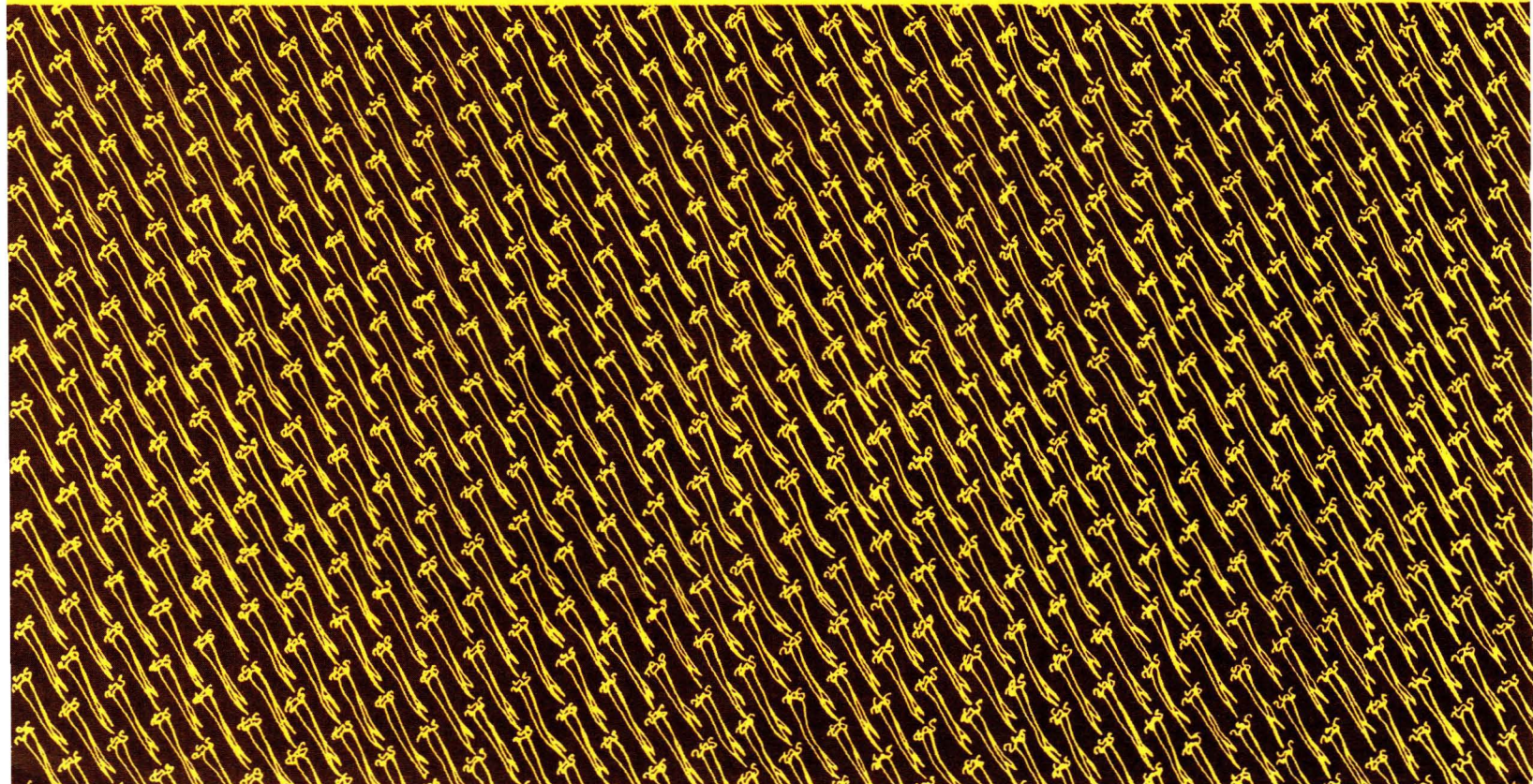
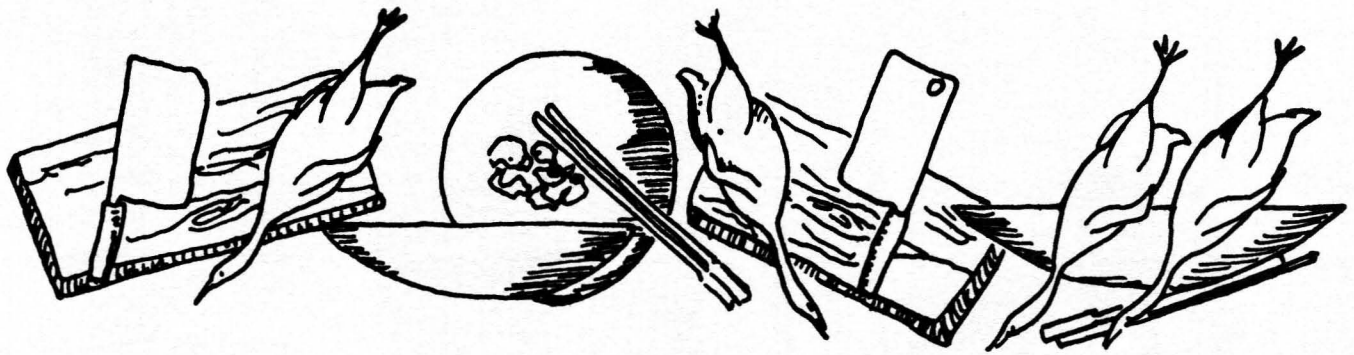


