

Tarhana is a dried mixture of fermented grain or flour, vegetables and yogurt or milk that is turned into a soup. Easily considered to be one of the Central Asian Turks' first-ever instant soups, the history of this culinary delicacy extends to records in 11 BC but is believed to have existed all the way back to the 100 BC. Popular in the Middle East, each country has their own distinct way of preparing and serving the dish. In Turkey, tarhana is made from cracked wheat or flour, yogurt and vegetables, namely equal parts onions, tomatoes and red peppers, yeast and spices that are left to dry for five days, although periodically kneaded each day in between with, the final product run through a sieve. The salmon-colored crumbly flakes that remain are kept for months to be used as the basis for this soup, easily considered one of the favorite comfort food of the Turks.



## HAWAIIAN FOOD

Today, many local restaurants and roadside food stands serve the ubiquitous plate lunch (also called loco moco), featuring the Asian staple, two scoops of rice, American macaroni salad, topped with a hamburger patty, a fried egg and brown gravy. Variations of the dish include Japanese style konkatsu or kalua pig and beef.

Another very popular meat in Hawaii is Spam (short for spiced ham), a canned precooked meat product produced by Hormel Foods. Even though Spam is available throughout the United States as well as in over 40 foreign countries, Hawaii residents consume the most Spam per capita in the United States. Spam is so popular in Hawaii that it is sometimes referred to as "The Hawaiian Steak." It is an ingredient in a variety of dishes. A popular one that's available at many convenience stores in Hawaii (wrapped and ready to eat) is Spam musubi, a combination of a slice of fried Spam placed on a cube of rice, wrapped with a strip of nori seaweed. Other dishes feature Spam with fried eggs and rice, in sandwiches with mayonnaise, baked with guava jelly, baked with macaroni and cheese, or stir-fried with cabbage. In Hawaii, teriyaki is one of the most popular ways of flavoring meats, including Spam.



**Loco moco from Hawaii.**

## **BOLIVIAN FOOD.**

One Bolivian food custom that has become known around the world is the traditional 15-30 minute break mid-morning to eat a [salteña](#). People don't eat and walk here and they don't eat and work. Mid-morning everything stops. Businesses, offices, stores, even government some agencies, take a short break for a mid-morning snack, which can include coffee or tea, and something small like a light sandwich, but in much of Bolivia is the famous salteña, a baked empanada that is filled with meat, vegetables, eggs, olives and delicious juiciness. During this time, if you have been waiting in line to be helped by someone, you are expected to wait. You can get impatient, you can complain if you want to, but it probably will be to no avail as this is a food custom that is deeply, deeply ingrained.

Many Bolivians are still accustomed to taking tea at about 4 or 5 in the afternoon. At that time the "salones de té" are very full and busy. Because we usually indulge at tea time, dinner is usually a lighter meal than lunch and is usually served around 8 or 9 p.m. Most salones de té double as bakeries and vice versa, so if you're looking for a great place for tea and pastries, I've included tea houses under my section on bakeries. You'll see this in large cities such as La Paz, [Cochabamba](#), and Santa Cruz, and in most small towns. One exception, however, is Tarija. Tarijeños haven't maintained the afternoon teatime tradition as much as in the rest of Bolivia.

## **WHAT MAKES FILIPINOS DIFFERENT WHEN IT COMES TO EATING HABITS**

1. **We eat more than three times a day.** Aside from usual breakfast, lunch, and dinner, we have morning snacks or *Segundo Almuerzo* (second breakfast) which is normally done around 10 to 10:30 in the morning and *merienda* (mid-afternoon snack time) between 3 to 4pm. Others have *pica-pica* and *pulutan* moments too. This tradition can be credited back to the people who live in the rural areas where

the day usually starts at 4am and the need to grab a bite several times during the day is essential.

2. **We love rice.** Philippine food is not complete without this ingredient. It does not matter if the dish is full of carbs already, has noodles (like *pancit* and sometimes spaghetti) or soup on it, this staple is almost a requirement in all major meals.
3. **We like condiments.** We are fond of dipping on or pairing anything with our dishes. Soy sauce (with lemon or *calamansi* juice), fish sauce (*patis*), catsup and *bagoong* or *alamang* (shrimp paste). Some even maximize the use of gravy (in KFC) and turn it into *sabaw* (soup) poured on rice!
4. **We eat with our hands.** Ever heard of the saying “*You are not a true Filipino unless you learn how to eat with your hands*”? It has already been part of our culture and stems back to the early times when we could not afford to buy spoon and fork. Now, it comes out of tradition especially if local cuisine is served or if the meal is presented in banana leaves.
5. **We are great advocates of fiestas.** Each city or barrio has at least one fiesta to celebrate. If you live in the Philippines, you can not stay in a place for at least a year without attending a fiesta or two. Pinoys usually stack as much as they can on one plate – *Menudo*, *Embutido*, *Fruit Salad* and *Leche Flan*. We also love meat during these times.