This course serves up the most well-known text of Chaucer’s canon, *The Canterbury Tales*. The meal is copious and not for the faint of heart: we will read them all, and we will do so in Middle English (no experience required!). Supplemental food for thought includes texts that serve as sources to the *Tales*, terms of prosody, and lessons in literary analysis, both verbal and written.

Come read a poet of remarkable contradictions! Fully immersed in the aristocratic court culture of his day, he nevertheless maintained distance from his social betters. Interested in serious philosophical issues, he also enjoyed joking about sex and farts. While some scholars see him as a typically orthodox late-medieval Christian, others insist he is the first modern English writer. But everyone agrees that after 600 years his work has lost none of its power to charm and to challenge us.