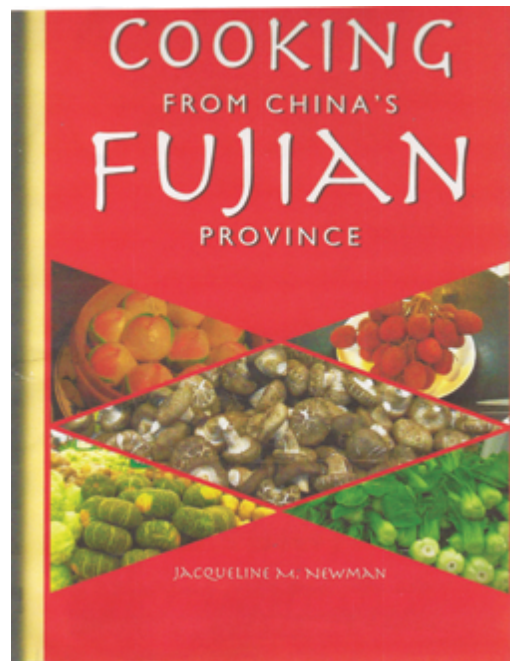


FLAVOR & FORTUNE

DEDICATED TO THE ART AND SCIENCE OF CHINESE CUISINE

FUJIAN FOODS
LOTUS; ARROWHEAD;
CHINESE NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS



UNUSUAL LOVED FRUITS;
HELEN CHEN, OUR FIRST AWARDEE;
BOOK AND RESTAURANT REVIEWS, AND MORE

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

About The Publisher

THE INSTITUTE
FOR THE
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OF THE
SCIENCE & ART OF CHINESE CUISINE

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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All pictures are from files or camera of the editor; articles by others use those from their files or camera.
Articles ending with a (JMN) are written by the editor.
The cover is the only all-English Fujianese cookbook published in the United States

FLAVOR & FORTUNE

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Dear Reader:

Welcome to this first issue of *Flavor and Fortune's* 25th year. Thanks to Helen Chen who did remind me that her mom, Joyce Chen, was the first person this organization honored: this year is the 100th anniversary of her birth.

Living in Cambridge right after college and marriage, then in Woburn MA before returning to New York, I did attend many of her Mom's classes. The one I recall most was in the Jordan Marsh department store in Boston. There were many others as I followed Joyce Chen, a culinary legend and great teacher, before moving back to New York City where I was born. Doing so meant lugging my toddler son and infant daughter to most of them.

At age seven, I started to tag along with my Aunt Lil and Uncle Jack to many fine Chinese restaurants; also to their Chinese friends' homes. One was a fantastic chef and restaurateur, and like Joyce Chen, he was a great teacher and wonderful cook. After moving back, we did buy a house on Long Island where we found others to learn from. Inspired by them, and thanks to them and the thousands of Chinese cookbooks I purchased, all since donated to Stony Brook University's Special Collections library, I did have lots of Chinese culinary education.

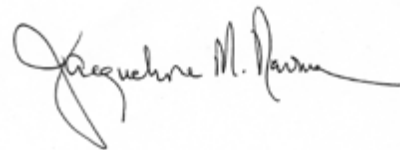
In this issue, delighted to share a little about Chinese New Year, their first annual Lunar holiday, and Lantern Festival which comes fifteen days later. Learned more watching my first lion dance and Lunar New Year festivities in Manhattan's Chinatown and more.

In this issue enjoy the article about foods from the Fujian Province, and the only Chinese cookbook I wrote. Discounted copies are available for this book on the cover of this issue. Most of thousands of Chinese cookbooks were purchased to satisfy my love of Chinese food, to practice making it, and I did cook one recipe from each of them.

Read and enjoy all the articles. In future issues read about other holidays, Chinese beer, bitter melon, and so much more. In this one, read about arrowhead, unusual fruits, and more.

Yes, I am still looking for help; do volunteer to join this effort. At age eighty-five, I am slowing down and do need more help; so thanks in advance.

The Editor,



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM MAILLE IN MIDTOWN:

Loved the picture on the cover of bubble tea, but why no information about this beverage in that issue?

MAILLE: Thanks for calling us to task; shame on our not seeing that what we wrote about this tea was not included. Bubble tea was first introduced in Taiwan in the 1980s by three guys who also popularized it. Their names were Liu Han Chieh, Lin Hsui Hui, and Tu Tsong He. In this great beverage are balls used in many different flavored and colored drinks, hot and cold. They are popular and loved by the young and the young at heart. They are usually black and made of ground *Manihot esculenta*, better known by various names including manioc, cassava, or yucca. We were told they (not sure if the balls or the guys) came from the Philippines, are dried, ground, and gray. After boiling, they turn black and translucent. And in one hour they look gelatinous. Newer ones now come in various colors. Commonly served in black or green tea but they can be in any other beverage, and often with condensed milk and flavorings. Their popularity is such that some call it McBubble. Others simply say 'tapioca tea' which in Chinese they say: *zhen shu nai cai*. This beverage when cold is most often served in clear dome-topped plastic containers, the bubbles resting on the bottom. With a fat plastic straw poking through the hole on the dome-topped lid, big enough for those bubbles to be sucked up through the hole. We love our bubble tea with lizhi-flavored syrup or peach syrup, also pear, papaya, or yin-yang (that is half coffee half tea). This latter mixture is very popular in Taiwan, a flavor combo making its way to other countries.

LING LING ASKS:

Can you share one or more Han murals with us?

LING LING: We have seen pictures but are not allowed to print them. Here is what we saw in one from a tomb in Henan excavated in 1960 it was a kitchen scene showing folks working there, one was stirring meat in a *ting* or cauldron, one carrying firewood, one with a dish of fish, two carrying a large pot or *keng*, one chap drawing water from a well, another holding a basin for this water. Also, there were two kinds of meat hanging in the upper left corner. We could not identify them.



EDITOR FROM ED:

Some of your recent issues delve into the past. As an eighteen-year-old avid tea drinker, can you look back and tell me and others about teas in the past?

ED: I was just about to pitch a batch of early tea information including one from the 1898 Original Boston Cooking School's *Fannie Merritt Farmer Cook Book* that erroneously says "Orange Pekoe and Flowery Pekoe are made from the youngest leaves." Clearly, she could not read our recent article "Tea is Tea-riffic" in the last issue advising that pekoe and orange pekoe are tea leaf sizes "neither the smallest nor close to the largest." Not all old tea information is correct. In an 1845 volume called: *Midshipman in China*, they mention bird's nests correctly but do not have correct tea clarifications; nor does the *New Household Receipt-Book* written more than a hundred years ago. This book's sub-title says "maxims, directions, and specifics" and talks about names of different teas gathered, even peculiarities in their manufacture, but nothing about these two tea-size names. It is not always right to describe 'black tea as Chinese large tea' (and) 'souchong as small scarce sort pekoe.' This book says 'young hyson is gathered early in the season, hyson-skin the refuse or inferior portion' which is also not correct. An 1859 book titled *Breakfast, Dinner, and Tea* writes about a tea recipe, saying its "ingredients are 'boiled down to a perfect mush,'" and that "rat soup is considered equal to ox-tail" but nothing about tea worth knowing is. We do not believe words or pictures including their early line-drawing of a wooden box with fire in it heating a tea pot. Why is the box not burning?

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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FROM LIZEE:

I know little about: oysters in the Chinese cuisine; can you add to that?

LIZEE: Oysters can be cultivated or simply raked and collected. These bivalves were once valued as aphrodisiacs and for their pearls. Now they are loved for their pristine sea-worthy taste. Most are found in brackish water, can be up to ten inches wide or long. Years back many were used to make oyster sauce, today they are loved raw, cooked, or bottled as sauce. In the past, more were dried or partially dried, and made into oyster sauce that was salted, rinsed many times, and boiled often in fresh water. These steps were repeated often, more oysters added, their liquid reduced until brown and thick, then cooled, bottled, sealed, then set aside for about a year before sale. Also in the past, few Chinese ate raw oysters; now many do, particularly young folk.



FROM TED:

Some rice questions including: What makes rice sticky? Is it always a short grain and Japonica? What are black and purple rices; and how should I cook them?

TED: Most sticky rice is short-grain rice with high levels of amylopectin and low levels of amylose; both common rice starches.

Sticky rice cooks up drier than non-sticky rice; it should be rinsed well in cold water before cooking. When cooked it does get stickier and can feel tacky, can clump, also not be mushy. We like ours with distinctly plump grains, and somewhat chewy. For those never seeing black Rice, also known as 'Precious Rice,' 'Forbidden Rice,' or 'Fragrant Rice.' It was forbidden to common folk in ancient China. This rice often turns dark purple when cooked, depending upon which of the hundreds of varieties that exist. Some have white interiors that get more tinted than others. One dietitian told me that "the darker the exterior, the more nutritious it is", and she said that "Persian rice is very nutrient dense." As a dietitian myself, I have seen different nutrient amounts in different sources, and do not agree that "all black rice is basmati rice" as she said. Maybe it is in her country, but not everywhere. We once did read that since Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE - 220 CE), rulers did seek out black rice and it was given to them as 'tribute rice.' Forbidden to commoners, it was often used as gifts for high officials, and in medicines to nourish blood, kidneys, stomach, eyesight, and the

liver. On this topic, Zhang Qian, a diplomat once fell asleep by a willow tree and when he awoke his dream did instruct him to find some so he did search for it. An early unknown artist did show him doing so. Later, it was sold not as forbidden rice, but as fragrant rice as seen on this page. A few recipes using it follow.

BLACK RICE

Ingredients:

½ cup black rice
1/4 cup sesame oil
½ teaspoon ground white pepper

Preparation:

1. Bring rice and six cups water to a boil in a large pot, cover the pan, and reduce the heat and simmer until tender and almost all the water is absorbed (about three-quarters of an hour) until the grains are separated and cooled a bit.
2. Remove the covered pot placing it off the heat source for fifteen minutes.
3. Fluff it with a fork, then stir in the sesame oil and ground white pepper, and serve.

NOODLE SHEETS WITH BLACK RICE FLOUR

Ingredients:

½ cup black rice flour
½ cup cornstarch
½ cup tapioca flour
½ cup vegetable oil or half that amount and 1/4 cup sesame oil

Preparation:

1. Whisk black rice flour, cornstarch, and tapioca flour, then add six cups of water slowly, another one if needed, and allow to stand for an hour.
2. Then strain through a fine strainer, it will look like thin crepe batter.
3. Using eight-inch non-stick fry-pan, add a tablespoon of oil and heat to medium. Take a paper towel and dip it in the oil wiping the pan before adding a scant one-quarter cup batter. Cover the pan with a tight-fitting lid and cook for one minute, then lift the lid carefully not to let any water from the cover drip on the contents. Dry the inside of the lid then recover the pan for another half minute before then lift the rice sheet with a wooden spatula and put it top-side down on a oiled baking sheet.
4. Stir the batter again and repeat until it is all used; and if they seem to stick together, oil the top surface or prepared sheet placing another on it. Cool before using and do wrap any filling you choose.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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EDITOR, PLEASE:

Can you provide a recipe for a paste made with red bean curd. We did have some in Xian; but can find none in a Chinese market in New York nor in any book here. Help!

NAMELESS: Hope this meets the taste you remember:

RED WINE PASTE

Ingredients:

1 Tablespoon mashed red bean curd
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh ginger
4 teaspoons light brown sugar
1 teaspoon minced garlic
½ cup mixed dry sherry, red wine, and orange-flavored liquor
1 Tablespoon tomato paste
2 teaspoons rice flour
1 teaspoon dark soy sauce
2 teaspoons finely minced tangerine peel

Preparation:

1. Mix all ingredients in a blender.
2. Transfer to a small pot and simmer for ten minutes.
3. Cool and use as needed. It can be kept for two months in a refrigerator.

FROM STATEN ISLAND ALDO:

Advise about yum cha; is it always the same as dim sum?

ALDO: Dim sum is Cantonese, yum cha its Northern name, both are for their snack food served in large places that can make a thousand or so varieties, only a hundred or so on any given day. Usually served mornings through lunch time, and from trays or rolling carts, their contents called out by women, then brought to your table. We never saw a man doing so, rarely found a printed menu, either. The best time to go is about eleven in the morning; and not after two p.m. Selections can be very limited before or after those times. A favorite in Hong Kong is the oldest known as Luk Yu at 24 Stanley Street in the Central District.

FROM LIAM IN PA:

Thank you for your article about snakes. I have a friend from Zhanghu in China in the Fujian Province who worships them. She says her folks, now deceased, said where they grew up they had a Snake Parade Festival. She now lives in Pennsylvania and knows no one to learn where that was.

LIAM: For all who loves snakes, we think she means the city with a three-day Snake Festival from the 16th to 19th day of the first lunar month, and a Snake Parade on the 7th day of the 7th lunar month. For the latter one, thousands parade and dance through the streets with one or more snakes while other snake lovers open their doors and welcome them in to see theirs. On the former one, many make boxes that look like snakes, flowers, birds, bugs, or something else, and attach them to each other looking like a very long snake, then parade around on the third night of the New Year to the Temple of the Snake King. There, they get burned sending them to heaven wishing for good luck in the coming New Year.

FROM LEE-HWA:

Thanks for the article about the Allium family; any advise for their microwaving?

LEE-HWA:

Re: Garlic: Put half cup peeled garlic cut as desired in a glass bowl with half cup of vegetable oil. On 100% power, cook them for five minutes, then stir well. Repeat with 100% power for two minutes, and stir again. If not golden, keep repeating in two minute cycles; then season with a little salt and/or confectioners' sugar and serve.

Re: Shallots: Rinse, drain and cut up three shallots, put them in a glass bowl with half cup of oil, then follow instructions for garlic above, but in three then two minute cycles.

Re: Leeks: Use white part of two leeks, cut lengthwise then cut them in pieces to suit. Toss with two tablespoons flour, and follow instructions as for garlic, but in two minute cycles.

FROM A COUNTRY BUMPKIN:

Thanks for the article about the Allium family; any advise for their microwaving?