# ABOUT CHINESE FOODS

KATHRYN J. ORR  
*Foods and Nutrition Specialist*

HELEN C. GASCON  
*Extension Home Economist*





LEASURE IN food has been part of the Chinese culture for centuries. Until the twentieth century, there were no recorded recipes of the Chinese cuisine, and then only in Western countries. In China, cooking is done by feel and by taste, and its secrets are passed on from one generation to another. Since it is the method of cooking that is basic, rather than the ingredients used, most Chinese dishes can be cooked with foodstuffs we use in America every day of the year.

The differences between Chinese and Western cooking are many. Among the most noticeable is that in Chinese cooking, the bite-sized pieces of meat and vegetables are seasoned while cooking; but in Western cooking, the meat and vegetables are cut into larger pieces or left whole. Pepper and salt are frequently added at the table.

Another difference between the Chinese and Western modes of cooking is that in Chinese dishes the meat and vegetables are cooked together, thus allowing a small amount of meat to go a long way. In Western cooking, with some exceptions such as stews and casserole dishes, the meat and vegetables are cooked separately but eaten together.

Communication in China, or rather the lack of it, put its stamp on the cooking of the people. In general, five distinct types of cuisine developed through the centuries, those of Canton, Fukien, Shantung, Honan, and Szechuan. The

Cantonese school of cooking is the best known outside China, because the Cantonese people were the travelers, the emigrants, who came to the Western world. With wealth and leisure a cuisine characterized by sautéing, roasting, and grilling was developed. Fried rice and fried noodles are specialties of this school.

The Fukien people were the sailors of China and settled in Thailand, Malaya, and Southeast Asia. This cuisine is characterized by good all-around cooking, although many complain that too many soupy dishes are included in its repertoire. A red fermented bean sauce is a specialty of Foochow and the best soy sauce used to be produced in this part of the country.

Shantung produced philosophers and good cooking! As Peking was nearby, many people of Shantung migrated to the big city and took their cooking with them. This food is lighter than that of the South. Much is cooked in wine sauce and very little sautéing is done. The most famous dish from this region is Peking Duck.

Honan was once the capital of China, so good cooking was demanded by the court. It is the home of the sweet-and-sour dishes. The carp from the Yellow River is famous.

Until Chungking became a temporary capital, Szechuan in the far west had been left to its own devices. Its summers are terribly hot, and like all people who live in hot climates, the Szechuanese developed a hot, very highly-

seasoned cuisine. Chicken with hot peppers is a good example.

Five main methods of preparing food in the Chinese manner are common to all five schools: they are sautéing, red cooking (a kind of braising or stewing with soy sauce, known as *hung shao* in Chinese), deep frying, steaming and roasting, and barbecuing or grilling.

Chinese cooking utensils deserve some attention. Old Chinese stoves were built of concrete, tile, and brick. They were conical with an opening on top. Similar stoves of a portable type known as "chatties" were devised for the poorer people.

Today, gas is more popular than electricity for Chinese cooking because the flame can be controlled instantly. In Hawaii, a gas stove can be adjusted to a typical "Chinese flame."

