

Conscious Food or Meaningful Eating
(theory and concept)



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Preface

The history of food as culture starts back in the Neolithic period with the development of agriculture in the Fertile Crescent in 8000 BCE; soon after, the synthesis of cuisine in ancient Mesopotamia¹ began.

Ancient Armenia was an epicenter of culture exchange of classical antiquity, where Sumerian, Acadian, Aramaic and Hettitian cultures spilled over and mixed. This tradition of cultural exchange passed down from generation to generation and reached the modern era through manuscripts, ethnographic research — and because of Armenia's role as a crossroads of antiquity, some of these ancient culinary traditions survive in today's ethnic cuisine. It is of the utmost importance to sustain and promote these customs as a way to keep alive and embrace our connections to this ancient and storied past.

Armenia today covers some 29,000 square kilometers, a small expanse in comparison to the ancient Kingdom of Armenia, which comprised nearly 700,000 square kilometers stretching from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and Caspian seas. However, even modern Armenia's wide-ranging topography and volcanic soil are major contributors to the scrumptious legumes, delicious fruits and vegetables, and famous grapes and grains grown within its borders.

Historical knowledge of Armenian agriculture and horticulture can be gleaned from countless archeological records and supported by surviving written accounts in Armenian, Assyrian, Sumerian and Egyptian manuscripts and inscriptions. Also, there are several contemporary accounts which exist, including those of the Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 BCE), the philosopher Theophrastus (372-288 BCE), and the books of Genesis and Exodus in the Hebrew bible.

The ancient Armenians created a complex and bewildering pagan theology based on worship of the sun and sky, the four elements, and a pantheon of human-like gods and goddesses. Their beliefs greatly influenced ancient civilization and theology and have been incorporated into many ancient religions such as Zoroastrianism and Hinduism.

This remarkable experience of ancient agricultural practices and cultural forces of countless ancestors that helped create many rich culinary traditions within the biblical Land of Noah, and has passed from generation to generation through millennia to today.

Unfortunately, this holistic tradition of agriculture and traditional practices of preparation are damaged by modernization of "civilization" and the onslaught of mechanization. Seventy years of the Soviet system stripped nearly all knowledge of harmonic agriculture in Armenia. and after the USSR's disintegration in 1991, Armenia was left without any stable agricultural infrastructure or heritage. Industrialized farming collapsed due to the lack of funding to repair and maintain farm and processing equipment. Packaging and distribution of food products were quickly forced to revert to non-mechanical techniques.

1 "Mesopotamia" is of Greek origin, meaning "Land between the rivers"; both rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, have their headwaters in the mountains of modern Turkey, well within the ancient Kingdom of Armenia. (source: McKay, p.13)

In light of the circumstances, many learned farming practices from their elders who still remembered the methods of the pre-Soviet era. Today, traditions of agriculture survive because of the ethnic knowledge passed from previous pre-Soviet generations, and rural peoples' return to these traditions. Armenians were able to preserve traditions of cultivation and dining through limited manuscripts and instinctive rural knowledge, and have now found a balance of ancient and modern techniques to ensure fine food production. It is possible that with the return of a vital economy, the reality of a true agricultural and culinary renaissance will be realized.

Understanding the Tenets of Natural Nutrition.

The concept of “conscious food”, or meaningful eating, is based on two main principles:

1. Food is not measured by caloric content; food is valued only by its viability. Calories are nothing more than a modern scientific quantification of food's viability.
2. The countless vitamins, compounds, and substances that are so often buttress the idea of "proper nutrition" are nothing more than self-deception. Any ingredient, or food that encompasses it, is an extremely personal gift of the natural world.

A human is formed and sustained not by food, but by **spirit**. In us is something completely different than what we eat. We have completely transformed these things; inside man there is a spiritually altering power that has been forgotten for several centuries, even millennia. We ourselves come from that what lies above simple earth and carbon.

Everything that we have in ourselves is not built from the substance of the Earth, but from that which is above this surface — from the spirit.

For human health, it is not essential to note the chemical makings of ingredients; carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, fat, protein, carbohydrates and so on, are but abstract concepts. But for the health of man on principle, it is important to know the vitality of foodstuffs — food and illness exist close at hand. Many diseases are foodborne illnesses, which oftentimes means that many nutrients can become injurious to many, while others may actually find them beneficial; food and its effects on the body can vary greatly.

What should one's food be so that they may become, more and more, in control over what is happening within them?

