FOOD CULTURES IN AMERICA

Asian American Food Culture

ALICE McLEAN

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Ken Albala, General Editor

African American Food Culture
William Frank Mitchell

Asian American Food Culture
Alice L. McLean

Latino Food Culture
Zilkia Janer

Jewish American Food Culture
Jonathan Deutsch and Rachel D. Saks

Regional American Food Culture
Lucy M. Long

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An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC
Santa Barbara, California • Denver, Colorado

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

McLean, Alice L.
Asian American food culture / Alice L. McLean.
pages cm (food cultures in America)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-313-34144-1 (hardback) — ISBN 978-1-56720-690-6
1. Food habits—Social aspects—United States. 2. Food—Social aspects—United States. 3. Cooking, Asian—Social aspects. 4. Asian Americans—Ethnic identity. 5. Asian Americans—Social life and customs. I. Title.
GT2853.U5M395 2015
394.1'20973—dc23 2014047824

ISBN: 978-0-313-34144-1
EISBN: 978-1-56720-690-6

19 18 17 16 15 1 2 3 4 5

This book is also available on the World Wide Web as an eBook.
Visit www.abc-clio.com for details.

Greenwood
An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC

ABC-CLIO, LLC
130 Cremona Drive, P.O. Box 1911
Santa Barbara, California 93116-1911

This book is printed on acid-free paper ♾

Manufactured in the United States of America

For my father who taught me the pleasures of eating, instilled in me a passion for cooking, and urged me to be ever curiouser and curiouser.

And for Kella, whose love of culinary adventure and hunger for all things edible have proven invaluable sustenance, and for her Auntie Josie, who has nourished me with dish after delectable dish of Filipino savories.

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Series Foreword

If you think of iconic and quintessentially American foods, those with which we are most familiar, there are scarcely any truly native to North America. Our hot dogs are an adaptation of sausages from Frankfurt and Vienna; our hamburgers are another Germanic import reconfigured. Ketchup is an invention of Southeast Asia, although it is based on the tomato, which comes from South America. Pizza is a variant on a Neapolitan dish. Colas are derived from an African nut. Our beloved peanuts are a South American plant brought to Africa and from there to the U.S. South. Our french fries are an Andean tuber, cooked with a European technique. Even our quintessentially American apple pie is made from a fruit native to what is today Kazakhstan.

When I poll my students about their favorite foods at the start of every food class I teach, inevitably included are tacos, bagels, sushi, pasta, fried chicken—most of which can be found easily at fast-food outlets a few blocks from campus. In a word, American food culture is, and always has been, profoundly globally oriented. This, of course, has been the direct result of immigration, from the time of earliest settlement by Spanish, English, French, and Dutch to slaves brought by force from Africa, to later arrival by Germans, Italians, Eastern Europeans (including Jews), and Asians, and up until now with the newest immigrants from Latin America and elsewhere.

Although Americans have willingly adopted the foods of newcomers, we never became a melting pot for these various cultures. So-called ethnic cuisines naturally changed on foreign soil, adapting to new ingredients and popular taste—but at heart they remain clear and proud descendants of their respective countries. Their origins are also readily recognized by Americans;

we are all perfectly familiar with the repertoire of Mexican, Chinese, and Italian restaurants, and increasingly now Thai, Japanese, and Salvadoran, to name a few. Eating out at such restaurants is a hallmark of mainstream American culture, and despite the spontaneous or contrived fusion of culinary styles, each retains its unique identity.

This series is designed as an introduction to the major food cultures of the United States—Jewish American, Hispanic, Asian American, African American, and regional. Each volume delves deeply into the history and development of a distinct ethnic or regional cuisine. The volumes further explore these cuisines through their major ingredients, who is cooking and how at home, the structure of mealtime and daily rituals surrounding food, and the typical meals and how they are served, which can be dramatically different from popular versions. In addition, chapters cover eating out, holidays, and special occasions, as well as the influence of religion, and the effect of the diet on health and nutrition. Recipes are also included. Each volume offers valuable features, including a timeline, glossary, and index, making each a convenient reference work for research.

This series is important for our understanding of ourselves on several levels. Food is central to how we define ourselves, so in a sense this series not only recounts how recipes and foodways serve as distinct reminders of ethnic identity, binding families and communities together through shared experiences but it also describes who we have all become, as each food culture has become an indispensable part of our collective identity as Americans.

Ken Albala
University of the Pacific

Introduction

Since the mid-19th century Asian immigrants to the United States have brought their influences to bear on American culture, yielding a rich, varied, and nuanced culinary landscape. Asians not only introduced their culinary traditions to the United States but also played an invaluable role in pioneering the U.S. food system. Just a few of their monumental contributions include helping to establish the Gulf Coast shrimping and rice industries and working alongside Mexicans to develop California into a global agricultural powerhouse. Asian Americans likewise fought resolutely for labor rights, playing a foundational role in the movement for just treatment of food workers in the United States.

Despite their considerable contributions to the 19th- and early 20th-century U.S. economy, Asians were barred from immigrating to the United States by a series of laws beginning with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1883 and culminating with the National Origins Act in 1924, which banned Asian entry into the United States. Although exceptions would be made to the law, Asian immigration would not regain substantial momentum until the Immigration Act repealed national origin quotas in 1965. Since the repeal, over 18 million Asians have immigrated to the United States. These numbers have been bolstered by the United States' involvement in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars as well as by the rise of globalization.

The Asian American population grew from under 1 million in 1960 to an estimated 19.4 million in 2013. Three-quarters of the Asian American population in 2012 was foreign-born, a trend that ensures that Asian cuisines will continue to invigorate and enrich the U.S. food culture. Globalization

likewise means that increasing numbers of foreign-born Asian Americans are traveling between their homeland and the United States. Many of these cosmopolitans are nurturing a transnational cross-pollination that dissolves and reconfigures culinary boundaries. Such East-West exchanges are likewise nurtured by the 2.6 million Asian Americans of mixed-race heritage.

Among the almost 20 million Asian Americans currently residing in the United States, six groups stand out for the large size of their populations—namely immigrants of Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese descent. Despite the popularity of Thai restaurants in the United States, many of which were opened as part of a promotional campaign launched by the Thai government, the Thai American population was under a quarter million according to the 2010 Census. By comparison, each of the six largest Asian immigrant groups boasts a population well over 1 million. As Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese cuisines were each heavily influenced by Chinese cuisine and less so by Indian, this project has set aside South Asian American food culture, a topic that deserves a book of its own. Instead it will focus intently on the five most populous immigrant groups from East and Southeast Asia.

In 1960, 6,000 Chinese restaurants dotted the landscape. Today, there are upwards of 40,000. Japanese restaurants number well over 10,000. The United States now boasts over 3,000 Vietnamese pho houses; as of 2007, Los Angeles alone was home to 600 Korean restaurants; and Philippines-based chains Max's, Goldilocks, and Jollibee have successfully expanded to the United States, where they have opened over 60 branches. Asian American restaurants range from high-end Chinese banquet halls and Japanese restaurants serving 16-course meals to food trucks and fast-food chains. Bakeries specializing in rice cakes, dessert soups, and other Asian confections abound as do noodle houses serving Japanese ramen, Chinese hand-pulled noodles, Korean cold and hot noodles, Vietnamese pho, and Filipino *pancit*. Sake bars and bubble tea cafés have begun popping up around the country, as have Asian-Mexican fusion food trucks serving such dishes as tacos loaded with Korean barbecued beef; Filipino burritos filled with chicken and pork adobo; pulled pork *bahn mi*; Japanese salmon sushi burritos; and kung pao chicken Chinese-Mexican tamales, nicknamed "chimales." Whereas the recent influx of Asian immigrants to the mainland United States has begun to alter the mainstream American culinary landscape in remarkable ways, Asian immigration to Hawaii has had an even longer and more profound influence, shaping the local diet into a unique hybrid of Asian, American, and native Hawaiian food cultures to yield such fusion dishes as poke, Spam musubi, and loco moco.

This book focuses on the historical trajectory that led to this remarkable point in Asian American food culture. Chapter 1 provides a brief synopsis of

Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and Vietnamese food cultures and traces the wars, conquests, and famines that led to mass migration from Asia to the United States. Divided into five main sections, each devoted to one country of origin and its immigrants, this chapter likewise charts the rise of Asian American food culture in the United States, beginning with the nation's first Chinese "chow chows" and storefronts that sold imported delicacies and ending with the successful campaign of Indochina war refugees to overturn the Texas legislation that banned the cultivation of water spinach—a staple vegetable in their traditional diet. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the major ingredients of the traditional Asian diet that are now found in the United States. It is compiled much as a dictionary would be, with foodstuffs organized according to the general category to which they belong, such as vegetables, meat, or grains.

Chapter 3 introduces Asian cooking philosophies and techniques, describes basic equipment, and examines the historical development of Asian American cookbooks in the United States. Chapter 4 addresses the rapid proliferation of Asian supermarket chains in the United States and explains their general layout and the categories of products they stock. The bulk of the chapter introduces the basic structure and content of traditional Asian American meals. Chapter 5 details the rise of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, and Vietnamese restaurants in the United States and discusses the contemporary dining options found in ethnic enclaves. The chapter closes with the rise of Asian Fusion and a few of its contemporary expressions, which range from Korean taco trucks and Asian Cajun restaurants to the menus of internationally renowned culinary avant-gardists such as Roy Yamaguchi and David Chang. Chapter 6 focuses on celebratory dining, providing an overview of typical festive foods eaten on key occasions. It also includes a handful of sample menus. Chapter 7, the final chapter, explores the use of food as medicine among Asian Americans, a practice that dates back to the mid-1800s with the arrival of the nation's first traditional Chinese herbalists. Collected at the end are recipes that reflect the diversity of the Asian American food culture, ranging from traditional Asian dishes to fusion foods—from dashi and radish kimchi to Korean tacos and Spam musubi.

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Chronology

1565–1898	The Philippine Islands are occupied by Spain.
1763	Filipinos settle in present-day Louisiana after jumping ship off a Spanish galleon. Known as Manilamen, these immigrants helped develop the first major shrimping businesses on the Gulf Coast.
1789	Chinese arrive in Hawaii.
1790	The U.S. Naturalization Act establishes that "free white persons" of "good moral character" can become American citizens. In 1878, California will rule that Chinese immigrants are ineligible for citizenship because they are neither white nor black.
1806	Eight Japanese sailors arrive in Hawaii aboard an American ship.
1830	Three Chinese appear on the U.S. Census.
1830s	Chinese establish sugar-making mills in Hawaii.
1843	An American ship rescues Manjiro Nakaham, also known as John Mung, who becomes the first recorded Japanese person to settle in the United States.
1849–1882	375,000 Chinese arrive in America. While the Gold Rush prompted the first large wave of immigrants, many others

	were recruited to build the nation's first transcontinental railroad. Most of the immigrants in this first wave hailed from the Fujian and Guangdong Provinces of China.
1850–1864	About 10 million are killed during China's Taiping Rebellion prompting many Chinese to leave their homeland.
1852–1900	Approximately 50,000 Chinese laborers arrive in Hawaii, many of them working as contract laborers on sugar plantations.
1860	California enacts special laws to tax Chinese fishermen and Chinese who work in fisheries.
1865	Railroad baron Charles Crocker hires 50 Chinese men to help construct the transcontinental railroad. At its peak, the railroad had 10,000 Chinese laborers on its payroll.
1869	The United States and China sign the Burlingame Treaty, which grants "free migration and immigration" to the Chinese. The treaty also grants Chinese immigrants to the United States the privileges awarded to citizens of the most-favored nations.
1875	The Bing cherry is developed on a farm in Oregon and named after the farm's Chinese foreman, Ah Bing.
	The Page Law is enacted. It forbids the immigration of Chinese, Japanese, and Mongolian contract laborers, prostitutes, and felons.
	The United States signs a treaty with Hawaii permitting sugar to be imported duty-free, initiating a boom in the Hawaiian sugar industry. Over the next 15 years, more than 50,000 Chinese and Japanese workers will be imported to work on the plantations.
1878	The Ninth Circuit Court of California denies Ah Yup the right to U.S. citizenship, ruling that Chinese immigrants are ineligible for citizenship because they are neither white nor black.
1880s	In the late 1800s, Chinese immigrants in Louisiana introduce drying platforms for shrimp thereby enabling the export of dried shrimp to China as well as to Chinatowns throughout the United States.

1882	President Chester Arthur signs the Chinese Exclusion Act, which bars the immigration of Chinese laborers for a 10-year period. It also forbids state or federal courts from granting U.S. citizenship to Chinese immigrants already residing in the country. The Exclusion Act would eventually be made permanent until its official repeal in 1943. Before the Act was repealed, the number of Chinese immigrants living in the United States declined by over 25 percent, dropping from 107,488 in 1890 to 77,504 in 1940.
1885	Serving as a representative of the Hawaiian government, American Robert Walker Irwin helped negotiate a treaty with Japan that enabled the immigration of Japanese laborers to Hawaii. Within a decade, 29,000 Japanese laborers had immigrated to Hawaii, where the majority are put to work on sugar plantations. The mass importation of Japanese workers to Hawaii helped to offset the labor shortage that resulted from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and would initiate Japanese migration to the United States.
1886	A wave of violence against Chinese immigrants begins, which results in murders throughout the American West and the expulsion of immigrants from cities throughout California as well as Tacoma and Seattle.
1888	The Scott Act bans Chinese laborers who travel outside of the United States from returning. The law devastates the Chinese fishing industry, which has developed along the West Coast; Chinese fishermen who travel further than three miles from the coast are legally barred reentry to the country.
1898	The Treaty of Paris marks an end to the Spanish-American War. Spain cedes the Philippines (along with Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Guam) to the United States.
	The United States annexes Hawaii.
1899–1901	Filipinos take up arms against American colonization, initiating the Philippine-American War.
1900	President William McKinley signs the Organic Act, which establishes a U.S. territorial government in Hawaii and gives U.S. citizenship to all Hawaiians. As a result, Chinese

	can no longer migrate to Hawaii and Japanese in Hawaii begin migrating to the mainland.
1900	Filipino families immigrate to Louisiana for work in the shrimping industry.
1903	The Oakland Noodle Company, founded by Japanese immigrant Jitsuji Aoki, begins to sell plain and egg noodles. By 1930, Oakland Noodle is manufacturing a ton of noodles a day, which are distributed throughout the United States.
	By 1903 in Hawaii, over 31,000 Japanese worked on sugar plantations as opposed to around 5,000 Chinese. To weaken the power of the Japanese workers, who frequently went on strike, the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association begins to hire Korean immigrants. By 1905, Koreans will have become the second largest ethnic group working on the plantations, numbering over 7,000, and the number of Japanese workers begins to decline.
1906	Many of San Francisco's municipal records are destroyed by the fires that sweep the city following a massive earthquake. With their immigration papers burned, some Chinese immigrants in the region begin to claim that they were born in the United States. After establishing themselves as U.S. citizens, these immigrants are allowed to bring their wives and children to the United States.
	The Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association begins to recruit Filipino laborers. By 1935, over 120,000 Filipinos will be working in Hawaii.
1907–1908	Japan agrees to the Gentlemen's Agreement with the United States, which stipulates that Japan will no longer issue passports to Japanese laborers who wish to enter the United States. The Agreement goes into full effect in 1908.
1910	Japanese farmers are growing 70 percent of the strawberries produced in California.
	Japanese and Korean picture brides begin to arrive.
	Angel Island is established off the San Francisco coast. Over the next 30 years it will process over 1,000,000 immigrants, the majority of these hail from China and Japan.

1910	According to the U.S. Census, 152,745 Japanese, 94,414 Chinese, 5,008 Koreans, and 2,767 Filipinos reside in the United States.
	George Shima, born Kinji Ushijima, becomes one of the nation's wealthiest Japanese immigrants, establishing himself as Potato King of the Sacramento Delta region. His potato farm will eventually cover 10,000 acres of land.
1911	*Chinese Cookery in the Home Kitchen* becomes the first Chinese cookbook written for an American audience. Authored by Jessie Louise Nolton, the recipes codify early 20th-century Chinese American cookery, with recipes for such dishes as "Chop Sooy," "Eggs Fo Yong," and Fried Rice.
1913	California becomes the first of 13 states to pass the Alien Land Law, which prohibits immigrants who are noneligible for U.S. citizenship from owning land or from leasing land longer than three years. In California, the act is targeted, in large part, against Japanese farmers who have enjoyed tremendous success in the state. Japanese, Chinese, and Korean farmers circumvent the law by claiming their U.S.-born children as owners.
1914	The *Chinese-Japanese Cook Book* is published. The first Japanese and, perhaps, the second Chinese cookbook written in English, it is coauthored by Sara Eaton Bosse and her sister Winnifred, children of a Chinese mother and English father.
1919	The Joy Young Restaurant opens in Birmingham, Alabama, becoming the best-known Chinese eatery in the South. The restaurant serves Cantonese food as well as Southern favorites, such as fried chicken and biscuits.
1920s & 30s	A chop suey craze sweeps the country. Women's magazines and cookbooks begin to print recipes for the dish. Jazz musician Louis Armstrong sings "Cornet Chop Suey," and the American artist Edward Hopper paints "Chop Suey."
1920	U.S. Census records 85,202 Chinese, 220,596 Japanese, and 6,181 Koreans living in the United States. It records 26,634 Filipinos living in the United States and Hawaii.

1921 Korean immigrants Kim Hyung-soon and Kim Ho establish a fruit wholesale company in the San Joaquin Valley. The Kim Brothers Company eventually expands to include orchards, nurseries, and fruit-packing sheds. During their many fruit breeding experiments, they cross a peach with a nectarine to invent a large yellow nectarine called Le Grand.

1922 Korean natives Ilhan New and Wally Smith begin growing bean sprouts, which they can and market under the *La Choy* brand.

1924 President Calvin Coolidge signs the Immigration Act, which bars aliens ineligible for citizenship from entering the United States. Since Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans were ineligible for U.S. citizenship, the law effectively bans their immigration.

1930s Don the Beachcomber, a Polynesian-themed bar, opens in Los Angeles to become one of Charlie Chaplin's favorite spots. Inspired by Don's tiki theme, Victor Bergeron opens Trader Vic's in Oakland. American soldiers who had been stationed in the South Pacific return home after World War II and spark a nationwide tiki craze that would last until the 1970s.

1930 The U.S. Census records 278,734 Japanese, 108,424 Filipinos, 102,159 Chinese, and 8,332 Koreans in the United States and Hawaii.

1934 The Tydings-McDuffie Act grants independence to the Philippines following a transitional period. As a result, Filipinos living in the United States and Hawaii are no longer American citizens. The Act limits Filipino immigration to 50 people per year.

1938 Chinese American Charlie Low opens the Forbidden City nightclub in San Francisco, which caters to non-Chinese clientele. The club offers Chinese- and American-style dinners as well as dancing shows and skits that feature all-Asian casts and showcases the "exoticism" of the East. Regardless of their ethnicity (Filipino, Japanese, Korean, or Chinese), the cast members are billed as Chinese.

1940 In California, Japanese farmers produce a large proportion of the state's fresh vegetables, including 67 percent of its

tomatoes, 44 percent of its onions, and 40 percent of its green peas.

1940 The U.S. Census records 285,115 Japanese, 106,334 Chinese, 98,535 Filipinos, and 8,568 Koreans living in the United States and Hawaii. The majority of the Japanese population was born in the United States. The imbalanced ratio of Chinese men to women has decreased to approximately 3 men to 1 woman as opposed to around 20 to 1 in 1890.

1942 In response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, around 110,000 people of Japanese descent are evacuated from their residences along the Pacific Coast. They are relocated to internment camps.

1943 President Franklin D. Roosevelt repeals the Chinese Exclusion Act. The War Brides Act allows Chinese American veterans to send for their families.

The U.S. government requires that all Japanese detainees over age 17 complete a loyalty questionnaire. One goal is to identify and register Nisei (the American-born children of foreign-born Japanese immigrants) men for the draft. Anyone refusing to sign the loyalty oath can be moved to a segregation center in Tule Lake, California.

1945 Japanese Americans are released from the internment camps.

How to Cook and Eat in Chinese, written by the Chinese physician Buwei Yang Chao, is published.

1946 On July 4, the Philippines is granted independence from the United States.

Filipinos are given the right to naturalization.

The Alien Chinese Wives of American Citizens Act enables male citizens who are ineligible for the draft to bring their wives to the United States.

1947 Italian American Jeno Paulucci founds Chun King, which markets canned and frozen chow mein and chop suey, both of which American soldiers had eaten in World War II Army mess halls.

