

## Food and Cooking Terminology

**Appetizer** - A small portion of food served at the beginning of a meal.

**Au gratin** - A dish, such as a casserole, topped with cheese, butter, or bread crumbs, then browned.

**Bagel** - A round, chewy yeast roll with a hole in the middle which is cooked first in boiling water then baked.

**Batter** - The uncooked mixture which is the base for most baked goods. It is usually made from a combination of flour, eggs, and liquid, and is thin enough to be stirred.

**Basil** - A member of the mint family, basil has a flavor similar to bay leaves and oregano, and somewhat minty. It can usually be found fresh or dried.

**Bay Leaf** - An aromatic herb. Bay leaves are added to food during cooking, but removed before serving.

**Beignet** - A deep-fried pastry usually dusted with confectioner's sugar.

**Blacken** - A method of cooking in which meat or fish is seasoned with a spicy mixture then fried in a hot skillet until blackened on both sides.

**Braise** - Braising involves cooking a food in a little fat to brown--usually on the stove top--then covering and cooking slowly until done.

**Broil** - To cook food directly under or over heat source, usually in the oven under the top broiling element or on the grill.

**Brown** - To cook food quickly at a moderately high heat to brown the surface. May be done on the stove top or under the broiler in the oven.

**Butterfly** - To cut a food down the center, but not quite through, leaving both halves attached. The food is then spread to resemble a butterfly.

**Blanche** - Blanching is a process in which food is briefly plunged in boiling water for a moment, then immediately transferred to ice water to stop the cooking process. Blanching tomatoes or peaches for about 20 seconds makes them easier to peel.

**Bouillon** - A base for soup and sauces made by cooking vegetables, poultry, meat, or fish in water, then straining. Also known as broth or stock.

**Cajun** - A cuisine with both Southern and French influences.

**Caper** - Capers are unopened flower buds which come from the caper bush. They are usually pickled, and are peppery.

**Casserole** - This is actually the name of the baking dish. Casserole recipes may include vegetables, meats, grains, or other combination of ingredients, usually bound by a thick sauce or cream soup.

**Cayenne** - A small, hot, chile pepper, usually used ground or in pepper sauces.

**Chili Powder** - A spicy blend of ground chile peppers and spices.

**Chive** - A relative of onion and garlic, chives have and a mild onion flavor. Available fresh and dried.

**Cilantro** - A pungent, leafy herb resembling flat-leaf parsley. Cilantro is sometimes called Chinese parsley, Coriander, or Mexican parsley. It is available fresh or dried.

**Dash** - Less than one-eighth of a teaspoon.

**Deep-Fry** - To cook in hot fat which is deep enough to completely cover the food.

**Dollop** - A spoonful of soft food, such as mashed potatoes or whipped cream. It may also mean a dash or "splash" of soda water, water, or other liquid if referring to liquid

**Egg Wash** - Egg yolk or white mixed with a small amount of water or liquid then brushed over baked goods to give color and sheen

**Florentine** - A butter, cream, and fruit cookie, one side is often coated with chocolate. Also may refer to dishes presented on a spinach and topped with Mornay sauce

**Fold** - To incorporate a light mixture with a heavy mixture, such as beaten egg whites into batter or custard. The lighter mixture is placed on the heavier mixture, and a spatula is used to gently cut down and through the lighter mixture to the bottom of the bowl then up again. This procedure gently turns the mixtures over on top of each other, and is repeated until the two mixtures are combined.

**Freezer Burn** - A loss of moisture in foods when improperly wrapped before freezing. Freezer burn affects both the texture and flavor of food, and is evidenced by dry patches which may be whitish or grayish in color.

**Fricassee** - To cook or stew pieces of sauteed meat in a sauce, usually with vegetables. Wine is often used as a flavoring.

**Garnish** - To decorate food or the dish on which food is served.

**Grill** - To cook on a rack directly over hot coals or other heat source.

**Half and Half** - A mixture of half cream, half milk. The fat content is between 10 and 12 percent

**Hors d'Oeuvre** - Small, bite-size foods usually served before a meal or as a party appetizer

**Hollandaise Sauce** - An emulsified sauce made from egg yolks and butter, usually flavored with lemon juice or vinegar.

**Julienne** - To cut food into thin, matchstick strips. Julienne strips are usually about 1/8-inch thick, but the length varies

**Knead** - A technique used to mix and work dough, usually using the hands. Dough is pressed with the heels of the hands, while stretching it out, then folded over itself

**Kosher** - Food prepared according to Jewish dietary laws.

**Liqueur** - A sweet alcoholic drink usually served after a meal. Liqueurs are usually flavored with aromatic ingredients such as nuts, fruits, flowers, or spices, and are frequently used in baked desserts and dessert sauces.

