

## Unit 2 Tasty Journeys

### Odd Pairings That Work

You order a nice, juicy hamburger with some fries.

What's next? Of course you have to have ketchup with your fries, right? Well, not for some people. In fact, some people prefer eating fries with mayonnaise, chili sauce, or even steak sauce. While ketchup with fries may seem quite ordinary, other combinations may seem rather odd. Read on to learn about some popular dishes that have flavor combinations that you may not have thought of.

### The Divisive Classic

Some people love this combination, while others can't seem to stand it. It can even cause quite heated arguments. If you haven't guessed already, it's the tasty or nasty — depending on your taste — ham and pineapple pizza. The man who created this pizza was neither Italian nor Hawaiian. A Greek immigrant from Canada, Sam Panopoulos did not want to stick to the usual ingredients on pizzas, like pepperoni and mushrooms. He spread canned pineapple and sliced ham onto a pizza and called it "the Hawaiian" because that's what was written on the pineapple can. Little did he know that he had created a classic combination. Even now, in the U.S. and U.K., no pizza menu seems complete without it. In Italy, however, most people find pineapple on pizza distasteful.

Why is the Hawaiian pizza so divisive? The combination is not that odd. Pineapple and ham is not the only fruit and meat pairing in kitchens around the world. In France, duck is paired with a sweet orange sauce, and American Thanksgiving turkey dinner would not be complete without cranberry sauce. Many people enjoy salty and sweet flavor combinations, whereas some others prefer to keep those tastes as far from each other as possible.

## Mango with Sticky Rice

A very popular dessert in Thailand is sweet, sticky rice topped with fresh mango and coconut milk. Mango with sticky rice is a dish that is extremely hard not to love. Rice is one of the world's most consumed grains, so it should not be surprising that it can be combined with other interesting ingredients. One of those ingredients is fruit, which is nutritious, sweet, and plentiful in many parts of the world. The combination of fruit and rice may seem unusual, but it's actually quite common.

According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand, neither mango nor sticky rice is native to Thailand. Mangoes are native to Myanmar and India, and sticky rice is commonly eaten in Laos, which shares a border with Thailand. This suggests that the roots of the dish are probably a result of the mixing of cultures in Southeast Asia. Rice is usually thought of as a food that is eaten as a meal, but its use as a dessert shows how simple ingredients can create innovative, wonderful treats.

## The Elvis

What kind of snack is nutritious, full of energy, and simple to make? This is the genius of peanut butter and banana sandwiches. Never could anyone have predicted that the sweet taste of bananas coupled with salty, nutty peanut butter would become an American comfort food. This sandwich can be a healthy choice for breakfast or lunch because its combination of protein and fiber helps you feel full, while the carbohydrates provide sustained energy. The best thing about this sandwich is that the ingredients are readily available and affordable.

Some people, however, like to take things to another level. Imagine a regular peanut butter and banana sandwich, and then add fried bacon to it. It has been said that the famous singer Elvis Presley loved this sandwich, which is why it's called, "The Elvis." Even though you may not want to eat the Elvis every day, there are many fans of this unconventional combination.

The world is a big place, and everyone has to eat. Eating the same thing every day can get quite boring. Sometimes all you need is to combine some ingredients in novel ways to create a new flavor. But if you think it's odd, it's probably because you haven't tried it before. Considering how diverse the world is, there are probably more food combinations that seem odd than seem "normal." Maybe odd is just something you haven't experienced yet. They are just new experiences waiting for you to discover.