

REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Food

Traditional	Contemporary
What are favorite local dishes?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadfruit, preserved breadfruit, coconut, banana, pandanus, and taro • Poultry and fish 	<p>Oriental, American, and Filipino Foods Rice, Ramen, Bread, Cereal, Apple, Orange (imported food)</p> <p>Chicken quarter/leg, turkey tail, neck, imported chicken</p>
What foods are eaten from other countries or Pacific Islands?	
None	
What are the taboos associated with food?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some families did not eat turtle meat • Certain foods were not eaten by sick people, depending on illness • Breastfeeding women did not eat raw fish 	<p>More people eat more turtle meat. More breastfeeding mothers eat more raw fish.</p>
What are the practices and beliefs about food giving, preparation, and handling?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baskets of cooked food (fish, local chicken, pigs, breadfruit, pandanus, taro, and coconut) were prepared by community and given to guests • Only a few <i>alabs</i> (class of landowner) knew the special way to present food to chiefs • Females did all the cooking • Chiefs, guests, and males were served first • Families provided potlucks for all occasions • In big celebrations, men took part in handling, preparing, and serving food 	<p>Some other places & islands still using the basket w/local foods & some using the basin w/cooked imported foods.</p> <p>Fewer <i>alabs</i> know the way to present food to the chief.</p> <p>Men & women prepare the foods together.</p> <p>Females still do all the cooking</p> <p>Chiefs, guests, and males are still served first Men and women work together. Groups will separate the tasks e.g. food committee, clean-up, serve</p>

What are the rules associated with meals within the family?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people, head of house, and very young children were served first • Talking was not allowed when eating • Food was blessed before eating 	<p>Each can serve themselves. Now we can talk while we are eating.</p> <p>Some people do, & some people don't</p>
What food/ dishes are related to good health?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish, clam, turtle, coconut crab, banana, pandanus, papaya, and other local produce 	<p>Plain rice, flour, ramen, turkey tail (imported foods).</p>
What are the rituals, stories, and proverbs associated with food?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blessing/thanking for food before eating • Traditional leaders, church leaders, guests, elders, and young children were served first • Highly-recognized people and hosting family gave speeches • Songs before or after eating 	<p>You can do blessing on your own.</p> <p>Separate the church leaders, guests, adults table from the young people.</p> <p>You can select from who you want to do the speech.</p> <p>Songs now after all</p>
What methods are used for gathering/ acquiring food?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing: spears and nets • Group fishing for certain occasions 	<p>From the Fishing Markets.</p> <p>Individual fisherman</p>
Which seasons or times of year are associated with farming, hunting, and fishing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadfruit and pandanus seasons • Year-round fishing and banana, taro, and papaya planting/harvesting 	<p>Breadfruit is different season from the pandanus. Because of the climate change, the food season are now changing</p>
How important is food in social activity?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important because it brought people together for celebrations of special events (weddings, birthdays, deaths) and for welcoming/meeting new friends 	<p>Foods are prepared from each families events.</p>

Adapted from PREL Resources 'ReSPCT – Food' Pacific Resources for Education & Learning (PREL) www.prel.org