



Lutheran Immigration
and Refugee Service

REFUGEE SUNDAY 2018

LEARNING RESOURCES



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ADULT FORUM 1

Pursuing Hospitality: A Call to Embrace Migrants and Refugees

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality”

(Romans 12:9-13 NIV).

Sample Ice-breaker

The Migration Quiz: Facilitator asks participants to stand up if any of the following statements are true for them:

1. You were born outside the United States and migrated here.
2. You have ever spent a significant amount of time outside of the U.S. (at least one year).
3. You know of someone who was not born in the U.S., perhaps a coworker or fellow congregant.
4. You no longer live in your city of birth.

Migration is the reality of human experience. We have been migrating since we first learned to walk. It is also something people do with lots of anxiety and trepidation. Some questions that typically come to mind are:

1. What does this new place look like?
2. Will I be welcomed and make new friends?
3. Will my family be happy in this new place? Will they be able to settle in?

Background

According to the 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS), immigrants and their U.S.-born children now number approximately 84.3 million people, or 27 percent of the U.S. population. The United States has always been a nation of immigrants and has been known for opening its borders to those who are in need. Following WWII one out of every six Lutherans was a refugee or displaced person. Lutheran Immigration Refugee Service (LIRS) was founded in 1939 with the expressed goal of helping resettle fleeing Lutherans into the U.S. Today, with the support of Lutherans across the country, we continue this mission of compassion and have welcomed more than half a million refugees of all faiths from around the world.



Lesson

(Depending on the length of the session, this can be taught in two sessions. Feel free to adjust for your setting.)

Read Romans 12: 13: Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Share

The Apostle Paul admonished the New Testament Church to practice hospitality. We all know the definition of hospitality: "the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers." Practice involves an active, ongoing engagement. It is not a one-time activity. It is meant to be a lifestyle. Integration into the United States for migrants and refugees is a real, arduous experience of isolation, fear, uncertainty and loneliness. Imagine you and your family – or you alone while your family is back home in the U.S. – arriving in Iraq, Morocco, Uzbekistan or Peru. You do not know anyone. You are unable to speak the language. You are unfamiliar with the customs and cultures. How would you feel? What would you hope for? Wouldn't you hope for a friendly and generous reception that you not only encountered once, but that was a reflection of the people and their lifestyle?

Watch

Video about John Dutcher, an Omaha, Nebraska resident, who thought he hated his Muslim refugee neighbors, but had a change of heart once he had the opportunity to get to know them.

<http://www.ketv.com/article/change-of-heart-for-omaha-man-who-hated-muslims/8690536>

During the interview John Dutcher shares how he "got over" his hatred of Muslims. His advice to everyone like him is "if you hate a Muslim, go get to know one."

Pair Activity

Working with a partner, make a list of ways you can "go get to know them." Do refugees, migrants, non-English speakers or Muslims live in your neighborhood? Where do you encounter these individuals? How do you relate to people who are different from you? Do you work with refugees or Muslims? What are the opportunities in your community for getting to know them?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Read: Romans 12:13. Share with the Lord's people who are in need

What gifts or talents do you have? What "good work" could you share with a migrant or refugee to support them in their transition? What you may consider to be insignificant, another may deem to be great. In sharing of your time and talent, you are building relationship—something that cannot be measured. Lutheran Pastor Robert Shoffner recently shared with LIRS his story of helping resettle a refugee family from Vietnam via LIRS while he was pastor at Holy Trinity in Hickory, North Carolina. He said, "When the immigration of people from Vietnam began, this congregation signed on almost immediately...The Le family was our first family. We remodeled a house for them not far from the church..." (emphasis added). His congregation was excited and willing to help. They immediately responded to the need to show hospitality to a stranger. "We remodeled," Pastor Shoffner said, clarifying that it was the members of the church who "put their hands to the work." Hospitality requires our full involvement. From the time the Le family arrived at the airport, the members of Holy Trinity gave their time and resources to ensure that the family felt welcomed and supported.

Group Discussion

How does Holy Trinity's experience impact your thoughts about the true meaning of hospitality?

Read: Romans 12:13b. Practice hospitality

Small Group Discussion

Allow participants the opportunity to really consider each question.

Bring small group responses back to the larger group.

1. With whom should we practice hospitality?
2. What reputation do you think you have for being hospitable?
3. Are you still hospitable to the inhospitable?

Complaining and hospitality cannot exist together. You cannot disparage someone while also being generous and friendly and expect to build relationships. Our God is a relational God. For many of us, the simplest gift, yet the one we have made the most complicated, is the gift of relationship. We cannot view migrants and refugees as projects; we must view them as people. The mission is relationship-building, not project-building. Hospitality is about showing the love of Christ and treating others as the special gifts from God that they are.



Personal Written Reflection

1. What are ways that you have “washed the feet of the saints” or cared for the lonely, grieving or sick? How has someone done this for you? How did it make you feel?
2. What are some ways that you are devoted to “every good work”? What are some ways that you want to expand this in your life, related to refugees and migrants?
3. With whom do you seek to build relationships? How does hospitality look different between old friends and new friends? Does it mean something different for you? If so, how?
4. Consider times when you have sought out ways to be hospitable. Think about a time when you waited for people to ask you for help. How were these encounters different? How could the former been more beneficial, both to the one in need and to you as the one serving?
5. What has changed in your understanding of hospitality in this study?

