

“These Things Come from the Terrestrial Paradise”:

Spices and their Use in the 14th and 15th Centuries

In 14th century Europe, spices had the ability to capture the imagination in a way few other luxury items could match. Symbolic of paradise, they grew to represent wealth and the exotic ports of Asia where they originated. Their extensive use in dishes from sauces to pottages and roasts could be characterized as the most prominent feature of medieval European cuisine. Taste alone does not explain the popularity of these spices amongst the nobility – locally grown herbs and spices could fill that need. Spices were a crucial part of 14th century cuisine not only because of their taste, but because the use of spices was a form of conspicuous consumption, and because spices had supposed medical properties.

Origins of Spices

Spices were amongst the most desirable of medieval luxury goods, in part because of their mystery. Guillaume de Loris, in his 13th century poem *The Romance of the Rose*, wrote of what he considered the most luxurious garden imaginable in a dream-sequence: “In that orchard grew many a spice: cloves, licorice, fresh grains of Paradise, zedoary, anise, cinnamon and every delectable spice that is good to taste after a meal” (Dalby 12). While his intended audience would be familiar with these spices, most had no knowledge of where (or how) these spices really grew. Fantastic stories of the origins of spices were common, even amongst those who should have been more knowledgeable. Jean de Joinville, a Crusader writing in 1250, wrote of the spices floating down the Nile River even after having waded in said river:

"Before the river entered Egypt, the people who are so accustomed cast their nets in the river in the evening; and when morning comes they find in their nets those goods sold by weight that they bring to this land, that is, ginger, rhubarb, aloes

wood, and cinnamon. And it is said that these things come from the terrestrial Paradise..." (Turner 47)

His belief that spices had fabulous origins was one shared by his contemporaries. Bartholomaeus Anglicus wrote that cinnamon was used by the phoenix to build his nest and that peppercorns grew in a snake-infested on the hillside of Caucasus. Their black and wrinkled appearance was due to the fires set to drive the snakes out before harvesting (Scully "Art" 12). Another example was the relative popularity of the works of "Sir John Mandeville" and of those of Marco

Polo. "Sir John Mandeville" was the pseudonym of a French author whose satirical travelogue, the *Itenerarium*, contains descriptions of the imaginary lands of Gog and Magog, the realm of Prester John,



and even described "monopods" (one footed people) and the "dog-headed men" of India (Turner 53). While the more straightforward (though still fantastic) travels of Marco Polo were met with some skepticism, the tales of "Mandeville" were widely read and accepted to some degree. However, belief in these stories wasn't universal - many believed (correctly) that these exotic tales were nothing more than an effort by merchants to sell their goods for a higher price (Henisch 104).

The lack of knowledge regarding the origin of spices reflects the lengthy journey spices took to reach the towns and cities of Europe. While certain spices could be grown

locally – garlic, for instance, and even saffron (Henisch 105), most others underwent lengthy journeys from India and beyond. Pepper and ginger were grown in India, Sumatra and Java, while cinnamon was grown in Ceylon (Turner xii). Even rarer were cloves, nutmeg and mace. Prior to the 16th century, no European knew the location of the islands where these spices grew (Turner 29). Nutmeg and mace, which are the dried fruit and seed of the tree *Myristica fragrans*, grew only in the Molucca Islands (now part of Indonesia), while cloves are the immature flower buds of *Syzygium aromaticum* (Turner xxxv-xxxvi). (See Appendix 1 for a map of these locations.) Once harvested, they traveled a myriad of routes to reach Europe – the most common of these after the 10th century was from India via Malacca (a city whose name in Arabic means market), across the Indian Ocean, past the Horn of Africa and north up the Red Sea. Cargoes were then carried overland to the Nile where they were shipped downriver from Cairo to Alexandria and hence to Venice, then on to the rest of Europe (Turner 29, 117).

