

C O N T E N T S

UNIT 1 Getting to know you

UNIT 2 Food for thought

UNIT 3 Family matters

UNIT 4 Live life to the full!

UNIT 5 Happy holiday!

UNIT 6 University challenge

UNIT 7 Live to work ... or work to live?

UNIT 8 Travel broadens the mind

2 UNIT

Food for thought

What we eat, when we eat, how our food is prepared, and who we share it with ... food is one of the most interesting and enjoyable aspects of learning about other cultures. But however many cultural differences there may be, there are some aspects shared by all cultures. Firstly, we all need to eat in order to survive. Secondly, there are customs and traditions about how we eat. Finally, whenever we share food with others, family, friends or formal guests, we show our respect to others around the table. But as the Asian saying goes, "Talk doesn't cook rice." Let's have a look at the culture of food around the world.



Start out

Obviously, we need food to live, but it serves so many other functions as well. Meals organize our lives, like punctuation marks in our daily prose. Sharing food with others symbolizes our social side, and is a device for developing and sustaining friendship. Favourite foods are emblems of our moods and feelings, eaten when you're happy or when you're sad. And within an intimate relationship between two people, food can represent the source of their love ... or a potential threat.

1 Work in pairs. Discuss which of the words and expressions you can use to describe the food in the photos.

| | | | |
|------------|--------------------|-------|------------|
| bitter | boiling | hot | cool |
| fizzy | flat | gassy | icy cold |
| revolting | salty | tasty | unpleasant |
| spicy | sweet | sour | juicy |
| disgusting | Out of this world! | | |

2 Work in pairs. Read the poem and talk about your answers to the questions.

This Is Just to Say

William Carlos Williams

I have eaten
 the plums
 that were in
 the icebox

 and which
 you were probably
 saving
 for breakfast

 Forgive me
 they were delicious
 so sweet
 and so cold



Cultural information

William Carlos Williams (1883–1963) was an American poet who was well-known for his experimental writing and love of imagery.

- 1 To whom do you think the writer is writing?
- 2 What do you think the plums represent?
- 3 Do you think the writer is really sorry, or he is trying to be humorous?
- 4 How do you think the person he is writing to will react?
- 5 What does the poem tell you about their relationship?

Speaking through cultures

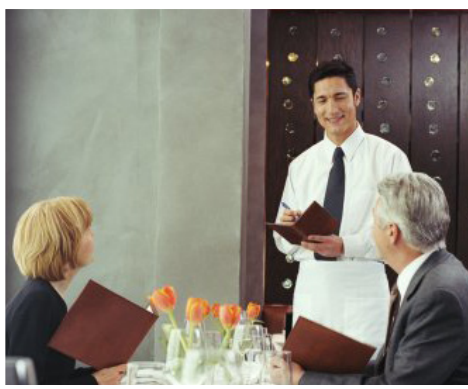
When we travel we often spend more time in bars and restaurants than we do at home. But while the circumstances for eating and drinking are different, we try to ensure that our enjoyment remains the same. In everyday conversation, we use a variety of different words and expressions to achieve this, making sure we know what the food or drink tastes like, being ready to experiment, and allowing the experience to be as pleasurable as possible.

Listen out

Conversation 1

1 Work in pairs. Look at the photo and discuss:

- what the situation is
- who the people are



Now listen to Conversation 1 and check your answers.

2 Work in pairs. Look at Conversation 1 and decide where the expressions go.

- And for your main courses
- Are you enjoying your meal
- Are you ready to order
- Can I get you something to drink
- Could you change it for something else
- I'm not very keen on
- It's made with
- What's that

Now listen to Conversation 1 again and check your answers.

