

Study on Relevance and Importance of Food Accompaniments

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Abstract: *This research work explores the accompaniments of various dishes and cuisines and shows the importance and the reasons for pairing a particular accompaniment with a dish.*

We aim to understand the importance of pairing the accompaniment as certain dishes may be dry and bland at times and the accompaniment adds depth or complete that dish without which one cannot savour the dish. Art and science behind pairing flavour elements, texture, cooking methods plays a very vital role along with the traditions and culture of the region from where the food is evolved

Keywords: Food, Accompaniments, sauces, compound butter, Culinary

I. INTRODUCTION

Growing up in the city of Mumbai which has many people residing from different parts of India with varied cultural backgrounds one gets exposed to the rich culinary spread each household has to offer. Indian food, whether an elaborate feast prepared for a festival or just having a humble vada pav we find on the streets of Mumbai is accompanied by chutneys, pickles, murrabas, etc. Also, over a decade numerous restaurants showcasing cuisines from different countries have emerged in increasing numbers. Having experienced this culinary world full of flavours it was obvious to choose this topic to explore different food items and their accompaniments and further understand the reason behind serving food with accompaniment. Accompaniments add a complimenting taste or contrasting taste to the food it has been served or it moistens some food or enriches the mouthfeel.

Objectives:

1. To explore various kinds of accompaniments paired with different types of food dishes.
2. To understand the importance of serving the right accompaniments with a particular food.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Jennifer, 2023) This article states that Food accompaniments are essential for highlighting the flavour, texture, presentation, and nutritional content of the main course without detracting from its fundamental qualities. They enhance regular dining experiences with variety, interest, and satisfaction by providing a range of benefits to a meal. The enticing contrasts produced by these accompaniments enhance flavour and the overall culinary experience, elevating the dining experience.

(Alicia Paulina Cárdenas-Castro a, 2019) Mayonnaise, dressings, and sauces have become essential components of modern cooking culture because they are convenient and improve the flavour of a variety of foods. Asian cuisine frequently uses sweet and sour sauces, while spicy sauces give flavour to a variety of dishes. Sweet sauces also enhance desserts. Mayonnaise is used as a flavour enhancer and salad binder by American chefs, who also use dressings to elevate meat snacks. Not only are these condiments widely used in daily life, but they also have nutritional and commercial value, which makes them useful ingredients in contemporary cooking.

(Baseel, 2013) The Japanese place a great deal of importance on traditions, and their dining customs are only one example. Japanese cuisine is renowned for its inventive use of flavours and ingredients. These customary combinations often provide actual health benefits, although this could be only the result of cultural conformity. These combinations are the outcome of a deep understanding of both nutrition and cooking principles, not random choices. Japanese culinary traditions, which promote a diet that is both healthful and balanced, emphasize the complex relationship between food and wellbeing.

(Harshad, 2021) Clarified butter, or ghee, is a staple of Indian cooking and is highly regarded for its capacity to significantly improve the flavour of a variety of foods. Its depth and richness are essential for enhancing traditional recipes. It is frequently used in Indian homes to improve the flavour of foods like Parathas, Modak, and Littichokha. It is also served as an accompaniment to a variety of dishes like VaranBhat, LittiChokha, and Puran Polis.

(Corrie, 2023) A well-liked and adaptable dish, roast chicken is renowned for its flavourful, tender, and evenly cooked texture. Slick turning on a spit guarantees tenderness and a delicious first course. Even though it tastes good by itself, serving it with the right side dishes can improve the whole dining experience. A memorable and pleasurable meal can be created by combining the delicious rotisserie chicken with a variety of tastes and textures such as mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables, macaroni and cheese, salads, and more.

(Johnny's Kitchen, 2023) In order to prevent conflicts, salads served as accompaniments should complement the main course and other side dishes. Vegetable salads are a tasty and light alternative for side dishes, while sweet fruit salads go nicely with ham or pork dishes. Heartier salads with ingredients like cheese, meat, or shellfish can go well with lighter main courses. Variety salads are a great way to serve salad alongside sandwiches. Making sure the salad enhances and complements the entire dining experience is crucial.