Man has an innate connection with nature as he perceives it in a certain way and unites spiritually with what is in it. However, here the mistake lies: man desires to learn all there is about what he calls "nature", and he wants to follow nature alone. Medieval Armenian doctors often advised that one should not be a slave of nature; one must instead extend what nature creates through your own being.²

When a person is in complete control of his health and conscious, he owes this to the plant world. Nutrition must take place in such a way that everything that is synthesized in the plant is again

² Amirdovlat Amasiaci, "Unnecessary for the ignorant", c. XI century.

disintegrated in man. The person becomes internally stronger due to this connection with the plant world.

Where a person does not permit anger, antipathy, and prejudice, he owes this to food from the animal world. With animal food, he incorporates something that gradually becomes really alien substances that live in his own life. Meat is just as necessary now as it once was, because a person must firmly stand on the Earth, he must be fixed within his person. Thus, in those who eat mainly vegetable food, there is a greater propensity for spirituality, courage, which is also necessary for life.

An introduction of the digestion process.

There is a definite relationship between what is called digestion and what is called mental activity. In other words, what digestion is to the torso, the mental activity is to the brain.

When we eat, we first place food in the mouth. Through the mouth we intake solid and liquid foods; however our digestive tracts cannot process solids. Therefore, the solid already in the mouth must be turned into a liquid. This happens in the mouth due to the presence of small gland organs that constantly secrete saliva. Food should be broken down by chewing and soaked in the mouth with saliva, otherwise it is of little practical use in the body. Just as with our eyes we perceive colors, with the tongue we perceive the taste of food during its liquefaction. Together with taste, a person gets a fuller awareness of food.

Saliva is a necessary component in breaking down foods for digestion, as chewing isn't enough to fully disintegrate foods and processing nutrients. There must be some substance to help with this breakdown; this substance within saliva is called ptyalin. This ptyalin is also the substance that first processed food products, so that they become suitable for the stomach.

After passing through the esophagus, the processed food products enter the stomach. In the stomach they must be recycled further; to do this, there again must be some substance that is produced by the stomach, performing a similar duty as saliva did previously. In this substance is a somewhat different chemical which further breaks down the structure of food products, called pepsin.

The food is processed in the stomach, then enters the intestines, and the processed matter travels through. If the food hadn't have been broken down by chewing, ptyalin, and pepsin, it would be impossible to digest. Furthermore, within the pancreas, another substance — called trypsin — passes through thin channels and enters the intestines. And so, in the intestines, the food matter is for the third time "saturated with saliva."

And again, something new happens. This can no longer be perceived by human consciousness — what arises out of these three iterations of chemical breakdowns is felt by the liver and the kidneys in a certain way. Consequently, everything that happens in the intestine is sensed by the kidneys and perceived by the liver. This means that there, in the kidneys and liver, the soul sits; it recognizes and feels, just as one's mind perceives itself. But only to a certain extent, as one's mind — and therefore, the soul, cannot ever fully comprehend its own self.

So, the liver absorbs what the ptyalin, pepsin, and trypsin all participate in — it must be said in this way, as science unfortunately gives such terrible names to things; if you are so unsympathetic to the cold, exacting nature of scientific terminology, then Science would be beside herself for your inexactitude. And so, to avoid the risk of angering Science, the old names of ptyalin, pepsin, trypsin stand at the true heart of feeling in the liver.

After the ptyalin in the mouth, the pepsins in the stomach, and the trypsin in the pancreas, bile from the liver is thrown into the mix. Now the matter passes through the kidneys.

When the food pulp is thus prepared, four times "soaked with saliva," only then can its nourishment pass through the walls of the intestine into the lymphatic vessels and into the bloodstream. From the mouth, until the food gruel enters the blood, constantly the food gruel is transformed so that it can be properly digested not only by the stomach, but by the whole human body.

How a body is built

In order to maintain life, a person needs: carbohydrates, fats, proteins, and salts.

Carbohydrates act everywhere — everywhere we are formed as a person. And if a body does not move carbohydrates to the brain, and they are deposited in the intestines and in the stomach, then the body is destroyed. For example, a hoarse throat may mean a person has something wrong with digestion. If he cannot properly digest carbohydrates; they have no way to enter the right place of the brain, which can adversely affect breathing and speech. Therefore, it is necessary that we have these carbohydrates. They may act on our appearance, but their purpose is simply to give us energy. They do not give us mere padding — this is done by fats. Fats build upon the structures made through carbohydrates.

