

Culinary Curiosities

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Of all the tasks in the world, cooking is the toughest. The second toughest one, probably, is making others taste your absolutely revolting creations: not even your famished dog will swallow the leftovers, scared to death of food poisoning. For those souls who excel at being lousy cooks, even simple dishes and drinks are harder to master than brain surgery. Surprisingly enough, this often comes as a curiosity for most fine chefs and ordinary people.

Even preparing such a plain beverage as *mate* is challenging. Pouring the hateful water makes you consider practising euthanasia. You never seem to know when to stop or where to aim at. It is a wonder there are still no courses of studies to learn how to have a good command of such hideous practice. Another serious point to take into account is that your *mate* seems to have a life of its own. You have created a monster: it resembles a swamp, the perfect bubbly habitat of a family of smelly ogres. They are all having a swim –and a laugh– in your puke of a *mate*. Not even Mary Shelley dared to create such a repulsive abomination.

Such complex cognitive tasks developed during your failed attempt at mastering the secrets of cuisine are coupled with an obsession with extremes... They are a bad cook's best friends. The resulting food –and the English language should be given some credit for its enormous generosity for letting your foulness be called 'food'– will always be either raw or burnt. You see, there is nothing in between. No matter how much effort is put into following the instructions, you cannot get it right. Even toast looks as if it has overslept under the sun. A pilgrimage to the bathroom is enough for you to forget you have something in your oven. At other times, you experience chronic lust and anxiety to open it too soon, which leads to pale scraps. You cannot help it: you take everything into extremes.

Forgetting an ingredient cannot be avoided, either. Your pitiful waffles will always lack milk and your pathetic pound cakes, eggs. Short-term memory seems to be your Achilles heel, no matter how hard you try to improve. Even goldfish are better at remembering than you are. It is logical enough, though. You are often distracted by other issues, which you consider more important. It is possible –and not uncommon– to even forget why you have started cooking in the first place.

Evidently, professional chefs are deprived of enjoying most intricate culinary curiosities. By overlooking your weaknesses and what can go wrong when cooking, chefs also miss out on the huge benefits being a terrible cook has. Although you will not be winning a cooking competition, you will have been able to overcome adversities, to host Shrek's relatives, to learn about extremes, to ponder upon more relevant topics and to save up some ingredients for next time– provided you live through the nasty experience and there *is* a next time.

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