- Waiter** Good evening, here are the menus.
- Man** Thank you.
- Waiter** (1) _____ while you choose your meal?
- Man** Can you get me a spritzer?
- Waiter** Certainly.
- Woman** (2) _____?
- Man** It's a white wine with some soda water.
- (Later)
- Waiter** (3) _____? What would you like to start with?
- Woman** What's gazpacho?
- Waiter** It's a soup from Spain.
- Man** What's in it?
- Waiter** (4) _____ tomatoes and other summer vegetables. It's delicious. I thoroughly recommend it.
- Woman** That sounds good. I'll have that.
- Man** And the same for me, thank you.
- Waiter** (5) _____?
- Man** What's this ... I can't pronounce it.
- Waiter** Ceviche, sir. That's fish. Very good, perfect for a summer's evening like tonight.
- (Later)
- Waiter** (6) _____?
- Man** No, I'm afraid the gazpacho is cold. Could you take it back, please?
- Waiter** Ah, I'm sorry sir, but the gazpacho is meant to be cold.
- Woman** Well, you might have told us. (7) _____ cold soup. I wouldn't have had it if I'd known.
- Man** Cold? Cold soup? Are you absolutely sure?
- Waiter** Yes, sir.
- Man** I'm not sure I believe you.
- Waiter** In the meantime, can I get you something else?
- Woman** No, just bring the fish. It is cooked, isn't it?
- Waiter** Er, no. Ceviche is raw fish. It's a famous Spanish fish dish made with lime juice.
- Woman** Raw fish! (8) _____?
- Man** Is anything cooked in this restaurant? That's it! I'd like to speak to the manager.

Cultural information

There are usually three or four **courses in a Western meal**. In Western restaurants, it's usual to order a starter, which is a small appetizer such as soup, cuts of meat, vegetables, or salad. Then you order your main course, such as pasta, roast chicken, hamburger and fries etc. Later you can order a dessert, which is a sweet dish of fruit or a variety of puddings, pies and tarts. You're not expected to share your food with the other guests, although informally, you can offer to share your choice or ask to try anything you like the look of.

3 Work in pairs and answer the questions.

- 1 *What would you like to start with?* Does this mean (a) who is going to choose first, or (b) what dish you would like at the beginning of your meal?
- 2 *Could you take it back, please?* Does this mean (a) please take it away, or (b) please warm it up?
- 3 ... *but the gazpacho is meant to be cold.* Does this mean (a) this soup is cold but should be warm, or (b) this soup is supposed to be cold?
- 4 *That's it!* Does this mean (a) I've had enough of your excuses, or (b) that's exactly what I want?

Conversation 2

4 Work in pairs. Look at the exchanges of Conversation 2 and number them in the correct order.

- Could you wait your turn, please? There's a queue here.
 - Oh, well. It takes all sorts. Now, anything else, madam?
- Certainly, madam. The larger ones or these smaller ones?
 - Which ones do you recommend?
 - Well, these ones are good for salads, but I'd use those ones for cooking. Cut them in half, some oil, some herbs and garlic. Then bake them for about 20 minutes.
- That's it, thank you. How much is all that?
 - Three pounds ten. Let's say three pounds to you.
 - Thank you very much.

- Can I help you, madam?
 - I'll have a kilo of tomatoes, please.
- That sounds tasty! OK, a kilo of the larger ones.
 - They're delicious cooked like that.
- I'll be with you as soon as I've finished with this customer, sir.
 - All I want are some onions.
- And I'd better get some garlic and herbs as well.
 - Good idea! Make sure you don't fry the garlic or it'll taste bitter.
- And could I have half a dozen eggs, please?
 - Fresh eggs, very good. Here you are.
- I'll have some onions, those ones over there.
 - Excuse me!

Now listen to Conversation 2 and check your answers.

5 Listen to Conversation 2 again and check (✓) the statements which are likely to be true, according to what you can learn from it.

- 1 You can sometimes buy vegetables and eggs from the same market stall.
- 2 You don't have to wait to be served if you only want one type of food and not several.
- 3 Eggs come in boxes of 12.
- 4 You usually call market sellers sir or madam.
- 5 The market seller always demands the exact amount.
- 6 You don't bargain with market sellers.

Cultural information

Street markets take place either every day or once or twice a week in most towns in Europe. They're usually in a special large hall or simply in rows of stalls, some with fruit and vegetables, others with meat, cheese and chicken. You rarely see a stall which sells all different types of food. A stallholder may give you a plastic bowl to fill with fruit and vegetables, which they'll weigh when it's your turn. But remember that there's often a queue, so the stallholder will serve each person in turn and may ignore people who try to "jump the queue" or get served before others who have been waiting longer. People rarely bargain with stallholders, as everything has a fixed price. However, sometimes the stallholder may offer you a discount.

