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# Chinois

A **chinois** (UK: /ˈʃɪnwɑː, ˈʃiːnwɑː/ *SHIN-wah*, *SHEE-nwah*, US: /ʃiːˈnwɑː/ *shee-NWAH*, French: [ʃinwa] ) is a conical sieve with an extremely fine mesh. It is used to strain custards, purees, soups, and sauces, producing a very smooth texture. It can also be used to dust food with a fine layer of powdered ingredient.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>



A French-made chinois from a commercial kitchen

## Etymology

*Chinois* is a loanword from the French adjective meaning 'Chinese'. French cooks call it this not because this kitchen tool comes from China but because it resembles an Asian conical hat.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Description

A similarly shaped utensil is the **China cap**, a reference to the Asian conical hats that used to be common in China. It is a perforated metal conical strainer with much larger holes than a chinois. A China cap is used to remove seeds and other coarse matter from soft foods, but produces a coarser-textured product than the chinois.<sup>[5]</sup>

Both the chinois and the China cap often are used with a cone-shaped pestle. With the pestle tip placed in the bottom of the strainer, it is rolled against the sides of the device to work liquids and soft food through it. In this way, the chinois functions much like a tamis and the China cap, a food mill. A small ladle is also sometimes used instead of a pestle. This allows the user to scoop solids from the sides of the strainer as well as pressing liquid through the mesh.

## See also

- Food portal
- Colander
- Filter
- Sieve
- Tamis



A china cap, or conical strainer

- [Zaru](#)

## References

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2. "Chinois | Resource" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140111214805/http://www.smartkitchen.com/resources/chinois>). *Smartkitchen.com*. Smart Kitchen Online Cooking School. Archived from the original (<http://www.smartkitchen.com/resources/chinois>) on 11 January 2014. Retrieved 4 December 2013.
3. Kimball, Christopher (July 2012). "Chinois Sieves Review" ([http://www.cooksillustrated.com/equipment\\_reviews/1373-chinois-sieves](http://www.cooksillustrated.com/equipment_reviews/1373-chinois-sieves)). *Cook's Illustrated* (July 2012). Retrieved 4 December 2013.
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5. "buykitchenstuff.com - Best Kitchen and Cooking Stuff" (<https://buykitchenstuff.com/>). *BuyKitchenStuff*. Retrieved 2023-11-20.

## External links

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-  The dictionary definition of *chinois* at Wiktionary

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