Food, Culture, and Asia

ASIA, GENERAL

The Rhythm of Rice Production
URL: http://on.natgeo.com/rewF5U
The National Geographic Society, in its Xpeditions section, provides this lesson plan for young elementary school students about the importance of rice in the economy and culture of Asia. A link to a handout is also available.

Food Timeline: Asian-American Cuisine
URL: http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodasian.html
Short overviews of the history of Asian food in America are accompanied by reviews and quotes from periodicals, some dating back to the nineteenth century. Histories of specific dishes such as chop suey or dim sum are also given.

Asia Recipe
URL: http://asiarecipe.com/
In addition to many recipes, there are two special pages of interest. The links can be found in the left frame. 1) Evolution of Food, which is a simple overview of the cuisines in Asia, is well suited to a secondary school class; and 2) Food Timeline goes back to 17,000 BCE. Not all items refer to Asia, however. Each entry is linked to a detailed description of the food. In some cases, there are recipes associated with the food item.

Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines: The Encyclopedia of Food and Culture
This article has sections on rice, the coconut, foreign influences (especially China), and the status of the cuisines of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

CHINA

Chinese Food: A Brief History (video)
URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoIMHaXEYaM
This ten-minute video from the History Channel follows the history of Chinese food in America, dating from the influx of Chinese immigration from Canton to California. The video has many black and white clips from the early twentieth century and discusses the establishment of Chinatowns in large cities with chop suey as the primary dish.

Flavor and Fortune
URL: http://www.flavorandfortune.com/
This journal published its first issue in 1994, and it is “dedicated to the art and science of Chinese cuisine.” There are hundreds of articles, book reviews, and reviews of Chinese restaurants from all over the world. Articles published within the past five years are not available to non-subscribers.

Jennifer 8. Lee Hunts for General Tso (video)
URL: http://bit.ly/Mt4dX
The acclaimed TED Talks series presents this light-hearted but informative video about the place of Chinese food in American culture.

Eating China
URL: http://www.eatingchina.com
This is a blog about Chinese and Taiwanese cooking and food products. There are recipes; posts about individual foods, like the Chinese radish; and food events. At the top of the main page are links to articles, book reviews, and some facts about Chinese food.

INDIA

All about Indian Food & Culture
URL: http://samfusionz-recipes.tripod.com/id177.html
The rudiments and ingredients of Indian food are presented here. The site, while superficially unscientific, offers a lot of information and provides many accompanying images. Information is presented by geographic region, such as the north (including the states of Kashmir and Punjab), the west, and so forth. Following the regional discussions are sections on legumes and cereals. There is a great deal of information about the spices of India.

How Much is There to Eat?
URL: http://bit.ly/nL3k3q
This lesson plan from the Asia Society uses basic mathematics to explore the differences in India and the southern US in the production of food and the relationship between population and food supply.

Northern India: The Encyclopedia of Food and Culture
URL: http://bit.ly/mSIAc5
The foods of Kashmir, Punjab, and the other states of the northern region of India are covered in this essay. There is a discussion of the seasonality of the cuisines and the effects of outside influences over the years. There is also an article about southern India here: http://bit.ly/mVvYEV.

Colleen Sen.com
URL: http://www.colleensen.com/
Colleen Sen is known as an authority on the foods of South Asia, especially of India. On her website, there is a link to some of her articles. One can also listen to her discussion about the origins of curry here: http://www.heritageradionetwork.com/episodes/1266-A-Taste-of-the-Past-Episode-46-Origins-of-Curry.

INDONESIA

Food in Indonesia
URL: http://bit.ly/o201k
Part of the Food in Every Country series, this article on Indonesia begins with the agricultural setting and the history of food in Indonesia. The types of foods, foods at celebrations, and mealtime customs can be found interspersed with recipes from the region.

Ethnic Cuisine: Indonesia
The site offers a brief but detailed summary of the cuisine of Indonesia, with mention of the historical influences of Arab traders, Chinese merchants, and the Dutch. There are also some recipes, a short glossary of cooking terms, and short reviews of cookbooks pertaining to Indonesia and other regions of Asia.
Japan: Geography, Cuisine, and Culture
URL: http://bit.ly/oUzAIP
The resources found in these four modules will help teach students not only about Japanese foods but also about what one finds in a Japanese kitchen. There are a few recipes and a short section that contrasts the cuisines of Japan and China.

The Cambridge World History of Food, Japan
URL: http://www.cambridge.org/us/books/kiple/japan.htm
This is a long chapter about the foods of Japan and the history of Japanese food. There are discussions of rice, vegetables, food in the Edo period, and modern-day Japanese fare.

Japan: Food History and National Myths
URL: http://bit.ly/387T2k
The essay here is part of the Japan Society’s resources for teachers “About Japan.” The subject is ramen, but the broader topic is Japanese food history and the influences of China on the cuisine of Japan. To quote from the essay, “The cuisine of a nation can tell us a lot about the society itself because there is a link between what people eat and how they perceive the world.”

Obentō: The Japanese Lunch Box
URL: http://aboutjapan.japansociety.org/content.cfm/obento
The lesson plan here is also part of the Japan Society’s “About Japan” resources. It is aimed at elementary-level students and provides background materials and activities with the focus on the importance of the Obentō in Japanese life.

Korea: Food History and National Myths
URL: http://www.cambridge.org/us/books/kiple/japan.htm
This is a long chapter about the foods of Korea and the history of Korean food. There are discussions of rice, vegetables, food in the Joseon dynasty, and modern-day Korean fare.

Food in Korea
URL: http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/1051_Food.jsp
The Korea Tourism Office presents a good overview of what to eat in Korea, the etiquette of eating, the spices of Korea, and royal Korean food. There is also a section on a variety of Korean teas.

Thailand: Food and Population in a Northeast Thai Village
URL: http://bit.ly/raOBe1
One cannot read the entire book here, but there are a sufficient number of excerpted pages to give the reader a great deal of information about agriculture and rice production in rural Thailand.

Resources Web gleanings
By Judith S. Ames

The History Teacher
by THE SOCIETY FOR HISTORY EDUCATION

The History Teacher (ISSN: 0018-2745) began in 1967 and is in its 45th Volume. Published quarterly, this informative and inspirational journal features peer-reviewed articles and reviews from educators, researchers, and administrators addressing issues in primary, secondary, and higher education classrooms from a variety of angles.

The Society for History Education (SHE), a nonprofit organization based at California State University, Long Beach, publishes The History Teacher. SHE is an affiliate of the American Historical Association.

Annual Subscription Rates
Inclusive November, February, May, and August
- All issues in
  - U.S. Dollars
  - United States
  - Canada
  - All other
    - Individuals: $40 $41 $50
    - Institutions: $165 $172 $181
    - Students/Retirees: $25 $31 $33
    - Libraries/Subscriptions: $300 $390 $500
    - Single issue/order: $12 $15 $20

Order online or by mail:
www.thehistoryteacher.org
Society for History Education, Inc.
California State University, Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90840-1601
905-460-5372 • fax 905-460-5433

AHA Offer for K-12 TEACHERS
Save on American Historical Association membership and automatically receive The History Teacher and AHA’s monthly Perspectives. Visit the AHA’s Subscription page at <www.historians.org/members> for details and ordering.

Available at our website:
- Begin/renew subscriptions
- Submit articles and reviews
- Link to full-text online archives
- Request permissions for course readers
- Advertise in the journal

www.thehistoryteacher.org

Judith S. Ames, PhD, formerly associated with the Japan Society in New York, is currently an editorial and computer consultant.