The cost of spices was determined by the distance they traveled and the many hands through which they passed, as well as the fact that as tropical plants most spices could not be grown in Europe.. In 14th century London, a pound of cloves cost 6 days wages for an average carpenter, while a pound of saffron would cost over 30 days wages (Munro). In contrast, mustard, a cheap spice which grew throughout Europe, was used by all social classes (Henisch 107). As spices became more available and thus cheaper, they also became less popular amongst the nobility. For instance, pepper lost its popularity amongst the upper classes in the 15th century, replaced by grains of paradise as its price fell – pepper became regarded as “vulgar” and thus did not meet the standards of the noble table (Crossley-Holland 108).

The Use of Spices on the Medieval Table

Once imported, spices were used abundantly, though not profligately, on the medieval table. They were perhaps the most distinctive feature of medieval cuisine. In one 15th century Italian cookbook, cinnamon is found in over 40% of the recipes, while ginger is found in over 30% (Allard, *Manuscrit*). In French cookbooks of the same time, proportions varied somewhat (this variation is detailed in Appendix 2). Perhaps the most common use of spices was in sauces. These sauces were most often made at home but could also be purchased from professional sauce makers (Henisch 75). They were considered especially important during Lent, when they were used to conceal a monotonous diet of fish. As early as the 4th century, St. Jerome criticized this practice, as it distracted from the austerity Lent was meant to represent: “What advantage do you hope to receive by refraining from the use of oil, whilst at the same time you seek out rare and exquisite fruits – Carian dried figs, pepper, dates of the palm tree, pistachio-nuts?” (Henisch p 42) In large households, the position of “Saucer” was an important kitchen responsibility, also responsible for salt and silver dishes (Scully “Art” 244). These dishes included cups, serving platters, and elaborate sauces and spice plates (Henisch 169).

In addition to the Saucer, other positions created by the popularity of spices and sauces include the Carver and the Spicer. While the Carver’s primary task was the carving and serving of meat, the proper serving of meat included the application of appropriate sauces, sometimes with elaborate rituals. In John Russel’s *Book of Nurture*, written in 1460, an elaborate service of a crab is described, including cracking the crab

claws, extracting the meat from the claws to remove the sinews, then saucing it and putting it back in the claw (Henisch p 200). The appropriate sauce was determined both by diner's preference and by the way a particular item was cooked (For details on sauce pairings, see Appendix 3).

Spices were used to decorate as well as to flavor dishes. This use of spices even led to specific cooking vocabulary amongst French and English cooks – to decorate a dish with saffron was to fringe it, with parsley was to garnish it (Henisch 70, Powers 263). As the most expensive spice available, the golden color of saffron was also the most desirable (Crossley-Holland 108). Spices were also a crucial part of "entremets", the fanciful dishes served as much for looks as for taste. Charles the Bold (Duke of Burgundy from 1467-1477) was married in 1468 - his marriage feast included 6 model ships at the main table with 16+ smaller ships surrounding them, all filled with spices and fruits (Turner 148). Perhaps these ships



Figure 2 – 13th century nef. The Cloisters -1983.434

were similar to the 13th century salt cellar, shown in Figure 2. Although the Duke's spectacle was an elaborate example, candied spices were the most common way to end a meal. The 14th century English *Boke of Nurture* states that the end of a meal should consist of "Whot appuls and peres with sugre Candy / With Gyngre columbine, minced mannerly, Wafurs with ypcras" and these candied spices even occurred in English monastic records (Allen 40).

The most extravagant non-culinary use of spices was as incense – spices were occasionally burned either for their scent, or merely as a grand gesture of wealth. 15th century romances speak of kings spoiling their daughters with incense burners full of cinnamon for their bedrooms, so “that when ye slepe the taste may come”. More practically, Richard Whittington made a point of burning papers indicating King Henry V’s debts in a fire of cinnamon and cloves, as a sign of gratitude for being made Lord Mayor of London (Henisch 104). Paying for all of these spices could be a monumental task in some cases. For instance, King Edward I of England spent over £1775 on spices in one year – this sum was greater than the total income of some of his earls (Turner 153). Indeed, royal debts were occasionally even paid in spices – pepper was used as currency (Turner 102-3). Because of the high value of spices, the grocers, spicers and apothecaries who sold them gained political power based on their wealth.