Additional Resources

1. LIRS Circle of Welcome: <https://circleofwelcome.lirs.org>
The goal of Circle of Welcome is to increase successful integration of refugee families arriving in the U.S. and to create meaningful and varied ways for faith and community groups to engage with and walk alongside refugee families in service, friendship, and as advocates.
2. Letter to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service from Pastor Robert H. Shoffner
3. Immigrants in the United States: <https://cis.org/Report/Immigrants-United-States>



ADULT FORUM 2

We Saved You a Seat

“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me’” Matthew 25:35-41 (NIV).

Sample Ice-breaker

Stand up if any of the following is true for you.

1. You have ever migrated from outside of the U.S. or from a different state within the U.S.
2. You have ever experienced challenges in communicating when traveling to a non-English speaking country or context.
3. You have ever been in a place or community with people you did not know.
4. You have ever had difficulty meeting people or making friends in a new place.
5. You have ever started a new job.

Share

At least one of these is true for most of us, if not all of us. It can be scary and lonely to start in a new place, but if just one person welcomes us, it makes all the difference.

Share

“Save me a seat!” We say it all the time without any real thought to it. We enjoy sitting with our friends and family during Sunday service. When was the last time you saved a seat for your “neighbor”? Presently, there are over 84 million immigrants residing in the United States. Opening our doors to migrants and refugees does not require them to deny their faith or to join our churches, but it is an opportunity for us to offer support and build relationships with them in other ways. Churches, synagogues and mosques have always been places of refuge, so it is not surprising that those in need will seek out religious institutions. What a wonderful opportunity for Lutherans to welcome the stranger and share the love of Christ.



Small Group Activity

Divide your group into smaller groups of no more than 3 or 4.

Distribute the following Reflection Questions:

1. Who is Christ referencing when he says "I" in this passage? What is his expectation of those to which he is sharing this parable?
2. When have you encountered a stranger and engaged him/her? What was that experience like? How did it impact your life and the life of the one you engaged?
3. Consider a time that you have visited the sick or those who were in prison. Can you describe that visit and how it impacted you and one you visited?
4. What are some things that we can do within our churches to welcome the stranger into our "land"?

Set aside time for participants to share their reflections with the larger group.

Group Activity

As a large group, brainstorm 3-5 church events or activities to which you could invite your immigrant and refugees neighbors. Display the list on a white board/chart paper.

Share

Have the group reflect on these events or activities and determine if there are any that they can help implement within their congregations. If Refugee Sunday is not mentioned, add it to the list. This is the service that prepares congregations to become more welcoming communities.

Group Activity

Develop best practices for making the service engaging and discuss how to best invite others, particularly immigrants and refugees. Review the following checklist. If the congregation is open to it, go ahead if time permits and plan the service.



Checklist: Post on a board or white paper

1. Select a date
2. Form a committee and give assignments
3. Invite a former refugee or migrant from the LIRS Speakers' Bureau to share his/her story with the congregation
4. Review videos on LIRS site and select one to show
5. Plan a potluck or light brunch

Additional Resources:

1. Religious Composition of Immigrants:
<http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/immigrant-status/immigrants>
<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/07/most-refugees-who-enter-the-u-s-as-religious-minorities-are-christians>
2. LIRS Speakers' Bureau: <http://www.lirsspeakersbureau.org>
3. LIRS Videos: <https://vimeo.com/lirs>



ADULT FORUM 3

My Coworker Holds Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God”
Leviticus 19:33-34 (NIV).

Sample Ice-breaker

Stand if any of the following is true for you.

1. You can easily identify someone who has Temporary Protected Status.
2. You know someone with Temporary Protected Status.
3. You were forced to flee your home because of a natural disaster like Hurricane Katrina.
4. You want to be treated with dignity and compassion.

Share

Most people with TPS are just like you and me. Many have lived in the United States for decades, have been law abiding and have contributed to our economy. They have married and raised children who are American citizens. We will needlessly separate families if we deport TPS holders.

Background

Temporary Protected Status is just that: a temporary benefit that does not lead to lawful permanent resident status (green card) or give any other immigration status. During the period for which a country has been designated for TPS, beneficiaries may remain in the United States and may obtain work authorization. TPS is typically designated for between 6 and 18 months at a time for each country.

A country can receive TPS designation for the following reasons:

1. Ongoing armed conflict such as civil war. Good examples are Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo.
2. An environmental disaster such as a hurricane or earthquake (ex. Haiti) or an epidemic such as the Ebola virus (ex. Liberia).
3. Other extraordinary and temporary conditions such as gang violence in El Salvador.

The U.S. currently provides TPS to over 300,000 foreign nationals from the following countries:

Resource: <http://immigrationforum.org/blog/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status/>



Read

“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God”
Leviticus 19:33-34 (NIV).

Group Discussion

How does this scripture relate to being a TPS holder?

