

Reading, Listening and Vocabulary

Irish food is known to be pretty **bland** with our vegetables overcooked, to the point that they are soggy. Our traditional food consists of **helpings** of potatoes, cabbage and salmon. It is not exactly gourmet food but it appeals to a certain **palette**.

In my house when I was growing up, my mother did the cooking and we set the table. Generally, we would have fish on Fridays, chicken on Sundays and a mixture of beef, **stew**, chips, pizza, omelette, curry, potatoes, and greens during the week, (whatever my father wanted really, as he was the breadwinner in those days before his early retirement). I used to love watching my mom cook, trying to steal food, before it was ready. I especially loved the time when she would make **savories**, like chocolate cake, sponge or trifle. I would always wait to lick the mixture off the spoon or scrape at the mixing bowl before it went into the sink to be washed. I loved the aroma in the kitchen as the food baked or cooked in the oven, the smells filling the air.

We kind of had every type of food growing up, and it was made in various ways, from boiling to frying, to grilling or **broiling**, to deep fat frying and so on. We would always have a fry-up for breakfast or a bowl of porridge, for lunch, it was a **packed lunch** of a sandwich, a piece of fruit and a small drink, usually juice or milk. Dinner would be ready when I got in the door after school. I would **scoff it down** quickly, so I could go and do my homework or more often, go out to play football with friends.

When I left home to go to university, I missed **home-cooked** food. I had to fend for myself, learning how to cook on my own. I really enjoyed this as I had picked up a few things from my mom over the years. If it was during the week, I would just make a quick snack, whatever I could throw together in a few minutes. At the weekend though, I would always take my time preparing a meal, chopping up the vegetables, **defrosting** food the night before, leaving things to soak or **marinate** overnight. I would learn when to put things on to boil or when to leave them **simmer**. Sometimes I'd look at cookbooks or TV cookery shows, to get ideas and **recipes**. Sometimes, I just experimented, not always successful though.

During University, to pay for my tuition, I worked as a chef in a hotel, for about 4 years, prepping vegetables, cooking meat and fish, sometimes working on pastries. I would **dice** onions, shell shallots, crush garlic, **bone** fish, tenderize meat, boil live lobsters, mix sauces, serve appetizers, soups, **entrees**, desserts (a four course meal) and much more. After I would clean the pots and pans, scrub down the chopping board, turn off the ovens and make sure the gas rings were off.

I love cooking a variety of food, from Irish to Indian, from French to Mexican and Italian, and before coming to Korea I learned how to cook Bulgogi (불고기), Kimbap (김밥), and Buchimgae (부침개). In Korea I live alone so I cook, but mostly I **eat out** or **order in**. My daily **diet** has changed, I fell in love with Doenjang chigae (된장찌개), Samgyetang (삼계탕), and even Bundaegi (번데기). One thing I always miss when I go back to Ireland, is Korean food. The barbecue culture of Samgyapsal, the Soju and Cider, the **etiquette** and customs of drinking and eating with others. These are some beautiful things I love about eating out in Korea.

Today, when I switch on the box, I am surrounded by celebrity TV chefs, like Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay, but it was an earlier TV chef I used to love watching, Keith Floyd, who unfortunately passed away last week, but I think it was him, as well as my mom, who gave me my love for food and cooking.

Phrases

The most commonly used Food Phrasal Verbs

Verb	Collocation	Example
add in	flour	Slowly add in flour, baking powder and salt. Mix until well blended.
bang on/put on/stick on	kettle	Make yourself useful and bang the kettle on , will you?
be off	milk	The milk is off . Don't drink it!
boil over		Watch the milk carefully when you heat it. If it boils over you'll have a lot of cleaning to do!
chop up	vegetables	Chop all the vegetables up and put them in a pan of boiling water.
clear off	table	After dinner, he helped to clear off the table.
clog up	arteries	Too much fatty food clogs up the arteries.
come off		The skin comes off easily if you dip the tomatoes for several seconds in hot water.
come on		How's dinner coming on ? I'm starving.
cool down		This soup is too hot to eat. I'll wait for it to cool down .
cut back on	sugar	Kraft Foods, the maker of brands from Oreo cookies to Oscar Meyer bologna, announced plans Tuesday to cut back on sugar and fat in some products.
cut down on	sugar	If losing weight is a priority it is quite safe to cut down on sugar.
cut off	piece of meat	He cut off a small piece of meat and smelled it.
cut out	coffee	I'm trying to cut out coffee altogether but find what I really miss is having a hot beverage in the morning.
cut up	food	I've heard that it's considered bad etiquette to cut up all of your food at once.