Fats are far different than starches and proteins. Though present in plant matter, vegetable fats are leaner than animal fats. A body needs fats from either the vegetable kingdom or the animal kingdom in order to function properly. Consequently, fats are the third thing that a person uses as food matter. Fats enter the colon and, in turn, are transformed by what is released by the pancreas in combination with the liver's bile. Within fats are two substances: glycerin, acid. Consequently, glycerol and acids, various fatty acids, originate from fats.

Whether you take food from the vegetable kingdom or from the animal kingdom, you consume protein. Protein essentially the building block of our bodies; everything else in the body must first be formed from protein. So we can say the following: the protein must exist from the very beginning of life, so that a person can arise. If one has too little protein, or if he can not digest the protein properly, then the lack of it not only depletes him — it also gradually kills him. Just as protein is necessary for the creation of life, it is also necessary for the person to live at all. So we can say this: one who cannot digest proteins will surely die.

During the process of digestion, an important role is played by salts. Only salts retain more or less the same structure and makeup throughout the process, apart from dissolving physically. However, they remain, in fact, essentially intact as salts. Salt forms on the way from the stomach to the head; the smallest particles go up and are transformed by this ascent.

And what arises there, within the lungs that is transformed into the lightest particles of food that reach the head? This is a type of phosphorus which comes from the food itself. We salt our food not just because we, say, enjoy the savory mineral tang it provides, but we salivate for the reason that we can think it at all. Salts are associated mainly with our thoughts. If anyone, for example, is so sick that everything that is in the food is salt, it lays in the stomach and intestines and does not sent along with the blood to the brain then he becomes idiotic.

This is certainly something to note: the spirit exists, but the spirit must get to Earth, so that it can act — act within these substances. And that is why, when they are engaged in spiritual studies, one must know the actions of the spirit within matter. So the creative spirit throughout the world needs food. If something prevents one from properly absorbing matter, the salt — instead of penetrating the blood into the brain — is deposited in the stomach and intestines, then the person becomes, for all intents and purposes, dead.

After we digest, instead of starch, protein, and fats are sugars, dissolved proteins, glycerin, acids and salts. And what happens to what is now in us? Within us is something completely different than what we ate. We have completely transformed these things. Inside man there is a great transforming power. However, this power has been forgotten for several centuries.

In the corporeal body, nothing from terrestrial matter enters, nothing at all — it's simply a delusion. We eat because as creatures we are inclined to. But we build our inner selves from what is above. So people labor under the assumption that food goes into the body and passes out of the body, leaving some form of nutrition inside — yet it's not at all true. Food is only a delivery system; a vessel of spirit. Everything that we have within ourselves does not come from the substance of the Earth.

If we consume too much food, then the food stays too long inside of us. Then our bodies begin to collect deposits of unnecessary substances, leading to excess fats and similar consequences. If we take too little, then we have too little ambition or drive, and subsequently we take too little of what we need from the spiritual and etheric worlds. However, it is crucial that we do not base our beings solely on the Earth and its substances; rather that we build ourselves from what exists beyond the Earth's material plane.

It is said that the human body completely renews itself on a cellular level every eight years; if so, then the heart too is renewed. The heart carried within yourself eight years ago, it is no longer. It was renewed — renewed not from the matter of the Earth, but renewed from what surrounds the Earth in the light. Your heart is a pressed light! As though pressed from sunlight, as a diamond is formed by millions of years of pressure. And that which you consumed through food has stimulated your cycle of renewal, this cycle of light. All your organs are built from a light-imbued environment, and what we eat — what we take for food — acts only as an impulse upon this cycle.

Everything that I do when cooking, I will have to replicate in my own body. This frees my body from additional difficulties by processing and engaging the food matter. From all these things that I do when cooking, I relieve the body of performing these duties internally. Hence, all “raw food eating theories” are nothing but fantasy.

Conscious Food Concept - Good Food, Good Mood

The majority of epicureans and gourmets say that food means the material, nutritional components. But the medieval masters' definition of food was much simpler: something to be enjoyed by eye, allured by smell, and enjoyed by the palate. And in many ways, that is true: the first impression from food is combination of the senses — appearance, scent, then texture and taste.

Hence, foods that start from an empirical and emotional impression based on knowledge and understanding of how it acts upon your body and mind can be seen as a philosophy of nutrition. Together that creates a magical combination which I call “conscious” or “mindful eating”.

There is no need to overcomplicate food through endless preparation of technical tasting charts or scientific modules with extraordinary methodologies — we should make it simple and easy to understand the true food and its nutrition. We should follow the natural way was practiced by our forefathers and passed down from generation to generation to today. This is the “intuitive nutrition” or “conscious eating”. Where food plays a communicative, cultural role rather than the part of sole nourishment, where people enjoy the flavor and atmosphere of the dinner, where ingredients are selected according to the seasonal food and agricultural calendars, by considering the man and nature in harmony, rather than a passing trend — there, real food and dining culture exists.

