

Burghley

Tudor Food

What were Tudor kitchens like?

Most people lived in houses with just one room, they cooked their food on a fire in the middle of the room. But if you were wealthy you might have a huge kitchen like this one at Burghley. Built of stone, it has a tall, ribbed ceiling for smoke to escape, long wooden benches to work on and plenty of space for the twenty kitchen maids to prepare the food.



What did Tudors eat?

Most people ate whatever they could grow. Poor people ate fruit and vegetables. If they had animals, they might have some dairy products and a little meat. They often cooked in a cauldron, boiling up a stew called 'pottage' made from mainly from vegetables. They couldn't afford sugar, so they never had cakes or puddings.

Three quarters of what rich people ate was meat. They enjoyed hunting and cooked their meat on a spit in front of a big fire turned by a poor 'Spit boy.' As well as beef, they ate deer, wild boar and all sorts of birds even swans! They could afford sugar and spices and often finished off a meal with sweet cakes or jelly.



Foody Tudor Facts

Everyone drank beer as water wasn't safe to drink.

People ate with spoons and knives – but no forks!

Plates were made from metal or wood.



New food arrived from abroad like; potatoes, sugar, spices and turkeys.



Tudor Food Challenge:

- Rich people had bad teeth and poor people had good teeth; why?
- Which other countries did food come from in Tudor times?
- There were no sinks or taps so where did the water come from?
- Why can't we eat swans today?