

pans look as if the casting molds to make them were created with actual corncobs, each kernel is so individualistic.

[See also Corn.]

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LINDA CAMPBELL FRANKLIN

Corned Beef

All-American as beef in most forms may be, corned beef has never quite managed to shed its Old World image. Even the name sounds quaint—"corn" being a bygone English synonym for "granule," a reference to salt as the product's active ingredient. To complicate matters, the English themselves prefer the term "salt beef" (or "pickled beef") to distinguish the cured brisket (or other comparable cut) found in delicatessens from the canned loaf found on supermarket shelves; in the United States, however, "corned beef" is used for both items.

The history of corned beef is likewise confusing. Salting as a mode of food preservation is as ancient and widespread as civilization itself, such that the genesis of any one product is hard to pinpoint. For instance, the consensus is that salt meat was well and widely known in Europe by the Middle Ages, but opinions continue to differ as to whether the origins of corned beef per se lie in the British Isles and, more specifically Ireland, or in central and eastern Europe and, in particular, among the Ashkenazi Jews. It is clear, however, that Ireland created and led the market on exportation of corned beef until the nineteenth century, when the canning industry emerged in England and opened doors for the cattlemen of South America, who came to dominate production of canned corned beef—although its heyday passed with World War II, at least among civilians. (Consumption is still notable among British and U.S. armed forces).

Techniques for salting meat vary, from dry salting, a method based on topical application and absorption, to wet salting, whereby the meat is immersed in brine. These procedures, which can take days to complete, are

also known as curing and pickling, respectively. For corned beef the latter process is key, although it is often preceded by the former; brines may contain sugar, salt-peter, and spices in varying amounts.

What does not vary much is the way in which corned beef brisket is traditionally prepared: it is simmered with a blend of seasonings that may include garlic, peppercorns, bay leaf, tarragon, mustard, parsley, thyme, marjoram, cloves, nutmeg, or allspice. It can then be served hot, accompanied by onions, potatoes, and the like, or cold, with copious condiments from horseradish to sweet relish. Corned beef and cabbage is the most famous version, one with Irish roots but American blossoms—especially on Saint Patrick's Day, where it forms the centerpiece for the proverbial New England boiled dinner.

Strangely, this peasant dish appeared regularly on the elaborate menus of America's grand hotels in the nineteenth century. Its even more humble relatives have taken different routes: from the hash houses of the period to modern-day greasy spoons, corned beef hash, frequently paired with eggs, remains a staple, while the Reuben, a classic deli sandwich of sliced corned beef piled high on rye with Swiss cheese, sauerkraut, and Thousand Island dressing, continues to inspire heated debate between Nebraskans and New Yorkers as to its birthplace.

[See also Jewish American Food; Reuben Sandwich; Saint Patrick's Day.]

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RUTH TOBIAS

Corn Oil, see Fats and Oils

Corn-Preparation Tools

From the early days of the United States, corn was grown for livestock feed and human consumption. For livestock, husked ears of corn were usually dried and stored in corn cribs—ventilated structures that were open invitations to

(from 1995). Since 1991 Crisco has been sold in butter-sized sticks besides the original tubs. Perhaps more remarkable, though, was the introduction of butter-flavored shortening in 1981—this from a company that had once claimed that “upon thousands of pages, the words ‘lard’ and ‘butter’ [had] been crossed out and the word ‘Crisco’ written in their place” (Kronld, p. 267).

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MICHAEL KRONLD

Croly, Jane Cunningham, *see* Jenny June

Crullers

In essence, a cruller is a twisted piece of deep-fried sweet dough. It originated with the Dutch, who named it for its distinctive shape (the verb *krullen* means “to curl”). In practice, especially U.S. practice, exceptions and variations abound—not only among the Dutch Americans whose forebears are credited with introducing the cruller to New York, but also among bakers of Scandinavian, Austrian, and Polish descent, each with their own twist (if you will) on the recipe. No ingredient save flour is completely indispensable, not even butter, sugar, milk, or eggs. Flavorings run the gamut from cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, lemon, and vanilla to wine, whiskey, rum, and even rose water (a suggestion from the seminal nineteenth-century cookbook author Eliza Leslie). The namesake shape is only one of many crullers may take. Various recipes specify diamonds, braids, corkscrews, cigars, rectangles, and even rings (whereupon they are dead ringers for doughnuts). Some are plain, others are glazed, dusted with sugar, or topped with syrup or jam. Finally, crullers are known by a slew of alternative names, including twist cakes, love knots, matrimony knots, angel wings, and Henriettes. Leslie knew them additionally as wonders, and Louisiana Cajuns proffer *croquignoles*.