Food and eating is based on the relationship between man and nature, the living and the beyond, the earth and space — where the role of food appears not only in material form but also in its communicative form, its role as a linking thread of various social groups.

This type of food culture assists in the communication of preparation and tradition by transmitting the contents of universality to the individual, uniting people and society at large through the food.

This food culture is the ethos based on the manifestation of cuisine's impact on thought, psychology, philosophy, behavior, and lifestyle of the people that compose a broader ethnic group.

The theory of *conscious eating* underlines that the person becomes sick as a result of certain food practices and is recovering as a result of this consumption. The disease is the result of misguided spirit, while the recovery comes from an understanding of flavors and taste — and the result is suitable nutrition.

Medieval physicians believed that diseases had two causes, both physical and mental. When an imbalance between the earthly and spiritual forces within the body arises, illness develops. An overpowering force of earth can cause mental issues; likewise, an imbalance of increased spiritual force can bring about physical malady.

Hence, food and morality are very deeply connected. The basics of natural nutrition that Armenians proscribed in ancient and medieval times delivers to us invaluable expertise and knowledge.

Nowadays, the acts of cooking and eating are definitely complicated forms of physical, chemical, and biological processes with only one aim: pleasure, satisfaction, and satiation. Natural materials grown as crops, in trees, or in water change their state, structure, color, taste, and smell. Consequently, cooking involves simultaneous and non-separable physical, chemical and biological processes in a highly coupled manner, unlike in classical physics, chemistry, or biology.

Both cooking and eating define a new class of multidisciplinary scientific problems of varying sizes. However, cooking and eating remain inextricably embedded within the fabric of human culture.

According to the “Conscious Eating” philosophy, the meal demonstrates to us the schematization of dining which are beyond culinary techniques; nevertheless, they compose the methods of basic food preparation.

A good example of this is the Armenian traditional food often used:

1) ***In accordance with daily routine*** – morning meal (*nakhachash*, or “before the dinner” in Armenian) and evening meal (*entrik*). The afternoon meal (*dinner*) became a part of culture at a much later date, connected mainly with the urbanization of rural populations in the 18th-19th centuries;

2) ***In accordance with situation*** — home (*entanekan entrik*, or “family dinner”), field or workplace (*andi ag u hats*, “field meal”), or communal (*hatskeruyt*, a feast supper or *khrakhchank*, “party”) meal;

3) ***In accordance with purpose*** — everyday (*amenorya*), festive (*khndjoyk*, to have fun), and ritual meals (i.e. *hokeat*, or “memorial meal”);

4) ***In accordance with prestige*** – royal (*ginarbuk*, to drink wine), church (*kochnank*, to invite) and national/communal significance (*haskeruytt*).

Another important point of “Conscious Eating” is that any meal starts at consumption, continues by digestion, and is completed by inner satisfaction. In medieval times, palace cooks were also considered physicians and herbalists, and have known these traditions and prepared food accordingly. They were aware that it is necessary to achieve self-balance and harmony with nature through food and inner wellbeing to avoid illness. Emotional imbalance and mental illness can be corrected through the practices of Conscious Eating, since the food has a direct impact on the ways of thinking, character, and behavior of people.

To reiterate, this theory of “Conscious Eating” underlines that a person becomes sick as a result of incorrectly prepared food — through a lack of tradition or proper care — and is recovering as a result of eating correctly.

According to medieval philosophy and medicine, the functions of the body depend on three systems that contain three main branches and four elements that define lifestyle and nutrition.

These three systems are the Head, the Chest, and the Limbs. The functional role of the Head is to regulate all processes of living, including thinking, absorbing, and digesting. The functional role of the Chest system is to regulate water, air, and fat cycles. And the functional role of the Limb system is to regulate hormonal functions of energetic processes and movements through muscle. All three systems are connected with four circumstances: the time of the year (season), the influence of evil spirits (destructive thoughts), the nature of nutrition (what one consumes), and lifestyle (how we organize life).

Three main points that include the above mentioned systems are:

Absorption: starts from the eye and mouth, and concerns the senses of sight and taste.

Digestion: a tenet of wellness. Concerns structural breakdown of food matter in the stomach.

Satisfaction: what makes one human, more or less. Comprises feelings, emotions, and mental wellbeing.

