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"Making Bourdélots and Tasting Terroir"

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> It has always struck me that the transmission of culture, from whatever source, in however small a way, is a means of resisting such an accusation. It implies some attachment, care, and concern for a specific place, which, in a world of flows, connections, and endless choice, has given rise to

reflection among scholars. As a cultural geographer, I explore and report back from other cultures. I look at languages, religious beliefs, oral histories, culinary traditions, and relationships with the environment. Less often, I am asked to share and interpret my own culture. In 2024, I led a class on the geography of food and drink at Oklahoma State University, exploring food cultures from places like Mexico, France, and India, examining what we eat today in the United States, and discussing how this connects to the nation's landscape, society, economy, and culture. Knowing where I grew up, one student asked me: What food comes from the Channel Islands? I may have blushed. What food comes from that tiny archipelago, lying in the shadows of the world-famous food and drink of Great Britain and France? I reeled off a list of a few traditional dishes, including bean crock (*pais au four*), Guernsey Gâche, and Jersey wonders (*mèrvelles*). I mentioned the Jersey Royal potatoes, which emerge from the soil in that island every spring, the earliest on the steepest sloped fields, with the best angle to catch the sun. I talked about the Jersey cow, selectively bred for some two hundred years, and now present on every continent. And for a dish close to the soil, *bourdélots* came to mind, a word I hadn't uttered since landing in the United States. I insisted they were very plain, but would I make some for the class, my students inquired. (From the article)

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