6 Work in pairs. Listen to Conversation 2 again and find one or two expressions which go under the headings:

- Offering to sell something to someone

- Saying what you want to buy

- Giving advice

- Complaining about someone's behaviour

- Giving a cheaper price

Conversation 3

7 Work in pairs. Look at some sentences from Conversation 3 and answer the questions.

- a What can I offer you?
- b No, we order at the bar here, then we sit down.
- c What flavour do you have?
- d How much do I owe you?
- e Thank you sir, I'll have a half. That'll be eight pounds fifty.
- f What do you reckon?
- g Well, I was looking forward to something cool and fizzy.

- 1 Where does the conversation take place?
- 2 How many people are speaking?
- 3 How well do the people know each other?
- 4 What do you think the conversation might be about?

Now listen to Conversation 3 and check your answers.

8 Listen to Conversation 3 again and choose the best way to complete the sentences.

- 1 An Englishman and an American _____.
(a) are buying drinks for a barman
(b) go into an American bar
(c) are looking for something to eat
(d) go into a British pub
- 2 They order beer and _____.
(a) some bar snacks (b) a bar meal
(c) a table for two (d) drink it at the bar

- 3 The Englishman asks the barman _____.
(a) what he recommends to drink
(b) if he'd like a drink
(c) which beer to offer an American guest
(d) what flavour the beer is
- 4 The American has never _____.
(a) been in a pub before
(b) tasted English beer before
(c) been to England before
(d) tasted flavoured crisps
- 5 The American thinks the beer is _____.
(a) better than American beer
(b) icy cold and gassy
(c) delicious
(d) different from what he expected

Cultural information

In **British and Irish pubs and bars** you usually order and pay for your drinks at the bar, and then find somewhere to sit. There are usually snacks, such as peanuts and crisps to eat with your drinks, but you don't have to eat a meal, which is often available too. You don't have to leave a tip, although if you feel generous, you can offer the barman a drink. In restaurants you can sit down first, and the barman or waiter will come and serve you. You usually pay when you leave. It's expected that you leave a tip, maybe even 20 per cent of your final bill. In restaurants there may be a service charge of 10–15 per cent added to your bill. If so, there's no need to pay a tip. Many British and Irish beers, as well as beers from Belgium, often have a surprisingly strong taste, which is best appreciated when they're not served cold. They're also "flat", which means they don't have bubbles.

9 Work in pairs. Listen to Conversation 3 again and find one or two expressions which go under the headings:

- Offering someone something to drink

- Saying what you'd like to drink

- Asking and saying how much things cost

- Asking for and giving opinions about food and drink

Speak out



Conversation 1



Conversation 2



Conversation 3

1 Work in pairs and talk about your answers to the questions.

- 1 How would you describe the attitudes of the customers in the three conversations?
- 2 How would you describe the attitudes and behaviour of the three people who serve the customers?
- 3 Which factors might change the attitudes and behaviour of the customers?

atmosphere service food

- 4 How would these factors change the customers' language? Use the Cultural information to help you.
- 5 Do you think the language and behaviour of the customers are similar to those of customers in China?

Cultural information

The **behaviour and language in bars, restaurants and markets** in Western countries are informal, relaxed but very polite, although the barman / waiter / stallholder may use certain formal terms of address, such as *sir* and *madam*. Offering a service, buying food and drink, asking about payment are all fairly predictable and ritualized transactions, and everyone uses words like *please*, *thank you*.

It's only when the ritual is broken by unforeseen circumstances, such as not liking the food or drink offered, or the need to make a complaint, that the language changes. But it still remains fairly restrained with any disappointment being concealed by finding a polite way to express one's expectations (*I'm not sure it's what I was expecting ... / Well, I was looking forward to something cool and fizzy.*). If people are annoyed or upset, they may be more direct (*That's it! I'd like to speak to the manager.*), but it's rare that voices are raised or any stronger language is used.

