Chef Todd Mohr's Web Cooking Classes.com

Appetizers and Hors d' Oeuvres

"Preparing hors d' oeuvres and appetizers uses skills from almost every section of the kitchen. Because they can consist of meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, vegetables, potatoes, grains, pasta, fruits, baked goods and sauces, they require a working knowledge of these foods and how they are prepared. -Chef Todd Mohr

Some commonly encountered hot hors d' oeuvres:

Filled Pastry Shells

Savory (unsweetened) tartlets, choux puffs, or other small dough products are most often baked to remove moisture content, then filled with warm meat, poultry, fish purees, or ragouts, garnished and served hot. They become soggy quickly, so must be prepared as closely to service as possible.

Brochettes / Skewers / Kabobs

Hors d' oeuvres brochettes are small skewers holding a combination of meat, poultry, game, fish, shellfish or vegetables. They are normally baked, grilled or broiled and served with a dipping sauce. Soaking wooden skewers in water before assembly can prevent them from burning.

Meatballs

Meatballs are made from ground beef, veal, pork, or poultry and served in a sauce buffet style. Fish and shellfish can also be bound with egg whites or veloute white sauces to create a fish "meatball".

Rumaki

Traditionally, rumaki were made by wrapping chicken livers in bacon and broiling or baking them. Today, however, many other foods prepared in the same fashion are called rumaki. For example, blanched bacon can be wrapped around olives, asparagus, water chestnuts, scallops, or pineapple. Thinly sliced Italian meats like prosciutto or salami can be used in the same way.

Stuffed Wonton Skins

Wonton skins are an Asian noodle dough used to produce a wide variety of hors d' oeuvres such as miniature egg rolls or puffs filled with cream cheese and crab. They can be filled with anything your creativity allows. Wonton skins can be pan fried, deep fried or steamed as for dumplings.

Endless Others

Consider: Phyllo dough wrapped around various fillings; vegetables such as mushroom caps or tiny red potatoes filled with sour cream and caviar or Roquefort cheese and walnuts. Tiny artichoke hearts or oyster shells filled with your favorite cheese or other fish or shellfish.

Guidelines for Preparing Hors d' Oeuvres:

They should be small, one to two bites
They should be flavorful and well seasoned, not overpowering
They should be visually attractive
They should complement the foods to follow without duplicating flavors
The secret to great hot hors d' oeuvres is to let your imagination be your guide, to keep the ingredients harmonious and, if the hors d' oeuvres are to precede dinner, not to allow them to duplicate the foods to be served or overpower them with excessively spicy flavors

To provide a comprehensive list of hot hors d' oeuvres would be virtually impossible, as this list would be limit-less. Global availability of food items, new products, and your creativity gives you license to create anything you imagine.

Hors d' Oeuvres, whether hot or cold, are very small portions of foods served before the meal to stimulate the appetite. They are generally the first course or introduction to a meal; they are more typically served with dinner than with lunch.

The French term hors d' oeuvres translates as "outside the work". Its usage was correct under the classic kitchen brigade system, for it was the service staff's responsibility to prepare the small tidbits for guests to njoy while the kitchen staff prepared the meal.