

# Food Terminology

**Anchovies-** True anchovies come from the Mediterranean and southern European coastlines. Most anchovies are salt-cured and packed in oil.

**Crostini-**Means “little toasts” in Italian. They are small, thin slices of toasted bread usually brushed with olive oil.

**Chipotles in Adobo-** a chipotle is actually a smoked jalapeno. They are packed in adobo sauce, which consists of tomato, onion, paprika, and vinegar

**Sirachi-**A smooth, spicy, garlicky Vietnamese chili puree

**Chinese Long Beans-**Growing up to three feet in length, this bean is a long favored Chinese vegetable. They lack sweetness, but have a subtle taste and pleasing crunchiness that make them a good addition to numerous dishes

**Curry Paste and Powder-** Blends of ground spices used to flavor savory dishes. A basic Indian curry powder includes ground dried red chiles, coriander, mustard, black peppercorns, fenugreek, cumin, and turmeric. Other spices that can be included are cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, allspice, ginger, and garlic. The addition of oil, vinegar, or water makes it into curry paste. The green and red curry pastes of Thai cooking are both based on a blend of fresh cilantro leaves, chili peppers, garlic, and other spices and fresh herbs.

**Daikon-** A variety of radish grown in Japan with a long, almost cylindrical, fleshy white root and a mild, peppery taste, its pickled form is called Takuan.

**Rice noodles-** a type of pasta made from rice flour and water.

**Fish Sauce (Nam Pla)-**Literally “fish water,” a clear, amber-colored seasoning sauce with a pungent, salty taste. It is used in Vietnamese and Thai cooking to enhance the flavor in foods. The Vietnamese variety is darker in color and stronger in flavor.

**Jicama-**A root with brown skin and crisp, white flesh. It is similar in taste to a water chestnut and used raw in salads and stir-fries. Commonly known as the Mexican potato.

**Stilton Cheese-**A creamy textured, blue-veined, semi-firm cow’s milk cheese. It is creamy white to amber in color and has a strong aroma.

**Wasabi-**A pungent, powerfully flavored root, not unlike the horseradish root, used in Japanese cooking as an ingredient in sushi and mixed with soy sauce as an accompaniment to sashimi.

Emmental-Switzerland's oldest and most important cheeses. Nutty-sweet, and mellow in flavor. Light gold in color, with marble sized holes and a natural light brown rind. It's named for Switzerland's Emmental valley.

Gruyere-This moderate-fat, cow's milk cheese has a rich, sweet, nutty flavor that is highly prized. It's usually aged for 10-12 months and has a golden brown rind and a firm, pale yellow interior with well spaced, medium-size holes.

Pepperoncini-Tuscan peppers 2-3' long that have a bright red wrinkled skin. They have a slightly sweet flavor that can range from medium to medium hot. They are most often sold pickled.

Yellowfin Tuna-(also called ahi) are usually larger than albacores, reaching up to 300 pounds. Their flesh is pale pink with a slightly stronger flavor.

Pancetta-An Italian bacon that is cured with salt and spices but not smoked. Flavorful, slightly salty pancetta comes in a sausage-like roll.

Porterhouse-A steak cut from the large end of the short loin containing meat from both the tenderloin and the top loin muscle.

Sirloin-This cut of beef lies between the very tender short loin and the much tougher round. As would be expected, the meat cuts from the portion near the short loin are more tender than those closer to the round. Sirloin is usually cut into steaks or roasts. Bone removed, the cuts are referred to by the names of the three main muscles. Top sirloin is a continuation of the tender top loin muscle of the short loin. The tenderloin is part of the tenderest muscle (which also continues from the short loin) and the bottom sirloin, which is part of the same less tender sirloin tip.

Achiote seed- This slightly musky-flavored seed of the annatto tree is available whole or ground in east Indian, Spanish and Latin American markets.

Coriander-Native to the Mediterranean and the Orient, coriander is related to the parsley family. It's known for both its seeds (actually the dried, ripe fruit of the plant) and for its dark green, lacy leaves. The flavors of the seeds and leaves bear absolutely no resemblance to each other. They are mildly fragrant and have an aromatic flavor akin to a combination of lemon, sage and caraway. Coriander leaves are also commonly known as cilantro and chinese parsley. Fresh coriander leaves have an extremely pungent odor that lends itself well to highly seasoned food.

Caper-The flower bud of a bush native to the Mediterranean and parts of Asia. The small buds are picked, sun-dried and then pickled in a vinegar brine. Capers

range in size from the petite nonpareil variety from southern France (considered the finest), to those from Italy, which can be as large as the tip of your little finger.

Brioche- This French creation is a light yeast bread rich with butter and eggs.

Coulis- A general term referring to a thick puree or sauce, such as a tomato coulis. The word can also refer to thick, pureed shellfish soups.