Act out

1 Work in groups of three. You're a waiter and two guests in a restaurant in the UK. The waiter serves the guests some unfamiliar food. Follow the instructions and act out the following conversation.

- Student A** Offer something to drink. *Good evening. What ...?*
- Student B** Say what you'd like to drink. *Good evening. I'll have a ...*
- Student C** Say what you'd like to drink.
- Student A** Ask what food people would like to order. *Are you ready to order?*
- Student B** Ask about an unfamiliar dish. *What's ...?*
- Student A** Explain about the unfamiliar dish. *It's made with ...*
- Student B** Say what food you like or don't like. Say what you'd like to eat. *I'm not so keen on ... I'll have ...*
- Student C** Say what you'd like to eat. *Could I have ..., please?*
- Student A** Ask if everyone is enjoying their meal.
- Student B** Complain about the unfamiliar food. *I'm afraid that ...*
- Student A** Explain to Student B. *But ... is meant to be ...*
- Student B** Express your surprise. *I wouldn't have had ... if I'd known.*
- Student C** Complain about the unfamiliar dish. *I'd like to speak to the manager!*

Language to help you

Offering and ordering food and drink

What would you like as a starter / main course / dessert?

Are you ready to order?

Talking about unfamiliar food

What's ...?

What's it made with?

Saying what food you like or don't like

That sounds good.

I'm not so keen on ...

I'm not very fond of ...

Complaining about unfamiliar food

I'm sorry but there's something wrong with ...

... is off / too salty / too sweet / too hot / too spicy ...

Can I speak to the manager?

Cultural information

There's likely to be some **unfamiliar food** on the menu wherever you go, and you'll need to ask the waiter about it. The ingredients of many dishes will be self-explanatory, for example, fish and chips, roast beef, vegetable soup. But what about Toad in the Hole and Stargazy Pie? Much traditional food will have traditional and sometimes even amusing names. Toad in the Hole is pieces of sausage cooked in a batter in the oven. Stargazy Pie is a Cornish dish of small fish cooked with their heads peering through the pastry. Haggis is a traditional dish from Scotland, made of oatmeal, sheep's liver, lungs and heart with various spices and cooked in a sheep's stomach. Sticky Toffee Pudding is a steamed dessert made with very moist sponge cake, containing finely chopped dates, covered in a toffee sauce and often served with a vanilla custard (蛋奶糕) or vanilla ice cream. It would be impossible to list all the unfamiliar dishes you'll come across, so make a note of any you come across while reading or travelling, find out what they're made of, and share the names with other students.

2 Work in groups of three and act out the following conversation.

Student A You're a market seller. Offer to sell something to a customer.

Student B You're a customer. Say what you want to buy.

Student A Give advice on how to cook it.

Student C You're a customer and you're impatient to be served. Say what you want to buy.

Student B Complain about Student C's behaviour.

Student A Explain why Student C has to wait their turn.

Student B Ask how much something costs.

Student A Say what it costs and give a cheaper price.

Language to help you

Offering to sell something to someone

Can I help you?

What can I get you?

Saying what you want to buy

I'll have ...

Could I have ...?

Giving advice

I'd use this / these for ...

Make sure you ...

Complaining

Excuse me!

Could you wait your turn please?

Giving a cheaper price

Let's say ... to you, sir / madam.

Ways of preparing and cooking food

bake / boil / cut / fry / slice

3 Work in groups of three and act out the following conversation.

You're friends from different countries or towns and one is visiting the other. Go to a typical bar. Decide whether to drink at the bar or to find a seat. Ask for something to drink and eat and pay for them. Ask for and give opinions about what you're drinking. If the visitor doesn't like it, offer a drink which is more familiar to them.

Language to help you

Offering someone something to drink

What can I offer you?

I'll get you ...

Saying what you'd like to drink

Can I get / have ..., please?

Asking how much things cost

How much do I owe you?

Asking for and giving opinions about unfamiliar food and drink

What do you reckon?

I was looking forward to something more / less ...

