**Defining Cuisine: (Course 1)**

In Chapter 13, cuisine is defined to include:

* Ingredients typically used
* Spices and seasonings that characterize the food
* Techniques and / or tools associated with preparation
* Rules and guidelines that form the rules of the cuisine
* Social roots (people that care about the cuisine)

The goal of this activity is to identify examples of cuisine and define each of these principles within the example.

Depending on the age and level of cultural awareness of the students, it may be useful to have a discussion about biases and the importance of humility when making cross-cultural observations. Encourage students to check any preconceptions prior to the research phase of the assignment, and to use an open mind when learning about cuisines that differ from their own. Be sure that students are aware of positions of privilege of the dominant culture, and caution against making assumptions about an “exotic” other, as described in Course 1 of Chapter 13.

Also consider the eventual format of their deliverables. This assignment works well individually or in small groups, as long as this expectation is set in advance of the research phase of the assignment.

Research phase:

* Students will first engage in research for their assigned or selected cuisine.
  + The Bloomsbury Food Library has many resources, including the Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia (Albala, 2011)
* Goals for this phase:
  + Identify the four defining characteristics listed above
  + Note regional distinctions or variations
  + Find images and recipes for dishes from this cuisine, including those consumed regularly and reserved for holidays or special occasions.

Presentation:

* Students compose a presentation to share information about their cuisine with the class.
* A presentation with slides, infographics, or video recording all work well for this step.

**Related references:**

Albala, K. [editor] (2011), *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia,* Bloomsbury Food Library (online).

Mintz, S. (1997), *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions in eating, power, and the past*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.