Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

**Food Culture in Creole Culture**

**Introduction**

Similar to several ethnic communities residing in the United States of America (USA), Creoles were did not migrate from other places. In essence, these communities are the descendants of Portuguese, Spanish and French populations dwelling in the Latin America and West Indies. The peculiar Creole culture is an amalgam of diverse cultures comprising a rich heritage which has a culinary and cultural impact beyond its Louisiana origins. As per the statistics recorded in 2010, approximately two million Creole dwelled in the United States. However, it is imperative to underpin and research a specific cultural aspect. Irrefutably, food ought to be the cultural element which must be highlighted and deliberated critically. An intricate analysis of the food culture of Creole is worthwhile to assimilate the essential heritage, legacy and contemporary state of affairs.

**Discussion**

The food traditions are essentially intriguing because they have been in practice since a significant amount of time. People are reluctant to change their protracted food patterns. Consequently, food acquires an instrumental role to affiliate itself with the cultural identity and unleash the cultural processes as maintenance, diffusion or blending(Rosales). The Louisiana Creole is a kind of food that originates from the Creole settlements. The cuisine comprises Spanish, French, Native American, Caribbean and African influences that make for a delicious and astounding culinary experience. There exist several meals which are deemed the typical Creole; however, it is imperative to comprehend that several foods have distinct ways and varieties of preparation. It relies on the traditions and preferences of the area beside the pattern wherein the recipe has evolved since ancient times. For instance, the places at distance from New Orleans featured dishes with less tomato in their meals.

With its Spanish roots, Jambalaya is a renowned Creole dish originating in the vicinity. It is stipulated that saffron was challenging to be imported for making paella. Therefore, tomatoes and then Caribbean spices were integrated into the meal. It is prepared with spice, vegetables, meat, rice and stock. Jambalaya has a wide range of varieties as red Jambalaya or Creole present found around New Orleans and rural areas(Fertel). In addition, a Jambalaya festival is also held in Gonzales, Louisiana each year.

It is essential to mention the most popular food gumbo. It is cooked and prepared in several varieties which a stew comprising onions, celery, bell peppers, shellfish, celery and thickener. It originated from southern Louisiana during the eighteenth century and known as the official cuisine of the state. It is an immaculate manifestation of the cultural creolization or blending. The dish is critically associated with melds African, South Louisiana, Native American and European cultures. This word is derived from a Bantu word for okra called nkombo. The okra plant is favorite in Africa which is a Middle Eastern Plant brought by Portuguese traders in America. Gumbo’s origins termed as a dish similar to soup featuring seafood or three to more meats served with rice. An in-depth analysis reflects that it is often associated with the French bouillabaisse.

The research on gumbo indicates there are several types and consensus cannot be established about the aspect that makes gumbo delicious and out of the world. A vast majority of people in South Louisiana make sausage and meat gumbo thickens with file; the seafood gumbo which is thickened with okra is the most scintillating across the coast(“Handbook of Food Engineering, Third Edition”). These dishes are very less likely to be found in several of the Creole and Cajun cookbooks. Cooking and eating are the most common activities pursued in the leisure time in Louisiana.

**A Critical Appraisal**

A critical apprehension of the food and culture reflects that the cultural diffusion or the spread of cultural traits is closely intertwined. These foods further highlight the family traditions in accordance with the distance from South Louisiana. It can be asserted that communities in East Texas, North Louisiana and South Mississippi are more likely to make gumbo in comparison to the population of Arkansas, Alabama and North Mississippi. Another critical factor is the migration of people towards New Orleans and South Louisiana for employment, becoming accustomed for food and further bringing the new traditions back upon their advent to the home.

The cultural maintenance is explicitly manifested by the food traditions in several cultural communities whether they belong to a colonial settlement or lately arrived cultural group in the area. In Creole culture, food assumes an instrumental role and is reminiscent of special rituals and occasions. Consequently, food traditions can potentially be resistant to change. Similar examples abound across Louisiana. Sauerkraut is still being made by the German enclave of Roberts Cove in Acadia Parish. Hungarians have remained a part of Tangipahoa Parish for more than 100 years and take profound pride in Hungarian sausage. Filipinos celebrate the special occasions with noodle dish pansit (“Louisiana Creole Culture · InterExchange”). The Croatians keep goat to yield cheese. In New Orleans, the Irish celebrate St. Patrick’s Day by throwing the ingredients of potato stew to the crowd and parading.

The influence of native America foods is largely apparent in the traditions of people which transcended from the ancient settlers. The Europeans brought turnips, carrots, lettuce, cabbage and beets. Africans also contributed peanuts, yams, okra, watermelon, hot peppers, collards and pepper sauce. A wide range of scholars has divided the state into three significant cultural regions as South Louisiana, New Orleans and North Louisiana. Each of these specific groups has cultures which are primarily different from the other regions. The distinct food traditions define the state of affairs but those in South Louisiana and New Orleans are critically entwined. In contemporary times, it is very challenging to distinguish between Creole and Cajun cooking as they are thoroughly practiced in homes. These terms are also used interchangeably. However, Creole often refers to the haute cuisine served in the restaurants of New Orleans among which several cuisines originated from the European-trained chefs.

To commend the food culture of South Louisiana, one ought to remember that Cajun and Creole cooking are the products of three years of continuous borrowing and sharing among diverse cultural groups of the region (Martin). For instance, the French advanced to contribute sauces, stews, sweets, breads and doughnuts with powdered sugar. The addition of Jambalaya was added by the Spanish. The Africans contributed okra, deep fat frying and barbecue and dictated the presence of Spanish culture in soups and hot spices. It is essential to delineate a remarkable distinction between the food of New Orleans and South Louisiana. The food is deemed much more than mere sustenance. Food is cherished and the standards of merely meeting the standards of adequate cooking are much higher than the other regions of the state.

**Conclusion**

The Creole food culture reflects the protracted traditions and history of the communities dwelling there. These traditions have been passed and innovated by diverse ethnicities. The food traditions in Louisiana and cultural communities are an explicit reflection of the information about the indigenous communities. The food is deemed much more than mere sustenance. Food is cherished and the standards of merely meeting the standards of adequate cooking are much higher than the other regions of the state. The potential research about popular foods, methods of preparation and historical context is the gateway to exploring the traditions and culinary influences of the Creole culture.

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