Cultural information

You may not know what **typical drinks** there are when you go about. If you want water, ask for a bottle of mineral water, which you'll have to pay for. Sparkling water has bubbles; still water has no bubbles. If you just want tap water, you don't usually have to pay for this. Perhaps you'd like some soda (US), such as a Coke, Sprite or Fanta. If you'd like to try some wine, most restaurants will serve you a glass of red or white wine. For a beer, you can ask for a beer or a bottle of beer. Draft beer is very good and it's served as a half or a pint of beer. For coffee, ask for a black coffee (without milk) or a white coffee (with milk). For tea, just ask for a cup or a pot of tea. But asking just for hot water in Europe and North America is considered an unusual request!

Speaking about cultures

There are many customs and rituals associated with food and drink in cultures around the world. It's interesting to find out about them, but useful too, especially if you intend to travel.

Find out

English afternoon tea



Meat times around the world vary considerably even within the same culture, depending on age, professional or social status, or on the climate. Traditionally, the main meal of the day in many countries was eaten in the middle of the day, and people would eat a lighter meal in the evening. But the growing demands of professional life mean that there's generally less time to enjoy a full meal at midday. In warmer countries there's always been a tendency to eat late in the evening; in cooler countries, the final meal of the day is earlier.

In Northern Europe, people have a relatively quick lunch between midday and 2 pm, and dinner as

early as 6 pm, when children are home from school and adults back from work. But in Southern Europe, shops and offices close for business for two or three hours in the middle of the day, to allow for a long lunch break, which may even include a *siesta* (Spanish for a short sleep). In Mediterranean countries people have lunch and dinner relatively late.

In both North and South America, the customs of the immigrant population, many of whom had come from Europe, still influence meal times and food customs. So in Canada, dinner may be as early as 5 pm except in the French-speaking province of Quebec, where, as in France, it's likely to be served at 7 pm or 8 pm.

But few countries elsewhere follow the pattern of Spain or Greece, where people have lunch after 2 pm and may not begin dinner before 10 pm.

Most cultures eat three meals a day, but some have extra meal times. In German-speaking countries and Poland, there's sometimes a second breakfast served mid-morning. Brunch is a late breakfast and an early lunch, which is especially common in the US. In England, afternoon tea is a light mid-afternoon meal of cold food such as sandwiches and cakes, and served in relaxed surroundings. High tea is a larger meal at 5 or 6 pm, often with hot food, and is served at a table. In many parts of Asia, especially in the summer, people often eat late in the evening, buying food from street stalls or having a barbecue.



Table manners around the world vary according to the formality of the occasion and the type of meal, but all seem to be based on varying degrees of respect for the people sharing it and practical matters such as using the most appropriate utensils for eating and drinking. It's probably more practical to focus on the important differences between one's own culture and others', so here are some points to remember.

In India it's common to eat with your fingers, but it's essential only to use your right hand. In Western countries certain foods can be eaten with your fingers (hamburgers, fried chicken, chips / French fries, sea food, sandwiches, fruit), but make sure you check what other people are doing, because the more formal the meal, the less hand contact with the food.

In some European countries, such as France and Italy, it's common to use the same knife and fork through the several courses of the meal. In formal meals, a number of items of cutlery (餐具) will be placed either side of the plate, and the general rule is to start, usually

with a spoon for soup, from the outside and move inwards with each course. You may also find a water glass, a glass for white wine and one for red, maybe even one for port (波尔图葡萄酒) at the end of the meal, and the same general rule applies.

In the US they cut food with the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left, then pass the fork to the right hand to eat. In European countries, it's more common to cut the food as you eat it, so the knife and fork, remain in the same hand through the whole course.

If there's food which you need to take out of your mouth (eg bones, or something unpleasant), it's important not to spit it onto the plate, but to take it out of your mouth with a fork, a spoon or with your fingers and if possible, behind your napkin.

In many countries, especially in the West, it's important to eat with as little noise as possible. So soup needs to be enjoyed quietly even if it's very hot, although it's sometimes considered acceptable to blow on a spoonful to cool it. It's considered very rude to make a slurping noise.

It's also a good idea to see what others do with their mobile phones. It may be impolite to check or send messages, or have conversations on your mobile phone.