Upon entering a Chinese kitchen, the first eye-catcher is the cooking utensil known as a *wok* (called *kuo* in China). It is a cooking pan with rounded bottom which allows for even heat and has no corners to clean! You can use it for sautéing, cooking in small or large amounts of water, for deep frying, and as the base for a steamer. A vegetable cutting knife similar to a cleaver is indispensable in a Chinese kitchen. With a sharp one, you can chop bones, scale fish, and mince meat. The chopping block is the most picturesque thing in a Chinese kitchen. It is usually 16 to 18 inches in diameter. Additional tools would be a pancake-like turner, wooden dippers for water and liquids, China spoons, and chopsticks for stirring and tasting. Colanders and sieves are useful, too.

Chopsticks are the utensils one uses for eating. They are made of silver, ivory, bamboo, wood, or plastic; are about 10 inches long and about the thickness of a pencil. These two pieces of wood take the place of egg beaters, cooking forks, mixing spoons, draining spoons, and wire whisks. "Chopsticks" in Chinese

means "quick little ones." "Quick" stems from pidgin English meaning "chop." Thus the name "chopsticks" came into being.

The dining table for a Chinese meal is generally round, because it permits placing each diner at the same distance from the center where the food is placed and affords a time of relaxation for pleasant conversation.

There are two distinct styles of serving Chinese menus—the family style and the party style. The dishes may be the same for either. At a family-style meal the main dishes and soup are placed in the middle of the table and a bowl of rice served to each diner. Each person serves himself a little food at a time. The dishes are never passed. At a party-style meal, each course is placed on the table one at a time and passed to the guests. Toasts may be offered by the host between courses, or a guest may toast the host and thank him for his party. When the meal comes to an end, it is the guest of honor who makes the first move. The other guests slowly follow suit, and the host leaves the table last.

#### CHINESE FOODS MENU

**SAI YONG CHOY TONG**  
(Watercress Abalone Pork Soup)

**WUT GAI**  
(Pot Roast Chicken)

**NGO YUK FAN KAY**  
(Beef Tomato)

**GEE YUK SIN CHOY**  
(Pork with Sour Cabbage)

**FAN**  
(Rice)

**CHA**  
(Tea)

**ALMOND COOKIE**

**SAI YONG CHOY TONG**  
(Watercress Abalone Pork Soup)

6 servings

1 bunch or 1 pound watercress	½ pound lean pork, sliced ⅛-inch thick
2 tablespoons oil	5 cups water
Salt to taste	1 can abalone, cut in thin slices
½ teaspoon monosodium glutamate	

Wash watercress, discard yellow or damaged portions. Pick off leaves and cut stems into 2-inch lengths. Heat oil, add salt and monosodium glutamate, and sauté pork. When slightly brown, add water and bring to boil. Add watercress stems and cook 5 more minutes. Remove from heat, add abalone and watercress leaves, and serve.

**WUT GAI**  
(Pot Roast Chicken)

4 to 6 servings

1 2-or-3-pound whole frying chicken	2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup soy sauce	Salt and pepper to taste
2 cloves of garlic, crushed	¼ cup oil
1 small piece (walnut size) fresh ginger, crushed	1 sprig Chinese parsley, chopped (fresh coriander)
½ teaspoon monosodium glutamate	2 green onions, cut in 2-inch strips

Marinate chicken in soy sauce mixture prepared from next six ingredients 1 hour before cooking, turning occasionally. Remove chicken and reserve sauce. Heat oil in a large pot and brown chicken on all sides. Pour reserved sauce over chicken and simmer for 45 minutes. Remove chicken and cut in serving pieces. Pour remainder of sauce over chicken to serve. Top with chopped parsley and green onions.

**NGO YUK FAN KAY**  
(Beef Tomato)

6 servings

1 pound of sirloin tip, sliced ⅛-inch thick	2 stalks of celery, sliced
2 teaspoons cornstarch	Oil for frying
3 tablespoons soy sauce	2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon sugar	¼ cup cold water
Pinch of salt	1 teaspoon sugar
Dash or two of pepper	½ teaspoon monosodium glutamate
½ teaspoon monosodium glutamate	Salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons oil	3 or 4 tomatoes, cut into wedges
1 clove garlic, chopped fine (optional)	3 or 4 sprigs of green onions, cut into 2-inch strips
1 round onion, sliced	
2 green peppers, sliced	

Marinate sliced sirloin tip in sauce made from next seven ingredients. Let stand 10 to 15 minutes. If garlic is used, brown in small amount of oil in frying pan. Add marinated beef and fry very lightly until hot and meat changes color. Push meat to outer edge of pan and add a little more oil. Cook round onion, green peppers, and celery for 5 minutes. Do NOT overcook these vegetables.

