

Chatterbox # 19 – Canadian Food, Comfort Food and Potlucks

Transcript

- Maura: Hello everyone, this is Maura ...
- Harp: and Harp.
- Maura: And this is Culips.
- Harp: And we're bringing you a Chatterbox podcast.
- Maura: Right. In the Chatterbox episodes what we do is we chat.
- Harp: Exactly. In the Chatterbox we pick a topic that is interesting for you to hear about.
- Maura: Right, so it could be something cultural or something going on in the news or just a topic that everyone is interested in.
- Harp: Exactly, make sure you check out our website, that's Culips, C-U-L-I-P-S.com because at the website you can find the Lipservice which has the detailed explanations, the full transcript and also a quiz.
- Maura: Yeah, so check it out! So today the Chatterbox episode ...What are we going to talk about today?
- Harp: Today we are going to talk about food.
- Maura: Yeah we're going to look at food. First we're going to talk about **potlucks**, and if you don't know what that is keep listening and we'll tell you.
- Harp: Yeah, and we're also going to talk about **comfort food**.
- Maura: Yeah, so **potlucks** and **comfort food**, but first we're going to talk about **Canadian food**.
- Harp: Exactly, but that's kind of weird because what kind of food is **Canadian food**?
- Maura: Yeah, it's a really hard topic actually. I remember I was in France, maybe five years ago, and someone there asked me, "what is a typical Canadian **dish**?", and honestly Harp, I couldn't think of anything.

- Harp: Yeah, I've been in the exact same situation. The answers that I would give would be **poutine** ...
- Maura: OK. So **poutine**, **poutine** is really popular in Quebec, and I think people in Quebec would say that **poutine** started here but you can get it across Canada now too.
- Harp: Yeah, I think the best **poutine** is in Quebec though.
- Maura: Yeah, so **poutine**, it's a funny word. What it is, is French fries and cheese – **cheese curds** – a kind of cheese, and then **gravy** on top of it.
- Harp: Yeah and the **gravy** kind of melts the cheese a little bit and it's **ooey gooey**, ... oh it's delicious.
- Maura: Yeah, I **could** really **go for** a **poutine** every once in a while.
- Harp: I **could go for** one right now.
- Maura: I'm sure some of you listening think that that sounds not very delicious.
- Harp: But it is. You should try it if you come to Canada.
- Maura: Yeah, it sounds very strange if you've never heard of it before but it's really good. Umm, what else could be Canadian food?
- Harp: **Bannock**?
- Maura: What's that Harp?
- Harp: **Bannock** is, it's a bread, and I don't think it has yeast in it. I could compare it to maybe, naan which is an Indian bread or pita. It's a nice warm bread.
- Maura: Ok, cool. So I guess it depends where you are in Canada because some food is popular in some regions but not in others. Because in the **Maritime** provinces, like on the east coast of Canada, lobster and other seafood and fish, that kind of stuff, is very popular.
- Harp: Yeah but it's difficult to get fresh seafood in the middle of Canada.
- Maura: Yeah, for sure, people eat lobster but it's not fresh from the ocean. When you go to a typical Canadian or North American restaurant, I think the kind of food you get is, like, hamburgers or pasta and pizza and nachos.

- Harp: But if you think about it those foods all came from different places. Pasta is Italian, nachos are Mexican, and that's kind of like Canada. All the people came from different places so that's our food.
- Maura: Yeah, exactly. All of those foods are popular but none of them really came from Canada.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: So we don't really have an answer to what Canadian food is.
- Harp: No, but you can find lots of delicious food when you come here.
- Maura: Yes. So now let's talk about **potlucks**.
- Harp: I love **potlucks**.
- Maura: Yeah me too.
- Harp: So a **potluck** is where you have a group of friends, or you have a group of co-workers and everyone brings one **dish**. For example, one person can bring a cake and one person can bring a pasta and one person can bring a salad. So at the end you have a lot of different types of food and you get to **help yourself** and you get to just pick a little bit of each thing that looks good to you.
- Maura: Yeah, exactly. So it's really easy to have a **potluck** dinner because you only need to prepare one thing and all the other people who are coming, they bring one thing too. So in the end it's only a little bit of work for everybody, but then, you have a lot of food.
- Harp: Yeah, I found at **potlucks** you have so much food.
- Maura: Yeah, I love **wolfing** it all **down**.
- Harp: Yeah, eating so fast and so much.
- Maura: Yeah, it's so good but sometimes it's not very organized, so maybe you have 3 cakes or 2 pizzas because people bring the same things.
- Harp: Yeah, sometimes people are more organized and make a list. I've been to one that was all desserts. Everyone brought a dessert. No one brought any sort of **main course** or salads. It was delicious, but not very healthy.