[*See also* Doughnuts; Dutch Influences on American Food; Pastries.]

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RUTH TOBIAS

Cuba Libre

“Cuba Libre” was shouted over raised glasses in bars in the United States and Cuba during and after the Spanish American War. The combination of Cuban rum with the newly invented American Coca-Cola seemed natural for a drink. The Cuba Libre became Cuba's national cocktail and is widely consumed in South Florida. It is made with rum, Coca-Cola, and a dash of key lime juice; it is served over ice in a chilled highball glass with a lime wedge. Many bartenders naturally put a lime wedge in a rum and Coke even when the drink is not ordered by its original name.

[*See also* Coca-Cola; Cocktails; Rum.]

MARIAN BETANCOURT

Cuban American Food

Located barely ninety miles from Key West, Florida, Cuba is the largest island nation in the Caribbean. It is a slender, crocodile-shaped island with fertile soil and a moderate tropical climate. The cuisine of the island was created by the native Taino (Arawak) Indians and transplanted peoples from four continents: Caribbean Indians and some from Florida brought to work in the mines, Spanish colonists, African slaves, Chinese contract workers, French refugees from Haiti, and peasants from Jamaica and Haiti.

Two events have marked the history of Cuba and defined its cuisine: the Spanish conquest and settlement, which lasted more than four hundred years, and the socialist revolution that began in 1959. Cuban cuisine formed almost biologically through the cross-fertilization of successive waves of peoples and cultures under Spanish colonial rule. The cuisine has preserved more of a Mediterranean character than many other Latin American cuisines. There is little use of the hot peppers

Ginger Ale

Ginger ale—a carbonated beverage sweetened and flavored with extract of ginger root (or imitations thereof)—serves as the transitional link between the home-brewed alcoholic small beers and small ales of old and modern-day mass-produced soft drinks. Small beers had been prevalent for centuries as affordable, if far less potent, alternatives to commercial alcoholic brews. Derived from almost any part of almost any plant available in England and colonial America, small beers and ales were generally presumed to be tonic in contrast to civic water supplies, which were believed to be potentially toxic. Ginger beer, which peaked in popularity in the early nineteenth century, was certainly considered to be healthy: Ginger's reputation as a counterirritant and digestive aid, among other things, was firmly entrenched in folk medicine.

At the same time, the rage for natural mineral spring-water fueled the development of artificially carbonated water or soda water. The first name in soda water manufacture was Jacob Scheweppe, who set up shop in Geneva and London in the late eighteenth century. His ingenuity inspired chemists for decades to come, who added to his achievement by adding flavor, including, by the mid-nineteenth century, ginger. The company Scheweppe founded—a multinational corporation in the twenty-first century—went on to become the foremost producer of ginger ale.

Though the precise circumstances of its invention remain unknown, ginger ale, also called ginger champagne or gingerade, achieved immediate fame throughout the British Isles and overseas as a product of Belfast. There may have been a few American antecedents. Kenneth F. Kiple and Kriemhild Coneè-Ornelas cite a sixteenth-century source that refers to a Native American concoction containing ginger boiled with cinnamon; however, the early date is suspect, since ginger is not indigenous to the New World. The same authors and others also allude to switchel, a curious-sounding colonial American beverage made by combining ginger with molasses and vinegar.

The role Americans played in the soda revolution is better known. Stateside pharmacists invented the soda fountain itself, the popularity of which surged throughout the nineteenth century. Over the course of the century, the health benefits of soda water were eclipsed by its refreshing qualities, just as had happened in the case of small beer. As the soda fountain became a form of entertainment,

a destination in itself, the beverages it dispensed were increasingly drunk for pleasure rather than health.

