



**EAST TEXAS A&M**  
UNIVERSITY

**HIST 413.01E (83389)**  
**FOOD IN WORLD HISTORY**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2025**



*The Four Seasons* by Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526-1593)

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Professor: Dr. Cynthia Ross  
Class Time: MWF 1:00pm – 1:50pm  
Class Location: SS 141  
Office Location: SS 104  
Office Hours: MWF 11:00am - noon; TR 11:00am – 1:00pm  
Instructor Email: [cynthia.ross@etamu.edu](mailto:cynthia.ross@etamu.edu)

Email is the best way to reach me outside of class. I typically respond to email during regular business hours, within one day during the week; emails sent after 5:00pm on Friday may not get a response until Monday morning.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Course Description**

This course examines the role of food in shaping world history from ancient times through the modern era. We will focus attention on crucial transitions in food history such as the agricultural revolution, the Columbian Exchange, and globalization. Using the lens of food history and culinary cultures this course will examine the connections and exchanges within historical events and related issues such as empire, migration, race, class, gender, religion, power, identity, and the environment.

This class also fulfills a requirement in the Food Studies Minor, an interdisciplinary minor in Food Studies through the Department of Agriculture which provides students the opportunity to examine food choices and issues from multiple perspectives. The minor uses courses from a variety of disciplines and is open to all majors.

### Course Readings

*Note: Students are welcome to get the books in any format that makes it easy to read the entire book, including audiobook; a print or ebook will be necessary for paper citations.*

Required:

Wurgaft, Benjamin Aldes, and Merry White. *Ways of Eating: Exploring Food through History and Culture*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2023. ISBN: 978-0-520-39298-4 (ebook, hardcover, paperback, audiobook; full text available online through Waters Library)

Turner, Jack. *Spice: The History of a Temptation*. New York: Vintage Books, 2005. ISBN: 978-0-375-70705-6 (ebook, hardcover, paperback; one print copy available at Waters Library)

Stone, Daniel. *The Food Explorer: The True Adventures of the Globe-Trotting Botanist Who Transformed What America Eats*. New York: Dutton, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-101-99059-9 (ebook, hardcover, paperback, audiobook)

Regan-Lefebvre, Jennifer. *Imperial Wine: How the British Empire Made Wine's New World*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2022. ISBN: 978-0-52034-368-9 (ebook, hardcover, paperback, audiobook; full text available online through Waters Library)

Collingham, Lizzie. *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food*. New York: Penguin Press, 2011. ISBN: 978-1-59420-329-9 (ebook, hardcover, paperback)

Any additional article length readings will be provided by the Professor

### Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems) in relation to the history of food.
2. Students will provide citations in proper Turabian/Chicago format.

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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### Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

The reading assignments are listed for each week. This is a discussion-based course, somewhat similar to a graduate level course with more instructor guidance. That means we will all sit in a circle, think about, and discuss the books so the quality of the course is dependent on your engagement; you must do the readings, take notes as you read, and highlight as needed. Ask questions and answer questions in class with thoughtful responses. There may be a few mini-lectures throughout the semester to provide important background for your reading.

Note: This is a class that requires student attendance and inter-personal interaction. D2L will only be used for the syllabus, gradebook, and assignment submission when Turnitin is required.

### **Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course:**

Read the syllabus and adhere to the schedule. Complete the readings, take notes as you read, attend class, complete all written assignments to the best of your ability. The texts will drive classroom discussion, a crucial course requirement and a large part of your grade. You are responsible for all the material contained in the readings; if you do not read them, you will have a difficult semester. I expect professional and polite interactions with everyone in the class.

### **Assignments:**

Food and Culture Survey	25 points
Short Papers (5 @ 50 points each)	250 points
AI Project (Pilot; first run)	50 points
Food History Digital Archive Project (scaffolded)	300 points
Discussion and Engagement	300 points
Goodbye Notecard	25 points
TOTAL:	950 points
Student Evaluation BONUS	25 points

**\*Student Evaluation Bonus:** At the end of the semester, if you complete the student evaluation for the class, you can upload a screen shot of the completion screen for 25 points. Please make sure it is not a screenshot of any responses.