1948	President Harry S. Truman signs the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act, which allows Japanese American war internees to file claims to recover financial losses.
	The U.S. Supreme Court lifts the racial restrictions that had barred Japanese Americans from obtaining commercial fishing licenses.
	California's ban on interracial marriage is lifted.
1950	The U.S. Census records 326,379 Japanese, 150,005 Chinese, 122,707 Filipinos, and 7,030 Koreans living in the United States.
	The United States enters the Korean War to help South Korea restore its border at the 38th parallel.
	The United States begins its involvement in the Vietnam War.
	Many U.S. soldiers marry Asian women, whom they meet while stationed at U.S. bases in Japan, Korea, and the Philippines. Throughout the 1950s, about 500 Korean women immigrate annually to the United States as military wives.
1951	The United States begins to grant political asylum to Chinese intellectuals and students who wish to flee their homeland following the Communist Revolution. Around 23,000 Chinese will be granted asylum.
1952	The California Supreme Court declares the alien land laws illegal.
1953	The Refugee Relief Act allows Chinese political refugees to achieve permanent resident status in the United States.
1958	The Joyce Chen Restaurant opens in Cambridge, Massachusetts, introducing New England to Mandarin and Shanghai cuisines.
1959	Responding to Jewish enthusiasm for Chinese cuisine, Bernstein-on-Essex becomes one of New York's first kosher-Chinese restaurants.
1960	The U.S. Census records 464,332 Japanese, 237,292 Chinese, 176,310 Filipinos, and 11,171 Koreans in the United States.

1965	President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Immigration Act, which abolishes the national origins quotas.
1967	Anti-miscegenation laws are declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.
1969	San Francisco State University and the University of California at Berkeley establish Asian American Studies programs. The University of California in Los Angeles establishes the Asian American Studies Center.
	The New York Times food critic Craig Claiborne awards Tsung Ting Wang's restaurant Shun Lee Dynasty four stars.
1970	The U.S. Census records 591,290 Japanese, 435,062 Chinese, 343,060 Filipinos, and 69,150 Koreans living in the United States.
1972	President Richard Nixon reopens diplomatic relations with China, making a monumental trip that symbolically marks the end of China's self-imposed isolation begun with the Cultural Revolution. Millions of Americans watched as Nixon is feted at a Chinese banquet in Beijing.
	The New York Times food critic Craig Claiborne and Chinese cookbook instructor Virginia Lee coauthor *The Chinese Cookbook*.
1973	The first Panda Express opens in Glendale, California. By 2014, the Chinese American–owned Panda Restaurant Group will have opened 1,700 stores to become one of the nation's most lucrative fast-food chains, earning 2 billion in sales in 2014 alone.
1975	The Vietnamese War creates a refugee crisis. President Gerald Ford grants asylum to 130,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees. Over the next 20 years 250,000 refugees from Laos will migrate to the United States, including 130,000 Hmong.
	The Refugee Cash Assistance Program provides three years of financial assistance to Southeast Asian immigrants.
1976	The Philippines-based bakery Goldilocks opens its first store in the United States. By 2014, 22 more U.S. stores will be opened.

1978 The "Yan Can Cook" television show is launched. The show's host, Martin Yan, immigrated to the United States from China. His show won the *James Beard Award* for best television cooking show in 1994 and for best television journalism in 1995. Yan has also authored 26 cookbooks.

1979 Within a three-year period, the United States will admit about 450,000 Southeast Asians. Most settle in California and Texas.

1980 The 1980s sees a rising interest in Japanese cuisine.

The U.S. Census records 806,040 Chinese Americans, 774,652 Filipino Americans, 700,974 Japanese Americans, 354,593 Korean Americans, 261,729 Vietnamese Americans, and 16,044 Cambodian Americans.

1981 The U.S. grants Taiwan and Hong Kong separate immigration quotas from that of mainland China.

1982 The Korean food market, Han Ah Reum (also known as H Mart) opens its first store in Queens, New York. The market has become a national supermarket chain.

The Amerasian Immigration Act allows entry to Southeast Asian children who were fathered by American GIs during the Vietnam War.

1984 An immigrant from Taiwan, Roger H. Chen opens the flagship store of the Chinese supermarket chain 99 Ranch. So-called because 99 is considered a lucky number in China, the chain includes over 35 stores in California, Nevada, Washington, and Texas—each state with comparatively high Asian American population.

1987 Chef Ken Hom's cookbook *Ken Hom's East Meets West Cuisine* is published, helping to initiate a nationwide fusion movement, which applies French techniques to classic Asian dishes.

1988 President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act, which requests compensation be awarded to people of Japanese descent who lost liberty or property because of discriminatory government actions during World War II. In 1989, each of around 80,000 survivors received a signed apology

	letter from President George H. W. Bush along with a symbolic payment of $20,000.
1989	The Humanitarian Operation agreement is reached between Vietnam and the United States, which allows Vietnamese who have spent three years or longer in communist reeducation programs to immigrate to the United States.
1990s	Vietnamese cuisine spikes in popularity within the United States.
1990	The U.S. Census records 1,645,472 Chinese, 1,460,770 Filipinos, 847,562 Japanese, 798,849 Korean, 614,547 Vietnamese, and 149,014 Laotians, 159,047 Cambodians, and 94,439 Hmong.
1993	The first P. F. Chang's China Bistro opens, serving American Chinese food. By 2014, the chain numbers 204 restaurants.
1995	The United States normalizes diplomatic relations with Vietnam, which enables relatives of former Vietnamese refugees living in the United States to join their family members.
1997	Hong Kong returns to China, and the United States initiates the Visa Waiver Program, which allows visa-free entry to permanent residents of Hong Kong who are Chinese nationals.
1998	The Philippine food chain Jollibee opens its first store in the United States in Daly City, California. By 2014, it has opened another 28 stores.
2000	An executive order enables American citizens to travel to North Korea.
	The number of restaurants owned by Asian Americans reaches 69,903; 40,000 of these are owned by Chinese Americans and 80 percent serve Chinese American as opposed to Chinese dishes.
	The U.S. Census records 2,858,291 Chinese, 2,385,216 Filipinos, 1,226,825 Koreans, 1,212,465 Vietnamese, and 1,152,324 Japanese.
	Forty-eight percent of Asians live on the West Coast.

2004 David Chang opens Momofuku Noodle Bar in New York, initiating his meteoric rise into culinary stardom. Today his Momofuku Restaurant Group boasts ventures in such far-flung spots as Toronto, Canada, and Sydney, Australia.

2008 Korean American Roy Choi starts selling $2 Korean tacos out of a mobile food truck, initiating a nationwide craze for Asian fusion street food.

2010 Of those Asian Americans who self-identify as being a representative of one Asian group, the U.S. Census records 3,347,229 Chinese, 2,555,923 Filipinos, 1,548,449 Vietnamese, 1,423,784 Korean, and 763,325 Japanese.

Of those Asian Americans who self-identify as Asian alone *and* as Asian in combination with one or more other races, the U.S. Census records 4,010,114 Chinese, 3,416,840 Filipinos, 1,737,433 Vietnamese, 1,706,822 Koreans, and 1,304,286 Japanese.

2011 *The Kimchi Chronicles* airs on PBS. The 13-part series follows Korean American adoptee Marja Vongerichten to Korea, where she explores her culinary heritage. Costars include Jean-Georges Vongerichten, Hugh Jackman, and Heather Graham.

Korean American David Chang launches the irreverent food journal *Lucky Peach*, which earned the Gourmand International Award for Best Food Magazine in the World.

2013 Korean American David Chang wins the James Beard award for outstanding chef. Korean American Danny Bowien of Mission Chinese in San Francisco wins the James Beard award for rising new chef.

1

Historical Overview

For millennia, China has placed a high value on the culinary arts, and this reverence gradually spread throughout East and Southeast Asia. China's foundational influence on the development of Asian culinary cultures likewise meant that it introduced many of the region's prevalent ingredients and cooking techniques. In turn, international trade, immigration, war, and imperialism have blended the culinary boundaries that separate the many regions of Asia as well as those that divide the East from the West. Northern Chinese cooking methods and traditions were spread throughout Southeast Asia by Mongol invaders. Through trade, Japan and Korea absorbed the culinary philosophy and ingredients prevalent in eastern and northeastern China. Large immigrant populations from China who landed in Indonesia and the Philippines brought with them the culinary traditions of their homeland. In turn, Western imperialism left a strong imprint on Asian cuisine. English, Dutch, Portuguese, French, and Spanish colonization can all be felt throughout Asia. Vietnam and Cambodia absorbed the culinary influences of their French invaders, and the Philippines took on the flavors of their Spanish colonizers. During its post–World War II occupation of the Pacific Region, the United States introduced Spam to Hawaii, the Philippines, and Okinawa, giving rise to such dishes as Spam *musubi* and Spam and eggs. More recently, the rise of globalization has considerably blurred the boundaries between East and West, giving rise to fusion foods and transnational ingredients and cooking techniques.

THE RISE OF CHINESE AMERICA

Chinese Cuisine

Scholars and gastronomers have been reflecting on and documenting Chinese cuisine for well over 3,000 years, yielding the codification of over 8,000 recipes and what may be the largest list of edible foodstuffs in the world. The catalog of recipes and edibles expanded over the millennia as wars, conquests, invasions, and trade introduced culinary innovations and far-flung foodstuffs. Countless cooks and dieticians devoted their lives to feeding the myriad kings, emperors, lords, and overlords who ruled China. Over the millennia, gastronomic reflection developed into a philosophical pursuit, drawing legendary minds to the task. None other than Confucius taught that the goal of cookery should be to achieve a harmonious balance, such that no single ingredient or flavor overwhelmed another. He likewise underscored the importance of color and texture, an emphasis that would play a fundamental role in the development of Chinese cuisine.

Some of the most revered foodstuffs in China, in fact, are valued for their texture. Such delicacies as birds' nests, sharks' fins, and sea cucumber have little flavor, yet are prized for their gelatinous quality. In addition to its focus on texture, Chinese cuisine stands out for its important role in medicine. In Chinese culture, a person's daily diet determines health and longevity. Foods are classified according to their heating (yang) and cooling (yin) properties. A food's caloric value, taste, and method of preparation each helps determine its classification. Spicy, caloric foods are considered more heating, while bland, watery foods are considered cooling. For the healthy individual, meals entail a balance of yang and yin.

China's devotion to culinary pleasure and its long-held reverence for food as medicine remain inextricable from the country's long history of widespread drought, famine, and poverty. Upwards of 60 million have died of famine in China within the past 150 years, a fact that has contributed to Chinese mass migration to other Asian countries as well as to the United States.

Early Chinese Immigration

At least a half-century before Chinese food debuted in California in the mid-1800s, American merchants had been profiting from the trade of Chinese delicacies. Americans harvested and traded for some of China's most prized edibles in order to feed America's considerable appetite for black tea and fine silk. The first American ship to sail to China landed at Canton (the name Westerners gave the city Guangzhou) in 1784. Over the next 50 years, more than 1,300 American ships would land in China, carrying merchandise

that garnered high prices on the Chinese market, including spices and other delicacies revered by the Chinese for their health-giving properties. The ships carried with them ginseng roots that grew wild in New York's Hudson Valley, dried sea cucumbers obtained from Pacific islanders in exchange for guns and gunpowder, and edible birds' nests made of swiftlet saliva, which were harvested from Southeast Asian caves.

Canton itself served as the entry point of Western influence into China, which, in part, explains why such a large number of early Chinese immigrants to America hailed from the city and the surrounding province. These early immigrants fled their native country to escape a catastrophic combination of Western imperialism, political upheaval, crushing poverty, natural disasters, and religious persecution that blighted the province. Already suffering from overpopulation and poverty, Guangdong Province experienced even greater economic hardship after the Chinese lost the First Opium War (1839–1842) to Britain. At the end of the war, China was pressured to sign treaties that exacted heavy indemnities against the government. To help pay these indemnities, the government taxed the rural peasants, thereby exacerbating the widespread impoverishment of the region. Then in 1850, a massive civil war broke out in southern China, known as the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864), which alone claimed an estimated 20 million lives.

In the first half of the 19th century, the majority of Chinese migrants fled to Southeast Asia. With the discovery of gold in California in 1848, however, America became a prized destination. By 1860, over 40,000 men from Guangdong Province had made their way to what became known among the Chinese as *gum san*, or Golden Mountain. Whereas the first immigrants arrived as free men, the majority of immigrants arriving in America after 1860 came as contract laborers destined to work in the mines or, after 1865, for the transcontinental railroad. The railroad project, which ended California's isolation, employed around 10,000 Chinese at its peak. By 1877, around 200,000 Chinese had immigrated to the United States; 90 percent of these were men.

Nineteenth-Century American Chinese Food

Because the vast majority of Chinese arrived in the American West without their families, these early immigrants soon began to establish public dining houses called "chow chows," which served Cantonese-style meals to suit the Chinese palate. These eateries identified themselves to the public by hanging yellow three-cornered flags with Chinese characters from their storefronts. Noodle houses, rice houses, and street carts served dishes made from local produce, seafood, and meat flavored with ingredients imported from China. Beginning in the 1850s, Chinese-run stores stocked

their shelves with such items as preserved duck eggs, dried fish, sharks' fins, rice, noodles, dried mushrooms, dried bean curd, bamboo shoots, sausages, and hams.

In addition to relying on such imported specialty goods, Chinese restaurants often housed hen coops for a ready supply of fresh poultry and purchased fresh produce and meat from local Chinese fishing villages and farms. Immigrants from the Pearl River Delta built fishing villages along California's central coast, which not only supplied the local population with fresh seafood but also earned around $1 million a year shipping dried fish and shrimp back to China. Chinese tenant farmers grew asparagus, potatoes, onions, fruits, and nuts. New Chinese immigrants also worked as vegetable peddlers, selling such produce as cucumbers, tomatoes, beans, and melons. Some vegetable peddlers worked routes that extended hundreds of miles, a distance they covered in horse-drawn carts. Other peddlers served local clientele, carrying their produce in baskets suspended from a bamboo pole that rested across their shoulders. Both short- and long-distance peddlers sold to Asian and white clientele alike. Beginning in the early 1870s, Chinese were hired as cheap labor by the Alaskan salmon canneries.

As with most new immigrants, Chinese were forced to work in jobs traditionally considered women's work such as cooking and cleaning. As a result, many Chinese were hired as domestics in middle-class houses, where they learned the basic skills needed to open laundries, grocery stores, and restaurants. In the West, Chinese were preferred as domestics over the Irish, as they were considered more obedient and demanded less pay. As a result, many middle- and upper-class families were fed by Chinese cooks, who were expected to prepare Western, as opposed to Chinese, fare. Working as domestics, Chinese immigrants not only learned to speak English but also how to cook for the Western palate. Many domestics saved enough money to open their own businesses, thereby entering the realm of self-employment.

In addition to the immigrants who arrived on the West Coast, around 46,000 Chinese migrated to Hawaii from the mid- to the late 19th century. Hired by the sugar plantations, these early laborers complained about the lack of rice in their food rations, which consisted of taro, sweet potatoes, pork, and fish. By 1900, close to 6,000 Chinese worked in rice cultivation, ensuring a steady supply of the grain for the growing number of Asian immigrants to the islands. In effect, Chinese immigrants helped create the diet of three-grain staples (taro, wheat, and rice) that characterizes Hawaiian food today.

To supplement their daily rations, laborers cultivated vegetable gardens and raised chickens, ducks, and pigs. As they did in California, enterprising Chinese immigrants peddled fish and produce as well as established shops where they sold rice cakes, dumplings, and imported goods from China.

Unlike early immigrants to the mainland, who were legally barred from marrying non-Chinese women, many Chinese who worked on the islands married Hawaiian women.

Unlike the mass migration of Chinese to the West Coast and Hawaii, immigrants entered the eastern United States in a slow but steady trickle. The first of these were Chinese sailors and merchants who visited between boat trips to and from China. Beginning in the mid-1800s, the occasional sailor or merchant put down roots, sometimes marrying an Irish or a German woman. By 1900, an estimated 7,000 Chinese had settled in Manhattan, many opening restaurants where Bohemians would dine.

The vast majority of these immigrants were men who either had families back in China or were unmarried. Many of the small number of Chinese women who migrated to the United States during the late 19th and early 20th century had been sold into prostitution. Suspecting all Chinese women of being prostitutes, the U.S. government enacted laws beginning in 1875 that forbade most Chinese women from entering the country. As a result, unlike their European counterparts, the majority of male Chinese immigrants who had families could not send for their wives once they had established themselves. The laws targeted Chinese laborers in particular. The wives of individuals who could demonstrate themselves to be successful merchants, however, could join their husbands.

Without their wives or daughters, Chinese immigrants formed what are known as "bachelor societies" within the Chinatowns that sprung up in large cities. Renowned for its opium dens, gambling parlors, and brothels as well as its restaurants, San Francisco's Chinatown had begun to draw adventurous tourists from the East Coast and from Europe by the turn of the century. When the enclave was leveled by an earthquake in 1906 and burnt by the fires that followed, it was completely revitalized and marketed as a clean and safe destination. Tourist numbers skyrocketed and non-Asian locals began to cross into Chinatown, prompting Chinatowns across the nation to market themselves in order to draw outsiders. Some restaurant owners remodeled in order to project an "Oriental" image. They also began to craft menus and dishes that catered to the Western palate, beginning to develop what would eventually become Chinese American food. In the most Western-oriented establishments, forks were offered and the structure of the meal was altered. Soup became the first course as opposed to the last.

Rise of Anti-Chinese Violence in the Late 19th Century

By the 1870s, anti-Chinese sentiment had risen to a frenzy, spurred in part by an economic downturn. Murder, arson, and forced expulsion prompted many Chinese to flee the western states for the eastern United States,

Canada, Mexico, and even back to China. Chinese homes and businesses were burnt to the ground; Chinese were lynched, shot, and beaten to death. Anti-Chinese mobs forcibly expelled the inhabitants of Chinatowns in cities throughout the West including Santa Barbara, Oakland, San Jose, Sacramento, and Seattle. In Tacoma, Washington, Chinese were herded onto a boat and set adrift. In 1878, the Ninth Circuit Court of California ruled that Chinese immigrants were ineligible for citizenship because they were neither white nor black.

The anti-Chinese frenzy culminated in the Chinese Exclusion Act, which President Chester A. Arthur signed into law in 1882. The law barred Chinese immigration and naturalization. Excepted were merchants, teachers, students, and their personal servants. In 1886, Euro-Americans waged a boycott against Chinese manufacturers. As a direct result, Chinese were no longer able to sell any manufactured goods except ethnic products. Those entrepreneurs who survived the boycott shifted their focus onto ethnic foods such as tofu, soy sauce, and bean sprouts. As far back as 1860, California had begun to levy special taxes against Chinese fishermen. Then in 1888, the Scott Act forbade Chinese who left the country temporarily from returning, so fishermen could no longer journey past the U.S. coastline, or they faced deportation. In response to the mistreatment of Chinese in America and in protest over the Chinese Exclusion Act, China began to boycott American goods in 1905.

Because of violence and legislation targeted against the Chinese, their numbers declined from 118,746 to 85,202 between 1900 and 1920. The rise of anti-Chinese sentiment only served to concentrate the number of Chinese working in the restaurant industry. Chinese immigrants were forbidden to marry white women and the vast majority were legally barred from bringing Chinese wives or children to the United States. As a result few Chinese immigrants had a wife at home to prepare their meals and thus became heavily reliant on restaurants for their daily sustenance. Chinese immigrants were likewise driven out of many of the occupations that had sustained them in the mid-19th century, so they resorted to self-employment out of sheer necessity. The growing number of grocery stores and restaurants they owned, in turn, provided employment for other Chinese immigrants.

Chinese Restaurants in the United States

By the early 1900s, most large cities with Chinatowns had a selection of large restaurants with the facilities needed to serve banquets, meals that are prepared for large gatherings to celebrate special occasions. With the largest concentration of first-wave immigrants, San Francisco had three or four Chinese banquet restaurants by the 1870s. These banquet halls served traditional Chinese fare in rooms elaborately decorated with furnishings and art

imported from China. Because the early immigrants hailed from Guangdong Province, banquet restaurants served the dishes native to this region. Unlike the economical and simple fare eaten on a daily basis, banquet meals were lavish affairs including such delicacies as fried shark's fin, bird's nest soup, and sea cucumbers. Many of the dishes were prepared using the recipes of Guangzhou's finest chefs. Chinese businessmen would occasionally host Anglo-Americans at a banquet dinner, but, by and large, white men expressed distaste for traditional Chinese meals.