And so it was with ginger ale, which occupied the top of the flavor-popularity charts from the moment of its introduction until the 1940s, with home consumption increasing as the bottling and, eventually, canning industries grew. Vernor's was the first American manufacturer of note. Ginger ale was also employed as a mixer in such classic cocktails as the buck and the highball, Prohibition notwithstanding, as well as the Shirley Temple, a nonalcoholic favorite of children. (The rum-based dark and stormy, meanwhile, is traditionally made with alcoholic ginger beer.)

Around the mid-twentieth century, however, colas began to dominate the market through the promotion of a youthful, all-American image. Ginger ale, by contrast, came to be associated with an old-school if not Old World quaintness, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century its share of soft-drink sales was all but negligible, despite modestly successful attempts to innovate with new flavors, such as raspberry and grape.

[See also Beer; Cocktails; Soda Drinks; Soda Fountains; Switchel; Water, Bottled.]

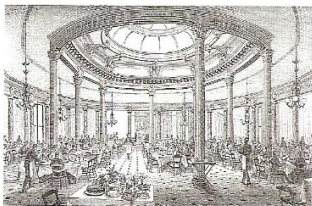
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RUTH TOBIAS

Glassware

Glassmaking is an ancient process of melting silica, usually from sand, with an alkali to form a malleable compound that hardens on cooling. Whether discovered in one location or several, by the fifteenth century B.C.E. glass was known in Egypt and Mesopotamia and thereafter spread to the Mediterranean region and China. Various metals were often added to mimic precious stones because it was technologically impossible to make colorless glass. Drinking glasses were a luxury, made by the arduous



Hotel Dining Room. Hotel dining scene, nineteenth century. *Sothmarty Family Culinary Collection*

Hotel, which opened in New York in 1791, sprouted in the commercial districts of larger cities and served emerging business communities. Well-heeled businessmen who could not travel home for the midday meal dined on the hotels' original "businessman's lunch."

Second, the grandest hotels were entertainments in themselves and had a near-monopoly as sites for banquets and elegant dining. Often staffed by European chefs and waiters, the hotels broadcast sophistication. Dinners were choreographed with military precision. A gong summoned guests for dinners at which waiters in union removed silver domes covering the various dishes, creating a public spectacle akin to the most opulent dinners in private homes. The great expense of the food generally was compensated by liquor sales. Prohibition effectively killed the hotel dining rooms, and in the changed economy of the 1930s, restaurants, rather than hotels, became the sites of culinary excellence.

Third, hotels great and small were long-term residences. Before America's first apartments were built in the 1870s in New York, the cost of elegant urban homes and house-keeping increased dramatically. Well-to-do, permanent boarders, single persons and families alike, accounted for one-half of the hotel occupancy in the mid-nineteenth century and often took meals in the public dining rooms.

Fourth, hotel dining rooms were a progressive public venue for ladies, who generally were not welcome in restaurants, particularly unescorted, until the late nineteenth century. Hotel etiquette and service differed from that in private homes, as detailed by authors such as Eliza Leslie and Tunis G. Campbell. Both of these authors emphasized the egalitarian nature of the hotel

tables. Leslie observed that, "Nobody 'sits below the salt.' And every one has an equal chance of obtaining a share of the nicest articles on the table."

On the other side of the social coin, hotels were a battleground for fledgling labor unions in the early twentieth century. Carefully timed walkouts by waiters at the most elegant establishments left bewildered patrons in dinner jackets to serve themselves. When cooks joined the fray, shutting down the immense kitchens, management was forced to negotiate. Labor unions continue to organize vast hotel staffs. Hotel dining rooms no longer command their extraordinary place in the pantheon of American eateries. For the cost of a nineteenth-century dinner, they allowed old and new money, women, and the socially aspiring to "rub elbows and pick their teeth at a public table."

[See also Boardinghouses; Restaurants; Taverns; 'Tschirky, Oscar.]