FIVE SPICE POWDER:

Put in a blender:
1 Tablespoon whole cloves
3 teaspoons whole fennel seeds
1 teaspoon whole white peppercorns
2 teaspoons whole Sichuan peppercorns
5 whole star anise
1 five-inch stick of whole cinnamon broken into small pieces.
Grind until fine, stir well, and store in a small glass jar in a cool dark place. Then use as needed.

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NEW YEAR: ONCE A FIFTEEN-DAY HOLIDAY

In China, New Year is called 'Spring Festival.' This most celebrated and most important holiday used to be the longest annual one many years ago. Then, it was a fifteen day one that ended on Lantern Festival. That is no more. The government now guarantees only three days off. Some are luckier as their bosses may give them a five day vacation. A few get an entire week off, but that is neither common nor universal. Some get no days off then as they are workers in food service. Many eat out on this holiday; lots of staff are needed to cook for them and serve them so they may get comp time days later or extra money to work.

Some foods are eaten for nourishment, others popular for a particular holiday, still others eaten for renewal or rebirth. There are some with special meanings or wishes for this New Year holiday; and many of these are wishes for prosperity or long life. (See page 13.)

The New Year is time for forgiveness, time to repay all debts; and most do so if they can. This is a holiday when, if at all possible, all generations gather for a 'Reunion Dinner' held on New Year's eve. It is a meal with special foods, some made with special or expensive foods, or foods whose preparation requires lots of time and/or effort.

The origin of the New Year holiday dates back to China's ancient agricultural society thousands of years ago. There, some people did believe that a fierce monster called Nian would create havoc on this day. This idea did frighten them. They did discover he was afraid of the color red, of bright lights, and of loud noises so they used these fears to frighten him and keep him away from them and their homes. They used firecrackers, now illegal in many places. Many folk wore red, many made loud noises, many used bright lights, and/or did other things to scare him away. Some even did one or more of these things even if they no longer believed he existed.

New Year holiday, beside getting together is also time to think of the coming of Spring, planting, and wishes for a good harvest. Spring planting does start soon after this holiday.

For the New Year, many give good wishes and tangerines or oranges. Both are symbolic of gold, good health, good luck, and prosperity. Children, the ill, the infirm, and the elderly receive red envelopes called *au pau* or *hong bao* with money in them. These they receive just before or during the first few days of the New Year.

There are some who believe an older legend, one of the King coming to see them at the Sun and Moon Pavilion. They might purchase fresh flowers and decorate there, do so in their homes and/or in nearby temples. These, too, are hopes and wishes for a prosperous year. In

their homes, many put up pictures of the God of Longevity. Some call him the Sun-and-Moon God. In addition, at home and at temple, they might make offerings of cooked rice and newly brewed alcoholic beverages.

On the 8th day of the last month of the old year, many make and eat *laba*. This is a porridge made with eight or more ingredients. Some do this in celebration of Sakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism. They

believe he attained immortality on this day. In the week or weeks before New Year's Day, they prepare for the coming year cleaning his and all statues, their homes, too. They get rid of every speck of dirt as sweeping on New Year's Day and until Lantern Festival fifteen days later can sweep away upcoming luck.

Before the New Year, they also make or buy new clothes, take down last year's door posters and Door Generals. There are for the red-faced god called *Qin Shubao*, and the black-faced one known as *Weichi Jingde*. They also write cards and remove the picture of the Kitchen God displayed on or near their hearth. *Zao Jun*, this god spent the entire year watching them and over them.

These they commonly do on the 23rd or 24th day of the last month of the old year; when then they plan to send him to the Jade God of Heaven to report about the family he lived with all year. On what some call the 'Preliminary Eve,' this Kitchen God, who some call the 'Prince of the Oven' will be sent skyward to report about them to the God of Heaven. Before he leaves, someone in the family will smear his lips with a sugary

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NEW YEAR: ONCE A FIFTEEN-DAY HOLIDAY

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paste so he only can say sweet things about the family. When sending him to heaven, his image will be burned, usually on or after the 23rd or 24th day of the last month of the old year, as will posters with words such as 'health,' 'wealth,' 'longevity,' even 'Spring.'

These will be replaced with new ones by New Year's Day, as will any couplets or charms such as those carved on peach or another wood. Some may have been hung upside down for luck. One elderly chap told us they are symbolic acts of veneration for their ancestors. Others may recite special incantations loudly so their ancestors can hear them.

Some men may go to a temple to make sacrifices to their ancestors for the family when convenient, not at a specific day, date, or time. There they will burn incense or paper money and recite some incantations. Others may do so at ancestral shrines in their homes.

Before the Kitchen God is sent to heaven, some families prepare a special dinner to share with many sweet dishes to keep his disposition that way. When his image is ready, family members throw beans on the roof to simulate horses hooves taking him there. Some light torches or incense to help him find his way, others may say prayers for a lucky and safe trip there and a safe return the following week.

An article by Wonona Chang in a 1995 issue shares more about this holiday. Read it on this magazine's website at www.flavorandfortune.com and the recipes her family made then. Also read the article Erin Moriarity wrote. It is on the same site but from another time. She was a gardener-in-residence at the Queens Botanical Garden, and shares spring symbols and tells of the common octagonal prosperity tray served to guests during this holiday.

Before New Year's Eve, many families make special *doufu* treats, some kill or purchase one or more animals such as a pig, sheep, chicken, and/or duck for this holiday. Some purchase flour and ferment it to make the special dumplings, or they purchase them and libations, too. Some buy hair vegetable which is called *fa cai*, and other auspicious foods for that Reunion Dinner. They serve them then and during the days before Lantern Festival.

All family members who can, come home to share this extravagant dinner, eat dumplings shaped like ancient gold ingots as wishes for a prosperous year. Family, friends, and visitors during these two weeks dine on them. In addition many give or get oranges or tangerines during these days with similar wishes.

After the Reunion Dinner, most stay up that night to worship deceased ancestors, show respect and reverence for them, eat lots more, even sing and dance through the night. They are welcoming *Gou* or the New Year. In 2018 it started on the 16th of February, is called the Year of the Dog, and will end in February 2019. The following year will be the Pig Year, and it will begin the 12th of February 2019. After it will come years in the order they came to the Buddha or the Emperor, which ever legend you believe.

During and more after the New Year day, the streets are filled with people, drums, and noisemakers scaring away evil spirits, lion dancers collecting lettuce as money for charities, and other things popularly increasing everyone's holiday spirits. Before these holidays, some



help make or repair the costumes for these events and things used to collect charity monies. Incidentally, the word for lettuce does sound like the word for 'rising fortunes' and explains its use by those collecting it for charities.

This is the Dog Year. Their naming legend is for those animals who came to the emperor (or Buddha). We are told he asked a dozen of them to race to him on the second moon after the winter solstice. The winner was the rat followed by the ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig, in that order. Their reward, each was named for a Chinese year in the order they got to him.

In Korea, Japan, and Vietnam they also use animal year names, but are not always the same ones. These lunar calendars, now called 'lunisolar,' all repeat their twelve animals every year. The Chinese do so five times making for a sixty year cycle. That is why sixty is such an important number to them, and on a sixtieth birthday, they celebrate having reached that milestone year.

In New York City's Chinatown, New Year festivities last from four to fifteen days, and after the third one many stores reopen. Chinatown is then full of potential customers as they welcome the Kitchen God back (usually after one week). Many a boss does give red envelopes to each of his or her workers with money in them. Their workers can use this annual gift, if they get time off, to return to their ancestral homes, enjoy their family Reunion Dinner, and if so inclined, participate in New Year festivities.

In many a Chinatown, most but not all businesses close those first three days, some do so for up to a week to allow their workers vacation or to spend some or all of the holiday with their local or further-afield extended families.

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NEW YEAR: ONCE A FIFTEEN-DAY HOLIDAY

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After eating their Reunion Dinner, many stay up and leave their doors and windows open to let out the old year. Many parents let their children stay up and do not discipline them that day not wanting to take away their luck. No one uses knives or scissors which might cut away good fortune during this holiday. On New Year's Day almost everyone wears new or spotlessly clean pressed clothes, visits their eldest relative first, then the next eldest, etc.; and on the day after this, called *tsuo-ke* or *hui-men*, married daughters return to their mother's home, those married in the past year come with their new husband bringing gifts for all.

On the third day of the New Year, most go to bed early to put them in good mind to return to their daily routines. Many do not completely return to normal until after the Lantern Festival holiday.

Family and friends visit each other during the days until Lantern Festival Day and wish each other health, prosperity, and happiness for the coming year. On the fifteenth day, many parade with lanterns, kites, candles, or lights; an activity once recommended by one of their emperors.

Chinese New Year is celebrated in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Bhutan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and all places with large Chinese populations, and in every Chinatown in the world. While dumplings shaped like gold ingots are the most popular food in China's north, Southern Chinese make and eat *nian guo*, their New Year cake. That word is a homophone meaning 'to reach higher and higher.' Many buy and make a whole *yu* or fish. It is the homophone for 'abundance,' something everyone wants for the coming year. They serve it whole not to cut into any luck that might come their way.

Some countries with large Chinese populations number or name these years differently. Those that do might start from the 3rd millennium BCE because they believe the Yellow Emperor's reign began then. As, not all are in agreement, so they might call this year 4710, 4718, or 4658.

Most, but not all Chinese, use a lunar calendar with months of thirty days and twelve months. These years need two leap years with thirteen months once every five years. As not all agree as to the number of days or months, not even how many days their shops should be closed, either.

For those who wish to offer auspicious greetings to family or friends, there are more than four appropriate

wishes, but we suggest four with four syllables each in Chinese. For those wanting to prepare a dish typical for this holiday, recipes follow made with *fa cai* which in Cantonese sounds like 'becoming prosperous.' This dark green vegetable, usually sold dry and black, does look like hair. In English it is called 'hair vegetable.'

So next year, wish your Chinese friends *gung hei fa cai* which is wishing them prosperity, and serve them this vegetable. First soak it, then cook it in an auspicious dish. *Fa cai* grows in the Gobi Desert, the Qinghai Plateau, and the Mongolian Steppes. It has been over-harvested, so many governments do limit its harvest, so if you want some, do get yours early. Below are those greetings you can share with their translations.

Jing Chun Jie Fu:

Greet New Year and Encounter happiness

Fu Shou Shuang Quan:

May Happiness and Longevity Be Complete

Jin Yu Man Tang:

May Your Wealth Come and Fill a Hall

Ji Qing You Yu:

May Your Happiness be Without Limit



LANTERN FESTIVAL is the last day of the New Year holiday, and the 15th day of the first lunar month of the year. Adults and children make or purchase lanterns, some get kites to fly. Either can have a candle or another light source in it, and when done flying these kites, they cut their strings and do allow them to fly to heaven.

The custom of lighting lanterns came into being as early as the Han Dynasty which was more than two thousand years ago. Most fly them after dark, and some say this is the highlight of their holiday. Home-made dragons or huge kites are held aloft by many young men. They can dance as they guide them through the streets.

The custom of their being lit and paraded around may have begun as early as the Tang Dynasty as a celebration for the coronation of Emperor Wendi who reigned (179 - 157 BCE), or when Zhou Bo paved the way for his enthronement crushing a rebellion, or maybe it could have been when Wendi walked out of his palace and joined the common folk, or when after he was seriously ill but recovered thanks to a necromancer who helped him with no medication.

We read that an altar was built for sacrifices to the Gods on this 15th day of the first lunar month, and/or when Emperor Ming Di, whose reign began in 58 CE, so he ordered them lit to celebrate his recovery.

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NEW YEAR: ONCE A FIFTEEN-DAY HOLIDAY

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During the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 CE), this holiday was called 'Lantern Fair' and some say that was when it became a large celebration. Another possibility is during the reign of Emperor Xuan Zong in the middle of this dynasty when he ordered fifty thousand lanterns lit. Many say that since then, this festival grew into the big event it is today.

There are others who call this day Chinese Valentine's Day or *Juen Siu*. For that, there is no holiday from work but taking advantage of this day, young folk do celebrate, parade with lanterns or kites, wish friends, family, and neighbors good luck, and enjoy the spirit of the holiday. Some young men give their sweetheart a token of their love.

Thus, many Chinese celebrate this festive day in different ways. Chinese minority populations often celebrate it for three days. Most are not off from work, but thousands of years ago maybe they were. Older folk care more than young folk about this holiday. Everyone seems to, and most participate one way or another.

Other Chinese holidays will be discussed in future issues of *Flavor and Fortune*. Should we miss one of your favorites, please tell us about it, share how you and your family celebrates it and share your recipes, too. (JMN)

NEW YEAR CAKE

Ingredients:

4 cups glutinous rice flour
1 and 1/3 cups brown sugar
1 Tablespoon lard or another solid shortening
1 cup vegetable oil
Golden Syrup for dipping or spreading on the diamond-shaped cake pieces

Preparation:

1. Sift the flour, then dissolve the brown sugar into one and a half cups boiling water, and slowly add the flour into this.
2. Grease an eight-inch cake pan with the shortening, and fill it with the flour-sugar-water mixture. In a steamer, steam this over boiling water for two and a half hours. Then remove it from the steamer and cool to room temperature. Then cover it and refrigerate overnight or for at least eight hours until it hardens, then cut into diamond-shaped pieces.
3. Heat a wok or fry pan, and add the vegetable oil and shallow-fry the cake pieces on each side until golden brown. Then serve hot, warm with the Golden Syrup for dipping; or spread some on their tops and serve.

HAIR SEAWEED, A PROSPERITY VEGETABLE

Ingredients:

1 pound firm *doufu*
10 large Chinese black mushrooms, soaked until soft in one cup warm water
4 ounces bean thread noodles
1 ounce dry hair vegetable, also known as black moss, soaked in warm water half an hour, then cut into two-inch lengths
3/4 pound Napa cabbage cut into one-inch pieces
1 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
3 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth
3 Tablespoons thin and dark soy sauce, mixed
3 Tablespoons oyster sauce
3 Tablespoons yellow bean sauce
1 Tablespoon sesame oil

Preparation:

1. Cut *doufu* into one-inch cubes, squeezing out any excess water from them.
2. Squeeze the mushrooms reserving the soaking water, discard their stems, then sliver their tops.
3. Soak bean thread noodles and black moss separately, in warm water for half an hour, then squeeze and discard these waters.
4. Heat wok or fry pan, add oil, they fry *doufu* for five minutes, tossing them gently all the time; then drain them on paper towels.
5. Add mushrooms and stir-fry for two minutes, then add the cabbage, salt and pepper, hair vegetable, rice wine, broth, and all the sauces. Cover and simmer for twenty minutes, then serve.

