



Foundation Chef Trainer Article

Feast for the eyes



Classic plating



Free-form plating



Landscape plating

Food is not only meant to satisfy our taste buds but also to delight our eyes. The way a dish is presented can elevate the dining experience, turning a simple meal into a visual masterpiece. Food presentation involves a combination of creativity, balance and attention to detail.

In the culinary world, presentation is an integral part of the dining experience. By applying the principles of plating, chefs and cooks can transform their dishes into works of art. Remember, a visually pleasing presentation not only delights the eyes but also enhances the overall enjoyment of the meal.

In this article, we will explore the principles of plating and how to present food in a visually pleasing manner.

Balance and composition

Like in art, balance and composition are key elements in food presentation. A well-plated dish should have a harmonious arrangement of colours, textures and shapes. Consider the visual weight of each component and arrange them in a way that creates a sense of balance on the plate.

Colour palette

Colours play a crucial role in food presentation. A vibrant and diverse colour palette can make a dish more visually appealing. Incorporate a variety of colourful fruits, vegetables and garnishes to add visual interest. Pay attention to contrasting colours to create an inviting plate.

Textures and layers

Adding different textures to a dish can create a more engaging dining experience. Consider the contrast between crispy and creamy, smooth and crunchy. Layers can also add depth to the presentation, whether it's layering ingredients or using different heights in plating.



Plate selection

The choice of plate can significantly impact the overall presentation. Consider the plate's shape, size and colour of the food being served. Choose the right plate based on the type of food and the overall theme. The plate serves as a canvas for your creation, influencing how the dish is perceived. A clean and simple plate can enhance the visual appeal of intricate dishes while a more elaborate plate may complement a simpler dish.

Individuals with dementia often face challenges with vision and perception, switching from white plates to blue or red plates will help improve their eating, and as a result, their nutritional intake.

Overcrowding

Don't overcrowd the plate; negative space is as important as what's on the plate. A well-designed dish allows the eyes to rest and appreciate all the components. Leave enough space around the main elements to create a sense of balance and sophistication.

Focal point

Identify the focal point of the dish and highlight it. This could be the main protein or a visually striking element that draws attention.

Plating techniques

Experiment with various plating techniques, such as stacking, fanning and drizzling sauces. Each technique can create a different visual effect and add an artistic touch to the presentation. Introducing height by layering or stacking components adds dimension to the presentation and makes the dish more visually appealing.

Theme and storytelling

Consider the theme or concept of the dish and build a visual story around it. Align the presentation with the flavours and the time of the year to create a memorable experience for the diner.

Garnishes and edible decorations

Garnishes should not only be flavourful but also contribute to the visual appeal of the dish. Fresh herbs, edible flowers and colourful sauces can elevate the overall presentation. Be mindful of the overall theme and choose garnishes that complement the flavours and aesthetics.

Clean edges

Wipe the edges of the plate for a clean and polished appearance. Attention to detail, including the cleanliness of the plate, contributes to the overall presentation. Wipe the edges of plates with a damp paper towel or cloth, and employ a solution of vinegar and hot water to eliminate stains from utensils.

Photograph your creations - if a dish captures your heart, immortalize it through photography. Create a shared folder where you and your team can document and share ideas. The visual record becomes a valuable resource for ongoing inspiration and improvement.