

FLAVOR & FORTUNE

DEDICATED TO THE ART AND SCIENCE OF CHINESE CUISINE

TIANJIN;
BAMBOO SHOOTS;
MORE ABOUT FRUITS;



SHARKS AND THEIR FINS;
SOUPS: SWEET OR SAVORY;
BOOK AND RESTAURANT REVIEWS, AND MORE.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

About The Publisher

THE INSTITUTE
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促進中國烹飪科學與藝術研究所

The institute was conceived and established in the early 1990s in response to the growing interest in Chinese food and the need for collaboration between professionals and the public at large. Its purpose was and continues to be as an important source of information about the scientific and the artistic significance of Chinese and other Asian foods and cuisines.

The Mission and Goals include:

- 1 To encourage the exchange of ideas and information about all aspects of the science and art of Chinese cuisine
- 2 To foster the study of foods, herbs, diet, cuisines, customs, habits, health, nutrition, technology, and other scientific and culinary applications as they relate to Chinese and other Asian cuisines
- 3 To consult, advise, share and in other ways assist individuals and groups, corporations, associations, government agencies, and private individuals about Chinese and related cuisines

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FLAVOR & FORTUNE

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*All pictures are from the files or camera of the editor except those in articles by other authors.
The cover picture features a Sichuan soup in a divided Mala pot.
Articles ending with (JMN) are by the editor*

FLAVOR & FORTUNE

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or send them to: www.flavorandfortune.com

Dear Reader:

Welcome to this first issue written at our new address as noted in the column to the left. Our new e-mail address is there, too.

This first issue of our 24th year writing and editing Flavor and Fortune, the only English-language Chinese food magazine, offers twenty years of articles free to all on our website. We truly believe and want to share knowledge about this fabulous cuisine, and are amazed at the number of articles published. We never dreamed that we would still be at it ten years ago, and continue to get more queries than we ever thought possible. It has hardly slowed down even with these addresses changes. Queries keep us busy about things we know not enough about; and writing about them keep us even busier.

We have written hundreds of articles, printed, and tested some two thousand recipes put into print by us and others, included more book and restaurant reviews, and written a generous bunch of short items responding to queries, some in the Letters to the Editor column. Anyone out there want to tally them all as we do not have the time to do so as we are still unpacking?

We do enjoy responding to them and all your e-mails. They keep us hopping with our favorite topic, Chinese food. Do keep them coming! We thank everyone who has an interest in our favorite topic. We and our staff, all working pro bono, make responding to them a pleasure.

In this issue, we write about Islamic food and folk, Middle Eastern tastes in China, more about fruits, the third and longest article so far in this series, soups sweet and savory, a menu from an eatery in Flushing, four book reviews, shark's fins, bamboo shoots, and more. Several have written asking us to write about unusual fruits, and after the next article about nuts and berries, we will address some of them. We plan to include information about cashew and carambola fruits; they are leading on that list. In the meantime, read about the many fruits discussed in this issue and other topics, and learn that one fruit, the tomato, is hardly recognized as a fruit.

Check into the many topics discussed in the past, twenty years of them, free to all. We did investigate most of them thanks to reader requests, so advise about others you may have questions about. Read a bit about those in this issue and in earlier ones on our website. We thank those who ask many questions, contribute to our efforts; and the many who give gifts large and small; all are appreciated.

Your editor has made sixteen trips to China, and will go again to the next food conference in Beijing next year. It is a wonderful city and she looks forward to doing so. By the way, she still looks forward to someone to replace her. At age eighty-four, that need will become a reality. Anyone who wants to write or edit about this longest continuous food culture, step right up! Learn on the job and learn helping this lady; experience is not necessary.

The Editor



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM BOBBI AND OTHERS:

Often write an e-mail in the head, now for one on the computer. Your magazine reads deliciously; be proud of its scope. What a lovely discovery for those interested in Chinese food and the related culture. Do see why a few months ago, David Rosengarten said "it can 'change your chopstick life.' Hope you continue to grow as much as we have reading and learning from FLAVOR AND FORTUNE.

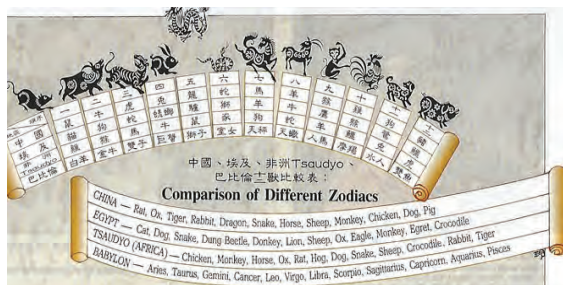
THANKS TO BOBBI AND OTHERS:

Thank you. Do appreciate the composite from all of the above. Those are kind words, and we do appreciate them; and also appreciate the suggestions, subscriptions, and donations. We all work pro bono, enjoy all your comments, and all the donations that keep this magazine afloat.

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FROM ELLIE IN NEWPORT CA:

A dear friend said that all over China, the Far East, too, there are twelve zodiac animals, and that all are not the same country to country. What are all their names? And, what are double months? We are confused, please educate us all.



ELLIE: To our knowledge those double or extra months are named as animals associated with them. In China, most are the same one place to another, with a few regional differences. As to the extra month, the name of the month before is usually doubled so people born in the double month have the same birth animal as those born in the previous month. Most Chinese believe the classic animal years are: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Chicken, Dog, and Pig, named by an early emperor whose name we do not recall. Most are used by the nearly nine percent of non Han but members of China's minority populations. For some of them, several animals are different. The Chinese can call these double months *lichun* years. Confused? So are many of the Chinese people.

The Chinese government did adopt the Gregorian calendar since 1911. Some use both calendars, one based on the sun, the Chinese one is based on the moon; and their extra month is only in that lunar calendar. It has three hundred fifty-four days. Their calendar is the longest recorded chronological calendar anywhere in the world, and it started in 2637 BCE when Emperor Haung Ti introduced their first Chinese zodiac cycle. Early Chinese literature tells us he did this in the sixty-first year of his reign.

His calendar was tinkered with in the Shang Dynasty (1766-1123 BCE). A young man, Wan Nien, spent many years using a water clock and measuring shadows to figure out and address inconsistencies between moon and sun (solar) years. He said the best way was to add some months to keep things straight, so that is when the extra months were started.

A bit more of that story, which does include an assassination attempt with an almost fatal arrow. He was promoted to Minister of the Astronomical Bureau. The Emperor saw his logic and accepted his notion of adding what we westerners call an 'intercalary' month. The solar calendar is also not perfect. That is why we have a leap year every four years. They have that intercalary month once every nineteen years.

For the record, several countries and peoples believe in animal zodiacs. For example, in Egypt, they have Cat, Dog, Snake, Beetle, Donkey, Lion, Sheep, Ox, Eagle, Monkey, Egret, and Crocodile years. In an African country they have Chicken, Monkey, Horse, Ox, Rat, Hog, Dog, Snake, Sheep, Crocodile, Rabbit, and Tiger years. With roots in ancient Babylon, western astrologers developed Aires, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpi, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces nomenclatures; all animal signs. To sum things up which may confuse some folk, the Chinese have five cycles of twelve animal years, their seventy-eighth cycle began in 1984. It is quite a while until a new cycle begins; sixty plus eighty-four will get us well to the year 2144.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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FROM A MAINE IAC:

Dennis asks how does one make Dragon Beard Candy?

DENNIS: It is very hard to find *Long Xu Tang*, even in China. It is a noodle like item, this Dragon Beard Candy, and find it in Canada, in Toronto and Vancouver, but never in the US. The first time we saw it, pulled, was in a culinary school in Jinan in China's Shandong Province. Every student in this class we observed was making it. Each one was already a master at *la mian* or ordinary pulled noodles; seems that is where to start. As lovers of cotton candy, our first bite's began a love affair as it is also a mouth melting edible. In a huge Chinese mall outside of Toronto, a chap was making some. Watching him was watching a ballet of his hands. We can tell you his recipe, but not how to pull it, but the strands he pulled were not much thicker than the hairs on your head.

DRAGON BEARD CANDY

He said: "Mix a cup of rice flour and three cups of wheat flour, high protein works best. Add some Chinese baking powder, about three tablespoons worth, and a healthy teaspoon of salt. Mix well making a well, slowly pouring in a cup and a half of water. Mix gently, then slap the dough against a table for fifteen minutes. Add more water, if/as needed, but by the teaspoonful until the dough is soft and barely holds together. Next, take a rest, the dough needs one, too, for at least a dozen hours. Cover it with a cloth while it rests. At its wake up time, put a large clean cloth on a table and a half cup's high protein flour on it.

Turn the dough after getting some flour on it, then make a snake with half the dough and cover the rest for a second batch. Take the snake like dough in both hands and pull it far as possible. Next, put the two ends together twisting as you do. Let it hang down for a minute or two. Now, pull, stretch, twist again, and let it hang down again.

Often put the dough down on the floured cloth turning it once or twice. Keep repeating the fold in half, pull, twist, let hang, put it on the flour, at least a dozen times. When pulled and twisted repeat until you have 1024 strands. Then repeat with the second batch of dough. When ready for the candy, twist the hair like threads into a three inch circle folding them over and over on themselves until about two inches high. Then dip them into a bucket of half very fine table sugar mixed with half fine ground maltose sugar. Add about a quarter again of rice flour to this mix. Then let the strands piled high rest and dry for an hour or two, then enjoy". That chap said that doing this four or five times a week for two years might make you a fairly competent dragon beard candy maker.

FROM SAM, VIA E MAIL: *Can you tell me what is China root?*

SAM: We think you are asking about *Smilax China*, a thick fleshy root of a climbing plant said to have many medical uses. Not indigenous to China, some herbal practitioners told us it is also used in the tropical counties of Peru, Mexico, and Jamaica.

...

SIRS:

Have yet to find any letters asking about pigs knuckles or pigs feet. Do you have any good Chinese pickled recipes for them or other pickled foods? My family would most appreciate them.



JON: No longer a popular item in Chinese cookbooks, though they were twenty-five years and more ago. Two we loved are below; they come from a cookbook by members of the GFWC Women's Club of Phoenix AZ. Both are on the same page of their 1990 spiral-bound 1990 edition called: *Tea and Chopsticks*. Have not made either in years. Hope I did copy them correctly when I did.

PIGS KNUCKLES

Ingredients:

6 pigs knuckles, cut in two-inch pieces, their hairs removed
1 pound fresh ginger, peeled and sliced
1 cup raw peanuts, skins removed and discarded
4 cups Chinese black vinegar
1 Tablespoon coarse salt
4 cups brown sugar

Preparation:

1. In a large glass or ceramic pot, add the ginger, knuckles, and the vinegar and enough water to cover everything.
2. Simmer for three hours, and in the last hour, add the salt and the sugar. Then serve.

PIGS FEET WITH HARD-COOKED EGGS

Ingredients:

6 pigs knuckles, par boiled for a half an hour, the water discarded
1 pound fresh ginger, peeled and sliced thinly
4 cups Chinese black vinegar
4 cups brown sugar
8 large eggs, boiled for five minutes, then rolled gently to crack but not remove their shells

Preparation:

1. In a large pot, put all the ingredients, and then cover them with cold water.
2. Simmer for two hours, then remove the eggs and peel them discarding their shells.
3. Simmer the knuckles for another hour, then serve as when needed. Serve.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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EDITOR:

Absolutely love your publication; it is beautiful! Had fun traveling with all of you in Ireland. Hope to see you again; take care.

DIANE: Thanks for your thanks. Hope you subscribe and then can enjoy F&F for years!

...

HEI WEI IN SHANGHAI SAYS:

Was disappointed with so few sea vegetable recipes. Love using them, and wish you had provided others.

HEI WEI: Space does constrain what we can do in forty pages four times a year. However, here are two more for your wok; and do check our index listings. By the way, thank you for all those stamps, we do collect them, they were lovely, and they were much appreciated.

GRASS CARP AND SEA VEGETABLES

Ingredients

½ pound grass carp fillet
¼ cup dried sea vegetables, soaked for ten minutes, then chopped
6 slices fresh ginger, shredded
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
2 Tablespoons thin soy sauce

Preparation:

1. Place grass carp on a heat-proof plate and put the sea vegetables and the shredded ginger on top.
2. Mix the heated oil and the soy sauce, and sprinkle on top of the fish fillet. Cover with plastic wrap and steam five to six minutes, then serve.

SEAWEED CRISPS

Ingredients:

¼ pound sea weed sheets cut into very thin strips
¼ pound cabbage. Cut into very thin strips
1 cup vegetable oil
½ teaspoon granulated sugar
¼ teaspoon coarse salt

Preparation:

1. Remove any thick stalks from the greens before shredding them.
2. Heat a wok or deep pot, add the oil, and deep fry the greens in batches until crisp or they float to the surface; then remove them with a slotted spoon or another strainer device
3. Mix sugar and salt and sprinkle on the greens, then put them on paper towels in a serving bowl, and when cooler, discard the paper towel, and serve.

CRABS, SEA VEGETABLES, AND YELLOW BEAN PASTE

Ingredients:

3 crabs, scrubbed, the tops removed, then chop the bodies into four pieces, and separate and lightly smash the claws
6 shallots, peeled and sliced
5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and sliced
1 red chili pepper, seeded and chopped
5 slices fresh ginger, slivered
3 Tablespoons vegetable oil, divided in half
3 Tablespoons spicy yellow bean paste
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
1 Tablespoon Chinese vinegar
1 Tablespoon dried ground sea vegetables
1 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
2 scallions, cut into half-inch pieces

Preparation:

1. Put shallots, garlic, chili pepper, and ginger in a blender, add half the oil and blend, then transfer this to a small pot, add the bean paste, sugar, vinegar, sea vegetables, and the soy sauce and simmer for three minutes. Then set aside.
2. Heat wok, and add the rest of the oil and stir-fry the crab legs and claws for two minutes, then add the crab shells and half cup of water, cover, and simmer for ten minutes until the crabs are cooked through before stirring in the seasoning mixture. Stir-fry this for three minutes. Transfer to a pre-heated bowl, sprinkle the scallions on top, give one stir, then serve.