Apothecaries: Merchants and Medical Providers

Pepperers and apothecary guilds were found throughout Europe by the 13th century (Turner 116). Due to their prevalent use, the importation and distribution of spices was an important industry in 14th century Europe, and the pepperers and apothecaries held a unique social status - neither truly doctors nor merely merchants (Gottfried 79). Most retailers provided spices



Figure 3 - Apothecary shown in the stained glass of Chartres Cathedral.

in either whole or powdered form – more frugal households bought their spices whole to be pounded in the kitchen, but wealthier households, or those planning large feasts, could

buy their spices pre-ground, stored in leather pouches (Henisch 75). The scales used to weigh (see Figure 3) and the mortar and pestle used to grind these spices became synonymous (even in the modern era) with the apothecary, as the trade required all varieties of mortar and pestles, even large ceiling-hung varieties (Henisch 75).

Although these merchants were often wealthy, they were often seen as greedy or dishonest due to the expense of their products. Occasional reports were made of substitution of products, such as radish-root for the much more expensive ginger, or of the wetting of spices to increase their weight (Henisch 81). Statutes were made to forbid this adulteration, as well as to forbid apothecaries from “colluding” with doctors in the prescription of expensive drugs (Turner 198). These “spicers” were also given important positions in royal and noble households. For instance, in 1317 there were only 4 household officers noted in the King of France’s records - a barber, a tailor, a taster and a spicer (Turner 142). The position of a spicer/apothecary in a royal household included many seemingly unrelated tasks – compounding drugs, producing candies, and managing stores of spices (Gottfried 81).

The dual nature of apothecaries, as both merchant and medical provider, reflected the other major reason spices enjoyed such extensive popularity. In the 14th and 15th centuries, many held the belief that spices were potent drugs, and could be used both to prevent and to cure disease. To understand this belief, one first must understand the basic building block of medieval medicine, humoral theory.

Humoral Theory:

The theory of the humors was first conceptualized by Hippocrates in 400 BC and elaborated on by the Greek physician Galen. Essentially, there are four fluids which make up the human body: blood, yellow bile (aka cholera), phlegm and black bile. Each has properties of temperature and moisture – blood is hot and wet, yellow bile is hot and dry, black bile is cold and dry, while phlegm is cold and wet (Adamson “Dietetics” 11-15).

Ideal health, or *eukrasia*, was characterized by balanced levels of these humors. Balanced, however, did not mean equal as many people assume. Instead, the ideal balance was approximately 64 parts blood, 16 parts phlegm, 4 parts cholera and 1 part black bile – see Figure 4 (Albala 49).

This “balanced” temperament was also

expressed by the word “sanguine”, due to the prevalence of blood or “sanguine”. The imbalance of humors was also believed to express itself in one’s personality. (See Appendix 4 for a lyric elaborating on these personality changes.)

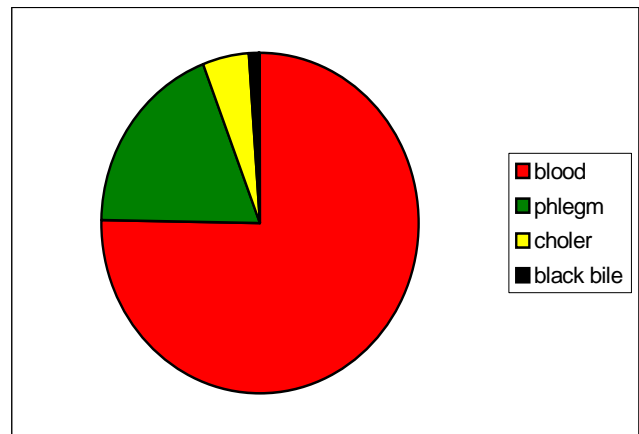


Figure 4 - "Eukrasia" - Ideal Proportions of Humors in the Human Body

The ideal balance could be upset by various causes, categorized by Galen into the “six non-natural causes”. These causes included air, food and drink, sleep, motion and rest, evacuation, and emotions (Arano 6), the most important of which (and easiest to regulate) are food and drink. Galen believed that food could cause disease or restore

