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Mark the Rustic, haggis-fed

“But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed, The trembling earth resounds his tread…” (Burns). These legendary words are one line from the famous Roberts Burns poem *Address to Haggis*. Haggis, the well-known Scottish delicacy is more than simply a cultural food. It’s a crucial piece of true Scottish heritage, a proud demonstration of Scottish cultural independence, and a cornerstone of modern Scottish identity. Haggis is more than a food of a culture its an act of rebellion.

Haggis can be traced as a dish for near to all of all Scottish history, though its origins are shrouded in ambiguity (New World Encyclopedia). The dish itself is a robust test of pallet, consisting of a stuffed sheep stomach roasted whole and eaten in kind. The meal is an embodiment of Scottish “robustness” it’s filling and hearty and not for the faint (Joy). Though prevalent in Scottish history this alone wasn’t what tethered haggis to Scottish identity.

In 1705 Scotland formally joined Great Britain, securing safety and trade but also risking the homogenization of Scottish culture (Joy). Scottish dialects were declared illegal and Scottish tartans took on the symbolic role in clan identification we know them to have today. Once simple preference became an identity for the Scottish and Haggis was no exception. Around this same time in 1759, we have the birth of Robert Burns famous Scottish poet and icon of Scottish identity.

Robert Burns carved a path of legend in his time, famous for his poetry, nationalism, and drinking. He was the idealized Scottish man (Joy). Of these works *Address to Haggi*s truly tied this common Scottish food to the cultural identity we know today. Five years after his passing Scotland held its first Burns day. A celebration of Scottish culture centering around the famous poet. Haggis was intrinsic to this celebration, then, and as a national holiday is still a staple of any Burns day celebration. With more elaborate celebrations hosting and entire piping in of the haggis (where bagpipes, a traditional Scottish instrument, are played to announce the arrival of the haggis).

Haggis much like the Scottish started a humble meal, a food of the land in Scotland. That was then taken to a place of defiant identity. The ground shakes to the feet of those eaters of haggis, paraphrasing Burns. A true testament to Scottish heritage and individuality I can think of little more of a Scottish thing than Haggis

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