

example, cutting boards can be color coded and dedicated for use with a specific product. One color would be used only for cutting raw poultry, another only for fresh vegetables, and another for breads. This helps to prevent the danger of cross contamination when handling different types of foods.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention identified common factors that are responsible for food-borne illnesses, including purchasing food from unsafe sources, failing to cook food adequately, holding food at improper temperatures, using contaminated equipment, and poor personal hygiene. Most of these are related to time-temperature abuse and cross-contamination. The ServSafe program developed by the National Restaurant Association provides the knowledge to properly design a food safety management system that monitors and reinforces food safety principles from receiving, storing, preparing, cooking, holding, cooling, reheating, to serving food.

Beverages

The distillation, fermentation, and compounding of spirits is surrounded by a history as long and rich as the history of food. No one really knows who the alchemist was who invented the distillation process, so it is no wonder that many people through the centuries have referred to it as a gift from the gods. It was the Arabs or Saracens who gave us the words *alcohol* and *alembic*, the latter word meaning a still. In fact, the word *alembic* is used in all but the English-speaking countries even today.²⁷

Beers, wines, and spirits can enhance foods and add to the overall dining experience. However, a lively bar will seldom complement a candlelit dining experience, just as a great selection of wines will do little to enhance a hot dog stand on the beach. Beers, wines, and spirits not only make a good companion for a dining experience, but they are often the predominant flavor in a sauce, entrée, or dessert. They can also be used in food preparations to season and tenderize foods.

When alcoholic beverages are used in hot food dishes, the alcohol quickly evaporates, leaving only the flavor. In dessert recipes in which an alcoholic beverage is not heated and cooked off, the practice is often referred to as *perfuming*. In short, the relationship between foods and beverages is a marriage made in heaven and there are many cultures who take the relationship for granted. For example, in Germany, you can order a beer with your Big Mac and, on a trip to Japan, you can find vending machines offering not only food but also cold beer or hot sake.

Beverage Operations

Successful beverage operations depend on many of the same fundamental business principles that we previously discussed in developing efficient, profitable, and safe foodservice organizations. In addition, beverage operations require a great deal of attention to detail because they represent a substantial investment in equipment, furniture, décor, and inventory.

Books, television, and movies have all painted a picture of the bartender full of character, serving the guest whose stress is lifted away with a warm greeting. At the guest's request, the bartender reaches for a bottle or pulls the tap. That practice called "free-pouring" is fading away to be recalled as a thing of the past. Today, it is common to see the increasing use of technology in bar operations in response to dramatic drops in profit margins. The causes of these drops are heavy taxes on alcoholic beverages and a change in consumption behaviors, as people are drinking less but ordering more premium products. These changes along with guests' intolerance of higher prices are leading to narrower profit margins. However, interest in the status of premium brands holds the promise of increasing sales and profit margins.