Many of these rules are "unwritten" and extremely extensive, so it remains important to watch how other people behave and do as they do. If you're still not sure, then simply ask a question, such as *Excuse me, how should I eat this?* or *Can you show me what I should do?* The fundamental rule is respect for others and most people are delighted to be invited to show visitors what to do.



Enjoy your meal! I was having dinner with a French person in England, someone whose English wasn't very assured. As we were served, he said to me, "Good appetite!" I explained that we didn't say this at all. "Well, what do you say?" he asked. I replied, "Well, we don't really say anything." This is true. The French always wish you a polite *bon appétit* before a meal, but there's no real equivalent of the expression in English. "How about *Enjoy your meal!*?" he suggested. I replied that it was more likely for a waiter to say this to the customers than for him, my guest, to say this to me, his host. "But you have to say something!" he replied.



With alcoholic drinks, there are several things to say. You toast everyone with you by raising your glass to everyone and say *Cheers!* or *Your good health!* At formal dinners in the armed forces a common toast is *To our wives and lovers! May they never meet!*

But what do you say at the start of a meal? In fact, in many communities, including English-speaking countries, there's sometimes a formal prayer or grace which is sometimes said at the start of a meal. In the US, many families give thanks for the source of the food and to the people who have prepared it. It may be a religious custom, but even if you don't share the beliefs of your host, you should remain silent and respectful until the person saying grace has finished. Many Jewish families say grace both before and after the meal.

But it's true, if there's an expression which is customary in one culture and language, it feels important to find its translation. The French say *bon appétit*, the Germans say *guten Appetit*, the Japanese say *itadakimasu*, and the Chinese say *man man chi* or something similar. But when there's no direct equivalent, the sense of a cultural "absence", of something missing, can be difficult to accept.

It was this sense of absence which was troubling my French friend. "But you must say something!" he continued.

So, faced with my duties as a host towards a proud Frenchman who was deeply suspicious of English cooking, and very probably nervous of the food he was about to receive, I found the most culturally appropriate solution.

"Well, yes. There IS one expression we use with guests from other countries at dinner in England."

He said, "What is it?"

I replied, "We say *Good luck!*"

Bars and pubs are cross-cultural experiences enjoyed by most visitors, and there are three main questions one needs to ask: How do I get served? Where do I sit? When do I pay?

Generally, if you stand at the bar, the person behind it will serve you, and you'll pay less for your drinks than if you take a seat at a table, where someone else will serve you. In most places you pay when you leave.

At a crowded bar, it's useful to catch the eye of the bar staff, and make sure you're ready to pay as soon as they give you the bill. In pubs in the UK and Ireland, you pay for the drinks each time you order. In bars in Italy, you usually go straight to the cash desk and pay for what you'd like to eat and drink, then take the ticket which you'll give to the bar staff, who will then prepare your order.

In many countries, you usually choose a table where no one else is sitting. Someone will come and serve you, and you'll pay the waiter when you're ready to leave. Remember that where you choose to sit will reflect the price of your drinks. Outdoors in a popular tourist destination will be more expensive than the bar inside or elsewhere in the same city. In Germany, the UK and Ireland it's common to share a table with people you don't know, although apart from a brief greeting, you don't need to have a conversation with them. In Germany, if you're drinking beer, you often receive a new beer mat each time you order a drink. The waiter will use these mats to add up the number of drinks you've had, so make sure you leave them on the table.



Usually the price you pay is for all the drinks you order, but in German-speaking countries, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, it's possible to pay the waiter just for the drinks you've had, and not for everyone. The term for this in English is *going Dutch* and the question you can ask or may hear is *Are we going Dutch?* In many Southern European, Middle Eastern and Asian countries, going Dutch is not common and may be regarded as ungenerous or impolite.

Speak out

1 Look at the photos and think about what is culturally similar or different to what happens in China.



People dining in an outdoor restaurant in Italy



An American family saying grace before a meal



A Middle Eastern family eating with their fingers



Turks smoking water pipe in a *shisha* bar

Now work in groups of three or four. Talk about your answers and discuss cultural similarities and differences.