Semester Grades: A: 100-90%; B: 89-80%; C: 79-70%; D: 69-60%; F: 59% and below.

The general grading criteria for all written assignments in this class is based on the following:

A = Mastery of content and reading material; factual accuracy; thoughtful interpretation or argument that synthesizes original thoughts and ideas with content; technically clean

B = Good-to-excellent command of most content and reading material; competent factual accuracy; a generally solid historical argument backed with adequate evidence

C = Fair command of content material; reasonable factual accuracy; ability to articulate a specific thesis or argument even if it is not original or is poorly supported by the evidence

D = Poor command of content; factual errors; no real argument driving the essay

F = Even worse than above; completely off topic; no work submission

### **Assignments / Assessments**

#### **Food and Culture Survey:**

On the first day of class, each student will receive a printed survey to complete on their personal experience of food and culture. This is a combination ice breaker, reflective exercise, and practical planning tool so thoughtful answers are key. We will use your responses to this survey

several times over the course of the semester and it will help me determine the experiential portion of the class.

### **Short Papers:**

These papers satisfy the Student Learning Outcome #1 (Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems). Each assigned book has a corresponding short paper assignment of 3 to 5 pages. Prompts may be reflective, imaginative, argumentative, analytical, expository, or creative. Each assignment will be discussed in class.

### **AI Project (Pilot; first run):**

This project begins with the foundational belief that artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to be a powerful research tool for historians. Used thoughtfully and intentionally, AI can help us uncover and explore connections, generate new research questions or explore established research from different angles, and provide access to a wide range of ideas. However, there are also significant concerns related to the use of AI: how to use it ethically, how to be transparent in its use, how to evaluate its accuracy, and how to maintain scholarly credibility while incorporating these tools into historical research.

This assignment is an opportunity to learn the strengths and weaknesses of AI for historical research by engaging with it critically rather than just accepting its output without question. Students will practice evaluating AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, completeness, and scholarly value, and will learn how to document and cite AI contributions responsibly.

There are many different AI programs available and under development by research institutions, universities, libraries, and the private industry. However, as this is a pilot assignment, we will focus on commonly known, freely available programs such as ChatGPT, Gemini, or other accessible large language models (LLMs).

The project is designed to take approximately 4–5 hours to complete. As this is a pilot project, if students complete all steps to the best of their ability—providing clear documentation, verifying AI information against scholarly sources, and completing the written reflection—they will receive full credit. If all steps are not completed, the result will be a zero (essentially, pass/fail grading similar to the Zotero assignment in 300 level courses).

Students will choose one AI-based research project from the approved list below. Project guidelines are available during the first week of class.

#### Assignment Options:

1. Historical Recipe Reconstruction
2. Source Comparison Exercise
3. Interview with a Historical Figure
4. Archive Simulation

## 5. AI-Generated Bibliography with Verification

### **Food History Digital Archive Research Project:**

Over the course of the semester, you will complete a major research project exploring a topic in food history by using a reputable open-access digital archive. Your research should connect historical developments in food to broader world history themes—such as trade, migration, colonialism, globalization, or environmental change—and to your own lived experience. The final product will be a 15-page (+/- 10%; not including cover page, images, or bibliography) research paper that draws on primary sources from the archive, supported by other relevant primary and secondary sources.

You will work through this project in stages, with scaffolded assignments to help define your research question, locate and analyze sources, and develop your argument. You will also learn to critically evaluate the strengths, limitations, and biases of archival material. Optional: you may include an experiential element—such as recreating a historical recipe or reconstructing a menu—and integrate your reflections.

In addition to the final paper, you will deliver a short presentation summarizing your research, key findings, and (if applicable) your experiential component. All work must be original and ethically sourced, with clear documentation of any tools used, including AI (use is optional and very limited), following course guidelines on transparency and citation. This project is designed to deepen your historical research skills while encouraging creativity and meaningful engagement with food history.