CRABS AND SEAWEED

Ingredients:

6 crab legs, each cut into four pieces
6 shallots, peeled and sliced
5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and sliced
1 red chili pepper, seeded and chopped
5 slices fresh ginger, slivered
3 Tablespoons minced nori (seaweed sheets) divided
3 Tablespoons spicy yellow bean paste
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
1 Tablespoon Chinese vinegar
1 Tablespoon dried ground sea vegetables
1 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
2 scallions, cut into half-inch pieces

Preparation:

1. Lightly smash each crab leg piece with the side of a cleaver.
2. Put shallots, garlic, chili pepper, and ginger in a blender, add half the oil and blend, then transfer to a small pot, add the bean paste, sugar, vinegar, seaweed sheet pieces, and the soy sauce and simmer for three minutes, then set aside.
3. Heat a wok or fry pan and add the rest of the oil. Stir-fry the crab leg pieces for two minutes then add half cup of water, cover, and simmer for two minutes, then stir in the seasoning mix and stir-fry two more minutes. Transfer to a pre-heated bowl, sprinkle the scallions on top, stir once, then serve.

SOUPS: SWEET AND SAVORY

Many tales inform about Chinese royals with or without soups. One we remember is about Emperor Qianlong who ruled from 1736 to 1796, and a famous savory soup made with tofu, a carp head, and broad bean sauce. It launched what became a famous restaurant with just these simple ingredients. When word got out about this fish head and tofu soup, its Hangzhou eatery became famous. Other soups were not as famous as this one made with vegetable stock. There was Rib Tea Soup popular in Singapore, Turtle Soup loved in Taiwan, Congee and Pearl Meat Broth appreciated in Southern China, Floating Cloud and Oxtail Soup adored in Beijing, and Scallop Soup eaten often in China's north.

Soups are important dishes at every main Chinese meal and at many Chinese snack meals. Most were consumed at the end of a meal, some just sitting on the table there to be eaten whenever a diner wants them. Some eat soup several times during one meal to wash down other ingredients. The location of Chinese soups at many meals is changing. It is moving to the beginning of a meal and not at the end as they used to be.

Some Chinese eat more than one soup at a single meal as do the people from the Fujian Province. They can enjoy two or three at every meal. Feel free to try many soups below and those listed in the index of this magazine or found in many Chinese cookbooks. Feel free to try more than one at any given meal.

TOFU VEGETABLE SOUP

Ingredients:

1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
1 onion, peeled and sliced from root to top
½ cup broccoli, thinly sliced
½ cup cauliflower, thinly sliced
1 cup drained canned straw mushrooms, each cut in half
½ cup drained winter bamboo shoots, thinly sliced
1 Tablespoon dried wood ear fungi, soaked in warm water, then coarsely chopped
2 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
8 cups vegetable stock
¼ pound firm tofu, sliced

Preparation:

1. Heat a wok or a large pot and then heat the oil and stir-fry the onion for three minutes until soft and beginning to caramelize. Next add the broccoli and the cauliflower and stir-fry them for two minutes.
2. Now add the straw mushrooms and the wood ear fungi and continue to stir-fry for two more minutes.
3. Now pour in the soy sauce and the soup stock and bring this to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for five minutes.
4. Lastly, add the tofu and simmer on low for five minutes, then pour the soup into pre-heated individual soup bowls or a large soup tureen.

FISH HEAD AND TOFU SOUP

Ingredients:

1 carp head, cleaned and scaled, the gills removed
3 Tablespoons broad-bean sauce
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
½ pound firm tofu, thinly sliced
2 Tablespoons Shao Xing wine
2 Tablespoons thin soy sauce
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
2 Tablespoons minced bamboo shoots
4 Tablespoons soaked Chinese black mushrooms, stems discarded, caps minced
2 slices fresh ginger, peeled and minced
2 garlic shoots, thinly slivered
1 Tablespoon lard

Preparation:

1. Flatten the fish head with the side of a cleaver and brush it with the broad bean sauce.
2. Pre-heat a wok or large fry pan, then add the oil, and fry the fish head on both sides one to two minutes each.
3. Now add the tofu and stir gently for another minute or two.
4. Carefully stir in the wine, soy sauce, and sugar, stir for one minute, then add six cups of water and bring to the boil.
5. Next add the bamboo shoots, mushrooms, and ginger and bring almost to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for fifteen minutes.
6. Lastly, add the garlic shoots and the lard and stir for one minute, then serve.

RICE NOODLE SOUP

Ingredients:

½ pound dried rice noodle sticks (called *mei fun*)
¼ pound shelled medium shrimp, veins removed and discarded, each cut in three or four pieces
2 eggs, well beaten, and made into an omelette, cut it into slivers and set it aside
4 to 6 peeled and minced shallots
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
8 cups vegetable or fish stock
2 tablespoons thin soy sauce

Preparation:

1. Simmer dried rice sticks for four minutes, then drain and rinse them in cold water.
2. Heat a wok, add the oil and fry them stirring for half a minute.
3. Next, in a large pot, bring the stock to the boil, add the rice noodles and the soy sauce, and the egg slivers, stir and serve in individual soup bowls.

SOUPS: SWEET AND SAVORY

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PORK RIB TEA SOUP

Ingredients:

2 Pounds pork spare ribs, cut into individual boned pieces, in one- to two-inch lengths
6 cloves peeled garlic cloves, each one smashed
1-inch piece *tung kwai* (optional)
3 sticks Chinese cinnamon
6 star anise
1 Tablespoon each, white and black peppercorns
1 teaspoon coarse salt
2 teaspoons granulated sugar
1 Tablespoon dark soy sauce
2 Tablespoons dried shallot flakes
1 small chili pepper, seeds discarded, and slivered
1 Chinese cruller, thinly sliced on the diagonal

Preparation:

1. Make a packet in cheesecloth of the tung kwai, cinnamon, star anise, and peppercorns tied tightly.
2. Boil this with the spare ribs in three quarts of water for one hour, remove, scum and then add the salt, sugar, soy sauce, and half the shallot flakes and half the chili pepper slivers, and simmer for another hour, then add the cruller slices and the rest of the chili peppers.
3. Serve in individual soup bowls and sprinkle the rest of the shallot flakes and chili pepper slivers on the top of each bowl; and serve.

TURTLE, PORK, AND KIDNEY SOUP

Ingredients:

1 small turtle, removed from its shell, and thinly sliced, the shell set aside
2 Tablespoons goji berries
1 pork heart, veins removed, then minced
1 pork kidney, veins removed, then chopped coarsely

Preparation:

1. Bring eight cups water to the boil, add the turtle shell, reduce the heat, and simmer for fifteen minutes, then remove and discard the shell or show it off in a soup tureen.
2. Add turtle meat, goji berries, and the cut-up heart and kidney meats. Simmer for four or five minutes then ladle everything into the pre-heated soup tureen; and serve.

TWO-WAY SCALLOPS IN SOUP

Ingredients:

1 dry scallop, soaked for one hour until soft, then shredded
8 cups chicken broth
2 fresh sea scallops, slivered, then blanched for one minute
5 Chinese black mushrooms, soaked for an hour stems removed and discarded, the caps slivered
2 Tablespoons slivered smoked ham
2 Tablespoons canned drained bamboo shoots shredded
1 Tablespoon dark soy sauce
½ teaspoon salt
2 egg yolks
2 teaspoons cornstarch mixed with 1 Tablespoon cold water

Preparation:

1. Simmer shredded dry scallop pieces in the chicken broth for half an hour.
2. Add fresh sea scallop pieces, the mushroom slivers, ham, bamboo shoots, soy sauce, and salt and simmer another five minutes, then add the cornstarch mixture mixed with the egg yolks, stir, and serve.

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SOUPS: SWEET AND SAVORY

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FLOATING CLOUD SOUP

Ingredients:

½ lamb brain. Membrane removed and discarded
4 Chinese black mushrooms soaked in two cups of warm water, remove and discard their stems, then sliver them
1 tablespoon Shao Xing wine
1 teaspoon coarse salt
2 scallions, finely slivered on an angle
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 Tablespoon goji berries

Preparation:

1. Cut brain into one-inch pieces, and add them and two cups of mushroom or plain water to a large pot, and bring to the boil.
2. Then simmer for five minutes, then toss in the scallion slivers. Serve in preheated soup bowls.

SEAWEED AND WATER CHESTNUT SOUP

Ingredients:

2 seven-inch sheets of nori (seaweed sheets) broken into small pieces
6 cups chicken stock
½ pound firm tofu, slivered
1/4 pound ground pork
½ teaspoon salt
10 water chestnuts. Peeled and slivered
2 egg yolks or 1 whole egg, beaten well

Preparation:

1. Put nori pieces, stock, tofu, salt, and water chestnut pieces into a large pot, bring to below the boil, reduce heat to a simmer, and stir often for ten minutes.
2. Now raise the heat, stir in the egg, then turn off the heat source.
3. Next serve in pre-heated soup bowls.

OXTAIL SOUP WITH PEANUTS

Ingredients:

1 oxtail, cut into one-inch pieces
2 Tablespoons cornstarch
1 cup vegetable oil
1 onion, peeled and cut into wedges top to root
½ cup Chinese celery, cut into thin angle pieces
½ cup Chinese parsley, minced
3 Tablespoons roasted peanuts, shells and paper skins removed and discarded, and chopped coarsely
2 raw wonton skins, finely slivered
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
3 shallots, peeled and slivered
6 cups chicken or vegetable stock

Preparation:

1. Toss oxtail pieces with the cornstarch, and set aside for ten minutes, then deep fry in the oil for five minutes, then drain and discard the oil or save for another use.
2. Heat wok, add the oil, and stir-fry the onion for three minutes, then add the celery, parsley, and the peanuts, and stir well.
3. Next, add the wonton slivers, salt, pepper, the shallots, and the stock. Simmer for five minutes, then serve in a tureen or individual soup bowls.

**DO SUBMIT OTHER
FAVORITE RECIPES
FOR CONSIDERATION;
YOUR NAME WILL BE RECOGNIZED**

ISLAMIC FOOD AND FOLK IN CHINA

Chinese Islamic people live everywhere in the world and guide their lives using the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed. The rules he was said to have written are in the Hadith and/or in the Quran. Both are said to have come from Allah, their creator, who tells adherents what is *halal* or permitted and what is *haram* or not allowed.

There is a large Muslim population in China, some twenty-three million which is close to two percent of China's total population. Most Muslims live in Western China, their cuisine said to have originated with beliefs and dictums about food and other behaviors in other Islamic countries.

During the Yuan Dynasty (1279 - 1368), *halal* methods of slaughtering animals was forbidden by Mongol Emperors starting with Genghis Khan. Islamic cuisine or *qingzhen cai*, also known as *huizu cai* or Hui people's cuisine, relies on beef, lamb, and mutton and forbids eating pork. It also requires special slaughtering of animals and done by Muslim people. There are many different Muslim ethnic minorities in China including the Bonan, Dongxiang, Dungan, Salar, Tibetan and others who adhere to Muslim dietary tenets.

Muslims love *lamian* which are hand-made hand-pulled noodles served in a beef or mutton-flavored soup, and they love *chuanr* or lamb kebobs, *niang pi* or cold noodles, and doufu and *suan cai*, the latter pickled cabbage. They like them with *nang*, their unleavened flat bread that is usually round.

Permitted foods include all things created by God. There are prohibitions due to impurities and harmful things. Things permitted are not what is superfluous or falsely represented. Prohibited are intentions unlawful or unacceptable. Doubtful things must be avoided, unlawful things prohibited, no exceptions allowed.

Muslim dietary laws are practiced in China and elsewhere that prohibit the eating of carrion or dead animals, animals with flowing or congealed blood, swine and their by-products, animals killed that prevent blood from being fully drained from their bodies, and animals slaughtered saying a name other than Allah. Intoxicants of all types are also forbidden as are alcohol and drugs, and carnivorous animals

with fangs, birds with sharp claws, and land animals with no ears.

According to the tenets of this religion, every Muslim should fast during daylight during the month of Ramadan which is the ninth month of their 354 day year. They should also help the less fortunate, and eat only two meals during Ramadan.

One meal they call *fatour*, it is eaten at sunset, the other is called *schoor* and eaten before sunrise. Those age ten to fourteen are at the age they should practice this fast and eat just these two meals, as do all older folk. The *fatour* meal should begin with an odd number of dates followed by a soup. Drinks are preferably made with milk or milk products, and they eat main courses.

All foods must be clean, made with clean utensils, and all waste discarded. Women need not fast if menstruating, pregnant, or nursing, but they should make up any missed days after Ramadan when these conditions do not exist. Men and women should not eat more food than needed, two-thirds of their normal capacity is recommended.

Most Muslim women wear head coverings and Muslim men wear beards as they do not shave. Many Muslims have the surname Ma, probably from the first syllable of Mohammed, or they have the surname Na or Ding, from Nasruddin.

Muslim favorite restaurant fare varies. For Hui people, it can be noodles in a spicy beef stew, their lamien, laghman, lagmian or polo. These are particularly also loved by Uyghur Muslims. Tea is a favorite beverage of most Muslims. They like it sweet and made with herbs or spices.