2 Work in pairs and talk about the best answers to the questions.

- 1 An English friend invites you to tea at 4 pm. What do you think or say?
 - (a) What a treat! I love the sandwiches and cakes. Carrot cake is my favourite!
 - (b) "Sure, but I'll only have five or ten minutes as I'm studying."
 - (c) "Thank you, I'd love a cup of tea!"
 - (d) "Yes, but any chance of having tea at 6 pm or 7 pm?"
- 2 You're in the US and your friend has invited you for brunch one Sunday morning. What do you think or say?
 - (a) Great! It means I can sleep late and then go out for something to eat.
 - (b) Now, should I eat breakfast when I wake up and then have brunch? Or will that be too much?
 - (c) "Nice idea! Shall we meet at 11.30 am for brunch?"
 - (d) "Could we meet later for lunch?"
- 3 You're in a Western restaurant, and either side of your plate are three forks, three knives, two spoons, and three glasses. What do you think or say?
 - (a) This is going to be an enormous meal. I'd better eat small portions.
 - (b) I'll just use one set of knife, fork and spoon, and save on the washing up.
 - (c) "Is it acceptable just to have something light to eat?"
 - (d) "This looks splendid. Tell me, what do I use for each course?"
- 4 As you begin your dinner in a restaurant, the waiter says, "Enjoy your meal." So you turn to your host and say, "Enjoy your meal." Your host smiles, but says nothing in reply. What do you think or say?
 - (a) Oh have I said the wrong thing? What's the right thing to say?
 - (b) I'm trying to work this out ... Is *Enjoy your meal* something only a waiter would say to the customers?

(c) It's not very friendly for my host to say nothing in reply.

(d) "Is it better to say *bon appétit*?"

- 5 You're at a pub with some friends in England. A couple you don't know come up to your table, which has some spare places, with drinks in their hands and say, "Are these seats free?" What do you think or say?
 - (a) How strange! Can't they see we're already sitting here? Why don't they find somewhere else?
 - (b) Why didn't they check if there was somewhere to sit before they bought their drinks?
 - (c) "I'm sorry but they're already taken."
 - (d) "Sure, go ahead. Cheers!"

3 Work in pairs and talk about your answers to the questions.

- 1 Do you think a change of meal times in China would lead to improvements in efficiency at school or at work?
- 2 Do you think table manners are essential to good relations with other people, or they are something which you don't need to worry about?
- 3 What examples of table manners and customs would you tell visitors to China to remember or to avoid? Think about:
 - what expressions or sayings you use at the start of or during a meal
 - where you place your chopsticks
 - who gets served first
 - when the meal is finished
- 4 What aspects of customs and traditions in China do you especially enjoy? Are there any you'd wish to avoid or to change? Think about:
 - where the host and guests sit
 - the number of dishes
 - serving food to the guests

Try out

Food is an emotive issue whatever culture you come from because it's essential for our survival. But it is also one of our great pleasures in life. For some countries, the traditions of cooking contribute directly to their cultural profile. For example, as different as they might be, the three great cuisines in the world are considered to be French, Turkish and Chinese. Even in countries where the culinary traditions are less celebrated, such as the UK, it's certain that a vibrant and varied restaurant business contributes greatly to its appeal as a workplace or a tourist destination. For the culture of food to be significant, there needs to be chefs and people who are interested enough in good food to spend hard-earned money and enjoy it in restaurants. So how do chefs break into running their own restaurant?

SCENARIO

In your city, there is an international catering enterprise. This year, they want to open a pop-up restaurant and have partnered the innovation centre of your university, hoping to get some good ideas or proposals for this project from university students. You, as members of this centre, try to seize this opportunity. So you are going to run a project meeting and come up with a proposal on setting up a pop-up restaurant.



Read the Cultural information and the case study below.

Cultural information

Pop-up restaurants have become very popular in cities such as London and New York over the past 10 years. These are temporary restaurants in a former factory, during a festival or in a disused car park. They can also refer to supper clubs in private homes or a guest slot in a pub or bar for a short period of a couple of months. They're set up by talented, young chefs who want to try out new ideas, gain experience running a business, and build their reputations, but without having to pay the enormous sums required to own and run a restaurant.