The finer restaurants themselves were typically three stories. The first floor housed the kitchen, through which customers would pass on their way to the second and third floor dining rooms. Owners of large restaurants imported this architecture from China, where kitchen entryways had developed centuries before in order to showcase to patrons the cleanliness and order of the establishment as well as the quality of the meats and poultry, which were hung on display. The second floor housed the public dining rooms, where simpler, less expensive meals were served, while the third floor was reserved for more elaborate banquets and dinner parties. Like most early restaurants, Chinese banquet halls catered to the "bachelor" crowd. Not only was it considered improper for women to dine in public during this era, but also few would have been around to do so even had it been allowed, as Chinese women were largely forbidden from migrating to the United States before the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943.

Not surprisingly, Chinese immigrants who lived and worked within the boundaries of Chinatowns held onto their Chinese culinary traditions far longer than those who lived or worked outside of them. Late 19th-century immigrants who had the money to dine at a restaurant boasting a trained chef would have encountered light sauces, roasted and marinated pork, steamed and fried poultry, and the gourmet delicacies revered throughout China, including bird's nest soup, sea cucumber, and sturgeon's head.

The Chinese restaurant industry experienced a boom in the early 20th century, especially in such cities as New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco where increasingly more non-Asians were drawn to Chinatowns. Those restaurants that wanted to please the Western palate began to serve heavier, sweeter, and more meat-centered dishes. Whereas most Chinese meals feature a wide variety of quickly stir-fried, gently braised, and lightly steamed vegetables with delicate sauces and a proportionately smaller amount of meat, 19th-century Americans preferred deep-fried dishes, heavy sauces, and vegetables that had been boiled for a considerable time. The translation of the Chinese spring roll into the egg roll eaten daily by millions of Americans demonstrates the Americanization of Chinese dishes. Whereas the Chinese spring roll serves as a crisp, light snack, the Chinese American egg roll is a heavy, often greasy appetizer served with syrupy sweet sauce. To please the Anglo-American palate, restaurants began to serve such

San Francisco's Chinatown, ca. 1929. The 1906 earthquake leveled much of the city's Chinatown, which was revitalized and successfully marketed to non-Asian tourists. (Library of Congress)

dishes as chow mein and chop suey, both of which originated in China as a means of using leftovers.

Chow mein, or *ch'ao min* meaning stir-fried noodles in Cantonese, is a noodle version of fried rice, which usually includes bamboo shoots, bean sprouts, pork, and other leftover scraps. Another dish from the city of Toisan in Guangdong Province, *tsap seui* (which means "miscellaneous scraps"), or chop suey, became so wildly popular in the United States that Chinese restaurants became known as chop suey houses, and many restaurants responded to the craze by advertising themselves with large signs emblazoned with the words "Chop Suey." The "leftovers" that went into Chinese American chop suey generally included bean sprouts, celery, onions, water chestnuts, green pepper, and diced pork or chicken. In order to feed the nation's hunger for the dish, two entrepreneurs founded the La Choy brand and began to manufacture and sell canned bean sprouts, "chop suey vegetable mix," and, eventually, even soy sauce. By the 1930s, Western diners had begun to feature variations of chop suey and chow mein on their menus, including the chop suey sandwich.

The loosening social strictures of the jazz era coincided with the "chop suey craze" that swept big cities throughout the nation, prompting some Chinese restaurateurs to incorporate music, dancing, and even floor shows into their restaurants. By 1924, Manhattan boasted 14 "chop suey jazz" establishments along one stretch of Broadway. Chinese dinner clubs also proliferated in San Francisco's Chinatown, one of which, Shanghai Low, was featured in the 1947 film *The Lady from Shanghai*, starring Rita Hayworth and Orson Welles.

Because the Chinese Exclusion Act largely precluded Chinese immigration from 1882 until its revocation in 1943, Chinese American restaurants eventually began to stagnate. Without new immigrants to breath fresh air into restaurant kitchens, dishes became more standardized and Americanized. The light, healthy, succulent cooking of China had become heavily deep-fried and sweet, bearing little resemblance to traditional Chinese cuisine. By the 1950s, however, restaurateurs had begun setting out to revitalize Chinese restaurant cookery. In San Francisco, Johnny Kan opened Kan's restaurant in 1953, where he served such delicacies as Peking duck and bird's nest soup, and in 1961, Cecilia Chang opened the Mandarin restaurant, which introduced many Americans to the traditional dishes of Hunan, Sichuan, and Peking. New York diners swooned over Emily Kwoh's Mandarin House, which opened in 1958, and Shanghai-born Tsung Ting Wang's Shun Lee Dynasty became the highest rated Chinese restaurant in the United States, earning four stars in 1969 from *The New York Times* dining critic Craig Claiborne.

THE RISE OF JAPANESE AMERICA

Japanese Cuisine

Although elite Japanese were familiar with and often ate Western-style meals by the 1890s, the lower and middle classes would not be introduced to this style of dining for several more decades. Because of the economic upheaval of the Meiji era (1868–1912), the average Japanese household lived on a comparatively frugal diet, with boiled short grain rice serving as the staple food in most regions, providing well over half the calories that an individual consumed daily. In mountainous areas, where rice cultivation was difficult, millet was often mixed with rice or substituted for it altogether. Sweet potatoes served as a rice supplement in southern Japan. The number, variety, and substance of side dishes and soups served at a meal remained, and still remain, largely dependent on family income. Typically, miso soup appears at breakfast. Lunch and dinner consist of rice, pickled vegetables, and a side dish featuring vegetables, tofu, or fish. Because of Buddhist beliefs and royal bans against eating meat (game proving the main exception), it was largely

absent from the traditional Japanese diet. During the Meiji era, however, the Japanese government began to associate Western military prowess with heavy consumption of meat. In order to Westernize Japan and to strengthen its populace, the government began to encourage meat eating in the late 19th century. It would be well into the 20th century before meat became a significant part of the Japanese diet, however. (Per capita annual consumption rose from 3 kilograms of meat in 1955 to over 28 kilograms in 1990.) Having eaten a diet without meat for hundreds of years, Japanese learned to rely on fish and tofu as their primary sources of protein and on vegetable oil rather than on animal fats for cooking.

The Japanese learned to preserve fish by salting it and wrapping it in rice, a process that pickles the flesh and prevents it from spoiling. This original form of sushi, or *nare-zushi*, was eaten only after the rice had been rinsed off. In the mid-1600s, vinegar was introduced into the process, which greatly shortened the fermentation period, thereby making the rice itself edible. As a result, sushi became a popular snack food. What we know of as sushi today, or *nigiri-zushi* (fresh fish served on rice), did not become part of the Japanese diet until the early 19th century. By mid-century, sushi stalls had begun to proliferate throughout Tokyo (then called Edo) and peddlers traveled the streets with boxes of sushi on their backs. In addition to fermented fish, the Japanese diet also includes a variety of dried fish products. Bonito fish that has been fermented, dried, and smoked serves as an essential ingredient in *dashi*, the staple broth of Japanese cuisine.

In addition to preserved and fresh fish, side dishes consist of vegetables. Protein-rich soybeans, in particular, serve a foundational role in the Japanese diet. They are eaten fresh and also transformed into a range of products including tofu, *natto* (a slimy, stringy, odiferous fermented soybean product), *miso* (fermented bean paste), *yuba* (tofu skins also known as dried bean curd), and *shoyu* (soy sauce). Other popular vegetables include seaweeds, daikon, burdock, eggplant, and kabocha squash.

In eastern Japan, buckwheat noodles (*soba*) in broth have served as a popular lunch option since the early 1700s, while wheat noodles (*udon*) are more common in western Japan. Ramen did not become a popular Japanese dish until Chinese immigration spiked in the early 1900s. As in the United States, Chinese immigrants opened restaurants and noodle shops that served *la mian* (hand-pulled noodles). By the 1930s, the word had become *ramen* in Japanese.

In addition to a heavy reliance on pickles, soybean products, and noodles—affinities that identify Japanese cuisine as distinctively Asian—Japan absorbed a range of Western culinary influences beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese in the 16th century. Among these are the practices of baking cakes and of deep batter frying, both of which were adopted and

Vegetable tempura being prepared in a wok. Tempura describes both the dish itself and the method of cooking in which vegetables or proteins are dipped in a light batter and quickly fried. (Monkey Business Images/Dreamstime.com)

transformed to make them uniquely Japanese. The sponge cake became a specialty of Nagasaki known as *kasutera* and battered, deep-fried foods were transformed into tempura. Other Western techniques were adopted after Japan opened its doors to the West in the late 19th century, including the technique of deep-frying breaded seafood or meat to make such dishes as the iconic pork cutlet *tonkatsu*. Known as *furai*, this method adds *panko* (flaky bread crumbs) to the flour and egg batter used for tempura.

The Modernization of Japan and Early Immigration to the United States

The vast majority of early Japanese immigrants left their homeland due, in part, to Western imperialism and the effects it wrought on the political and economic climate of their nation. For over 200 years, Japan underwent a period of self-imposed isolation from the West, a period that ended in 1853

when Commodore Matthew Perry first muscled his way into Edo Bay with the threat of military reprisal should the Japanese fail to comply with his demand—namely, that his fleet of American ships be allowed to peaceably anchor and that Japan open its doors to trade with the West.

Coerced like China to sign "unequal treaties" that catered to the trade demands of the West, Japan underwent a period of radical modernization. Determined to avoid what they saw as China's weak position in relation to the West and to buttress their nation's political, economic, and military power, Japanese revolutionaries overturned the ruling Tokugawa shogunate in 1868, wresting control from the military in order to restore it to the emperor Meiji. During what became known as the Meiji era (1868–1912), Japan transformed itself from an agricultural economy into an industrial powerhouse, overhauling its legal, economic, and political systems as well as building a formidable navy and army in order to command respect from the West.

The Meiji Restoration marked an era of globalization in which many foreign foods were introduced into Japanese markets. Japan's embrace of Western ways likewise led to the adoption of Western food and dining styles among the upper classes. Rather than usurping Japanese traditional dining altogether, however, the Western style of dining became a secondary option, one with which diplomats and well-heeled Japanese became culturally fluent. In order to educate themselves, Japanese began to pore over manuals in order to learn the intricacies of Western dining etiquette and cuisine. By 1890, the Japanese elite had mastered the art of Western dining, which differed radically from their own tradition. Whereas Japanese wore kimonos, dined with chopsticks, and sat on floor mats, Westerners wore suits and dresses, dined with forks and knives, and sat well above the ground in chairs. The Meiji aristocracy designated certain meals as Japanese and others as Western, thereby demonstrating a cultural fluency in both Eastern and Western ways. These two styles of dining would ultimately merge by the mid-20th century.

In order to learn as much about Western culture as possible, Japan sponsored students to travel abroad to study in Europe, England, and the United States. As a result, the first Japanese to immigrate—albeit temporarily—to the United States were wealthy individuals who were well educated in the art of Western dining. Between 1868 and 1900, the Meiji government sent around 900 of its brightest students to the United States, where they studied Western technology, science, law, politics, and culture. After a course of study, the students returned to Japan in order to educate their compatriots as well as to guide their nation in international development.

The modernization of Japan during the late 19th and early 20th century resulted in a contemporary diet that may be the world's most multicultural.

Initially, however, the process of modernization took a tremendous toll on the rural populace. In particular, over 300,000 farmers lost their land, unable to pay the high taxes levied by the Meiji government to help cover the tremendous cost of industrialization and militarization. As a result, farmers migrated eagerly to the United States, accounting for roughly half the 142,000 Japanese immigrants who traveled to Hawaii between 1894 and 1908.

The growing impoverishment of the farming class coupled with the tremendous labor shortage on Hawaiian sugar plantations spurred Japan's decision to allow its citizens to travel abroad, which they began to do legally for the first time in almost 250 years. Hawaii had begun widespread cultivation of sugar after the American Civil War in order to replace the devastated sugar industry of the Deep South. Initially relying on Chinese labor, Hawaiian sugar plantations experienced a labor crisis when the Chinese Exclusion Act passed in 1882, as the law barred Chinese immigration to the United States.

Immigration to Hawaii

In 1885, the Japanese government granted 600 citizens permission to immigrate to Hawaii. In order to recruit contract laborers, plantations paid for their voyage from Japan. By the time the United States passed the Asian Exclusion Act in 1924, the number of Japanese in Hawaii had reached 200,000. Although the majority of these Japanese immigrants arrived in Hawaii under a three-year contract to work on sugar plantations, others were hired by the fruit and vegetable plantations and farms that exported their products to the mainland in order to feed the fast-growing population of the western United States. Hawaiian farms produced huge quantities of potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, pumpkins, oranges, and pineapples.

Japanese immigrants soon began to dominate coffee production, rice farming, and the fishing industry. By 1914, they produced 80 percent of Hawaiian coffee and had taken over most of the rice farming from the Chinese. They had also revolutionized the fishing industry with the introduction of wooden-hulled sampans, boats that were especially well suited for the ocean waters of Hawaii. Just as the Chinese had before them, Japanese merchants, tradesmen, and restaurateurs began to supply the growing immigrant population with the familiar foods of their homeland. By early 1900, dozens of Japanese-owned companies had begun to manufacture such essentials as tofu, soy sauce (shoyu), rice cakes (mochi), fermented soybean paste (miso), rice wine (sake), and pickles. By the 1930s, plantation workers could rely on Japanese peddlers to supply vegetables, meat, sashimi, fishcakes, and canned goods. Honolulu became the site of Japanese noodle soup (saimin) stands and take-away delis (*okazuya*). Saimin, a noodle soup based on fish or chicken

broth topped with sliced ingredients such as fishcakes, seaweed, and roast pork was served as a staple food on plantations throughout Hawaii, as it can easily be adapted to use whatever ingredients are on hand.

Like the Chinese restaurants of the mainland, these early Japanese eateries in Hawaii soon adapted to suit the local palate. In so doing, they played an integral role in helping to fashion a distinctive 20th-century Hawaiian cuisine. For example, today the term saimin in Hawaii refers to a variety of noodle soups, which can be topped with everything from oxtail to raw beef slices and mint to eggs and Spam. Considered a truly Hawaiian dish, saimin can be found at school cafeterias, at pushcarts and stands, and even at McDonald's. Like saimin stands, Japanese delis known as *okazuya* developed as a means of feeding plantations workers and other laborers on the go. The name derives from *okazu*—the seasoned meat, fish, or vegetable accompaniment to rice—and *ya*, or shop.

Moving to the Mainland

Large-scale Japanese migration to the mainland did not begin until the 1890s when many Japanese journeyed from Hawaii to the West Coast to work in agriculture as well as for the railways and in canneries, fisheries, and mines. Around the same time, immigrants began to arrive directly from Japan in large numbers. They were drawn to the United States, in part, because of its image in Japan as a sophisticated, modern, and powerful nation as well as by the promise of financial reward. Working in the United States also offered tremendous financial reward, as laborers could earn 5–20 times the amount they would earn for a given job in Japan.

In addition to laborers, who accounted for the majority of immigrants, this group included a significant percentage of students as well as merchants, the latter of whom began to erect stores and restaurants that would serve the growing Japanese population. By the time the Immigration Act was passed in 1924, which effectively barred Japanese immigration, 180,000 Japanese had traveled to the mainland from Japan and Hawaii. Before the turn of the century, enough Japanese had concentrated in large urban centers to create quarters that provided housing, entertainment, clothing, food, and services, all catering to Japanese tastes. One of the most successful early merchants, Masajiro Furuya opened a tailoring shop and then a grocery store in Seattle in the early 1890s. To meet the increasing demand of Japanese immigrants for goods of their native country, Furuya eventually expanded the grocery store into a six-floor department store where customers could find imported Japanese goods as well as local produce. The Furuya Company became one of the cornerstone businesses around which Seattle's Japanese community developed.

Japanese immigrants arriving in San Francisco aboard the ship *Shinyu Maru*. By the time the Immigration Act was passed in 1924, which effectively barred Japanese immigration, 180,000 Japanese had traveled to the mainland from Japan and Hawaii. (Bettmann/Corbis)

Having witnessed the growing violence against Chinese immigrants to the United States, which ultimately ended in the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Japanese government determined not to suffer such international humiliation. As a result, it set up consulates and helped establish coalitions known as the Japanese Association of America in cities where the largest concentration of immigrants coalesced, such as the Japantowns of Seattle, San Francisco, Sacramento, Portland, Los Angeles, and Honolulu. These consulates were not only charged with preventing the mistreatment of Japanese immigrants but also with ensuring that the immigrants served as respectable representatives of Japan.

The Japantowns, known as *Nihonmachis*, that sprang up in West Coast cities catered not only to those Japanese who lived within their boundaries but also to tens of thousands who labored in the agricultural fields and fisheries that surrounded them. The Japanese who helped transform the Sacramento Delta from a vast expanse of swampland into one of the state's most lucrative farming communities enjoyed the benefits of Sacramento's Japantown. Japanese-owned restaurants, grocery stores, fish markets, lodgings, bathhouses, billiard halls, and barbershops were frequented by the area's seasonal workers, its merchants, and their employees, as well as large landowners, many of whom began as laborers on the sugar plantations of Hawaii and in the agricultural fields of California. The "asparagus king" of Yolo County, Frank Sakata, for example, immigrated to Hawaii as a contract laborer for a sugar plantation before migrating to the mainland to work for the railroads. After years of hard labor, Sakata saved enough money to purchase a piece of swampland, which he soon transformed into the region's most lucrative asparagus farm.

Like Sakata, many Japanese rose from manual laborers to landowners, a trajectory that was aided, in part, by the families that the early immigrants were able to form. Unlike early Chinese immigration, which consisted almost entirely of men, Japanese immigration included large numbers of women, who traveled abroad with the encouragement of the Japanese government and of the sugar plantation owners. Having learned from their failure to retain single Chinese men, plantation owners realized that laborers with families were more likely to stay rooted in place. Even with wives and children, however, many Japanese left Hawaii for the mainland. Compared to the rigid social and political hierarchy that characterized Hawaii's plantation-based economy, the more fluid West Coast frontier offered greater opportunity for financial success, enabling some enterprising immigrants to achieve positions as merchants, tenant farmers, or landowners.

In 1908, however, the movement of Japanese laborers to the United States was halted altogether when the Gentlemen's Agreement went into full effect. Unlike the Chinese Exclusion Act, which barred immigration outright, the Gentlemen's Agreement stipulated that Japan would no longer issue passports to laborers who wished to immigrate to the United States. In return, the United States agreed not to legislate against Japanese immigrants.

Although the Gentlemen's Agreement halted the flow of Japanese laborers into the United States, a loophole that allowed for family reunification initiated a flow of women and children into the country. The legal loophole that allowed farmers and businessmen to send for their wives and children would be officially closed in 1924 with the passage of the Immigration Act, which effectively banned the entry of Asians to the United States. Before the loophole was closed, however, around 67,000 women and children entered

the United States, enabling tens of thousands of families to form, or reform as the case may be, creating the first American-born generation of Japanese.

The growth of families in the 1920s and 1930s enabled a form of Japanese American home cooking to develop, one that blended Japanese, Chinese, and Western cuisines, a trend paralleled in Japan. The meals prepared by foreign-born immigrants tended to resemble the traditional home cooking of Japan far more than those prepared by their American-born children. Special occasions, in particular, showcased Japanese dishes and cooking techniques such as rice cakes (mochi), steamed fish cakes, dumplings (*gyoza*), and sushi. For most Japanese families, pickle and rice featured at every meal no matter how Americanized they might have become. As American-born women began to start families of their own, the home-cooked meals became increasingly Americanized to include such standards as clam chowder, macaroni and cheese, and apple pie. Housewives culled recipes from such divergent sources as Japanese American newspapers and *The Joy of Cooking*. By the 1930s, Japanese home cooking had begun to supplement traditional Japanese dishes with American classics.

Chinese cuisine influenced Japanese home cooking in large part, because Chinese restaurants were frequently the only eateries outside of *Nihonmachis* where Japanese Americans felt welcome. Unlike African Americans who were legally barred from Caucasian restaurants, Asians were not banned outright. They were frequently denied service, however, or, if served, met with malicious stares from Caucasian diners. Their exposure to Chinese American food and its rise in popularity throughout the United States in the 1930s meant that many Japanese American housewives incorporated such dishes as chop suey, chow mein, and egg foo yong into their culinary repertoire.

Anti-Japanese Legislation

The United States ultimately failed to uphold its end of the Gentlemen's Agreement, and California, in particular, was swept with a wave of anti-Asian hysteria, much of which was aimed at Japanese farmers. From the time of their arrival to the West Coast in the 1890s, Japanese farmers numbered among the nation's most skilled agriculturalists. Success stories included those of the "asparagus king" Frank Sakata, the "potato king" George Shima, who amassed millions of dollars and over 10,000 acres of potato fields in the Sacramento Delta, and Abiko Kyutaro, who transformed the desert land in the San Joaquin Valley into a fertile farming community planted with over 1,500 acres of grapes and fruit trees. In 1920 alone, Japanese American farmers in California would produce $67 million worth of land crops.

