Mongolian traditional food is adjusted to the condition of way of life. It can be divided into milk products, meat or meat products, and vegetable or green products. Mongolians produced over 3,000 types of food and beverages. Let’s take samples.

**Milk skim**

This is a type of dairy product. It doesn’t need much skill. It is popular among Mongolians. It is tasty and nourishing food rich in calories. Mongolians pour the milk of an ewe, nanny-goat, cow or yak into cast iron pot and boil it on a cow-dung fire. We then ladle the scalding milk into the cast-iron pot in haste until frothiness. The milk froth rises. Then we cool the scalding milk gradually. The milk froth is coated over the cooled milk, which sits overnight. The coating solidifies the thickness or thinness of the coating, which depends upon milk’s creaminess.

Then we separate the milk coating or milk skim from the pot and skim the coating and fold it in a half moon shape, it is called ṥроме (milk skim) on the wooden slab. We consume it as fresh or dry at summer or consume it in winter. We also freeze it. We produce ghee from milk skim by rendering it and make diverse food by mixing the ghee with agriophyllum, Gobi- rhubarb, sphalerocarpus gracilis, cynomorium and alpine bistort.

We also mix the ghee with the barley flour, millet and rice. Also the milk skim is mixed with cherry berries and other berries and boiled curds of ewe milk. There are varieties of dairy products such as нунаах (mash), зуусаамал (jelly), zuurmag (paste) and khalimag (rendered cream).
Boiled curds

Mongols milk cow, ewe or nanny goat and boil the milk gently. Then they curdle the boiled milk. Curdled milk releases whey. Then it is boiled in the whey until the whey is absorbed away. Mongols scatter the boiled curdles on the rack to dry and store them for winter use. They also mix the boiled curds with cream or milk skim and eat it. The boiled curds are a combination of all the good qualities of dairy products. They are the nourishing food. Only Mongolians make these kinds of products from milk. The boiled curds are good treatments for chronic troubles of gall and liver.

Oblong fritter

Mongolian people ferment clotted milk from cow, ewe and nanny goat and distil milk vodka. The cheese curds are separated from the whey in a gauze sack. The separated cheese curds are called aarts. These cheese curds are squeezed in square and sliced into oblong fritters by wire and dried out on the rack. These are called süün khurud (oblong fritters), and they can be kept for a long time. These are dainties not only for young people, but also for old people by their taste and nourishment.
Limb meal, saddle of mutton

Mongolians often make meals by boiling the limbs of large or small creatures which are then combined with fat. Plano Carpini, a thirteenth century emissary from the West, attended the celebrations associated with Güyük’s accession to the throne and noted that when the Mongolian invited him to the pavilion, they treated him with salt-less dried meat with pickled onion. This is evidence that Mongolians dried meat without salt. Instead they used separate pickled onion. From ancient times the Mongolians made meals by boiling dismembered limbs or pieces of mutton and treating their honorary guests or visitors at the feasts or weddings. Such Mongolian meals are divided into those in which the whole carcass is prepared. We take off the internal organs and pluck the hair of sheep or goat carcass. Then we stew the whole carcass, cover it with the ghee, and offer it to the feast. Another type of meal consists of pieces of mutton, goat, and seared shanks. It is possible to add some limbs to the above. This is offered at the ceremonies surrounding a new ger warming, wedding, lunar month holiday and commemoration of the elder’s birthday. Honorary meals consist of head, tail fat, shoulder and four long ribs, shinbones and rectum. These are used for the great feast. Other types of meals consist of a shoulder and four long ribs.

Shoulder and four long ribs

This is boiled shoulder and four long ribs. This is considered to be sacred food. It is mentioned in the historical resources that Mongolians offered this food to the French missionary Rubric in the thirteenth century.
Shin-bone preference

The shinbone is one of the preferable limbs for the Mongolians. This is a very ancient custom. If you eat to the dullness, you can be a dullard. This is a famous saying. Mongolians prefer the normal fill of a child’s tummy. Zanabazar, the first grand lama of Mongolia, used to eat only one shin-bone a day. Mongolians believe that if a mother eats a shin-bone after her delivery of baby, she can get strength easily. That is why mothers eat shin-bone’s muscles and drink its stock; Mongols wash the new-born babies with its stock. One should never break a shinbone. But if a baby’s ears ache, we boil the marrow of a shinbone and drop it into the baby’s ears. The ailing of ears stops. This is a traditional. Except for these, we let married couples hold a shinbone and stand up them toward the rising sun and utter:

Homage to the rising sun
Homage to the shinbone
Homage to the solemn bond of our four parents
We offer meat including the shinbone to the altar.

There are many things concerning shinbone in Mongolia.

Steamed dumplings *buuz*

*Buuz* is a delicate food together with *khuushuur* (meat in a fried pastry) *tsomoi* and *byanz*. They are offered to the visitors. The filling of *buuz* consists of minced meat with fat seasoned with salt, onions, garlic, allium mongolicum and chives. We cook the dumplings in a hot steam.

Sausage of colon

There are many traditional sausages in Mongolia, including *tsagaan shavai* or sausage of colon. This is made from seasoned meat and blood and stuffed in a tube of colon (gut). But *tsagaan shavai* is sausage made of the clotted blood of horse or ox mixed with flour and salt seasoned with onion and garlic, stuffed in the colon of horse or ox. It is boiled in salty water. If you do not over-boil it, it is a soft and tasty sausage. It is necessary to slice and eat the sausage when it is a lukewarm.

**HURGAN BANTAN**

Sort of flour gruel

*Bantan* is meat broth with very little flour pellets. This *bantan* is called *khurgan bantan* (lamb gruel), *khonin bantan* (sheep gruel) and *ükher bantan* (cow gruel). The meat of *bantan* is powdered or chipped. The flour of *bantan* is formed into tiny pellets. *Bantan* is seasoned with onion, allium mongolicum and german garlic.