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STEAMED WHOLE FISH

Ingredients:

- 3 Tablespoons vegetable or peanut oil
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 Tablespoons thin soy sauce
- 2 Tablespoons Shao Xing wine
- 2 Tablespoons peeled shredded fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon salt
- dash ground white pepper
- 2 to 3 pounds whole fish, scaled and gutted, but with the head and tail left on
- 3 scallions, angle sliced
- 1 Tablespoon chopped coriander

Preparation:

1. Whisk smaller amount of oil with the sesame oil, soy sauce, wine, ginger, salt, and pepper.
2. Put fish in a heat-proof dish, and pour this whisked mixture in and over it.
3. Put this dish on a wire rack in a steamer and steam the fish covered for twenty minutes or until it flakes testing it with a fork.
4. Heat the remaining oil and pour it over the fish, then remove the fish carefully to a pre-heated dish on a serving platter. Then garnish it with the scallions and coriander, and serve.

VEGETARIAN GOOSE BEAN CURD SKIN ROLLS

Ingredients:

- 1 Tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 Tablespoon dark soy sauce
- 1 Tablespoon granulated sugar
- dash of ground white pepper
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 10 Black mushrooms, soaked until soft, stems discarded, then sliced thin
- 1 large carrot, peeled and cut into thin strips
- ½ cup canned bamboo shoots, cut the same way
- 1 large piece fresh bean curd skin, cut in 4 x 6 inch pieces
- 3 Tablespoons peanut oil
- 1½ cups finely shredded lettuce

Preparation:

1. Mix sesame oil, soy sauce, granulated sugar, and ground white pepper.
2. Heat wok or fry pan, add the oil and then the mushroom slivers, carrot pieces, bamboo shoot pieces, and the shredded lettuce and stir-fry for two minutes, then add the soy mixture and two or three tablespoons of water and stir-fry for four minutes until all liquid in this filling has evaporated, Then let this filling cool.
3. Using about two tablespoons of the stir-fried filling, put it on a bean curd rectangle and wet all four edges lightly with a little water. Then roll and lay each one seam-side down on a oiled metal pan or pie plate until all bean curd skins are filled and rolled.
4. Sprinkle each roll with one tablespoon of water, put the pan on a steamer rack and steam for fifteen minutes. Then serve them then or fry them lightly on all sides in fry-pan in a little oil, remove them to paper towels, and serve them later whole or cut in half on an angle. Place them on a pre-heated plate when serving them.

**UPCOMING ISSUES TO INCLUDE:
UNUSUAL FRUITS;
SEA CUCUMBER; AND LOTS MORE.**

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TEN STIR-FRY VEGETABLES

Ingredients:

- 5 large dried black mushrooms, soaked until soft, stems discarded, and sliced thin
- 24 dried tiger lily buds, soaked until soft, each cut in half
- 5 dried bean curd sticks, soaked until soft, thinly angle cut
- 5 slices fresh ginger, sliced thin
- ½ cup peeled carrot, thinly sliced
- ½ cup peeled lotus root, thinly sliced, each slice cut in half
- ½ cup canned bamboo shoots, thinly sliced, each slice cut in half
- ½ cup celery, thinly angle sliced
- 20 snow peas, strings discarded, each thinly angle cut
- ½ cup canned ginkgo nuts, each halved
- 1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 ounces bean threads
- 1 cup and 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil, separated
- 2 Tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons dark soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground white pepper

Preparation:

1. Prepare the top ten vegetables, but do not mix them together. Then divide the bean threads in half, soaking half until soft, then cut them in two-inch pieces.
2. Heat the cup of vegetable oil in a wok or deep pan, and fry the dry bean thread pieces for one minute until they expand, then immediately drain and place them on paper towels.
3. In a small bowl, mix cornstarch and three tablespoons cold water, add the soy sauce, sesame oil, sugar, salt and pepper, and bring this to the boil stirring it well. Then set it aside.
4. Heat a wok, add the fresh ginger slices in any remaining oil from the bean threads, and fry the ten vegetables one by one, each with one tablespoon of cold water added for one minute until the water boils out. Remove them one by one to a single large bowl, and do the same for the bean threads. Then, mix them all together in that bowl.
5. Heat a clean wok and put the bowl of vegetables into it and stir-fry them until any remaining water stops sizzling, then add the cornstarch mixture and stir-fry all the sauce thickens, then serve.

SYMBOLIC FOODS FOR NEW YEAR AND ALL YEAR

Many Chinese believe the foods listed below, when served during Chinese New Year, are special wishes for their ancestors, the Kitchen God and the Jade Emperor in Heaven. Here are just twenty of them. (JMN)

- APPLE** or *ping guo* is for wisdom and peace
- BANANA** or *xiang jiao* is for wishes of brilliance at school and/or work
- BLACK MOSS** or *fa cai* is also called hair vegetable and is for wealth
- CHICKEN** or *ji rou* if whole is particularly loved for joyous family togetherness
- FISH** or *yu*, also when whole is for surplus prosperity
- GRAPES** or *pu tao* is for many descendants and family harmony
- LETTUCE** or *shneg cai* is for prosperity
- MELON** or *gua*, when candied is for good health
- NOODLE** or *mian tiao* is for long life
- ONION** or *yang cong* is for cleverness
- ORANGE** or *gan ju* is for gold
- PEACH** or *tao* is for immortality
- PINEAPPLE** or *heng li* is for gambling luck
- PRAWN** or *da xia* is for liveliness
- RICE** or *mi fan* is for linking heaven and earth
- SWEETS** or *tang gua* is for safety and good fortune
- TOFU** or *dou fu gan*, when dried is for blessing the house
- TANGERINE** or *ju* is for luck
- WALNUTS** or *he tao ren* is for the entire family's happiness
- WATER CHESTNUT** or *bi qi* is for unity

COOKING TECHNIQUES: CHINESE STYLE

This ancient culture has more ways to prepare foods than most others, new or old. There are some forty different ways to cook food, Chinese style. We read this but never found such a list. We did read that this cuisine uses the freshest ingredients when so doing and adds more flavors and more ways to prepare its foods. Though we have never seen a comprehensive list of these ways, flavors, or tastes, we know the Chinese use the largest variety of ingredients considered safe to eat. Here are some of them; if you know of others, please advise. The ones we know or read are below. (JMN)

CHU is China's earliest and probably simplest food preparation process as it is cooking food in well-controlled and well-timed applications in water.

TANG is quick-boiling requiring cutting ingredients in thin or other small-shapes and putting them into a boiling liquid to seal them and cook them quickly and evenly.

SHUAN is cooking all pieces of food in a boiled liquid at the table over charcoal or in or over a spirit-heated liquid.

CHIN is putting food in a boiled liquid and immediately reducing its temperature or removing it from the heat source.

CHUAN is bringing water or stock to a rolling boil, putting all food in at one time, then re-boiling it until the liquid reaches a rolling boil, then removing the food when completely cooked.

PAO is deep or using a rolling boil in liquid three to four times more than the amount of food being cooked.

MEN is first frying a food in very little oil, then adding water or stock and bring that to the boil, then reducing the heat and slowly simmering the food in this liquid.

SHAO is similar to *men*, but first frying the food in very little oil, then simmering it in water or stock reducing the liquid and leaving a small amount thickened at the end.

CHA SHAO is a Cantonese method of reducing liquid that is cooking meat and/or vegetable cut in strips marinated then roasting them over a fire or hanging and cooking them in a hot oven.

LU is cooking meats in strong aromatic soy or herbal stock with rock sugar, soy sauce, wine, dried tangerine peel, ginger, garlic, and five-spice powder or in a master stock.

CHENG is steaming fish or sea food in an open bowl or on a plate over a liquid in a rolling boil, the food never touching the liquid.

TUN is steaming food, marinated or not, in a closed container over a liquid in a rolling boil in a closed pot.

PENG is frying both sides of a food until brown, then adding a small amount of water, stock, and other ingredients and simmering the food until the water has evaporated.

HUI is cooking pre-cut meat or vegetables in a liquid thickened with starch until almost done, then adding transparent or thin noodles and a drop or two of sesame oil and serving.

PAN is tossing or scrambling food similar to Hui, but as a dry process, then adding wheat flour noodles and a drop or two of sesame oil, tossing or stirring it once, then serving.

CHA is food often marinated, then battered and deep-fried two or three times; if dry-fried, first fry it in a little oil, then toss with flour and fry a second time.

JUNG is deep-frying meats or vegetables one time.

CHAO is stir-frying food, often cut in strips in a small amount of oil then tossing them continuously.

PAO is a last cooking process, done in oil, water, or stock, and called 'explosive' frying.

CHIEN is cooking large chunks of food in a small amount of oil, as one part of a multi-phase cooking process.

LING, sometimes called 'splash-frying,' food is suspended over hot oil using a ladle and frequently pouring oil over the food. And never putting the food into the oil.

LIU is frying food, marinated or not, in the middle or late stage of cooking, then tossing it with wine or another spirit after it is fried.

LOTUS: A FAVORITE VEGETABLE IN HUBEI BY WANG SI

One food reminds me of my missing where I grew up. It is the lotus, and just thinking about it fills me with homesickness. This food, mistakenly called lotus root, is not a root but a rhizome. It grows widely all over China and is one of the most popular foods in Hubei where I was born and raised. It certainly is a favorite food of mine.

Several archaeological discoveries confirm its early existence in China. Botanically known as *Nelumbo nucifera*, it was eaten in my country for thousands of years. We know that because leaves from it were found fossilized in the 1940s in the Qinghai Province dated from a million years ago. In 1970, when the Mawangdui Han Tombs were unearthed in Changsha in the Hunan Province, people found slices of this vegetable in a lacquered funerary object. They were only dated from the early part of the 2nd century BCE.

In 1973, two lotus seeds, dated from five thousand years ago were excavated in Zhengzhou in the Henan Province. Ancient lotus pollen was found at the Hemudu site in the Zhejiang Province and they were some seven thousand years old. Historical literature talks about this vegetable in the *Book of Songs* written some time between the 11th to the 6th centuries BCE. And, in *Sorrow after Departure* there are writings about it by Qu Yuan (340 – 278 BCE).

There is a controversy, not its age, but whether China or India first cultivated the lotus. Historical People in both countries do take credit for it, and both are fond of eating it. Whenever it is spoken about or one reads about it, its beautiful flowers are mentioned. Seems they always smell good when blooming, and are sweet and wonderful.

The lotus flower does represent many good things in my culture. The flower represents purity and is found with sacred intent in religious paintings and sculptures; and is used in many common rituals. Among intellectuals, it is considered a gentleman's flower because it grows up from the mud and does stay pure. It has huge leaves, most are almost round, lie flat, and stand for both family reunion and peaceful living.

People use lotus leaves to wrap food when cooking it, particularly if it is in small pieces. They do not eat the leaves but love their aroma when it is cooked that way.

One typical dish in Hangzhou made that way is 'Beggar's Chicken.' Lotus seeds, edible and symbolizing being fruitful and fertile, are very popular at weddings and other family ceremonies. I adore them fresh in summer and dried in all seasons, and I often use them when making desserts.

Their long fat rhizomes are my favorite part. There are various ways to cook them, each has its fans. This part of these plants grow horizontally, under water, and in the mud. They have hollow tubes running through them. I join all who like to stuff them with a myriad of things animal and vegetable. (See their picture on next page)

Around 540 CE, Jia Sixie wrote a book titled *Qi Min Yao Shu* that includes many basic techniques and traditional recipes. Intended for common people, this book did guide folk on how to best cultivate them. Later they read

local views from the Ming and Qing Dynasties (1368 - 1644 and 1644 - 1911, respectively) advising where and how they were cultivated including in Eastern and Central China, Southern, Southwestern, and Northern places, and in Northeastern and Northwestern parts of my country.

Except in extremely cold areas, freshwater and irrigated fields are popular for their cultivation, and

they are considered an alternative staple when grain shortages exist, as they have during China's long history. There, many species are commonly used for their edible seeds and rhizomes, and their big beautiful leaves are commonly used ornamentally.

In my hometown, and in area of the Hubei Province, there are about twenty cultivars of the lotus plant. More than half are traditional varieties. For those that like to eat this vegetable as I do, two kinds are most appreciated for their taste, one juicier, sweeter, and crunchier; best cooked than sliced or stir-fried. The other kind is more starchy and some say it puckers the lips when eating it, but this one is delicious when steaming or stewing, particularly when adding meat in its preparation.

As a child, I did not like this variety, and it was on my list of vegetables that I was picky about, and sometimes still are. As to why, its fibers are annoying, and when I was young they made me think of spider webs. Widely planted and in my hometown, all are available in every

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LOTUS: A FAVORITE VEGETABLE IN HUBEI

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season, prepared one way or another. However, then they were not really appreciated by my stomach. Now I love dishes made with all of them.

The most popular lotus dish in Hubei is Spareribs and Lotus Soup. I love it because it is fresh and tasty. Stir-fried, is another popular way to prepare this vegetable sliced, diced, or simply fried with ginger and salt, or fried with chili and vinegar.

I am reminded of a conversation in my hometown market last there with my mom. The vendor did ask, when she stopped and stared at a pile of these rhizomes, "Are they for soup or to stir-fry?" Then he showed her two kinds according to each possible preparation technique. Without this question, my mom would have checked the junction

between sections to see if they looked and felt starchy. For those that did, they would know if they should be for soup or for a dish that stir-fries them.

One thing to know is what one finds between their dividing joints. Are they laden with oxygen or iron? Either could change color from white to blue, even black if soaked in fresh water as soon as they are peeled or chopped. There are also color differences particularly when using stainless steel or implements made of iron.