Mesclun Greens- Found in specialty produce markets and many supermarkets, mesclun is simply a potpourri of young, small salad greens. The mix varies depending on the source, but among those greens commonly included are arugala, dandelion, frisee, mizzuna, oak leaf, mache, radicchio, and sorrel.

Sashimi-sliced raw fish that is served simply with condiments

Sushi-A Japanese specialty based on boiled rice flavored with rice vinegar. Once cooled, the rice has a glossy sheen and separates easily. To make these rolls, various chopped vegetables, raw fish, pickles, tofu, etc. are enclosed in sushi rice and wrapped in thin sheets of nori. The rolls are then cut into slices. Sushi is designed to be finger food.

Wasabi-This Japanese version of horseradish comes from the root of an Asian plant. It's used to make into a green-colored condiment that has a sharp, pungent, fiery flavor. Some specialty markets sell fresh wasabi that can be grated just like fresh horseradish.

Tofu-Also known as soy bean curd or bean curd, custard-like white tofu is made from curdled soy milk, an iron rich liquid extracted from ground, cooked soybeans. The resulting curds are drained and pressed in a fashion similar to cheese making. The firmness of the tofu depends on how much whey has been pressed out. It has a bland, slightly nutty flavor that gives it a chameleon-like capability to take on the flavor of the food with which it is cooked.

Buttermilk-In the past it was the liquid left after butter was churned. Today it is made commercially by adding special bacteria to nonfat or lowfat milk, giving it a slightly thickened texture and tangy flavor.

Cumin-Shaped like a caraway seed, cumin is the dried fruit of a plant in the parsley family. It's aromatic, nutty-flavored seeds come in 3 colors: amber, white, and black.

Balsamic vinegar- It is made from white Trebbiano grape juice, gets its dark color and pungent sweetness from aging in barrels-of various woods and in graduating sizes-over a period of years. It should be noted that many balsamic vinegars contain sulfites, which are primarily added to inhibit the growth of unfavorable, flavor-detracting bacteria.

Aioli- A strongly flavored garlic mayonnaise from the Provence region of Southern France.

Star Anise- A star-shaped, dark brown pod that contains a pea sized seed in each of its eight segments. Native to China, star anise comes from a small evergreen tree. Star anise is from the magnolia family and its flavor is slightly more bitter than that of regular anise.

Brine- A strong solution of water and salt used for pickling or preserving foods. A sweetener such as sugar and molasses is sometimes added to the brine

Cure-To treat food by one of several methods in order to preserve it. Smoke-curing is generally done in 1 of 2 ways. The cold-smoking method (which can take up to a month) smokes the food at between 70' to 90'. Hot-smoking partially or totally cooks the food by treating it at temperatures ranging from 100' to 190'. Salt-cured foods have been dried and packed in salt preparations.

Masa- The Spanish word for "dough", masa is the traditional dough used to make corn tortillas. It's made with sun-or-fire- dried corn kernels that have been cooked in limewater (water mixed with calcium oxide). After having been cooked, then soaked in the limewater overnight, the wet corn is ground into masa.

Al Dente- An Italian phrase meaning "to the tooth," used to describe pasta or other food that is cooked only until it offers a slight resistance when bitten into, but not soft or overdone.

Al Forno- Italian for baked or roasted

Allspice- The pea-size berry of the evergreen pimiento tree. It tastes like a combination of cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves.

Anellini- Small pasta rings

Anise- This plant is a member of the parsley family. Both the leaves and the seed have a distinctive, sweet licorice flavor. Anise seed is the greenish, brown, comma-shaped seed used for flavoring.

Arborio Rice- The high starch kernels of this Italian grown grain are shorter and fatter than any other short-grain rice. Arborio is traditionally used for risotto because its increased starch lends this classic dish its requisite creamy texture.

Arugula- A leafy vegetable native to the Mediterranean, known as "rocket" in Europe. Grown for its leaves, which are slightly pungent and peppery in taste.

**Basil-** A member of the mint family, fresh basil has a pungent flavor sometimes described as a cross between licorice and cloves. It is a key herb in Mediterranean cooking and essential to making pesto.

**Basmati Rice-** Grown in the foothills of the Himalayas, its perfumy, nutlike flavor and aroma can be contributed to the fact that the grain is aged to decrease its moisture content. Basmati is a long-grained rice with a fine texture.

**Biscotti-** A twice baked Italian biscuit that made by first baking it in a loaf, then slicing the loaf and baking the slices. The result is an intensely crunchy cookie that is perfect for dipping into coffee.

**Compote-** A chilled dish of fresh or dried fruit that has been slowly cooked.

**Compound butter-** Butter creamed with other ingredients such as herbs, garlic, wine, shallots and so on.

**Crème Brulee-** The literal translation of this rich dessert is “burnt cream.” It describes a chilled, stirred custard that, just before serving, is sprinkled with sugar and caramelized with a torch.

