



# charcuterie boards

*are they actually period?*

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War of the Wings 2023 - A&S Class



# agenda



history



planning



creating

# charcuterie shär'kōodərē

The term "charcuterie" itself comes from the French words "chair" (flesh) and "cuit" (cooked). It refers to the preparation and preservation of meats-primarily pork-through salting, smoking, drying, and other methods. These techniques were essential in preserving meat before the advent of refrigeration.

## Salt Curing

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Salt-curing was one of the most common methods used to preserve meat. Pork, in particular, was a favored choice for preservation due to its suitability for salt-curing. Meat would be coated in salt and left to dry, which not only preserved it but also enhanced its flavor.

## Smoking

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Smoking was another method employed, as it added both flavor and additional preservation. In less affluent areas, meat was hung high on their fireplace at night. More affluent families/areas had dedicated smokehouses.

## Sausages and Terrines

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Sausages, a popular charcuterie item, were developed during the Middle Ages as a means of using every part of the animal and reducing waste. The process involved grinding meat and spices, then stuffing the mixture into casings. Terrines, which are slow-cooked dishes made from minced or ground meat, were also developed during this time.



# charcuterie & grazing boards in the middle ages

Medieval grazing boards, also known as medieval feasting platters or medieval banquet spreads, were displays of food that were commonly served during feasts and banquets in the Middle Ages. These feasting platters were characterized by their extravagant and abundant presentation of a wide variety of foods, and they played a significant role in the social and cultural life of medieval Europe. These boards often included charcuterie.

## Extravagant Displays

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Medieval feasting platters were known for their opulent and lavish displays. These boards were often large and covered with a rich assortment of foods, reflecting the host's wealth and hospitality. The goal was to impress guests with the abundance and variety of delicacies.

## Mixed Ingredients

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These boards typically featured a diverse mix of foods, including roasted meats (such as venison, boar, poultry, and beef), cured meats (like ham and sausages), cheeses, fruits, nuts, and bread. The combination of sweet and savory elements was common.

## Decorative Presentation

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Presentation was a crucial aspect of medieval grazing boards. The arrangement of food items on the platter was done with care to create visually appealing displays. Various garnishes, herbs, and edible flowers were used for decoration.

# charcuterie & grazing boards in the middle ages

It's important to note that the specifics of medieval grazing boards could vary depending on the region and the time period within the Middle Ages. Different regions had their own culinary traditions and ingredients, which influenced the composition of these feasting platters. Nonetheless, the concept of presenting an extravagant array of foods on a communal board was a common thread in medieval feasting practices.

## Symbolism and Ritual

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Feasts and banquets in the Middle Ages were not just about food; they also had symbolic and ritualistic elements. The way food was presented and shared often had cultural and social significance.

## Social and Cultural Significance

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Medieval feasting was an important aspect of courtly life, and it played a role in showcasing a host's generosity and status. Banquets and feasts were occasions for entertainment, storytelling, and displaying chivalric virtues.

## Entertainment

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In addition to the food, medieval banquets often included entertainment such as music, dancing, and theatrical performances. The entire experience was designed to be a multisensory delight.

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# extra tidbit monastery influence

Monasteries played a significant role in the development of charcuterie during the Middle Ages. Monks had access to extensive gardens, livestock, and food preservation knowledge, and they put these resources to good use. Monastic communities often cured and stored meats for their own consumption and for trade, as monasteries were important centers of commerce and culture during this period.



# planning your board

Planning and budgeting tips







# serving platters/boards

Be creative when building your platter and board inventory

- Shop thrift stores and yard sales/marketplace
  - After-wedding posts usually have a lot of items
  - Make sure you don't get leaded items (ask me how I know)
- Look for items that have varied heights
  - Tiered trays
  - Dollar tree baskets can be used as risers
- Wax or parchment paper can be used as a base layer in lieu of a board
- Votive candle holders are great for holding plastic utensils