The four elements were integral to medieval Armenian philosophy, cosmology, and cuisine — they are considered basics for understanding the nature of matter and life in general. It remains in the legacies of the ancient Armenian philosophers and herbalists David Anhakht, Mkhitar Heratsi, Amirdovlat Amasiaci, Grigor Magistros, etc.

The broader medieval philosophy of the time was organized around these four elements of earth, water, air and fire; four qualities of cold, hot, wet, and dry; and four physical qualities determining the behavior of all created things, including the human body and its way of life.

Melancholic	Flegmatic	Sanguine	Choleric
			
Humor: Black bile	Humor: Slime	Humor: Blood	Humor: Yellow bile
Element: Earth	Element: Water	Element: Air	Element: Fire
Season: Winter	Season: Autumn	Season: Spring	Season: Summer
Age: Elder	Age: Old	Age: Teenager	Age: Childhood
Quality: Cold and Dry	Quality: Cold and Humid	Quality: Hot and Humid	Quality: Hot and Dry
Organ: Spine	Organ: Brain	Organ: Hart	Organ: Gallbladder
Planet: Saturn	Planet: Moon	Planet: Jupiter	Planet: Mars

Water (what we drink) has a cold and humid quality, reflects feelings and defines the soul.

Earth (what we eat) has a cold and dry quality, reflects thought and contributes to spirit.

Air (which we breathe) has a hot and humid quality, reflects fortitude and influences courage.

Fire (what burns) has a hot and dry quality, and reflects the will and regulates the mood.

Hence, all those 4 elements describes the human being's character.

In the Middle Ages, a concept existed which stated that man was comprised of four parallel beings: the physical body — the basis of which was made up of proteins and was responsible for inspiration; the astral body — based upon carbohydrates, and responsible for speech and imagination; the etheric body, based in fat, and responsible for bodily material and organs; and “I am”, or the conscience — based upon salts, and responsible for thought.

It should be noted that the true and entire process of eating includes meditation and psychological processes, which we call self-psychology-training: perception, assimilation, absorption,

assimilation, isolation, separation, satisfaction (the essence of the activity of the six senses, and both mental and physical activity).

Eating and illness go hand in hand, as do illness and healing. Carefully considered food preparation is done in such a way that food products are transformed into a state that can be easily absorbed and digested by the body. The underlying forces of vitality and self-preservation are this absorption and allocation of matter. All diseases come, in some way, from alkalization; similarly, cures spring from oxidation. If the body is properly oxidized, many painful processes and ills are impossible.

There are two causes of eating afflictions: removed and immediate. Remote afflictions are those that result from: 1) inability to use their passions, 2) lack of true kindness, and 3) ignorance. The immediate causes of digestive disorders stem from discord of the processes of the 1) mucous-serous and 2) lymphatic systems which weaken the energy and vitality of the body and can lead to the degradation of the body and spirit.

To overcome the aforementioned infirmity, it is essential to achieve harmony between the mental and sensory systems and be brought up under the cleansing elemental influences of light, space, air, water, and soil.

From the mouth, a man retains only carbohydrates; everything else he creates by himself through oxygen and the elements. It was once believed that carnivorous activity drove humans to egotism, reflected corporeally as diabetes and epilepsy. A vegetarian diet can make man altruistic, and closer to spiritual well being. Roots connect with the brain, leaves to breath, stems to digestion, seeds and fruits to limbs. It is also inherently known that digestion is directly connected with thinking, as is the heart and blood connected with willpower and drive, and as the power of breath is connected with feeling and sensory capacity.

Ancient wisdom says that the welfare of man, family, society, and state depends on A) conscious lifestyle and B) thoughtful consumption. Food was seen as an driving factor of harmonic development, and taste was known as the awareness of food itself. This is why in medieval times, recipes and “menus” were rarely used; improvisation and traditional technique was embraced — the historical basis of the Conscious Food theory. According to this theory, lifestyle, food and drink are the basics of physical wellness and individual development. The meal is experienced and an impression is made, based on knowledge and understanding of the components of that meal, and through the cerebral plane as well — the philosophy and understanding of nutrition. This, combined with the sensory tastes and aroma of the meal, as well as the choice of ingredients and seasonings, creates the alchemic result of “conscious” or “mindful eating”.

“Meaningful Eating” tasting chart

Food, and the processes and experiences of cooking and dining, is considered in a very different way in this day and age due to the rapid changes in technology, eating habits, change of palates, etc. The field of sensory evaluation has grown rapidly since the later half of the 20th century, along with the explosive expansion of the processed-food and consumer products industries.