The missionary Roubruck noted down that "Mönkh Khaan was having *bantan*; it seemed that he had a hang-over when he entered his room". This means that the Mongolians have had this food from ancient times. It was probably a privileged provision.
Snake shaped cake

Mongolians make diverse kinds of flour cakes, before the Lunar New Year holiday or a wedding. First, we make coiled snake shaped cake. It is an old custom. This is the test of flour and its viscosity, kneading and consistency and of rendered tallow in which cakes are boiled. It also expresses its meaning to subdue evil spirit which might enter the flour.

Patterned cakes

Patterned cake is one of the national and traditional cakes. This cake is made of good wheat flour mixed with milk, cream, ghee, brown or white sugar and nut-meg. We make the dough and knead it until it has good viscosity and consistency. Then we roll the dough into flat flour slab and cut it into oblong pieces; we then press this oblong piece upon the patterned mould. Then these cakes are boiled gently in the classified ghee on the fire of the chips of cow.

The first cake mould with swastika pattern was created by Zanabazar, the first grand lama of Mongolia. This mould is kept at the Gandan monastery which is used by the monks of Gandan monastery for making a few pieces of flour cakes every year. There is a saying:

There is no cake other than samnoa (this is a cake that is boiled).

There is no sign of honour than sambai (a gauzy piece of sacred scarf).
**BOODOG** *(Sweal)*

Boodog is a delicacy in Mongolia. We treat our guests with it. In order to make boodog, a goat is choked without cutting the pit of stomach of goat. All the bones and entrails of the dead goat are removed through the neck skin. Then seasoned meat is stuffed through the neck into the boneless skin. In such manner, the hot roundish stones and seasoned meat are stuffed alternatively. The seasoned meat consists of onion, allium mongolicum and pepper. Then a bit of water is added into the boneless skin. Then we tie the neck of the boneless skin with rope of horse’s hair up tightly and place the boneless skin on hot cow dung, turning it in various directions. Those hot roundish stones roast the meat and its skin. We place it on the hot embers and wash it with water. During these periods we take vapours from the neck of the boneless skin. The taste of this meat is delicious; its stock is good for those suffering from mental fatigue. It is good for health if you roll the warm stone on your fingers balls.

**KHORKHOG** *(Meat cooked in the rumen of sheep)*

This is also a delicacy. Meat is cooked in the rumen of a sheep or goat. The animal’s rumen disembodied and cleaned. We pour a little water into the cleaned interior and stuff the boneless meat with salt, onion, red pepper and al-lium mongolicum. Also hot stones are stuffed into the boneless meat seasoned with condiment. The mouth is bound with the cord of hair tightly. Then we place the meat with hot stones on a soft fire of cow dung or on hot embers, which cooks the meat. Handling the warm stones after the meal can help to remove your fatigue just like sweal, and its stock (broth) can be drunk for one’s health.

**AIRAG** *(mare’s fermented milk)*

Mongolians start tethering foals and colts on the tiger day of summer. We stop tethering foals and colts on the dog day in autumn. There is a feast for fermenting mare’s milk within three days after tethering foals and colts. There is also feast for when we stop tethering foals and colts in autumn.
The mare’s milk is fermented by churning. This fermented mare’s milk is called airag. The airag emits a delicious smell and its taste can make your mouth water. Every Mongolian loves to drink airag. Both males and females, including children, can drink airag by the bowls, from morning to evening. A bowl for airag holds 1 to 1.5 litres of liquid. In order to make airag, we use the airag skin of the previous year. We hang the soaked airag skin from the base of the ger roof and pour milked milk of mare into the hung skin and ferment the milk with the dried yeast of the previous airag. Then we churn the milk in the skin many times. The churning accelerates the fermentation of milk. The liquid can be churned 2,000-4,000 times. If you churn many times, you can make a good blend of fermentation. Airag plays roles of quenching one’s thirst, satisfying one’s hunger, and treating one’s illnesses because its calories and nourishment. It has essential bio active constituents of and improves their metabolism. The airag treatment was and is famous for curing chronic illnesses, heart and lung troubles, stomach illnesses, rheumatism, back trouble, scurvy and dropsy.

**Mongol tea**

Mongolians make a tea in various ways. We boil the water for tea and add powdered tea to the boiling water and keep it on the stove for two minutes. Then we blend the boiling tea with milk and salt. We ladle up and pour back the blended tea in a flurry. We call tea as five dainties. They are water, salt, milk, ghee and tea. We melt ghee or fat of sheep’s tail and add millet in the cast-iron pot and fry them. Then we pour hot plain tea without dregs, blend it with milk, put the lid on the pot and keep it for a while. Then we season the boiling with salt and soda. Then we pour it into a kettle. This is called hitstsi tsai or tea with various mixtures. This is thicker and oily tea. It can remove one’s fatigue and satisfy one’s hunger. Mongolian tea is called as, üsen tsai (tea in corky tub), bortsoi tsai (tea with pemmican), torgud tea, tea with ravioli, tea with nettle and so on. We have many traditions to make a tea. Let’s take an example.

**Churned tea**

We brew up tea blended with milk, salt, soda, ghee, and barley flour and pour it into a wooden churn and churn it 60-70 times. In this process there is a good blend of ingredients. But it cools. So we pour and boil the blended tea into the hot pot. We pour it into a kettle, warm it, and drink it. This tea is tasty and nourishing. This tea is good for health. The tea made with wild-rose is good for curing scurvy. The tea with wood bark is good for one’s heart. The tea blended with the powdered liver of wild sheep is good for the human liver.