

Fondue

Definition: a noun - comes from the French verb “fonder” Meaning to melt because cheese fondue is melted cheese with wine.

In France fondue is creamy eggs.

In Italy it is a souffle.

In the Orient it is “Hot Pot”

History:

I first had a cheese fondue in the mountains of Switzerland on a cool day in the summer of 1961. Then often, I had it when I lived there for a year and a half. I was introduced to meat fondue cooked in broth, in Bern, Switzerland and called “Fondue Chinoise”. Back in the United States, I prepared meat fondue in oil and later beef or chicken broth. I have had Velveeta type cheese fondue served in restaurants in the Sierras and beer with cheese in a brewery in Oregon. Cheese fondue in the states was popular in the 60’s and 70’s.

Cheese Fondue:

Cheese fondue had its origin in necessity. In the old days bread and cheese were made in the summer and had to last all year. When the bread and cheese was hard in the winter the cheese was melted and the bread was dunked. Over the years, various cheeses and seasonings were added to the haute cuisine.

Traditional Swiss fondue is made of 2/3 Ementaler and 1/3 Gruyere. Ementaler is milder than Gruyere (do not use Jarlsberg from Scandinavia –it does not melt well). Using a heat resistant pot, chunks of cheese or slices or shreds are melted into wine such as Neuchatel, Rhine, Riesling or Chablis. I use Chablis. Add some lemon juice at the beginning and nutmeg at the end. A thickener such as flour or cornstarch is often added by mixing with a little wine or dredged with the cheese. I prefer dredging. Kirsch (Cherry) Brandy may be added after the cheese is melted. Slightly stale French bread is cut into bite size pieces. A piece is speared on a fork and dunked in the melted cheese. I often use chunked stale steak rolls. The wine is heated over medium heat. The cheese (dredged in corn starch) is added by the hand full and allowed to melt while stirring constantly before the next handful is added. Sprinkle the nut meg on the completed fondue. Transfer it to a ceramic pot or earthen ware pot that has been rubbed with garlic. Set the pot over a warmer fueled with alcohol, Sterno or butane gas (Candles do not give off enough heat). The fondue is set in the middle of the table. Four people spear bread

chunks on fondue forks and dunk it in the cheese. If using a metal melting fork, don't eat directly off the fork but transfer it to a table fork or you will burn your mouth (allow the cheese to slightly cool).

If the bread falls off your fork, you must pay a forfeit. If a man, he must pay for the bottle of wine. If a lady, she must kiss her companion or whoever sits next to her or as required by the host (Table Master).

At the end of the meal, the brown crust on the bottom of the pot is scrapped off and divided among the guests.

Fondue "Chinoise" or Meat Fondue:

. Oil or broth is heated to almost boiling in a metal pot. (In the sixties they were yellow, green, or red) often electrified. The meat is sliced thin when slightly frozen and placed on a large plate and allowed to come to room temperature. Guests are given a plate with divisions on it. There will be several dishes of sauces on the table (up to six). Put a selection of sauces on the dinner plate. Spear the meat on a 2 tonged fork and dunk it into the liquid in the pot and keep it in until the desired doneness. Remove the meat to the divided dish, and using a noncooking fork, dip it in a sauce before eating. Vegetables – anything firm enough to spear and not fall off a fork can also be cooked in oil or broth.

I really like this meal for 4 to 6 people because conversation really flows, especially if people are drinking beer or wine

Dessert Fondue

Serve in a small metal or ceramic bowl that can be heated over a candle or flame on a stand. Many people like to use a chocolate recipe to dunk cake or fruit. I think this might be a little heavy for the end of the meal. Don and I like to use heated Cointreau and dip fruit such as strawberries or squares of melon. Other liquors or liquids could be used.

Equipment

Cheese Fondue:

Pot – more heat resistant to heat for cooking. I have broken several ceramic pots by heating too hot.

Ceramic or earthen ware pot for serving.

Heating stand with burner. (alcohol, Sterno or butane)

Forks with 3or4 tines to put bread into the cheese.

Eating forks.

Dinner plates.

Meat Fondue:

Steel pot on a stand – often electric pots are used. Can use Sterno, alcohol or butane.

Meat fondue dishes (Segmented (for sauces and meat)).

Sauce serving dishes – traditionally served with 5 sauces.

Metal forks with 2 tines (NEVER eat off this fork)

Eating forks.

Desert Fondue:

Small bowl on a stand with a candle warmer.

Small spearing forks (can use seafood forks or dessert forks).

Various fruits (bite size), Angel food or pound cake, lady fingers marshmallows, macaroons or donuts. Sauces: Carmel cream, chocolate, peppermint.

I had many recipes with me. You were welcome to copy some to your cell phone. Many people knew which fondue they will make and put it on a list which I gave to Larry. Because there are not enough outlets in the room, electric pots cannot be used. There will be several camp stoves available. Setups with alcohol or Sterno are OK. WILL THE PERSON WHO BPRROWED THE FONDUE BOOK PLEASE RETURN IT TO ME. THANK YOU.