Many millions in China are Muslim, many are craft people who take pride in their work be it making jewelry, preparing perfumes, or collecting and selling spices. Some are butchers who slaughter the halal meat, others sell halal foods. They might live anywhere in the country, are highly visible, and many of them live in Gansu, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Ningxia, or Xinjiang.

Most Muslims in China are descendants of people from the Middle East or from Central Asia. Many of their forebears came to China during the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 CE), and many are Sunni Muslims. They follow

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ISLAMIC FOOD AND FOLK IN CHINA

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the Nanafi Muslim School of thinking. The Chinese government often calls all Muslims Hui or Huihui though they may not belong to this specific ethnic minority population. We do not know why; perhaps a reader can educate us about this nomenclature.

Not all Muslims speak the same language. For example, Uyghur Muslims speak a Turkish dialect as do the Kazaks and both can write in Arabic, as do Tatars and Salas people. Those who are Bao'an speak and write

their own language, the Dongxiang speak a Mongolian language, and the Tajiks speak a tongue related to Persian. In most mosques, Arabic is the calligraphy used, and found on tombs. It is often spoken in their mosques.

There are very few cookbooks following Halal protocols or books other than those already mentioned, that non-Muslims can use to educate themselves. Often just eliminating pork is the only thing the Muslims do.

**WE GET MANY
REQUESTS FOR HALAL RECIPES;
MUSLIMS, DO SEND
YOUR FAVORITES
FOR FUTURE ISSUES**

MIDDLE EASTERN AND CHINESE TASTES IN KASHKAR

In a previous issue, we discussed Yugur and Uyghur foods but with no mention of Kashkar, an important city ruled at one time or another by Tibetan, Persian, Turkic, or Mongol people. Many living there were Muslims in this large city more than two thousand years old. Then and now, more than thirty different ethnic populations lived and live here.

It was on the ancient Silk Road and a city whose name meant 'place to find jade.' It was bounded by Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, is close to Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and India, and on the edge of the Taklimakan Desert. The city looks Chinese, but much of its food does taste more Middle Eastern than Chinese.

An imperial envoy of the Han Dynasty, Zhang Qian (164-114 BCE), did visit here when it was called Shule; that was in 119 BCE. One of this envoy's tasks was to make alliances in this Chinese territory. He did not succeed all that well because there was lots of Uyghur culture, lots of Uyghur economics, Uyghur politics, and their food, too. This place had many farms, pastures, and local products, and many people did follow the Islamic rule eating, in their attire, art, and architecture as their heritage was Middle Eastern.

This Oasis city had many traditional bakeries, one of China's largest mosques, a Sunday Animal Market, a crowded bazaar, and a huge night market. Day and night one could buy beasts and breakfast, dried fruit and pilaf, and a dessert called *zonga*. Here was a local take on sticky rice wrapped in bamboo leaves, *matang* which was their nut nougat covered in creamy yogurt curds drizzled with brown sugar syrup. There were spices in *dora dermak* shops where the most popular one was a mixture called *tetitku*.

People here had a strong sense of family, and they were hospitable. Different generations did live together in one compound, and strangers were warmly welcomed. They always washed both hands before and after eating; and they never sat with the soles of their feet facing others as most often they sat on their heels. At meals, they tore their *naan*, their bread, into small pieces, never bit into a whole one. They accepted a cup of tea with two hands and never brought dirty dishes into a mosque or a cemetery.

Kashkar was and still is home to Indian, Christian, Arab people, and many Islamic and Chinese cultures. This was a Buddhist commercial hub with its own unique charm, a place where females were never allowed into a mosque, non-Muslims never allowed to attend a Friday worship service.

The Heyigah Meschit or main mosque had a tower for sightseeing, showed many exhibitions, and had a museum of Western regional things. The main shopping street did and still does sell lots of gold jewelry, many handicrafts, and all kinds of pottery. Five hundred years ago, there was a school here that spread Islamic culture.

This was an international place connecting China with Western Asia and Europe. During the Yuan Dynasty (1271 - 1368 CE), the fiefdom of Genghis Khan and his second son, Chagatai, ruled. In the second century CE, art was popular and colorful, and folks bought many water jugs, bowls, plates, trays, drinking cups, and mugs in many colors. They still do.

People here lived in homes with skylights and terraces, but no modern conveniences. The Kazahks ate using their hands, their Han neighbors used chopsticks. Both ate much *nang*, and those who were Turkic ate theirs Muslim style flavored with cumin, chili, cinnamon, garlic, saffron, sesame, and yogurt. They put sugar on top, their lamb pies were pan-grilled and stuffed with carrots and onions.

They adored *lagmen* and other noodle dishes made Uyghur style, and their whole lambs were fat, popular, and two-years old. They were sold with red silk tied around their necks, their mouths stuffed with fresh caraway. Chicken was cooked with carrots and onions, mutton called *polu* came fried with onions, rice steamed with carrots and onions, too. Kebabs were called *kawaplar* and made with beef or lamb, seasoned with salt, pepper, and sesame seeds, then grilled after soaking them in milk, butter, salt, and sugar.

Here and in Taiwan they make Big Plate Chicken and called it *dapanji*. It is made with chili peppers, potatoes, hand-pulled noodles, and served with gravy. Some is boiled with raisins, sliced onions, carrots, small cubes of fried beef, and cubes of fat; the raisins grown and dried in Turfan and called *museles*.

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MIDDLE EASTERN AND CHINESE TASTES IN KASHKAR

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Beverages could be horse milk which they called *kymyz* or *xibe*, and eaten with sheep entrails accompanied by *dongxiang*, which is a thick soup of mutton served with steamed twisted rolls. The Muslims also enjoyed roasted fish with rice as long as it was *halal*. The Uyghurs ate *sangza* or crispy twisted fried bread or baked buns called *kao baozi* at breakfast, and lamb *yutaza*, a steamed many-layered bread at other meals.

At lunch or dinner, everyone enjoyed *nanqbaorou* which are pan-grilled lamb pies, *pamirdin* or baked pies stuffed with lamb, carrots, and onions, or both with *kao baozi*, their crispy buns filled with onion, potato, mutton, spices, and a sauce called *shorpa*. It is close to lamb soup.

Some people born here did tell us they enjoy *kawaplar*, their lamb or beef made as kebabs. These came seasoned with chili powder, black pepper, salt, and cumin. They also ate a pilaf of lamb, carrots, peppers, and rice made with lots of oil, and drank black tea, *kvass*, or a non-alcoholic beverage made with honey they called *gewasi*. This if made with nuts and honey was called *matang*. Many Middle-Eastern breads are loved in this region, including the one in the next column.

NANG BING, A LOCAL FLAT BREAD

Ingredients:

1½ teaspoon active dry yeast
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
1½ cups all purpose flour
¼ cup pastry flour
1 cup wheat germ
2 Tablespoons unsalted butter
1 Tablespoon peanut oil
Optional are: various seeds such as sesame, nigella, fennel, ground black pepper, and/or coarse salt

Preparation:

1. In large bowl with a dough hook, mix yeast, salt, sugar, and 1 cup warm water, and let stand until foamy, then add a quarter cup more flour, the wheat germ, butter, and the oil and mix until dough comes together.
2. Preheat oven to 500 degree F, and insert a pizza stone. Punch the dough down, cover it, and let it rise until double in volume. Then put it on a floured surface and divide it into four parts. Let them rest for fifteen minutes before rolling one flat and into a seven-inch circle. Put it on a floured baking sheet, and repeat until all are made and have been able to rise another half an hour.
3. Slightly prick the dough with a fork, brush with water, and sprinkle with desired seeds, then transfer to the hot stone and bake until golden, about three minutes. Then serve.

MIDDLE EASTERN CHINESE RECIPES APPRECIATED

FRUITS. PART III: HAWTHORN AND BEYOND

This series about fruits began in Volume 23-4 and featured apples, apricots, bananas, chayote, cherries, and coconuts. Part II continued with the citrus family and included dates, durian, figs, ginkgo nuts, goji berries, the gooseberry, grapes, and guavas. Each fruit does include one recipe. In this, the third article, we continue with more fruits common in the Chinese cuisine. In the next issue, information about nuts and berries will follow.

Do note often but not always, one fruit can substitute for another one. A reminder, there are additional fruit recipes in this magazine's index to be enjoyed by those who prepare them!

山楂

HAWTHORN is in the genus *Crataegus*, species *hipidophylla*.

These local small fruits grow on shrubs or small trees, and often these have thorny branches. You may have seen them sold candied and on sticks in open air markets in early summer. Year round, they are found dried as wafers sometimes called haw or flakes. They come wrapped in paper and look like thin reddish coins. Found in Asian markets, this fruit is also sold as a drink, in alcoholic beverages, and preserved or canned. When fresh, they are sweet and bright red or blackish-brown.



Considered delicacies, they are eaten raw, cooked, and in many other ways. The Chinese call them *shan zha*; in English they are known as hawthorn or mountain red fruits. Made into assorted snacks with different names, they are very high in vitamin C, have many phytochemicals, tannins, and phenolic acids. TCM or traditional Chinese medical practitioners say they have many uses. These include relieving indigestion, reducing diarrhea and high blood pressure, and removing pain from a hernia when mixed with ground fennel seeds. They also ease the itch of a rash, reduce dizziness and symptoms from dysentery.



HAWTHORN WITH PORK IN LOTUS LEAF

Ingredients:

- ½ pound pork butt, coarsely chopped
- 2 Tablespoons water chestnut flour
- 2 scallions, minced
- 1 Tablespoon each broad bean and chili pastes
- 1 Tablespoon each sesame oil and soy sauce
- 20 dry round haw circles, each broken into four or more pieces
- 2 large lotus leaves
- 4 whole cinnamon sticks

Preparation:

1. Mix pork butt with water chestnut flour and then add in the minced scallions, both pastes, sesame oil and soy sauce. Then, add the broken circles of haw, and mix these well. Put this mixture on the lotus leaves and tie them into a flat pancake.
2. Now, distribute the cinnamon sticks in various places on the bottom of a steamer basket and set this tied pancake on them.
3. Then, add two cups of boiling water into the bottom of a steamer and steam this on its rack for two hours. After that, remove it to a pre-heated platter discarding the cinnamon sticks. Cut the top of the pancake open, and serve.

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奇异果

KIWI is a fruit whose botanical name is *Actinidiaceae*, and is one with many species, some say four hundred or more. Most are called *yang tao*, years ago all called Chinese gooseberries. They are also known botanically as *Souris vegetale*, and were known and eaten by the Chinese for thousands of years. However, they were not as popular as they are

today since being called kiwi fruit. Current varieties did develop from a single seed brought to New Zealand where they were popularized after their name kiwi was adopted.

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FRUITS. PART III: HAWTHORN AND BEYOND

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One mature vine can produce some two hundred fruits. They store well in the refrigerator, and can be frozen then defrosted keeping their texture and taste undiminished. Their hairs eventually disappear after they ripen, though few consumers seem to know this; they eat them before fully ripened.

Technically a berry, without fertilization, these fruits grow to be about the size of a hen's egg.

Their black seeds are edible and not tough. In years past, these fruits were pickled. They were and still are a good source of antioxidants, have many vitamins and minerals, and are a particularly good source of Vitamin C.

TCM practitioners tell us these fruits are good to aid digestion, and can be a heart tonic. Boil their branches and they are used to treat mange in dogs, their vines when young make great rope.

SHREDDED CHICKEN AND KIWI

Ingredients:

- 1 whole boneless chicken breast, cut in thin two-inch strips
- 1 egg white, beaten
- 3 Tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 Tablespoon Chinese rice wine
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- ½ teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 cup carrots, angle cut in half-inch pieces
- 2 scallions thinly angle-cut
- 5 slices fresh ginger, cut in strips
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and smashed
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- 3 kiwis, peeled, sliced, the cut in half

Preparation:

1. Toss chicken strips with egg white, cornstarch, rice wine, and the salt and pepper.
2. Heat wok or fry pan, add oil, and stir-fry chicken strips until almost crisp then drain and set aside.
3. Add carrots to remaining oil, and when almost soft, add scallions, ginger, garlic, and sugar and stir-fry another minute before adding kiwi pieces, stir for one minute, then serve in a pre-heated bowl.

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荔枝



LI ZHI are tree fruits native to Guangzhou. They are a member of the soapberry family called *Sapindaceae*; its botanical name is *Litchi chinensis*. These fruits are very sweet and very juicy. They have a thin membrane under their warty exterior skin. Inside is a hard dark pit, this seed is in its center. Usually red or pink-skinned when ripe, these fruits dry out with a brown crisp outside and are called lizhi nuts.

This fruits probably went from China to India and then to the US. Their pits can be ground and mixed with fennel and simmered and used to reduce swollen testicles and relieve menstrual pain. Chinese traditional medical practitioners say they are very sweet and improve blood and are good for those who are ill. They are also good for those suffering with asthma, pain from a hernia, and for those with a cold stomach.

Wild li zhi trees grow on China's Hainan Island and throughout the rest of the country. There are many stories about their love as a delicacy in Imperial courts. In early times, they were described by Michal Boym and others as fruits from trees with thick twigs with smooth internal fruit. Known as far back as 2000 BCE, a famous story is about their use in the courts of Imperial times, rushed at great expense by fast horses to the capital and the court there. Preferred raw, many Chinese purchase them no matter the price when they first come into season. Few cook them or use them in dishes, those that do often use them in a meat dish or a cold soup such as the one that follows.