- Maura: Yeah, sometimes **potlucks** have themes.
- Harp: Yeah, so it could be a Mexican theme or it could be an Italian theme.
- Maura: Yeah yeah, one of my friends had a burrito party so everyone brought one ingredient to make burritos.
- Harp: Oh, that's a fun idea.
- Maura: Yeah, actually one of the first **potlucks** I ever went to was a **comfort food potluck**.
- Harp: Oh! So I guess this brings us into our third topic of what **comfort food** is.
- Maura: Yes, so if you know the word **comfort**, which is like comfortable. So it's a food that you really like that makes you feel good.
- Harp: Exactly. So some typical North American **comfort foods** are macaroni and cheese, or chicken noodle soup.
- Maura: Exactly, so a lot of the time **comfort food** is food that you had when you were a kid because if you have good memories of when you were a kid and you eat the same thing when you are older you feel all nice and warm, like maybe your mom is taking care of you.
- Harp: Exactly. What's **comfort food** for you?
- Maura: Well, one of the things that is a **comfort food** is perogies.
- Harp: Oh really!
- Maura: Yeah, because my mother's side of my family is actually Polish, so growing up and even now sometimes we eat Polish food, and perogies, well, if you don't know what that is, it's like a dumpling. So you have dough and inside of it- you have different kinds but the ones we had were cheese and potato. Yeah, we also sometimes had blueberry sometimes too.
- Harp: Really?
- Maura: Yeah, so you eat those with sour cream.
- Harp: I have to say I love perogies. Whenever I eat perogies **my eyes are bigger than my stomach**, and I just eat and eat and eat and then I feel a little bit sick because I ate so much.

- Maura: Yep, for sure, me too. When I want to make perogies, I decide to make maybe 10 and then when I start to eat them, I sometimes can't eat all 10 because I get full too fast. What about you Harp? What's your **comfort food**?
- Harp: Umm, my **comfort food** is daal, and daal is an Indian lentil soup and for me it's just comfort. Every time I go home, my mom makes it for me and it's just delicious and comforting and you feel warm. And, I try to make it but it's not as good as when my mom makes it. When my mom makes it, that's when it's real **comfort food**.
- Maura: Yeah, for sure. I like to have **comfort food**, you know, if you're having a bad day or you're feeling sad or tired then you have **comfort food** and you just feel a little bit better.
- Harp: Yeah, I **crave comfort food** in the winter, you know, when it's cold outside and you want to stay warm and eat something comforting.
- Maura: Yeah, it's nice to have a warm food in that case, for sure.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: OK, great. So now after all this talking Harp, I'm kind of hungry.
- Harp: Me too!
- Maura: Do you want to go **grab a bite to eat**?
- Harp: Let's go.
- Maura: OK but before we go we will just remind you what we talked about. Well we tried to answer the question, what is **Canadian food** but we can only guess.
- Harp: Exactly, and then we talked about **potlucks**.
- Maura: Yeah, that's the kind of meal where everyone invited brings a certain food and you share with everybody.
- Harp: Exactly and then we ended with a conversation about **comfort food**. So **comfort food** is food that is comforting to you, something that you remember from your childhood, that makes you feel warm and good inside.
- Maura: Right, so I wonder what your **comfort food** is.

Harp: Yeah, write us an email.

Maura: Or go to our website and post a comment telling us about your comfort food because it's really different depending what country you're from or your background.

Harp: Yeah, what kind of food your mom made or dad made when you were growing up.

Maura: Exactly, OK great. Now let's go get something to eat.

Harp: Yeah, I'm starving.

Maura: OK, so thanks for listening. Don't forget to go to our website, culips.com and we will be talking to you later.

Harp: Bye everyone.

Maura: Bye.

Detailed Explanation

Canadian food

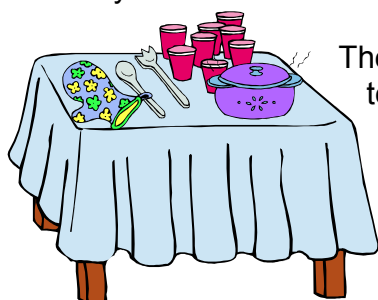
What is **Canadian food**? That is a really hard question to answer, even for us Canadians. Here is a short list of foods that are generally more traditional in Canada. The food Canadians eat depends on where they live and what their family background are.

A short list of some **Canadian food**:

- Lobster
- Bannock
- Poutine
- Meat pie
- Pea soup

Potlucks

A **potluck** is all about sharing food between people. A **potluck** happens between a group of friends or colleagues, when everyone brings one kind of food and shares it with everyone else.