**Crimini-** A dark brown, slightly firmer variation of the everyday cultivated white mushroom. Crimini’s have a slightly fuller flavor than paler relatives. Portobello’s are fully matured crimini mushrooms

**Crostini-** Meaning “little toasts” in Italian, crostini are small, thin slices of toasted bread which are usually brushed with olive oil.

**Dolce-** Italian for “sweet,” referring to desserts, candy and other sweets.

**Emulsifier-** Generally, any ingredient used to bind together and noncombinative substances, such as oil and water. Egg yolks contain a natural emulsifier and are used to thicken and bind sauces, as well to bind ingredients in baking.

**Endive-** Small, cigar shaped head of cream-colored, tightly packed slightly bitter leaves. Its grown in complete darkness to prevent it from turning green.

**Escarole-** Broad, slightly curved pale green leaves with a milder flavor than endive. T is cooked like spinach.

**Gelato-** The Italian word for “ice cream.” Gelato does not contain as much air as its American counterpart and therefore has a much denser texture. It does not contain cream, but milk.

**Tuile-** A thin, crisp cookie that is placed over a rounded object while still hot from the oven. Once cooled and stiff, the cookie

resembles a curved roof tile.

Zest- the perfumy outermost skin layer of citrus fruit which is removed with a paring knife or peeler. Only the colored of the skin is considered the zest.

Tomato Concasse- Tomatoes that are slightly blanched to remove the skin, then sliced open to remove the seeds and diced.

Tempura Batter- A Japanese specialty of batter-dipped, deep fried pieces of fish or vegetables.

Hoisin Sauce- A sweet and spicy, red-brown sauce that is made from fermented soy beans and red rice, a natural coloring agent

Quesadilla- A flour tortilla filled with a savory mixture, then folded in half to form a turnover shape. The filling can include shredded cheese, cooked meat, refried beans or a combination of items. After the tortilla is filled and folded, it's toasted under a broiler or fried.

Potato Latke- Traditionally served at Hanukkah, the latke is a pancake usually made from grated potatoes mixed with eggs, onions, matzo meal and seasonings. It is pan fried.

Prime Rib- A beef roast from the rib section between the short loin and the chuck. Usually slow roasted, and contains a higher marbling and fat content to increase flavor.

Filet mignon- An expensive, boneless cut of beef from the tenderloin. Extremely tender cut of meat.

Trip sirloin- A "filet of sirloin", cut from the lower section of the rump, this meat is full of flavor but needs to be marinated.

Blackened- A cooking technique made famous by chef Paul Prudhomme of New Orleans by which meat or fish is cooked in a cast iron skillet

Au poivre- A term used for peppercorn crusted beef. Usually strip steak and covered with a brandy peppercorn sauce.

Au poivre sauce- A veal stock based sauce, started with shallots, brandy, and peppercorns, and reduced cream.

Max cut- A larger cut. A 16 oz. steak instead of 12oz. and 22 oz. prime rib instead of 16oz.

Ala stone- Max's newest classic. A marinated sirloin a top of a garlic crostini and smothered with sauted peppers and onions.

Gentle giant- Our smaller cut of prime rib. No bone in this cut.

St. Louis ribs- Sometimes called spare ribs these larger boned rib offer a meatier version than baby back ribs.

Smoked- Any methods for preserving and flavoring food by exposing them to smoke. Methods including cold-smoking, (in which smoked items are not cooked), hot smoking (in which the items are cooked), and smoke-roasting.

Satay-[sah-TAY] An Indonesian favorite consisting of small marinated cubes of meat, fish or poultry threaded on skewers and grilled or broiled. Sate is usually served with a spicy peanut sauce.

(U-10)-"U" stands for unit per pound. "10" (or following number) stands for the number of units per pound.

Blanched-To plunge food (usually vegetables and fruits) into boiling water briefly, then into iced cold water to stop the cooking process. Blanching is used to firm the flesh, to loosen skins (as with peaches and tomatoes) and to heighten and set color and flavor.

Little Neck clams-Called littlenecks on the East Coast and Pacific littlenecks on the West Coast, these small, hard-shell have a shell diameter of less than 2 inches. They're usually reserved for eating on the half shell.

Gorgonzola-Named for a town outside Milan where it was originally made, Gorgonzola is one of Italy's great cheeses. It has an ivory-colored interior that can be lightly or thickly streaked with bluish-green veins. This cow's-milk cheese is rich and creamy with a savory, slightly pungent flavor. When aged over 6 months, the flavor and aroma can be quite strong. Gorgonzola is a perfect accompaniment for pears, apples and peaches, and pairs nicely with hearty red wines. It's delicious when crumbled in salads.