(BY PETER COUCQUYT, 2020) Texture is a key factor in our food experience, as we tend to favour dishes with a variety of textures. Classic pairings like chips and guacamole or chocolate mousse with a cookie showcase our natural preference for combining soft and crispy textures. To enhance the harmony of food and drinks, it's beneficial to incorporate two or more of the five contrasting tastes: umami, sweet, salty, sour, and bitter. For example, salt can balance out sweetness, as seen in sea salt caramel.

While food pairing highlights aromatic similarities, creating truly delicious dishes goes beyond this. Taste and texture are vital considerations, and balancing flavour elements such as aroma, taste, and texture add depth to your dishes

(2, 2020) This article speaks about how the technique of cooking entails combining, mixing, and heating ingredients to prepare food. The foundation of both home-cooked and commercially produced food products is pairing. The sensory experience of food-beverage and food-food combinations is important. It includes the inherent way that ingredients are arranged in a recipe, how food products are paired with one another and with drinks, and how full meals are prepared.

Food accompaniments can be of various types and can be cooked by a variety of cooking methods. Enlisted below are accompaniments that pair with the food and elevate its flavour when consumed together:

Compound Butter: In layman's terms we can call it herbed butter which is served as an accompaniment with grilled meats, and fish and is also used as flavouring agent for soups and sauces. Examples of popular dishes that are accompanied by compound butters are Grilled meat/fried fish with Parsley butter

Sauces: Sauces are served with food to add flavour and consistency. Some sauces pair well with roasted/grilled meats while certain types of sauces pair well with food items like fruits, toast, poultry, and fish preparations. E.g.: Custard sauce served with fruit salad, Cranberry Sauce with Roast Turkey, Apple Sauce with Roast Duck, etc.

Garnishes in Soups: Croutons, pasta, bread loaves, pancakes, and chopped or diced vegetables are some examples of accompaniments we see that are served with soups.

Egg Preparations: There are numerous ways in which eggs are cooked. Each cooking method adds a different flavour and texture to the eggs, which implies that there are a variety of sauces that are paired with different types of egg preparation. E.g. Oeuf Poche Florentine is a poached egg served on the bed of spinach and Mornay sauce. The most common accompaniments with omelettes are toast and ketchup.

Meat Accompaniments: Depending on whether it's roasted or grilled the meats are paired with sauces that will enhance the mouthfeel and flavour of the meat. Grilled meats and roast meats are served with different accompaniments to match the cooking style. E.g. roast lamb will be served with red currant jelly and mint sauce while grilled lamb will be served with Maitred'hotel butter, Sauce chorion, and Sauce Paloise.

Certain accompaniments improve the richness of the delicacy along with it is served. Tabulated below are popular food items with its accompaniment

Food Items	Accompaniments
Crudites and Salads	Garlic Mayonnaise/ Aioli
Roast Pork/Duck/Goose	Apple Sauce
Oysters	Cayenne Pepper, Chilli Vinegar, Tabasco
Charcuterie	Gherkins, Cocktail Onions, Cumberland sauce, Dill pickle,
Roast Turkey	Cranberry Sauce
Roast Beef	Horseradish Sauce, English Mustard
Seafood Cocktail	Cocktail sauce

III. CONCLUSION

After reading through a number of publications, books, and websites, it became clear that food accompaniments serve as crucial element for improving dining experiences. This research also helped in understanding how one food item can hugely impact the flavour and texture of the food with which it is accompanied. Customs and cultural influences have a significant impact on food pairing which came across while researching documents on certain cuisines coming from a specific country. Understanding the science and art of food pairing has helped in understanding this topic in a better manner. As we continue to explore and study food accompaniments, it is evident that there are many opportunities to learn about and sample a wide range of foods from various cultures and culinary traditions.

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