The origin of **potluck** is unclear. One common idea is that it is an old term that possibly describes a meal that contains whatever food the cook had. In order to not throw any food away, people would make a meal with all the food that was left in the kitchen. In this case, the meal was not special or planned in advance. Some time in the 19th century **potluck** took on the meaning that we use today.

Comfort Food

Comfort food is food that makes you happy when you eat it, and like we say in this episode, it is often food that you ate a lot when you were a child. **Comfort food** is different for everyone.

We mention some common comfort food in Canada. Here is a short list of it:

- Chicken noodle soup
- Macaroni and cheese
- Cake
- Pie
- Pizza
- Ice cream

A dish

The word **dish** can be used in different ways. The most literal way that it is often used is as another word for *plate* or *bowl*. It is a general term for something that food is served on. In this episode we use **dish** in another way.

When we talk about a Canadian **dish**, we are talking about food! A **dish** can also mean a meal, or a kind of food. A **dish** is food that is made or prepared, usually following some sort of recipe.

Here are some examples with **dish**. Can you see the difference between using **dish** to talk about food and using it to talk about a plate or bowl?

Lorna: Let's go to that Italian restaurant for dinner tonight.

Leslie: OK! I have been looking forward to trying their special **dish**! (food)

Ron: Do we have enough plates for everyone?

Cindy: We just need one more **dish**. (plate)

Hannah: I want to make you something special for your birthday. What is your favourite **dish**?

Michelle: My **favorite** dish is nachos. (food)

Poutine

Poutine is one of the Canadian foods we talk about in this episode. Here is a picture of what it looks like.



We tell you what ingredients poutine is made up of. There are French fries, **gravy** and **cheese curds** in poutine. **Gravy** is a brown sauce made with chicken or beef fat mixed with flour or cornstarch to thicken it. It is often served with French fries and meat. **Cheese curds** are fresh curds of cheese. They are usually eaten alone. **Cheese curds** are a popular snack in Quebec, so you may often see them at convenience stores.

The exact origin of **poutine** is unknown. It was first made some time in the 1950s somewhere in Quebec. It is now made all across Canada, more popular in some areas than others. **Poutine** is virtually unknown outside of Canada.

Ooey gooey

We describe **poutine** as **ooey gooey**. This is a pretty informal and even silly term. When something is **ooey gooey** it means that it is a kind of liquid that is thick and sticky. The hot **gravy** in **poutine** melts the cheese and so when you put a French fry on your fork the cheese stretches! This is why **poutine** can be so **ooey gooey**.

Another food that can be **ooey gooey** is caramel or toffee. Caramel and toffee are soft, but can stretch when you bite into them. A thick, sweet syrup could also be described as **ooey gooey**.

Sometimes people also just say **gooey** by itself, and the meaning is the same, but it is a little less silly and more commonly used.

Could go for something

When someone says that they **could go for** some kind of food it means that they are hungry and would like to eat that food. In this episode, Harp says that she **could go for** a poutine. This means that Harp would like to eat a poutine right now.

Here are some other examples.

Ben: What do you feel like eating for dinner?

Jackie: I **could go for** Mexican food. How about you?

Ben: I **could go for** Mexican too.

Christina: I **could** really **go for** some Indian food.

Kevin: OK. Let's order some.

Bannock

As we describe in this episode, **bannock** is a bread that is made by First Nations communities in North America. Like most bread, the main ingredients are flour, baking powder and water. These ingredients are mixed, possibly with other ingredients like spices or dried fruit, and then baked.

Indian

Indian is a name that can cause some confusion. In the past **Indian** was used to describe people who are native to Canada and the U.S. Some people continue to use the word **Indian** to describe these people. The more politically correct terms are First Nations or Natives.

Indian is more appropriately used to describe people who come from India. When Harp talks about Indian food, she is talking about food from India.

Maritime

This refers to the east coast of Canada. We can say **Maritime provinces** to talk about New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. We also use **Maritime** to talk about a time zone.

Help yourself

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If someone tells you to **help yourself**, this is similar to saying *serve yourself*. **Help yourself** or **serve yourself** means that no one will serve you and that you can take whatever is there. In **potlucks** people most often **help themselves**. This applies to food being served, but can also be used for other items.

Here are some examples.

Jeff: The food is over there. Just **help yourself**.

Yasmina: Everything is on the table. Go ahead and **help yourself**.

Peter: **Help yourself** to any of the magazines. They are all free.

Wolf down

To wolf down some food means that someone eats something fast. You can imagine that the person eats as fast as a wolf. You can also say *to scarf down* food, or simply to *down* food.

Here are some examples of these expressions that mean to eat something fast.

Julie: I didn't have much time to eat before I left.

Don: Did you get a chance to eat?