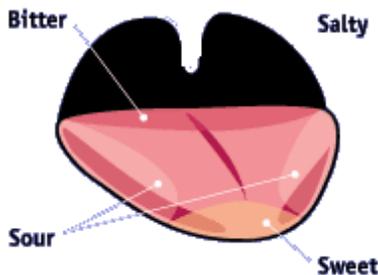
That is why the tasting of food for product development — known as sensory analysis — has become essential. Its methods are used throughout the food production industry to make judgments as to the quality of food. This industry relies on tasting theories and models that have been

developed over millennia of scientific study. These food physics and gastronomical studies take into account physical aspects of an ingredient structural thermodynamic aspects of aroma compounds. It also delves deep into the understanding of biophysical processes in cell physiology via the dynamics of receptors and psychophysics of sensory perception.

Even from a pure physicist's standpoint, cooking-related problems are non-trivial; most of them are of a highly non-equilibrium thermodynamic nature. Gastronomy says that the final states of cooked food depend strongly on the pathway by which it travels, that is, the 'processing'. In contrast to many (classical physical) material properties, the resulting structure depends on these specific processes themselves and apart from a structural–property relationship, etc. However, such empirical theories and practices such as astrophysics, etc., cannot adequately explain the “soul of food”. All those aforementioned ways of studying culinary science consider food as a physico-chemical process, whilst the act of Eating is, in fact, the inner wellness process.

Today, “Conscious Eating” is an essential part of understanding how what we eat affects us philosophically as well as physically. Dining is a major portion of many epicureans, gourmets, and indeed the average person's daily habits.

One of the main pillars of “Conscious Eating” is to rehabilitate the medieval knowledge and understanding of the act of eating — that food is made to be eaten and enjoyed as a part of daily life and factors towards the wellness of both body and mind in a very spiritual and holistic sense. Hence, understanding how the concept of taste works is essential to understanding food itself. Even medieval masters knew that taste as we know it is detected by receptor cells on the tongue, called taste buds. Different areas of the tongue can detect the four elements of taste: sweet, sour, bitter, and salty.



Modern scientific research suggests that genes affect taste buds. This means that personal preferences surrounding your diet and the tastes therein may be genetically predetermined. One thing is clear: the more taste buds a person has, the more sensitive they are to taste as a sensory experience.

Human beings exist and upon this world due to the transformation of food products. However, only a conscious diet is directly related to morality. Morality is when knowledge is cleansed of selfishness; when a person realizes that each of his actions influences the general course of world development. While the laboratory table did not become an altar, until chemistry becomes a spiritual art, and until humanity realizes its higher self, no progress in the cultural development of mankind can be made.

Through the Water Element, a person acquires imagination, determining movement and symbolizing the Present. Through the Air one acquires inspiration, which determines rhythms and flow that symbolize the Future; and through Fire one can acquire intuition, which determines knowledge, symbolized by the Past. The principle of morality is generally associated with the element of heat or Fire, so the heat reflects the life of thought and ideas.

As one determines and experiences smells through the air, we experience taste through various liquid forms.

About Smell

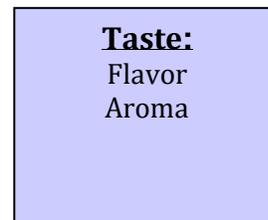
We smell only what evaporates, what particles or vapors leave a larger mass of matter and disperse into the air; through this we experience smell. Smell is something that humanizes a person, since it is directly related to memory. Unlike animals, people do not orient themselves by smell, but, on the contrary, they are either drawn in by it or they resist it; thanks to this, people develop memories based on particular aromas. Consequently, all our thoughts are transformed smells.

About Taste

Taste is discovered and synthesized through the back of the mouth, but it is truly felt in the abdominal cavity. The feeling of taste turns into an emotional strength.

In order to understand Conscious Eating, we make the food testing module very simple and useful for anyone who wish to make judgments about the quality of food but also learn about living through food, by the combination of physical and sensory qualities. According to Conscious Eating, when we taste food we hone in on two key features: appearance and taste. Appearance relies on several factors, such as: texture (or “mouth feel”), size and granularity, and color. Taste includes both flavor and aroma, uniting liquid and air elements.