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FRUITS. PART III: HAWTHORN AND BEYOND

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LI ZHI, CHAYOTE, AND OYSTER SOUP

Ingredients:

5 sugared hawthorns on a stick, minced
5 li zhi, skins peeled, they and the pits discarded
1 dried oyster, rinsed in hot water, drained, and slivered
2 large chayote, slivered
1 pound chicken breasts, cut in thin strips
1 carrot, peeled and minced
5 slices fresh ginger, mincer
2 large Chinese black mushrooms, soaked, stems discarded, caps and slivered
5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and slivered

Preparation:

1. Put peeled li zhi in two cups of boiling water and set aside, than after half an hour mix them with the preserved ones on a stick.
2. Put the slivered dried oyster pieces in a quart of boiling water and simmer them for twenty minutes.
3. Then add the chayote, chicken breasts, and carrot pieces and simmer for ten minutes, then mash this mixture gently.
4. Now add two more cups of boiling water, the ginger, black mushroom pieces and the garlic, reduce the heat and simmer for one hour, then stir well, and serve in individual soup bowls.

龙眼



LONGAN, another ancient Chinese fruit that is often called dragon eye fruit, is botanically known as *Dimocarpus longan*. They grow on twenty foot or taller evergreen trees, and some say their fruit does look like an eyeball. We do not see this but do note they have a dark pit and white flesh. They are also known as cassia chief, and in Chinese are called *gui yuan*.

Not as sweet as the li zhi, they ripen somewhat later. The Chinese consider them warm in nature, and say they benefit the spleen, enrich the blood, increase vigor, calm the nerves, help reduce bleeding, ease pain, and reverse weight loss after illness.

They also say they help settle dizziness and blurred vision. TCM medical practitioners prescribe them to reduce nervousness, reduce heart palpitations, restore weak feelings during pregnancy, and heal ulcers. They

also recommend roasting their pits and using them for these needs, for scalds, burns, and anemia; and they use their dried skins and pits to make wine. The fruit itself is used fresh and dried when making wines and liquors, and for cooking in many main dishes. They particularly like them in soups and sweet ones.

SHRIMP AND LONGAN SOUP

Ingredients

½ pound fresh shrimp, peels and veins discarded
½ cup longan wine
20 goji berries
30 dried longan
½ slivered hot pepper, their seeds discarded
1 Tablespoon light soy sauce
5 cups chicken stock
1 scallion, finely cut on an angle

Preparation:

1. Soak the peeled shrimp in the wine for half an hour with the goji berries and dried longans. Then put all of this in a pot with five cups chicken stock and the hot pepper slivers.
2. Bring it to just below the boil and simmer for twenty minutes, then add the scallion pieces for five minutes and serve hot or tepid.

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枇杷



LOQUAT, called *pi pa* in Chinese, is the same name as one of their musical string instruments. Some Chinese call these fruits *lu jie* or reed oranges, perhaps because their fruit is yellow-orange. They ripen at the end of summer, and TCM practitioners say they cool fevers and increase saliva, and are good to relieve constipation in

the aged, and reduce coughs for those of all ages.

Botanically known as *Eriobotrya japonica*, these fruits grow on flowering evergreen shrubs or trees, and are in the *Rosaceae* family. Their origins are quite ancient, and some say they originally came from Japan while most believe they originated in China. There are several varieties and they differ in flavor and color, all with dark green leathery leaves.

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FRUITS. PART III: HAWTHORN AND BEYOND

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The fruits are succulent, smell sweet, grow in clusters, and can have one or many pits. Some have a bitter flavor. Many Chinese tell us they taste like a mixture of peach, mango, and citrus. They were mentioned in ancient Chinese literature, sometimes as *lu jie*. Some of the fruits have light hair on their exteriors.

Chinese TCM practitioners say they cool fevers and increase saliva; and that their pits when ground can help reduce coughing and other throat irritations. These dried fruit, when placed under a marriage bed, are a wish to have children quickly. The Chinese elderly are encouraged to eat some dried if they are constipated, also if they have asthma.

In Chinese kitchens, loquats are known for their high sugar content and abundance of pectin. Therefore, they are used for all kinds of preserves. Fresh ones are poached in syrup. Fresh, dried, or canned, they are used in bakery products, and made into wines and liquors. Low in saturated fat and sodium, TCM personnel often recommend them as a cough medicine; and they do warn that their leaves can be poisonous because they can contain cyanogenic glucosides. Even though many do, they still make and sell them as a paste and suggest they are a fine expectorant that soothes the throat and the digestive system.

HAIRY MELON SOUP



Ingredients :

½ pound hairy melon, peel discarded, flesh cut into two-inch pieces or smaller
1 chicken thigh, bones and skin discarded (optional)

3 slices fresh ginger, slivered
3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
5 chicken or vegetarian bouillon cubes
5 dried Chinese mushrooms, soaked, caps discarded, and slivered
2 carrots, peeled and slivered
1 pound silken doufu, cubed then smashed
¼ teaspoon each ground white and black pepper

Preparation:

1. Prepare hairy melon, chicken, ginger, and garlic and mix them with six cups of boiling water and the bouillon cubes, then reduce the heat and simmer for ten minutes.
2. Now add the mushroom and carrot pieces and simmer for an additional hour, then add the doufu and both ground pepper. Simmer another fifteen minutes, then serve.

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硬壳果 NUTS are edible fruits or seeds, many true nuts, drupes, or dry fleshy fruits surrounding a pit or a stone, or a naked seed such as are pine nuts. Peanuts are angiosperms not enclosed in a larger fruit or another exterior part. The most popular nuts to the Chinese are almonds, apricot seeds they consider nuts, cashews, Chinese chestnuts, coconuts, ginkgo nuts, peanuts, pine nuts, and walnuts. Also popular are soybeans that some do call soy nuts; but these are not nuts. Many nuts are popular for their oil and as vegetables. They can be used dry or roasted, either way in stir-fry dishes, in baked foods, as flavorings, and/or when raw.

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橄榄 OLIVES, are fruits, though not everyone thinks of them as such. To the Chinese, the most important one in their culinary is botanically known as *Canarium album*, and called *tol gai lan*, *huang lan*, or *bai lan*. All olives grow on evergreen trees, are often oval-shaped, and have hard pits. This Chinese olive has very pointed ends, many using them as tooth picks.

Olives are astringent, and their pits or hard stones, when ground and consumed, TCM practitioners say can clear a fever, relieve poisoning from alcohol, benefit the throat by reducing chronic coughs, ease hangovers, slow down the bleeding of wounds, reduce chill blains, and reduce skin sore infections.

All olives are eaten processed, the Chinese bury many in salt after drying them in the sun for two or more days, then preserving them for weeks. The love them for their taste and for healing.

**MORE ON NUTS IN A
FUTURE ISSUE.**

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FRUITS. PART III: HAWTHORN AND BEYOND

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SPICY CHICKEN WITH CHINESE OLIVES

Ingredients:

2 pounds skinless and boneless chicken thighs
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
½ cup unsalted roasted cashew nuts
1 teaspoon dried chili pepper flakes
1 Tablespoon honey
1 fresh hot pepper, seeded then slivered
1 sweet onion cut in large dice
10 Chinese olives, flesh cut away in large pieces.
Pits discarded
2 Tablespoons oyster sauce
1 scallion, slivered on an angle

Preparation:

1. Cut the chicken pieces into one-inch pieces and toss with salt and pepper.
2. Heat a wok, add the oil, and stir-fry the nuts for half minute, then remove them to a paper towel-lined bowl and discard the paper towel. Then toss them with the chili pepper flakes and add the honey and set aside.
3. Add the seasoned chicken to the wok, and stir-fry for three minutes, then add the onion pieces and stir-fry another two minutes before adding the olive pieces, and the oyster sauce. Return the chicken and onions and stir-fry for two minutes.
4. Add half the scallion pieces and stir for half a minute, then put in a pre-heated bowl and top with the rest of the scallion pieces, and serve.

番木瓜



PAPAYA, also called paw paw, is botanically known as *Carica papaya*. It is a very large group of tropical fruits growing on large trees or their trunks. There are some two dozen species, their fruits technically are berries that are ripe when soft and almost orange. Female trees most often grow these fruits, one flower left on to make for a stronger and larger fruit. These fruits are very susceptible to disease and viruses, and growers are working to genetically modify them.

There are two main kinds of papayas, one with orange to red flesh, the other with yellow flesh. Either can be picked green and they usually are. Green papayas are used for salads and cold dishes, the orange-ish red ones eaten raw or cooked in soups or with meat or fish dishes.

PAPAYA SOUP WITH FISH

Ingredients:

1 two-pound green papaya, peel and seeds discarded, and cut into two-inch pieces
1 two-pound fish
3 ounces white Chinese wine
12 red dates, pits discarded, each cut in four pieces
6 slices fresh ginger, slivered
20 goji berries

Preparation:

1. Remove skin and bones from the fish, and gut it.
2. Put pieces of the papaya and the fish in two quarts of water, then add the wine, dates, and ginger, and simmer for forty minutes.
3. Add the goji berries, and simmer for five minutes more, then serve hot or warm.

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梨



PEAR, is a fruit that lovers should not share. Why not, because the Chinese word for pear is identical to the word meaning separation. That is why Chinese friends do not like to share a pear. This is true for the common pear or the Asian pear; the latter is crunchy and tastes somewhere between a pineapple and a rose.

Most pears grow on deciduous trees, though there are two species growing on evergreen ones. Not all are pear-shaped, a few look like apples. One way to tell is when eating them. Some are 'gritty' in texture, apples never are. Pears are *Pyrus*, their species one of thirty or so. Some say there are a thousand pear species, others tell us there are many cultivars but only three species.

Pears grow their fruit on what is called the 'spur' which is a shoot more than a year old. *Nashi* or Asian pears look like apples but are more crisp. In Chinese, all pears are *bai li*. Chinese TCM practitioners tell us they moisten lungs, cool fevers, relieve the effects of alcohol, and ease constipation. Also, if one has a cough, diarrhea, or a cold feeling in the lungs, one should not eat any pear.

There is one pear called *tang li* in Chinese, in the species *P. betulaeifolia*; It is round and sometimes known as a 'false pear' and it is used to stop diarrhea and ease acute throat irritations. One TCM doctor told us never eat these fruits without the skin, and chew them slowly for best results. He could not explain why, but did say to cook any type of pear any way you might like.

ON OUR BOOKSHELVES



Krishnendu, Ray. *The Ethnic Restaurateur*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing Co., 2016. 237pp., 23.5 x 15.5 cm., paperback. ISBN 978-0-85785-836-8. No price given.

Not a cookbook, this is a path-breaking contemporary view of the American culinary scene mostly in New York

City public eating places, their chefs, restaurateurs, and culinary consumers. It shows migrants becoming established in new places and play important roles influencing their home and adopted food cultures. One sees them impacting newspaper reporting and guide books, their toil, tastes, and ethnicity making for what is eaten in the places they work and those they own, but less than one might imagine.

In 1980, for example, Chinese, Italians, and Mexicans were nearly seventy percent of restaurant workers, but did not account for anywhere near that amount of ethnic foods consumed in the US.

Krishnendu discusses their haute aspirations and restaurants they own and/or work in. He looks back to recorded restaurant beginnings in the 1850s when many had few Chinese staff. Their occupations were first recorded from that year. Now there are more correlations between ethnicity of food service workers and foreign-born restaurant cooks, an item slow to change.

The author, from the Indian sub-continent, reports that since the Civil War, French, German, and Chinese restaurant workers were most discussed in newspapers and Zagat-rated eateries. After 2010, there are almost four million Chinese in the US that now own more Chinese restaurants than all McDonald, Burger King, and Kentucky Fried Chicken eateries combined. Their

eateries grow quickly with more Chinese restaurants growing more quickly than other eating places.

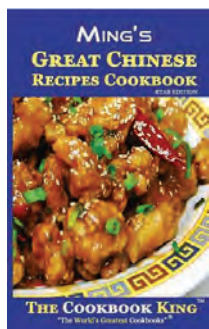
Lots of Chinese restaurants serve food that did not originate in China such as alligator Chinese style and a Chow Mein Sandwich, both unknown in China. Most Chinese restaurant workers, some half million in the past decade, came from the Fujian Province and the south of China; they are not serving nor touting these foods.

The two oldest food service worker populations in the US are Chinese and Mexican, most not serving Chinese nor Mexican foods they know best. Thanks to people such as Misa Chang both of these populations have redefined many parts of the places they work in or own, and include take-out and delivery of their mixed culinary offerings.

They are not represented by the less than twelve percent of James Beard awardees who are female, yet the more than that percentage are females in the restaurant industry. Their restaurant foods are a culinary mix, their work experiences and food memories further from the foods that their 'tastes of home.'

There is robust sociology literature about ethnic entrepreneurship and correlations between food service workers, new immigrant groups, and how their foods move to new eateries. Ray does report that most restaurant cooks are foreign born, do not serve the foods of the countries they came from. As one example, Queens County in NY has many Asian cuisines and in 2014 the Chinese were the largest population among the sixty-one different ones reported working there. There are almost four million Asians living in the US while French food this city's most expensive, far from the one most often served. Chinese cuisine is the second most frequently consumed foreign food, Italian served most often. There are very few French living in this city, few French restaurants, and no relationship between price, availability, and these populations.

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Anderson, Walter. *Ming's Great Chinese Recipes Cookbook*. Middleton DE: TheCookbookKing.com, 2016. 177pp. 20.3x12.6cm., ISBN 9781516898909. 14.95US\$.

This BTAB edition has one hundred twenty-six recipes and until the last page even there it never says who Ming is. If one goes to the recommended website, one does learn that Water Anderson has dozens of other cookbooks, not that he is Ming.