Small Group Work

Have participants work in groups of two or three to review the following site for specific information on the TPS countries: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status>.

The facilitator can print out the information if computers are not available.

Explain

The TPS status of hundreds of thousands of recipients is under scrutiny. People who have been in the United States for years – and have established their lives in this country – now face removal to countries where they have not lived and may be unable to support them when they return. TPS recipients have lived in the United States for an average of 19 years. During that time, they have become parents to nearly 275,000 citizens of the United States.

Source: <http://www.americanprogress.org>

Small Group Work

Review the stories of TPS holders in these articles published by NBC News and Catholic Legal Immigration Network. (Or select one to read.)

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/families-protected-u-s-plead-trump-administration-let-them-stay-n813771>

<https://cliniclegal.org/sites/default/files/resources/The-Human-Cost-of-Terminating-Temporary-Protected-Status-%28TPS%29.pdf>

Consider and discuss what it must be like to face the possibility of being separated from family or friends. As a group,



write down some ways you could possibly support a friend. Deuteronomy 10:19 says “And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt” (NIV).

Individual/Group Activity

TPS holders need our active support. Review the actions and decide as a group what steps to take to help those in need. When one faces the possibility of deportation, the response is often to retreat to the shadows. This is an opportunity for us to become the voice of those who are seemingly voiceless. Our congressional leaders want to hear the positions of their constituency on the issues that face our nation.

- Visit <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/2017/10/03/savetps/> for ideas
- Use the Interfaith Toolkit for larger actions: <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/issues/tps/>
- Tell Congress to support TPS holders and save TPS by calling your members of Congress. Please call each of your two senators and your one representative three times each using the following sample script:

“I’m your constituent from [City, State]. I stand in solidarity with my immigrant neighbors. I support Temporary Protected Status, and I strongly oppose any attempt to terminate or curtail the program. TPS is designed to protect people from being returned to harm, and it is extended based on country conditions. There are about 330,000 people from ten different countries who are currently pursuing their dreams, rebuilding their lives, and raising families in safety, all thanks to TPS. Some have been here for decades, and more than 70% have a U.S. sibling, spouse, or child who is a U.S. citizen. Tearing apart families is wrong.

I urge [the senator/representative] to do everything he/she can to ensure that the administration extends TPS for all ten countries for at least another 18 months, issue a public statement declaring support for all TPS holders, and support legislation that ensures stability for TPS recipients who have lived here for many years, who would face extreme hardship if deported, or who are otherwise eligible for permanent residence.”

- Tweet the same message: “@SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE Declare your support for #TPS holders & legislation to protect them from deportation #SaveTPS #GreaterAs1”

Additional Resources

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/10/20/440400/tps-holders-are-integral-members-of-the-u-s-economy-and-society>

<http://immigrationforum.org/blog/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status>



YOUTH MINISTRY

When My Friend's Family Faces Deportation

"Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt" Exodus 23:9 (NIV).

Sample Ice Breaker: Post white chart paper around the room with the statements below at the top of each. Have the participants write their name on the chart paper that displays any statement that is true for them.

Statements:

1. I have a friend from another country.
2. There are immigrants at my school.
3. I have a friend who has someone in their family facing deportation.

Most of us know at least one person who is an immigrant. We many not know their stories. They may not have shared the difficulties that their families are facing, but many of our classmates and neighbors are facing deportation.

Vocabulary Concentration

Setting up the Game: Prior to the session, the facilitator should write each word on one note card and the definition on another.

Playing Vocabulary Concentration: The goal of the game is to collect the most pairs.

1. Place all the cards face down on a table (or floor).
2. The first person to play selects two cards, turns them over, and reads them aloud. If they are a pair, the player keeps them and selects two more cards.
3. The player's turn is over when (s)he does not match cards. The player must put them back in the same position.
4. The key to winning this game is to remember the location of each card.

*Depending on size of the group, you may need to divide into smaller groups.
There should be no more two or three in a group.*



KEY TERMS

Deportation: The expulsion of a person or group of people from a place or country

Arrest: The “act of detaining an individual by legal authority based on an alleged violation of the law.” Also called an apprehension.

Border Removal: An individual removed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) who is apprehended by a Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officer or agent while attempting to illicitly enter the United States at or between the ports of entry. These individuals are also referred to as “recent border crossers.”

Convicted Criminal: An individual convicted in the United States for one or more criminal offenses. This does not include civil traffic offenses.

Immigration Fugitives: An individual who has failed to leave the United States based on a final order of removal, deportation, or exclusion, or someone who has failed to report to ICE after receiving notice to do so.

Intake: The first book-in into an ICE detention facility associated with a unique detention stay. This does not include transfers between ICE facilities.

Interior Removal: An individual removed by ICE who is identified or apprehended in the United States by an ICE officer or agent. This category excludes those apprehended at the immediate border while attempting to enter the United States unlawfully.

Other Removable Undocumented Migrant: An individual who is not a confirmed convicted criminal, recent border crosser, or other ICE civil enforcement priority category such as individuals removed on national security grounds or for general immigration violations.

