Week 2—Basic Sauté Procedure

“No recipe can be 100% accurate due to variations in ingredients, cooking temperatures, kitchen equipment, and even elevation and atmospheric pressure. A skilled chef knows the desired outcome in a recipe and learns to anticipate what happens when heat is applied. Food is done when the desired outcome is achieved.”

-Chef Todd Mohr

Characteristics of Food

Proteins—coagulate—become firm when heated. They shrink, lose moisture. Coagulation occurs 160-185 degrees

Carbohydrates—starches and sugars are both carbohydrates

- Carmelization—browning of sugars—338 degrees
- Gelatinization—starches absorb water and expand—begins at 150 degrees

Fats—Present in meats, poultry, fish, eggs, milk products, nuts, grains. Fat can be liquid (oil) or solid and is an important cooking medium as in frying. When heated too much, they smoke, break down, deteriorate

Water—turns to steam at 212 degrees, evaporates i

Steam is used to leaven baked goods, or make them puff up

Minerals—are important for the nutrition of foods. Consider them vitamins. Minerals also offer pigment or color to foods. Over cooking destroys minerals and pigments, turning foods brown

Important Aspects of the Sauté procedure

- Controlling the heat in the pan is the most important aspect. In adding or removing heat, keep desired result in mind. Pan should not be so hot that food burns outside, is raw inside
- Preheat the pan otherwise food will slowly warm in its own juices, resulting in a dry product
- Do not overcrowd the pan
- Product must be dry to prevent splattering, promote browning
- Uniform heat is needed by the food product
- Meats are often dusted with flour to enable more uniform browning leaves roux for making pan gravies

Types of Heat Transfer

Conductive - Single source direct heat
In Sauté procedure we use Conductive heat transfer

Convective – Heat is spread through the movement of air, steam, or liquid. Stirring is a form of convective cooking.

Cooking Equipment

The Oven is a “box” to cook food in. Hot air rises like a balloon, hits the top of the oven, cycles downward

The Stove applies heat directly to the bottom of the pan.
Heat flows from stove to pan, from pan to outside of food, from outside of food to inside of food

Basic Sauté Procedure

Preheat the pan, test with drops of water
Add small amount of oil, coat entire pan with oil
Heat the oil until convection begins, just before smoke point
Add product, searing both sides, creating pan “fond”
Remove product, use pan drippings to sauté onions or vegetables
Deglaze pan with any type cooking liquid to make sauce

Things that effect cook times

- Type of heat transfer
- Size of product
- Applied temperature
- Characteristics of food item
- Type of Cooking Vessel

To sauté is to cook food quickly in a small amount of fat. It’s NOT pan-frying. The French word “sauter” means to “jump”