Gao Lian, a well-known writer born living in Hangzhou from 1573 to 1620 during the Ming Dynasty, wrote of his many experiences in a book titled *Zun Sheng Ba Jian*. There, he records preparing lotus starch. Now, people buy it prepared in supermarkets, but in his day they needed to make their own as it certainly was not available during Ming Dynasty times. Unlike other starches, to make it they needed two steps. The first to mix it with a little cold water, the second to add eight or nine times that amount of boiling water. They needed to stir it quickly at the same time so the starch would turn into a very light pink jelly; or they could add sugar or osmanthus, if preferred.

Candied lotus stuffed with glutinous rice was a Yua Mei favorite; he lived from 1716 to 1798 CE and recorded his preferences in his *Sui Yuan Shi Dan* volume. My



favorite is to steam this starch made into balls. One needs some minutes to peel, rinse, and mash lotus rhizomes, then rub them back and forth on flat blades over a bowl. There are other steps, too. In my family, only my grandmother or an aunt, the one who is her eldest daughter, makes them to please me, and making them at home is complicated.

These balls are best served during Spring Festival; and great patience is needed to make them. My best memories of them are at big annual family gatherings. I miss them and can offer no recipe, but if you find an easy one, do share it with me. Another of my favorites is of this vegetable made in a soup. That recipe follows as does another using lotus in sandwiches, and still another stuffed with glutinous rice which you may know as sticky rice. Do make and enjoy them all!

SPARERIBS AND LOTUS SOUP

Ingredients:

2 sections lotus rhizomes, peeled and chopped, then soaked in cold water
1 Tablespoon salt
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
2 pounds spare ribs, bones discarded, meat separated and cut into small pieces
5 slices fresh ginger

Preparation:

1. Put lotus pieces in a large bowl, sprinkle on the salt and shake the bowl to evenly distribute the salt; then allow it to rest for ten minutes.
2. Then heat a wok or deep pan, add the oil, and stir-fry the meat and the ginger until the meat is no longer pink.
3. Transfer pork and ginger to a stockpot. Rinse the pieces of lotus root and add to a large stockpot. Add four cups of water or cover all ingredients with this or more water, as needed.
4. Cover and bring the wok or pot to the boil. Then reduce the heat and simmer for forty minutes or more until the lotus pieces are soft.
5. Blend a pinch more salt, if needed, then pour this into a pre-heated soup bowl, and serve.

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LOTUS: A FAVORITE VEGETABLE IN HUBEI

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LOTUS AND PORK SANDWICHES

Ingredients:

1 section lotus rhizome, peeled and thinly sliced
½ pound fatty pork, minced
1 scallion, minced
1 teaspoon fresh minced ginger
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 Tablespoon Chinese rice wine
2 egg whites, beaten
4 Tablespoons cornstarch
dash ground black pepper
1 cup vegetable oil, divided
thin soy sauce for dipping, optional

Preparation:

1. Mix pork with scallion, ginger, salt, ground pepper, sesame oil, and wine.
2. Rinse and dry lotus slices with paper towels, and lightly dust one side of each slice with a little cornstarch, then put about two tablespoons of the meat mixture between cornstarch-sided slices and press gently making sure the meat mixture fills but does not go through every hole.
3. Heat a wok or fry pan, blend rest of the cornstarch with the beaten egg whites, dip both sides of the sandwiches in the cornstarch mixture, and fry covering the wok or pan with a lid, for three minutes, then turn them over frying their other side, also covering the pan. Add more oil when next batch of sandwiches goes into the pan.
4. When both sides are golden, drain sandwiches on paper towels, then transfer them to a clean dry platter, and serve with optional dipping sauce on the side.

PICKLED LOTUS RHIZOMES

Ingredients:

2 or 3 lotus rhizomes, peeled and cubed or sliced
3 Tablespoons coarse salt, divided
3 scallions. Cut in half-inch pieces
3 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
1 Tablespoon fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
5 to 10 chili peppers
2 Tablespoons vinegar or brine from shili peppers
¼ cup rice vinegar
¼ cup granulated sugar

Preparation:

1. In a small pot, cover lotus rhizomes with water, add half the salt, and boil for five minutes, then cool to medium.
2. Then add the rest of the ingredients and put everything in a clean canning jar. If needed, add cooled boiled water to top it off until full, then close and refrigerate for two to three days, and shake the jar each day. These contents can be used in up to five days.
3. A second set of lotus pieces can be added, shaken daily, and eaten in some days, as desired or needed.

LOTUS STUFFED WITH STICKY RICE

Ingredients:

2 lotus rhizome sections. Separated and scrubbed clean
1 ounce glutinous rice, soaked for half hour, then drained
2 ounces brown rock sugar, smashed
2 ounces cooked brown rice
toothpicks
honey and osmanthus syrup, optional as sauce

Preparation:

1. Cut half inch end off each section of lotus and reserve.
2. Fill each hole in each section, break toothpicks in half, and close the section with half of three or four of them.
3. Put each section of lotus in a pressure cooker and cover them with water. Add both sugars to the water, cover the pressure cooker, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer under pressure for half an hour, then cool them and when cool, open the pan and when partially cool, slice each one in half-inch pieces. Serve the honey and the osmanthus in separate small dishes, or combine them and pour them over the cut slices.

LOTUS SEED STUFFED CATALOUPE

Ingredients:

1 cup lotus seeds
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 cups sticky rice. Soaked overnight
1/3 cup pearl tapioca
large piece brown cubed sugar
2 Tablespoons osmanthus or another light-colored jam
3 Tablespoons goji berries
3 Tablespoons white or bleached raisons
4 Tablespoons toasted pine or walnuts, toasted, then chopped
3 Tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
1 cantaloupe melon per person, seeded, and cut so half stands upright with no place for anything to leak out

Preparation:

1. Put lotus seeds and baking soda in a small bowl and cover with boiling water. Set this aside until cool. Rinse and discard any green sprouted parts inside the seeds and repeat covering them with boiling water and letting them cool again, then chop them or cut each seed into quarters. and put the lotus seeds in a steamer basket and steam them for half an hour.
2. Prepare the tapioca cooking it as the package instructs, then add it to the sticky rice and simmer a few minutes until the sugar melts, then add this to the lotus seed pieces..
3. Peel the rest of the melon and chop it into one-quarter-inch dice and mix with the diced lotus seed pieces and all the rest of the ingredients.
4. Put this in the non-peeled melon half that has no place for anything to leak out. Cover and chill overnight. Then serve.

JOYCE CHEN: FLAVOR AND FORTUNE'S FIRST AWARDEE

BY HELEN CHEN

Celebrated restaurateur, cookbook author, television personality, and entrepreneur, Joyce Chen was born in Beijing, China on September 14, 1917. This September 2017 is the 100th anniversary of her birth. She grew up in a highly regarded family in Jiading, a suburb of Shanghai, and was the youngest of nine children.

Her name, Joyce, was given to her by one of her teachers who said it was appropriate because she was always so joyful. One learns, as recounted in the *Joyce Chen Cookbook*, she was very interested in cooking and was encouraged by her mother to learn from the family chef so she "would never eat raw rice."

Joyce Chen fled the communist regime in 1949 with her husband Thomas, and her two small children. On recommendation of a Harvard-educated Chinese journalist and relative, she settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts on Kirkland Street. A few years later the family moved to Alpine Street near Fresh Pond, also in Cambridge. After they moved, Chinese graduate students from Harvard, MIT, and Boston University did flock there to socialize and enjoy her Shanghai and Beijing cooking. They sorely missed it in America. She did prepare it for them and her family along with other Chinese cuisines.

Joyce Chen's first public foray introducing Chinese cuisine to Westerners was at her children's Cambridge school. It was a fund raising event called 'the Buckingham Circus' and there she made egg rolls for the food table. Later, not seeing them there, she surmised they were not popular and were put out of sight. To her surprise and delight she was enthusiastically greeted with requests for more of them as that first batch did sell out immediately. She went home to make more, and so her legendary 'Joyce Chen egg rolls' entered the school's culinary history.

Soon thereafter, she taught the cuisines of China first in her home, later at adult education centers in Cambridge and Boston. Her friends encouraged her to open a restaurant, and in 1958, she and her husband opened New England's first Mandarin Chinese restaurant. It was on Concord Avenue in Cambridge and there, she introduced classic Northern Chinese dishes such as Peking Duck, Moo Shi Pork (as spelled on her menu), and Hot and Sour Soup.

She coined the name 'Peking Ravioli' for the first potstickers served in New England, and to this day, New Englanders still call all potstickers 'Peking Ravioli.' Thanks to them and many other dishes, her restaurant experienced tremendous success as she did awaken Americans accustomed to Chinese-American fare such as chow mein and chop suey to new authentic tastes of China.

Her Joyce Chen Restaurant was the most famous Chinese restaurant in America in the 1960's. Customers came from all walks of life to enjoy her food. Among the notable fans were Nathan Pusey, then president of Harvard and Julius Stratton then president of MIT. John Kenneth Galbraith, Danny Kaye; Beverly Sills; James Beard; Julia Child; and then US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger were there often. Kissinger proclaimed her Peking Duck "better than those in Beijing!"

She did open a second restaurant in 1967 called Joyce Chen's Small Eating Place. Also in Cambridge, it was in Central Square. MIT professors did complain that her first eatery favored the Harvard community. Her last Joyce Chen Restaurant closed in 1998.

Earlier, in 1962, she published the first edition of her *Joyce Chen Cook Book*. It included home-style recipes of Mandarin, Shanghai, Beijing and Chongqing dishes. Then, in 1968, she started and hosted a nationally broadcast PBS television series called "Joyce Chen Cooks." That program introduced thousands to Northern Chinese cuisine.

Realizing the lack of properly made utensils in the US for Chinese cooking, Joyce Chen designed cookware and cooking utensils with her name on them. Among them, she introduced the very first flat bottom wok which she called the 'Peking Pan.' After her death in 1994, her cookware company was sold, and that was in 2003.

Embraced by her Chinese restaurant chefs, this inspired her to make them available to other chefs and the general public who did love and embrace them.

This was a bold and unique move at that time because bottled Chinese stir-fry and other sauces did not exist in America or most other non-Chinese markets. Her company, Joyce Chen Foods, is now run by her son Stephen who continues to offer Joyce Chen's iconic frozen 'Peking Ravioli' potstickers, healthier Chinese

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JOYCE CHEN: FLAVOR AND FORTUNE'S FIRST AWARDEE

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saucers, and many Chinese ingredients. Most are now available in many American and other markets and supermarkets.

After president Richard Nixon opened diplomatic relations with China in February 1972, Joyce Chen, her son Stephen, and her daughter Helen were some of the first Americans to go to China. So did this magazine's editor, but on a separate trip. Chen's trip resulted in a PBS television special called, "Joyce Chen's China."

In September 2014 she was honored with her own U.S. postage stamp; it is seen on this page and was part of a set of American commemorative stamps of her adopted country's culinary legends. It did sell out quickly.

Joyce Chen died in 1994; her granite marker reads "Beloved Mother" at its top. Her Chinese name, Liao Jia Ai, and Chinese women keep their maiden names, is also there in Chinese characters with an inscription in English saying: "To live in the hearts of those we leave behind is not to die."

This great famous lady will never leave the hearts and minds of the hundreds of thousands she introduced to authentic Chinese cuisines. She brought them to them and taught them in the US. This magazine's editor is one of her thousands of fans.

This information, taken from an article written by her daughter, Helen Chen, is about her mother, a world famous Chinese cooking authority. Like her mother, her daughter who wrote this article is one as well. Her daughter also taught and wrote Chinese cookbooks, including 'Peking Cuisine' published by Orion Books in 1997, 'Helen Chen's Chinese Home Cooking' published by Hearst Books in 1994, 'Easy Chinese Stir-Frying' published by John Wiley and Sons in 2009, and 'Easy Asian Noodles' published by John Wiley and Sons in 2010. Both mother and daughter are well-known cooking authorities honored and adored. Both are worshiped as fantastic experts teaching and writing about Chinese cuisine. Readers need to know that this magazine's editor is in total agreement.

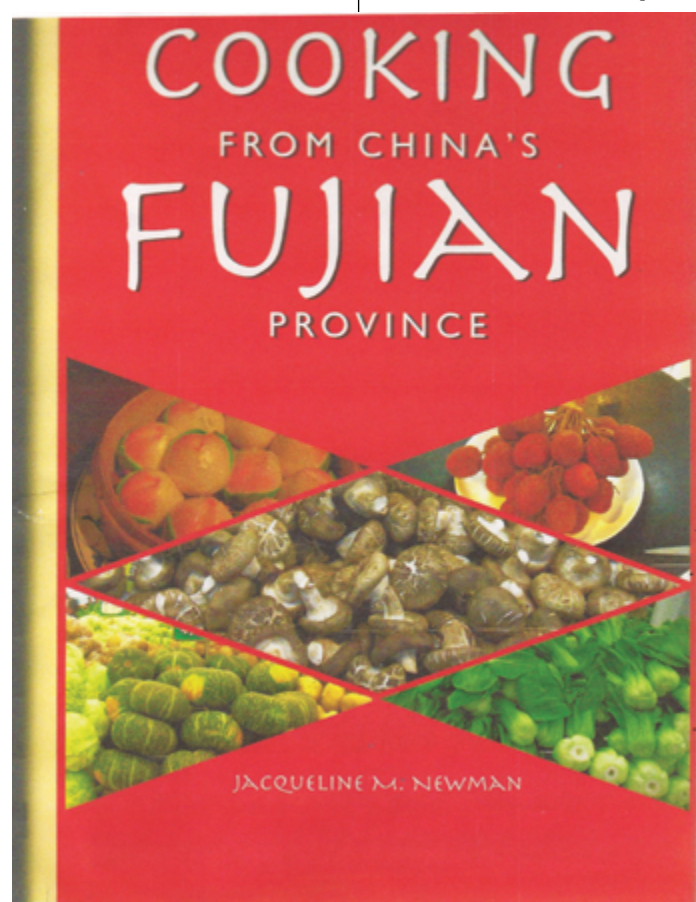


FUJIAN FOOD

This is one of China's eight outstanding culinary styles. It is from the province directly across the Taiwan Straits known as Fujian and known for its hundreds of different delicious dishes. Most of them have Min roots. Also known as Hoikken food, it is said to be one of the country's best known cuisines in China, but one not well known abroad. Readers may recall an early article about Fujianese food in Volume 6(2), a 1999 issue. If not, check it out on this magazine's complete website at www.flavorandfortune.com

This province is well known outside of China because thousands of its people went abroad hundreds of years ago. They were and are seafaring folk. As one of China's twenty-seven provinces politically equal to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Tianjin. They are: Anhui, Fujian, Gansu, Guangdong, Guangxi, Guizhou, Henan, Hainan, Hong Kong, Hubei, Hunan, Inner Mongolia, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Liaoning, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Sichuan, Xinjiang, Xizang (more commonly known as Tibet), Yunnan, and Zhejiang; and most have more than a thousand years of history.