health – prevention of disease by eating well was preferable to curing existing diseases (Grant 7). Galen published these ideas in several books, including *On Hygiene* and *On the Powers of Food*, which classified foods according to their powers – he was the first to introduce the concept of *gradus*, or intensity, of the properties of foods, which could be expressed as weak, noticeable, strong, or extreme, or simply as 1st-4th degree (Adamson “Dietetics” 17).

One of the most important points to consider in understanding medieval cooking is Galen’s theories on food and digestion. Digestion was “the root of life”, or so stated the Greek physician Avicenna (Albala 54). This term didn’t merely apply to digestion as we know it today, but was a more general term referring to the entire process of turning food into part of the body (Albala 54). It even included cooking as an essential part of digestion, as the cooking of food and intrinsic processing thereof made it easier to digest (Grant 7).

“Everything boiled in water experiences a shift of its own power and also a transfer of the power belonging to itself and the water. It is essential for you to realize that this occurs every day with things that are cooked in sauces, whether some pulses are being boiled, or part of an animal or a vegetable. Whatever has been boiled reveals through its taste and smell the quality and power of the sauce, whilst the sauce discloses the quality and power of what has been boiled in it.” (Galen translated in Grant 71)

Galen believed that a good doctor should be a good cook, and gave recipes to assist in this (Grant 11).

These theories were propagated and expanded by Arabic doctors and writers after the fall of Rome. A 10th century doctor, Ali ibn al-’Abus, established 4 classifications of

foods: *medicina*, *mortifera portio*, *medicinales cibi*, and *solum cibus* (Adamson “Dietetics” 17). These classifications were roughly analogous to the idea of “degrees” of humoral value put forth by Galen, and could be used to evaluate the healthfulness of a food under different circumstances and for various diners.

These ideas spread into Europe along with the spice trade, especially between the years 800-1000 AD (Hunt 9). Later, an 11th century Arabic innovation, the *Taqwim alSiHHA* (Tables of Health) was written by an author known in English as Ibn Bôtlan (Hammad 53, Arano 11). This book presented lists of foods, beverages and other items and their effect on health in tabular form rather than as a listing, and was translated into Latin under the name *Tacuinum Sanitatis* (Hammad 53). It circulated Europe both in complete Latin chart form (280 items) and in abbreviated, illustrated form which varied from manuscript to manuscript but usually contained around 200 items. Unlike other *Regimen Sanitatis*, it was published as a separate work rather than as part of a larger medical treatise (Adamson “Dietetics” 84).

Medical knowledge continued to evolve into the 14th century, when a variety of both specifically medical texts and less-focused general works were written and distributed. After the Black Death, home health books became increasingly popular, and often included both sections on medicine and cookbooks (Gottfried 177). When the Duke of Lancaster wrote a book about medicine in 1354, it included recipes for rosewater and chicken broth as well as medical uses for other spices (Henisch 102). In fact, the line between “cookbook” and “medical text” became increasingly blurred in many examples, such as lists of dishes for specific ailments, and even lists by poets such as Deschamps of

dishes appropriate during times of plague (Scully “Sickdish” 138). Cookbooks such as *On Cookery* by Chiquart included recipes for dishes for restoratives for sick people, and books on medicine, such as the anonymous 15th century work, included recipes for simple chickens roasted with salt to prevent dysentery (Burkholder).