In this book, the recipes list ingredients, preparations are a single paragraph. This book has one single color photograph, it is on the cover. The recipes are listed in page order on the first five pages, the book ends with half-page about the book's author with little information about him or his books or even who Ming is.

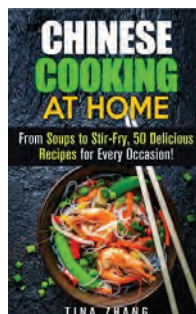
CHINESE NEW YEAR TURNIP CAKE

Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 8 ounces Chinese dried mushrooms, soaked overnight
- 1/3 cup dried shrimp, soaked overnight, then drained
- 1 pound pork sausage, sliced
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil 2 slices fresh ginger root
- 3 turnips, shredded
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Chinese five-spice powder
- 2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules
- 1 Tablespoon ground white pepper
- 2/3 pound white rice flour

Preparation:

Heat oil in a wok or large skillet over high heat. Add mushrooms, shrimp. And sausages and saute for half minute, then remove and set aside. Add ginger and saute a bit, add shredded turnips and stir-fry three minutes, then add five-spice powder, salt, chicken bouillon and white pepper and toss until evenly distributed, Extract ginger sliced, turn off the heat, top the mixture with rice flour and use chopsticks to mix in evenly. Add reserved sausage mixture, and toss, then put in a 9x2 inch deep round pan. Place this on a wire rack over boiling water and steam for 45 minutes. Then serve or place in the refrigerator covered with plastic wrap.



Zhang, Tina. Middletown DE: no publisher listed; *Chinese Cooking at Home*, 2016. 22.9x15.1cm., Pb. 2016. 146pp., ISBN 9781523906413, 9.00 US\$.

Subtitled: From Soups to Stir-fry, this volume has fifty recipes in eight chapters. Each one lists its ingredients, their preparations is written as a single paragraph, no matter its length. There is one color photograph, it is on the cover. The book begins with a four-page Table of Contents, and one page with copyright and related information. The last chapter, titled: Conclusion, simply tells readers what they already did tell them within its pages.

CRISP PORK BELLY

Ingredients:

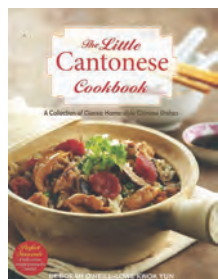
- 1 pound Pork tenderloin
- 1/2 teaspoon five-spice powder
- 3/4 Tablespoon sugar, brown or white
- 1 Tablespoon oil
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons hoisin sauce
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon oyster sauce
- 1/2 Tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- few drops of food coloring, optional

Preparation:

Prepare marinade by bringing all ingredients except pork tenderloin to a simmer in a small saucepan. Allow marinade to cool for fifteen minutes. Pour back into zip lock bag, add pork and seal and massage until pork is fully coated. Set in the refrigerator for a minimum of three hours, ideally overnight. When ready to roast, remove and set at room temperature. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and place on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake for about 25 minutes, spooning leftover marinade over pork about halfway through cooking process. Finish by broiling for 2 to 3 minutes after brushing on a final coating of marinade. Allow to cool about 10 minutes before serving.

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ON OUR BOOKSHELVES



continued from page 21

Kwok Yun, Deborah O'Neill-Lowe. *Little Cantonese Cookbook, The.* Singapore: Marshall Cavendish (Asia) Private Limited, 2015. 108pp., 23.3x18cm., paperback. ISBN 978-981-4634-12-0. No price given.

This book has forty-two recipes written in standard style. It calls itself: A Collection of Classic Home-style Chinese Dishes, and does include four full-color recipe postcards, half attached to the rear of the front cover, half to the inside of the back one. One color photograph illustrates every completed dish, the author a cooking teacher who begins each one with a paragraph of background. Most have cooking tips, a few have recipe variations, and all have detailed instructions, some from her grandmother or her mother.

The recipes use various techniques common to this region of China and include many light sauces. They are dishes young Cantonese women can delight sharing with their families.

BLACK BEAN CHICKEN HOT POT

Ingredients:

3 chicken legs, each cut into four pieces
1 Tablespoon oil
1 medium onion, cut in chunks
1 small red pepper, seeded and cut in chunks
2 Tablespoons fermented black bean paste
3 scallions, chopped

Marinade:

2 teaspoons cornstarch, divided
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
1 teaspoon Shao Xing wine
1 Tablespoon finely grated ginger
1/2 teaspoon granulated sugar

Preparation:

1. Mix marinade, mix with the chicken, and set aside for 15 minutes in the refrigerator.
2. Brown the chicken in a clay pot or a pan on both sides, then set aside and add the onion and red pepper for a minute, then add the black bean paste and stir for half a minute, then add 3 cups of water and simmer for forty-five minutes, then add the second batch of cornstarch with a tablespoon of water, stir, thicken, add the scallions, and serve.

**SEVERAL READERS DID
SUGGEST THESE COOKBOOKS
CAN YOU SUGGEST OTHERS?**

SHARKS AND THEIR FINS

Nowadays, rich and oily shark meat is popular where once their fins were. The fins are now banned in many places because some say they are becoming endangered. In the past among the Chinese, bowl after bowl of Shark's Fin Soup was popular before and in the rule of Empress Cixi.

Now, in southern China and Taiwan, a single bowl of this soup at an honorific banquet such as a wedding can cost upwards of five thousand Taiwan dollars or its equivalent in Chinese Yuan, American dollars, or the local currency. Getting real shark's fin soup is not a reality in many places because serving them is not allowed. At best one can get artificial shark's fin in soup.

There are more than three hundred different species of sharks worldwide. Even with that number, their soups are no longer allowed in many cities, town, or hotels. Eating this soup is morally unacceptable because sharks are thought to be or becoming endangered species. Their fins when cut off, the rest of the shark returned from whence it came, dies shortly thereafter.

Scientists need an accurate picture of these reducing numbers, distribution, spawning grounds, migration routes, and how many may still be available. Some tell me they do not have that information but do know their availability is rapidly diminishing due to over-fining.

Rich and oily shark meat is becoming popular at Chinese meals while in the past, simply eating their fins was popular at special events. Bowl after bowl of this soup was a required dish at these high-end banquets and important business-deal-meals. The Chinese finalized many a deal with this soup on the table as it impressed all.

Now, thanks to the cooperation of people around the world, the consumption of shark meat may be increasing while the numbers of sharks solely caught for fining has decreased. Is this enough for their numbers to remain the same or better yet increase?

According to one estimate in a New Zealand English-language Chinese food magazine, some two hundred

million sharks are killed by commercial fishing fleets doing this fining. If lined up head to tail, these mutilated and deceased animals would go around the equator five times.

In ancient records, shark fins became popular and an honorific food long after they were low grade and consumed by common folk. That was during the reign of the Qing Emperor Chien Lung (1736 - 1795). Then, their soup became popular on palace and honorific menus. After that and the death of Empress Cixi, this soup gained greater popularity at high-class banquets.

Today, due to their extensive use in many dishes beside shark fin soup, particularly mako and thresher sharks and many other shark varieties are being fished out of existence. Now, their use and those lesser-valued hammerhead sharks are increasingly sold as shark steaks, stir-fried shark dishes, fish balls made with shark meat and shark fin bisque. Overall, the number of sharks swimming in open waters are decreasing.



At the beginning of the last century, Chinese emigrated and now live on every continent; and they are more affluent than ever before. Therefore, their fins were sought after for many special meals. Most are purchased and shipped to China and

Taiwan, sold in large numbers in Singapore, Macao, and other countries with large Chinese populations, as well as in China and Taiwan. Fin consumption has grown steadily at more and more banquets and special events, their soup still a required dish. In Hong Kong, a few years back, more than seven million pounds of shark fins were consumed in one year.

We know of one restaurant in that city, the Sun Tung Luk Shark Fin Restaurant, that closed their doors, but not because of supply issues. They closed them because their customers felt it inappropriate to serve or eat shark fins. They later did reopen, changed them, changed their name, not their ownership, and changed their menu, too. Morality had impacted their bottom

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SHARKS AND THEIR FINS

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line, their customers did demand they stop using sharks fins. They no longer ordered these fins, and many did not eat at their restaurant because they were appalled about fining actually killing sharks.

This attitude grew and impacted Chinese restaurants in many cities and towns, at restaurant chains, and at all places serving shark's fin soup. People demanded this and municipalities demanded they adhere to it. These places and many people did not want to be responsible for the precipitous decline of and eventual extinction of sharks.

Though this decline came into question, prices of shark fins continued to rise. There was a demand for artificial shark fins, and so fake fin prices rose and are now close to equal, some even higher than real shark fins. People still want to show off and so they order these soups with fake shark fins. They seem to continue to impress, too.

What fascinates is that few seem to mind the term 'artificial' on a menu. They still want these soups even if made with fake ones. These soups now cost almost as much as soups with real shark fins, seem to sell well, and their prices are almost as high and some are even higher than those made with the real thing.

People are unaware that sharks are very primitive animals, each having six to eight fins. The marketplace sorts them into three grades according to thickness and location on the shark but does not grade fake fins, to our knowledge.

The best shark's fins are dried in the sun then softened before use. Dried shark fin is hard and tough needing repeated soaking and simmering. The fins need their scales removed before use.

Their flavor is almost non-existent. Fake or real, they need to be prepared adding the flavor of one or another special food, and they need to be cooked for a long time. A chef in Taiwan told us their meat can be fishy if it has a high concentration of urea. He did ask us if those who read this magazine know that when preparing shark's fins they need to be cooked with a strong broth and other strong ingredients?

He said that Chinese know that shark's fins are called *sha yu* or *yu chi*, and that chefs need to immediately

put the fins on ice. And he went on to say that many chefs, he too,, now use shark meat for other purposes and he thinks this is good. Shark's fin soup, for the Chinese, may be an honorific dish which he calls 'an act of generosity' but now he worries if his livelihood will soon disappear. He hopes not. Have you ever wondered which fin was most prized? He told us that the one on the center back called the 'dorsal fin' is the very best. He went on saying side fins were considered second best, tail fins the least valuable. A soup with a whole fin is the very best way to have this soup, and we have written about having this once; we did photograph it and it is shown again on this page from the meal where we had that.

He did tell us that there are hundreds of other ways to serve shark, such as in dumplings, stuffed into chicken wings, or used as a sweet ending a meal. Literature and life tell us that shark's fins increase the cost of a meal by thousands of dollars depending upon quality and quantity. That means shark fin soup can be from ten dollars for a few strands of a fin to a few thousand dollars for one bowl with a whole shark fin in it.



In Canada's Ontario Province years ago, we did visit a place called 'Shark Fin City.' They gave us a brochure that we share on this page, their Shark Fin Soup shown in a white crock. They did not serve us or anyone a taste.

In Taiwan, we did eat with the owner of the previously mentioned shark fin restaurant before it morphed into something else. He told us he was feeling the economic pinch, said many of his frequent customers did not even want to be seen in his place. At that time, he was ready to change the name of his restaurant and its menu; and later did.

Some hotels no longer serve shark's fins in their restaurants, though a few still do. More often than not they serve artificial shark's fin in dishes or just a few real fin pieces with crab meat or with abalone. Their managers tell us they only use imitation fins.

TCM practitioners tell us that real fins can cure diabetes, reduce indigestion, and benefit *Qi* in men and women, and decrease cancerous tumors, reduce pain from arthritis, and heal serious wounds faster than anything else they know of.

To those who ask: are there different kinds of shark fins, the answer is yes. Look in your local library for the book titled: *Musings of a Chinese Gourmet* by F.

SHARKS AND THEIR FINS

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T. Chang. It has many pages of enthusiastic guidance for handling the fins of real sharks, how to cook them on a bamboo mat, serve them at extravagant banquets, prepare them properly, etc. It advises not to deal with shark meat, just enjoy those cartilaginous needles from the fins. When cooking shark's fins, we read that they should be soft and chewy after simmering for two hours or more. That author suggests rinsing them many times, cutting them into small squares, freezing them for later use, etc. He says that when unavailable, to substitute slivered sturgeon skin in their place.

While most TCM practitioners we spoke to say the needles from shark fins cure many things, not every one of them believes there is enough reliable information to substantiate that. A few blatantly said they are ineffective while some theorize that they may inhibit angiogenesis and prevent blood vessel growth. Not all are in agreement.

There are folks with seafood allergies who do not eat any fins. Some say they do get a bad taste in their mouth, others complain of dizziness, constipation, low grade fever, yellowing of the eyes, etc. while others only complain of their cost.

Many who want to serve shark purchase a small shark so they get very small fins. One gal said she serves these small items with crab meat and eggs, and did so celebrating the birth of her first grandson. Another told us she served them at her husband's sixtieth birthday party. One fellow said he heard they were served at a New Year's Eve party his friend called 'Around the Stove Feast.' His wife did not attend. Another chap said shark fins are a wish for 'surplus' meaning 'money' in the days ahead; and he is for that but has yet to have any.

Here are a few classic shark recipes, and all can be made with artificial shark fins. There is also a shark lip recipe. Enjoy them all!

SHARK'S FIN THICK SOUP

Ingredients:

5 ounces shark's fins
4 ounces crab meat
2 Tablespoons corn oil
2 Tablespoons crab roe
1 egg
4 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and slivered
2 scallions

6 cups chicken stock
1 chicken bouillon cube
1 teaspoon granulated ginger
1 Tablespoon each cornstarch and water chestnut flour
1 Tablespoon sesame oil
dash of ground black pepper
1 Tablespoon Shao Xing wine

Preparation:

1. Boil shark's fins for half an hour, then soak them overnight, rinse them, and discard any hard parts.
2. Heat a wok or large pot, add the oil, the garlic, ginger, and onion and stir-fry one minute.
3. Beat roe and the egg, add them, the stock, bouillon cube, scallions, and all the seasonings, flours, sesame oil, the flours, and the wine and simmer until no longer cloudy. Then serve..