Chutney-From the East Indian word chatni, this spicy condiment contains fruit, vinegar, sugar and spices. It can range in texture from chunky to smooth and in degrees of spiciness from mild to hot. Chutney is a delicious accompaniment to curried dishes. The sweeter chutneys also make interesting bread spreads and are delicious served with cheese.

Vinaigrette-Is a basic oil-and-vinegar combination, generally used to dress salad greens and other cold vegetable, meat or dishes. In its simplest form, vinaigrette consists of oil, vinegar (usually 3 parts oil to 1 part vinegar), salt and pepper.

More elaborate variations can include any of various ingredients such as spices, herbs, shallots, onions, mustard, etc.

**Kalamata Olives**-(also spelled calamata) An almond-shaped Greek olive that ranges in length from about ½ to 1 inch. Kalamatas are a dark eggplant color and have a flavor that can be rich and fruity. They're often slit to allow the wine vinegar marinade in which they're soaked to penetrate the flesh. Kalamatas are marketed packed in either olive oil or vinegar.

**Broccolini**-The trademarked name for a cross between broccoli and Chinese kale. This bright green vegetable has long, slender stalks topped with a bouquet of tiny buds reminiscent of a miniature broccoli head. The flavor is sweet with a subtle, peppery edge: the texture is slightly crunchy. Also called baby broccoli.

**Georges Bank**-The Georges Bank run from the Northern tip of Cape Cod to the southern tip of Nova Scotia. The Georges Bank is the most nutrient rich fishing ground in the world. Two currents converge at the banks providing Georges Bank fish with a superior diet.

**Salsify**- This root vegetable also known as oyster plant because its taste resembles a delicately flavored oyster. The parsnip-shaped salsify can reach up to 12 inches in length and 2 1/2 inches in diameter.

**Bel paese cheese**- Translated as "beautiful country" this semisoft Italian cheese has a mild, buttery flavor that is delicious with wines. It can be served as a dessert cheese or for snacks and melts beautifully in casseroles.

**Prosciutto**- Italian for "ham," prosciutto is a term used to refer to a ham that has been seasoned, salt-cured and air-dried. The meat is pressed, which produces a firm, dense texture. Prosciutto di Parma, from the Parma region of Italy, is the most famous prosciutto in the world and often referred to as the best.

**Polenta**- A staple of northern Italy, polenta is mush made from cornmeal. It can be eaten hot or cooled until firm and cut into squares and fried.

**Muffaletta**- A specialty of New Orleans, this hero-style sandwich originated in 1906 at the Central Grocery. The sandwich consists of a round loaf of crusty Italian bread, split and filled with layers of sliced provolone, Genoa salami, and ham topped with "olive salad," a chopped mixture of green unstuffed olives, pimientos, celery, garlic, cocktail onions, capers, oregano, parsley, olive oil, red-wine vinegar, and salt and pepper. The olive salad is what sets the muffuletta apart from other sandwiches.

**Vidalia onions**- Are from their name sake of Vidalia, Georgia, where these sweet onions are available from May thru June only.



Soft shell crab- Refers to the growth state of the blue crab. Always sold whole and are in season from April thru mid-September, with the peak time in June and July. The crab loses their hard shell during a growing spurt and during this time the crabs are referred to as "soft shell" crab while their new shell hardens.

Frisee- A member of the chicory family, frisse has delicately slender, curly leaves that range in color from yellow-white yellow-green. This feathery green has a mildly bitter flavor and is often used in the special salad, mesclun.

Brochette- French term for "skewer."

Brick Pressed- To press food with many pans or another weight to create a crisp exterior.

Creole- Reflects the full-flavored combination of the best of French, Spanish, And African cuisines. Uses butter and cream, and tomatoes. Most famous Creole dish is gumbo.

### **FRONT OF THE HOUSE KITCHEN TERMS**

86- Kitchen has run out of this particular item. DO NOT ORDER MORE.

On the fly- The server needs this item as soon as the kitchen can produce it.

Hold- Do not fire this item/table until the server requests it.

Fire- Word used to tell the cooks to start putting the particular course in the window.

Order Fire- The order rung in is expedited, cooked, and run out immediately.

Window- The place where the food is run out from.

Expeditor- The person in charge of calling out tickets from the back of the line, he is in charge of the whole line operations. requests must be placed through this person. The expeditor in the front of the line is responsible for the running of all tickets, and special requests from the servers.

Pantry- The station from where the appetizers, salads, and desserts come from. Raw bar items also come from this station.

Grill- The station from which all grilled items, steaks, pork chops, ribs, and any other grilled items come from.

Saute- The station from which all pan seared items come from. Pasta, fish, sides, sauté is the term for pan searing using a hot pan and quick cooking to sear the produce to seal in the flavor.

Fry- The area of the line where the fried items come from. French-fries, wings, calamari, and any other fried items.