A “Balanced” Diet

In practice, these theorems were used in one of two ways – to determine the daily diet of the upper class, and in the prescription of drugs. Not all authorities agree on how well diners actually followed these instructions (after all, modern diners often ignore doctors’ warnings regarding the healthfulness of various diets), but it is clear that they were an important part of culinary knowledge. To quote Melitta Adamson, “Cookbook authors often display[ed] a profound knowledge of medieval theories of nutrition in their choice of terminology, use of medical source-materials, or inclusion of dishes for sick people” (“Dietetics” 9). Analysis of several English coronation feasts shows that the menus were chosen to balance the humors of the dishes within the feast (Burkholder). Perhaps most tellingly, one of the Dukes of Burgundy employed 6 doctors, one of which was required to stand behind the duke whenever he ate and recommend which dishes would be appropriate for him to eat that day (Scully “Art” 42).

“Balancing” of dishes worked on the principle of opposites – to counteract a hot food, add something cold, or to counteract a dry food, add something moist or use a moist cooking method (Adamson “Food” 213). These “opposites” were not always obvious - even liquids, such as wine could be considered humorally “dry” (Arano 107). The ideal, balanced food matched the ideal humoral balance of the human body – warm and slightly

moist (Scully “Temper” 7). Natural philosophers writing on the subject, including Arnaud of Villanova and Walter of Odington, created elaborate formulas for balancing the nature of foods. Arnaud of Villanova set forth algebraic formulas which could be used to determine the precise quantities required to balance foods. These formulas were purely theoretical, and were probably never used by dietitians/cooks, who worked more informally (Albala 90).

The most common way of balancing foods was with sauces, which consisted mainly of spices combined with liquid ingredients and/or bulking materials (such as breadcrumbs). Entire cookbooks were devoted to sauces - the 12th century physician, Maginus Mediolanensis stated in his work, *De Sapoborus* that "sauces are to be consumed only in small quantities and in order to check the various evils of food and to restore appetite" (Scully “Temper” 19). Maginus continues to say "sauces differ according to the foodstuffs for which they are made, for various foods require various sauces, as the cooks of the great lords know" (Scully “Temper” 10). The process of adding a sauce to a dish to correct its humoral balance was known as tempering. "To temper" refers to removing the harmful qualities of dishes by adding an appropriate sauce or liquid, in order to create a dish that was moderately warm and moist (humorally speaking) (Scully “Temper” 7). The ingredients in sauces themselves had to be tempered in order to provide the desired effect – for instance, mustard was tempered with vinegar - hot and dry mixed with cool and moist (Scully “Temper” 8). In many recipes, cooks are given a choice of liquids to temper the dry ingredients of a sauce with in order to create the desired effect - from wine to vinegar to broth to milk to eggs (Scully “Temper” 12).

Sauce ingredients (and the foods they were placed upon) also varied by season (Scully “Temper” 17). For typical sauce/food pairings, please see Appendix 2.

Spices as Cure

In addition to their use in creating “healthy” food, spices were also used as drugs in their own right. Due to their expense and the distance they had traveled, and because they were not well understood, they were believed to have almost mystical powers (Turner 184). Various spices were prescribed for ailments – some more logical than others. Pepper, especially, was useful for many diseases. From pleurisy (recommended by Hildegard of Bingen) to gout, to use as a topical remedy for hemorrhoids and gout (the pain of the pepper was meant to “burn out” the problem), to being thrust up the nose as a remedy for epilepsy or use in salves for “dimmed eyesight” pepper was seen as a miracle cure for most diseases (Turner 187, 192-3). Cinnamon was recommended for fevers, while either galangal or peppered wine was recommended for indigestion (Turner 187, Grant 10). However, these spices were only prescribed for the wealthy patients who could afford them (Hensch 103).