In order to stymie the enormous success of Japanese farmers, California passed a series of laws that forbade Japanese from owning land outright or

Seen here at the plow ca. 1900, George Shima established himself as one of the nation's wealthiest Japanese immigrants. Known as "Potato King" of the Sacramento Delta region, Shima, born Kinji Ushijima, would eventually amass millions of dollars and 10,000 acres of land. (Agricultural Laborers in California, 1905.02724, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley)

from leasing land for more than three years. Although the Japanese were not named outright, they were the prime target of California's Alien Land Law of 1913, which made it illegal for anyone ineligible for U.S. citizenship to own land. Since foreign-born Asian immigrants were ineligible, this law effectively barred Japanese farmers from owning the land they worked. Washington state would pass its own Alien Land Law in 1921.

Many Japanese farmers bypassed the law by naming their children as owners or by establishing land corporations, a move that enabled them to help transform the West Coast into a global breadbasket. By the outbreak of World War II, Japanese were producing over 30 percent of California's commercial truck crops. They also dominated the distribution and marketing of produce in key agricultural areas such as Sacramento and Los Angeles. The rural and urban communities were linked via a system of networks that resulted in mutually assured success. Japantowns provided business and social services to the rural farmers and laborers, who, in turn, provided a steady supply of fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, and poultry for the urban dwellers.

Japanese farmers not only helped transform California into an agricultural powerhouse but they also introduced Japanese rice seed to Texas and Louisiana. In the early 1900s, Japanese farmers were invited to Texas in order to advise rice growers on how to increase production. They arrived bearing rice seed as a gift from the Japanese emperor, a gift that would revolutionize the Texas and Louisiana rice industries, enabling them to double production. One of the advisors, Seito Saibara established a pioneering Japanese

farming colony with over 1,000 acres of rice fields, helping to found the Gulf Coast rice industry.

With the United States' entry into World War II in 1942, triggered by the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, tens of thousands of Japanese American farmers living in California were rounded up and sent to live in concentration camps, where they remained until 1945. In one of the most egregious violations of civil rights in U.S. history, more than 40,000 Japanese and 70,000 of their American-born children, who were U.S. citizens, were forced to leave their West Coast homes behind and move inland to detention centers. In particular, the mass detention targeted foreign-born community leaders, ranging from Buddhist and Shinto priests and Japanese language teachers to prominent businessmen. Once in detention, Japanese were fed in mess halls, which largely precluded families from sitting with one another. The meals themselves varied wildly from what Japanese Americans ate outside of military prison. Instead of rice accompanied by pickled and fresh vegetables or a small portion of meat, internees ate potatoes, canned Vienna sausages, spaghetti, beans, and bread. By war's end, internees felt relieved and thankful when, on occasion, Japanese pickles, fresh vegetables, and rice cakes graced their plates.

Whereas almost 90 percent of Japanese lived along the Pacific Coast in 1940, after the war many moved to the Midwest, South, and Northeast. Although many of these early migrants eventually returned to the West Coast in the 1950s, the total percentage of Japanese Americans living in the Pacific would decline steadily to about 40 percent by 2010. By the 1950s, most Japanese Americans had successfully rebuilt their lives and moved into the middle classes. Many chose to live in suburban areas, where they worked diligently to blend into mainstream America. Throughout the 1980s, over half of third-generation Japanese Americans would marry non-Japanese. Among all Asian immigrant groups, interracial marriage remains the highest among Japanese, with 64 percent marrying non-Japanese partners in 2010.

THE RISE OF KOREAN AMERICA

Korean Cuisine

As with Japanese cuisine, China had a profound influence on the development of Korean cuisine and culture. Just a few such influences include Korea's adoption of Buddhism and Confucianism; its use of chopsticks; its reverence for rice (or grain substitute) as a staple part of every meal; its strong belief in the medicinal properties of food; and its heavy reliance on a range of soybean products, including soy sauce, tofu, and fermented soybean paste.

As it was in China, meat eating was a luxury typically reserved for the upper classes, except for special occasions or for health reasons. Because meat did not play a regular role in the daily diet of most Koreans and because Buddhism is commonly practiced, the preparation of vegetables developed to include an array of techniques and intricate flavors. In particular, Korean side dishes often feature seasonal wild herbs and greens.

Over the centuries during which Korean cuisine developed, gradual changes resulted from improved agricultural practices and the introduction of new ingredients through trade. Perhaps one of the most profound Western influences on Korean cuisine came in the form of the chili pepper. Introduced from the New World via Japan by the early 17th century, the chili pepper provides a core flavor of contemporary Korean cuisine and is a main ingredient in kimchi, Korea's most iconic food and a staple without which a meal is considered incomplete.

Wars, Colonization, and Early Immigration

Like many other Asian immigrants to the United States, Koreans were driven to leave their homeland due to a series of wars, which eventually led to their colonization by Japan. The roots of the Korean diaspora date back to the late 19th century. During this time, Korea underwent a period of remarkably swift changes due to a series of military conflicts during which Japan, China, and Russia fought for control of the Korean peninsula. Japan would prove the ultimate victor, usurping China as the most powerful force in East Asia.

Just as Matthew Perry forced Japan to open its ports to Western trade, thereby prompting Japan to initiate a series of radical steps toward modernization, Japan forced Korea to open its ports for trade in 1876. The Kangwha Treaty, which allowed Japanese merchants to enter Korean ports, was the first in a series of treaties that required Korea to open its borders to foreign influence. The United States followed by Britain and France coerced Korea into signing treaties that allowed Western trade access as well as granted the right to proselytize Christianity.

Japan gained control over Korea when it emerged victorious in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895). Having wrested the peninsula away from China, Japan allowed Korea to declare its independence. This freedom was short-lived, however, as Japan claimed Korea as its protectorate in 1905 and colonized the nation in 1910. Following the example of Western colonial powers, Japan utilized Korean resources to its own advantage, introducing modern agricultural practices that enabled Korea to supply Japanese urbanites with rice. Rice exports to Japan, however, came at the expense of

Koreans themselves, who suffered from rice shortages. In addition to modernizing Korean agriculture, Japan introduced industrial food processing, a key step in its transformation of Korea into a military-industrial base capable of producing the rations and munitions needed to fuel Japan's imperialist goals—a task that ended when Japan surrendered to the Allies in 1945.

Japan controlled not only the territory of Korea but also Korean migration to the United States. The initial wave of Koreans to arrive in the United States landed in Hawaii between 1903 and 1905. They were brought by sugar plantations in order to undermine the power of the Japanese laborers, who had begun striking for higher wages and for better working conditions. As a result, 7,500 Koreans were contracted to work on Hawaiian plantations. Once Japan became the protectorate of Korea in 1905, however, it halted Korean migration to Hawaii in order to protect those Japanese laborers whom Koreans were hired to replace.

Unlike Chinese and Japanese immigrants before them who came from situations of rural poverty, the first Koreans to immigrate to Hawaii hailed from a wider range of economic backgrounds, although the majority still came from the lower classes. In addition, many Korean immigrants arrived in the United States having been previously converted to Christianity by European missionaries stationed in Korea. As a result, they were able to assimilate more quickly than had Chinese and Japanese laborers.

Because working conditions were harsh on the sugar plantations, over 1,000 of these first Korean immigrants traveled onto the mainland to settle on the West Coast, where they picked oranges, grapes, and tomatoes for a living. Some farm workers migrated with the seasons to find jobs, calling themselves "flying geese." Because migrant workers earned low wages, they subsisted largely on kimchi and rice, with a bit of beef or chicken on occasion. In order to house these migrant workers, Koreans opened hotels in cities throughout California, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Stockton, and Riverside. Koreans also opened grocery stores and bakeries to help feed the farm workers.

By 1913, Koreans had begun to succeed as rice farmers by taking advantage of the 10 percent deal, which stipulated that the landowner supply the land, the seeds, and the equipment needed for farming in return for 90 percent of the crop. This deal enabled hard-working laborers to slowly accrue more land for farming. Kim Chong-lim, for example, eventually accrued 10,000 acres on which he grew rice and barley, earning him the short-lived moniker "the rice king," before a massive flood destroyed his fields in 1920. By the time he lost his fortune, Kim Chong-lim had become the largest contributor to the Korean Independence Fund and had financed the Korean Aviation School to train pilots to fight against the Japanese.

Fruit farming likewise proved lucrative for Korean Americans. Although unrelated, Harry Kim and Charles H. Kim founded the Kim Brothers nursery in 1921. They earned their fortune by growing and distributing the first commercial nectarine variety. Developed by horticulturalist Fred Anderson, Le Grand nectarine was bred by crossing a peach with a nectarine in order to produce a large, yellow fruit. Because Le Grand was hardy enough to ship long distances, Kim Brothers shipped the fruit from California all the way back east. They were so successful that they would become the first recorded millionaires of Korean descent. Like Kim Chong-lim, the Kim Brothers helped fund the Korean independence movement in the United States. Another pair of Korean Americans, Leo Song and Kim Yong-jeung founded K&S Jobbers in 1925, which brokered fruit between growers and wholesalers. They were able to found the company after the Kim Brothers consigned most of their fruit to them, and like other wealthy Korean Americans, they were fervent supporters of the Korean independence movement.

Twentieth-Century Immigration

Aside from the 800 picture brides (wives selected long-distance via a matchmaker) who were allowed to enter Hawaii between 1910 and 1924, few Koreans immigrated to the United States before the 1950s; the 1950 census counted only 7,030 Korean Americans living in the United States. These numbers have grown dramatically, however, over the last 60 years, so much so that the 2010 census recorded over 1.7 million Korean Americans. This spike in immigration has been a direct result of U.S. involvement in the Korean War.

The Allied defeat of Japan in 1945, which ended Japanese colonization of Korea, only inaugurated another long, brutal battle for control of the country—this time between the U.S. military and Russian forces. During the course of the Korean War, which claimed the lives of more than 400,000 Koreans in South Korea alone, over 5.7 million U.S. troops would serve in the conflict. Many of the millions of Americans who served in Korea eventually brought home a Korean wife; an estimated 28,000 war brides arrived in the United States between 1950 and 1975.

Although these wives learned to cook distinctively American foods for their husbands, some successfully incorporated Korean flavors into their meals. In turn, many of those soldiers who returned as single men or to their stateside wives brought back with them a palate that had been altered by Korean dishes laden with chili peppers, garlic, ginger, and fermented fish—the signature flavors of Korean cuisine. The war likewise introduced iconic American ingredients into Korean and Korean American dishes alike. Just

a few such ingredients include American cheese slices (often used to flavor soups and stews); soda, which is used for marinades; and hot dogs, which might be topped with kimchi or sliced and tossed with kimchi to form the basis for a stew.

In addition to altering American and Korean palates, the Korean War likewise left millions of orphaned children, many of whom were fathered by American soldiers. The Korean War initiated the widespread international adoption of South Korean orphans. Between 1955 and 1998, over 100,000 Korean orphans were adopted by American families. By the 1980s, South Korea was exporting between 7000 and 8000 orphans to the United States every year, a trend that began to decline shortly after the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Responding to international criticism of its loose transnational adoption policies, the South Korean government instituted limits on the number of children that could be adopted abroad annually and began to actively promote adoption within Korea. Today, adoptees are estimated to comprise 5–10 percent of all Korean Americans, with the highest concentration—10,000 to 15,000—living in Minnesota.

One of these adoptees, Marja Vongerichten, grew up to host a PBS series that introduces Americans to Korean food. Like the majority of adoptees, Vongerichten grew up eating typical American fare. As a young adult, however, she set out to meet her birth mother and, in the process, rediscovered her Korean culinary heritage, which she famously chronicles in the PBS television series and cookbook *The Kimchi Chronicles*. The series likewise showcases the influence that Asian cuisine has had on her husband, the internationally renowned chef, Jean Georges Vongerichten. His book *Asian Flavors* (2007) showcases his culinary style, which fuses Asian flavors with French technique. Another Korean adoptee to hit it big in the culinary world, Danny Bowien, grew up in Oklahoma and did not taste a Korean dish until he moved to San Francisco at the age of 19. After a few years apprenticing in restaurants, Bowien opened Mission Chinese, which serves Asian American cuisine flavorful and interesting enough to catapult him to culinary stardom; he earned the James Beard Rising Star Chef award in 2013.

Third-Wave Tensions and the Rise of Koreatowns

The third wave of Korean immigrants, which arrived in the 1970s and 1980s, hailed from largely middle-class backgrounds, with many having trained and worked as medical professionals. Once in the United States, many of these middle-class immigrants found themselves forced to downgrade their occupations as they were unable to find work in the professional fields in which they were originally trained. A large number of these immigrants

opened liquor and grocery stores. By 1983, Koreans owned 75 percent of the produce markets in New York. By 1987, Koreans owned 17,105 businesses in Los Angeles County, up from 398 in 1972. One-third of these businesses were located in Koreatown. According to the 1990 census, 145,431 Korean Americans lived in Los Angeles County; only 15 percent of this population was born in the United States.

With the largest Korean population in the United States, Los Angeles has experienced extreme racial tensions between Korean storeowners and the African American and Latino communities that they serve. Seeing recent immigrants from Korea attain a level of success as their lives stagnate, the urban impoverished have found Korean Americans an accessible target for their anger. The tensions between Korean Americans and African Americans were severely heightened in 1991 by the shooting death of Latasha Harlins. Videotape of the incident showed Harlins punch a liquor store clerk, Soon Ja Du, who then raised a gun and shot Harlins in the head. The ill will that resulted from the highly publicized shooting helped fuel the violence aimed at Korean American store owners during the Los Angeles riots two years later.

On April 29, 1992, the acquittal of four white police officers who had been videotaped beating an African American man, Rodney King, fueled riots in South Central Los Angeles. Known as Sa-I-Gu (Korean for 4-2-9, or April 29) among Korean speakers, the L.A. riots quickly spread through Koreatown, proving a devastating turning point in the lives of the tens of thousands of Korean Americans who lost their businesses and jobs. Over four days of looting, arson, assault, and murder, 63 people were killed and 4,500 stores were decimated. More than half the stores destroyed were Korean owned. The devastation of Koreatown eventually led to serious work by Korean immigrants and African Americans to improve race relations and to bridge the rupture that had violently split their shared community. Through sheer determination, Los Angeles's Koreatown has not only been revitalized since the riots but has also expanded its boundaries.

Koreatowns and the Mainstreaming of Korean Cuisine

Having developed in the 1970s and recovered from the 1992 riots, Los Angeles's Koreatown now boasts the largest concentration of Koreans outside of Seoul; many Koreans have subsequently moved to the suburbs of Orange County, creating Korean business districts of their own. The nation's second largest Koreatown began to take discernible shape in New York during the early 1980s; by the 1990s, large enough numbers of New York's

Korean population had spilled into Flushing, New Jersey, to create a thriving Korean district of its own. More recently, a discernible Koreatown has begun to take shape in the Atlanta suburb of Duluth. Large Korean enclaves have also developed in Chicago and in Annandale, Virginia, outside of Washington, D.C.

The growing popularity of Korean food within the United States over the past 15 years naturally corresponds to the rapid rise in Korean immigration. It has also been boosted to some undefinable degree by South Korea's campaign to improve its image abroad, which was launched by then President Lee Myung-bak in 2009. In addition to establishing a scholarship program for foreign students to study in Korea and promoting such national pastimes as tae kwon do, the Presidential Council on Nation Branding has likewise launched a campaign to globalize *hansik*, or Korean cuisine.

With $40 million earmarked for the cause and with the United States as its primary target, the government ran a campaign to promote the health benefits of Korean food as well as its tastiness. Toward that end, the Korean Food Foundation has published e-book guides to Korean restaurants in Los Angeles, helped Korean restaurateurs to create franchises abroad, and promoted Korean cooking classes at such well-respected schools as the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, and Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. Culinary classes aimed at the home cook have likewise followed pace; heeding the latest culinary trends, the cooking supply store Sur La Table added Korean cooking classes to its roster in 2011. In these courses, students learn how to make Korean dishes with flavor profiles that readily appeal to the mainstream American palate—namely, *bulgogi* (barbecue beef), *bibimbap* (rice bowl), and *pajeon* (green onion pancake). The former Korean first lady Kim Yoon-ok took an active role in promoting her nation's cuisine, personally performing cooking demonstrations for American veterans of the Korean War in New York as well as for CNN's feature "Eye on South Korea."

Korean food companies such as Ottogi and CJ Foodville Corporation are likewise committed to globalizing Korean cuisine. Toward that end, they export food products to Korean and pan-Asian grocery stores throughout the United States. Especially eager to gain a foothold in the American market, CJ has likewise established fast food chains in the United States, including a self-described "French-Asian bakery" Tour les Jours and a Korean restaurant Bibigo. In 2005 CJ began a partnership with Korean American entrepreneur Annie Chun in 2005 before buying the Annie Chun brand outright in 2009. Since then, Annie Chun has founded GimMe Health Foods, which manufactures snacks made from Korean-sourced seaweed.

Korean American April Kim working at her South Central Los Angeles store in 2002. Having developed in the 1970s and recovered from the 1992 riots, L.A.'s Koreatown now boasts the largest concentration of Koreans outside of Seoul. (AP Photo/ Damian Dovarganes)

THE RISE OF FILIPINO AMERICA

Native Food of the Philippines and the Effects of Spanish and American Colonization

Distinctively Southeast Asian in nature, Filipino cuisine draws from the bounty of its environs. Because the Philippines is an archipelago made up of over 7,000 islands, seafood abounds. So too do tropical fruits and vegetables. Strong elements of Chinese cookery are present, first introduced by merchants who traded with and settled in the Philippines as far back as the ninth century. Chinese junks collected raw materials from the islands in exchange for luxury goods, which they brought with them from China. Many of these merchants and crew members married native Filipino women and settled in and around Manila. These early merchants brought with them elements of Chinese cuisine, which would become synthesized into the indigenous food culture over several centuries. Chinese ingredients that would become essential to Philippine cuisine include tofu, duck eggs, soy sauce, sausage, noodles, and wrappers.

Western ingredients, dishes, cooking methods, and techniques likewise flavor Filipino food, vestiges of close to four centuries of Spanish and American

colonialism. The strong Western influence that runs throughout Filipino cookery began in 1565 when Spain conquered the Philippines, which it ruled until 1898. During this time, Spanish colonial administrators, businessmen, and merchants settled in Manila, where they introduced Spanish cuisine, and Catholic missionaries swept through the Philippines, converting 80 percent of the indigenous population to Christianity by 1898. Whereas Chinese ingredients, dishes, and cooking methods were adopted over a long period and slowly transformed into distinctively Filipino dishes, Spanish cuisine entered the Philippines in a less syncretic manner. Unlike the Chinese who traded with Filipinos and even married local women, Spaniards came to the Philippines as colonizers and worked to maintain a strict hierarchy between themselves and their Filipino subjects, a hierarchy that extended to the dinner table.

As they did in Mexico, Spaniards drew a distinction between their own cuisine and that of the indigenous peoples, characterizing the latter as less prestigious. Not wanting to ingest what they viewed as inferior food, Spanish colonizers worked to reproduce their homeland recipes in the Philippines. In order to do so, they imported ingredients and taught Filipino cooks to prepare their favored dishes. They likewise gave Spanish names to local foods that resembled dishes from their homeland. In turn, Filipinos worked as cooks for the colonial administration, learning how to make Spanish dishes that would eventually become a regular part of the Filipino diet. The Spanish *sofrito*, made with sautéed onion, garlic, and tomatoes, became the flavoring base of many standard Filipino dishes. Spanish dishes that became integrated into Filipino cuisine include beef stew, egg-based tortillas, empanadas, meatballs, bread pudding, marzipan, *buñuelos* (fried dough balls), and hot chocolate.

In order to reproduce the dishes of their homeland, merchants imported cattle, olive oil, wine, and ham, among many other items. In turn, the Spanish galleon trade between Manila and Acapulco, Mexico, introduced a variety of New World ingredients that Spain had incorporated into its diet, including chili pepper, tomato, cacao, corn, avocado, and jicama. Many of the dishes introduced during the colonial era were transformed over time and given distinctive Filipino touches. For example, Spanish paella was transformed into Filipino *arroz Valenciana*, with the substitution of sticky, or glutinous, rice for the medium-grained Spanish *paella* rice. Some Filipino recipes also add coconut milk, which gives the dish a Southeast Asian flair. Many names of Filipino dishes have also been inherited from Spanish colonials. Most famously, the iconic dish adobo was named by Spaniards who likened the dish to their own *adobado*, a pork dish made with vinegar and spices or with wine and onions. Unlike the Spanish *adobado*, however, Philippine adobo usually

includes soy sauce and can feature a wide range of ingredients other than pork, including chicken, squid, catfish, shellfish, or water spinach.