VEGETARIAN SHARK FIN STEW

Ingredients:

4 ounces fresh coriander
½ cup dried day lily buds, soaked until soft, drained, each cut in half, and dried with paper towels
1 cup vegetable oil
3 Tablespoons cornstarch, divided
2 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
2 cups chicken broth, divided
3 large Chinese black mushrooms, soaked for one hour, stems discarded, each slivered
2 ounces canned bamboo shoots, slivered
1 small carrot, peeled, then shredded
3 Tablespoons canned wheat gluten, shredded

Preparation:

1. Knot half the soaked day lily pieces.
2. Heat oil and deep fry the knotted day lilies until crisp. Then remove them from the oil and discard them, but reserve the oil.
3. Mix half the cornstarch with one tablespoon cold water and toss with the unused day lilies.
4. Reheat the oil and deep fry the day lilies with cornstarch until crisp, then drain on paper towels, and with a scissor, cut into one-inch pieces.
5. Put drained day lilies in a bowl with wine and half the broth and steam for ten minutes over boiling water, then steam the mushrooms and bamboos shoots for fifteen minutes over the boiling water; then remove them from the stock.
6. Mix day lily pieces, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, shredded carrot pieces, and the wheat gluten, toss with the remaining cornstarch, and boil in half cup of the broth until somewhat thickened.
7. Serve each diner a small bowl of broth with two or three tablespoons of the vegetables on the side.

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SHARKS AND THEIR FINS

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IMITATION SHARK FIN SOUP

Ingredients:

1 sea cucumber, soaked overnight until very soft, remove and discard its intestines, thin slice it, and cut each slice in half, then set this aside
3 Chinese black mushrooms, soaked an hour, stems discarded, caps sliced
1 cooked chicken leg, bone discarded, slivered
½ cup fresh shrimp, veins and shells discarded, each cut in small pieces, and blanched for one minute
2 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
4 Tablespoons vegetable oil, divided in half
10 slices fresh ginger, divided into two batches
4 scallions, angle-sliced, divided into two batches
1 heaping teaspoon chicken bouillon powder
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
5 cups chicken broth
1 cup shredded bok cai or Chinese cabbage
½ cup imitation shark fin, soaked for two hours, drained, cut in one-inch pieces, and blanched for one minute
2 Tablespoons cornstarch mixed with same amount of cold water
1 Tablespoon Chinese black vinegar
1 Tablespoon Chinese sesame oil
2 sprigs cilantro, coarsely chopped

Preparation:

1. Prepare sea cucumber, mushrooms, chicken, and shrimp, toss them together, microwave them for four minutes, then set them aside after mixing with wine and cooled.
2. Heat wok or fry pan, add half the oil and stir-fry half the ginger and half the scallions for one minute, toss with the bouillon powder, sugar, and the broth, toss in the bok cai, and set aside. When cool, add the sea cucumber mixture.
3. Reheat wok or fry-pan, add the other half of the oil, ginger, and scallion pieces, and when this boils, add the sugar and the artificial sharks fin pieces, and toss for one minute.
4. Next, mix this with the sea cucumber mixture and the shark fin mixture and stir-fry for two minutes then add the cornstarch mixture and bring to the boil. Add the vinegar and the sesame oil, and when thickened, pour into a large pre-heated soup bowl, sprinkle with the cilantro, and serve.

IMITATION OR REAL SHARK FIN DUMPLINGS

Ingredients:

20 dumpling wrappers
3 Tablespoons cooked belly pork, minced
3 Chinese black mushrooms, soaked for one hour, stems discarded, then minced
3 cooked chicken gizzards, thick center skins, discarded, gizzards minced
3 Tablespoon shrimp, shells and veins removed and discarded, shrimp minced
3 Tablespoons imitation or real shark fins, minced
1 egg, separated
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil

Preparation:

1. Mix minced pork, mushrooms, gizzards, shrimp, and artificial shark fin pieces with the egg white.
2. Put one tablespoon in a dumpling wrapper, using one finger, take some yolk and wet the edge of the wrapper and pleat it sealed; repeat until all are filled and sealed. Then set them aside covered with a thin towel, for half an hour.
3. Place then not touching each other on a very lightly oiled steamer tray and steam for eight minutes, then serve.

SHARK FINS, MEAT, AND SEAFOOD SOUP

Ingredients:

¼ cup fish paste
1 Tablespoon soaked dried shrimp, minced
2 Tablespoons shark fins
1 Tablespoon chicken fat
2 Tablespoons minced scallions
2 Tablespoons minced carrots
2 Tablespoons minced Chinese black mushrooms
1 egg white
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 Tablespoon rice wine
2 Tablespoons cornstarch
6 cups chicken stock

Preparation:

1. Mix fish paste, minced soaked dried shrimp, shark's fins, chicken fat, scallions, minced carrots and mushrooms, egg white, salt, sesame oil, and rice wine and roll into balls and roll them into the cornstarch.
2. Heat chicken stock, add the balls, and simmer them for five minutes; then serve.

SHARKS AND THEIR FINS

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SHARK FIN LIPS AND ABALONE

Ingredients:

- 1 cup shark fin lips, soaked until soft
- 2 canned abalone, sliced very thin, then cutting each slice in half
- ½ pound lean pork, slivered
- 2 zucchini quartered the long way, then angle cut

Preparation:

1. Bring six cups of water to the boil, add the lips, abalone, and the pork simmer for one hour. Then add the zucchini and simmer an additional half an hour.
3. Next, let this cool about fifteen minutes, drain, and serve the liquid in individual soup bowls, the solids on the side.

IMITATION OR REAL SHARK FINS AND WINGS

Ingredients:

- ½ cup fresh real or prepared imitation shark fins
- 10 large double-bone chicken wings, bones removed and discarded
- 2 slices fresh ginger, minced
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- 3 Tablespoons cooked Yunnan ham, minced
- 1 thick slice cooked bamboo shoot, minced
- ½ cup chicken stock
- 1 Tablespoon Chinese rice wine
- 1 Tablespoon lard
- 1 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon water chestnut powder mixed with same amount of cold water

Preparation:

1. Simmer shark fin in boiling water with ginger and sugar, then drain, and put them on a heat-proof plate.
2. Mix rest of shark fin with ham, minced bamboo shoots, soy sauce, wine, and lard and simmer for twenty minutes, then cool, and stuff into the chicken wings and put them around the outside of the plate.
3. Steam for fifteen minutes, drain liquid into a small pot, add the water chestnut powder mixture, bring to the boil stirring, and when thickened, pour over fins and wings, and serve.



IMITATION SHARK FIN, CORN, AND EGG WHITES

Ingredients:

- 1 cup imitation instant shark fins
- ½ cup crab meat, cartilage removed and discarded
- 1 scallion, diced, the white and green parts separated
- 3 Tablespoons bean sprouts, tails removed, each one cut in half
- ½ cup cream-style corn
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 Tablespoon Chinese rice wine
- 6 to 8 egg whites, beaten just until frothy
- 1 sprig fresh coriander, coarsely chopped, as garnish

Preparation:

1. Mix shark fin pieces with the crab meat and white of the scallion, bean sprouts, and the wine and set aside.
2. Heat wok or fry pan, add the oil, and stir-fry the shark fin pieces and the white of the scallions for one minute, then add the bean sprouts, creamed corn, and the rice wine.
2. Add the frothy egg whites and the rice wine and stir for one minute, then add the crab mixture and continue stirring until the egg whites start to set.
3. Put them into a pre-heated bowl, stir in half the coriander, and serve as the egg whites finishing setting, but before they get dry.

IMITATION SHARK FIN IN GOURD

Ingredients:

- 2 large Chinese black mushrooms, soaked for an hour, stems removed and discarded, then minced
- 1 Tablespoon shredded bonito, then ground
- 1 cup cooked belly pork, minced very fine
- ¼ cup imitation shark fin, soaked for one hour, steamed for ten minutes, drained, then minced
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 young Chinese green gourds, each cut into one-inch slices, a spoonful of seeds removed from each of them
- ½ cup chicken broth

Preparation:

1. Mix minced mushrooms, ground bonito, and the minced belly pork.
2. Heat wok or fry pan, add the oil, then the mushroom mixture and stir-fry the mushroom mixture for three or four minutes, then remove from the heat and put one to two tablespoons of this on each slice of the gourd; then put about half that amount of the shark fin on top of it.
3. Put these slices on a heat-proof flat or almost flat platter, and steam for ten minutes, then serve.

ON GREAT MENUS IN SUFFOLK COUNTY, NY

TAO'S FUSION

1310 Middle Country Road; Selden NY 11784;
phone: (631) 320-0414.

This place has two menus, both covered in black leather, both put on your table. Telling them apart requires looking carefully. Only one has metal ring binders, and you are gin but one of that one. It has metal ring binders. Everyone gets one of the other kind. They are not the same. The metal ring binder one is a close mimic of their paper take-out one. Both have gorgeous but different color photographs of their many dishes; not the same dishes. All are designed and prepared by an outstanding chef. He is from Beijing and there cooked for many years in one of its five great Restaurants named 'Peking Duck' In Chinese.

He came to the US from China's capital city and in Selden makes great Peking Duck in an oven specifically made for it. The oven came from China, the duck is the white Peking species originally bred on Long Island. This eatery purchases huge ones, most seven pounds or larger, and they are roasted classically and correctly, not fried off as most US Chinese restaurants do. We once had a Duck Banquet here with two Peking Ducks for ten people along with ten other dishes. It was a pure indulgent meal thanks to the duck's huge size priced to match, and the other dishes healthy sizes, too.

After a group is seated, they should peruse both menus with their many color photographs. Both are different, both with delicious items to select from. That is no easy task as Chef. Wong is multi-Chinese-cuisine-talented. He cooks great dishes from many of them including those from Beijing and other Northeastern provinces, and grills superbly, does make great BBQ, and we love his other selections from iangnan, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Sichuan, Chongqing, Fujian, and other provincial specialties, and fine Buddhist vegetarian dishes, too.

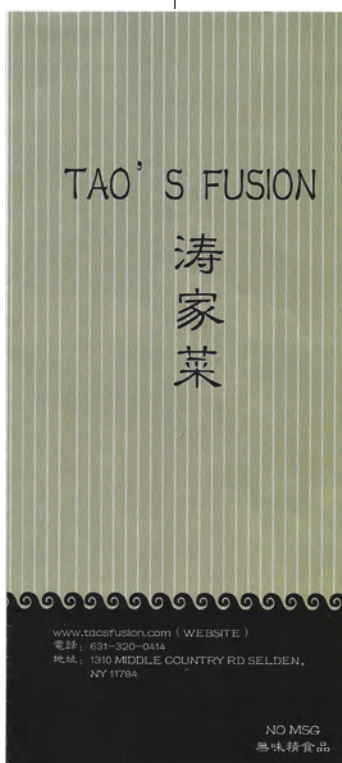
The chef also cooks at a branch in Sayville with the same menu. On it our favorites are many, two we like to order frequently. These are his whole fried sea bass and his Hong Kong Shrimp. Our son-in-law who worked for years in one of Homer's Chinese eateries says he likes the Steamed Sea Bass best and also adores his Hong Kong Shrimp. All appetizers are great, my husband always orders the Beef and Beef Tendon in Chili Sauce.

He says it is better than at any other Chinese restaurant. My daughter always selects his Snow Pea Leaves with Garlic. She did introduce it to others who now want to order it, too. One friend loves his Hot Pot and orders hers with tripe, shrimp, crab meat, tempura, or lamb. They can be had with steamed white rice, rice grains, or boiled noodles at no extra charge.

Another friend tells us this chef makes the best General Tso's Chicken; though one does disagree because she says his Lamb with Green Onions is tops on her list. Still another says not to miss the Cooked Chestnut with Young Chicken in Brown Sauce, it a casserole.

When there, we look at tables with Chinese patrons, many have ordered one or two cold dishes to have before their main selections. Choices are from oxtail or fish head plain or Sichuan style, fresh shrimp, sauteed bullfrog, shredded chicken, grilled scallops, wild salmon, lamb chops, Kobe beef, or sauteed mixed seafood dishes.

There is lots to please everyone. We like this place so much we go often and are lucky it is close by. Seek it out even if a distance from home. It is in an 'L'-shaped shopping center on the south side of the road. Easy to find, it shares landlords with Papa Johns, an Afghan eatery and market, and many a small business. Go enjoy, and learn what really good Chinese food's texture should be and what it should taste like!



TIANJIN

Long a gateway city to Beijing, Tianjin is fifty miles Southeast of the country's capital city. It is China's fourth largest city and a major seaport half an hour by high speed train. In Tianjin, one boards at Tianjin South' main station to get to the capital quickly.

Historically, this was a city of migrants. There were many foreign settlements here from 1858. It is a major trading port and a place where British and French were early power players. Living with them were Japanese, Germans, Austro-Hungarians, Italians, Russians, and others in this cosmopolitan city with strong Russian and Japanese influences that still exist today.

Once divided into nine international concessions, this city was known for them and for the strong monsoons that occasionally blew in. Here, blended cultures existed, ones that mixed foods from China's north and south; a mite more southern than northern.

Tianjin was a busy seaport as well as a melting pot of peoples. It was a city with places ancient and modern, folk and food from all over China, a place with dry winters, hot and humid summers, lots of fish, and sandstorms from the Gobi Desert that could last for several days.