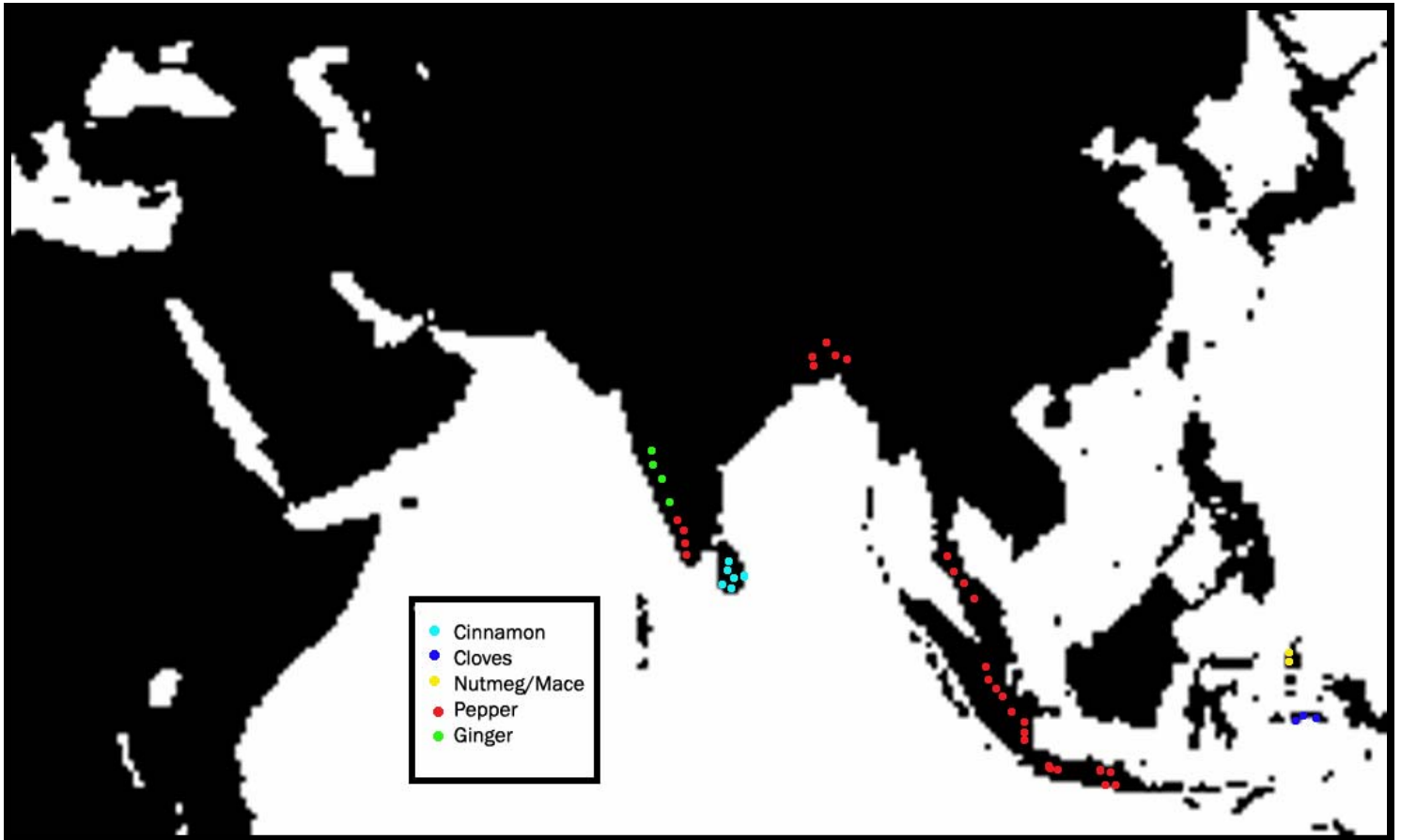
In general, spices were believed to prevent “corruption” of food inside and outside the body (Albala 159), an effect believed to be similar to the effect of gold and pearls in certain medicines (Scully “Sickdish” 136). This effect even extended to the ability to avert poison, which was considered a grave danger to noblemen. In Galen’s book, *On Antidotes*, he asserted daily doses of cinnamon and other spices (the costlier, the better) would avert poison. Other philosophers recommended pepper as an antidote to hemlock, and ginger as a remedy against unspecified toxins (Turner 192). Spices were