**Marinade** - A seasoned liquid in which meat or other food is soaked to flavor and tenderize.

**Marmalade** - A citrus fruit condiment, similar to jam, which includes the fruit peel.

**Marsala** - A fortified Italian wine, Marsala is used as a dessert wine or after-dinner drink, and is often used in cooking.

**Marzipan** - A sweet paste made from ground almonds, sugar, and egg whites.

**Medallion** - A small, round cut of meat, usually pork, veal, or beef.

**Melt** - Heating a food (such as shortening, butter, or chocolate) until it becomes liquid.

**Meringue** - A meringue is a mixture of beaten egg whites and sugar. Meringues are often used as a topping--usually lightly browned in the oven--or baked separately.

**Mesquite** - A hardwood tree grown throughout the Southwest and Northern Mexico, mesquite wood is used in barbecuing and smoking foods.

**Mousse** - A sweet or savory dish, mousse is usually made with egg whites or whipped cream to give the light, airy texture. In French, the word means "froth" or "foam."

**Oregano** - A pungent herb, similar to marjoram. Oregano can usually be found dried, ground, or fresh.

**Paprika** - A seasoning powder made from red peppers. The flavor can range from mild to hot.

**Parchment Paper** - A heavy moisture and grease-resistant paper used to line baking pans and wrap foods to be baked.

**Parsley** - An herb with a sweet and fresh flavor, parsley is usually available the fresh or dried.

**Petit Four** - Small bite-size cakes, petits fours are usually square or diamond-shaped. They're typically coated with icing and decorated.

**Phyllo** - A Greek pastry, phyllo is made up of tissue-thin layers of dough

**Primavera** - Italian for "spring style," this term refers to the use of fresh vegetables as a seasoning or garnish in a dish

**Pulverize** - To reduce to powder or dust by pounding, crushing or grinding.

**Puree** - To blend, process, sieve, or mash a food until it's very smooth and has the consistency of baby food.

**Reduce** - To boil a liquid until a portion of it has evaporated. Reducing intensifies the flavor and results in a thicker liquid.

**Risotto** - Rice sautéed in butter then cooked and stirred as stock is slowly added in portions. As each addition of stock is absorbed, another is added until the rice is creamy and tender. Vegetables, meat, seafood, herbs, cheese, wine, and other ingredients may be added.

**Rotisserie** - A device which contains a spit with prongs. Food (usually meat or poultry) is impaled on the spit, fastened securely then cooked. Most rotisseries are motorized so they automatically turn the food as it cooks

**Sage** - An herb with grayish green leaves, sage has a slightly bitter, musty flavor. Sage is often used in dishes made with pork, cheese, and beans, and in poultry and other stuffings.

**Salsa** - The Mexican word for "sauce," salsa may be made with a variety of ingredients and may be fresh or cooked.

**Sauté** - To cook quickly in a pan on top of the stove until the food is browned. Sautéing is often done in a small, shallow pan called a sauté pan.

**Scald** - To heat a liquid such as milk to just below the boiling point. Scald also means to plunge a food into boiling water to loosen the peel.

**Scallion** - Also known as "green onion": the scallion is a member of the onion family.

**Scallop** - 1) A dish cooked in a thick sauce, such as "scalloped potatoes." 2) To form a decorative edging along the raised rim of pie dough or other food. 3) A mollusk with fan-shaped shells. Bay scallops and the larger sea scallops are the types commonly found in supermarkets.

**Soufflé** - A sweet or savory dish in which beaten egg whites are incorporated to make it light and airy.

**Steep** - To soak, in order to extract flavor or soften.

**Stock** - The strained liquid in which meat, fish, poultry, or vegetables have been cooked. Stock may also be called "broth" or "bouillon."

**Tarragon** - An aromatic herb with dark green leaves and an anise-like flavor. Tarragon is used in a variety of dishes, including chicken, vegetables, fish, and sauces

**Tofu** - A cake made of bean curd, which is made from soybeans. High in protein, tofu is often used as a meat substitute in vegetarian dishes.

**Torte** - A decorated cake with several layers. The layers of a torte are often made with ground nuts or breadcrumbs, and very little flour.

**Tortilla** - An unleavened Mexican bread, tortillas are flat and round. They may be made with flour or corn flour

**Vanilla** - An aromatic spice with a warm flavor, vanilla is the seed pod of an orchid. It's available dried or as an extract

**Vinaigrette** - An oil and vinegar sauce usually used on salad greens or other vegetables. Vinaigrette may contain other seasonings, shallots, onions, mustard, et cetera

**Whisk** - (noun) A metal utensil made of looped wires joined at the handle, used to whip foods such as cream and egg whites. (verb) Whipping ingredients with a whisk.

**Yeast** - Yeast is a living organism which is used in brewing, winemaking, and baking

**Zest** - The thin, brightly colored outer skin of a citrus fruit (not the white part). A citrus zester or paring knife may be used to remove the thin layer, usually in small shreds