In Tianjin, temperatures on some days in July, do range from twenty-five to eighty degrees Fahrenheit. There are two to three thousand hours of sunshine in the Fall, mostly in October, and there is lots of warm rain in July and August. Air quality here can be thick enough to taste but no one seems to mind, at least they never say so.

The name of this city means "Emperor's Ferry." It guards Beijing with people not only of many different cultures, but also of various faiths. They support many forms of local art, are known for their great sense of humor, have lots of tolerance, and frequent many elegant dining and snack locations.

Many folk come here to enjoy Ancient Culture Street, the Tianhou Temple dedicated to the Goddess of the Sea, see the Confucius Temple, the Wang Hai Luo Cathedral, and more. That church was destroyed several times including in 1870, during the boxer rebellion of 1900,

and in an earthquake in 1976. Repaired most recently in 1983, people keep coming to see it, the Dabei Monastery near the market place the Laughing Buddha at its entrance, see Guanyin, and the Tianjin Eye which is one of the world's tallest Ferris Wheels, three hundred ninety-four feet tall. They oogle at it and at the French-built cathedral called *Xi Kai*, at the many colonial buildings on Jiefang Street. They also go to the Chian House Museum, and the Tianhou Temple.

People also come here to eat their famous Goubuli Dumplings filled with delicious pork. They come to enjoy Stone-grilled Beef, braised Prawns. Crabs with Seaweed, Corn Thimbles, and many other local and imported dishes. They love all their snacks including those steamed buns; they are stuffed with pork or other juicy fillings, enjoy the Earhole Fried Cakes that are filled with red beans and sugar, the *Shibajie* or Fried Dough Twists named for the street where first made, and many more snack foods. The most famous fillings in many of their dishes include walnuts, prunes, and/or sweet osmanthus, all are very popular.

This seaport city also has other sea foods, often served in big bowls alone or with other foods from the land. Most are salty and fresh, braised with lots of fresh bean curd or made with dried bean curd sticks. Some eat theirs with different kinds of ham, and many flavor them with southern seasonings.

Local pancakes are popular here, the most loved are those made with mung bean flour rolled with scallions, eggs, and fermented bean sauce. Some prefer theirs as *guobacia*, made with other ingredients.

Locals and visitors flock to *Nashi* Street or make a bee line to *Jingyuan*, once known as the Garden of Serenity. Now, it has an exhibition of Puyi's life. Others go to *Zhangyuan* to see this grand mansion's exterior at 59 Anshan Road. They can not go inside but can imagine Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his wife living here. This they did for some months in this 1915-style building. Others go to

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天津

TIANJIN

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Italiante Street to see the two hundred or so European-style buildings on the north bank of the Haine River. Still others go to Marco Polo Square to see and be seen.

Tianjin once was a small walled city. Now it has more than sixteen million residents, most of whom know it was first built in 1404, and that the entire wall is gone except for small parts from 1860. Many come here to the concession areas from years ago that no longer exist in this Hebei former capital.

There were a few rebuilt since the major earthquake but they are curious about the close to three hundred 'Fortune 500' companies headquartered here. Most come just to enjoy the Grand Canal begun years ago and opened during Sui Dynasty times (589-618).

The Boxers did seize control of this city in 1900, were defeated and forced back from where they came from soon afterwards. Then, this city became the provincial capital of Hopeh, later fell to Japan in 1937, and Americans surrendered in December of that year though the Boxers did remain in control until August of 1945. World War II ended all local battles and peace has gratefully taken over since so people can only worry about their next main dish.

PRAWNS BRAISED POPO SYLE

Ingredients:

2 pounds large shrimp, shells cut open, veins removed
3 Tablespoons Shao Xing wine
1 cup vegetable oil, separated in two halves
5 slices fresh ginger, minced
3 Tablespoons fermented rice and its liquid
3 Tablespoons mashed ripe tomatoes
2 Tablespoons sesame oil

Preparation:

1. Dry shrimp with paper towels, then toss them with the wine, half the oil, and the ginger, and set aside for half an hour at room temperature.
2. Heat a wok, then add the other half of the oil, and when it is hot, add half the drained shrimp and stir-fry until they are almost pink, then take them out of the oil and fry the other half of them, each time removing them to a pre-heated bowl.
3. Dry the wok, add the fermented rice and the mash tomatoes, and after one minute, return the shrimp and stir until they are hot, no more than two minutes, then add the sesame oil, and serve in the same bowl, after drying it with paper towels..

GUIZHOU, IGNORED BY THE DOG

Ingredients:

12 ounces ground pork
2 Tablespoon sesame oil, divided in half
3 Tablespoons ground chicken fat
3 Tablespoons dark soy sauce
3 Tablespoons fresh minced ginger
10 dumpling bun dough

Preparation:

1. Mix ground pork and the chicken fat and two tablespoons ice water and stir slowly and carefully until all is incorporated into the meat, then add the soy sauce, and the ginger, and continue stirring until it, too, is stirred into the meat.
2. Brush a bowl with very little of the sesame oil.
3. Roll each batch of dough until about six inches, then wrap it twice around two tablespoons of the meat mixture sealing all edges of the dough with water brushing its outside with the rest of the sesame oil.

45ft. Steam over boiling water for eight minutes, then put them on an oil-brushed bowl, and serve.

2 scallions, minced

BAMBOO SHOOTS: AN UPDATE

The first article about these foods, common for pandas and people was written in 2003 by Irving Beilin Chang in Volume 10(4) on pages 9, 10, and 12. It had four recipes and is on this magazine's website. A dozen years later, in Volume 22(1) an article titled: Vegetables: Unusual in the western World.

The newer article did discuss a dozen Chinese vegetables, but many readers wrote to ask why bamboo shoots were not included. Several also asked why we have not written more about these reed-like vegetables used in a variety of ways in many Chinese dishes. Responding to those queries, this article is about these vegetables some call 'universal providers.'

Bamboo shoots are popular and used often because they can be sauteed, steamed, stuffed, boiled, or braised and used in ever so many other ways. They are used in ever so many dishes by those who eat with chopsticks. They are also used to making paper, build houses, repair residences, and make baskets, furniture, fencing, clothing, weapons, and many other things.

Cooks and consumers need to know that rarely, if ever, are bamboo shoots eaten uncooked. If you wonder why not, one reason is that some species include toxins such as hydrocyanic acid, though not in large amounts. Because of that they are always boiled before consuming them. Companies that sell them almost always cook them before they do. There are hundreds of species, some with more toxin than others. That is why they are rarely sold uncooked.

Some varieties of these shoots actually shoot up four feet in one day, particularly if they are spring shoots. Many

known winter shoots are probably the best among them; and you can recognize them as they have spaces inside a whole shoot, and they are the tastiest of any of them.

Some call bamboo shoots the 'king of the vegetable family.' They are *cai wong* or *tian zhu* in Chinese, all grow more quickly in spring than in winter. The winter ones look as if someone cut out some of their insides, they are not solid throughout.



Most bamboo shoots are perennials. They have solid outer husks that need to be removed and discarded. When too old, they are woody and not worth eating. Most are members of *Bambusa beecheyana* or *phyllostachys*, and they grow pointy and are as tall as some trees. Many are flesh-colored, all are loved for their texture and their taste.

TCM practitioners tell us their flavor is sweet, neither warm nor cool, and they impact the lungs and phlegm and are a valuable aid for respiratory problems such as coughs and a rough throat. They suggest simmering them with sugar and also eating them that way if unable to ditch a common cold. They also suggest cooking them with garlic and fermented soy beans. If one has a chronic prolapse of the anus, one TCM doctor told us to eat pickled bamboo shoots cooked with chicken and salt every day.

Next are a few recipes when wanting to prepare some. There are many others in this magazine listed in the index on its website.

Check them out in the vegetable listings and also look at others in meat, poultry, and fish dishes. While they can be eaten alone, and prepared in dessert dishes, most are in the vegetable section.

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BAMBOO SHOOTS: AN UPDATE

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BAMBOO SHOOTS, STIR-FRIED

Ingredients:

1 pound bamboo shoots, peeled if needed, and blanched
½ cup chicken stock
2 Tablespoons canned evaporated milk
3 Tablespoons Shao Xing wine
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
1 Tablespoon cornstarch
2 Tablespoons rendered chicken fat
1 Tablespoon black vinegar
1 teaspoon sesame oil

Preparation:

1. Mix the chicken stock with evaporated milk, wine, ground pepper, and cornstarch.
2. Heat a wok or pot and add the chicken fat and the bamboo shoots and braise them for three or four minutes, then add the above mixture and stir-fry it for two minutes before adding the wine, seasonings and cornstarch.
3. Stir-fry one minute more, then serve.

WINTER BAMBOO SHOOTS AND FERMENTED FLOUR

Ingredients:

1 pound canned winter bamboo shoots, drained and thinly sliced
¼ cup vegetable oil
½ cup pea vines, cut into one-inch pieces
3 Tablespoons fermented flour paste
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
½ teaspoon coarse salt
1 teaspoon sesame oil
½ cup chicken stock

Preparation:

1. Heat wok or fry pan, add bamboo shoots and oil, and stir-fry for two minutes.
2. Add the pea vine pieces, fermented flour paste, sugar, and salt, and continue to stir-fry for two more minutes. Before adding the sesame oil and stock boiling it until thickened, but not more than two minutes; then serve in a pre-heated dish.

STUFFED CHICKEN WINGS

Ingredients:

10 one-bone chicken wings, thri meat and skin pushed to one end making them look like lollypops
2 Tablespoons dry shrimp, cooked in water or stock for twenty minutes, then drained their liquid discarded
1 shiitake mushrooms boiled in haf cup water, then discard their stems and mince their caps
1 Chinese sausage cooked with the mushrooms, then minced
½ cup canned winter bamboo shoots, drained and minced
1 cup sweet rice cooked until soft
2 Tablespoons tin soy sauce
2 Tablespoons cornstarch, separated
¼ teaspoon hot sauce

Preparation:

1. Prepare all ingredients as directed, ad cut a pocket in each chicken wing.
2. Mix minced shrimp, mushrooms, sausage, bamboo soots, and rice with half the cornstarch and the hot sauce.
3. Dust the wings with the rest of the cornstarch, stuff each wing and squeeze it closed.
4. Heat the oil and fry half of the wings for two or three minutes, then put them in a steamer basket and fry the rest of tem for the same amount of time.
5. Put the wings over boiling water and steam then for twelve minutes, put them in a serving bowl, then serve them.

DUCK, LOTUS ROOTS, AND BAMBOO SHOOTS

Ingredients:

1 duck breast cut into matchstick-size pieces
1 section lotus root, peeled and cut into match-stick size pieces
1 Tablespoon each: rice wine, chicken stock, and white wine vinegar
1 teaspoon each salt and granulated sugar

Preparation:

1. Mix dusk pieces with all the other ingredients and steam over boiling water for twenty-five minutes.
2. Stir well, and serve.

ROOSTER YEARS

This year honors a common household bird, the rooster. It was known and respected by royals from Pre-Qin times to today. In those ancient times, matchmakers studied the first eight characters of a man and of a woman's birth year, their month, day, and hour if they wanted to marry. These determined if their marriage had potential. If their dates did not align, parents would discourage or not allow the couple to wed.

Such was the role and reason they had consulted a matchmaker before any decisions were made and a wedding date set. The twelve animal signs of the Chinese zodiac have lucky and unlucky matches, lucky and unlucky colors, lucky and unlucky numbers etc. selected from those animals who went the king first. The rat did arrive first, and so it began the circle of the order they got there.

This Year of the Rooster begins January 28, 2017 and ends February 15 in 2018. Because roosters weep at the sign of the dog, matchmakers know these two animals do not pair well and those with their signs should not marry. Most elder Chinese believe this without a doubt, more younger folk are veering away from these beliefs. Other animals making poor pairings include those born in Rooster years mating with those born in rat, rabbit, and mouse years.

The rooster is the only bird in the Chinese zodiac. What is positive about those born in its years is that they are said to be punctual, express fidelity, and able to get rid of the evil spirits of others. Their lucky numbers are five, seven, and eight, their unlucky ones are one, three, and nine. Rooster folk are honest, bright, talkative, capable, ambitious, and independent.

The rooster, known to some as a cock, includes other personality traits such as not needing to fight, are brave, modest, reticent, and that they like wooden statues. Roosters do not crow for lack of reasons in heaven and

earth as to why they remain silent. And as do flowers, they do not ever lose their beauty.

It is said that the words of the fortunate are few, the words of the anxious many, so learning from the rooster, they know that too much talk leads to loss, and silence except when absolutely necessary can approach benevolence. Therefore, roosters do not verbally bully for fun; they only do so if needed even though they are dictators of the barnyard. This animal appears after the monkey and before the dog, and it is best for them when they keep away from both of them.



Knowing your animal year and your neighboring animals, the Chinese believe are important. Roosters should not pick fights in rooster years. This year is a fire-rooster-year so it is even more important not to do ignite a quarrel. If you were born in a rooster year, do consult a Chinese zodiac expert to learn that you and the rooster are steady

of purpose, virtuous, true to your principles, and that you should waste no time. The rooster only crows if not confused. Being of clear head is his constant desire, not being confused is his life-long need, so be sure to do both.

Roosters are unyielding to the chaos around them and they are steady-eddie who only proceed with good information; be sure to get that before making any decisions. Roosters make good relationships with those born in dragon, ox, and pig years. Their positive colors are black, yellow and brown, so wear them often. Roosters are high achievers, and they do best when they trust themselves. If you are a rooster, you are a thoughtful partner, a brave one, honest, and with a good business head; use these traits to your advantage.

On your birthday, roast a cock with its head on. They stuff it with citrus, baste it with sugar or maltose, and share it with best friends. There is no better way to spend that day every rooster year.