also an antidote to chastity, if one was to believe the writings of clerics. In fact, one monk, Constantine the African (who Chaucer referred to as Constantine the Damned), wrote extensively of the aphrodisiac properties of spices. In his book, *On Coitus*, written in the 11th century, he suggests various combinations of ginger, pepper, cinnamon, galangal, honey, and other herbs for varying degrees of impotence and to increase the sex drive (Turner 212-213, 218).

The Allure of Spices

With all of these uses – from antidote to medicine to tasty treat, it’s somewhat difficult to understand why so many properties were given to such small objects. And yet, as alluring and exotic as spices were, it is not surprising that beliefs about spices abounded. Given the distance they traveled and the fact that spices were unique, unlike any plant that grew in Europe, the thought that “these things come from the terrestrial Paradise” doesn’t seem unreasonable. With a fantastical origin established, it isn’t hard to understand why during this time period, spices were believed to have almost mystical properties of preserving or restoring health. The rarity of spices and their medical properties led them to be in great demand, and meant that spices remained an expensive commodity, the lavish use of which showed wealth. Overall, this belief that spices were exotic, more than their taste, explains the prevalent utilization of spices during the 14th and 15th centuries.

Appendix 1: Spice Growing Locations



Data from a similar map in Turner, page xii.

Appendix 2: Spices in 14th Century French Cookbooks

The following data was taken from 3 14th-15th century French cookbooks:

- *On Cookery*, written by Chiquart, who was the chief cook to the Duke of Savoy. It is dated approximately 1420 (Scully “Early” 14).
- *Le Menagier de Paris* was written around 1393 by an anonymous French minor nobleman for his young wife. Some believe it to be the work Guy de Montigny, a knight in the service of the Duke of Berry (Crossley-Holland 8).
- *Le Viandier* is attributed to Guillaume Tirel, who was appointed the chief cook of the King of France in 1370 (Scully “Early” 13).

Spices Used By Cookbook						
Spice	<i>Le Menagier</i>		<i>On Cookery</i>		<i>Le Viandier</i>	
	# Recipes	Percentage	# Recipes	Percentage	# Recipes	Percentage
cinnamon	23	16.91%	25	30.86%	30	13.64%
pepper	2	1.47%	35	43.21%	1	0.45%
ginger	49	36.03%	60	74.07%	54	24.55%
clove	26	19.12%	31	38.27%	32	14.55%
saffron	27	19.85%	31	38.27%	28	12.73%
grains of paradise	25	18.38%	52	64.20%	31	14.09%
long pepper	10	7.35%	0	0.00%	15	6.82%
cumin	1	0.74%	0	0.00%	2	0.91%
nutmeg	11	8.09%	18	22.22%	6	2.73%
"spices"	16	11.76%	0	0.00%	30	13.64%
mace	2	1.47%	16	19.75%	4	1.82%
galangale	5	3.68%	8	9.88%	3	1.36%
Total Recipes	136		81		220	

Table data was compiled from Scully’s edition of *Le Viandier*, Cook’s translation of *On Cookery*, and Powers’ edition of *Le Menagier*. Overall, ginger is by far the most common spice used. Interestingly, Chiquart does not reference long pepper, and uses far more

pepper than the other books use long pepper and pepper combined. Perhaps this was to meet the tastes of the Duke of Savoy. He also uses spices in a far greater number of dishes than the other books. His book has fewer recipes, however, and he may have tried to list the more “complicated” and thus highly spiced dishes.

Appendix 3: Use of Sauces in 14th Century French Cookbooks

This data is taken from the same sources as Appendix 1. This survey is intended to show how cooking methods and sauce types were carefully chosen to balance the humoral nature of a given meat.

