

# Bridge



“This is authentic Chinese food. That fast-food restaurant is not authentic.”

“I don’t recognize most of these dishes.”

“This is what I think a meal should be: a main dish and a side dish.”

“This looks healthy and nutritious.”

“Restaurants like these give us the wrong idea of what foreign cuisines are like.”

“You never know what’s in the food or where it comes from.”

Trendy new “pop-up” stands, cafés and restaurants are appearing all the time – from bubble tea stands to smoothie bars, from cupcake stands to breakfast-cereal cafés. Work with a friend to think about some new concepts, discuss them, and choose the best one.

### Example Dialogue

**Tilly:** A new food idea? Easy. A bacon stand. Everything made with bacon. Bacon coffee, bacon ice cream...

**Jim:** Ugh! No way! It sounds disgusting, and it’s totally unhealthy.

**Tilly:** Maybe you’re right. Healthy food is in. What about a fruit salad bar?

**Jim:** Like a smoothie bar but making fruit salads? Maybe. Any other ideas?

**Tilly:** Well, what’s trendy? Healthy food, but what else?

**Jim:** People like local food – farmers’ markets and so on. We could have a sandwich bar where everything is local.

**Tilly:** That’s not a bad idea. But there are lots of sandwich shops.

**Jim:** True. So maybe not sandwiches but something else, like baked potatoes with different fillings.

**Tilly:** Or tortilla wraps, maybe. Or stuffed pita breads.

**Jim:** Those are exotic, not local, though.

**Tilly:** That could work though: exotic meets local. Exotic snacks all made from local ingredients.

**Jim:** Oh, I like that! The slogan could be “Local doesn’t have to mean traditional.”

**Tilly:** Yes, then we could have specials made with really surprising ingredients.

**Jim:** Like what?

**Tilly:** Well – bacon coffee, bacon ice cream... Why are you looking at me like that? I like bacon!

### Discuss

Do you care about food? What kinds of food do you like? What are your favourite dishes? Do you eat out often? Why or why not? What types of restaurants do you go to? Do you prefer foreign cuisines or local? What unusual or unfamiliar foods have you eaten, for example when on holiday? Do you cook? What dishes do you like to make?

Do you care about the quality of food? What do you think about it, and why? Do you worry about things like healthiness, additives or where the food is from? Do you follow any special diets?

Do you ever think about food in terms of ethical questions, such as environmental impact? Do you look at ingredients lists on packaged foods? Do issues like this affect your food choices?

Take turns to talk about different cuisines you’ve tried, whether in restaurants, at home or on holiday. Tell your partner about the dishes you ate and describe them in terms of ingredients, taste, aroma, texture, etc. See if there are any that you’ve both tried and see if your experiences and opinions are similar or different.

### Some Useful Phrases

- cuisine
- national or regional speciality (*BrE*) / specialty (*AmE*)
- delicacy
- nutritional needs
- meat-free / vegetarian / vegan
- gluten-free
- authentic / inauthentic
- to be tasty / delicious / yummy / bland / tasteless / disgusting
- to taste of sth / to taste like sth
- sweet / savoury / sour / bitter
- heavy / light / greasy / juicy / spicy / soft / crunchy