

**Course FA-25**                    **LITERATURE AND CUISINE: READING, WRITING, COOKING, EATING** (45 class hours)  
Lecturer:                        Luis Laplaza Hdez-Franch ([luislaplaza@hotmail.com](mailto:luislaplaza@hotmail.com))  
Co- Lecturer:                   Mercedes Delgado ([mmdelgado@us.es](mailto:mmdelgado@us.es))  
Substitute Lecturer:        Montserrat Izaguirre Rodríguez ([isaguirremon@gmail.com](mailto:isaguirremon@gmail.com))  
Collaborators:                Antonio Tirado Martín, enólogo y sumiller Ángel Custodio Ruiz Martínez, chef.

## OBJECTIVES

This Course is designed as a way of approaching the world of cuisine and food through literature in different periods and throughout history. It is not intended to be either exhaustive nor all-embracing, but rather a humble *hors d'oeuvre* that aims to whet the appetite for the great banquet of literature in its relations with food, cuisine, eating habits, and gastronomy.

## METHODOLOGY

The Course is made up of two distinct parts. A theoretical part wherein literary texts in which cuisine and food play a relevant role will be read and analyzed. The other part will be practical, and consists of preparing dishes from a range of recipes related to a series of texts, as well as to Spanish culture as such

## SYLLABUS

Introduction: Why literature and cuisine?

### Antiquity

**Topic 1:** The Dawn of Cuisine

- Cuisine in Sumer (bread and beer in the poem of *Gilgamesh*).
- Bread in Ancient Egypt (hieroglyphics).
- Food and symbol: *The Bible (Old and New Testaments)*.

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Bread making.

**Topic 2:** Notes on the Classical World

- Homer's *Odyssey*: The first barbeque?
- Marcus Gavius Apicius, the first gourmet.
- Petronius' *Satyricon*; those Romans!
- Lucius Junius Moderatus "Columela", the agriculture correspondent from Cádiz.
- Marcus Valerius Martialis (Martial) and his *Epigrams*.

**A screening** of sequences from Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*.

**A screening** of scenes from Federico Fellini's "Satyricon".

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** A pickles and salted fish tasting. Cuisine inspired by the *Apicius* recipe collection. How to prepare marinade and French toast ('torrijas').

### The Middle Ages

**Topic 3:** From the Eulogizing of Vegetable Stew ("alboronía") to the nostalgia for fried eggs

- The legacy of Abu I-Hasan Ali ibn Nafi "Zyriab".
- Al-Yahiz, Amr: *The Book of the Greedy (Libro de los avaros)*.
- Ibn Razin al-Tuyibi and his *Table Titbits (Relieve de las mesas)*.
- Notes on the *Talmud* collection of doctrines and laws.
- Ben Sira on the subject of gluttony.
- Selection of Maimonides' commentaries on wine and food in his *Guide for the Perplexed*.
- Ibn Rushd "Averroes". *Al-Adwiya wa 'l-aghhdhiya* (medicine and nutrition).
- "The Battle between Don Carnal and Doña Cuaresma (Lent)" in Juan Ruiz's *The Book of Good Love (El*

*libro de buen amor*).

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Spinach with chickpeas, vegetable stew (alboronía), and fried eggs.

**A screening** of scenes from Tassos Boulmetis' *A Touch of Spice*.

### **Modern Times**

**Topic 4:** A case in point: *The Life of Gargantua and of Pantagruel* by François Rabelais, eschatology in the extreme

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** soufflés, pâtés, *filloa* pancakes, and mousse.

**Topic 5:** To Eat or Not To Eat, That Was the Question: Where What Is Told About Is the Very Special and Close Relationship that Existed between the Picaresque Rogue and Hunger

-Francisco Delicado in *The Lusty Andalusian Maid (La Lozana Andaluza)*.

- An entertainment piece: "The Dinner" by Baltasar del Alcázar.

-Lazarillo de Tormes.

-Quevedo's *The Rouge*.

A screening of: *The Rogue*.

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken: A Passover supper.**

**Topic 6:** A Golden Age in which not All that Glitters is Gold

-The gastronomic sorrows and joys of the austere Don Quixote and the plump Sancho Panza.

-Lope de Vega and the role of the stewpot in his play entitled *The Lions' Son (El hijo de los leones)*.

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Fry-up ("Duelos y quebrantos") and cottage cheese with quince jelly.

### **Eating in Modern Times**

**Topic 7:** From Realism to Naturalism

-Between down-to-earth chickpeas and stews, on the one hand, and gallicization/frenchification, on the other hand, in the Madrid of Galdós.

-Emilia Pardo Bazán: aristocrat and gourmet.

-Juan Valera or sybaritism down south.

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** High-stakes stew or lamb stew and vegetables Jewish style (Cocido con mayúsculas o adafina)

**Topic 8:** Gastronomic snatches in *Galíndez* by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, in *The Century of Lights (El siglo de las luces)* by Alejo Carpentier, and in *Days and Nights of Love and War (Días y noches de amor y de guerra)* by Eduardo Galeano

-Reflecting upon Basque cuisine.

-Carpentier's "grill to beat all grills," or Caribbean exuberance.

-Going around the marketplace with Galeano.

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Fish stew Veracruz style and rice pudding.

**Topic 9:** Jorge Amado and Isabel Allende, humor and love among the cooking stoves, or erotica and cuisine

**A screening of:** *Like Water for Chocolate*

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Spinach "a la creme" with raisins and pine nuts, fried eggplant with molasses, zucchini ravioli and aubergine stuffed with duck and mushrooms; *mille-feuille* custard slice B.C., chocolate truffle

**Topic 10:** Notes on Good and Bad Eating in Noir Detective Thrillers (Four Gastronomic Cases)

- Camilleri, Andrea: the taste of the Mediterranean.