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ROOSTER YEARS

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GINSENG ROOSTER

Ingredients:

1 four-inch piece dried ginseng, soaked overnight or longer in one cup boiling water
5 dried black mushrooms, soaked an hour in tepid water, stems discarded, each cut in half
1 rooster, innards removed, rinsed and dried with paper towels
1 teaspoon coarse salt
3 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
3 scallions, each tied in a knot
3 slices fresh ginger, smashed
1 inch minced Chinese ham, minced

Preparation:

1. Put ginseng and its water in a pan and steam for half an hour.
2. Put half the mushrooms and their water, and half the salt, wine, one scallion, knot, one slice of the ginger, and half the hm in the rooster, and the rest of the ingredients in a heat-proof bowl and steam for one hour.
3. Remove rooster, cut it into eight to ten pieces, put it in a clean bowl, discard the scallions, and serve.

POACHED ROOSTER

Ingredients:

10 rooster thighs, skinned, boned, and diced in one-inch pieces
½ teaspoon toasted Sichuan peppercorns, smashed and knotted in cheese cloth
3 Tablespoons each, Chinese rice wine, thin soy sauce, Chinese black vinegar, and granulated sugar
3 garlic cloves. Peeled and smashed
1 Tablespoon toasted cashew nuts, crushed
1 Tablespoon toasted sesame seeds, crushed

Preparation:

1. Bring ten cups water to the boil, add the chicken thigh meat and simmer for twenty-five minutes.
2. Then add the Sichuan peppercorn packet, rice wine, soy sauce, vinegar, sugar, and the smashed garlic cloves and simmer twenty minutes longer and then remove and discard the peppercorn packet.
3. Next, add nuts and seeds and simmer for five more minutes. Then put this into a pre-heated soup tureen, and serve.

ROAST ROOSTER

Ingredients:

1 whole chicken, head left on, wing tips and innards removed, head covered for foil for half of the cooking time, breast bone removed and discarded, rooster flattened and set in a smoker or on a roasting pan rack.
2 whole oranges, quartered
1 whole tangerine, skin removed, innards separated and pierced
1 Tablespoon toasted ground Sichuan peppercorns
½ teaspoon pink or coarse salt
3 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
3 scallions, each one knotted
8 slices fresh ginger
½ cup tea leaves
3 Tablespoons brown sugar
½ cup wheat bean paste

Preparation:

1. Stuff chicken with orange and tangerine pieces and with two skewers, use one to close the cavity at the neck, the other between its legs.
2. Mix crushed Sichuan peppercorns and the salt and rub the skin with this mixture, then pour the rice wine over this bird.
3. Prepare a smoker or a deep roasting pan with the scallion knots, ginger, tea leaves, brown sugar, and the bean paste. If using a smoker, put this mixture where it will ignite and burn; if cooking in an oven, turn oven to 500 degrees F and put just the pan in the oven for half an hour, then put chicken on a rack above the pan for half an hour, then turn it over breast up for another half hour, then remove from the oven and allow to cool for twenty minutes, then cut the bird into pieces and serve.

ROOSTER IN SOUP

Ingredients:

1 rooster, cut in ten pieces
3 scallions, minced
3 slices fresh ginger, each one smashed
1 cup Chinese rice wine
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
½ cup thin soy sauce
3 Tablespoons chicken fat

Preparation:

1. Put all ingredients in a four quart stock pot, and bring to the boil, and just before it does boil, reduce the heat to a simmer, cover the pot, and keep simmering for one hour, then cool in the refrigerator overnight.
2. Discard the skin, bones, and solidified fat. The next day, cut the chicken into one-inch pieces.
3. Bring the liquid back to a simmer, add the chicken pieces, and when they are hot, serve the soup and chicken in a pre-heated soup tureen.

GARLIC: CHINESE LOVE AND LORE

大蒜 This aromatic flavoring has been part of the Chinese cuisine for thousands of years. It is also a part of their traditional medical practices, as well. TCM practitioners, that is Chinese traditional medical people use this common bulb now commonly believed to have some antibacterial and antiviral impact on people.

Botanically known as *Allium sativum*, there are many who believe garlic shows improvement in some patients with specific health problems. The Chinese have believed this for decades, even longer. It is popular in their medicinal thinking. A large number of Chinese do take it fresh, in extract form, or another way several times a day. For instance, they do so if they have a cold or show signs of the flu. Newer research studies say it also protects the liver from aflatoxin damage, is an anti-parasitic agent, etc. Thus more and more of them believe that ingesting garlic is a good thing to do.

'Stinking rose,' one of this bulb's nick-names, is actually composed of more than two hundred sulphur compounds; they give it its well-known flavor, aroma, and perhaps, its medicinal properties. In very ancient history, eating garlic for one's health was limited to curing a toothache or for easing whooping cough. That may be why it was made into a liquid, an oil or an extract. For other reasons, making it into a powder, tablet, or a capsule expanded its use.

Many folk have no problem ingesting this bulb raw, others report heartburn and/or flatulence, to say nothing of it giving them bad breath. Those who take anticoagulants need to know that garlic in any form should not be taken without the advice of their physician. It can cause allergies, contact dermatitis, lethargy, soft stools, dehydration, even death in some cases. Information about this bulb is available from the National Garlic Information Center; simply call their hotline at 1-800-garlic.

Researchers report garlic's many compounds may be why there are some questions about its safety, its effectiveness, and/or its dosage. One among a litany of concerns could be that it causes a fever if one does consume too many cloves. Seems no one knows how many or how long one can safely ingest them.

Interest in the medicinal effects of garlic are not new. They have been recognized by the Chinese since 3000 BCE and by the Egyptians since 1500 BCE. Recent chemical and pharmacological research did gain steam after Chester Cavallito isolated its sulphur-containing compounds and named them 'allicin,' that was in 1944. One hundred years before, T. Wertheim wrote about using steam distillation on onions; and in 1961, Arthuri Vivtanan received the Noble Prize for his efforts on related bulbs. Current efforts support the notion that garlic needs a co-factor to impact any of its nutritional and physiological properties. Some say these include lowering blood lipid levels, reducing clotting, etc.

Before this avenue of research, garlic was hailed for everything from its aphrodisiacal abilities to treating athlete's foot; though none reported if they meant taking a clove a day or less to keep people healthy. As this information is not definitive, many still eat one or more every day.



World history is rife from Chinese turtle bones to the Talmud with anecdotes that garlic can ward off vampires, demons, dragons, and deleterious health. Many only eat it cooked or aged; some never do so. The Chinese ingest more garlic than any other population; often more than any other food supplement. Those who do tell us they enjoy its potential. Some believe cooking with garlic does enhance the taste of their foods so maybe it also enhances their health.

There are Chinese who use garlic when someone faints from excessive heat; they crush a clove or dilute its juice with water and drip it into their nostrils. Most do recover so that seems good enough for them.

If that is adequate for you, or you have other reasons to consume this food/medicine, then do make many of the following recipes.

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GARLIC: CHINESE LOVE AND LORE

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KUMMING GOAT, GARLIC, AND GREENS

Ingredients:

1 pound goat fillet, sliced thin
2 teaspoons each, dark soy sauce, rice wine, and sesame oil
½ teaspoon each, coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
2 Tablespoons cornstarch
¼ cup vegetable oil
5 fresh chili peppers, some hot some not
5 peeled and crushed fresh garlic cloves
½ cup fresh coriander leaves, coarsely chopped

Preparation:

1. Mix goat meat, soy sauce, rice wine, and sesame oil, and then add salt, pepper, and cornstarch and marinate this for half an hour, then drain and dry the meat with paper towels.
2. Heat a wok or fry pan, add the vegetable oil, and stir-fry the drained dried marinated meat for two minutes before adding the chili peppers and garlic and stirring this for another minute.
3. Next, put this in a pre-heated serving bowl, sprinkle the coriander leaves on top, and serve.

GARLIC STUFFED MUSHROOMS

Ingredients:

20 small fresh shiitake mushrooms, stems discarded
2 teaspoons cornstarch or water chestnut flour
½ pound ground turkey or ground chicken
5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and ground with the poultry
¼ cup scallions, minced coarsely
3 Tablespoons thin soy sauce
1 Tablespoon minced fresh ginger
¼ chili pepper, seeded and minced
1 egg white

Preparation:

1. Dust the gill-side of the mushrooms with the flour, then mix all other ingredients and divide this into twenty batches and put one batch on each flour-side of each mushroom.
3. Broil the mushrooms stuffed side of the mushrooms about four inches from the heat source, for four minutes. Then serve.

MANDARIN STEW

Ingredients:

2 pounds firm skinless and boneless white-fleshed fish, cut into two-inch pieces
2 Tablespoons brown sugar
2 teaspoons Siracha or another hot sauce
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
2 medium zucchini, angle-cut
2 stalks celery, angle-cut
1 large carrot, peeled and angle-cut
1 onion, cut in large wedges
8 cloves fresh garlic, peeled cut in halves, then smashed
1 knob fresh ginger, peeled, thick-sliced, then each slice smashed
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil

Preparation:

1. Mix pieces of fish with the brown sugar Siracha sauce, and the vegetable oil, and let rest for ten minutes.
2. Heat a wok or fry pan, and fry the fish mixture until light brown, then add all the vegetables, and stir-fry for three minutes, then remove to a bowl, and serve.

FRIED RICE WITH TOFU

Ingredients:

5 cups cooked rice, still hot
5 fresh Shiitake mushrooms, stems discarded, caps coarsely diced
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
½ pound firm tofu, chopped coarsely
2 eggs, beaten well, made into two omelets, and then coarsely slice them
1 knob fresh ginger, peeled and coarsely minced
5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and coarsely minced
5 scallions, cut in half the long way, then thinly angle-sliced
1 teaspoon granulated sugar
½ cup frozen peas
½ cup bean sprouts, tails removed and discarded

Preparation:

1. Dry-fry the rice with the diced mushroom pieces for two minutes, then add the oil, and fry for two more minutes, and remove to a bowl.
2. Heat half the oil, and fry half the doufu until tan, then add the omelet strips, the rice, the garlic, and the ginger, and stir-fry for two minutes before adding the sugar, peas, and the bean sprouts and stir for two minutes, then mix with the rice mixture, return it to the bowl, and serve.

GARLIC: CHINESE LOVE AND LORE

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PORK RIBS AND SCALLOPS IN SOUP

Ingredients:

5 dried scallops, boiled for one hour, then drained, and then cooled, and finally torn into the most thin strips possible

1 pound pork ribs cut into one-inch pieces

½ pound daikon, peeled and diced or very thinly sliced

2 large carrots, peeled and diced

1 inch fresh ginger, peeled and sliced, then each slice smashed, and then diced

5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and chopped

1 Tablespoon goji berries

Preparation:

1. Put pork ribs into one quart remove them and strain the liquid of all solids, then rinse the pot and return ribs and the strained liquid to the pot.

2. Add the rest of the solid ingredients but not the goji berries. Then add another quart of water, bring to the boil and boil for five minutes, then reduce the heat and simmer for another half an hour before adding the goji berries and simmering all for another ten minutes. Serve in individual pre-heated soup bowls.

SPARERIBS WITH CARAMELIZED GINGER

Ingredients:

3 to 4 pounds spare ribs, cut into individual one-inch pieces

2 cups vegetable oil, reserving one tablespoon to oil a serving platter

¼ cup fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped

5 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and minced

½ cup Ginger liqueur

½ cup granulated sugar

½ cup red wine vinegar

2 Tablespoons soy sauce, one dark, the other thin

1 teaspoon salt

Preparation:

1. Blanch spare ribs for two minutes in boiling water, the very quickly rinsed in cold water.

2. Heat oil in a soup pot and deep fry half the spare ribs until crisp, about five minutes, then drain them on paper towels and fry the second half the same amount of time, then return them to mix with the first batch and fry them all for another two to three minutes, then drain all but two tablespoons of the oil, and discard it.

3. Stir-fry the ginger and the garlic in the remaining oil, then add the liqueur, sugar, vinegar, soy sauce, and salt until it thickens and is like syrup, then add the spare ribs, toss well, and the plate them on the pre-oiled platter, and serve hot or warm, as desired.

MEATBALLS, ABALONE, AND VEGETABLES

Ingredients:

12 ounces finely hand-minced pork

2 Tablespoons dark soy sauce

2 Tablespoons granulated sugar

2 Tablespoons Chinese brandy or rice wine

1 scallion, minced

5 cloves peeled garlic, minced finely

1 egg

1 heaping Tablespoon cornstarch

5 dried Chinese black mushrooms, soaked for half an hour, stems discarded, then slivered

½ pound Chinese cabbage, slivered

½ pound bamboo shoots, shredded

½ pound winter melon, peeled and shredded or cubed

½ pound melting mouth peas, stingy edges removed and discarded, then slivered

1 pound doufu, cut into half-inch squares (optional)

4 ounces canned abalone, sliced thin, then cut into thin strips

Preparation:

1. Mix ground pork, soy sauce, sugar, brandy or wine, scallion pieces, egg, and the cornstarch and make into one-inch or smaller meatballs and refrigerate covered overnight.

2. Mix mushrooms, cabbage, bamboo shoots, and peas.

3. Add meatballs and the vegetables and the winter melon to three quarts of boiling water, and when it returns to the boil, add the abalone and turn the heat so the liquid simmers, then add the abalone and the bean curd, if using it and let everything simmer for three minutes, then serve every person a heaping ladle of the vegetable mixture, and let them serve themselves as much liquid as they wish.

NOTE: Instead of the abalone, substitute half-pound cooked shrimp, veins removed and discarded or half-pound any white fish diced in half-inch pieces instead of the cubed abalone.

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