Jack and Finn were “foodies”, young men who loved cooking and eating, and were interested in sharing their passion with other people. But neither of them had the money to open a restaurant. They met the owner of a pub in Soho, London, who regularly invited innovative chefs for a guest slot of two months. Jack and Finn prepared and served all the food, and charged what the customers thought the food was worth, not a fixed price. Some customers paid very little, but many customers paid much more than they needed to, simply to encourage the two chefs in their business endeavour. They then paid the owner a small rent, and kept what was left from their takings for their overheads (管理费用). They managed to break even over two months, and are now well known enough to receive similar invitations for other pop-up restaurants.

2

Work in groups of four and talk about your answers to the questions.

- 1 What are the advantages and disadvantages of a pop-up restaurant?
- 2 Do you think the charging way in the case would work in China?
- 3 What aspiration do you get from the case?

3

Prepare your project meeting.

1 Discuss and make a list of factors you have to consider when you run a pop-up restaurant.

You could talk about:

- selling point
- location
- menu
- equipment
- marketing

...

Do some research of the factors after class. Each one in the group should prepare one or two factors. Make sure each factor has at least one person to work on.

2 Draw up an agenda for the meeting.

4

Run your project meeting.

1 Listen to and discuss everyone's recommendations.

2 Choose the best one on each factor and write a final proposal.

Communication tips

Planning and running a project meeting

A project meeting is about planning something in the future. Of course, it's important to support your suggestions with stated facts, but this is a speculative venture, and a great deal of the planning and the meeting itself will be opinions. You usually need to present your arguments in favour of or against a suggestion, and try to convince other people to agree with your conclusion. It's more effective to be able to distinguish clearly between facts, opinions, speculations, positive and negative aspects. Try to make sure there's a clear conclusion at the end of the meeting of what you're planning to do.

Stating facts

The fact is ...

Certainly, ...

Stating opinions

I think ...

In my opinion, ...

I guess ...

Speculating

It may be that ...

Stating positive facts

There are several advantages ...

In its favour ...

... is an opportunity to ...

... is the principle of ...

Stating negative facts

On the other hand, when I'm a customer, I don't like ...

One disadvantage is that ...

Suggesting

Why don't we try ...?

What if we ...?

Concluding

It seems clear to me that ...

Reviewing

Cultural information

William Carlos Williams
Courses in a Western meal
Street markets
British and Irish pubs and bars
Behaviour and language in bars, restaurants and markets
Unfamiliar food
Typical drinks
English afternoon tea
Meal times
Table manners
Enjoy your meal!
Bars and pubs
Pop-up restaurants

Language to help you

Offering and ordering food and drink

What would you like as a starter / main course / dessert?

Are you ready to order?

Talking about unfamiliar food

What's ...?

What's it made with?

Saying what food you like or don't like

That sounds good.

I'm not so keen on ...

I'm not very fond of ...

Complaining about unfamiliar food

I'm sorry but there's something wrong with ...

... is off / too salty / too sweet / too hot / too spicy ...

Can I speak to the manager?

Offering to sell something to someone

Can I help you?

What can I get you?

Saying what you want to buy

I'll have ...

Could I have ...?

Giving advice

I'd use this / these for ...

Make sure you ...

Complaining

Excuse me!

Could you wait your turn please?

Giving a cheaper price

Let's say ... to you, sir / madam.

Ways of preparing and cooking food

bake / boil / cut / fry / slice

Offering someone something to drink

What can I offer you?

I'll get you ...

Saying what you'd like to drink

Can I get / have ..., please?

Asking how much things cost

How much do I owe you?

Asking for and giving opinions about unfamiliar food and drink

What do you reckon?

I was looking forward to something more / less ...

Communication tips

Planning and running a project meeting

Stating facts

The fact is ...

Certainly, ...

Stating opinions

I think ...

In my opinion, ...

I guess ...

Speculating

It may be that ...

Stating positive facts

There are several advantages ...

In its favour ...

... is an opportunity to ...

... is the principle of ...

Stating negative facts

On the other hand, when I'm a customer, I don't like ...

One disadvantage is that ...

Suggesting

Why don't we try ...?

What if we ...?

Concluding

It seems clear to me that ...