By the mid-19th century, Filipinos had begun traveling to Europe, where they were exposed to political ideals of the French Revolution. Returning home, they began to organize against Spanish colonialism and had achieved considerable progress by the time of the Spanish-American War in 1898, during which Filipino and American forces drove Spain from the Philippines. Rather than granting the Philippines independence at the close of the war, however, the United States declared it a colonial territory. Filipino nationalists fought to wrest control from American aggressors, initiating the Philippine-American War, which lasted three years. During the war, U.S. forces burned agricultural crops, a move that led to mass starvation and malnutrition. According to some estimates, as many as 1 million Filipinos died either in battle or from the malnutrition and disease that resulted from the war. President Theodore Roosevelt declared amnesty in 1902, calling an official end to the War, although Filipino guerilla resistance would continue for yet another decade.

The United States initiated sweeping educational and economic changes to its newly acquired territory and declared English as the official language. By 1904, 10,000–12,000 Americans were living in the Philippines with the express goal of aiding in the colonial project. The vast majority of them were teachers and administrators who worked to Americanize the Philippines. One of their first goals entailed teaching English to the Philippine population, which spoke more than 80 dialects and languages. Students were also taught American history. In their determination to instill American values so that Filipinos would be "civilized" enough for eventual self-rule, educators likewise instructed Filipinas (Filipino women) in home economics and Filipinos in agriculture.

Like their Spanish predecessors, American colonials derided the local cuisine. Whereas the Spaniards left Filipinos to eat their traditional foods, however, Americans worked diligently to Americanize the Filipino diet. Toward that end, they not only imported American processed foods for their own meals but also instituted educational reform to teach Filipinos about the inferiority of their native ingredients and to laud the superiority of American imported goods. For example, the standard curriculum in American public schools touted the benefits of condensed milk, which it argued far surpassed those of the local water buffalo milk and coconut milk. Students were taught that Western grains held greater nutritional value than rice.

Beginning in the 1920s, advertisements for American goods trumpeted their health benefits and played up notions of Western sophistication. They also worked to insert their products into daily life in the Philippines. Heinz created ads that positioned its ketchup as an easy replacement for

traditional sauces, promoting its ready-made product as a substitute for the sauce of brown sugar, lemongrass, and pork liver that traditionally accompanied spit-roasted pig (*lechon*). It also promoted its apple cider vinegar as a substitute for the tropical fruit vinegars that flavored the national dish adobo. In a like manner, Lea & Perrins advertised a recipe for adobo that substituted its Worcestershire sauce for the traditional soy sauce. In effect, the colonial project worked to create a Filipino middle class with a taste for American culture and a desire to consume it in the form of processed food.

For those students who did not hail from wealthy families, these initial lessons in Western cookery and the consumption of American goods were theoretical exercises; their homes and their budgets were ill-equipped to prepare many of the foods they were taught to make in school, including muffins, jelly rolls, ice cream, puddings, sponge cakes, and cookies. The emphasis on sweets belied the growing American addiction to sugar, one enabled by the annexation of the Philippines and Hawaii and fed by their sugar plantations, where generations of Asians labored under poor working conditions.

As with most imperial conquests, the Philippines was locked into a series of trade agreements that tied the nation strongly to the United States. In effect, the Philippines was transformed into an agricultural economy that exported its crops, namely, sugar and coconut, to the United States. In turn, the Philippines was made to import U.S.-manufactured goods, including large amounts of meat and dairy as well as canned and bottled goods. In 1900, U.S. goods accounted for 11 percent of all the imports to the Philippines. By 1934, U.S. imports accounted for 72 percent. When the United States finally passed a bill in 1934 that granted independence to the Philippines, it stipulated a 10-year interim period for the transition. The United States also mandated that American goods continue to enter the Philippines duty-free during this transitional decade, simultaneously stipulating that Philippine exports to the United States be subjected to tariffs. By the end of U.S. colonialism, Filipinos of all classes had adopted U.S. processed foods into their diet. Everyday recipes include such ingredients as Spam, Vienna sausages, canned peaches, and condensed milk.

Early Immigration to the United States

Louisiana Manilamen

Filipinos first settled in what would become the state of Louisiana as far back as the 1760s. These settlers, known as Manilamen, arrived in the region aboard Spanish galleon ships, which carried goods for trade between Manila

and Acapulco, Mexico, from 1565 to 1815. As colonial subjects of Spain, Filipinos were conscripted to work as crewmen on New World trade vessels and Filipinas were sometimes brought along as prostitutes. Once landed in Acapulco, the ships stayed in port for three months at a time to gather goods and replenish provisions for the arduous return home. Because they often spoke Spanish, Filipinos found an easy time blending with the native culture and some chose to stay behind in order to escape the harsh treatment aboard ship. As a result, Filipino settlements in Acapulco date back to the 16th century. By 1763, Filipinos had made their way across the Gulf of Mexico to settle in southern Louisiana, where they built fishing villages in the Louisiana bayous and marshes. Filipinos were drawn to the Louisiana wetlands, in large part, because they resembled those found throughout the Philippines. Skilled fishermen, Filipinos helped develop the first major shrimping businesses in the Gulf Coast.

St. Malo, outside of New Orleans, and Manila Village, in the Mississippi Delta, became two of the largest Filipino settlements. The first to be established, St. Malo was a community of around 100 fishermen who sold their catch to the Italian and Spanish fishmongers who supplied New Orleans. Built on 50 acres of marshland, Manila Village introduced a method of drying and processing shrimp to the United States that had first been taught to Filipinos by Chinese shrimpers in the Philippines. Both villages housed giant platforms for air-drying the shrimp. After the shrimp had been boiled in brine and then dried in the sun, workers would then separate the shells from the shrimp flesh by performing a slow, rhythmic movement known as "dancing the shrimp." The "dance," also known as the "shrimp step," was sometimes accompanied by guitar.

Pensionados, Navy Veterans, and Laborers

From the time the United States established a colonial government in 1900 through the end of World War II, it sought to Americanize the Philippines and to create Western-educated Filipino leaders for the colonial territory. Toward that end, it established the *pensionado* program, a government-funded exchange that brought promising students to the United States. These students were expected to return home to become leaders in government, business, agriculture, education, and engineering. From 1903 to 1911, 289 Philippine students were educated in U.S. colleges and universities. Placed with American families, pensionados not only received an American education but also learned about American family values and etiquette. Spurred by the success of the pensionados as well as by their own education in an Americanized public school system, around 14,000 non-sponsored Filipino students had traveled to the United States by 1938 in

order to attend college. Students who arrived without government funding often supported their studies by working in the agricultural fields in California, Oregon, and Washington.

Other early immigrants to the mainland United States included Filipino veterans of the U.S. Navy. Filipinos had been inducted into the U.S. military as part of the colonial project, which worked to create loyal Americanized subjects and to defend the United States' growing political and economic interests in the region. The extensive U.S. military presence in the Philippines was first established during the Philippine-American War when three U.S. Navy bases were built. As late as 1987, the U.S. military was the nation's second largest employer, only outranked by the Philippine government itself. Although serving in the U.S. Navy was perceived as a desirable job, especially given the comparatively high salary of an enlistee, Filipinos were restricted in their employment opportunities; they could work as mess attendants and stewards. As late as 1970, 80 percent of the 16,669 Filipinos serving in the U.S. Navy ranked as stewards. As a result of their Navy background, many Filipino immigrants to the United States have settled in large port cities such as Seattle, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

In addition to Filipino students and military veterans, the early wave of Filipino immigration included laborers who worked on Hawaiian sugar and pineapple plantations and served as a major source of labor along the West Coast from the Alaskan canneries to the agricultural fields of southern California. Like Asian immigrants before them, Filipinos found their job opportunities in the United States severely limited. So whether a Filipino arrived with a medical degree and years of practical experience or with little formal education, he would most likely support himself by working as an agricultural laborer. Unlike the previous Asian immigrants who arrived as aliens, however, Filipinos arrived as U.S. nationals. Not only did early Filipino immigrants arrive in the United States with American passports, but well-educated Filipino migrants likewise spoke fluent English, having been taught in an Americanized education system.

Despite the fact that they hailed from an American territory, however, Filipino migrants to Hawaii and the mainland United States experienced strong prejudice and hostility, just as other Asian immigrants did, yet with the added burden of being the most recent group to arrive. By the time Filipinos began to migrate in large numbers, many Chinese and Japanese immigrants had already risen from the ranks of laborers to farm owners or had established themselves as skilled workers, managers, or labor contractors in agricultural fields and canneries. As a result, early Filipino immigrants entered the country at the lowest position in the racial hierarchy and were often forced to work in the least desirable jobs and for the lowest pay.

A Filipino immigrant working in cauliflower fields near Santa Maria, California, in 1937. Like other Asian immigrants, Filipinos found their job opportunities in the United States severely limited. So whether an immigrant arrived with a medical degree or with little formal education, he would most likely work as an agricultural laborer. (Corbis)

As U.S. nationals, however, Filipinos were not included in the immigration exclusion laws that barred other Asians. In fact, the 1924 National Origins Act, which prohibited immigration to anyone illegible for U.S. citizenship, resulted in a spike in demand for Filipino labor in Hawaii and on the West Coast. Between 1906 and 1935, the Hawaiian Sugar Plantation Association hired over 120,000 Filipinos, who became the preferred Asian workforce to replace the Japanese laborers barred by the 1907–1908 Gentlemen's Agreement. The shift from a primarily Japanese to a Filipino workforce took place over a remarkably short period. From 1915 to 1932, the Filipino labor force

rose from 19 to 70 percent of all sugar plantation workers, while the Japanese labor force declined from 54 to 19 percent.

Policies implemented by the United States led to economically devastating consequences in regions of the Philippines, which, in turn, encouraged immigration. As part of the colonial project, the United States transformed the Philippine economy into one based on agricultural exports. The Ilocos region, for example, had a strong textile industry at the time the United States first colonized the country. Because the United States preferred to import raw goods and labor from the Philippines rather than manufactured goods, Ilocos began to export human resources in the form of agricultural laborers to work in Hawaii and on the West Coast. Many immigrant laborers also hailed from the hard-pressed eastern region of Visayas. Because the working conditions on the Hawaiian sugar plantations were brutal and demeaning, many Filipinos, like the Chinese and Japanese before them, eventually migrated to the mainland.

Over 30,000 Filipinos had settled in California by 1930. One-third of this population lived in the vicinity of Stockton, which served as a hub for the region's migratory labor force. From the close of the 1920s up through World War II, Filipinos served as the primary labor force in the agricultural economy of San Joaquin County, which had recently undergone a transformation from small family farms into huge agribusinesses that depended on cheap labor for large profits. By 1930, Filipinos comprised over 80 percent of the asparagus workers in the Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta region and close to 14 percent of all farm labor in California. Asparagus farmers especially prized Filipino workers for their cutting skills. Field workers were expected to harvest 8–10 acres of asparagus a day, seven days a week. In addition to asparagus, Filipino laborers cultivated and harvested lettuce, beets, tomatoes, peaches, apples, berries, melon, hops, celery, grapes, melons, potatoes, brussels sprouts, artichokes, and onions among many other crops. Whereas Filipino men typically worked in the fields, Filipinas sorted and packed the fruits and vegetables for distribution and also worked as cooks at the camps where the laborers slept at night. Since men outnumbered women 14–1, however, most camp cooks were men.

Migratory workers often headed to Alaska to work in the salmon canneries for the summer. Some stayed on and married Native Alaskan women and taught them to make their favorite Filipino dishes. In order to save money, canneries sometimes supplied the labor camps with meager and inexpensive rations. When Filipino cannery workers finally unionized in 1937, one of their first demands was for better and more varied meals. Meals served in the farm camps (*campos*) could be almost as bad as those served in canneries, although they inevitably included whatever produce the crew was harvesting

at the time. Those crews fortunate enough to work for a Filipino contractor generally fared best; contractors not only negotiated wages for their crew but also for the quality of their food and housing, the latter of which didn't include running water or electricity until the 1970s in the Central Valley.

During the Depression, anti-Filipino sentiment rose sharply, and various forces worked to block further immigration. Such sentiment helped drive the Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act through Congress. The Act, which granted the Philippines future independence, limited Filipino immigration to the mainland United States to 50 persons a year and rescinded Filipino naturalization, a gesture that immediately transformed Filipinos into aliens. The Act exempted those Filipinos who had served in the U.S. armed forces; most of these servicemen had been recruited into the Navy after the United States claimed the Philippines as its territory. During the 1920s and 1930s, Filipinos accounted for about 5 percent, or 4,000, of those active in the U.S. Navy.

Immigration after World War II

When Japan invaded the Philippines just hours after it attacked Pearl Harbor, Filipinos and Filipino Americans alike were eager to fight for and with the U.S. military. Their wartime valor transformed the way Filipinos were treated in the United States. After the war, the United States relaxed the stringent laws against Filipino immigration that had been in place since the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. This relaxation enabled 33,000 Filipinos to immigrate to the United States before the national origins quota was abolished in 1965. Among these were war veterans and war brides, the latter of whom numbered among the first sizable influx of Filipino women to the United States. In addition to war brides, postwar immigrants included the final group of laborers to be recruited for work on the Hawaiian sugar plantation. With the abolition of the national origins quota system in 1965, Filipinos have arrived in record numbers, surpassing all other immigrant groups with the exception of Mexicans. The 1960 U.S. Census recorded 176,310 Filipinos living in the United States. The 2010 Census counted 3.4 million.

The Rise of Filipino American Food

As a result of colonization, early 20th-century Filipino immigrants had significant degrees of exposure to American foods. They also benefited in many ways from the Asian immigrants who preceded them. Chinese and Japanese farmers had already pioneered the Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta rice fields in California and become established truck farmers, often growing and selling Asian vegetables such as bitter melon, eggplant, okra,

and sweet potatoes. Short-grain rice and glutinous rice were both readily available. Soy sauce and tofu could be easily found in Chinatowns. Filipino immigrants likewise readily adapted their favorite dishes to accommodate the ingredients on hand. Alaskan adobo, for example, might be made with beaver, moose, duck, geese, or even porcupine. Field and cannery laborers also used inexpensive ingredients such as pigs' tails, chickens' feet, pork bellies, and pigs' trotters, resulting in such dishes as pigs' trotter adobo.

In the Alaskan canneries, meal rations could be substandard, as managers frequently expected their workers to live off a regular diet of rice and fish for lunch and dinner. Breakfast might consist of an unbuttered biscuit or eggs and rice. In order to supplement such imbalanced meals, cannery workers hunted deer and bear, raised pigs when possible, and transformed salmon scraps into two of their favorite flavorings—fish paste (*bagoong*) and fish sauce (*patis*). The farming regions of California, Washington, and Oregon, likewise teemed with wildlife, enabling laborers to supplement their meals with fish and game. At their best, camp meals consisted of ample rice, fish, meat, and vegetables. Breakfast might include coffee, toast, eggs, and leftover rice from the evening before. When possible, laborers planted gardens that included such vegetables as bitter melon, luffa gourd (*patola*), watercress, okra, and Filipino medicinal greens such as Malabar spinach (*alugbati*) and wolfberry, or goji, leaves. Laborers also raised chickens. Fishing in local rivers, laborers caught salmon, bass, catfish, river snails, and frogs. Depending on the time of year and their location along the West Coast, laborers could hunt pigeons, ducks, pheasants, quail, hares, deer, rabbits, and even swans. When times were good, crews would often celebrate the end of a harvest with a pig roast (*lechon*). The pig, which could weigh upwards of 300 pounds, would be spit-roasted whole and its blood used to make stew.

As early as the 1920s, Filipinos began opening restaurants and grocery stores in Chinatowns. While a few of these early restaurants specialized in regional cuisines—namely, Visayan and Ilocano—many focused on staple Filipino dishes and melded the regional ingredients and cooking styles. Because of their familiarity with Chinese cuisine and the fact that Little Manilas, also known as Manilatowns and Filipinotowns, were dependent on and abutted Chinatowns, Filipinos frequented Chinese restaurants in large numbers. In locations without a Little Manila, in fact, Chinese restaurants might well be the only establishments where Filipinos were welcome to dine.

Little Manilas developed as early as the 1930s in those urban centers with the highest concentrations of immigrants—namely Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and Stockton. The first Filipino American grocery chain got its start in Pismo Beach, California, in 1936. P.I. Market (short for Philippine Islands) became a hub for the Filipino American community, where people could find out about local job openings, locate families living in the area,

and arrange for travel between northern and southern California. P.I. Market eventually expanded to open in three additional California locations—Los Angeles, Salinas, and Montalvo.

THE RISE OF VIETNAMESE AMERICA

Wars, Conquests, and the Making of Vietnamese Cuisine

As with Korea, Japan, and the Philippines, the cookery and the diaspora of Vietnam were profoundly influenced by wars and conquests. Chinese rule, Mongol invasion, the expansion of Vietnam's borders southward into Indian-influenced Cham and Khmer territory, and French colonization have all contributed to the development of the nation's cuisine. Distinguished by the prominent use of fresh herbs, raw vegetables, fish, fish sauce, and fish paste as well as by the absence of animal fat and sparing use of vegetable oils, Vietnamese food is among the world's healthiest.

China ruled Vietnam for close to 1,000 years leaving behind an inheritance that includes the use of chopsticks; the consumption of star anise, rice noodles, and soy products; and the techniques of stir-frying and deep-frying in a wok. The adoption of Buddhism from China likewise led Vietnam to develop a highly sophisticated vegetarian cuisine. Northern Vietnam inherited a taste for beef during the Mongol invasion in the 13th century, enabling the eventual creation of such specialties as *thit bo bay mon* (seven dishes beef) and *lau* (meat cooked in a Mongolian hot pot). Sixteenth-century European merchants introduced New World ingredients such as peanuts, tomatoes, corn, and potatoes. When Vietnam expanded its southern borders at the end of the 18th century, it absorbed Indian spices and coconut milk from the Indianized Southeast Asian cultures of Cham and Khmer.

From 1859 to 1954, France ruled Vietnam, embedding colonial influences into Vietnamese culture. A hallmark of colonization is the use of the conquered country and its people to produce valuable resources for export. Toward this end, the French colonial government turned Vietnam into one of the world's leading coffee bean growers and the Vietnamese into avid coffee consumers. The French also introduced the consumption of asparagus, dill, charcuterie, breads, and pastries. Each of these French foods was adapted, however, to create distinctively Vietnamese dishes. Because of the heat and scarcity of refrigeration, Vietnamese coffee eschews milk and sugar for condensed milk and is frequently served over ice. In Vietnam, the rich butter and cream base of the French asparagus velouté soup, which is often garnished with crab, was transformed into the delicate *mang tay nau cua* ("French bamboo" and crab soup) with a chicken broth, fish sauce, and vegetable oil base. The French baguette spread with cheese or pâté became

bánh mì, a sandwich that features a combination of protein, vegetable pickle, herbs, and butter or mayonnaise. The Vietnamese baguette typically incorporates rice flour, which gives the crust extra crunch. Favored fillings include Vietnamese charcuterie, grilled or roasted meats, crispy pork skin, Chinese *char siu* (barbecued pork), tofu, sweet and sour daikon and carrot pickle, chili peppers, and cilantro. One U.S. food historian draws a link between Louisiana's poor boy sandwich and Vietnam's *bánh mì* to argue that the two are related in that they were both created by cultures under French domination. *Pho* (pronounced fuh) is believed by some to be yet another adaptation of a French dish—namely, pot-au-feu. In particular, some chefs and historians point to the similarity in pronunciation, the starring role of beef, and the foundation of bone marrow broth for both soups as convincing evidence of their connection.

From French Colonialism to the Vietnam War

From 1862 to 1893, France incrementally colonized Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, naming the collective regions Indochina. By the 1920s, an

Water spinach, a member of the morning glory family, is consumed in large quantities by Chinese Americans and Southeast Asian Americans. The centrality of water spinach to the Southeast Asian diet has led to its wide cultivation in regions where Indochina War refugees have settled such as Florida, Texas, and California. (Carl Pendle/the food passionates/Corbis)

anticolonial movement had begun to coalesce in the region. At the outbreak of World War II, the Indochinese Communist Party established the Vietnamese Independence League, or Vietminh, which was led by Ho Chi Minh. In 1945, the Vietminh began to capture and control the major cities in Vietnam, and Ho Chi Minh proclaimed Vietnam's independence. At the close of World War II, France tried to reclaim Indochina. The Vietminh, backed by China and the Soviet Union, established a resistance movement that led to the First Indochina War of 1946–1954. France eventually surrendered, and Vietnam was divided into North and South. At this juncture, the United States, which had paid much of France's bill for the first Indochina War, became increasingly involved, backing anti-Communist parties. In 1963, the United States began conducting massive bombing raids on the North. The Second Indochina War, or Vietnam War, began in 1965 when President Lyndon Johnson deployed U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam. By the time the United States withdrew from Vietnam in 1975, over 2.5 million American soldiers had served in the war.