Previously Removed Undocumented Migrant: An individual previously removed or returned who has reentered the country illegally.

Reinstatement of Prior Removal Order: The removal of an undocumented migrant based on the reinstatement of a prior removal order, where the undocumented migrant departed the United States under an order of removal and illegally reentered the United States (INA § 241(a)(5)). The undocumented migrant may be removed without a hearing before an immigration court.

Removal: The compulsory and confirmed movement of an inadmissible or deportable undocumented migrant out of the United States based on an order of removal. An individual who is removed may have administrative or criminal consequences placed on subsequent reentry because of the removal. ICE removals include removals and returns



where undocumented migrants were turned over to ICE for removal efforts.

Return: The confirmed movement of a potentially inadmissible or deportable undocumented migrant out of the United States not based on an order of removal, but through either voluntary departure, voluntary return, or withdrawal under docket control.

Share: In Fiscal Year 2017, ICE Enforcement Removal Operations (ERO) conducted 143,470 arrests, which is the highest number of arrests over the past three years. Of those arrests, 92 percent of those arrested had a criminal conviction, a pending criminal charge, were an ICE fugitive, or were processed with a reinstated final order. In FY 2017, ICE deported 226,119 undocumented immigrants. Visit <https://www.usa.gov/deportation> for more information.

Group Discussion: Ask if participants know anyone who has been deported or has a friend whose family member has been deported. Provide opportunity to share stories, if applicable. After the sharing and discussion, divide the stories among the participants, depending on the size of the group. Have participants read them:

Stories of Mothers Who are Being Deported

<https://www.vibe.com/2017/08/immigrant-mother-deportation-mexico>

Father of Paraplegic Son Faces Deportation

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/01/04/paraplegic-6-year-olds-daddy-faces-deportation/1006102001>

Girl with Cerebral Palsy Faces Deportation

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/oct/25/texas-girl-deportation-cerebral-palsy-hospital>

Fathers Being Deported

<http://www.cnn.com/2017/07/27/politics/connecticut-family-deportations/index.html>

<http://fox8.com/2017/09/27/elyria-family-braces-for-fathers-deportation-back-to-mexico/>

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/ohio-father-bids-farewell-deportation-mexico/story?id=48698905>

After reading the stories, discuss with your partner or in a small group how you would feel if you were the children in these stories. Consider the difficult decisions these families have to make. Should the children stay in the U.S.? They are U.S. citizens and they have never lived in another country. Should they give up their lives here to be with their mother or father? They would move to a country they may not have even visited.



Larger Group Discussion

Have participants brainstorm ways that they can better support friends, neighbors, or community members, who are dealing with deportation.

1. Other Activities: Provide links to information on how to contact Congress regarding immigration reform to address separating families through deportation: <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/2017/09/01/tell-congress-protect-immigrant-youth-and-cut-funds-for-deportation-detention-and-border-militarization/>
2. After the discussion, have participants write an editorial or create a podcast about the plight of immigrant families who are dealing with deportation.
3. Share the scripts and Twitter hashtags from the previous Adult Forum with the kids. Have them tweet at their members of Congress – or send them a Snap, post on their Instagram, etc. – to end the lesson.



ADULT FORUM 4

You Are Invited!

Lesson: Community Meals

Objective

Provide ways for Lutherans to connect with migrants and refugees in their communities.

Materials

Chart paper, Markers, Enough printed copies of these articles enough for your group

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/06/syrian-refugee-chefs-share-recipes-160628081358083.html>

<https://medium.com/@UNmigration/cooking-with-the-community-f38278210ce6>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-05/shared-table-project-encouraging-tolerance-friendship/8589354>

Sample Ice Breaker

Have each participant share a favorite food that is not American.

Introduction

What cultural groups live in your community?

Have participants write on the posted chart paper the names of the groups.

Group Discussion

Ask the ways that participants have engaged or welcomed different cultural groups into the community.

What are some ways you can welcome them?

Share

Read the following to the group or project on a screen for the group to read it together.



Food is the great “uniter” of people. Over food we have sealed corporate deals and shared our deepest secrets. We have made new friends and broadened old relationships. Nothing soothes the hardest day or the toughest situation like food. It is culturally unique, yet enjoyed across cultures. Food! Amy Choi, writer for TED says, “Our comfort foods map who we are, where we come from, and what happened to us along the way.” In their journeys to the U.S. and other countries, refugees often lament their native meals – soups, breads, meats. When they arrive to the U.S. and begin to integrate into the U.S. culture, there are aspects of their native culture that they begin to lose – style of dress, language, yet food is one thing that many New Americans do not give up. It connects them to smells and memories of home and family.

In many countries, meals are communal. Family members do not eat from individual plates, but shared communal platters. A shared meal is a wonderful way to say, “Welcome, you are no longer a stranger.” What a wonderful way for you to unite with your Arab, Latino, African or Asian neighbors. Acts 2:46, says, “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts (NIV).” Food is the greater “uniter.”

