

Title:

Fondue - Types Of Fondue And Restaurants That Serve It

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698

Summary:

Several years ago, I worked for a company that had a corporate office in Belgium, and some Belgian employees came and visited our local office on a business trip. As I was chatting with one of them, the subject of fondue came up. I offhandedly mentioned this favorite fondue restaurant of mine, and raved about the delicious chocolate fondue dessert.

Across his face came a look of incredulous horror. He had the same expression I must have had when I saw spam sushi in Hawaii ...

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Article Body:

Several years ago, I worked for a company that had a corporate office in Belgium, and some Belgian employees came and visited our local office on a business trip. As I was chatting with one of them, the subject of fondue came up. I offhandedly mentioned this favorite fondue restaurant of mine, and raved about the delicious chocolate fondue dessert.

Across his face came a look of incredulous horror. He had the same expression I must have had when I saw spam sushi in Hawaii for the first time. For him, the only proper fondue was cheese fondue, and a chocolate fondue was just a wrong, unnatural thing. Any notions of Americans being a savage, uncultured and decadent people must have been confirmed in his eyes.

Nevertheless, we have chocolate fondue, and I am forever grateful for it. Specifically, we have Konrad Egli to thank, a Swiss(!) chef who created it for New York's Chalet Swiss restaurant in 1964. He had earlier already started to popularize the more traditional fondue through his restaurant by featuring both the cheese style and the method of cooking meat cubes in hot oil (Fondue Bourguignon).

Well, with the introduction of the chocolate element, the craze really took off.

Fondue became a popular menu item at American dinner parties throughout the 60's and 70's, and is starting to become popular again.

Fondue originally came from the mountains of Switzerland, where poverty-stricken peasants had little to sustain them except for Gruyere cheese, bread loaves and lots of wine. Poor peasants. Making do of these meager ingredients, they combined them to create what became the traditional fondue, melting the hard cheese with the wine in a communal earthenware pot, and taking turns dipping the bread into the tasty mixture.

Fondue Bourguignon, on the other hand, was a French creation. Born out of necessity, a medieval monk by the name of Johann du Putzxe came up with the idea. He worked in the vineyards of Burgundy and needed a convenient way to have lunch while he harvested the grapes. A pot filled with hot oil set nearby where he could dunk & cook tasty morsels of meat while he worked was the solution.

Today, there are several different kinds of fondue sets available on the market. There are burners that are heated by tea lights, butane, alcohol & electricity. For cheese and chocolate fondue, a traditional pot called a caquelon is used. This is typically made from ceramic or earthenware. An enameled iron or copper pot is used for Fondue Bourguignon.

If you don't want to deal with the mess and hassle of making fondue at home (the fondue pots can be difficult to clean after a meal), there are many restaurants that specialize in fondue that you can go to. My favorite, La Fondue in Saratoga, California, is whimsically decorated, with a romantic, slightly gothic ambiance that looks like the kind of place La Cirque du Soleil would go to for lunch.

Many styles of cheese fondue are available, such as Mediterranean (cheddar, beer & sun-dried tomatoes) and Stinking Rose (Swiss, wine & garlic). For the Fondue Bourguignon, exotic meats such as wild boar and ostrich are offered, as well as tasty dipping sauces.

The chocolate fondue, though, is to die for. Along with your choice of chocolate (milk, bittersweet or white) and flavorings (Amaretto, Irish Cream and others), you can dunk in pieces of snicker bars, marshmallows, strawberries, apples, bananas & sponge cake.

Bring a large appetite when you come here, so you have room for all the delectable courses.

If you would like to experience the fun and novelty of fondue yourself, here is

a selection of fondue restaurants that may be in your area:

The Melting Pot - 70 restaurants in locations all across the country

Boiling Point Fondue - Woodinville, WA

Café Fondue - Merrillville, IN

Dante's Down the Hatch - Atlanta, GA

Der Fondue Chessel - Keystone, CO

Fondue Fred's - Berkeley, CA

Fondue Room - Mount Clemens, MI

Forever Fondue - La Jolla, CA & San Diego, CA

Geja's Café - Chicago, IL

La Fondue Bourguignonne - Sherman Oaks, CA

The Magic Pot Fondue Bistro - Edgewater, NJ

Mona Lisa Fondue Restaurant - Nampa, ID

Potpourri Fondue Restaurant - Mentor, OH

Simply Fondue - Dallas, TX