There are few printed books where one can learn about foods from this province, and only one cookbook exclusively in English. Its cover is on this page and on the cover of this issue. Written by this magazine's editor, she thanks the help she had from many people and companies there and here. For those that want see it, they can go to see the world's largest collection of more than five thousand English-language Chinese cookbooks; they are at Stony Brook University in the special collections area. One does need to make an appointment to see them by contacting the librarian



by e-mail at: kristen.nytray@stonybrook.edu or by phone at (631) 632-7119.

Most Fujianese recipes have, like the cuisine, Min origins. They are from one of this province's culinary branches. Many use different mushrooms, different foods of the sea, dishes with meat and fish in one dish, etc. Some are long-cooked, steamed, stir-fried, or prepared other ways, and many incorporate many different herbs. Famous throughout China and among China's best, folks outside of this country are usually unaware of them

except perhaps for one known as Buddha Jumps Over the Wall. A pity, because their fish balls have meat inside them. Fujian noodles and dumplings, respectively known as *banmien*, and *bianrou*, are less well-known but equally delicious as are many other fish with meat dishes, and their many thick or thin soups. People from this province love having two or more during a single meal.

Dishes from Fujian often have soy in their sauce, some are made with flour, and many other special attributes. My Chinese colleagues call them the best in China; and they love the many local dishes that include wine or wine products including their red or white wine lees made with the dregs or

leftover solids from making red or white wines.

Either or both of the wine lees are used when making many dishes originating in this province. They provide unique tastes loved by the Fujianese people. Other dishes might have pickled foods in them, a mite of sugar, some coriander, sesame oil, or other things including different mushrooms, powdered or ground dry pork or beef, five-spice powder, and other ingredients.

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FUJIAN FOOD

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This province has twice the amount of land devoted to agriculture than does any other, twenty percent versus eleven percent more in most provinces. Here, the weather offers sixty or more inches of rain annually and that is twice what other provinces get. In addition, Fujian has many mountains that leach and leak water into the soil below making it exceptionally fertile.

Fujian did have serious famines some five hundred years ago and then they did need to import sweet potatoes from the Philippines and elsewhere to stave off starvation. That is why this vegetable did become part of many of their meals. Early sources such as *The Book of Rites* the Chinese call the *Zhou Li*, tells us there were seven Min tribes, many of its people sea-goers, many leaving by boat telling those they interacted with about their foods of the sea. That is why one-third or more overseas Chinese have Fujianese roots and make up the twenty million plus overseas Chinese.

This magazine has almost two dozen copies of this cookbook and offers them to you, our readers, on a first come, first serve basis for \$20.00 including tax and shipping. If you want one, do send a US twenty dollar check for each copy of this volume we note its rear cover has praise from Sidney Mintz, Martin Yan, Ken Hom, E.N. Anderson, and Grace Young.

The recipes below are from this book to tempt you to do so. One more thing, to see the citations and annotations of those more than five thousand English-language Chinese cookbooks that are at Stony Brook, do go on their website to read about them. Also make an appointment and contact that library or speak with the Special Collections director KristenNytray@stonybrook.edu or go to the university's STARS computer catalogue; she will explain how to do that. These Chinese cookbooks are in the Jacqueline M. Newman Chinese Cookbook section, and their catalogue listing has citations and annotations, titles, each book's chapter titles, number of recipes, and considerable other information including several sentences about each volume, and their number of pages, and much more including some historical and cultural content. While many do have recipes from this province, not all of them do. (JMN)

PORK, VEGETABLE, AND FISH SOUP

Ingredients:

1/4 pound pork, hand chopped
10 cups chicken stock
1 large carrot, peeled and diced
1/2 cup peeled diced white or green radishes
2 slices fresh ginger, diced
1 one-inch piece tangerine peel, soaked until soft, then diced
1 to 2 teaspoons minced Yunnan or Smithfield ham, minced
2 Tablespoons white rice wine lees
1 teaspoon red rice wine lees
1/4 pound skinless and boneless fresh fish
2 sprigs fresh coriander, for garnish

Preparation:

1. Blanch the pork two minutes in two cups boiling water, then drain and discard the water.
2. Bring chicken stock to the boil, lower the heat and add the pork, carrot, radishes, ginger, garlic, and tangerine peel and simmer for one hour.
3. Add ham and both wine lees and simmer another thirty minutes. Add the fish and simmer ten more minutes, then add the coriander and pour into a pre-heated soup tureen and serve.

UP AND DOWN SHRIMP

Ingredients:

1 pound large shrimp, peel and veins discarded, tails left on
2 Tablespoons *goji* berries
5 pitted Chinese black dates, each cut in half
2 pitted Chinese brown dates, coarsely chopped
5 pitted Chinese red dates, cut in half
2 pieces dried licorice
1 two-inch piece stick cinnamon
4 dried shrimp, minced
1/2 cup red Chinese rice wine
1 teaspoon white or red rice wine lees
1/2 teaspoon Chinese black rice vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt

Preparation:

1. Cut shrimp lengthwise including tail shell and soak in cold water.
2. Cut *goji* berries, dates, and licorice and put these in a pot with two cups water. Simmer them for twenty minutes, then remove the licorice and cinnamon stick and simmer the rest for another ten minutes.
3. Add wine, wine lees, vinegar, salt, and shrimp and turn off the heat and cover the pot for fifteen minutes. Uncover and transfer to a preheated bowl, and serve.

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FUJIAN FOOD

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MEATBALLS WITH CRAB MEAT

Ingredients:

1½ pounds minced boneless pork
1 Tablespoon Chinese rice wine
1 Tablespoon soy sauce
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
2 Tablespoons minced white scallion part
3 slices fresh ginger, minced
1 egg white
1 cup minced crab meat, cartilage removed
3 Tablespoons water chestnut flour or cornstarch
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
1 cup chicken broth
5 Chinese cabbage leaves, cut in half in their width

Preparation:

1. Mix pork, rice wine, soy sauce, salt, sugar, scallion whites, ginger, and egg white and divide into ten parts.
2. Divide pork into ten parts, flattened each one, put one tenth of crab meat in each center, then make into ball, meat on outside, crab meat inside it, then roll in flour or cornstarch and set aside for half an hour, then lightly flatten each one not breaking them open.
3. Heat vegetable oil in wok or fry pan, and fry these patties on each side until lightly browned, then add the broth and simmer for half an hour, setting the liquid aside.
4. Line a casserole with half the cabbage leaves, put meat patties on top, and then add reserved liquid on top of them, putting the remaining leaves on top of the patties. Cover the casserole and simmer for fifteen minutes, uncover it and simmer another five minutes. Put casserole on a trivet and serve.

PICKLED PAPAYA SLICES

Ingredients:

2 ripe papayas, seeds removed, peeled, and cut into thin slices
6 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
6 shallots, fried or purchased dried and pre-fried sea cucumbers

Ingredients:

6 chili peppers, seeds removed and discarded
6 sprigs fresh coriander, stems and leaves minced
1 lemon or lime, juiced
1 Tablespoon coarse salt
2 Tablespoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon sesame oil

Preparation:

1. Mix all ingredients including papaya slices, and toss well.
2. Cover and refrigerate for two hours or overnight; then serve.

SEA CUCUMBER SOUP

Ingredients:

½ pound soaked sea cucumber, cut in half-inch cubes
½ cup corn oil
3 ounces pork loin, cut in half-inch cubes
3 Tablespoons cubed canned bamboo shoots
4 dried Chinese black mushrooms, soaked, stems discarded, and cut in half-inch cubes
8 cups chicken stock
1 Tablespoon red rice wine lees
½ teaspoon granulated sugar
½ teaspoon coarse salt
½ teaspoon thin soy sauce
¼ teaspoon chili oil
¼ teaspoon sesame oil
1 chicken egg
1 Tablespoon cornstarch
½ teaspoon Chinese black rice vinegar
½ Tablespoon Chinese white rice vinegar
1 scallion, thinly sliced on an angle
5 hard-cooked pigeon eggs, peeled and cut in half, thin bottom piece removed so the stand upright

Preparation:

1. Simmer sea cucumber cubes in two cups water for one hour or until tender.
2. Heat wok or fry pan, add corn oil, and deep fry pork cubes for one minute, then drain them on paper towels, and remove all but one tablespoon of the oil.
3. Add sea cucumber cubes, pork, bamboo shoots, and mushrooms and fry them together for one minute, then add the stock, red wine lees, sugar, salt, soy sauce, and the chili and sesame oils and simmer uncovered for thirty minutes.
4. Beat chicken egg with the cornstarch and one tablespoon cold water, and stir into the soup in a thin stream; then add both vinegars and the scallion slivers.
5. Put one-half of each pigeon egg into each empty bowl, and gently pour soup one it; then serve. Reserve other pigeon eggs for seconds.

ARROWHEAD: HISTORY AND CONSUMPTION

BY YU WEIJIE

This perennial bulb has one variety botanically known as *Sagittaria sagittifolia*, another as *Sagittaria latifolia*. Its English name is thanks to the shape of its leaves that protrude above the water they grow in.

Known in Chinese as *cigu*, this popular vegetable grows in many temperate and tropical regions, and is popular in Asian countries including China, North Korea, Japan, and India. It was domesticated in China where it is very popular.

Written about by Tao Hongjing, a Taoist master alchemist (born circa 456 BCE), he said they most often grow in water. They were botanically known as *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, a botanical name no longer popular.

The bulbs are white to yellowish, and larger than many others, bigger than in his time. They have a small amount of tan or purple exterior skin, and most of their flowers are white. Their male flower grows on the upper part of their stems, the females ones on the lower parts. The bulbs themselves are round, some seen on this page. People eat the bulbs and the roots growing below them; and some call them 'weeds in water' or 'wild germ plasma.' We know not why, do you?

Meng Shen (621 – 713 CE), a well-known food practitioner said that people in Southeastern China did become fond of them. However, he also expressed concern that eating too many could cause some problems. We never learn what these were.

During the Song Dynasty (960 – 1279 CE), this plant was popular used in desserts, perhaps because they called them fruits in those days. However, fruits they are not. Some remove their bitter flavor making them more palatable, others do not; and we are among the latter group. A few did use them as sacrificial food, and that was commonly written about. In those days, also written about was that many gods, goddesses, and ancestors would like them better with that bitterness removed. They said these folk do not 'eat bitterness.'

Endless wars in the north of China saw many refugees migrating south. This caused food shortages that increased their use as more people starting to use them in soups, as vegetables, and in those aforementioned desserts.

This increased use increased a need for more to be planted so forest land was cleared to flood places and grow more of them. These bulbs are aquatic so fields needed to be flooded. These hungry folk also ate more of their stems and leaves so they planted even more of them. Before they did, locusts had enjoyed them, soon they had to abandon them as growers figured out ways to chase them away. Increased availability meant their prices did decline and their consumption did increase. This made more arrowheads available for human consumption.



During and after the Southern Song Dynasty (1127 - 1279 CE), their cultivation increased even more, and they were a vegetable important for staving off hunger. This continued during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties (1279 - 1368, 1368 - 1544, and 1644 - 1911 CE, respectively), as did early technology thanks to Lu Mingshan during the Yuan dynasty. This official of the Anhui Province wrote a tome convincing folk to "dig up the ground....put on a straw mat..., then arrange them on this mat,

(and)...cover the soil then irrigate them." This advice helped growers increase their yield as they could easily pick them from these mats.

Before this, arrowhead grew in disorganized fashions, and since this advice became popular, they benefitted from advanced planting, less transplanting, better spacing, and controlled weeding and feeding enabling more and larger yields, better quality bulbs, and that made for increased demand.

Before this change in growing them, inferior low-lying lands were used to cultivate these vegetables. However, by the 16th century, that article by Lu convinced farmers to grow them in new ways so they harvested bigger and better arrowheads in Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Anhui, Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi.

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ARROWHEAD: HISTORY AND CONSUMPTION

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This greater demand increased the incomes of growers thanks to better use and use in famous dishes such as Braised Pork with Arrowhead, Arrowhead Pickled Soup, and more and better desserts. The previously mentioned braised dish was now more appreciated, the soup more appetizing, and other dishes used more, too.

This magazine's editor advises that arrowheads can be used in many recipes. She says that before so doing, do peel and slice, dice or prepare them in any way one might prepare and cook potatoes. A favorite is to thin slice them and then fry them as one would when making potato chips. One can also simply boil them and then mash them, or dice and mix them with other vegetables, or to make them stir-fried with or without any sauce, as the two recipes that follow indicate as general examples.

Below are some recipes using this vegetable. Should you know others, we hope you will share them.

ARROWHEAD BRAISED WITH PORK

Ingredients:

½ pound arrowhead
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil or lard
1 pound pork belly
2 Tablespoons dark soy sauce
3 Tablespoons yellow Chinese rice wine
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar

Preparation:

1. Peel the arrowhead tuber and cut it into large chunks.
2. Cut the pork belly into small pieces and blanch it for one minute, then blanch it with boiling water for one more minute, then drain and discard the water.
3. Now heat an empty wok or fry pan, add the oil or lard, and stir-fry the pork for three minutes, then add the arrowhead pieces and stir-fry them together for two more minutes.
4. Now add the soy sauce and the wine and stir-fry for one minute, then add enough boiled water to cover all ingredients and bring quickly to the boil, then reduce the heat to medium and simmer for fifteen minutes, then reduce the heat and simmer for forty minutes more on low heat.
5. Then add the sugar, stir well, and serve.