Source: Amy Choi, 1984, <https://ideas.ted.com/what-americans-can-learn-from-other-food-cultures/>

Small Group/Independent Activity

Distribute copies of the articles below. Depending on the size of the class/forum, you can divide the participants into three groups and give each group an article to read. Read one of the following about how meals have united communities.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/06/syrian-refugee-chefs-share-recipes-160628081358083.html>

<https://medium.com/@UNmigration/cooking-with-the-community-f38278210ce6>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-05/shared-table-project-encouraging-tolerance-friendship/8589354>

Group Activity

Discuss the takeaways from the article that you read. Identify at least one statement from the article that resonated with you.

Take Action

Before participants leave, establish a committee to prepare a community meal.

Later Action with Your Group or Committee:

1. Examine the population of your community. Determine where people are from.
2. Decide with which group or groups you want to begin to connect.



3. Conduct research on their country of origin. Learn background information (the culture, educational system, economy etc.). Helpful websites are:
 - <https://reliefweb.int/countries>
 - <http://www.everyculture.com>
 - <https://www.britannica.com>
5. Review the background information and recipes included in this resource.
6. Look for country recipes and choose one to prepare.
7. Invite your neighbors from your country of interest and ask them to bring a meal as well. Utilize the toolkit from Breaking Bread and Building Bridges to help you to plan this meal.
https://www.speakcdn.com/assets/2474/hfh_breaking_bread_2017.pdf
8. Set a date for a meal.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND RECIPES

BACKGROUND 1: IRAQ

Iraq, officially known as the Republic of Iraq, is a country in Western Asia, bordered by Turkey Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Its population is approximately 37 million. During ancient times, the lands now comprising Iraq were known as Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization. Numerous modern wars led by Saddam Hussein left the country financially strapped. Under the Hussein regime, the United Nations imposed an embargo that further contributed to the countries financial struggles, and the Iraq War in YEARS nearly destroyed the nation. Under the current president, Fuad Masum, there is a push among Iraqis to rebuild Iraq and secure it against renewed extremist violence following the three-year war against ISIS. Review the following resources for additional information about the Republic of Iraq:

<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/iraq-population>

http://www.nafsa.org/Professional_Resources/Browse_by_Interest/International_Students_and_Scholars/Network_Resources/International_Enrollment_Management/The_Education_System_in_Iraq__An_Overview

<https://tradingeconomics.com/iraq/gdp>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14542954>

Food

Iraqi cuisine mirrors that of Syria and Lebanon, with strong influences from the culinary traditions of Turkey and Iran. As in other parts of the Middle East, chicken and lamb are favorite meats and are often marinated with garlic, lemon, and spices and grilled over charcoal.

AN IRAQI RECIPE: CHICKEN IN POMEGRANATE AND WALNUT SAUCE

Ingredients

2 chicken breasts cut into cubes
1 onion, finely chopped
500g/1lb/2 cups of walnut pieces



¼ tsp ground black pepper
200ml/6fl oz/1 cup hot water
100ml/3-4 fl oz/½ cup pomegranate molasses
1 tbsp sugar
1-2 tbsp. tahini paste (sesame seed paste)
Preparation: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 40 minutes.

Method

1. Heat a tablespoon of cooking oil in a saucepan, add the chopped onion, cook until soft and season with a little black pepper. Add the walnuts and pomegranate sauce, hot water, tahini paste and salt, bring to the boil.
2. Meanwhile, sprinkle a little flour over the pieces of chicken and fry until golden and crispy; dry on kitchen towel; sprinkle with black pepper. Add the chicken to the sauce and cook over a medium heat for 20 minutes. Turn down the heat and simmer until the sauce is reduced and thickened (allow 5-8 minutes).
3. Serve with white rice.

Note: Lamb can be used instead of chicken.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/may/18/iraqi-cookbook-chicken-pomegranate-walnut>



BACKGROUND 2: SYRIA

Syria, also known as the Syrian Arab Republic, is a country in Western Asia that borders Lebanon, the Mediterranean Sea, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Israel. The ongoing Syrian Civil War began in 2011. According to the United Nations, approximately 100,000 people had been killed by June 2013, including 11,000 children. Approximately 5 million Syrian refugees have fled to neighboring countries of Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Turkey. Under Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, 6.1 million people are internally displaced. By October 2017, an estimated 400,000 people had been killed in the war, according to the UN. Roughly 1.75 million children and youth are not in school. Since the war in Syria started, 7,400 schools have been closed. The ones that remain opened are not in good condition and 150,000 teachers have left. For more information about Syria visit the following websites:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14703856>

<https://tradingeconomics.com/syria/gdp>

<http://www.latimes.com/world/global-development/la-fg-global-syrian-childrens-education-20170309-story.html>

<http://www.cnn.com/2013/08/27/world/meast/syria-civil-war-fast-facts/index.html>

Food

Syrians enjoy spiced beef or lamb served in various ways. Meat pies and spinach pies are also enjoyed, as well as fruits, vegetables, and grains. Flatbread, cheeses, salads, and olives are served as smaller dishes.

Syrian pastries are also very popular.

