

Food taunts lovers with results

Coffee

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By William Rudolph
Staff Reporter

Aphrodisiac. adj. 1. arousing sexual desire. -n. 2. an aphrodisiac agent, drug or food.
—The Random House Dictionary.

Good looks, qualities, youth and liberality are the chief and most natural means of making a person agreeable in the eyes of others. But in the absence of these, a man or woman must have resort to artificial means.
—The Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana

Contrary to popular sayings, music may not, in fact, be the food of love.

Since ancient times, some lustful people have relied on certain foods themselves for love — at least in the more earthy senses of the word.

Truly a category of exotic food all their own, aphrodisiacs are an edible form of what naughty catalogs coyly call "sensual aids."

The word "aphrodisiac," in fact, comes from Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love.

Aphrodisiacs have turned up throughout the pages of literary history, from "1001 Nights" to the Bible to Shakespeare, according to Greg and Beverly Frazier in "Aphrodisiac Cookery: Ancient and Modern" (Troubador Press, 1970).

Modern science, however, only officially recognizes two true aphrodisiacs: the dangerous Spanish Fly, or cantharides, which comes from the ground-up remains of European blister beetles. Spanish Fly irritates the sexual organs and

can be fatal even in small doses. Yohimbine powder, from the bark of the yohimbine tree, also has received official notice.

Like sex itself, too much of this also can kill.

But popular tradition gives erotic powers to many other food items. Besides keeping the doctor away, apples may also do wonders for the love life. After all, it was the apple from the Tree of Knowledge that spelled the end of earthly paradise in Christian tradition. According to John Milton in "Paradise Lost," the first thing Adam

Perhaps this is why avocados cost so much in the supermarket.

Today, the potato is a staple of our diet. But before its incarnation as the french fry, in Early Modern times, the potato was believed to be a powerful aphrodisiac.

In fact, mandrake root, a distant cousin of the lowly tuber, figured prominently in many love potions of the past. The Ancient Egyptians even referred to it as "The Phallus of the Field."

In "Romantic Meals for Lovers" (1988, Prima Publishing), Gabrielle Kirschbaum lists several

tops the list and has long been a staple of Indian cookery. Sesame, coriander, cloves, celery, parsley, sage and anise also have supposed aphrodisiac powers. Not to be forgotten is sweet basil, fennel seed and saffron — which acts as a powerful stimulant in a short story by Anais Nin.

For the health-food minded, the Fraziers include wheat germ, pine nuts, honey, raisins and dates.

Last but not least, garlic may do wonders between the sheets, even if vampires and breath may be casualties.

walks of life filter into the area stores.

Customers at The Mill and Euphoria are mainly college students or professionals in their 30s and 40s.

"Anybody that drinks coffee likes us," Didrichsons said.

The Perfect Cup caters to business people and also attracts out-of-town customers. Shriener said the store's convenient location in the Atrium's skywalk lures passers-by to stop in for coffee to go.

