

British food best in the world (Fri 22 Apr, 2005)

WARM-UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about: restaurants / British food / ice cream / bacon and egg ice cream / experimental food / snail porridge / fish and chips ... For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

BRITISH FOOD BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with British food. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

MY COUNTRY'S FOOD: Write down what you consider to be the three most delicious dishes in your country. Talk about these to your partner / group. Describe or explain the following:

- ingredients
- flavour
- presentation
- history
- cultural importance
- difficulty of preparation / cooking
- eating style
- your history with this food
- price
- availability

AGREED: In pairs / groups, agree on a word or sentence ending to finish the following sentences. Change partners and repeat.

- a. British food is _____.
- b. The best cuisine in the world is _____.
- c. The most delicious dessert is _____.
- d. Egg and bacon ice cream sounds _____.
- e. Microwave dinners are _____.
- f. Vegetarian fare is _____.
- g. The best drink to accompany a meal is _____.
- h. Dining out is _____.
- i. McDonalds hamburgers are _____.
- j. Life without restaurants would be _____.

“FOOD” WORD PARTNERS: In pairs / groups, talk about the following words that are collocated with the word “food”:

mouthwatering / fast / slow / junk / exotic / rich / nutritious / health / frozen / packaged / canned / disgusting / Indian / French / Japanese

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'ice' and 'cream'.

TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true or false:

- a. A British restaurant serves bacon and egg ice cream. T / F
- b. A British restaurant won the title of best restaurant in the world. T / F
- c. The head chef loves cooking traditional English dishes. T / F
- d. The head chef studied at a French cooking school. T / F
- e. All of the judges that participated in the poll were British. T / F
- f. Britain is the home of fish and chips. T / F
- g. French people love English food. T / F
- h. London was named as the gourmet capital of the world. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | | |
|-----|------------|------------|
| (a) | runner-up | epicurean |
| (b) | coveted | tasteless |
| (c) | reputation | cooking |
| (d) | unorthodox | taste buds |
| (e) | gastronomy | eccentric |
| (f) | poll | second |
| (g) | culinary | prized |
| (h) | bland | scorned |
| (i) | scoffed at | survey |
| (j) | palates | standing |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (a) | voted | unorthodox dishes |
| (b) | claimed the coveted top | the poll |
| (c) | developed a | is turning |
| (d) | highly experimental and | the elite eateries list |
| (e) | pioneered | at |
| (f) | participated in | the best place in the world to eat |
| (g) | made it onto | reputation for |
| (h) | the home of | the art of |
| (i) | scoffed | spot |
| (j) | the tide | fish and chips |

UNSCRAMBLE: Unscramble the words in the underlined parts of the article:

British food best in the world

A British restaurant that serves bacon and egg ice cream has been voted the best place in the world to eat in *Restaurant* magazine's list of The World's 50 Best Restaurants. The Fat Duck restaurant, which was runner-up last year, spot the claimed coveted top. Owner and head chef Heston Blumenthal opened his restaurant ten years ago and for a reputation soon developed highly experimental and unorthodox dishes. The menu includes leather, oak and tobacco chocolates, sardine on toast sorbet, snail porridge, and mousse dipped in liquid nitrogen. He is self-taught and of the art pioneered has "molecular gastronomy" - experiments with chemistry, physics, food and flavour that result in unique and unusual taste combinations.

Nearly 600 international restaurant owners, chefs and journalists participated in the poll to rank the best restaurants worldwide. A further thirteen British restaurants eateries onto the elite it made list, four in the top ten. This gives the home of fish and chips an as a culinary unusual reputation paradise. Britain is infamous for its bland and uninspiring food, which is scoffed at by the more sophisticated palates of its French neighbours. However, turning the tide is it seems: France had only eight restaurants in the top fifty and London was named in March by *Gourmet* magazine as the Gourmet Capital of the World. Ella Johnston, editor of *Restaurant* magazine, said British people are now "becoming more adventurous eaters".

HOMEWORK

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on The Fat Duck restaurant. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. PIONEER:** Choose a pioneer (in any field) and make a short presentation on them for your next class.
- 4. ARTICLE:** Write an article for an international travel magazine about the best aspects of your country's food.

DISCUSSION:

- a. Do you believe this headline?
- b. Was there anything in the story you cannot accept?
- c. Did you agree with anything you read?
- d. Do you think there is any bias in the article?
- e. What do you think of British food?
- f. What do you think of “The Best...” lists?
- g. Do you think your country’s food is the tastiest in the world?
- h. Do you prefer home cooking or restaurant food?
- i. Only one restaurant in the whole of Asia made it onto the list. Is this right?
- j. Where is the culinary centre of the world?
- k. Are you an adventurous eater?
- l. What’s the strangest thing you’ve ever eaten?
- m. Is there a food in your country that foreigners generally dislike?
- n. What do you think of haute cuisine?
- o. Would you like to eat at the Fat Duck restaurant?
- p. Is bacon and egg ice cream your cup of tea?
- q. What is your favourite restaurant and why do you like it?
- r. How important is ambience in a restaurant?
- s. Do you think “molecular gastronomy” will catch on worldwide?
- t. Did you like this discussion?
- u. Teacher / Student additional questions.

TEXT:

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Nearly 600 international restaurant owners, chefs and journalists participated in the poll to rank the best restaurants worldwide. A further thirteen British restaurants made it onto the elite eateries list, four in the top ten. This gives the home of fish and chips an unusual reputation as a culinary paradise. Britain is infamous for its bland and uninspiring food, which is scoffed at by the more sophisticated palates of its French neighbours. However, it seems the tide is turning: France had only eight restaurants in the top fifty and London was named in March by *Gourmet* magazine as the Gourmet Capital of the World. Ella Johnston, editor of *Restaurant*, said British people are now “becoming more adventurous eaters”.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES:

FOOD PRESENTATION:

Your task is to make a presentation to another group or the class on a food or dish that is eaten in your country. In (preferably same nationality) pairs/groups, make notes on the themes below. These could be used as the structure of your presentation.

- The history of the food / dish
- Ingredients
- How to cook it
- Different styles or regional variations
- The part it plays in your life
- Other
-

MOLECULAR GASTRONOMISTS:

In pairs/groups, create an experimental menu for a three-course dinner – starter, main course and dessert – that will be judged by a panel of expert food experts (the other members of your class). Decide on the theme of the menu and the names of the dishes, before going into detail. Present your menus to other class members. Vote on the most appetizing and mouthwatering menus.