A SYRIAN RECIPE: DAWOOD BASHA (Syrian meatballs in tomato pomegranate sauce)

Ingredients

- 1 lb. ground beef (or lamb)
- 1 medium sized onion
- 1/4 cup minced onion
- 1/4 cup bulgar or rice
- 1/2 8oz can tomato sauce



1 1/2 cup water (or chicken stock)
1 tsp pomegranate molasses
Salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Soak the 1/4 cup of bulgar in water, if using.
2. Add the bulgar, minced onions, salt and pepper to the ground beef and form into one-inch balls.
3. Sauté the meatballs in a deep pan. Do not cook all the way through or they will be dry. Push meatballs aside, and sauté the onions in the same pan.
4. Add the tomato sauce, water (or chicken stock), pomegranate molasses, salt and pepper. Let the flavors cook together for a few minutes. Add the meatballs back in and cook for roughly 10-15 minutes until they have cooked through. If adding chickpeas, add 5 minutes before the end. Serve over rice or bulgar.

Tips

- Add more tomato sauce if it's too diluted.
- Add 1 teaspoon of flour if the sauce is not thick enough.
- Add more water or chicken stock if the sauce is too thick.

Source: <http://www.sweetpillar.com/blog/syrianmeatballs>



BACKGROUND 3: MEXICO

Mexico, with a population of 116 million, is a trillion-dollar economy characterized by extremes of wealth and poverty.

Poverty has led to gang violence, which has traumatized most of the nation. There is an inequitable distribution of wealth that has resulted in masses of rural and urban poor. As a result, Mexico is a developing country, yet simultaneously stands as a chief economic and political force in North America. Under the leadership of President Enrique Peña Nieto, it has the second-largest economy in Latin America and is a major exporter of oil.

For more information about Mexico, visit the following websites:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-18095241>

<https://www.classbase.com/Countries/mexico/Education-System>

<https://tradingeconomics.com/mexico/gdp>

Food

There are at least five staples in Mexican food: corn, beans, squash, rice and avocados. Dishes vary by region, but tortillas are widely enjoyed, as well as enchiladas, cornmeal tamales, burritos, soft-shell tacos, tortas (sandwiches of chicken, pork, or cheese and vegetables enclosed in a hard roll), stuffed chili peppers, and quesadillas.

Other favorites are soups and spicy stews.

A MEXICAN RECIPE: CHICKEN IN GREEN SALSA TAMAL

Ingredients

For the tamal dough or masa:

3/4 cup lard or vegetable shortening

1/2 teaspoon kosher or coarse sea salt or to taste

1 teaspoon cold water

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 pound (about 3 1/4 cups) instant corn masa flour (masa harina) for tortillas or tamales

3 1/2 cups chicken broth add more if needed

For the filling

1 batch salsa verde (recipe below)



2 cups shredded cooked chicken

To assemble the tamales

25 dried corn husks soaking in hot water

Method

1. Make the tamal dough: Place lard, vegetable shortening or seasoned oil in an electric mixer and beat until very light, about 1 minute. Add salt and 1 teaspoon of cold water and continue beating until it is white and spongy, a couple more minutes. Add the baking powder and then alternate adding the instant corn masa and the chicken broth a little at a time. Continue beating until dough is homogeneous and as fluffy as can get.
2. To make the filling: Combine the salsa verde with the cooked shredded chicken.
3. To assemble the tamales: Soak the dried corn husks in hot water for a couple minutes, or until they are pliable, and drain. Lay out a corn husk with the tapering end towards you. Spread about 3 tablespoons of masa into about a 2 to 3-inch square, the layer should be about 1/4-inch thick, leaving a border of at least 1/2-inch on the sides. Place 1 tablespoon of filling in the middle of the masa square.
4. Pick up the two long sides of the corn husk and bring them together and fold the folded sides to one side, rolling them in same direction around tamal. Fold up the empty section of the husk, with the tapering end, from the bottom up. This will form a closed bottom and the top will be left open.
5. Assemble all the tamales and place them as vertically as you can in a container.
6. To cook the tamales: Place them, as vertically as you can, into a prepared steamer with the open end on top. If there is space in the steamer, tuck in some corn husks so the tamales won't dance around. Cover with more corn husks, and steam covered with a lid for 50 minutes to an hour.

Salsa Verde Ingredients

2 pounds green tomatillos husks removed and rinsed

2 cloves garlic

2 serrano or jalapeño chiles or more to taste

1 cup cilantro leaves and upper stems

1/4 cup roughly chopped white onion

1 teaspoon kosher or coarse sea salt or to taste

2 tablespoons safflower or corn oil



Method

- Place the tomatillos along with the garlic cloves and chiles in a pot and add enough water to cover. Place over high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for about 10 minutes, or until the tomatillos change in color from bright green to a pale green, are cooked through, and are soft but are not coming apart.
- Transfer the tomatillos, garlic, chile, and 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid to a blender and puree until smooth. Incorporate the cilantro leaves, onion and salt and process again. Taste for salt and add more if need be.
- In a medium saucepan, set over medium heat, pour the oil. Once hot, pour in the salsa verde, bring to a simmer and cook for 6 to 8 minutes until it thickens a bit and deepens its flavor and color. Turn off the heat, allow to cool to room temperature and serve.

