

## MOTHERS GET ACQUAINTED ...

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Most children are picky about food, turning their noses up at unfamiliar cuisine. But that hasn't stopped Lynne Anderson, who cooks professionally, most recently at Rialto in Cambridge, from introducing them to Native American, Puerto Rican, Asian, Spanish, and Italian foods.

Anderson teaches cross-cultural cooking to inner-city middle school students in Pawtucket, R.I., as part of a special summer-enrichment program.

"The first few days or so, they say 'I won't eat this or I only eat that,' and then, in no time, they are trying everything. I think it's because they are involved in the cooking and menu planning, and they figure I might as well try this," said Anderson, who offers food and cooking workshops for schools and youth groups.

Food is essential to life, but Anderson acknowledges it is rarely used as a teaching tool. "It should be used more this way," she said, because food is basic to cultural understanding."

Students in the seven-week summer program --which meets twice a week for classes and a third day for a field trip --are introduced to new dishes from tables worldwide. Early on, the students hand rolled fettucini pasta and made a fresh tomato sauce with basil to go with it. Another day, they made a fruit tart for dessert. A few weeks before, the students had a visit from a woman from Trinidad who cooked a traditional Sunday meal of church-going families from the Caribbean nation -- chicken stew using root vegetables and Caribbean herbs and spices.

Then students headed north for field trips. They explored ethnic neighborhoods, restaurants, and markets in Boston's North End and Chinatown. They also toured the Four Town Farm in Seekonk, where they learned how fruits and vegetables grow and made a Mexican fruit salad out of papaya, mangoes, limes, and blueberries.

"Especially for students who come from a multi-ethnic environment, food is a way to get them thinking about their own ethnicity while learning to appreciate others," according to Anderson.

For more information about Anderson's ethnic-cooking workshops, write to her at 10 Parley Ave., Jamaica Plain 02130.

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