

6 EASY GARNISHING IDEAS

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KITCHEN

“We eat with our eyes first,” happens to be a common and true statement. According to research, our perception of taste, smell, and flavor are affected before we take our first bite simply by what we see on the plate (*Physiology & Behavior 107(4) · August 2012*). Whether we realize it or not, dishes that are colorfully and pleasingly presented will heighten our senses and influence our taste buds more than ones that are colorless and drab.

Adding eye appeal to a plate or finished food does not need to be complicated. A sprinkling of fresh herbs, citrus zest, cheese or chopped nuts over top is a great start to adding color and texture. To move beyond that, a few simple tools and techniques are all that are necessary to take any dish up a notch or two.

Some general plating guidelines include:

- Consider the plate or bowl size and color. Plate or bowl size should be reasonable and complimentary to the serving size. White is a classic color that shows off most foods well, and colored dishware can provide a striking contrast especially to neutral colored food.
- Arrange food items in odd numbers and add a bit of height if possible, keeping it within the rim of the plate.
- Choose only edible garnish, ones that compliment flavor, color, contrast and texture.

IDEA #1 - DROPS



Photos:iStock.com

Option 1:

- Place sauce into a squeeze bottle
- Choose where to place drops on the plate
- Vary the size of the drops (photo 1) or make them equal



Option 2:

- Use a toothpick to form the “tail” on each drop (photo 2)

IDEA #2 - DRIZZLE



Photos:iStock.com

Option 1:

- Using a squeeze bottle or spoon, lightly drizzle sauce over food and allow to pool on plate.
- The addition of fresh fruit builds flavor, color, texture and interest.

Option 2:

- Spoon sauce around food forming pools and drops on plate



IDEA #3 - LINES - Zig Zag, Parallel, Intersecting



- With the sauce in a squeeze bottle, gently apply pressure and form desired line pattern. Make pattern directly on plate (then place food on top), or drizzle over food and on to plate.
- Sprinkle something complimentary (such as chopped nuts) lightly over top of food and on to plate.
- Whipped topping piped decoratively on edges provides a finished look.

Photo:iStock.com

IDEAS #4 and #5 - QUENELLE and LEMON TWIST

- Using two spoons, form a [quenelle](#) out of the whipped topping. (Also see - [Quenelles Dress Up A Plate](#) retrieved from [www.finecooking.com](#))
- Using a paring knife, thinly slice a **lemon**, then cut $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way in half and twist. The sprig of mint adds further color and texture to the dish.



Photo:Love+Craft Kitchen

IDEA #6 - "SWOOSH OR PAINT"



- Place a spoonful of sauce onto plate, then use the spoon to form a "swoosh or smear" by spreading part of the sauce away from the original spoonful. The shape can form a comma, or be straight.



Photos:iStock.com



- For a slight variation, place a spoonful of sauce on one end of the plate, use a pastry brush to "paint" the sauce across the plate in one or two motions.
- Sauce does not need to be evenly distributed.
- Food may be placed on top of the sauce or to the side.

Ready for More Ideas?

For further ideas on garnishing, check out these websites -

- [How to Garnish](#) retrieved from [How Stuff Works](#)
- [How to Make Fruit and Vegetable Garnishes](#) retrieved from [FineDinings.com](#)
- [How to Make Cucumber Garnish](#) retrieved from [Gala in the Kitchen](#)
- [Basic Food Plating Techniques](#) retrieved from [Webstaurant.com](#)