Physical and Sensory Characteristics



First impressions count. **Color, texture, and size** refers to the food’s qualities. The color is the first indicator of a product’s quality — as sight is often the first and most immediate of human senses — followed by texture. Color, and by association of sight, shape, refer to the quality of light that can be ascertained by the eye and fragmented through various wavelengths. Texture and size can be felt with the hands, tongue, palate, and teeth. Foods can have myriad different textures, such as crispy, crunchy, hard, tender, chewy, creamy, etc. The texture of a food can change as it is stored, for various reasons. If fruits or vegetables lose water during storage they wilt or lose their turgor pressure, and a crisp apple becomes leathery on the outside. Evaluation of texture involves

measuring the response of a food when it is subjected to forces such as cutting, shearing, chewing, compressing or stretching.

Tasting Characteristics

FLAVOR	AROMA
<p>Sweet: <i>Acidic:</i> prickly <i>Melon:</i> soft and delicate</p>	<p>Flowery: <i>Chlorophyllic:</i> Medicinal <i>Odorant:</i> Rose soft and Violet delicate</p>
<p>Sour: <i>Pickle :</i> Rough and astringent <i>Vinegaric :</i> Strong and tart</p>	<p>Fruity: <i>Citrus:</i> Lemon and Apple <i>Berry:</i> Currant and Strawberry</p>
<p>Salty: <i>Tender:</i> Soft <i>Strong:</i> coarse</p>	<p>Herbal: <i>Grassy:</i> pungent <i>Petally:</i> Chamomile and Linden</p>
<p>Bitter: <i>Rude:</i> Alkaline and Caustic <i>Piquant:</i> Phenolic and Creosolic</p>	<p>Spice: <i>Oriental:</i> Clove, Cinnamon, Cardamom <i>Balsamic:</i> Eucalyptus and Mint</p>

Flavor and aroma compounds play a significant role on food tasting. Most people confuse flavor with aroma — these two words are not synonymous. Flavor and aroma are no more interchangeable than Armenia and Alemania. While they mean two very different things, both senses rely on each other to fully convey and inform one another. The sense of smell is limited in its scope as to what your taste buds can detect. Flavor is a composite term embracing taste, smell, and mouth feel.

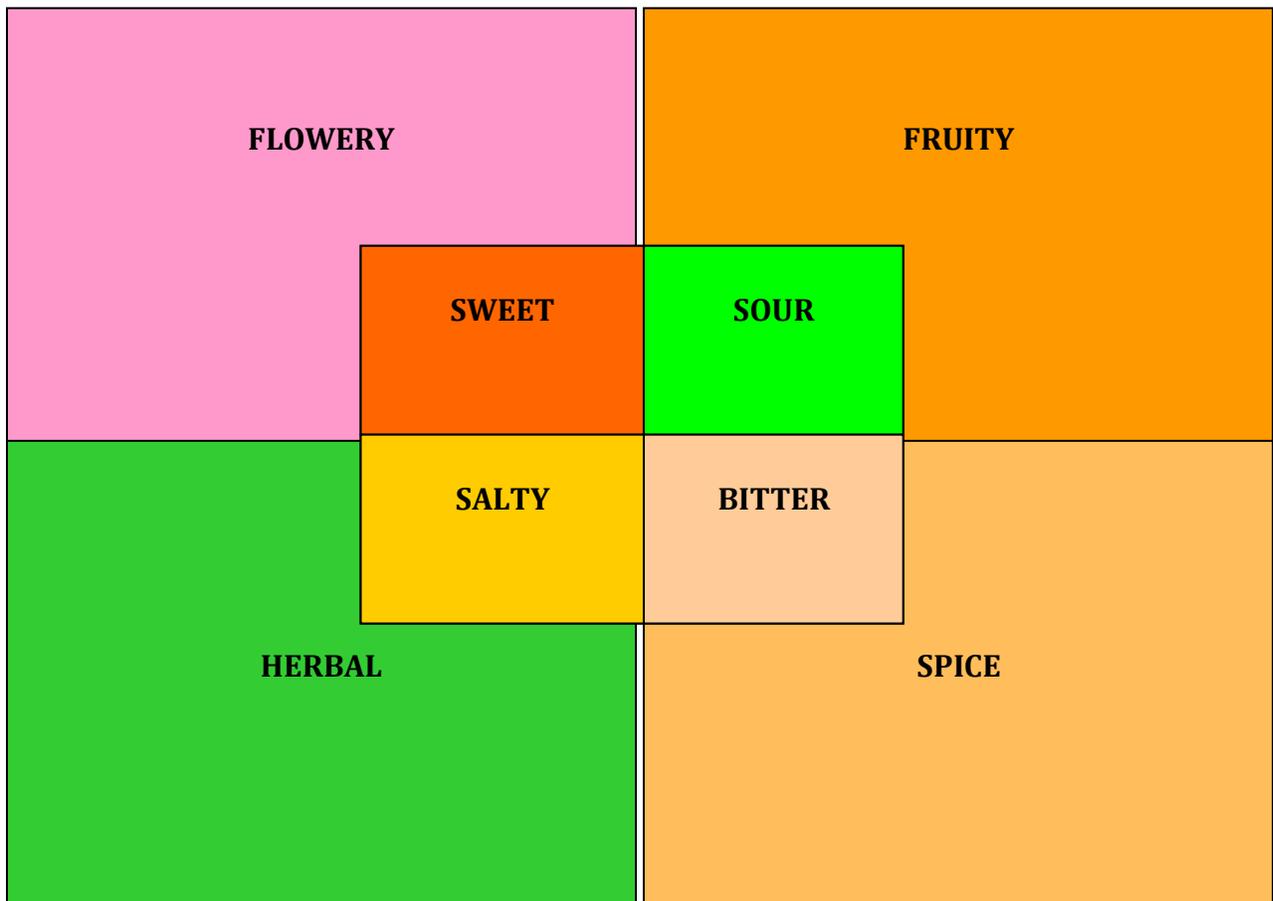
Flavor is technically a taste-olfactory sensation. In simpler words, when we eat food, we are actually simultaneously tasting and smelling the food — they inform one another. That is why when you have a stuffy nose, taste is virtually eliminated. Impaired olfactory receptor cells or blocked nasal passages can cause us to lose the ability to distinguish many tastes. Food must be moistened, typically by the chewing process, for taste to occur. Although all taste receptor cells appear structurally the same, they connect to one of two different nerves associated with tongue.