Julie: Yeah. I had just enough time to **wolf** something **down**.



Howard: How was the food at the party?

Paul: It was great. I **scarfed** a lot **down** when I got there. I was so hungry.

Chris: Hey, where is your hamburger?

Jennifer: I already **downed** it. I was too hungry.

Main course

The **main course** is the main meal. Sometimes when people eat a meal, they begin with appetizers, like a soup or salad. Then after they have the big dish! This is the **main course**. If you go to a fancy dinner, there is often more than one course. One course is one plate with one kind of food on it. A really fancy dinner can have 7 courses.

My eyes are bigger than my stomach

This idiom, **my eyes are bigger than my stomach**, means that a person thinks they can eat more than they are actually able to eat. When someone is really hungry sometimes they believe they can eat a lot, and take a lot of food. Then when the person starts to eat they find that they cannot eat all the food. Of course, no one's eyes are really bigger than their stomachs!

Here are some examples with **my eyes are bigger than my stomach**.

Jennifer: I don't know what to do with all this food on my plate.

Bruce: Why did you take so much?

Jennifer: I was super hungry when I got here. **My eyes were bigger than my stomach.**



Walter: Wow! Look how big your son's piece of cake is!

Carmen: I know. **His eyes are always bigger than his stomach.**

Crave

To crave something means that you desire something strongly. A person can **crave** food or an activity or just about anything. You can also say *to have a craving* with the same meaning.

Here are some examples with **crave**.

Fred: What do you want to eat?

Suzanne: I am really **craving** a hamburger.

Greg: I'm having a **craving** for chocolate.

Vicky: Well, let's go get some then.

Grab a bite to eat

To grab a bite to eat means to quickly get (**grab**) a small amount (**a bite**) to eat. For some people this could be just a snack or it could be a fast meal. It is always casual and usually unplanned.

Here are some examples with **to grab a bite to eat**.

Erica: Have you already eaten?

Nina: No, let's **grab a bite to eat** before the show.

Sometimes people can also simply say **to grab a bite**.

Justin: Can we **grab a bite** before we go downtown?

Sharon: Sure. I'm hungry too.

Written versus spoken English

In this episode there are a few examples of English that sounds fine when spoken, but the sentences are not proper or complete. When people speak in any language sometimes they stop and restart sentences or make really long sentences. Maura and Harp did that a lot in this episode. Here are some examples that are strange when written.

Maura: What it is, is French fries and cheese – **cheese curds** - a kind of cheese, and then **gravy** on top of it.

...

Harp: **Bannock** is, it's a bread, and I don't think that it has yeast in it. I could compare it to, maybe, naan which is an Indian bread or pita.

...

Maura: Yes, so if you know the word **comfort**, which is like comfortable.

...

Maura: Exactly, so a lot of the time **comfort food** is food that you had when you were a kid because if you have good memories of when you were a kid and you eat the same thing when you are older you feel all nice and warm, like maybe your mom is taking care of you.

...

Maura: I like to have **comfort food**, you know, if you're having a bad day or your feeling sad or tired and you have **comfort food** and you just feel a little bit better.

...

Harp: Yeah, what kind of food your mom or dad made when you were growing up.

Hopefully these sentences made sense to you when you heard them!

Quiz (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)

1. What is Canadian Food?

- a) It is hard to say for sure
- b) Seafood
- c) French fries, cheese and gravy
- d) Macaroni and cheese

2. What is comfort food?

- a) food that makes you feel good, that comforts you, often connected to good memories
- b) food that you eat in a comfortable chair
- c) food that feels comfortable in your mouth
- d) junk food

3. Wally: Is everyone bringing a dish to Julian's tomorrow?

Anne: Yeah, it's a _____.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) lucky pot
- b) potluck
- c) lucky party
- d) pot party

4. Chicken noodle soup and macaroni and cheese are both examples of what kind of North American food?

- a) potluck
- b) junk food
- c) comfort food
- d) Canadian food

5. Which food does Harp say is ooey gooey?

- a) ice cream
- b) chicken noodle soup
- c) taffy
- d) poutine

6. Anita: Could I have something to drink?

Paula: Sure. _____.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) I like juice.
- b) It's a potluck.
- c) Help yourself.
- d) Could you go for a drink?

7. Hannah: Where do you want to go for dinner?

Rob: How about Chinese? I have a _____ for it.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) stomach
- b) eye
- c) want
- d) craving

8. Alice quickly ate some food before she went to work. Which expression can we use to explain what Alice did?

Please fill in the blank.

- a) her eyes were bigger than her stomach
- b) she got a bite to eat
- c) she had a potluck
- d) she likes comfort food

Answers: 1.a 2.a 3.b 4.c 5.d 6.c 7. d 8. b