Note: Allowable use of AI in this project must follow the rules and guidelines set out in the AI Project with even more strict limitations to avoid academic dishonesty. This will be discussed extensively in class.

Scaffolded assignments include:

1. Topic Proposal (Week 3) – 1-2 pages outlining your research question and potential sources.
2. Preliminary Source List (Week 5) – Include at least 2 primary and 3 secondary sources from approved archives and scholarly databases.
3. Annotated Bibliography (Week 7) – Summaries and critical evaluations of each source.
4. Outline & Tentative Thesis Statement (Week 9) – Structured outline showing how you will integrate global and local perspectives.
5. Rough Draft (Week 12) – Approximately 10 pages with revised tentative thesis statement and citations.
6. Final Paper (Week 15) – 15 pages, Turabian (Chicago-style) citations, incorporating feedback.
7. Presentation (Week 15) – 5–7 minute in-class presentation of your hands-on component.

### **Discussion and Engagement:**

Regular engagement and keeping up with the material is critical in this discussion based course. Engagement includes attending class, being on time, taking part in class discussion, and completing assignments by the due date. If students have a problem with engagement due to illness, work, family, or life you need to contact me right away. Flexibility and extensions are possible if I know what is going on. **Absences:** University policy does allow excused absences in certain situations. These include participation in a required/authorized university activity, verified illness (doctor's note or positive dated covid PCR test), death in a student's immediate family, jury duty, court dates, and military service. All these excuses require proper documentation. Any other absences are **NOT** excused absences.

You must complete the readings prior to class and come prepared for discussion. Have the readings available to refer to or have notes handy in whatever form you take them. You are encouraged to ask questions and it is helpful to prepare them ahead of time. Unprepared attendance may be treated as an absence.

Students are expected to create and sustain an open intellectual classroom environment, which fosters discussion - you should listen to each other's comments and questions with an open mind and respect viewpoints other than your own.

Students must also be open to understanding why people of the past did what they did, and should not dismiss these actors' views because they might be perceived as "wrong."

I evaluate the discussion portion of your Engagement grade on the following criteria:

A = Student is always prepared; makes frequent voluntary contributions to classroom discussion

B = Student is generally prepared; makes occasional voluntary contributions to discussion or participates only when called on

C = Student is usually prepared but rarely voluntarily speaks

D = Student is generally unprepared and does not contribute to discussion

F = Student is unprepared and appears disinterested in contributing to discussion

For a three-credit course, expect to spend nine hours on class work per week outside of regular class attendance to stay on top of the workload. That's about 12 hours a week, total. The expected reading load for a 400 level university class is 150 – 200 pages per week. University classes can be difficult but not impossible with strict time management.

Note: Upper level undergraduate students should not skip classes or be chronically late to class, especially in the major. Students are expected to attend every class session; attendance will be tracked. Each unexcused absence beyond two (2) instances will result in a semester grade reduction; excessive unexcused absences (more than 4) may be cause for a failing grade.

### **Goodbye Notecard:**

On the last day of instruction, each student will receive a notecard. Each person will put their name at the top of the card and five things they learned in this class that they will take with them in the future, turning it in at the end of class. This could be related to the course, college life, technology, pretty much anything.

### **Remember:**

Read and review the syllabus

Attend class; do not be late

Be present both physically and mentally

Check university email and D2L regularly  
Stay current on your reading schedule  
Take notes in any way that is helpful to you  
Complete assignments by the due date  
Contact me whenever you have questions or concerns

## **D2L TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@etamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@etamu.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU loaner laptop, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your professor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

Students are encouraged to email the professor with questions, concerns, or comments. Students must provide a valid return email address for replies. Unless otherwise announced, students can expect replies between 8:00am and 5:00pm during the week. Response times are not guaranteed over the weekend.

When sending an email always do the following:

1) Use a subject line. This tells me what the topic is and prevents your message from ending up in my junk mail.

2) Include your class and section (or class time). I need to know exactly which of my courses you are in. This course is Hist 413.01E.