Source: <https://patijinich.com/recipe/chicken-in-green-salsa-tamal>



BACKGROUND 4: AFGHANISTAN

Located in South Asia, civil war has consumed Afghanistan since 1978. In 1994, the Taliban formed, and has had sporadic control of various parts of the nation since then. Many citizens have come to accept their regime and, in turn, the Taliban government has to determine how to provide adequate education, healthcare and financial support to families under their rule. The elected Afghan government, under President Ashraf Ghani, has been plagued with corruption, leaving many of its citizens impoverished and its infrastructure undeveloped. In Afghanistan, boys are more likely than girls to receive an education; however, there is a current push by the government for girls' education. With a population of 31.6 million, it is one of the least-developed nations in the world. It imports more than it exports, and its external debt is in the billions. For more information about Afghanistan, visit the following websites:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12011352>

<https://www.usaid.gov>

<https://tradingeconomics.com>

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters>

Food

The staple of the Afghan diet is bread (nān) which has become very popular in the United States. Traditional cuisine consists of a variety of roast meats or meat pies, stewed vegetables, rice pilaf, and a thick noodle soup accompanied by fresh fruit and an assortment of yogurt-based sauces.

AN AFGHANI RECIPE: AFGHANI BOLANI

Dough Ingredients

3½ cups of all-purpose flour (580g)

1 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons oil (I use canola)

1¼ cups water (300g)

Filling Ingredients

1½ lbs. potatoes (680g)

2 packed cups sliced green onion (140g)



2 packed cups cilantro (60g)
½ cup chopped green pepper (60g) or to taste
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp salt or to taste
2 tbsp olive oil
Additional oil for shallow frying

1. Dough Method: Combine flour, salt, and oil in the bowl of a food processor. With the motor running, add water until the dough comes together in a ball. It should not be too sticky or too dry. You may use a little more or less water than 300g.
2. Remove the dough from the processor and give it a couple of kneads on the counter. Wrap in plastic and let rest about 20 minutes.

Filling Method

1. Wash potatoes, prick with a fork, and microwave until soft, approximately 10 minutes depending on the size of your potatoes. Potatoes are done when you can easily pierce them with a knife and they feel soft. When the potatoes are finished and cool enough to handle, remove the skins and coarsely mash with a fork.
2. Roughly chop the cilantro. Set aside.
3. In a skillet, heat olive oil. Sauté green pepper for 1 minute. Add green onion and sauté for 2 minutes. Turn off the heat and stir in chopped cilantro, salt, and pepper. Gently stir in the potatoes.

Forming Bolani

1. Divide the dough into 8 equal pieces and roll into balls. Keep them covered on the counter while you roll them out. Divide the filling into 8 equal portions.
2. Roll out a ball of dough on a lightly floured surface to an 8- to 9-inch circle. Put a portion of filling on the top half of the circle, leaving a half inch border around the edges. Fold the bottom half up over the top half and seal the edges, pressing firmly all around the edge to seal it shut. Repeat with the remaining balls of dough.
3. To shallow fry: Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet on medium high. Fry each bolani separately until each side is golden brown. Press down gently on the edges of the bolani while cooking to ensure that they brown evenly. Place cooked bolani on a metal cooling rack while the others finish to stay crispy.

Source: <http://foodtasia.com/afghani-bolani-potato-green-onion-stuffed-flatbread>



BACKGROUND 5: EL SALVADOR

Located on the Pacific Ocean, El Salvador is one of seven Central American countries. It is led by President Salvador Sanchez Ceren and has a population of 6.3 million. From the civil war in the 1970s to Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and an earthquake in 2001, El Salvador has struggled to gain its footing. Crime, limited economic growth, and social inequality have also contributed to its inability to develop as a nation. Despite high rates of emigration, El Salvador remains densely populated with about 50% of the citizens living in poverty. Tourism and an increase in factories called maquiladoras have increased employment opportunities. Additionally, El Salvador has become increasingly Americanized, as many native El Salvadorans are returning from the United States and bringing many U.S. customs with them. For more information about El Salvador, visit the following websites:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19401932>

https://web.stanford.edu/~hakuta/www/archives/syllabi/E_CLAD/sfusd_cult_03/nancy/new/educ.html

<https://tradingeconomics.com/el-salvador/gdp-per-capita>

<https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/17762/el-salvador-s-murder-epidemic-and-the-paradox-of-peacebuilding-success>

Food

Popular dishes in El Salvador are a spicy mixture of rice and beans, and pupusa, a sandwich made of cheese, meat, or beans wrapped in cornmeal.