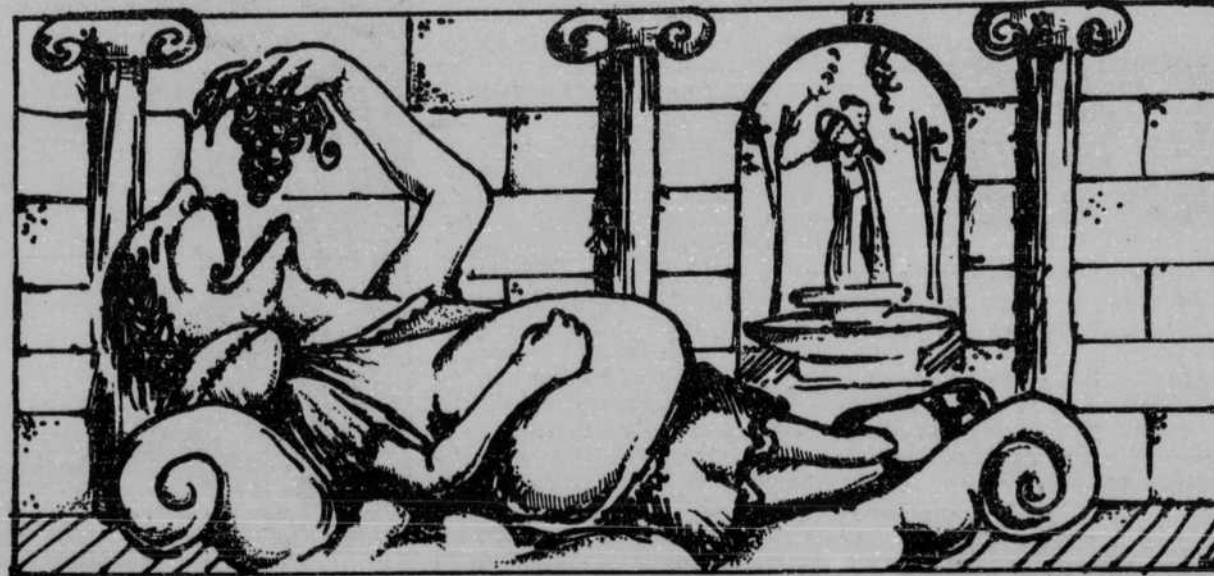
Gourmet specialties are brewing up popularity because they are a easy variation from everyday life.

"It's a change of pace. After drinking Folgers for a long time it's nice to have a change," Shriener said.

Euphoria Herbs is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Hours at The Mill are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

The Perfect Cup is open 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday.



Ken Johnson/Daily Nebraskan

and Eve did after eating the apple was the original wild thing.

"Aphrodisiac Cookery" also contains the erotic history of the avocado. Apparently the Aztecs originally called the fruit "ahuacatl," which translates into "testicle."

other exotic aphrodisiacs, notably ground rhinoceros horn and ginseng.

The Kama Sutra, the famous Classic Indian treatise on sexuality and civilization, lists several sure-fire recipes for food to get one in the mood.

Milk mixed with sugar, the root of the uchchate plant and licorice may be a stimulating tonic.

A ram or goat's testicle boiled in milk mixed with sugar is supposed to evoke a rise from anyone who sips it.

In addition, ghee (clarified butter), honey, sugar, licorice, fennel seed and milk mixed together "is said to be holy and provocative of sexual vigor; a preservative of life and sweet to the taste."

But before any would-be super lovers dash off to the zoo to mutilate any rhinos, many common herbs and spices have long been linked to increased erotic appetite.

In fact, an everyday household spice cabinet can contain all the recipes for love anyone might need for 1001 Nights of pleasure.

Curry powder, which irritates the bladder and uro-genital tract,

And in Oriental cuisine, bird's-nest soup is in an erotic class by itself. One aphrodisiac that has long evoked consuming passions is chocolate.

Throughout history, besides being associated with acne by woeful young lovers, chocolate has had its erotic side, according to "Aphrodisiac Cookery."

When not occupied with avocados, Aztecs drank chocolate toasts to the health of Xochiquetzal, their equivalent of Aphrodite.

As late as the 1600s, the Catholic Church outlawed any forms of chocolate. Apparently it was just too stimulating.

Today, of course, chocolates are associated with romantic love on Valentine's Day. But any day of the year, people with a passion for chocolate can indulge in anything from the simple Hershey bar to expensive, mouth-watering liqueur-filled Godiva confections.

If flowers, candy, the promises of a sincere, monogamous commitment, in-depth discussions of past partners and a clean bill of sexual health won't do it, perhaps a trip to the cupboard or grocery store can perk up things up.

Health

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ach, wild mushroom, lemon and pepper and saffron almost didn't need a sauce.

The list of unusual products grew as we continued up and down the aisles — goat cheese and goat milk, blue corn tortillas and spicy blue tortilla chips, hand-cooked potato chips and carrot "potato" chips.

My shopping list grew as I studied the bins in the bulk food section, took a look at the organic coffees and strolled through the new deli and seafood counter in the back.

Taking my reporting gear to the car, I got the checkbook from the car and headed for those little voices coming from the glass cabinet in the back of the store that hadn't stopped calling since I walked in.

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Saint Valentine's Day Massacre