



FOOD *Art*

HISTORY OF FOOD ART

Food itself is an art that is universally appreciated and utilized for its ability to touch the senses, create memories and evoke certain feelings. There is no clear indication of when food art began, however, it is known to have been in existence for thousands of years. The use of food in art can date back to the Stone Age, when it was used to create paintings in caves and throughout time. Although food art today is often referred to art made with food, it originally began through paintings.

During the Renaissance, portraits of foods were prevalent in wealthy homes. They represented biblical symbols or the message of temperance and the passing of time. There were also artists like Giuseppe Arcimboldo, who painted imaginative portraits using plants, fruits and other natural produce.

In the 1960s and 70s, artists such as Andy Warhol who created the "Campbell's Soup Cans" paintings, began using food to depict social issues and the status of the American economy. It was also the same time period where artists began using actual food as material for their work. Technology then became more relevant in the 90s and the simple act of eating with another person was perceived as art.

Today, food is still used by artists to make a statement, however others create food art for the sake of having fun and creating a picture or to bring joy to children. It is often seen through social media that food art is no longer a serious style of art, but a way for individuals to enjoy themselves when eating.

Food art is the embellishment of food in an aesthetically pleasing way. From Starbucks' latte art to Japan's adorable, homemade bento boxes, food art is everywhere. In fact, according to the Smithsonian, artists began using edible food as art around the 1960s and 1970s.

Another famous example of food art is bento boxes. These meals are often specially made to resemble famous characters. According to CNN travel, bento boxes are often made by mothers for their children's lunches. Each one is crafted carefully, usually using processed hams, cheese, vegetables, rice and seaweed.

Latte art is also a form of food art that can be found at many local coffee shops. It is made by pouring steamed milk into coffee to make designs on top. Latte art was made popular by David Schoner, who is also the cofounder of Espresso Vivace. However, the practice was started in Italy around half a century ago.

Food art has gotten increasingly popular and can be seen in everyday life. It comes in many other forms than just bento boxes and latte art.

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THE KEY TO FOOD ART

Food art at its core, values the art of cooking as much it does the artistic aspects of the presentation. Many of the cooking styles are traditional including dry-heat methods, moist-cooking method and raw placement.

Dry-heat methods are the most popular among the three. This includes stir-frying, pan-frying, deep-frying and sautéing which are found in many traditional dishes. This is commonly used for professional presentations that require training. No liquids are used in the process of cooking the food items and the final product is usually easier to work with since all the ingredients are dry. In many well-known Japanese school art lunch boxes, also known as bento, the items are dry in order to prevent spillage and allow for greater detailing contrary to the homogenous color of liquids.

Moist-heat cooking is also another way of creating food art. This is often more challenging because of the behavior of liquids used in this cooking method. Curry and soup are among the two most popular moist-heat cooked dishes.

For amateurs and beginners, uncooked dishes, such as fruits or salads, are the best place to begin. The ingredients used are typically room temperature or refrigerated which allows for hands-on placement. Cuts and placement are especially important with food art that is not cooked since there is more emphasis placed upon the presentation.

There are no limits as to what dishes can be cooked and turned into food art. From the cooked to the uncooked, all can be used in a modern art form that turns a necessity into something that can be enjoyed visually.

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FUN FACTS

-Culinary Arts is the art of cooking and preparing food.

-Chef Julia Child reinvented French cuisine in America through her show "The French Chef" and the revolutionary cookbook "Mastering the Art of French Cooking."

-Food Stylists prepare and present food so it looks appealing for photos.

-Filippo Tommaso Marinetti was the first modern era artist to think that the preparation and consumption of food as art.

-In 1932, Marinetti published "The Futurist Cookbook", where dining had to feature originality, harmony, sculptural form etc.

-Some artists today embrace food as a rejection of everyone and everything future-obsessed.

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FLAVORS OF ART

There are many famous artists and entrepreneurs who utilize food as a way of expression. At a bakery in Los Angeles called

Van Bakery, the owner Zhanna Kubova, makes cakes modeled after real items, such as labels, buildings and animals. A Brooklyn establishment with a similar concept is Zax Restaurant which is owned by Will Stewart. His restaurant features vegetarian based food art.

A different approach to food art is by a chef named James Parker from Boston, he uses fruits and vegetables to make various sculptures. Many of his sculptures are well known for their extravagance and detail. Some of his sculptures depict various designs ranging from flowers, marine life and faces. Parker was originally inspired by the Asian tradition of using food sculptures as garnishes.

Chef Ray Duey has the same idea, but instead of making faces and animals, he uses fruits to make certain types of flowers, shapes, patterns and designs. He specializes in unique centerpieces used in special events.

The prices of food art are based off the types of fruits and other materials used to make the sculptures, as well as the amount of time spent to make them. Artists and chefs charge depending on occasions and events.

For paintings, their prices are determined by many factors like the amount of time took to create, labor and cost of materials.

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MOOR graphic by JENNIFER SU