Make a paste of 2 teaspoons cornstarch and ¼ cup cold water. Stir in next three ingredients. Add to beef and vegetables and stir until sauce clears. Add tomatoes and green onions last. Remove from heat and serve.



**GEE YUK SIN CHOY**  
(Pork with Sour Cabbage)

6 servings

3/4 pound pork, sliced 1/8-inch thick, bite size	2 teaspoons sugar
Oil for frying	2 tablespoons vinegar
1 stalk celery, sliced	1/2 teaspoon monosodium glutamate
1 round onion, sliced	Salt and pepper to taste
1 pound sour cabbage,* sliced	2 teaspoons cornstarch
2 tablespoons soy sauce	1/4 cup water

Fry pork in oil until tender. Add celery and onion. Cook for a few minutes and add next six ingredients. Make a paste of 2 teaspoons of cornstarch in 1/4 cup water and add to cabbage mixture. Cook until sauce is clear and serve.

**\*SOUR CABBAGE**  
(Prepare day before use)

Yield: 1 quart

2 quarts boiled and cooled water	Water to cover cabbage
1 tablespoon vinegar	2 large mustard cabbage or 1 large solid head cabbage
1/2 cup rock or Hawaiian salt	2 tablespoons cooked rice

Mix boiled and cooled water, vinegar, and salt for vinegar brine. Wash cabbage and set aside to drain. In a large pot bring a large amount of water to a rolling boil; remove from heat and add cabbage. Let stand until cabbage turns a bright green. Drain and cool. Add cabbage to vinegar brine.

**FOR USE IN 24 HOURS:**

Add 2 tablespoons cooked rice to cabbage mixture. Top with a weight to keep cabbage submerged in brine. Let stand at room temperature to ferment. Drain off liquid and use cabbage.

**FOR GENERAL USE:**

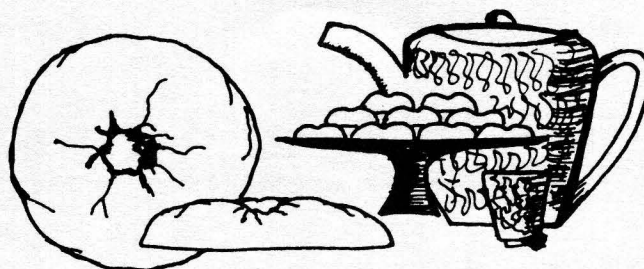
Omit rice and let cabbage stand in brine 3 to 4 days to ferment. Remove fermented cabbage from liquid and place in jars or plastic containers. Store in refrigerator until used.

**ALMOND COOKIES**

4 1/2 dozen

3 cups flour	1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon soda	1 1/3 cups shortening
1/2 teaspoon salt	Blanched almonds or red coloring
1 large egg	
1 teaspoon almond extract	

Sift flour, soda, and salt together. Beat egg with fork until lemon-colored and add almond extract. Cream sugar and shortening well, add egg, and mix thoroughly. Add sifted dry ingredients gradually. Roll into balls about 1 inch in diameter and place an inch apart on greased cookie sheet. Press thumb gently in center top of each ball. Fill depression with half a blanched almond, or touch it with the end of a chopstick dipped in red coloring. Bake 20 minutes at 350°F. For celebrations, a drop of red coloring put in the center of each cookie signifies joy and good fortune.



**REFERENCES**

1. *The Art of Chinese Cooking*. Mimie Ouei. Random House, 1960.
2. *Fun with Chinese Recipes*. Myrtle Lum Young. Vantage Press, Inc., 1958.
3. *Mary Sia's Chinese Cookbook*. University of Hawaii Press, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1959.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Director and Interim Dean Noel P. Kefford, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822. An Equal Opportunity Employer providing programs and services to the Citizens of Hawaii without regard to race, color, national origin or sex.

HEC 341—Reprinted 0781/3M