PICKLES AND ARROWHEAD SOUP

Ingredients:

2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1 teaspoon grated ginger
1 scallion, divided in half, and minced
dash of sugar
dash of salt
4 arrowhead bulbs, peel and sliced them, then rinse and drain them
3 half pickles, blanched one minute, then chopped

Preparation:

1. Heat wok or fry pan, then add the oil and stir-fry the ginger and half of the scallion for fifteen seconds, then add pickles and the arrowhead bulb slices, and stir fry for two minutes. Next, add three cups cold water and the sugar, and reduce the heat.
2. Simmer this for fifteen minutes until the arrowhead pieces are soft and the soup thickens a little.
3. Pour into pre-heated individual bowls or a soup tureen, then sprinkle on salt and the other half of the minced scallion, stir, and serve.

Wu Weijie is a prolific researcher, writer, and is a Research Fellow at the Zhejiang Academy of Social Science in Hangzhou, China. She has researched and written about many topics including an earlier one for this magazine at www.flavorandfortune@hotmail.com

FRUITS: UNUSUAL ONES THE CHINESE LOVE

Fruits are flavorful and fantastic, and four previous issues did discuss a large number of them. If you missed them, those were in volumes F23(3), F23(4), F24(1), and F24(2). Before them, sporadic information is elsewhere, so do look at the master web list at www.flavorandfortune.com and while there, check the master recipe index for fruit recipes, too. This particular article discusses eight unusual fruits the Chinese do adore including the custard apple, jack fruit, jujube, mangosteen, rambutan, quince, star fruit, and the wax apple. (JMN)



CUSTARD APPLE is botanically known as *Annona reticulata*, and is a light green tropical fruit that includes many black seeds. Some know it as "Bullock's Heart" and we know not why. Chinese say this fruit is wonderful even though their leaves smell dreadfully if crushed. That aroma can be distasteful as can their shape when lopsided. Nonetheless, these fruits are adored by many in Asia when ripe and sweet. They really do taste like custard when chilled.

Chinese folk tell us their leaves make a fine fumigant, their juice can get rid of lice, and their seeds and leaves when ground and liquified do make great insecticides. Their seeds are many and in pockets of their flesh. They are very creamy, and once we did count fifty-two in a single fruit.

TCM folk say that as a poultice they are good to reduce boils, abscesses, and ulcers when ground. When unripe, dried in the sun, and made that way, they recommend them to those with diarrhea or dysentery. In addition, the bark of their trees or their roots can reduce toothaches while their fruits are used to treat epilepsy and convulsions.

CUSTARD APPLE DUMPLINGS

Ingredients:

2 custard apples, pits discarded and fruit mashed
2 rambutan, their flesh thinly slivered
1 Tablespoon pomegranate seeds
½ ripe banana, mashed or sliced thin, each slice quartered
½ banana flower, slivered
2 Tablespoon honey or Osmanthus paste
30 dumpling wrappers
2 cups vegetable oil

Preparation:

1. Mash and mix the custard apple flesh, rambutan pieces, pomegranate seeds, mashed or cut banana pieces, and banana flower pieces with the honey or Osmanthus paste, and mix this well.
2. Put a heaping tablespoon of this fruit mixture in a dumpling skin, wet the edges, push out all air, and with a fork, crimp the edges together.
3. Heat a wok or deep fry pan, add the oil and fry the dumplings on both sides for two to three minutes, drain them on paper towels, and serve.



JACKFRUIT is the world's largest edible fruit from a tree. Botanically known as *Artocarpus heterophyllus*, there are smaller versions and many appreciate them. The big ones can weigh between twenty-five and one hundred pounds and are hard to carry home from any marketplace. Many purchase just a cut piece cut from a large one to manage that chore. Related to the fig, but hard to believe, they have similar numbers of seeds, but in this fruit they are huge by comparison.

In the past, one could not purchase all or part of these fruits in non-tropical areas where they could only be had canned or frozen. Not so any more. Now, the fresh ones are found in the US and other non-tropical countries with some grown in southern Florida near Miami and places with similar temperatures. They are available and getting popular in many more places nowadays.

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Some say these fruits resemble large watermelons. We do not see that because their colors inside and out are different as are their textures. Some have crocodile-like skin and a central core of huge radiating seeds, some have sweet, chewy, and sometimes stringy flesh, and a few have a smooth skin. Recently we learned they now grow lots of them in China.

Diabetics should avoid eating these fruits even though TCM practitioners report they are anti-aging with antioxidants galore because of their high sugar content. Round or oval at their ends, they fascinate as they also grow on main branches, tree trunks, and occasionally on exposed roots. When ripe, many tell us they are hard to resist because they taste like a mixture of cantaloupe, mango, pineapple, and Juicy Fruit gum.

Named from the corruption of a Malay word that means round, unripe, and earth-colored, they do become pale to deep green when ripe, some dotted with external spines. Farmers tell us they can feed them to their livestock even when the insides look like rags and have a rubbery texture.

We suggest oiling ones hands, knife, and cutting board before handling or cutting them so they do not stick to these surfaces. A few tell us their aroma is offensive when doing so, but we have not found that to be true. We know their nutrient content includes huge amounts of carbohydrate, and when unripe, some tell us they like this fruit as a vegetable and not a fruit. They say to stir-fry it with lots of oil, and/or put it in soup or salad. One chap said he found some in ice cream with their seeds removed.

Many use this fruit boiled or roasted, even pickled, and some do use the wood from its trees to make furniture or musical instruments. Years ago, the dye in their sap was used to color the robes of Buddhist monks. That source is no longer needed as there are cheaper and better sources for it.

JACK FRUIT SALSA

Ingredients:

6 to 8 ounces of jackfruit flesh, mashed
3 shallots, minced
3 Tablespoons Chinese black or balsamic vinegar
1 to 2 teaspoons fish sauce
freshly ground pepper and salt, to taste

Preparation:

1. Marinate jackfruit flesh with all other ingredients for two hours in a glass or ceramic bowl.
2. Then, serve it as salad or simmer it for an hour as a soup after marinating the jack fruit.



JUJUBES can be red, brown, or black and these dates, in Chinese, are called *hong zao*. Their colors are common, many only when ripe. When unripe, they are green. Often called dates, they are available in hundreds of varieties, many wild; their trunks grafted on different wild roots. Popular from Leling in the Shandong Province where more than eight million trees produce about ten thousand or more tons when dried, about a thousand tons of these dates are exported annually.

Loved for their sweetness, the honey jujube variety is sweetest with a content of almost eighty percent sugar. All dates are known for their sweetness when ripe, also for their many medicinal uses. Loved fresh and dried, also canned or cooked, TCM practitioners say they are warm, their medicinal properties many, and they have eighty to one hundred percent more Vitamin C than a single apple. They have other vitamins, as well, including iron, calcium, and phosphorus. Some jokingly call them a 'vitamin pill.'

Botanically, these are *Ziziphus jujuba* in the Buckthorn family more recently called the Planatarum family. Some call them *Rhomnus zizyphus*; we know not why. Many Chinese refer to them as *hong zao*, and almost all love them in syrups, in wines and liquors, and in vinegars and other liquids. We love them in bakery products, fresh or dried, and in many cooked dishes, and cut up and in salads.

TCM practitioners tell us they are great stress reducers thanks to their high sugar content. There is conflicting information about their role in contraception, pro and con, and several told us they have put five or eight of these fruits in the beds of their newlywed children. Several mothers whose children recently married told us their parents did likewise for them when they were first married.

Most TCM practitioners agree that these fruits are used to treat jaundice and diseases of the spleen and stomach. They also said they are popular when treating indigestion, anemia, insomnia, hepatitis, and even hypertension.

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Throughout Southeast Asia, we never found anyone who did not like them one way or another, if ripe. Very few made negative comments about them if not sweet. One chap did as he pointed inside his mouth at a broken tooth. He told us the unripe fruits were the cause. Thus, we recommend them in all fruit recipes when ripe and after removing their pits. That incidentally is a difficult task when they are not ripe.

HASMA WITH LOTUS SEEDS AND JUJUBES

Ingredients:

2 Tablespoons dried *hasma*, soaked overnight, then simmered in water and steamed for one hour
2 Tablespoons dried lotus seeds, steamed two hours
20 fresh red or brown jujubes, pits removed
½ cup brown rock sugar
3 Tablespoons ginger juice

Preparation:

1. Prepare all ingredients, and steam them together for two to three hours in two cups water. Then drain and do reserve their liquid.
2. Cool, then transfer this mixture to a large serving bowl or individual dessert dishes, add two tablespoons of the reserved liquid, and then serve.



MANGOSTEEN was written about in an earlier issue shortly after the first time we had ever seen and tasted them in Taiwan. Finding articles about them is rare. They are yummy fruits with hard exteriors. Commonly called the 'Queens of Fruits,' they are inedible unripe with brownish-purple exteriors, but when ripe and less green-looking, they get darker on their outsides, their interiors always looking like a *litchi* or a *longan*, but with less juice and with more pits and less aroma. We once read that their flavor is more like an apple-peach in combination. They look and taste like their name but are no relation nor resemblance to any mango we know.

Chinese like them fresh and hot or cold.. Their TCM practitioners use their exteriors for many medicinal needs dried and ground such as to stop diarrhea or control a fever. The leaves, when minced, mixed, and mashed with unripe banana are used as a balm for wounds, their roots when boiled, an aid for those with

very irregular menstruation cycles. The fruit does increase energy, reduce weight, improve indigestion, reduce cholesterol, and improve skin and eye health; and often used for one or more of these conditions.

Unusual, these fruits were written about by Carl Linnaeus only a few hundred years ago. He described them in his *Species Platarum*. That was long before most westerners ever saw, savored, or heard about this fruit, but thanks to him, they learned there were male and female trees, the male ones were rarely found, the female ones often self-propagating;. They also learned these fruits were productive even without fertilization, and that fascinated many of them.

MANGOSTEEN FRIED RICE

Ingredients:

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
2 cloves fresh garlic, peeled and quartered
1 small sweet onion, diced
1 small carrot, peeled and diced
½ cup corn kernels
1 cup flesh of mangosteen sections, pits discarded
1 cup cooked cold rice
2 scallions, thinly sliced on an angle
2 Tablespoons thin soy sauce
1 Tablespoon sesame oil

Preparation:

1. Heat wok or large fry pan, add the oil and stir-fry the garlic and onion for two minutes.
2. Next add the carrot and corn kernels and stir-fry another two minutes, then add the mangosteen sections, stir, and add the cold rice, scallions, and the soy sauce, and stir until hot, about two or three minutes; then add the sesame oil, stir, and serve.



RAMBUTAN a cousin to the *li zhi*. has a hairy rubbery exterior that needs discarding. These fruits grow in clusters, are not as juicy as their loved relation, and probably did originate in Malaysia because the word *rambut* is a Malay word meaning 'hair' and their exterior does have many hairy-like protuberances. Where they actually came from seems to be in dispute.

They are popular throughout Southeast Asia and Australia, their fruits have white flesh that can be a bit

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yellowish, and they have hard inedible seeds; edible only when ground and cooked. The fruit is best raw and ripe. There are many new species, all are delicious if ripe, all high in Vitamin C, and all producing two crops a year. Most are large and red when ripe, most grow in bunches, and these fruits stay refrigerated longer than most other fruits, and many love them for that.

Celebrated at festivals in many countries, they are made into syrups and alcoholic beverages, and loved as fruits. Their season is long, often March to October, and most enjoy them peeled and wolfed down after they discard their easy to spit out pits. Their flesh has a sweet-sour taste even when not completely ripe, and their pulp travels well so even when found peeled, pitted, and in plastic bags. This fruit is also sold in cans, frozen, in bakery products, as a juice, and as components of many medicines, sometimes made with other fruits, rinds or ground pits.

EIGHT TREASURE STEAMED RICE

Ingredients:

8 different dried fruits and nuts such as pit-free rambutan pieces, dried and soaked until soft Chinese black or brown dates, quartered pit-free apricots, and other soaked soft seeds until eight have been selected and soaked, as needed
2 cups cooked sweet rice
1 cup super fine sugar
3 Tablespoons lard
½ cup red bean paste

Preparation:

1. Line a steamer basket with muslin or cheesecloth rung out in cold water.
2. Grease a heat-proof bowl, spread the cloth on a greased bowl, and put the dried fruits and nuts on the cloth in a decorative pattern.
3. Mix the cooked rice with the sugar and the lard, put half of it on the fruit and nut design, then put the red bean paste on this, and the rest of the rice mixture on top. Cover with the ends of the cloth and push down firmly. Then put a small flat plate upside down on top.
4. Steam for twenty-five minutes, remove from the steamer, invert onto a clean flat plate leaving the bowl and cloth on for twenty minutes before removing. Then serve.



QUINCE are best picked unripe and better eaten fragrant and ripe. This yellow-green fruit is often compared to pears, we know not why, but do know not to let them touch each other when ripening. Why not, when they do, they bruise and deteriorate faster had they not. We also know that Virgil called them 'golden apples' and many still do centuries later even though they are not related to any apple we know.

Appreciated then and now when cooked, they maintain their shape for a long time whether poached, baked, braised, or stewed. They have lots of pectin, more when unripe than ripe, and are great in or with jams, jellies, marmalades, and chutneys.

The Chinese call them *mu kua*, and botanically they are *Cydonia oblonga*. Some botanists call them *Cydonia vulgaris* or *C. sinensis*, all know the Chinese quince has different specie names. These fruits can weigh ten pounds or more, can be huge, and when carved can be beautiful. They are often used in medicines and perfumes, and in wines and other potent drinks. Their pectin content helps lower blood cholesterol and provides some protection against heart disease. Their high Vitamin C and good source of potassium is appreciated. Their seeds are less so as they contain myaglandalin, a natural cyanide that breaks down into hydrogen cyanide in the stomach, so do not consume them alone or in quantity.

Cultivated in China since earliest times, these were sacred fruits presented as tokens of love, eaten at a wedding breakfasts, and known as 'stomach comforters; why we do not understand. When made into syrups, the Chinese use them to treat diarrhea, soreness in the mouth, as a digestive, a thirst reliever, and as a diuretic. The seeds were and still are used prescribed for cholera, cosmetics or incense. Their bark was used to treat ulcers, but rarely is any more, just as they are now rarely used in many medicines.