# serving sizes

Per Person, average

Meat: 2-3 ounces

Cheese: 2-3 ounces

Nuts: 2-3 tablespoons

Crackers/bread: 4-6 ounces

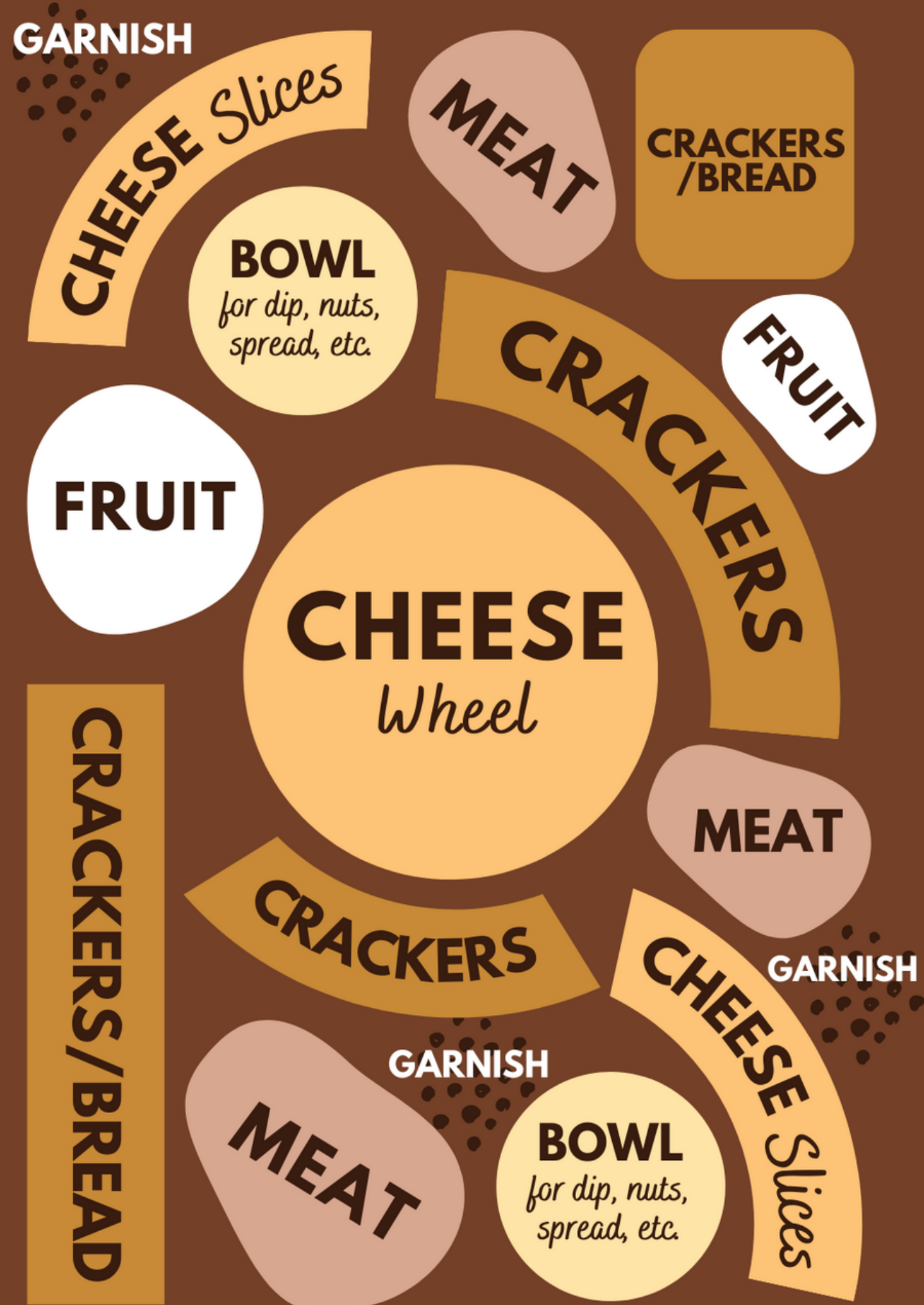
Vegetables/fruits: 4-8 ounces

Dips: 1/2 cup



Number of People	Meat	Cheese	Vessel	Additional Items
6	1 cured meat	1 creamy cheese & 1 sharp cheese	1 cracker or bread	1 salty item 1 sweet item 1 nut or seed
12	Above + 1 spiced meat	Above + 1 cheese using either sheep or goat's milk	Above + 1 crudites style vegetable	2 salty items 2 sweet items 1 nut or seed
20-30	Above +thinly sliced salami	Above + blue cheese	Above +melba cracker or toasted bread option	3 salty items 3 sweet items 2 nuts or seeds 1 optional dip or spread
31-49	Above + prosciutto	Above + aged or smoked cheese	Above + additional cracker	4 salty items 4 sweet items 2 nuts or seeds 2 optional dips or spread
50+ people	Above + mortadella	Above + a cheese with fruit or spices	Above + additional crudites style vegetables	5 salty items 5 sweet items 3 nuts or seeds 3 optional dips or spread





# building the board

- 1 Choose your board
- 2 Layout your board (mentally, or with paper)
- 3 Add spreads and dips
- 4 Add your cheese
- 5 Add salty components
- 6 Add sweet components
- 7 Add your crackers and bread
- 8 Add additional condiments and garnish





# serving tips

- cheese has the most flavor at room temperature, but cuts better chilled. Cut your cheese when it is cold, and set it out around 30 minutes prior to serving (adjust if outdoors) so it can get to room temperature before serving
- display some cheese whole and others in various shapes such as spears, wedges, pies, cubes, or crumbles
- pour your dips/jams/jellies into bowls for an elevated look (but keep your containers for leftovers!)
- garnish with items such as fresh rosemary, dried fruit, and diced chocolate
- don't forget your serving utensils





let's build  
our boards.