

KEY INGREDIENTS: America by Food

Exhibition Description

What exactly are kolaces, spaetzle and pierogies? Most of us eat day in day out without giving a second thought to the wealth of history and culture that shapes our dining habits and taste preferences. Our recipes, menus, ceremonies, and etiquette are directly shaped by our country's rich immigrant experience, the history and innovations of food preparation technology, and the ever-changing availability of key ingredients.

Key Ingredients: America by Food explains the little-known, the everyday, and the obvious through an entertaining and informative overview of our country's diverse regional cooking and eating traditions. It underscores the contributions made by Native American cultures to our palate and eating habits, and addresses the entrepreneurial spirit on which many food production industries are based, such as those of food pioneers Heinz, Campbell, and Borden. *Key Ingredients* investigates how climate, ethnicity, landscape, and tradition influence the foods and flavors we enjoy across the nation. The exhibition's national sweep and its accompanying website, www.keyingredients.org, allow Basque families in Nevada to swap recipes with Finnish towns in Wisconsin and Cuban communities in Florida.



Sample Humanities Programs and Local Activities

Key Ingredients inspires the gathering, celebration, and preservation of the finest of what rural America has to offer. Host institutions create activities and events that are both fun and informative. Cook-offs, oral history projects, folk demonstrations, publications, storytelling, chili and barbecue festivals, and ancillary exhibitions are just a few of the possible activities.



Curator

Key Ingredients was curated by folklorist Dr. Charles Camp.

Funders

Key Ingredients is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the Federation of State Humanities Councils. Support for Museum on Main Street is provided by the United States Congress.

Availability to State Humanities Councils

Two copies of this *newly revised* exhibition will be available for touring beginning late October, 2010 (council planning and participation begins in Summer, 2008) and continues through 2012.

Contents and Crates

Six freestanding structures with interactive components, artifacts mounted in eight wall-hung cases and two floor cases. Requires 700 square feet of exhibition space and 8.5 foot ceilings. The exhibition is packed in 16 crates with handles and wheels. Total weight is about 3,000 pounds.

Key Ingredients Resources Provided

Administrative Resources

- State coordinator manuals featuring program development strategies, sample budgets/contracts and other support materials. Provided in hard copy format and also available online at www.museumonmainstreet.org for easy access and for quick distribution of updated information;
- Museum on Main Street listserv for state council coordinators and national organizers providing access to immediate answers to project questions and opportunities for networking and project development;
- Experienced MoMS team members assigned to each state to provide advice and assistance in all areas of program development and tour coordination.

Workshops and Meetings

- National MoMS Orientation Workshop for first-time state council staff members to meet with Smithsonian project directors two years in advance of the tour; travel expenses covered by MoMS.
- National Planning Meeting for *New Harmonies*—state council staff member and state scholar meet with project organizers, exhibition curators, and other participating state council personnel one year in advance of the state tour; travel expenses covered by MoMS.
- State Program Planning Workshop—each state council is expected to **host** a program planning workshop for all local host sites, 6-9 months prior to the exhibition opening. FSHC personnel will attend and provide exhibition training and assist in program planning discussions; FSHC personnel travel expenses covered by MoMS, all other meeting expenses covered by state council.
- Installation Workshop—each state council is expected to **host** an installation workshop for all in-state participating venues at the site of the exhibition's state opening, just prior to the opening. SITES personnel will attend and provide the installation training. Travel expenses for SITES personnel covered by MoMS, all other meeting expenses covered by state council.

Public Relations/Marketing

- Participation in national publicity efforts by the Smithsonian;
- Smithsonian web page, at www.museumonmainstreet.org, featuring each state's rural itinerary and homepage links to each state humanities council;
- Project press and marketing toolkit: digital press images, skeleton news releases for local use, exhibition graphic identity for marketing use, tips for publicity and marketing at the local level;
- One multi-colored outdoor banner featuring state council name;
- Full color promotional poster with state council logo (50 per venue and 50 for each state council, total 350) and postcards (500/venue and 500/state council; total 3500)*
- The project website, www.keyingredients.org, invites community hosts to share their food traditions and publicize their exhibition-related educational activities and public programs.

Fundraising Resources

- MoMS informational brochure (upon request);
- Foundation proposal template;
- As required, letters of support from SITES and Federation;
- Sample press clippings and testimonials from previous participating humanities councils;
- Opportunities to provide underwriting credit on exhibition's credit panel.

Education Materials

- Take-away exhibit brochure/family guide featuring state council credit (1,000/site, 500/council, total of 6,500);*
- Teacher's Guide (50/site, total of 300);*
- Docent training guide (20/site, total of 120);*
- Local Exhibition Support Manuals featuring program development strategies, local exhibition development guidelines, marketing suggestions, exhibition script and installation instructions. Provided in hard copy format and also available on-line for easy access and for quick distribution of updated information (1 per local site and 1 for state coordinator);

- Program ideas and educational resource materials compiled from previous state council participants.

* Quantities based on a six-venue tour