Aroma is also known as an odorant or fragrance, and is a chemical compound that has a smell or odor. A chemical compound produces a smell or odor when it is sufficiently volatile to be transported to the olfactory system in the upper-part of the nose — volatility stemming from evaporation or release of particles of matter. Animals that are capable of smell detect aroma compounds with their olfactory receptors. Olfactory receptors are cell-membrane receptors on the surface of sensory neurons in the olfactory system that detects air-borne aroma compounds. In mammals, olfactory receptors are expressed on the surface of the olfactory epithelium within the nasal cavity.

Foods may have many different flavors, such as sweet – which could be prickly or melony; sour – tart or vinegary; bitter, rude or piquant or salty. Aromas may be flowery – that may be chlorophyllin or odorant; fruity – mainly citrusy or berry; herbaceous – any grassy or petaly scent; and spice – mostly oriental and balsamic flavors.

The combination of flavor and aroma define a relation between structure, processing, solubility, and compound release, and closes the circle between matter and cultural sciences via the “Conscious Food” tasting chart developed by the etho-epicurean Dr. Armen Mehrabyan. The large variety of texture, taste, and aroma can be seen in the raw, cooked, and fermented state of corresponding foods.

Conscious Food or Meaningful Eating Tasting Chart



Product Evaluation List

	<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Code of Product</i>	
		Flavor	Aroma
	CHARACTERISTIC		
1	Extreme		
2	Good		
3	Average		
4	Slight		
5	Poor		
6	Dislikeable		
7	Bad		
8	Very bad		
9	Not good		
Remarks			
Notes			

Understanding Food and Wine Pairing

The complex art of pairing wine with food can essentially be synthesized into one simple concept: there are four basic flavors across wines and foods, and knowing how these flavors interact can help you select the wines that will perfectly match the foods that you are eating. The goal is to use the interaction between food and wine to create balance. Here’s a list of the basic flavors you need to pay attention to when pairing food and wine. This list is a different approach to thinking about flavor, and has more to do with the specific character of the foods and wines rather than our actual taste buds:

Sweet. Naturally, sweet wines have low acidity. Pair these wines with anything that doesn’t require high acid. In general, sweet wines, such as dessert wines, go best with sweet foods.

Sour. This flavor occurs in both wines and foods. Acidic wines taste great with fatty foods. It’s also possible not to worry about balance with acid flavors. You can easily pair acidic foods with acidic wines.

Bitter. Tannins are compounds that naturally occur in wine and they are responsible for creating a bitter flavor. Some wines have a greater bitter flavor than others, and these wines need to be balanced with sweeter foods. In the reverse, bitter foods pair well with sweet wines.

Salt. If you plan to salt your food, do so as sparingly as possible. Salty flavors tend to conflict with the acid content of wine. When eating salty foods, choose wine with a low acid content, such as sweeter wines