



# Charcuterie 101: Planning, budgeting, and preparation

Volume 73 | Gr. 9-12

**Time: 4 class periods**  
(45 minutes each)



## NASAFACS 8

**8.4.3** Analyze food, equipment, and supplies needed for menus.

**8.4.7** Apply principles of measurement, portion control, conversions, food cost analysis and control, menu terminology, and menu pricing to menu planning.

**8.5** Demonstrate professional food preparation methods and techniques for all menu categories to produce a variety of food products that meet customer needs.

**8.5.1** Demonstrate professional skills in safe handling of knives, tools, and equipment.

**8.5.12** Demonstrate professional plating, garnishing, and food presentation techniques.

**8.2** Demonstrate food safety and sanitation procedures

## Materials list

- Charcuterie ingredients (cheeses, cured meats, fruits, crackers, etc.)
- Bamboo Charcuterie Boards ([NE40430](#))
- Charcuterie Serving Utensil Sets ([NE40431](#))
- Cheese Slicer/Plane ([WA21417](#))
- Mercer® Cutlery 13-Piece Cutlery Sets ([WA29343](#))
- Paring Knives ([WA26512](#))
- Mercer® Silicone Brush Plating Sets ([WA34501](#))
- Knife Cuts Model ([WA33661](#))



## Objectives

*Students will...*

- Learn about the history and components of charcuterie boards
- Work as part of a group to plan, budget, and prepare a charcuterie board
- Demonstrate safe food and kitchen equipment handling methods

## Day 1: Introduction to charcuterie history and components

1. Begin with a discussion on students' familiarity with charcuterie and their experiences with it.
2. Introduce the concept of a charcuterie board, explaining its components such as cheeses, cured meats, fruits, nuts, crackers, and condiments.
3. Present a brief history of charcuterie and engage students with questions and anecdotes.

### A brief history of charcuterie boards

The charcuterie board reflects the long culinary history of preserving and presenting foods. In ancient times, civilizations around the world developed techniques such as salt curing, smoking, and drying to extend the shelf life of meats and other foods.

In the Middle Ages, European monks worked to refine preservation techniques as they often raised livestock and used all parts of the animal to create a diverse range of cured meats and sausages. These preserved items were often displayed during community celebrations, forming early versions of charcuterie boards.

During the Renaissance, charcuterie became a specialized art performed by a charcutier, an artisan skilled in meat preparation and preservation. Charcuterie boards showcased their expertise in creating a variety of textures and tastes.

In the age of worldwide exploration and colonialism, preservation techniques, foods, and flavors were exchanged between cultures. The ingredients used in charcuterie increased in diversity.

The Industrial Revolution brought about advances in refrigeration, canning, and transportation, which enabled mass production and distribution of preserved meats and other foods. More charcuterie components were accessible to more people.

In recent decades, the farm-to-table movement has gained momentum, and consumers have embraced the idea of locally sourced and traditionally prepared ingredients. This revival has led to a resurgence of interest in charcuterie boards. Today, charcuterie boards have transformed into canvases for culinary artistry with the careful arrangement of colors, textures, and flavors.

## Days 2–3: Planning and budgeting

1. Start the day by showing students examples of both traditional and out-of-the-box charcuterie boards. Pinterest is full of ideas for unique themes, such as breakfast boards, dessert boards, dairy-free boards, gluten-free boards, jarcuterie (individual cups/jars instead of one board), and more.
2. Divide students into small groups and instruct them to plan their own charcuterie boards, including the types of food, the layout, and food labeling. Encourage creativity and discussion within groups as they design their boards, but emphasize the need for balancing creativity with practicality within a budget.
3. Provide students with access to price lists or online resources to find the costs of various charcuterie ingredients. Instruct students to calculate the total cost of their planned charcuterie board.
4. At the end of planning and budgeting, each group should have a final shopping list, including quantities and costs.



### Ingredient ideas

**Meats** – hard salami, prosciutto, smoked ham, dry-cured chorizo, Genoa salami, capicola, mortadella, summer sausage

**Cheeses** – Choose at least three flavors and textures.

- Creamy and soft (Brie, goat cheese, Camembert, burrata, Délice de Bourgogne)
- Hard (Pecorino Romano, Grana Padano, Manchego)
- Semi-soft (cheddar, Gouda, Emmentaler, Edam, mozzarella, provolone, Butterkäse)
- Strong and salty (blue cheese, feta)

**Crackers**

**Spreads** – jams, mustards

**Nuts** – almonds, pistachios, walnuts, pecans

**Fresh fruits and veggies** – sliced apples, pears, grapes, berries, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, peppers

**Olives**

**Gherkin pickles**

**Dried fruits**

**Honey or fresh honeycomb**





## Day 4: Preparing and presenting

1. Start the day by briefly reviewing safe knife handling and sanitary food preparation methods, as well as proper cutting techniques for meats, cheeses, veggies, and fruits.
2. Distribute the charcuterie ingredients, charcuterie boards, knives, cheese slicers, and plating utensils to each group.
3. Have students work together in their groups to prepare all the ingredients and assemble their charcuterie boards, paying attention to arrangement and presentation.
4. Next, have each group present their charcuterie board to the class, explaining their choices and budget considerations. If you'd like, you can create rubrics for students to evaluate the other groups based on criteria like presentation, adherence to budget, and creativity.

### What about the leftovers?

If the boards are too big to be eaten in class, ask students to brainstorm ways to distribute them on day 1 or 2. Options include inviting another class in to share at the end of day 4, placing them in the teacher's lounge, doing a drawing to see who gets to take each board home, and donating them to a community organization.