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CATHY K. KAUFMAN

Hot Toddies

To many Americans, who know the toddy only as a steaming après-ski pick-me-up, the term "hot toddy" may seem redundant. Yet it makes a legitimate distinction, for the cool toddy does exist. Both of these drinks reflect the

climate of their birthplace; indeed, toddies may even be defined by their usefulness in countering the effects of extreme temperature.

The cool version has its origins in the tapped and fermented sap of certain tropical palms, for which British colonialists in India developed a taste and a name, toddy, derived from the Hindi word *tārī*. The word traveled from the outposts of the British Empire to sultry plantation-era America, where Dixie gentlemen adopted it for their own combination of rum, sugar or molasses, and nutmeg, which was mixed with hot water and then cooled. It was also known as *bombo*, or, on occasion, *bimbo*.

The hot toddy hails from eighteenth-century Scotland, where a similar mixture of spirits (namely malt whiskey), hot water, sugar or honey, and lemon, plus spices, such as nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, or mace, was touted as a cure for colds—although its application was, not surprisingly, far more general. The name, in this case, is said to refer to Tod's Well in Edinburgh from whence the water came. Scottish affection for the drink is particularly evident in the gadgetry contrived specially for its preparation, including kettles, ladles, and lifters. (The lifter, which was usually made of glass, resembled a decanter but functioned like a ladle, transferring the beverage in question from punch bowl to drinking vessel.)

The hot toddy's popularity must have spread fast, if the lore that would-be American revolutionaries took courage from rounds of toddies (which were often heated by poker straight from the tavern hearth) holds any truth. Certainly Americans adopted the drink wholeheartedly, down to the toddy-stick (an implement akin to a muddler, flat at one end and knobbed at the other) with which it was stirred. In colonial New England, however, rum or brandy often replaced the whiskey—and the punch bowl itself often precluded glassware, since drinking from a common vessel was considered properly sociable among tavern patrons. Although for all the democracy of the gesture, it should be noted that toddy contained two ingredients—citrus and sugar—that commanded high prices at the time. It was thus not quite the drink of the people. New Orleansians, for their part, boast of their favorite French-born son Antoine Peychaud's experiments with bitters-laced toddies as leading to the invention of the cocktail around the turn of the nineteenth century.

Meanwhile, a few variations on the theme help stretch the definition of a hot toddy, from the blazer—a toddy that is not merely heated but actually ignited—to hot buttered rum, which floats a pat of butter on its surface.

Such drinks are typically served in a short-stemmed glass with a handle that is itself known as a toddy.

[See also Cocktails; Homemade Remedies; Taverns.]

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RUTH TOBIAS

Howard Johnson

Howard Johnson was a mid-twentieth-century phenomenon, an American company that pioneered concepts of food service and hospitality still in use in the twenty-first century. Super-premium ice cream, restaurant franchises, turnpike service stops, commissary-based restaurant production, quality control, and customer service were concepts formulated by the founder, Howard Deering Johnson, beginning with one corner drugstore in the oceanside Wollaston section of Quincy, Massachusetts, south of Boston. In 1925, the twenty-seven-year-old businessman turned his newsstand into a thriving delivery service, then set his sights on improving the soda fountain. He developed the first super-premium commercial ice cream using natural flavoring and cream with twice the butterfat content. Depending on the source, the story goes that Johnson either improved on his mother's recipe or purchased the formula from a pushcart operator. In any event, his new, larger portions were distinctively sculpted with a specially designed ice cream scoop.

Johnson sold his ice cream cones for a nickel from a growing series of wooden stands situated directly on the beach. By 1928, sales grossed \$240,000 and the original flavors, vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry, gradually increased to twenty-eight. A high-quality hot dog was added to the beachfront menu. Clipped at either end, notched down the center, and cooked in butter, it was presented in a buttered, toasted roll, cradled in a cardboard holder with scalloped edges, and renamed a "frankfort."

In early 1929, Johnson opened a full-service restaurant in a new ten-story building in downtown Quincy. The menu included typical New England fare, such as fried clams, chicken potpies, and baked beans, in addition to the popular frankforts and ice cream and huge sodas that