

# Ever Wondered About Food

## Are Oysters Really an aphrodisiac ?

Ever wondered about food? This new series gives you the history and the science behind some of our favourite dishes – and throws in a few great recipes too.



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Programme running: 6 x 30 mins Production: BBC Executive Producer: Clare Sillery

## EVER WONDERED about cheese?

This slice of history includes the legend of how cheese was discovered accidentally more than 5,000 years ago by a nomad travelling across the desert with a saddle-pack full of milk.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Paul Merrett shows us an Italian twist on the cheese fondue; the science behind making a great sauce to create the ultimate macaroni cheese, and how to produce a delicious ricotta and lemon cheesecake.

## EVER WONDERED about seafood?

The Romans had a particular passion for oysters but is this seafood really an aphrodisiac? Casanova must have thought so – he's said to have eaten 50 a day.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Paul Merrett reveals the chemical reactions that are going on when prawns change from grey to pink in the pot. He also demonstrates the best way to eat oysters and shows us how to cook 'unchewy' calamari and a classic Moules Marinere.

## EVER WONDERED about eggs?

Eggs are a truly universal food and the world tucks into nearly two billion of them every day. We love them scrambled, boiled, poached, baked, fried, beaten, whipped and even raw.

Placing the humble egg on a spoon, this programme takes us on a race through the 5,000 year story of nature's perfect meal.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Paul Merret makes an authentic Spanish Omelette; explains the science behind cooking a perfect poached egg for Eggs Benedict; reveals the secret of creating a superb soufflé, and shows us how to rustle up some scrumptious Eggy Bread.

## EVER WONDERED about potatoes?

From chips to gnocchi to saag aloo, potatoes have been around for about 6,000 years and are the most popular vegetable on Earth.

After discovering potatoes at the foot of the Andes, the Inca Indians were the first to cultivate them and they were brought to Europe from South America by 16th century Spanish explorers.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Paul Merrett makes twice-fried chips with garlic mayo, potato pancakes and potato wedges pronto and explains why you need science – and a potato rice – to create the perfect mash.



## EVER WONDERED about chicken?

From the classic roast to the traditional French Coq au Vin, chicken is a staple food the world over. It's cheap; it blends with hundreds of different flavours, and it has a very healthy image – all helping to make it one of the most popular meats on the planet.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Paul Merrett shows how science (and a good red wine) can produce a great Coq Au Vin and how to create a spicy marinade for Chicken Kebabs. He also cooks the perfect Roast Chicken and reveals the secret bit of the bird that all chefs love to eat.

## EVER WONDERED about mushrooms?

From the classic Italian risotto to the exotic Mushroom Bhaji, this programme unearths the true magic of mushrooms.

Mushrooms have been viewed with awe and suspicion for centuries – the Aztecs saw them as the food of the gods. The Romans, on the other hand, found a darker purpose for them. The wife of Emperor Claudius poisoned him with a toxic mushroom to make sure her son Nero came to the throne.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Paul Merrett shows us how to create a perfect warm mushroom salad and the best ever mushrooms on toast. He also reveals the science behind some of the spices used in a mushroom bhaji and the secret behind the ultimate mushroom risotto.

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