3) Use clear, formal English in your emails. Before sending ask yourself, “Would I send this email to my boss?” If not, revise it for professionalism.

3) End the email with your first and last name, that is “sign” your message. I need to know who you are. If you go by a name that is different than the roster, please let me know.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

All writing assignments should be in standard format – Times New Roman, 12-point font, one-inch margins, double-spaced.

Standard paragraphs are 6 to 8 sentences; short paragraphs are 4 to 6 sentences.

Turabian style (Chicago style) with full author-title footnotes and bibliography page is required of all history majors.

### **Late Assignments:**

Any work submitted more than three days past the deadline will receive a one letter grade reduction.

### **Extra Credit:**

There is one opportunity for extra credit in this course. Students are encouraged to talk to the instructor early and often if they are having problems in the course.

### **Student Conduct:**

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook)

### **Academic Honesty:**

In all courses, I expect that all work that you do and turn in is your own. It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and myself that no form of plagiarism, cheating, collusion, or

any other form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as deliberately taking the words or ideas of someone else and passing them off as your own. Cheating is obtaining unauthorized assistance on any assignment. Collusion is the selling of academic products with the intention that they be submitted to satisfy an academic requirement. Students are expected to uphold and support the highest academic standards at all times.

It is fine to use other people's words and ideas as long as they receive credit in citations. If you are unsure about the precise definition of plagiarism and/or think you may have committed this form of academic dishonesty, see the instructor or visit the Online Writing Lab before you turn in the assignment.

If a student commits academic dishonesty on any part of an assignment, the assignment will receive a zero with no possibility for make-up. Additionally, any incidents of academic dishonesty may be reported to the Office of the Provost by the Professor according to university policy 13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty.

### **AI Use in Course**

East Texas A&M University acknowledges there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

**No AI use is allowed in this course, except where explicitly allowed in the AI Project and within the strict limitations set out in the Semester Project Guidelines. Students should not use any text generated by AI in any of the short papers or other assignments. Use of AI to write any part of an assignment and present it as the student's work is unethical and academic dishonesty, thus prohibited. This applies to this course only (Hist 413.01E).**

Students should be aware of the requirements in all their classes and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

### **Writing Lab:**

The [ETAMU Online Writing Lab](#) is a valuable service free to any student. They can help you get started on a paper, help with drafts, and answer specific questions about citation style, grammar, and spelling. While they will not write the paper for you, they are there to give feedback and guidance.

### **Students with Disabilities Information:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that

provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Student Disability Resources & Services  
East Texas A&M University  
Waters Library, Room 162  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
Fax (903) 468-8148  
[StudentDisabilityServices@etamu.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@etamu.edu)

### **Nondiscrimination Notice:**

ETAMU will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement:**

Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedure/s/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **Statement on Student Grievances:**

Students who have questions or concerns about the Instructor's course policies or the conduct either of the Instructor or a classmate should first consult with the Instructor. In the event of a lack of resolution or satisfaction on the matter, the student may bring their concerns to the head of the History Department, Sharon Kowalsky ([Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu](mailto:Sharon.Kowalsky@etamu.edu)). If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion to the matter, students may bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Dean of Students per procedures outlined on pp. 15-19 of the Student Guide Book.

### **ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health:**

The Counseling Center at ETAMU, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.etamu.edu/counsel](http://www.etamu.edu/counsel).

## **Syllabus Change Policy:**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events may make it necessary for the professor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced as soon as possible.

## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

### **WEEK 1: Introduction to Food History & This Course**

- **T Aug 26** – Course Introduction, syllabus, food & culture survey, opening discussion
- **Th Aug 28** – Wurgaft & White, *Ways of Eating*, Introduction through Ch. 1; Discussion

**Assignment: Familiarize yourself with the syllabus, readings, course  
Complete Food and Culture Survey for Thursday**

### **WEEK 2: Ways of Eating**

- **T Sept 2** – *Ways of Eating*, Vignette 2 - Ch. 3; Discussion
- **Th Sept 4** – *Ways of Eating*, Vignette 4 - Ch.5; Discussion