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FRUITS: UNUSUAL ONES THE CHINESE LOVE

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LAMB AND QUINCE

Ingredients:

2 pounds of boneless lamb, any fat discarded
2 Tablespoons solid shortening or lard
1/4 teaspoon marjoram
1 teaspoon cardamon
1 whole clove
salt and pepper. to taste

2 quince, about 2 pounds, peel and seeds discarded, the fruit cut into four to six pieces

Preparation:

1. Cut lamb into two-inch pieces and add it and the shortening into a heavy casserole and brown the meat.
2. Next add one cup of water and all the spices and the salt and pepper, and stir. Then cover the casserole, reduce the heat, and simmer for an hour until the lamb is tender. Baste once or twice, as needed.
3. Then add the quince, stir, and simmer another five minutes, remove the cover, and simmer another five minutes, then serve.



STAR FRUIT is tropical and juicy. Also known as carambola and in the genus *Averrhoa*, they grow well in sandy soil, three or four fruits found together often on their tree trunks. These fruits look waxy and translucent, can be pale yellow to amber, and with angles that when cut cross-wise resemble a five-pointed star.

The Chinese like them very ripe or made into a juice. Their TCM practitioners say that fresh and less than ripe they cure hangovers and can be used as a poultice to relieve itching from prickly heat. They have lots of vitamins A and C, considerable iron, and lots of fibre, and folks need to know the thicker ones are usually the sweeter ones.

TCM practitioners tell us their leaves and roots cure headaches, reduce ringworm, remove some itching from chickenpox and scabs, and they help heal sore eyes. They tell nursing mothers these fruits increase their milk. Elders advise that pickled in vinegar or dried with salt or cured with sugar, they improve age-related illnesses. Younger folk say they are great in salads if mashed or sliced, and they ease sore throats, and nourish and quench thirst.

STAR FRUIT BEVERAGE

Ingredients:

5 star fruits, their star edges discarded
juice of 1 lemon and 1 lime
3 Tablespoons granulated sugar
½ cup any fruit syrup

Preparation:

1. Thin slice the star fruit removing all seeds.
2. Mix lemon and lime with the sugar and the syrup, and stir until the sugar is completely dissolved. Then refrigerate until ready to serve.

WAX APPLE, seen on the next page is also known as 'black pearl' or 'Taiwanese Black Apple' it is a fruit new to Taiwan in the last seventy-five or so years. Now cherished there and in Northeast China, they have shiny deep red skins and are called 'the diva of expensive fruits.'

Popular in China's Linpien Rural Township, a small place of only some twenty-five thousand folk, there they produce lots of them, sell them and many betel nuts and coconuts, and are proud of these agricultural commodities. Why, because one-third of their land is below sea level, many of their houses with upstairs windows at street levels, and roofs just a step or two above their sidewalks. We have not seen this place, but do want to get there soon before their entire houses are below their sidewalks.

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FRUITS: UNUSUAL ONES THE CHINESE LOVE

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Wax apples are tropical fruits getting lots of attention. Many grow protected by a bag to keep birds from snacking on them, others in fields covered with black mosquito netting to keep them away, reduce labor, and eliminate pesticides. Originally from the Malay peninsula, Dutch settlers brought them to Taiwan from Java in the 17th century, and now many grow showing black just below their deep red exteriors. Recently we did learn some bring one hundred US dollars a pound, many weighing that much or more.

APPLE-PEAR COMPOTE

Ingredients:

½ cup haw fruit, simmered for twenty minutes, then cooled and set aside

5 pieces white sugar cubes

5 wax apples, seeds discarded, fruit cut in big chunks

3 Chinese pears, seeds discarded, fruit cut in big chunks

Preparation:

1. Mix sugar and two cups of water and bring to the boil, then cool somewhat before adding the haw syrup and the apple and pear pieces. Simmer these for ten minutes.

2. Now cool this mixture to tepid before serving it.

KNOW OR USE OTHER EXOTIC FRUITS?

ADVISE AND DO PROVIDE ONE RECIPE FOR EACH ONE.

ON MANY MENUS: IN NEW YORK



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KUNGFU KITCHEN; 805 8TH AVENUE; NEW YORK NY 10019; phone (646) 52-9491 is in the theater district in Manhattan. It is a place to indulge in freshly prepared Chinese foods. As one of four places, each with a different name, each one identified on its take-out menu seen here, the others are in Hell's Kitchen, Times Square, and midtown on the east side. Each one serves Chinese food with several Sichuan selections. All, we were told, make hand-made noodles, pan-fried buns, and all use fresh ingredients in all their dishes. Only the one named above is reviewed here.

Ordering can be easy as many items do have pictures; all have their prices. This one was planned as a take-out place and does have places to eat inside to enjoy their food. Unusual is their 15% service charge when eating in; it is clearly indicated.

Caring about their customers, the menu and the staff ask if one has a food allergy. Signs tell customers their ingredients may contain wheat, egg, soy, or seafood. Their food is made in clear view up front. We did watch that happening, and were impressed with their culinary talent.

For beverages there are many selections including four hot teas including loose leaf Jasmine, Pu-ehr (their spelling), Genmai, and Chrysanthemum, four cold drinks including Soy Milk, Sweet Plum Juice, Herbal Tea, and Honey Yuzu, and four sodas including Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, and Ginger Ale. How nice to have so many beverage selections with all their good food.

Though a limited menu, there are many dishes to enjoy, and we did just that. Selecting was not easy as many looked very good in picture and when being cooked before ones eyes.



Among them, on a first visit, we ordered Pan-fried Beef Buns, and Peking Duck Buns because we could not make a choice between them. We were glad we did as both were winners. The

Scallion Pancakes were yummy, too, as was their Buns w/Egg & Turnip Puffs, the Pan-fried Pork, Chives, and their Shrimp Dumplings in purple dough. The Pan-fried Chicken Dumplings, came in yellow skins. The Vegetable Dumplings served in green ones; and we liked them all.

Stir-fried Ramen with Chicken was great, the Mala Tang Spicy Hot Pot was, too. The Ban Noodles with Special Spicy Sauce was even better. Most things are made quickly, and on many visits their speed was consistent. That was great for all, us included, as we are often in a hurry but delighting in doing so. This, our first visit there, but we often visit midtown theaters, always want to chow down in this area, so are glad we discovered this fresh-cooked Chinese eatery. Am sure we will return often as it is in the theater district, and we are theater buffs.

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ON MANY MENUS: IN NEW YORK

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GRAIN HOUSE

Grain House at Uniondale
Tel: 516-280-5140
1002 Hempstead Turnpike,
Uniondale, NY 11553

Grain House at little neck
Tel: 718-229-8788
249-11 Northern Blvd,
Little Neck, NY 11362

Business Hour:
Mon-Thur : 11:00am - 10:00pm
Fri & Sat : 11:00am - 10:30pm
Sun : 11:00 - 10:00pm

We Do Delivery!



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GRAIN HOUSE; 1002 HEMPSTEAD TURNPIKE, UNIONDALE NY 11553; PHONE: (516) 280-5140 touts themselves as having Authentic Szechuan Gourmet food. They have a second location further east and north in Little Neck; we need to go there soon, and you can note that address is on their take-out menu. They also have a menu posted above the counter where one orders. After that, everyone can wait at a selected table; they will deliver it, or pick it up there.

For starters on our first visit we tried and adored their Spicy Beef Tendon appetizer. Felt the same about their Leek Dumplings. One can look and see other dishes on other tables or an order being packed for take-out. We did neither, heard it was a good place with good food, so we simply sat and waited for our huge order; we were a large group.

They serve many soups, noodles, and fried rice dishes, and a plethora of those under their 'Specialty heading'. A Lamb-pulled Noodle did not appear there, but we were told to order it, and are glad we did. Do not miss them as they are great as was our Pan Cumin Lamb, a Salted Egg Yolk with Shredded Potato dish, a Pumpkin Pudding, and great Steamed Pork Soup Dumplings. This eatery deserves lots of your time and many visits. That is something we have done twice more in rapid succession when in that area.



Portions are large and do not look fancy; their tastes make up for this shortfall. Some are very special as is their Mouth Watering Chicken in Hot Sauce, the Stir Fired Green

Bean Leaves (their spelling), the Hot Spicy Jumbo Shrimp with Red Pepper, even the bland Mushrooms with Shrimp and Crab Meat Tofu. On two visits, we need to still get back there to taste many other things not yet tried.

A plus needing touting, almost half the dishes are less than ten dollars, many noodle and rice ones eight bucks. The beef and lamb dishes are the most expensive as are the jumbo shrimp ones, but every one of these is worth it.

Their menu says "card suggestion \$25." Once we did stop alone and ordered one dish and rice, and did pay by credit card. No one said anything about a minimum credit card charge; they did put it on our credit card and they did charge that little, added no fee, smiled, and they said thank you. It is very near Hofstra University, their clientele includes lots of students, that seems OK, and when I went there, would have eaten their often had they existed then.

Would have loved ordering what looks like a fine Spicy Hot Pot, and something they call: Mao Dish. It looks like Mapo Doufu, but is not as good because it is not piquant enough. On a future visit we need to try many other selections, because many of the ones we tasted were very good. We plan to return soon and often, and get to their other Grain House, too, in Uniondale. Students attending this university and those working nearby are lucky. We wonder if they realize it? (JMN)

TEA: KNOWLEDGE, TYPES, AND TASTES

Tea comes from one plant, *Camellia sinensis*. Many primitive tea trees are found in China, most in the Yunnan Province; and we did read that one of the largest has a diameter of almost four feet. It is about one hundred twenty feet tall and about seventeen hundred years old. It may not be the oldest, tallest, or the one with the largest trunk diameter. It was found on the slope of Mount Nannuo. There may be an even bigger and older one in Jinggu County, but how big or where we do not know as we lost the article mentioning it.



A classic tea pot

Yunnan is probably where the world's first tea trees originated. Most tea sold and consumed in ancient times did grow there and on similar trees. Nowadays, tea grows on bushes as they are pruned to be easy to pick its leaves more easily than they did from these huge trees. Tea leaves are also smaller as they are picked several times a year. The old wild tea trees had larger leaves and were picked less often. Nowadays, tea from these smaller bushes is consumed more often. This may be because more people worldwide drink tea as it is the world's most popular beverage after water, and the world's population is larger than ever so more people drink more tea than ever before.

The Tea Research Institute of the Yunnan Academy of Agricultural Sciences is outside the town of Menghai. There, they do lots of research about this plant and its beverage. Visiting there is a great experience as one learns about where tea originated, what tea trees and bushes are available and where, and so much more. We read there that are three hundred and eighty different teas in Yunnan and throughout China, all coming from one species.

Though it sounds like an oxymoron, the oldest living trees are in the 'virgin' forest of Dahei Mountain. The Blang are believed to be the first cultivators of tea, and they still live in the Village of Hesong where they love their special tea made sour. They did use big mature leaves that they steamed first, then dried, then tightly packed in old bamboo tubes. These, they buried in the ground for several months to two years.

Records in Xiangming and Yiwu, two districts of Mengla County, did produce tea in large quantities twelve hundred years ago, perhaps even earlier. Their

teas came from one of ten tea-producing mountains in this region. It did dominate the tea trade, and they frequented one of the more than thirty tea depots there. Tea horse caravans were loaded their tea daily during all picking seasons. So were other teas.

Some descendants of former tea merchants still live in this county. The Customs House where lots of their tea was sold no longer sells any. It was in use until near the end of the Qing Dynasty, and still stands today. In it is a stone tablet in its guild hall saying that a hundred and fifty years ago, there were tea merchants who refused to pay high taxes on teas sold there. We never knew the Boston Tea Party was not the first negative reaction against tea taxes.

People say that Prime Minister Zhuge Liang, a strategist living in the Jinou Mountains was one of the first to make tea with large tea leaves. He lived in the State of Shu during the Three Kingdoms period (220 - 280 CE), and is credited with pioneering tea drinking in this region.



Toucha pu-er tea

On his birthday, the 23rd day of the 7th lunar month, the Jinuo minority people remember and honor him by preparing tea as he did. They age then heat adding water to their tea leaves then heating them over braziers. Earlier, their tea was wrapped in *phrynium* leaves and put into bamboo sections then roasted over a fire. These days they put tea leaves into bamboo sections and boil them for a few minutes on his birthday. Actually, he did teach them to use tea leaves to cure hangovers by cooking them this way or adding salt and hot pepper to their tea leaves.

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TEA: KNOWLEDGE, TYPES, AND TASTES

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Pu-er tea does not usually come from this region and is a multi-fermented tea once only made with black tea leaves that the Chinese call red tea. They are referring to the color of the brew while black is the color of these dried leaves. The term pu-er today is not often used, because this fermented tea is more often simply called 'Yunnan Tea' whether compressed or loose. It is also now made with green or black tea leaves.



Old monks making tea

When processed, they are sun-dried or oven-heated, and these tea leaves change to very dark green. The Chinese still categorize their teas by the color of the brew. There are some tea leaves pressed when damp, others dried first. Most have many polyphenols and/or catechin components; and many say they improve the elasticity of the blood vessels of those who drink lots of tea. They also say this tea decreases blood pressure. This process is called oxidation and is said to improve the taste of the tea the longer it is oxidized. Tea made this way is also said to provide strong digestive and salivary functions when steamed; and the older it is, also the better these pu-er teas taste.

Pu-er tea is sold loose but earlier was always in *toucha* disks with their indentation on the under side (See this on page 32). Usually round, they can be square or as cakes, and some are known as *Jincha*. These are popular in Tibet where this tea is preferred as 'butter' tea.

Many think of tea only as a beverage, but in ancient China, it was used as an herb, a soup, as a vegetable, and as a beverage. A special ancient brew was called 'Lei' tea, and General Zhang Fei did inspect it in Wuling County giving it to those suffering from migraine headaches. He brewed that tea with fresh tea leaves, rice, ginger, and salt. He touted it that way to help them recover from migraine headaches. Some did add cooked peanuts, sesame seeds, and pepper, and they liked it even more when it did a better job of curing these migraines.

If you visit a Tibetan home and are offered buttered tea or get to order some in a restaurant, do watch them break up the brick tea and mix it with salt, butter, and sometimes with spices. Then they filter out the tea leaves, and beat the liquid before serving it.



