

# How has the word epicurean come to mean excess?

Post by "Cassius" of May 13, 2023 at 10:20 AM

## [Quote from ThinkingCat](#)

I'd really like to know how being Epicurean got to be twisted on its head i.e being a person who is into fine and luxurious foods.

Most of the comment so far focus on the intentional warping.

There is also the fact that there is a "grain of truth" in that if you are thinking that Epicurus was "only" into simple pleasures, then that too is not true.

Epicurus was into "pleasure" and that can come in many ways, simple and luxurious, and the trick is to maneuver through your personal context to focus on pleasures that do not cause you more pain than you are willing to experience for the sake of those pleasures.

The standard translation of [VS63](#) is: [VS63](#). Frugality too has a limit, and the man who disregards it is like him who errs through excess.

Further in the letter to Menoeceus:

130] Yet by a scale of comparison and by the consideration of advantages and disadvantages we must form our judgment on all these matters. For the good on certain occasions we treat as bad, and conversely the bad as good. And again independence of desire we think a great good — not that we may at all times enjoy but a few things, but that, if we do not possess many, we may enjoy the few in the genuine persuasion that those have the sweetest pleasure in luxury who least need it, and that all that is natural is easy to be obtained, but that which is superfluous is hard. And so plain savours bring us a pleasure equal to a luxurious diet, when all the pain due to want is removed; and bread and water produce the highest pleasure, when one who needs them puts them to his lips.

So there is both the "intentional misrepresentation" and the "grain of truth" that can be seen when you dive into the specific meaning of the words involved.

Welcome to the forum! This and many other similar questions are very deep so we always like to discuss them.