Overall, certain pairings are common – mustard is used to cover the saltiness of preserved fish, while cameline is enjoyed with roast meats. Sharp and tangy green sauce is found most often with boiled meats of all varieties. Delicate sauces such as jance are found only with “bland” meats such as roast capon which will not overpower them.

(Chart on next page)

Sauces in 14th Century French Cookbooks

	Mustard	Jance	Cameline	Green Sauce	Verjuice	Piquant	Green Garlic	White Garlic	Black Pepper	Yellow Pepper	Cold Sage	Own Sauce
Red Meat												
Venison	salted		boiled/roast						boiled			
Boar	salted		boiled						boiled			"Bourbulleys"
Beef	salted						boiled	boiled				
Pork	salted			boiled	roast	roast ("fat")						roast (w/ drippings)
Piglet			roast							roast		
Rabbit			roast			roast						
Veal			roast		roast (pasty)							
Kid			roast		roast							
Lamb			roast									
Mutton	salted		roast	boiled	roast							roast shoulders (w/blood)
Sausages	yes											
"numbles"												like lamprey
Poultry												
Goose		roast					roast	roast	roast			special sauce
Capon		roast										
Hen/Cockerel												
Pullets			roast		roast (pasty)						roast	
Peacock												roast (w/ liver)
Partridge			roast									
Swan										roast		
Pheasant			roast									
Pigeons												
small birds												"own sauce" - au jus?
Heron			roast									
Fish												
Pike	salted		"galantine"	boiled	roast							
Eel	salted				grilled/roast		roast/boiled					
Mullet	salted		saute/pasty		roast							
Barbel	fried								boiled	boiled		
Roach				boiled	roast							
Brochet		fried										
Sardines	Fried											
Herrings	salted											
Lamprey												roast
Ray												garlic cameline w/ liver
Turbot				roast								
Salmon			roast									
Generic Fish	salted					fried						
bass				boiled								
Shad	boiled		roasted	boiled								
Carp				boiled								
Bream				roasted/boiled	roast			pasty				
Chub				boiled	roast							
Trout			boiled									
Pimpernels					roast							
Loach	boiled											
Waymel	boiled											
"small fry"				boiled			boiled	boiled				
Lamprill	boiled		pasty/fried									
Mackerel	salted		roast/pasty									
Hake												ray sauce
Cod	salted	sauteed										
salmon			roast							roast		
flounder				sauteed								
sole				sauteed	fried							"own sauce"
anchovies	roasted											
smelt	fried	pasty/fried					pasty/fried					
cuttlefish					fry		fry					
oyster							boil-fry					
cockel								saute				
mussels					boil		boil					

Appendix 4: Humoral Nature

Fleumaticus:

Sluggish and slowe, in spetinge muiche,
Cold and moist, my natur is suche;
Dull of wit, and fat, of contenance strange,
Fleumatike, this complecion may not change.

Sanguineus:

Deliberal I am, loving and gladde,
Laghinge and playing, full seld I am sad;
Singing, full fair of colour, bold to fight,
Hote and moist, beninge, sanguine I hight.

Colericus:

I am sad and soleyng with heviness in thoght;
I covet right muiche, leve will I noght;
Fraudulent and sutill, full cold and dry,
Yollowe of colour, colorike am I.

Malencolicus:

Envius, dissevabill, my skin is roghe;
Outrage in exspence, hardy inoghe,
Sutill and sklender, hote and dry,
Of colour pale, my nam is malencoly (Grigsby).

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Figure 1. Dog-headed men. Bibliotheque Nationale du France, Richelieu Manuscrits Français

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Figure 2. 13th century saltcellar. The Cloisters.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/Works_of_Art/viewOne.asp?dep=7&viewmode=0&item=1983.434>

Figure 3. Chartres window. < <http://medievalwriting.50megs.com/word/medical.htm>>