Tea bricks

Before drinking this tea, we saw one chap flick off drops of this tea three times. We were told he was paying his respects to the Heavenly God, the Earth God, and the Dragon God. He then drank it and we were told it would help him resist the cold and dampness; even build up his immunity.

After Princess Wen Cheng married Tibetan King Songstan Gambo, it did help his digestion, so people said it was a good source of vitamins missing from the diet, so she convinced him and they did drink it several times a day.

Drinking different teas with the Chinese, one learns how the Han and how their minority neighbors drink tea. Each Chinese ethnic minority nationality drinks tea differently; and they use different teas in different regions. Only Tibetans drink buttered tea. The Blang drink sour tea, most others drink their own special teas; and the Bai enjoy theirs as three course tea.

According to historical documents, tea caravans used some fifty thousand horses each year to carry tea to different regions of China. While no caravan had thousands of horses, there were thousands of caravans transporting tea every year. Some had only a couple of horses, many had a hundred, even three to five hundred with packs of tea saddled to their sides. When it rained that tea could get wet, if it was exceptionally hot, it might dry-fry, etc.

All tea did arrive at its destinations in various ways. Many caravans had arduous journeys, their water or food might run out or get stolen, or they experienced other difficulties. Most caravans had problems one time or another, particularly on nights they did not bed down in a caravanserai.

Some routes had government monopolies that did control the tea trade. Some experienced hazardous journeys, some were lucky and had no problems. One caravan, a Ming Imperial Court did prohibit their moving tea shrubs and exchanging tea seeds as they did not want individuals or groups to grow or sell tea. They wanted it all for themselves. Today, tea is traded freely, in earlier times it was not.

In Mojiang on an ancient caravanserai street in their town, they sold Yenzhen Tea, a local specialty. These leaves

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TEA: KNOWLEDGE, TYPES, AND TASTES

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were rolled tightly, brewed in hot water, and enjoyed sweet. They also sold shellac, but what that relationship was or why we know not. Here, Hani women wore special head gear, had leggings and belts embroidered with floral designs, and traded them and tea often. Some traded it for fast food or fast horses.

In Kunming, a cultural center in the Yunnan Province, there were two main highways selling tea for these fast horses. On Stone Street, there was a well-polished road where everyone did slip and slide when it rained. In a tiny town in Tonghai was a large Mongolian community that had their tea their way. Here, these men were probably offspring of soldiers once garrisoned here, so they did enjoy strong tea made with big tea leaves, and they had cubes of sugar between their teeth. This reminded me of my grandma who always had her tea with one or more sugar cubes in her teeth. She was not Chinese nor Mongolian, she was Polish.

The Dai, Hani, and the Jingpo had Bamboo Tea steamed, sun-dried, sealed, and cooked in bamboo. Some had Rose Tea fried with nuts, soybeans, sesame seeds, popcorn, and rose petals. It was fried until dark brown. Tea in China is consumed by all fifty-five minority groups, and in more than one hundred sixty other countries, and on five continents.

Tea as a beverage is loved by many folk world-wide. It is loved in high and dry regions, it helps increase saliva and it quenches thirst. It stimulates and relieves tiredness, and many Chinese, drink thirty or more cups a day as some Tibetans do. Mongolians drink milk tea with toasted rice in it, some drink it only once a day, others do so a dozen times every day. Some have ceremonial ways to drink tea.

How do you drink or eat your tea? Below are some recipes to use tea. Most are popular among the Chinese. During the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 CE), some rulers did collect tea taxes, some dumped tea because of a tea tax. We know of no tea tax today; do you?

During the Ming Dynasty (1368 - 1644 CE) people had to pay a tea toll when transporting it. In some times, merchants had to pay or carry 'toll coupons'. If they did not, they did receive severe penalties including beheading if they did not. Tea rules, tea types, tea tolls, and tea penalties did exist all over China. That country is the largest tea-consuming nation in the world. We hope you will enjoy your tea in as many ways and as often as many Chinese do. In the meantime, enjoy some of the Chinese tea recipes that follow.

SPICED TEA EGGS

Ingredients:

18 eggs,
¾ cup black tea leaves
4 pieces stick cinnamon
8 star anise
7 Tablespoons dark soy sauce
2 Tablespoons coarse salt
1 Tablespoon granulated sugar

Preparation:

1. Put eggs in pot of cold water, slowly bring the water to the boil, reduce the heat, and simmer for fifteen minutes, then let them cool for an hour. Now drain them, and lightly roll them one by one on a hard surface cracking the shells, not breaking nor peeling them.
2. Now add water to cover the cracked eggs, and add the tea leaves, cinnamon, star anise, soy sauce, salt, and the sugar, and slowly bring this to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer, and cover the pot. Simmer for two hours, then discard the water and let the eggs cool, then refrigerate. When cold and ready to serve, peel, and discard the shells. Now cut in four to six pieces per egg, and serve.

SPARE RIBS IN TEA

Ingredients:

3 Tablespoons jasmine tea leaves in a big loose tea bag or loosely knotted in cheese cloth.
1 pound spare ribs, cut apart, then blanched for three minutes, then discard the water, and chop the ribs into one-inch pieces
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
1 Tablespoon minced ginger
1 scallion, minced
3 Tablespoons thin soy sauce
1 Tablespoon Chinese rice wine
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1 Tablespoon Sichuan chili oil
1 cup glutinous rice, steamed, optional

Preparation:

1. Mix tea leaves with one cup boiling water, and let steep for ten minutes.
2. Heat wok or heavy pan, add oil, ginger, and scallion pieces and stir-fry for one minute, then add the spare ribs and stir-fry for five minutes, then reduce the heat, add the soy sauce, wine, and the tea bag or knotted cheese cloth with the tea leaves, and simmer for fifteen minutes or until meat is cooked through.
3. Add the chili oil, stir well, and serve; with the rice, if desired.

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ON MANY MENUS*continued from page 36***PORK BELLY, RICE NOODLES,
AND JASMINE TEA****Ingredients:**

2 - 3 ounces dry wide mung bean noodles
 ½ pound belly pork, blanched for three minutes, water discarded, then cut into thick slices, each then cut into one-inch pieces
 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil
 3 Tablespoons jasmine tea, soaked in boiling water for ten minutes, then drain reserving the softened tea leaves
 3 scallions, each cut in one-inch pieces
 5 slices fresh ginger
 3 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
 1 teaspoon coarse salt
 1 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
 1 Tablespoon chili oil

Preparation:

1. Soak mung bean noodles until soft, then simmer them for ten minutes, drain, and cut them into two-inch pieces, and mix them with half the vegetable oil, and set them aside.
 2. Cover pork with cold water, bring to the boil, reduce the heat, soaked jasmine tea leaves and simmer for half an hour or until belly pork is cooked through.
 3. Heat a wok or fry pan, add the rest of the vegetable oil, and stir-fry the scallions and ginger for one minute, then add the salt, rice wine, and sugar and stir well, then return the belly pork pieces to the wok or fry pan and stir-fry them for five minutes, then add the rice noodles and stir-fry everything for ten more minutes, then serve.

TEA-SMOKED BEEF**Ingredients:**

4 pounds short ribs, bones removed, the meat of each one cut in half
 2 Tablespoons cornstarch or potato starch
 vegetable oil spray
 5 cloves garlic, peeled and lightly smashed
 8 slices fresh ginger
 3 scallions, coarsely minced
 ½ cup peeled pumpkin cut into one-inch chunks
 4 teaspoons jasmine tea leaves
 ¼ cup brown sugar
 ¼ cup cooked rice
 3 Tablespoons dark soy sauce
 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
 2 Tablespoons Chinese rice vinegar
 2 Tablespoons crushed rock sugar
 ¼ cup Chinese rice wine
 1 cardamon seed pod, lightly crushed
 2 squares fermented red rice, mashed

Preparation:

1. Mix rib meat and the corn or potato starch and set aside for ten minutes.
 2. Spray some vegetable oil on a wok or large fry pan, and heat, then add the meat and stir-fry for two minutes or until golden brown, and then put the meat on a clean plate.
 3. Add the short rib meat, garlic, ginger, and scallion pieces for one minute, then set aside for one to two minutes, then add the meat and six cups of water, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for one hour, then transfer to a bowl and allow to cool.
 4. In a different pot, simmer the soy sauce, tomato paste, and rice vinegar with the rock sugar, rice wine, the cardamon pod, and the mashed fermented rice squares for half an hour.
 5. Then rinse the wok and dry it, and line it with aluminum foil, add the sugar, steamed rice, and the tea leaves on top of the foil, heat this mixture until it starts to smoke, then place the meat on the rack and cover the pan, reduce the heat and smoke for ten minutes, then remove the duck from there, and serve.

CAMPHOR TEA DUCK**Ingredients:**

1 whole duck, feet removed, head left on
 ¼ teaspoon pink Himalayan salt
 3 Tablespoons toasted ground Sichuan peppercorns
 3 Tablespoons Chinese rice wine
 3 scallions, cut into one-inch pieces
 10 slices fresh ginger
 ½ cup sawdust or ¼ cup ground tea leaves
 3 Tablespoons brown sugar
 1 teaspoon sesame oil
 ½ cup Chinese bean sauce
 1 cup vegetable oil

Preparation:

1. A day or two before beginning to cook, dry the duck inside and out, and press down on its breast bone to crack its ribs; and then rub outside and inside with a mixture of the Himalayan pink salt, peppercorns, and rice wine, and refrigerate over night or as much as for two days, lightly covered, with plastic wrap. Turn the duck over several times during this time.
 2. Prepare a smoker out of doors, put tea leaves and sugar in its small pan under the duck at the bottom of the smoker, turn on the heat, and smoke the duck, breast side up, for half an hour, then turn off the heat and let the duck rest for half an hour.
 3. Next, steam the duck over boiling water, breast side down, for one hour, basting it every fifteen minutes. Now remove it from the steamer and allow it to cool. Reserve all the juices, and after one hour, dry it with paper towels.
 4. Prepare the sauce mixing the sesame oil, bean sauce, and soy sauce and heat this in a wok, then pour

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it over the duck catching and reserving any remains.
 5. Now chop the duck wings and legs in half, and chop the duck into one- to two-inch pieces.
 6. Heat the oil, and fry the duck pieces until lightly browned, Do this in batches, and when each batch is browned, put it on paper towels to absorb any excess oil. Serve while still hot.

**TEA-FLAVORED
QUAIL EGGS****Ingredients:**

30 quail eggs
 3 Tablespoons green tea leaves
 3 slices fresh ginger
 3 scallions, knotted
 1 Tablespoon Sichuan peppercorns
 1 piece tangerine peel
 1 Tablespoon fennel seeds
 1 Tablespoons crushed rock sugar
 5 Tablespoons dark soy sauce
 2 Tablespoons thin soy sauce
 5 Tablespoons mao tai or another Chinese liquor

Preparation:

1. Simmer the quail eggs for five minutes, then let them cool, and gently roll and crack the shells on a hard surface, do not peel them yet.
 2. Now pour boiling water into a medium pot, add the tea leaves, ginger, scallion knots, Sichuan peppercorns, fennel seeds, sugar, and both soy sauces, and the Chinese liquor, and simmer then covered in a large pot so they are completely covered, and refrigerate one day or up to a week; then peel them, cut each one in half, and serve at room temperature.

**SHRIMP AND
DRAGON WELL TEA****Ingredients:**

1 pound fresh shrimp, shells left on, veins discarded
 1 teaspoon coarse salt
 1 egg white
 3 Tablespoons potato starch
 5 Teaspoons Dragon Well tea leaves
 1 cup and 2 Tablespoons Vegetable oil, separated
 3 Tablespoons Shao Xing wine
 1 Tablespoon cornstarch mixed with the same amount of cold water
 Red rice wine, optional, for dipping

Preparation:

1. Mix shrimp with salt and egg white, then add the potato starch and chill for two or three hours in the refrigerator.
 2. Put tea leaves in a bowl with one-quarter cup boiling water and brew for two or three minutes, then strain out and reserve the tea leaves.

3. Heat a wok or pot, add the two tablespoons of oil, add the shrimp and stir until they separate, then add the rest of the oil, keep the temperature low and stir until they are separated more, then remove them, add the tea leaves, then the cornstarch mixture, and the brewed tea, stir until shrimp are coated, then serve them.

**APRICOT KERNELS,
TEA, AND EGG WHITES****Ingredients:**

1 cup apricot kernels, soaked until soft, then drained and blended
 1 Tablespoon jasmine tea leaves. Soaked until soft
 3 egg whites. Beaten until fluffy but not stiff
 2 Tablespoons rock sugar, crushed

Preparation:

1. Put apricot kernels into a blender with four cups of cold water, and blend until smooth, then pour this apricot-kernel-liquid through cheese cloth set over a bowl and drain saving the liquid and discarding the ground kernels.
 2. Heat the apricot-kernel-liquid in a pot over medium heat, add the crushed rock sugar, then slowly add the beaten egg whites and serve hot, tepid, or at room temperature immediately after adding them.

**GREEN TEA AND
WATER CHESTNUT DESSERT****Ingredients:**

2 Tablespoons cornstarch, divided in three parts
 1 cup vegetable oil
 20 peeled cooked water chestnuts chopped very coarsely or cut into thin pieces
 3 Tablespoons confectioners sugar

Preparation:

1. Put tea leaves in one cup very hot water and steep for five minutes, then drain the tea leaves on paper towels and mix with one-third (or two teaspoons) of the cornstarch.
 2. Heat the oil in a wok or a deep sauce pan until a square of bread brown in a minute or two, and deep fries in a half a minute, and dry the tea leaves for half a minute, and remove them quickly with a slotted spoon to paper towels. Do not let them burn.
 3. Mix water chestnuts with the rest (four teaspoons) of the corn starch, make sure the oil is reheated and fry the water chestnuts for two minutes until they are light brown in color, then remove them with the slotted spoon to other paper towels and drain them.
 4. Put the tea leaves in the center of a platter, and dust them with the sugar, and put the fried water chestnuts around them, and mix the tea leaves and the water chestnuts just when ready to serve them.

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