
2017-18 Postcards

Postcards from Abroad

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New Food

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November 15, 2017

New Food

Eating in a new culture can be fun and exciting but also can take some adjusting. Before leaving for England, I was diagnosed with Celiac disease restricting what I can eat (no wheat, barley or rye). I quickly learned that toast, biscuits, baguettes, and sausages are popular over here, all traditionally containing gluten. To my luck, there are many gluten-free brands and most places are accommodating to the restriction. During my time here in Nottingham, I am on a meal plan, which is not awful. In the dining hall, they will very regularly have a traditional English breakfast of beans, tomatoes, hash browns, toast, and sausages. I have learned that most do love a good cup of black tea, which can be referred to as a cuppa. It is common to have it with milk, sugar and a biscuit (a hard cookie). Potatoes are a staple prepared many ways: fried as crisps (chips) or chips (fries), baked, roasted or mashed. I am still adjusting to eating loads of potatoes and learning to enjoy a good cuppa.

Since being here, I am always looking for a new café or restaurant to try. Nottingham has a diverse mix of food options; there is a good mix of chain restaurants, local and international options. There seems to be endless cafes and pubs around every corner. A common pub food is bangers & mash. Bangers are a mix of pork, lamb or beef sausages with different seasonings and mash is simply mashed potatoes. Another pub staple is pie. A common type of pie is made with puff pastry and filled with pork and pork jelly (gelatin from the pork) eaten cold or hot. They are also made with various meats, vegetables, and gravies. Another pub staple is of course beer, people love to love a good pint while catching up with a friend.

Common late night or take out foods are kebabs and fish and chips. Kebabs are different types of grilled meat served on a stick, most commonly chicken or steak. Fish and chips are very common to find at a street shop. A more proper afternoon meal would be having tea. Traditionally served are crumpets, scones, small cakes, bite-sized sandwiches with different fillings such as cucumber, clotted cream and cream cheese and of course tea. Another common meal is a Sunday roast. This is commonly made with beef or pork with assorted veggies, potatoes, and gravy.

Meals have a way of bringing people together. I see this in the way the British sit down for a cuppa, pint or roast together. I find myself enjoying a cup of tea in the afternoon possibly with a friend, never something I would enjoy before. As I am introduced to different dishes and foods here, I see how food gives insight into a culture, "You have to taste a culture to understand it" (Deborah Cater).

Cheers!

Marquesa