Having experienced French colonial rule, a temporary Japanese overthrow of French colonial powers from March through August of 1945, and a continuous war from 1954 to 1975, the Vietnamese population suffered a deep familiarity with food scarcity through much of the 20th century. Upwards of 2 million Vietnamese died of starvation as a result of the Japanese occupation alone. Throughout the Indochina War and its aftermath, the daily diet for many consisted of rice topped with a bit of fish sauce or fish paste, both fermented protein-dense products that can be kept for years without spoiling. When possible, this diet would be supplemented with foraged or cultivated herbs and vegetables as well as fresh fish. For far too many, however, even this meager diet was impossible; Vietnam's food supplies were devastated by the estimated 20 million gallons of herbicides the U.S. dropped on rice paddies, orchards, vegetable gardens, and mangroves from 1961 to 1971. Rural Vietnamese were often forced to choose between eating poisoned plants or starving.

Variously known as *trokuon* in Cambodia, *pak bong* in Laos, and *rau muong* in Vietnam, water spinach played a crucial culinary role in the Vietnam War, serving as essential sustenance for Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians alike. It grew well in the 10–15 million craters left by bombs the U.S. dropped on the three countries—roughly 100 times the combined impact of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Because the craters would catch rainwater, Vietnamese soldiers stocked them with fish as well as water spinach. The stocked bomb craters that lined the Ho Chi Minh trail (the main thoroughfare for the Vietminh) enabled a fresh supply of food for the soldiers. The greens and fish from the bomb craters were also dried in large quantities.

The withdrawal of the United States in 1975 left many southern Vietnamese without the supplemental rations they had come to rely on, especially after the defoliation of much of their countryside. It would take until 1991 for Vietnam to begin economic recovery, after a change in government led to a shift toward a market economy; borders were opened to foreign trade and foreign investment, farms were returned to farming families, and the state loosened its control over rice supplies. Rising production has significantly improved living standards. Restaurants have even begun to thrive in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) and Hanoi.

Immigration to the United States

Before 1975, the few Vietnamese who lived in the United States were mostly students or spouses and children of Americans who had served in the Vietnam War. All that changed in April 1975 when Saigon fell to Communist control and the first wave of Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian immigration began. This first wave included 130,000 Vietnamese and Cambodians who had strong ties to the U.S. government or to American officials. The first wave largely consisted of well-educated and comparatively elite individuals; 70 percent hailed from urban centers and 40 percent were Catholic, a religious inheritance passed on by French missionaries. President Gerald Ford passed the Indochina Migration and Refugee Act of 1975, which established a resettlement program.

The second wave of Vietnamese immigration began in 1977 and would last for about eight years. Following the Communist victory over South Vietnam, the government implemented economic, political, and agricultural policies, some of which were specifically targeted at those Vietnamese presumed to have been affiliated with or loyal to the former South Vietnamese government. These individuals were arrested and sent to "reeducation camps" where they were forced into hard labor and, in some cases, tortured. The Communist government also closed businesses, many of which were owned by ethnic Chinese Vietnamese, and seized land from farm owners. As a result, the second wave included former reeducation camp internees as well as Chinese Vietnamese merchants. Many of these second-wave immigrants were Buddhists, and the vast majority hailed from rural backgrounds.

Most of those who fled during the second wave left by boat, and a sizable number of these refugees were brutally killed by pirates or, in the case of women and children, kidnapped and sold into prostitution. Those fleeing by boat included Vietnamese, Chinese Vietnamese, Hmong from the highlands of Laos who had been trained as guerilla insurgents by the CIA, and survivors of the Cambodian purge, during which the Khmer Rouge executed around

3 million nonethnic Khmer. By the end of the 1970s, the mass exodus of refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia had become an international crisis, prompting the United Nations to intervene and establish The Orderly Departure Program to expedite "family reunion and other humanitarian cases." Between 1979 and 1989, around 500,000 Vietnamese refugees entered the United States through the program.

Thousands of these refugees were Vietnamese Amerasians fathered by Americans during the Vietnam War. Known as "the dust of life" or "half-breeds" in Vietnam, these children faced strong prejudice and were often placed in orphanages. The 1982 Amerasian Immigration Act granted preferential immigration status to any child born between 1950 and 1982 who had been fathered by an American GI. The law, however, did not allow family members of Amerasians to join them. As a result, the U.S. government effectively revoked child custody from those Vietnamese mothers who were raising Amerasian children. This legal dilemma was partially corrected in 1987 with the Amerasian Homecoming Act, which allowed Amerasians born between 1962 and 1975 to immigrate along with their mothers, stepfathers, siblings, and half-siblings. In total, about 26,000 Amerasians and 75,000 of their close relatives have immigrated to the United States. The Vietnamese population numbered over 1.7 million in 2010, with approximately two-thirds being foreign born.

The majority of Vietnamese live in coastal fishing regions and in the suburbs of large cities such as Los Angeles, San Jose, Houston, and Washington, D.C. Because a large percentage of refugees worked as fisherfolk in Vietnam, many of these immigrants settled in the Gulf Coast to work in the fishing industries, with the majority settling around Houston, Texas. In addition to the Gulf Coast of Texas, coastal Louisiana has drawn a comparatively large number of Vietnamese. With a population of around 25,000, Vietnamese rank as Louisiana's largest immigrant group. Refugees have been drawn to the New Orleans region in particular. With its French background, large population of Catholics, and subtropical climate, the city proved a natural fit, so much so that Vietnamese were among the first groups to return to the city after Hurricane Katrina in order to rebuild.

Because the Gulf Coast boasted a relatively sparse Asian population prior to 1975, many Vietnamese have suffered racist treatment. In the 1980s, for example, members of the Ku Klux Klan in Galveston Bay, Texas, launched a drive to intimidate Vietnamese fishermen. The targeted Vietnamese sued for and won a federal injunction prohibiting the Klan from further harassment. As of 2010, one-third of the commercial seafood workers in the Gulf Coast were Vietnamese Americans. Because of their heavy investment in the seafood industry, Vietnamese were especially hard-hit by the 2010 British Petroleum oil spill.

The Rise of Little Saigons

The large flow of Vietnamese into the Gulf of Mexico, California, and the area surrounding Washington, D.C. has given rise to thriving Little Saigons, home to Vietnamese supermarkets, delis, bakeries, coffee shops, pho houses, sandwich shops, mom-and-pop restaurants, and banquet halls. Unlike the early Chinatowns, many of which developed in dense urban areas such as San Francisco, large Little Saigons are most often located in strip malls in the suburban outskirts of large metropolitan areas.

Located close to Camp Pendleton, which held a refugee camp that housed upwards of 50,000 Vietnamese at one time, Westminster, California, is home to the nation's most populated Little Saigon. With the largest number of

A woman with a shopping cart passes an eatery located in Westminster, California's Little Saigon, which houses the largest population of Vietnamese outside of Vietnam. Located close to Camp Pendleton, which held a refugee camp that housed upwards of 50,000 Vietnamese at one time, Westminster's Little Saigon boasts over 4,000 businesses and 200 restaurants. (AP Photo)

A dragon dance performed to celebrate Tet in Westminster, California's Little Saigon in 1999. Tet, the Vietnamese New Year, is the most widely celebrated holiday among Vietnamese and Vietnamese Americans alike. (AP Photo/Nick Ut)

Vietnamese outside of Vietnam, Westminster's Little Saigon boasts over 4,000 businesses and 200 restaurants. On the East Coast, a strip mall located at a busy highway exchange in northern Virginia serves as a gathering place for Vietnamese living in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and beyond. In addition to pho houses, coffee shops, pastry shops, restaurants, and grocery stores, outdoor vendors sell fresh herbs, fruits such as durians and longans, sugarcane drinks, and street food. Like any major Asian gathering center, the area known as "Seven Points" or Eden Center hosts New Year's and Autumn Moon festivals every year. In addition to such suburban enclaves, Little Saigons have also been established by Chinese Vietnamese in thriving urban Chinatowns throughout the country.

From Vietnamese to Vietnamese American

Vietnamese cuisine values a variety of textures, flavors, and temperatures within a meal. As a result, cooked ingredients are frequently mixed with raw ingredients, cold foods served with hot foods, and spicy or sour ingredients mixed with mild ingredients. Freshly picked herbs such as cilantro, basil,

mint, and perilla play a starring role as does fish sauce (*nuoc mam*), which is as essential to Vietnamese cookery as soy sauce is to Chinese. The most common seasonings include chilies, garlic, shallots, lemongrass, ginger, galangal, shrimp paste, turmeric, tamarind, and lime juice. Viet cooking eschews lard and other animal fats in favor of light cooking oils. Unlike Chinese who largely consume cooked vegetables, Vietnamese enjoy many of them raw.

Because Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino immigrants preceded those from Vietnam, 1970s refugees entered a United States that had a well-developed Asian American culinary infrastructure in key regions, especially California, where the vast majority of Vietnamese eventually settled. Because most Vietnamese who immigrated had extensive gardening and fishing experience, many have used these skills to make their livelihood in the United States. As they did in Vietnam, immigrants from rural areas often grow the vegetables needed for their daily meals as well as for medicinal purposes. In New Orleans alone, Vietnamese market and backyard gardens include a range of tubers, cucurbits, herbs, leafy greens and vegetables, legumes, medicinal plants, and fruits. Much of the cultivated produce had been difficult to find in the United States. As a result, many of the plants were grown from seeds brought directly from Vietnam or from cuttings received from other gardeners. They are likewise cultivated in a way that resembles the kitchen gardens common throughout Southeast Asia. Just a few of the previously rare plants grown in backyard gardens and popularized by foreign-born Vietnamese immigrants include taro, bitter melon, water spinach, perilla, Vietnamese coriander, Chinese celery, Malabar nightshade, and Jew's mallow. Such backyard gardening is waning, however, as elderly immigrants are dying and as the large Vietnamese-owned farms in Houston and southern California begin to dominate the Vietnamese American produce market throughout the United States.

Water Spinach: From "Noxious Weed" to Dietary Staple

The centrality of water spinach to the Southeast Asian diet has led to its wide cultivation in regions where Indochina War refugees have settled such as Florida, Texas, and California. The ease with which it grows in regions of the country with warm waterways led the U.S. Department of Agriculture to classify it as a "noxious weed," prompting some states to ban its cultivation altogether. Because water spinach is especially popular in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, refugees created a lucrative market for the plant. As a result, many immigrants began to cultivate the plant as a farming crop in the coastal regions of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas.

Water spinach grew so rapidly in the Florida Everglades that pesticides were widely used to halt its spread. In 1990, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department placed water spinach on its list of "Prohibited Fish, Shellfish and Aquatic Plants," a list that includes piranhas, stingrays, and electric eels. It would be another 13 years, however, before Texas game wardens and the USDA would mount a full-scale investigation, which resulted in a raid on 17 grocery stores in the Houston Metropolitan region and the confiscation of 2,000 pounds of water spinach. Conversations between officials from Texas Parks and Wildlife, water spinach farmers, Asian market owners, and the Houston branch of the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce eventually led the Texas Parks officials to back off their enforcement of the prohibition and to order extensive studies of the plant to determine its environmental risk. Ultimately, the official report declared water spinach a low-risk exotic species. As a result, hundreds of Cambodian and Laotian water spinach farmers and Vietnamese wholesalers have been able to legally continue the livelihoods that enabled them to rebuild their lives, which had been decimated by the Vietnam War and its aftereffects.

2

Major Foods and Ingredients

Within East and Southeast Asian cuisines, grain (*fan*, which is typically rice) serves as one-half of a meal's two components—the primary component, or what is eaten to live, and the secondary component, or what is eaten for pleasure. The second, nonessential component consists of vegetable and fish or animal proteins (*cai*). As a result, Asian American meals inevitably include at least one form of rice, although wheat takes the place of rice in the cuisines of northern China. Rice flour and glutinous, or sticky rice, also feature prominently in wrapped foods as well as desserts. Because rice is the foundation of Asian cuisine, Asian Americans consume four times the amount of rice (two cups a day) as the average American (half cup a day). In addition to rice, noodles play a primary role in Asian meals and can be made from a range of ingredients.

Throughout Asia, tremendous emphasis is placed on cooking with the freshest ingredients possible, a trend that characterizes Asian American cuisine. Overall Asian Americans spend about 75 percent more on fruits and vegetables a year than non-Asian Americans. Asian markets carry an array of fresh produce including pea shoots, galangal, pandan leaves, lotus root, jackfruit, rambutan, lychee, and star fruit. Seafood tanks hold live specimens including catfish, crayfish, blue crabs, bass, carp, oysters, clams, tilapia, and eel. Condiment aisles contain a dizzying selection of chili pastes and sauces, tamarind concentrates, fermented bean pastes, soy sauces, black vinegar, fish sauces, shrimp pastes, fruit vinegars, hoisin sauces, rice wines, and oyster sauces to name just a few of the items used on a daily basis.

GRAINS, NOODLES, AND WRAPPERS

Rice

Serving as the staple ingredient of Asian American meals, rice takes part in the daily diet in a variety of forms. It is shaped into wrappers for spring rolls, fashioned into confections for dessert, made into crackers, formed into noodles, or boiled to serve as the canvas of a meal onto which secondary ingredients are placed. Although thousands of rice varieties exist, they all fall within a spectrum ranging from long grain to short grain. Polished, or white, rice is preferred by Asians and Asian Americans alike. The length of the grain as well as its aroma, flavor, firmness, and stickiness determine its use.

Long-Grain Rice: Essential to much of Chinese and Southeast Asian cuisine, long-grain rice has less starch than the short-grain varieties, so the grains maintain their integrity when cooked. Long-grain rice has been cultivated in the United States since 1694, growing readily in South Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and California. Because American rice is well suited for use in most Chinese and Southeast Asian dishes, much of the rice consumed by Asian Americans is grown in the United States, with "Extra Fancy Texas

A bowl of rice typically serves as the canvas of a meal onto which secondary ingredients are placed. Because rice is the foundation of Asian cuisine, Asian Americans consume four times the amount of rice (two cups a day) as the average American (half cup a day). (Dreamstime.com)

Long Grain" being a particular favorite. *Hom mali* (meaning fragrant jasmine), a hybrid developed and imported from Thailand, is another popular variety and is highly valued for its aroma, which resembles that of the pandan leaf.

Medium- and Short-Grain Rice: Used in traditional Japanese American and Korean American cooking, medium-grain rice can be used interchangeably with short-grain rice. Although Japanese grow and consume short-grain rice for daily eating as well as for making sushi, Japanese Americans typically consume medium-grain rice, much of which is grown in California. The "new rice," or *shinmai*, that reaches the market in October and November is especially valued. Containing more starch than long-grain rice, the short- and medium-grain rice grains tend to cling together and cook to a softer consistency.

Sticky, or Glutinous, Rice: So-called glutinous rice actually contains no gluten. Rather, its starch content, which is considerably higher than other rice, provides the stickiness that earns its name and makes it well suited for snacks and desserts.

Wheat

Products made from wheat flour play a common role in traditional Chinese American, Japanese American, and Korean American meals. Asian American Buddhists consume meat substitutes that are often made from wheat gluten, or seitan, which contains the main protein found in wheat. Wheat gluten is also used as a tofu substitute in soups, noodle broths, and one-pot dishes. In northern China, breads, noodles, and dumplings made with wheat flour frequently replace rice as a staple.

Noodles

Noodles have played a role in Chinese cuisine for millennia. From China, noodles spread to Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia, where they feature prominently in the daily diet.

Buckwheat Noodles: These noodles are also known as *soba*, the Japanese word for the noodle and for the fruit seed from which it is made. Buckwheat noodles, which have a firm texture and slightly nutty flavor, are typically served cold with a dipping sauce or hot with a broth. This staple of northern Japanese cuisine is eaten on New Year's Eve.

Mung Bean Noodles: Popular throughout Japan, Thailand, Burma, Vietnam, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia, these semitransparent noodles are also known as cellophane, glass, or bean thread noodles.

Rice Noodles: Southeast Asian meals that are not served with rice will usually contain rice noodles, which come in a range of shapes and sizes. They vary from the ultra-thin noodles, like vermicelli or angel hair, to flat noodles from ⅛ inch to several inches in width.

Wheat Noodles: Plain wheat noodles are made fresh from a mixture of flour and water. Egg is frequently added to this mixture. Chinese restaurants specializing in hand-pulled noodles, which require significant skill to make, have begun to proliferate in the United States.

Wrappers

Spring Roll Wrappers: A traditional specialty made for the Chinese New Year, spring rolls were originally shaped to resemble gold bars, which represented prosperity. Although the name "spring rolls" is currently used to describe a wide range of wrapped foods, the original version consisted of a small, golden, deep-fried bundle, so-named because the Chinese New Year occurs in the spring. Although the traditional Chinese spring roll wrappers are made from wheat flour and water, rolls prepared in Southeast Asia, such as Vietnamese spring rolls, are often made with rice paper.

Lumpia Wrappers: These crepe-like, wheat-based egg wrappers are used for Filipino spring rolls (lumpia). They differ from Chinese spring roll wrappers in that they include tapioca or corn starch.

Rice Paper: These paper-thin wrappers come in various-sizes and shapes. The thickness of the wrappers as well as the ratio of rice flour to water used to make them varies from brand to brand and depends on whether the wrapped ingredients are intended to be eaten fresh, deep-fried, boiled, or steamed.

Wonton Skins or Wrappers: Made of wheat flour, these noodles are made with or without egg. The latter are usually labeled *Shanghai wonton wrappers*. Those labeled *glass* are stretched so thin that they are see-through. Wontons are used to wrap a variety of dumplings, including Chinese potstickers (*jiaozi*), open dumplings (*siu mai*), or dumplings for the Korean soup *mandu guk*.

Yuba, or Bean Curd Skins: These protein-dense wrappers are made from the thin skin that forms at the top of soy milk when it is simmered to make tofu. Fresh, half-dried, and dried yuba is sold in sheets and strips.

LEGUMES

Adzuki Beans: The tender, red adzuki beans are especially popular in Japan and China, where red represents good fortune. In Japanese cuisine they are steamed with glutinous rice to make festive red rice or boiled, mashed, and

sweetened to make a paste used in many desserts. Steeped in sugar syrup, adzuki beans are also added to shaved ice desserts popular among Filipino Americans.

Mung Beans: This legume ranks second in importance behind the soybean. Mung beans are cooked and eaten whole, made into cellophane noodles, ground and sweetened to stuff into pastries, fermented into bean paste, boiled and mashed to add to porridge or gruel, and even made into bean curd. Their most popular use in the United States, however, is to make bean sprouts, which are eaten raw and stir-fried. Mung beans have been cultivated in the United States since at least the early 19th century, when they were called Chickasaw peas.

Peanuts: Although commonly thought of as a nut, the peanut is actually a legume that grows underground, hence its alternate name, groundnut. A rich protein source, peanuts are a valued crop throughout China and Southeast Asia, where they are boiled and eaten as a snack, sautéed whole in stir-fried dishes, ground into a paste for inclusion in a variety of salad dressings and sauces, and roasted and crushed for use as a garnish. Peanut oil is valued for cooking because it can be heated to a high temperature before it begins to smoke, or burn. It is often used for deep-frying.

Soybeans: In their fresh form, known as edamame, green soybeans are gathered when they reach around 80 percent maturity. These fresh beans can be briefly boiled in salted water and enjoyed straight from the pod as a snack. Mature, dried soybeans come in a variety of shapes and colors, ranging from the round yellow variety commonly found in Asian markets to the black variety that is used to make Chinese black bean paste and sauce. Soybeans contain a substance that inhibits protein absorption in the human body. The protein inhibitor, however, can be neutralized by prolonged cooking. When eaten whole, dried beans are typically pre-soaked, a method that significantly reduces the cooking time required to deactivate the protein absorption inhibitor. Soybeans are also frequently processed into easily digestible forms such as tofu, soy milk, and fermented products such as tempeh, miso, and soy sauce.

Tempeh: This fermented soybean cake is dense in protein, making it well suited to vegetarian cooking. It is commonly marinated in garlic and deep-fried, simmered in soy sauce, steamed in banana leaves, or diced to add to stews and salads. Because tempeh was widely adopted by American vegetarians in the 1970s, it is readily found at natural food stores and vegetarian-friendly mainstream chains as well as at Asian markets.