**Assignment: AI Project Due Thursday (no penalty extension available to Week 5)**

### **WEEK 3: Ways of Eating**

- **T Sept 9** – *Ways of Eating*, Vignette 6 - Ch.7; Discussion
- **Th Sept 11** – *Ways of Eating*, Vignette 8 – Conclusion; Discussion
  - Release Short Paper #1

**Assignment: Research Topic Proposal – 1-2 pages outlining your research question and potential sources Due Thursday**

### **WEEK 4: Spice**

- **T Sept 16** – Turner, *Spice*, Introduction – Ch. 2; Discussion
- **Th Sept 18** – *Spice*, Ch. 3–4; Discussion

**Assignment: Short Paper #1 Due Thursday**

### **WEEK 5: Spice**

- **T Sept 23** – *Spice*, Ch. 5–6
- **Th Sept 25** – *Spice*, Ch. 7–Epilogue
  - Release Short Paper #2

**Assignment: Preliminary Source List – Include at least 2 primary and 3 secondary sources from approved archives and scholarly databases Due Thursday**

**WEEK 6: The Food Explorer**

- **T Sept 30** – Stone, *The Food Explorer*, Front Matter – Part 1 (Ch. 1-5)
- **Th Oct 2** – *The Food Explorer*, Part II (Ch. 6-10)

**Assignment: Short Paper #2 Due Thursday**

**WEEK 7: The Food Explorer**

- **T Oct 7** – *The Food Explorer*, Part III (Ch. 11-15)
- **Th Oct 9** – *The Food Explorer*, Part IV (Ch. 16-Epilogue)
  - Release Short Paper #3

**Assignment: Annotated Bibliography – Summaries and critical evaluations of each source Due Thursday**

**WEEK 8: Imperial Wine**

- **T Oct 14** – Regan-Lefebvre, *Imperial Wine*, Introduction – Part I (Ch. 1-5)
- **Th Oct 16** – *Imperial Wine*, Part II (Ch. 6-12)

**Assignment: Short Paper #3 Due Thursday**

**WEEK 9: Imperial Wine**

- **T Oct 21** – *Imperial Wine*, Part III (Ch. 13-16)
- **Th Oct 23** – *Imperial Wine*, Part IV (Ch. 17-Conclusion)
  - Release Short Paper #4

**Assignment: Outline & Tentative Thesis Statement – Structured outline showing how you will integrate global and local perspectives Due Thursday**

**WEEK 10: The Taste of War**

- **T Oct 28** – Collingham, *The Taste of War*, Introduction – Ch. 3
- **Th Oct 30** – *The Taste of War*, Ch. 4-7

**Assignment: Short Paper #4 Due Thursday**

**WEEK 11: The Taste of War**

- **T Nov 4** – *The Taste of War*, Ch. 8-10
- **Th Nov 6** – *The Taste of War*, Ch. 11-13

**Assignment: Continue reading and working on research project**

**WEEK 12: The Taste of War**

- **T Nov 11** – *The Taste of War*, Ch. 14-16
- **Th Nov 13** – *The Taste of War*, Ch. 17-19
  - Release Short Paper #5

**Assignment: Rough Draft – Approximately 10 pages with revised tentative thesis statement and citations Due Thursday**

**WEEK 13**

- **T Nov 18** – TBD (may need extra days for reading, discussion, projects)
- **Th Nov 20** – TBD

**Assignment: Short Paper #5 Due Thursday**

**WEEK 14**

- **T Nov 25** – TBD
- **Th Nov 27** – No Class – Thanksgiving Break

**Assignment: Record what you eat on Thanksgiving and prepare to discuss**

**WEEK 15**

- **T Dec 2** – TBD
- **Th Dec 4** – Final discussion & course wrap-up

**Assignment: Final Paper – 15 pages, Turabian (Chicago-style) citations, incorporating feedback Due Thursday**

**FINALS WEEK**

**Tuesday, December 9, 1:15pm – 3:15pm**

**Student Presentations– 5–7 minute in-class presentation of your hands-on component.**

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