AN EL SALVADORAN RECIPE

PASTELITOS SALVADOREÑOS/SALVADORAN EMPANADAS RECIPE

Serves 4-6 (2-3 per person)

Ingredients

- 1 cup instant corn masa flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons water (7 ounces)
- 1 teaspoon ground annatto (achiote) seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup cooled minced pork and vegetables (recipe below)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups vegetable oil
- 1 cup pickled cabbage, onions, and carrots (recipe below)



Method

1. Place the corn masa flour in a shallow bowl. Mix in the water, ground annatto, and salt. Knead by hand for about 5 minutes until the dough is moist and fluffy. If needed, add more water, 1 tablespoon at a time. Divide the dough into 12 equal small balls. The dough can be prepared the day before, then covered and refrigerated.
2. With wet hands, press and pat each ball between your palms and flatten into thin dough rounds that are about 3 inches in diameter. Place the flattened rounds on top of plastic wrap, waxed paper, or a damp kitchen towel to prevent them from sticking to any solid surface.
3. In the center of each dough round, place about ½ to 1 tablespoon of the minced pork and vegetable filling, then fold the dough over the fillings into a crescent. Seal the edges with your fingertips or the tines of a fork.
4. In a medium saucepan heat the oil over a medium to high flame until very hot or 360°F if using a frying thermometer. Fry the empanadas until golden brown. Serve with a side of pickled cabbage and carrots.

MINCED PORK AND VEGETABLES RECIPE

Ingredients

- 2 pounds boneless pork shoulder, fat trimmed, cut into 2- to 3-inch chunks
- 6 cups water
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons minced onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup minced tomato, seeds removed
- ½ cup finely diced potatoes
- ½ cup finely diced carrots
- ½ cup peeled, pitted, and finely diced chayote
- ½ cup thinly sliced fresh green beans
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper



Method

1. Rinse the pork in cold water.
2. In a deep pot, combine the pork, water, bay leaf, and salt over high heat. Bring everything to a boil and then reduce heat to medium. Skim the foam from the top; repeat as necessary. Cover the pot and cook for about 2 hours or until the meat is very tender. Uncover and cook for 10 more minutes. Remove the meat from the pot and let it rest on a chopping board for 15 minutes. Discard the bay leaf, and reserve 1 cup of broth. Finely dice the pork and set aside.
3. In a large saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and tomato, and sauté for 1 minute; then add the potatoes, carrots, chayote, green beans, and broth. Combine and bring to a quick boil, reduce the flame to low, cover, and cook all the vegetables for about 10 minutes or until tender. Add the meat and pepper and stir together. Correct the salt.

PICKLED CABBAGE, ONIONS, AND CARROTS CURTIDO RECIPE

- 2 cups shredded green cabbage
- ½ cup shredded carrots
- ½ cup thinly sliced onion
- 4 cups white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon whole black peppercorns (optional)
- 1 teaspoon dried chili flakes or 1 Serrano pepper, finely chopped (optional)

Method

Combine all ingredients, and let marinate for at least 30 minutes.

Source: <http://deliciouselsalvador.com/salvadoran-empañadaspastelitos-salvadoreños/>



BACKGROUND 6: SUDAN

Sudan, with a population of 39.5 million, is located in northeastern Africa. It is surrounded by Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Central African Republic, and Chad. President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who has been president for 25 years, has a young population, with 40% of its citizens under the age of 15. It is one of the poorest and least-developed countries in the world, and some citizens still live nomadic lifestyles. Despite its great agricultural potential, most of the land lies bear because of a limited water supply. Despite its economic challenges Sudan is a country rich in cultural diversity. The arts play a dominate role in society as storytelling, paintings, songs and poetry are prevalent. The Sudanese are passionate about soccer, and the country was among the founding members of the African Football Confederation. For more information about Sudan, visit the following websites:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14094995>

<https://www.classbase.com/countires/Sudan/Education-System>

<https://tradingeconomics.com/sudan/gdp-per-capita>

Food

Soups, stews as well as bread and porridges are very popular in Sudanese cuisine.
Carrot salad and yogurt salad mix with vegetables are also very popular.

SUDANESE RECIPE: LAMB STEW, POTATOES AND CARROTS RECIPE

Ingredients

2.5 pounds lamb meat (or beef stew meat), cubed into bite size morsels, bones included
2 tbsp light cooking oil
1 large onion, diced
4 tomatoes, diced
2 potatoes, peeled and quartered, refer to image in post for amount
1-2 carrots, sliced into cross-sections
½ large or 1 small zucchini or marrow, sliced
2 tsp salt
1 tbsp. garlic, minced
1 tsp cumin
½ tsp coriander
½ tsp black pepper
¼ green bell pepper, sliced
4 cups water



Method

1. In a large saucepan, set heat on medium high. Heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat.
2. Fry diced onions in the oil until they start to turn golden. Add ½ cup of water and cook the onions until soft and caramelized.
3. Add cubed lamb meat. Fry the lamb with the onions and oil. Drop 1 stick of cinnamon to the pot. Cover. Cook for 15 minutes.
4. Add diced tomatoes. Cook for 10 minutes. As it cooks mash the tomatoes and onions using the edge of your wooden ladle.
5. Add 2 tablespoon of tomato paste and ½ cup of water. Cook for 5 minutes. Add potato pieces into the pot. Cover, Cook for 25 minutes.
6. Add sliced carrots and zucchini. Lower the heat. Add garlic, green bell pepper, coriander, black pepper, cumin. Salt to taste.
7. Turn heat off. Leave pot to simmer down on stove for additional 15 minutes.

Source: <https://tasteofsouthsudan.com/lamb-stew-potatoes-carrots>