- Himes, Chester: soul food in Harlem; *A Strange Case of Murder*.

- Mankell, Henning: the cold Baltic.
- Vázquez Montalbán, Manuel: the ongoing “tribute”

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Grilled vegetable salad (escalivada) and noodle fish-stock *fideua*.

**Topic 11: Wine in Popular Folklore**

Flamenco singing and wine, the inevitable hook-up.

**Audio track:** The New Mastersinger School (Nuevo Mester de Juglaría): their wine songs

**Audio track:** a selection of songs about wine

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** A wine-tasting session

**Topic 11 Eating in the Movies**

**The food-table as scenario; a selection of sequences from:**

- Almodóvar, Pedro. *Women at the Edge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988)
- Bertolucci, Bernardo. *Last Tango in Paris* (1972)
- Buñuel, Luis. *Viridiana (Irreverence)* (1961)
- Byrne, David. *True Stories (Eating in Texas)* (1986)
- Cavani, Liliana. *La Pelle (Indigestion)* (1981)
- Chaplin, Charles. *The Gold Rush (So Tender)* (1925)
- Chaplin, Charles. *Modern Times* (1936)
- Chaplin, Charles. *A King in New York* (1957)
- Coixet, Isabel. *Map of the Sounds of Tokyo* (2009)
- Del Toro, Guillermo. *Pan's Labyrinth (Temptation)* (2006)
- DeVito, Danny. *Matilda (The Cake)* (1996)
- Edwards, Blake. *The Party* (1968)
- Jones, Terry. *Monty Python's The Meaning of Life* (1983)
- Mitchell, Roger. *Hyde Park on Hudson* (2012)
- Idem... *Le Week-End* (2013)
- Molinaro, Eduard. *Birds of a Feather (La cage aux folles)* (screwball comedy) (1978)
- Parker, Adam. *Angel Heart. (El huevo y el alma)* (1987).
- Rafelson, Bob. *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1981)
- Scorsese, Martin. *GoodFellas* (1990)
- Idem. *The Age of Innocence* (1993)
- Spielberg, Steven & Lucas, George: *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984)
- Vinterberg, Thomas. *Celebration (Festen)* (Dirty linen is washed within the family.) (1998)
- Walsh, Raoul. *Thief of Bagdad* (expressiveness) (1924)

**Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Gazpacho Carmen Maura style, Spanish potato omelette, and crumbed bread Manchego style (las migas manchegas).

**Appendixes**

**Special "Thanksgiving Day" and "Christmas" Special (Fall Semester)**

- Kelly, Jacqueline, *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate: A southern-style feast for Thanksgiving.*
- García Lorca, Isabel: Dining with Federico and Manuel de Falla

**A Gastronomic activity to be undertaken:** Thanksgiving Day Dinner and/or Christmas Dinner

**A screening of:** Chaplin, Charles. *The Gold Rush (La quimera del oro)* (A Thanksgiving Dinner)

**Poems and songs:** Texts by Federico García Lorca, Miguel Hernández, Pablo Neruda, Carlos Cano, Vainica Doble, and Cab Calloway.

**Substitute Lecturer:** Montserrat Izaguirre Rodríguez

**Collaborators:** Antonio Tirado Martín, oenologist and sommelier, together with Angel Custodio Ruiz Martínez, chef.

## Visits and Day Excursions

To a Food Market

To a Wine Cellar

## ASSESSMENT

15%: Active participation in class sessions, cook book/portfolio containing 6 recipes worked through in class, while the following elements are to be included: ingredients, cooking method, together with the literary context concerned + visit to the food market.

30%: Mid-semester Exam (Information about the date of the exam will be provided well in advance.)

25%: An assignment based on one of the recommended literary works or movies

30%. End-of-semester Exam

### WINE-CELLAR VISIT

#### A selection of mouthwatering movies

- Akin, Fatih. *Soul Kitchen* (2009)
- Arau, Alfonso. *Like Water for Chocolate (Como agua para chocolate)* (1992)
- Axel, Gabriel. *Babette's Feast (El festín de Babette)* (1987)
- Barreto, Bruno. *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands (Doña flor y sus dos maridos)* (1976)
- Boulmetis, Tassos. *A Touch of Spice (Politiki kouzina)* (2003)
- Cohen, Daniel. *The Chef (El Chef, la receta de la felicidad)* (2012)
- Ephron, Nora. *Julie and Julia* (2009)
- Ferreri, Marco. *La Grande Bouffe (La gran comilona)*(1973)
- Greenaway, Peter. *The Cook, the Thief, his Wife, and her Lover (love/horror)* (1989)
- Jeunet, Jean-Pierre. *Delicatessen* (1991)
- Joffé, Roland. *Vatel* (2000)
- Lee, Ang. *Eat, Drink, Man, Woman (the oldest cuisine?)* (1994)
- Loach, Ken. *The Angels' Share* (2012)
- Payne, Alexander. *Sideways* (2004)
- Taylor, Tate. *The Help* (2011)
- Velilla, Nacho G. *Chef's Special (Fuera de carta)* (2008)
- Vincent, Christian. *Haute Cuisine (La cocinera del presidente)* (2012)
- Wetzel, Gereon. *El Bulli, Cooking in Progress* (2011)
- Zwick, Joel. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (2002)