




# Injera

Injera
Flatbread

<span></span> <div>This meal, consisting of <i>injera</i> and several kinds of <i>wat</i> or <i>tsebhi</i> (stew), is typical of Ethiopian and Eritrean cuisine.</div>
Place of origin:
Ethiopia, Eritrea and neighbouring countries <sup>[1][2]</sup>
Included in the national cuisines:
Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen
Main ingredient(s):
Teff flour (sometimes wheat, barley, corn or rice flour)
Recipes at Wikibooks:
 <a href="#">Injera</a>
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**Injera** (Amharic, Tigrinya: ኦንጅራ *ənǧära* [ɪndʒəɾa], sometimes transliterated *enjera*; Oromo: *budena*; Somali: *canjeero*) is a yeast-risen flatbread with a unique, slightly spongy texture. Traditionally made out of teff flour,<sup>[3]</sup> it is a national dish in Ethiopia and Eritrea. A similar variant is eaten in Somalia and Djibouti (where it is called *canjeero* or *lahooh*), Yemen (where it is known as *lahoh*), and Sudan.

## Ingredients and cooking method

The most valued grain used to make injera is from the tiny, iron-rich teff. However, its production is limited to certain middle elevations and regions with adequate rainfall, so it is relatively expensive for the average household. Because the overwhelming majority of highland Ethiopians are poor farming households that grow their own subsistence grain, wheat, barley, corn, and/or rice flour are sometimes used to replace some or all of the teff content. There are also different varieties of injera in Ethiopia, such as *nech* (white), *kay* (red) and *tikur* (black).

In making injera, teff flour is mixed with water and allowed to ferment for several days, as with sourdough starter. As a result of this process, injera has a mildly sour taste. The injera is then ready to bake into large flat pancakes, done either on a specialized electric stove or, more commonly, on a clay plate (Amharic *mittad*, Tigrinya *mogogo*) placed over a fire. Unusual for a yeast bread, the dough has sufficient liquidity to be poured onto the baking surface, rather than rolled out. In terms of shape, injera compares to the French crêpe and the South Indian dosa as a flatbread cooked in a circle and used as a base for other foods. The taste and texture, however, are unique and unlike the crêpe and dosa, and more similar to the South Indian appam. The bottom surface of the injera, which touches the heating surface, will have a relatively smooth texture, while the top will become porous. This porous structure allows the

injera to be a good bread to scoop up sauces and dishes.

## Consumption

In Eritrea and Ethiopia, a variety of stews, sometimes salads (during Ethiopian Orthodox fasting, for which believers abstain from most animal products) or simply more injera (called *injera firfir*), are placed upon the injera for serving. Using one's right hand, small pieces of injera are torn and used to grasp the stews and salads for eating. The injera under these stews soaks up the juices and flavours of the foods and, after the stews and salads are gone, this bread is also consumed. Injera is thus simultaneously food, eating utensil, and plate. When the entire "tablecloth" of injera is gone, the meal is over.

In Somalia, at lunch (referred to as *qaddo*), the main meal of the day, injera might also be eaten with a stew (*maraq*) or soup.<sup>113</sup>

## Contemporary use



*Canjeero*, the Somali version of injera, is a staple of Somali and Djiboutian cuisine.



Injera figures prominently in Yemeni cuisine, where it is known as *lahoh*.

In Eritrea and Ethiopia, injera is eaten daily in virtually every household. Preparing injera requires considerable time and resources. The bread is cooked on a large, black, clay plate over a fire. This set-up is a stove called a *mitad* (in Amharic) or *mogogo* (in Tigrinya), which is difficult to use, produces large amounts of smoke, and can be dangerous to children. Because of this inefficient cooking method, much of the area's limited fuel resources are wasted. However, in 2003, a research group was given the Ashden award<sup>[4]</sup> for designing a new type of stove<sup>[5]</sup> for cooking injera. The new stove uses available fuel sources (including dung, locally called *kubet*) for cooking injera and other foods efficiently, saving the heat from the fuel. Several parts are made in the central cities of each country, while other parts are molded from clay by women of local areas. However, many women in urban areas now use electric injera stoves, which are topped with a large metal plate. In the United States, injera is most often made on a Bethany electric lefse griddle.

Outside of the Ethiopian and Eritrean Plateau, injera may be found in grocery stores and restaurants specializing in Eritrean, Ethiopian, or Somali foods. Varieties of injera are also eaten in Yemen, as well as Sudan.

## References

- [1] [http://books.google.com/books?id=bWMIKz\\_Zq-IC&pg=PA212&dq=injera&hl=en&sa=X&ei=PbybUvy5PILmywPfiIDwDA&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=injera&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=bWMIKz_Zq-IC&pg=PA212&dq=injera&hl=en&sa=X&ei=PbybUvy5PILmywPfiIDwDA&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=injera&f=false)
- [2] [http://books.google.com/books?id=Qi-KQchGks8C&pg=PA68&dq=injera+eritrea&hl=en&sa=X&ei=gbybUsOSKYnhywOF8YKwCA&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=injera%20eritrea&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=Qi-KQchGks8C&pg=PA68&dq=injera+eritrea&hl=en&sa=X&ei=gbybUsOSKYnhywOF8YKwCA&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=injera%20eritrea&f=false)
- [3] Science of Bread: Ethiopian injera recipe (<http://www.exploratorium.edu/cooking/bread/recipe-injera.html>)
- [4] Ashden awards: injera bread stove (<http://www.ashdenawards.org/winners/ertc>)
- [5] Pictures of the improved Injera stoves (<http://www.punchdown.org/rvb/mogogo/pictures/pictures.html>)

## External links

- Mesob Across America: Ethiopian Food in the U.S.A. (<http://www.pitt.edu/~kloman/mesobacrossamerica.html>) A book about the history and culture of Ethiopian cuisine
  - Ethiopian Food: Mesob Across America (<http://ethiopianfood.wordpress.com/>) A blog about Ethiopian food
  - Ethiopian Restaurant Guide (<http://www.pitt.edu/~kloman/ethiopianrestaurantguide.html>) Includes video visits to some restaurants
  - Ashden awards: injera bread stove (<http://www.ashdenawards.org/winners/ertc>)
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