Tofu, or Bean Curd: A staple of Asian cooking, tofu originated in China over 2,000 years ago. Made from the milk of soybeans that have been soaked, cooked, and crushed, tofu comes in a variety of textures, from soft, or silken, to firm. Rich in protein and light in calories, tofu has been made commercially

These fresh green soybeans, also known as edamame, are gathered when they are not yet fully mature. For a healthy snack, they are briefly steamed or boiled and eaten straight from the pod. (Le-thuy Do/Dreamstime.com)

in the United States since 1878, when Wo Sing & Company began making fermented and fresh tofu in San Francisco.

FRUITS

Banana: Technically an herb that grows to tree size, the banana plant thrives throughout Asia and the Pacific Region and is valued for much more than just its fruit. Its buds, leaves, and trunk are also used in cooking. The ripe fruit is commonly eaten as a dessert, while the green fruit is cooked. Also known as the banana flower or banana blossom, the bud is prized as a vegetable throughout Southeast Asia.

Carambola, or Starfruit: A popular ingredient in Southeast Asian and Chinese cooking, carambola is valued for its thirst-quenching, crisp flesh. Like papaya and mango, it is eaten as a fruit when ripe and as a vegetable when green, or unripe. Unripe carambola is also used as a souring agent.

Coconut: The coconut contains meat and water, both of which play an integral role in the daily diet of Southeast Asia. When a mature nut, or stone, is opened, the shell will be lined with the firm, white flesh known as coconut meat. The meat is often grated fresh to use in a range of savory

and sweet dishes or toasted to use in vegetable salads or to thicken curries. The clear sweet liquid housed at the center of a green, or unripe, coconut is known as "water" and makes for a refreshing and restorative beverage. The coconut water found at the center of a green nut should not be confused with coconut milk, which is made by pouring boiling hot water over the freshly grated meat of a mature nut and pressing to release the meat's juice, which is used in curries, sauces, soups, and desserts.

Durian: So odiferous that it is banned from some public spaces, this fruit has a flesh prized throughout Southeast Asia. Thought by some as having a smell like dirty diapers or rotten onions, durian has a custard-like texture and a unique flavor somewhat akin to other tropical fruits, but with a dash of vanilla. In addition to being prized from its spiky skin and enjoyed fresh, it is also made into ice cream, candy, and preserves.

Jackfruit: Weighing upwards of 90 pounds, jackfruit is the largest of tree fruits. The seeds of ripe jackfruit, sometimes referred to as *breadnuts*, are boiled or roasted to remove their bitterness, removed from their outer layer or covering, and then eaten as a snack. These seeds are enclosed in yellow-to-pink-colored flesh that tastes somewhat of banana and pineapple. As with many tropical fruits consumed in Asia, the flesh of the unripe jackfruit is eaten as a vegetable and that of the ripe fruit is eaten as fruit.

Jujubes, or Chinese Dates, or Red Dates: Used in both sweet and savory cooking, this olive-shaped fruit is dried, candied, or eaten fresh. At its peak stage, the fresh jujube tastes somewhat like a sweet, crisp apple. Dried jujubes are readily available at Asian markets and are often added to chicken dishes, soups, and stocks.

Kalamansi/Calamansi/, or Kalamondin/Calamondin: This hybrid of a mandarin orange and a kumquat is an essential ingredient in Filipino cooking. It is used to make a refreshing beverage, to season dishes, as an ingredient in marinades, and as a condiment to enliven both savory and sweet dishes. It is also mixed with soy sauce to make *toyomansi*, a basic Filipino dipping sauce.

Longan: This relative of the lychee is enjoyed for its sweet and succulent flesh. It may be eaten fresh as a dessert. When dried it is eaten as a snack or incorporated into soups and assorted desserts.

Lychee and Rambutan: These closely related fruits are cultivated throughout Southeast Asia. Lychees, which have been cultivated in China since at least the first century BC, were so prized that special couriers were dispatched to deliver freshly picked lychees to the imperial court. Today they grow readily in Hawaii and Florida. Whereas lychee grows to about 1 inch in diameter and have a prickly, brown skin, rambutan grows to about 3 inches in diameter and have hairy (*rambut* is the Malay word for hair), colorful skins ranging from crimson to green. Of the same genus as the lychee, rambutan has a more acidic flavor. Both fruits are sweet and highly aromatic.

Lychees were so prized in ancient China that the imperial court retained special couriers to deliver just-picked fruits as quickly as possible. Today lychees grow readily in Hawaii, Florida, and a few frost-free coastal regions of southern California. (Margouillat/Dreamstime.com)

Mandarin, or Tangerine: Thought to bring good fortune and happiness, the mandarin is especially popular during Chinese New Year celebrations. Smaller and less acidic than an orange, the mandarin was first planted in the United States in the 1840s. The pulp of the mandarin is usually eaten fresh, while the rind is dried for use as an aromatic in cooking and is paired often with duck and pork.

Mango: Cultivated in India since at least 2000 BC, mangoes are eaten raw, juiced, made into chutneys and pickles as well as used to flavor a variety of sweets. The ripe fruit has a velvety, aromatic, and delicate flavor and yellow to orange flesh. Green mangoes are either the unripened form of the sweet golden mango or a green mango variety that maintains a tart, crisp flesh when ripened. Green mangoes are added raw to salads or dipped in spicy

sauce for a snack. Pickled green mango is also much enjoyed in the Philippines, where it is known as *burong mangga*.

Mangosteen: Around the size of a mandarin, this segmented fruit has a thick purplish skin. When perfectly ripened, its delicate white flesh enjoys a flavor remarkable enough to have inspired countless writers to words of rapture.

Papaya: Like mango and carambola, this pear-shaped fruit is eaten as a snack or dessert when ripe and treated as a vegetable when unripe. When ripe, papaya has yellow to orange skin and creamy, sweet, orange flesh. An unripe papaya will have green skin and flesh that yields a crisp texture well suited to salads.

Pummelo, or Pomelo: Also known as Chinese grapefruit, this ancestor of the grapefruit is the largest of all citrus fruits, reaching up to one foot in diameter. Unlike most citrus fruits, which have a thin skin, the pummelo has an unusually thick pith and rind. Within Chinese and Vietnamese cultures, the pummelo is a prized celebratory fruit during the New Year. Typically eaten as a dessert, pummelo also appears in salads or in savory meat or fish dishes. The pith may be used as a vegetable or made into tea.

Wolfberry, or Goji: Sold mostly in dried form, the berries from this boxthorn shrub are valued for their sweet-sour flavor. They are added to stocks, soups, and stir-fries. Believed by the Chinese to be good for the eyes as well as the kidneys, wolfberries have become readily available in the United States within the past decade, during which they have gained a trendy status among the health conscious.

NUTS AND SEEDS

Chestnuts: Extremely popular in Japan, fresh chestnuts are steamed, baked, grilled, cooked in rice, and fashioned into an array of sweets. Dried chestnuts are more commonly used in Chinese cooking, featuring in braised duck and pork dishes.

Ginkgo Nuts: The fruit of a prehistoric tree, gingko nuts are used in Chinese traditional medicine to alleviate bladder and kidney problems. In China and Japan, they are also roasted, boiled, or steamed and eaten as a snack or incorporated into sweet and savory dishes. A primary ingredient in Japanese savory custards, ginkgo nuts are also threaded on pine needles and fried for a popular snack in Japan and Korea.

Sesame Seeds: Used frequently in East Asian cuisines, sesame seeds range in color from white to black and are commonly roasted and sprinkled on a range of dishes to which they lend a delicate nuttiness. Toasted and crushed sesame seeds appear in dressings, sauces, and marinades. The oil derived from sesame seeds is much prized by Asian cultures and is commonly used as a seasoning.

MEAT

Meat consumption is rising in many regions of the world, including Asia. Traditionally, however, Asians consume pork and, to a far lesser extent, beef in small portions and on special occasions, whereas Americans consume large portions of meat at every meal; the annual meat consumption of Americans per capita is well over twice that of China and Japan. Although higher than that of Asians, meat consumption among Asian Americans remains significantly lower than that of non-Asian Americans.

Beef: In general, beef plays a minor role in most Asian cuisines. Two major exceptions include northern Vietnam and Korea, where beef is far more common. Beef has also played a notable role in the Philippines since it was introduced by Spain in the 1500s. Japanese consumption of beef has risen since the 1860s, when the country opened its doors to Western influence. Given beef's predominance in the U.S. diet, it plays a significant role in Asian American cooking and is a common feature on Asian American restaurant menus.

Goat: Goat meat is a staple ingredient in many Southeast Asian curry dishes.

Pork: As with other animals, the pig is consumed from head to tail. Fatty cuts, such as pork belly, are especially esteemed.

Prepared Meats: As in the West, cured meat products such as ham, bacon, and dried sausages are used in Asian cuisines. Winter-cured, or soy sauce, pork consists of strips of pork belly that have been soaked in a soy sauce marinade and dry-cured with smoke.

POULTRY

Whereas chickens and ducks are raised primarily for meat in the United States, in Asia they are raised to lay eggs for several years before they are eaten at the table. Because active poultry have substantially more flavor yet require a lengthier cooking time, Asian American poultry dishes often entail a marinade or braise to render the flesh more tender.

Chicken: Served whole or in parts, chicken is one of the most popular meats in Asian American cooking, and the wide array of methods used to prepare the meat reflects the diversity and richness of Asian cuisines.

Duck: Favored by Chinese Americans and, to a lesser extent, Southeast Asian Americans, duck does not feature frequently in Japanese or Korean cooking. Because it is more expensive than chicken, it is often reserved for special occasions.

Quail: Both the bird and its eggs are especially prized in China, Japan, and Vietnam. Quails are commonly deep-fried or roasted and their eggs are boiled.

One of the most popular duck dishes eaten in the United States, Peking duck is traditionally served as three separate courses—one starring fried crispy skin, a second meat, and a third broth. (Anjelagr/Dreamstime.com)

SEAFOOD

Drawn from 39,000 miles of ocean coastline as well as from rivers, fish and shellfish are an essential component of Asian cuisine. Asian Americans, however, eat less fish and consume considerably more meat than their Asian counterparts. Like Asians, however, Asian Americans consume a great deal of fermented and dried fish in the form of condiments. Dried or fermented shrimp and fish add a distinctive savory element to countless dishes. Dried seafood, often fried, also serves as a common snack.

Crustaceans: The waters off the United States coastline yield blue crabs on the east and Dungeness crabs on the west, both of which feature prominently in Asian American cooking. In addition, Chinese markets import Shanghai freshwater crabs each fall. Live American lobsters, harvested from the North Atlantic, are sold in Asian markets throughout the United States. When available, live saltwater shrimp are a highly prized commodity.

Fish: Unlike Western groceries, which might stock live shellfish but not typically live fish, large Asian markets house tanks of freshwater fish such as carp, tilapia, catfish, eel, and trout. Saltwater fish will be displayed whole so that customers may carefully inspect the body for freshness. Chinese tend to prefer white-fleshed fish such as black sea bass, snapper, grouper, or rock cod. Japanese, on the other hand, prize the flavor of many oily fish. The oily flesh of tuna and salmon, for example, is considered such a delicacy that the Japanese prefer to eat it raw in the form of sushi and sashimi. Throughout Asia, delicate white-fleshed fish is usually steamed, grilled, or roasted whole. Heartier fish such as tuna and mackerel are pan-seared whole or cut into pieces for use in stews, curries, and braises. Southeast Asian cuisines are partial to fish simmered in curries and stews.

Mollusks (Cuttlefish, Octopus, and Squid): Chinese and Southeast Asian markets inevitably sell fresh or frozen squid, which is tossed in salads, deep-fried, stir-fried, sautéed, or stuffed and simmered in ink, a substance released by mollusks to hide themselves from predators. Melanin colors the ink a black, blue-black, or deep brown color. In addition to imparting a subtle briny flavor, the ink is high in glutamates, making it an umami-rich ingredient. Most of the liquid sold in jars is harvested from cuttlefish, as they are considered to produce the most delicate-tasting ink of all the mollusks. The Japanese are particularly fond of the octopus, which they consider to be good-natured and comical as well as fine to eat once its flesh has been boiled or steamed. Japanese markets carry octopus, which is often sold already tenderized and parboiled.

Chinese Carp

Because they are hardy creatures that can live in murky waters, several varieties of Asian carp were introduced to the southeastern United States in order to control weeds and parasites in aquaculture. Their resilience, however, has backfired. Due to flooding and the carp's ability to leap over low barriers such as dams, they migrated to the Mississippi and Indiana Rivers, where they have crowded out native fish and shellfish. Federal researchers warn that the spread of carp could affect freshwater fisheries in as many as 31 states. In response, fisherfolk have begun to harvest and sell them to seafood markets in Asian American communities in California, Chicago, and New York.

DRIED SEAFOOD

Bonito (*katsuobushi*): Fillets of bonito, part of the mackerel family, are dried and shaved into flakes. These flakes serve as one of two key ingredients in Japanese soup stock, or *dashi*. Whereas meat or fish bones form the base of Western soup stock, dried bonito flakes and kelp provide the flavoring for *dashi*, which plays a foundational role in Japanese cooking.

Fish: Dried whole, filleted, or cut into strips, a wide variety of fish are sun-dried, a process which concentrates their flavor.

Also known as skipjack, bonito belong to the same family of fish as the tuna and the mackerel. Bonito are dried, fermented, smoked, and shaved to make *katsuobushi*—a key ingredient in dashi, the foundational broth of Japanese cuisine. (Serdar Tibet/Dreamstime.com)

Shrimp: Dried shrimp are sold whole and shredded for use as a seasoning in stir-fried vegetables, seafood dishes, and soups. They are also used to season pastes and sauces.

Squid: Dried, shredded squid is a popular snack food in Japan and Korea. It is also stir-fried as a side dish. Used as a flavoring agent, dried, shredded squid lends a distinctive, chewy texture.

FRESH VEGETABLES

As in the West, many plant foods eaten as vegetables in Asian cuisines are, in fact, fruits. Those fruits treated primarily as vegetables are listed below. These include bitter melon, chilies, cucumber, eggplant, and winter squash.

Bamboo Shoots: Fresh shoots should be peeled and boiled before use, as all bamboo contains the toxin prussic acid. As shoots remain crunchy even after extensive cooking, they add a desirable texture to many vegetable, poultry, and meat dishes.

Banana Leaves: Used to wrap foods that are to be grilled or steamed, banana leaves impart a mild grassy aroma.

Bean Sprouts: Grown from mung bean and soybean, sprouts are prized for their crisp texture. Mung bean sprouts are more delicate and about half the size of soybean sprouts.

Bitter Melon, or Gourd: Treated as a vegetable, although technically a fruit, this melon earns its name from its bitter bite. Believed to strengthen the immune system, bitter melon is an essential component of bitter soups throughout Asia. It also features in the Filipino vegetable dish *pinakbet* as well as in a variety of stir-fried, steamed, and braised dishes.

Burdock, or Gobo: Cultivated burdock has a long, slender root. In China, the roots are used in stir-fries and soups. Burdock is a staple of Japanese cooking and enjoys popularity in Hawaii. Prized for its nutty, earthy flavor and crunchy texture, burdock is often included in raw salads, mixed vegetable stir-fries, tempura dishes, and soups. It is also frequently pickled. Burdock's most popular use, however, is in the Japanese dish *kinpira* in which it is stir-fried along with carrot, soy, sugar, sake, sesame seeds, and seven-spice powder.

Cabbage Family, or Brassicas: A wide range of vegetables belong to the cabbage family, ranging from the red and green cabbages, cauliflower, and broccoli found in basic grocery stores throughout the nation to the more "exotic" varieties that populate Asian grocery stores as well as the West Coast farmers' markets.

Bok Choy: Although over 40 varieties are commonly cultivated in Asia, only a few of these are readily available in the United States, including Canton, or dwarf; Shanghai or green-stemmed, which is the most common form sold in non-Asian grocery stores; tatsoi or rosette bok choy; and *yau choy*. They are sold in three main stages of growth: baby (most familiar in the West), mature, and flowering.

Chinese Broccoli: Found in Asian markets and in many farmers' markets, Chinese broccoli is a descendant of wild cabbage that is closely related to broccoli. Popular in Chinese and Southeast Asian cuisines, Chinese broccoli is often blanched before being steamed or stir-fried.

Chinese Cabbage: More delicate and milder than European cabbages, this variety is also known as Napa cabbage or celery cabbage.

Chilies: Ranging from mild to fiery, they serve as an essential ingredient in Asian cooking, appearing in fresh, dried, pickled, and flaked forms. They are also ground into a variety of sauces, pastes, and oils.

Chinese, or Garlic, Chives: Unlike Western chives, which are used as a seasoning herb, Chinese chives have long flat leaves and are often lightly cooked as a vegetable. For example, blanched (or flash-boiled) garlic chives are a prized delicacy served at Chinese New Year's celebrations.

Chrysanthemum Leaves: These leaves, which are popular in Chinese and Japanese cuisines, come from a variety of chrysanthemum plants that have been specially bred for eating. In Japan, young leaves, which have a delicate, refreshing flavor similar to that of celery leaves, are eaten raw or used as a last-minute addition to soups and stews. In China and Japan, the larger leaves are often parboiled, lightly dressed with oil, and served as a salad.

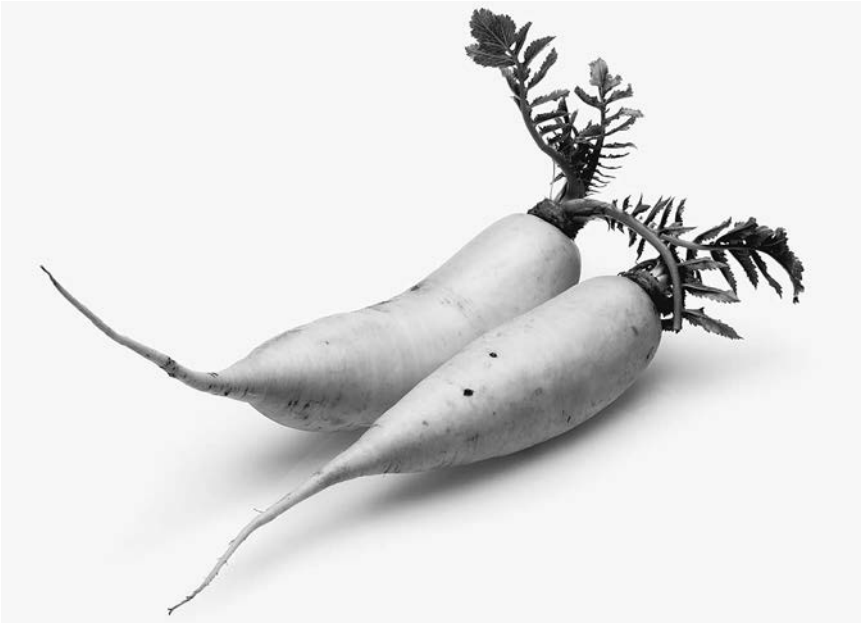
Cucumber: First cultivated in China in the sixth century, cucumber features in a wide array of dishes including salads, stir-fries, soups, sushi, and sashimi.

Daikon, or Asian Radish: This variety is the most common of the Asian radishes eaten in the United States.

Eggplant: The eggplant varieties popular in Asian cooking have thinner skins than those typically used in the West. They are prepared using an array of methods, as their tender, creamy flesh pairs well with most vegetables and meats.

Garlic: With the exception of Japanese cookery, garlic is a key ingredient in East and Southeast Asian cooking. It provides an essential flavor for stir-fried and braised dishes as well as myriad dipping sauces and pickles. In Vietnamese and Filipino cookery, it is also pan-fried until golden for use as a garnish.

Lemongrass: A staple of Southeast Asian cooking, this herb belongs to the grass family. As its name suggests, it has a strong citrus perfume that pairs especially well with dishes containing coconut milk and fish. The tough,



Also known as Asian radish, daikon is a staple vegetable in Asian American cooking. It plays an especially prominent role in Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese pickles. (Mahira/Dreamstime.com)

fibrous stalks are added whole and removed before a dish is served or finely minced or pounded into a paste before being added.

Long Beans: Often compared to green beans, long beans are actually immature cowpea pods that are eaten as a vegetable throughout southern China and Southeast Asia, serving as a common ingredient in stir-fries and stews.

Lotus: A flowering water plant, lotus is much revered in China where it is considered a symbol of purity and beauty. Every part of the plant is used in cooking. The seeds are eaten raw and dried. They are also crystalized in sugar to serve as sweets for Chinese New Year or ground into paste to serve as the filling for Chinese moon cakes. The tender young leaves of the plant are eaten with a savory sauce. The rhizomes, which grow under water, are used as a staple vegetable in Asian cuisines.

Shallots: In addition to being stir-fried until golden and used as a garnish in Filipino and Vietnamese cookery, shallots are likewise sautéed for use as a foundational flavor component in many Southeast Asian dishes. Shallots appear occasionally in Chinese and Korean stir-fries and feature frequently in East Asian pickles.

