pans
- Keep pan handles out of the aisle
- Don't fill pans so full that they are likely to spill hot food
- Open lids away from you
- Get help when moving heavy containers of hot food
- Use care when opening compartment steamers
- Make sure gas is well vented

- Wear long sleeves and a double-breasted jacket
- Dry foods before putting them in frying fat
- When placing foods in hot fat, let them fall away from you
- Keep liquids away from the deep fryer
- Warn service people about hot plates
- Always warn people when you are walking behind them with hot pans.

Preventing fire

Do's

- Know where fire extinguishers are located
- Use the right kind of extinguisher.
- There are three classes of fires and fire extinguishers:
- Class A fires wood, paper, cloth, ordinary combustibles.
- Class B fires: burning liquids, such as grease, oil, gasoline
- Class C fires: switches, motors, electrical equipment, and so forth
- Keep a supply of salt or baking soda handy to put out fires on a range top.
- Keep hoods and other equipment free from grease build-ups
- Smoke only in designated areas
- If a fire alarm sounds and if you have time, turn off all gas and electrical appliances before leaving.
- Keep fire doors closed
- Keep exits free from obstacles.
- Preventing Injuries from Machines and equipment.
- Use all guards and safety devices
- Unplug electrical equipment before cleaning
- Wear properly fitting clothing and tuck in apron strings
- Use equipment only for the purpose intended
- Preventing Falls
- Clean up spills immediately



- Throw salt on a slippery spot to make it less slippery
- Keep aisles and stairs clear and unobstructed
- Walk, don't run
- Preventing Strains and Injuries
- Lift with the leg muscles, not the back.
- Always stand giving equal weight on both the legs.
- Use trolley/cart to move heavy objects or get help.

Don'ts

- Don't leave hot fat unattended on the range
- Do not use any equipment unless you know its operation
- Don't touch or remove food from any kind of equipment while it is running.
- Do not touch or handle electrical equipment with wet hands
- Do not spill water/oil, etc.
- Do not carry objects too big to see over
- Do not lean or bent unnecessarily while working or do work in that way.
- Don't turn or twist the back while lifting and make sure your footing is secure.