

Christopher Columbus Day



"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

Christopher Columbus

Explorer (c. 1451-1506)

Explorer and navigator, Christopher Columbus, was born in 1451 in the Republic of Genoa, Italy. His first voyage into the Atlantic Ocean in 1476 nearly cost him his life. Columbus participated in several other expeditions to Africa. In 1492, Columbus left Spain on the Santa Maria, with the Pinta and the Niña alongside. He has been credited for opening up the Americas to European colonization.

Link to video (Preview as it is interrupted by commercials)

<http://www.biography.com/people/christopher-columbus-9254209>

MLA Style

"Christopher Columbus." *Bio*. A&E Television Networks, 2015. Web. 03 Apr. 2015.

5 Things Christopher Columbus Ate

<http://recipes.howstuffworks.com/5-things-christopher-columbus-ate.htm#page=4>

Whatever his legacy, its undeniable Columbus shook up European cooking with his New World imports.



One thing we know beyond a doubt is that Columbus found food -- new and amazing food in bright colors and bold flavors. European cooking as we know it hinges on what Columbus found when he mistook America for India and landed in the New World.

We also know that what he and his seamen ate on their way over was not particularly bright or bold. The contrast must have been striking.

Here, five things Columbus would have eaten on his adventures. The first is a common seafarer food from the time. The second is a more appealing alternative to include in a holiday feast.

Carbs!—Columbus and his men were more concerned with survival than weight control, definitely ate carbohydrates. Not, perhaps, the carbs we crave such as noodles, French fries, and donuts. The bread Columbus ate was "hardtack," an unleavened, hard, thick bread that could survive a long sea journey without spoiling. It's sometimes called a sea biscuit. Hardtack was twice baked to help preserve it, reducing the moisture that could breed mold.

For a commemorative meal, consider fresh-baked bread or Mediterranean-inspired flatbread.

Loads of Legumes-Dried legumes, namely lentils and beans, were a significant part of a sailor's diet. Columbus would have eaten plenty of lentil stew, boiled beans and chickpeas seasoned with salt.

For a commemorative meal, consider lentil soup, hummus or baked beans (Baked beans contain brown sugar, but Columbus did have sugar on board).

Salty, Salty Meat- Like dried beans, dry bread, and sometimes dried fruits, preserved meat was a staple of sea life. While fresh fish was a possibility, Columbus and his crew did not eat fresh meat. Most animal protein sources were salted. They would have commonly eaten things like salted (cured) beef, cod, and sardines. Salted pork was also a constant presence onboard. In fact, pork was something that Columbus and his peers brought to the New World. A culinary exchange between Europe and the Americas made it possible for pork to be introduced to Mexico and the tomato to be introduced to the Europeans (see veggies below).

For a commemorative meal, consider fresh-baked or fried cod, corned beef or jerky. You may want to skip the salted, dried meat for your Columbus Day celebration and cut straight to the carnitas tacos.

New World Veggies-Columbus and his men, on entering the New World, also entered a whole new world of food. In Spain and in Europe in general, they would have eaten turnips, onions, garlic, and carrots.

By the early 1500s, Columbus was probably dining on tomatoes, maize corn, and sweet potatoes, all of which had been cultivated in South America for many years.

For a commemorative meal, consider trying maize (if you can find it) or go with sweet potato pie, a corn-and-tomato salad, or, to meld the two worlds, a garlicky tomato sauce.

Spices-Christopher Columbus set out to find a shorter way to the spices of India. Instead, he found the spices of America. Columbus would have tasted, for the first time, the spicy flavors of chili pepper, cayenne, and allspice. The natives may also have introduced him to vanilla and cocoa (chocolate). The Aztecs ate chocolate straight and bitter. Only in Europe did cooks add sugar and milk to produce the creamy, sweet confection we know today.

So by all means, feel free to finish off a Columbus Day meal with something chocolate or a big hunk of plain-old chocolate. It's in the spirit of the holiday.

Other Ideas-Other ideas to consider to round out your Columbus Day celebration are chili, jalapeno poppers, Jamaican jerk chicken, or mole. If you want to keep it simple, a few recipes have been provided. If you want to go all out, do some research and create a feast by making something from each of categories above.