



# EATING 101

## RU DINING HEALTHY?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM

A Joint Program Between Rutgers Dining Services and The New Jersey Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health

### Food Pairings: A Love Story

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, by forces unknown, two unlikely condiments met, and it was love at first bite. This love story for the ages is none other than the peanut butter and jelly sandwich. When the salty flavor of peanut butter joined sweet jelly, something very beautiful happened and not by chance or fate, but by science. Do you know what important factors make food pairings... well, pair? It may be on the tip of your tongue.



#### Do Us a Flavor

Your tongue can detect 5 tastes: sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami. Each taste alone tantalizes our taste buds in a particular way but can also be paired for a unique experience. Bitter flavors can be rounded out with sweet, sour foods can cut through savory umami flavors, and salt can enhance any food it is paired with.

#### Try it Out:

- Combine **bitter** sautéed greens like kale or spinach with a drizzle of **sweet** honey
- Pour a small drizzle of **sour** balsamic vinegar over **sweet** strawberries
- Pair **umami** grilled chicken with a squeeze of **sour** lemon
- Try a salad of **salty** feta with **sweet** watermelon

#### Your Nose Just Knows

It turns out your nose has a bigger influence on the perception of flavor than your tongue. Try it out for yourself by taking a swig of your morning coffee while holding your nose. Your tongue will detect the bitterness, but you will be unable to capture the rest of the flavors. The nuances of your coffee come from its enticing aromas. So how does that play into food pairings? Some gastronomists believe foods with the same smells can be used to replace one another in some recipes.

#### Try it Out:

Consider that PB&J: the grape jelly smells fruity. You can replace the high sugar jelly with fresh fruits such as strawberries, blueberries, or bananas. The fruity smells will still pair well with your peanut butter, but with less added sugar.



#### Mi Flavor, Su Flavor?

Have you ever thought about putting cinnamon in your tomato sauce? How about peanuts on your noodles? Fermented cabbage in your rice? Those pairings may have never crossed your mind since most of the food pairings we think of are culturally grounded. These interesting food pairings would not sound so strange in Greece, Thailand, or Korea, respectively. This only goes to show that foods you may not expect can taste great together.

#### Try it Out:

Get creative and tour the world with your taste buds; there is a world of possibilities!

*We make a beautiful pear!*

Revised By: Erin Ormsby

References: *The Science Behind Creating New Flavours*. Available at: <https://particle.scitech.org.au/food/the-science-behind-creating-amazing-new-flavours/>. Accessed on: October 25, 2021. *Why Does the World Taste so Different?* Available at:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel/2018/07/why-does-world-taste-so-different>. Accessed on: October 25, 2021. *Better Together: The Science Behind Powerful Produce Pairings*. Available at: <https://fruitsandveggies.org/stories/better-together-the-science-behind-powerful-produce-pairings/>. Accessed on: November 2, 2021

**RUTGERS**  
Student Affairs

Dining Services

 / @rutgersdining  
[food.rutgers.edu](http://food.rutgers.edu)

Questions? Like us on Facebook (RU Healthy Dining Team), follow us on Twitter (@ru\_hdt), Instagram (@ru\_hdt), Snapchat (ru\_hdt) or email [peggyp@dining.rutgers.edu](mailto:peggyp@dining.rutgers.edu).