

Cultural Food Days

Cooking



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WHAT MAKES IT MEANINGFUL

Cultural Food Days give participants the opportunity to explore different cultures through cooking, tasting, and discussion. This activity promotes independence, decision-making, and practical life skills like measuring, mixing, and following steps. It also encourages curiosity, empathy, and appreciation for diversity by learning about others' traditions. Sharing prepared dishes fosters social interaction and pride in their accomplishments, and tasting new foods creates memorable, engaging experiences.

TIME

- 60–90 minutes (depends on recipe complexity and group size)

MATERIALS

- Ingredients for the chosen recipes (pre-measured if needed)
- Cooking tools and utensils (mixing bowls, spoons, measuring cups, knives with supervision, etc.)
- Cooking stations or tables with protective coverings
- Recipe cards with step-by-step instructions and visuals
- Plates, napkins, and serving utensils
- Optional: Decorations, music, or attire related to the culture being explored



Activity Title

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Choose a culture or country to focus on and introduce participants to some basic background or fun facts.
2. Show a sample of the dish or ingredients, and explain the steps for preparation.
3. Encourage participants to:
 - Follow the recipe with guidance
 - Measure, mix, and assemble ingredients
 - Taste-test along the way and adjust flavors if appropriate
4. Once prepared, share the dishes together as a group and discuss the flavors, textures, and cultural significance.
5. Optional: Take photos or create a recipe book with participant notes for future use.

RESOURCES

- <https://juleeho.com/food-marketing-blog/2020-food-holidays-the-most-comprehensive-365-day-list>

Activity Title

SUPPORTS NEEDED

- Supervision when using utensils, measuring tools, or heat sources
- Step-by-step visual guides for recipes
- Assistance with chopping, pouring, or mixing as needed
- Encouragement and reassurance to try new foods and flavours
- Adapted tools for participants with fine motor challenges

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE

- Recipes can be simple or more complex depending on participant skill level.
- Can tie in with music, decorations, or stories from the featured culture for a full cultural experience.
- Food can be portioned for tasting only to reduce waste.
- Great opportunity for group discussion about favourite foods, textures, and flavors.
- Flexibility is key: some participants may prefer preparing, others may focus on tasting or observing.