Sweet Potato: A member of the morning glory family, this edible tuber comes in a variety of colors ranging from white to purple and is the most important tropical root crop. In Asian cuisines, the tuber is usually steamed, boiled, or baked. Some varieties of sweet potato, however, are cultivated for the delicate flavor and high protein content of their leaves and tendrils, which are added to soups, stir-fries, and coconut-based stews. Sweet potato starch is used as a thickening agent in soups and sauces as well as made into noodles.

Taro: This ancient tuber features in dishes that include rich meats, such as pork belly or duck; it is boiled and pureed to make fritters or croquettes; it is fermented to make poi, the signature dish of Hawaii; it is simmered in stews and soups; or steamed and served with spicy sauces. For Chinese banquets, slivers of taro are fashioned into a "bird's nest" and deep-fried to serve as a bowl for various forms of seafood. In the Philippines, both taro root and taro leaves are staple ingredients. Both the roots and the leaves of taro contain toxic compounds (calcium oxalate crystals), so they must be thoroughly cooked before ingesting.

Water Chestnut: This corm has a crisp, sweet, and juicy flesh that maintains a pleasant crunch regardless of how it is prepared. Water chestnuts are a popular ingredient in Southeast Asian desserts. They are also eaten raw as snacks or added to salads. Wrapped in nori and deep-fried, they are served for Japanese New Year. Water chestnut flour is used as a thickener.

Water Spinach: This member of the morning glory family is consumed in large quantities by Chinese Americans and Southeast Asian Americans.

Winter Squash: Although native to North America, winter squash has gained a popular place in Asian cooking. It appears in a variety of soups as well as in coconut-based stews and curries.

PRESERVED VEGETABLES

Dried Vegetables

Sea Vegetables or Seaweeds

Cultivated by Japanese and Chinese for millennia, sea vegetables are also an important part of the daily diet in Korea. The various seaweeds are harvested, dried, and, in some cases, cellared like wine. Companies on the East and West coasts of the United States have begun harvesting and preparing seaweeds to sell to the growing American market. Popular forms include:

Agar-Agar: A sticky extract derived from red algae used to thicken soups, puddings, and custards. Called *kanten* in Japanese, this thickener is also known as grass jelly, China grass, and Japanese isinglass. It has become

a popular vegetarian substitute for gelatin, which is made from animal by-products such as hooves, tendons, and bones.

Kelp: Also known as konbu, kelp (along with bonito) is an essential flavoring component of the Japanese broth *dashi*. Dried or fresh kelp is used as a vegetable.

Laver: Also known as nori and as purple seaweed, laver is processed into sheets with which to wrap sushi. It is also finely diced or julienned as a garnish. In Korea, laver is cut into strips, coated with a glutinous rice flour paste and sesame seeds, and deep-fried to be eaten as a popular snack.

Wakame: Popular in Japanese and Korean cookery, wakame leaves are eaten fresh in the spring or dried and reconstituted for use in soups or salads. The leaves often feature in miso soup, a staple dish of Japanese cuisine.

Tea

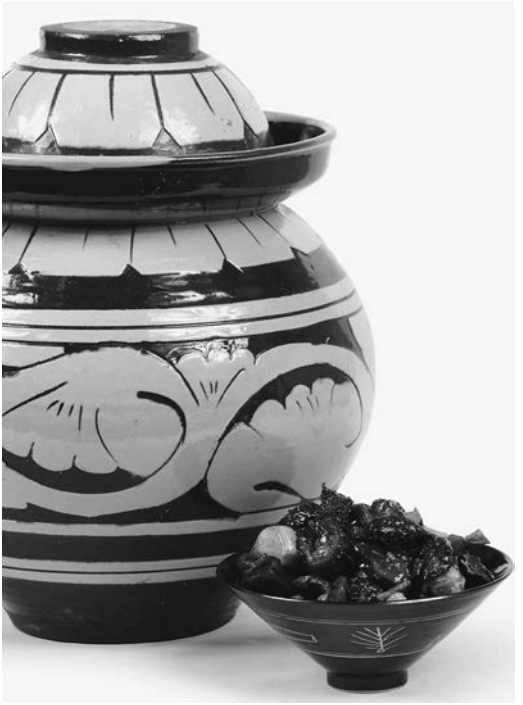
Although primarily consumed as one of the world's most important beverages, tea is also used as a flavoring in cooking. Tea leaves are frequently used to smoke fowl, such as tea-smoked duck, or to flavor simmering liquid. Eggs simmered in a mixture of water, soy sauce, tea leaves, and star-anise are considered to auger good fortune and rebirth and are served on the Chinese New Year. Tea leaves are also used as a primary flavoring agent in many Asian sweets. For example, powdered green tea leaves are churned into ice cream or mixed with syrup and poured over shaved ice to make enervating sweets.

Pickled and Fermented Vegetables

Chinese and Southeast Asian cuisines often pair pickled cucumber, daikon, and carrot with rice and a protein to make a simple lunch, and traditional Japanese and Korean cuisines showcase preserved vegetables as an essential part of every meal.

Kimchi: A fermented vegetable dish essential to Korean cuisine, kimchi is eaten as a side dish or as a condiment. Served along with rice at every meal, kimchi is made from a variety of ingredients, with Chinese cabbage being the most common base vegetable. In addition, kimchi is usually flavored with garlic, ginger, scallions, chilies, and salted fish or shrimp. Hundreds of varieties of kimchi are made, however.

Umeboshi: This pickle is made from ume fruits, which are a species of apricot that are confusingly called Japanese plums in English. Umeboshi recipes vary, but they traditionally include purple-red shiso leaves, which color the pickle red. Umeboshi is part of the traditional Japanese breakfast. Pureed umeboshi, called *bainiku*, is frequently used to lend a tart taste to dipping sauces.



A Korean pickling jar stands beside a bowl of kimchi. The basic kimchi recipes usually include cabbage, radish, herbs, chili pepper, mustard greens, garlic, fermented fish, and ginger in some combination. The salt and chili peppers as well as the fermentation process serve as natural preservatives, ensuring a store of vitamin- and mineral-rich vegetables on hand all winter. (Shutterstock.com)

ANIMAL FATS AND VEGETABLE OILS

Lard, or Pig Fat: Used to make Chinese pastries and biscuits, lard is also a preferred, yet comparatively expensive, medium for sautéing and frying in parts of China and Southeast Asia.

Coconut Oil: Since it does not begin to burn until it reaches 480 degrees, coconut oil is often used for frying in Southeast Asia. With a subtle note of vanilla and a richness not found in peanut oil, it is favored for many of the Southeast Asian curry dishes. Since it remains solid at room temperature it is likewise a popular alternative to lard for baking vegetarian pastries and biscuits.

Peanut Oil: Because of its high smoke point, or the temperature at which it begins to burn, peanut oil is favored throughout China, Japan, and Korea for deep-frying. It is a heavy oil, however, so it is not used for delicate dishes.

Rapeseed, or Canola Oil: Made from the mustard plant, rapeseed oil is favored in Japanese cooking. Known most commonly as canola oil in the United States, it is used for sautéing and deep-frying. It is valued for its clean, light taste.

Sesame Oil: Both cold-pressed sesame oil and dark sesame oil, which comes from roasted seeds, are used in Asian cooking.

CONDIMENTS, SAUCES, AND PASTES

Asian cuisines work to achieve a balance of sweet, salt, sour, bitter, and *umami* (the Japanese word for "a pleasant savory taste"). As a result, many of the condiments used in Asian cuisines are not only used to salt a dish but also to add the savory taste of umami. These include all the umami-rich pastes and sauces made from fermented bean and fermented fish, including soy sauce and fish sauce. The presence of umami serves to "round out" the flavors of a dish or ingredient, thus enhancing its overall flavor. As a result, umami-rich condiments and ingredients impart a richness and depth that complement and help to integrate the other flavors present. Just as Asian cuisines draw much of their umami from seaweed as well as from fermented bean and fish condiments, Western cuisines rely heavily on umami-rich aged cheeses, tomatoes, meat stocks, and cured meats to enhance the savory quality of dishes.

Umami

The discovery of umami dates back to 1908 when a doctor in Japan, Kikunae Ikeda, traced the savory taste of kelp to glutamic acid. He named the savory quality *umami* and hypothesized that it was the fifth taste. By 1909, Ikeda had manufactured and patented glutamate in the form of monosodium glutamate, which gained widespread popularity as a flavor enhancer in Asia and the United States. Umami is found naturally in breast milk, fermented beans and fish, seaweed, seafood, cooked mushrooms, ripe tomatoes, cured meat, meat broths, and aged cheeses. Although umami had been recognized as the fifth taste in Japan since the mid-20th century, it did not gain widespread recognition in

the West until 2000 when scientists located glutamate receptors on the tongue.

Although Western cuisines incorporate umami-rich ingredients, they do not play as integral a role in the daily diet as they do in Eastern cuisines; Japanese and Koreans consume over twice the amount of glutamate than do people in the United States. Instead of umami, Westerners rely heavily on salt and on fat to enhance the savory quality of foods. Scientists in the United States, however, have recently begun to focus intently on how umami might boost the flavors of foods with reduced salt and fat content, thereby enabling individuals to gain greater satisfaction from diets that restrict these powerful flavor enhancers.

Bean Pastes and Sauces

Black Beans, Fermented: This condiment is made by adding a special mold to black soybeans in order to promote their decomposition. This mixture is then dried and salted for use in a variety of dishes, especially those containing seafood, meat, poultry, asparagus, and broccoli.

Bean Sauce: Made from fermented soybeans, this sauce is used to season many Chinese meat dishes, specifically those hailing from northern China. It is often paired with chili peppers to lend a fiery flavor to the cuisines of Sichuan and Hunan.

Hoisin Sauce: Used for marinades and dipping sauces, hoisin is a sweet and spicy blend made of soybeans, vinegar, sugar, garlic, and five-spice powder.

Miso (Fermented Bean Paste): A specialized form of fermented bean paste essential to Japanese cooking, miso is a primary ingredient in many soups, including the *misoshiru* (miso soup) traditionally served for breakfast in Japan. Miso is also used to flavor marinades, dressings, sauces, stir-fries, and sweets. It also serves as a pickling medium. Miso varies in texture, taste, color, and aroma, with darker miso (from rusty red to black) being the most assertive and white being the most delicate. Asian immigration brought a demand for miso to the United States, which in 1907 alone imported 6.9 million pounds of the paste. The first American miso plant, Fujimoto Miso Company, was founded in San Francisco in 1917.

Soy Sauces

Invented by the Chinese as a food preservative, soy sauce has since become a staple of Asian cuisines. Like black bean paste, soy sauce is made through

the fermentation process and aged until it achieves the desired flavor. Tamari is a wheat-free soy sauce.

Chinese Soy Sauces: Although there are many different soy sauces, the Chinese varieties break down into two rough categories, dark and light.

Dark Soy Sauce: Aged longer than its lighter complement, this sauce is darkened by the addition of molasses. It is used to flavor heavier, darker dishes such as those made with red meat.

Light Soy Sauce: So-named for its lighter color, this soy sauce actually has more salt than dark soy sauce.

Japanese and Korean Soy Sauces: As a rule, Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*) contains less salt and more wheat, which makes it sweeter than the Chinese varieties. Like that made in Japan, Korean soy sauce (*ganjang*) is less salty and sweeter than the Chinese varieties. It also falls on the light end of the color spectrum.

Filipino and Vietnamese Soy Sauces: Although the use of fish sauces typically predominates over of soy sauces in Southeast Asia, certain countries have developed their own soy sauce blends to complement their national dishes and regional ingredients. Filipino soy sauce (*toyo*) is a thin, salty version. Vietnamese soy sauce (*nuoc tuong*) is typically used instead of fish sauce in vegetarian cookery.

Chili Pastes and Sauces

These condiments vary widely in texture from smooth to chunky and in spiciness from slightly sweet to fiery. Some are preserved in oil and others pickled in vinegar. One of the most popular chili sauces manufactured and sold in the United States was the brainchild of a Chinese Vietnamese entrepreneur and sells under the brand name Sriracha, which is likewise the generic name of a popular Southeast Asian sauce.

Seafood Pastes and Sauces

Fish Sauce: As essential to Southeast Asian cooking as soy sauce is to East Asian, this thin, pungent liquid is made from salted, fermented anchovies or other small fish.

Oyster Sauce: Made from oyster, sugar, water, salt, and, more recently, caramel and cornstarch, oyster sauce is a major seasoning in Chinese cuisine. It is frequently added to stir-fried vegetables and meats.

Shrimp Paste, Dried: Although these pastes vary from region to region, they are all made from shrimp that are salted and pounded to a paste before being fermented.

Vinegars and Cooking Wines

Whereas vinegars used in Western cuisines are invariably made from grapes, those used in Asia are made from ingredients ranging from coconut palm sap, peaches, dates, and cherries to barley and rice. Since the Chinese introduced Japan to rice vinegar in the fourth or fifth century, it has developed into a staple of the Japanese kitchen. In Southeast Asia, lime juice and tamarind often take the place of vinegar as a souring agent.

Chinese Black Vinegar: This vinegar is made from wheat, millet, and sorghum. Like the true Italian balsamic, black vinegars can be aged for years to produce a complex and highly valued flavor.

Coconut Vinegar: Made from coconut palm sap, this vinegar, which is less sour than most, is produced in the Philippines and exported throughout the Asian tropics.

Mirin (in Japan)/Mirim (in Korea): A sweetened spirit, mirin/mirim is used in Japan and Korea much as sugar is in the West and is only used for cooking. It is added to marinades, dipping sauces, salad dressings, and a variety of "sweet and sour" dishes.

Rice Vinegar: This mild, relatively sweet vinegar is used in Chinese and Japanese cooking.

Rice Wine: Although it is drunk as an alcoholic beverage, rice wine also plays an important role in Asian cooking. It is used to tenderize, to complement salty flavors, to tame fishy aromas, to draw out and highlight delicate flavors, and to pickle vegetables. China's most celebrated rice wine Shaoxing, made from rice, rice millet, yeast, and water, is named after the town that has produced it for over 2,000 years. The best Shaoxing is aged in underground cellars anywhere from a few years to a century. Liberal dashes of Shaoxing feature prominently in Chinese cooking, especially in stir-fried and braised dishes. What are known as "drunken" dishes contain upwards of two bottles.

Sake: Along with soy sauce and miso, this rice wine is considered a fundamental ingredient in the Japanese kitchen.

RHIZOMES

Galangal: This member of the ginger family has firm, white flesh with taste notes of pine sap and pepper.

Ginger: Prevalent throughout Asia, fresh ginger is often paired with seafood, added to curries, and boiled to make tea. It is also pickled for use as a garnish for grilled foods or as an accompaniment to sushi and sashimi. Ginger preserved in heavy syrup is a common addition to savory Chinese dishes.

Lotus Root: See Vegetables, Lotus Root.

Turmeric: Frequently used in curries, turmeric is valued as a coloring agent as well as for its sharp, musky, and slightly bitter flavor. Both fresh and dried forms share the same vivid orange hue.

Wasabi: Native to Japan, this rhizome grows near mountain streams and is an essential condiment for raw fish (sushi and sashimi) and is frequently added to noodle and soup dishes. Freshly grated wasabi contains the same pungent, nasal-clearing compound sinigrin that is present in horseradish and mustard seeds.

SPICES

Cardamom: The dried seed of a bush, cardamom has a clean, lemony-yet-earthy flavor and is often used in strongly flavored Southeast Asian savory dishes and pickles.

Cassia: An ingredient in China's five-spice powder, cassia is an essential flavoring in Chinese meat and poultry dishes. It is also a common seasoning in Vietnamese beef stew (*pho*). Most of what is sold in the United States as cinnamon is, in fact, cassia, which has a more intense flavor.

Coriander Seeds: With a lemony, earthy flavor, coriander seeds are used whole in pickling or dry roasted, ground, and added to soups, stews, and marinades. The roasted, ground seeds also feature in various spice blends, including curry.

Cumin: This earthy, pungent spice is an essential component of curry blends; its mildly bitter aftertaste and pungent flavor, reminiscent of ginger and lemon zest, complement the sweet undertone of the coconut milk-based curries prevalent in Southeast Asian cooking. It is also used in pickling.

Sichuan Pepper and Sansho: These dried fruits of prickly ash trees are not related to peppercorns. They both have a numbing effect on the tongue.

Sichuan pepper is an essential ingredient in Chinese five-spice powder to which it adds woody, pungent, and citrusy notes.

Sansho is an essential ingredient in Japanese seven-spice powder and is valued for its tangy, sharp flavor, which is frequently paired with fatty foods such as eel.

Star Anise: The star-shaped fruit of a Chinese evergreen magnolia tree, star anise has a flavor similar to fennel and anise. It is used to flavor soups, stocks, stews, and marinades as well as pork and duck dishes. It is an essential component of Chinese five-spice powder as well as the Vietnamese soup, *pho*.

SPICE MIXES

Chinese Five-Spice Powder: Not always limited to five spices, this mixture typically contains Sichuan peppercorns, star anise, fennel or anise

seeds, whole cloves, and cassia bark. Ground ginger and licorice root are sometimes added. Five-spice powder is not only an essential ingredient in hoisin sauce and some bean sauces but also a seasoning for roasted meats and poultry.

Curry Powder: Popular in Southeast Asian cuisine, curry powder is a blend of spices that includes turmeric, coriander seeds, cumin, chili peppers, cloves, and cinnamon.

Japanese Seven-Spice Powder (*shichimi togarashi*): This blend of red pepper, *sansho* (berries from the Japanese prickly ash shrub), tangerine peel, white and black sesame seeds, ginger, and nori is liberally used to flavor one-pot dishes (*nabe*), hearty soups, grilled meats, and fish.

SWEET-AND-SOUR FLAVORINGS

Palm Sugar: Made by boiling down the sap of palm trees, palm sugar is an essential ingredient in Southeast Asian cooking. It ranges in color from gold to dark reddish-brown and is characterized by a smoky, caramel flavor that comes from the cooking process from which it is made.

Sugar Cane: Cane sugar is derived from a giant grass similar in shape and size to bamboo. Rather than being hollow, however, sugar cane stems are filled with a pulp from which sugar is derived.

Tamarind: Used much like lemon or lime, the pulp of this tree's ripe bean pod adds a sour tang to soups, curries, sauces, meats, and seafood. The seeds can also be roasted and eaten as a snack.

HERBS

Asian Basils: An essential ingredient in Southeast Asian cooking, holy, lemon, and Thai basils have a more pungent anise flavor than the basils typically used in Western cookery and their flavors generally hold up better under heat.

Cilantro, or Coriander: Also known as Chinese parsley, the fresh leaves of this plant are used liberally in Chinese and Southeast Asian cooking. Lending a tart, lemony flavor, the leaves of this herb are quite delicate so they are typically added as a last-minute addition to cooked dishes.

Curry Leaves: These shiny green leaves come from a small tree in the citrus family. They are frequently added to Southeast Asian curries, hence the name.

Makrut Lime Leaves: A signature aromatic in Southeast Asian cooking, whole makrut lime leaves provide a subtle citrus note to a wide variety of soups, stews, and curries. Finely minced leaves also lend a refreshing flavor to salads and serve frequently as a garnish. Makrut is more commonly

known as *Kaffir* in English, which is a term so pejorative in South Africa that its use is actionable. As a result, there has been a concerted effort to eradicate the use of the term altogether, replacing it with the fruit's Thai name, makrut.

Pandan Leaves: Commonly called screwpine or pandanus in English, pandan leaves are used as a seasoning in both sweet and savory dishes throughout Southeast Asia.

Perilla, or Shiso: Both red and green varieties of this herb, a member of the mint family, feature prominently in Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese cuisine. With an aromatic flavor reminiscent of cinnamon, citrus, and mint, perilla leaves are added to salads, used as wrappers for grilled meats, and served as a garnish for soups, Vietnamese crepes, and Japanese sushi and sashimi.

Vietnamese Coriander: Also known as *rau ram*, Vietnamese mint, and Vietnamese cilantro, this essential herb in Vietnamese cooking is used both raw and cooked. Described by some as cilantro on steroids, rau ram has a distinctive earthy yet refreshing flavor.

Shiso (See Perilla).

FUNGI

Many fungi traditionally used in Asian cooking are not available in the United States except in dried form. Whereas Japanese markets sell fresh mushrooms, Chinese and Southeast Asian markets tend to specialize in dried. Indigestible in their raw form, all mushrooms should be cooked briefly before consuming.

Enoki Mushrooms, or Enokitake: In the wild, these mushrooms grow on the Chinese hackberry, or enoki, tree. Now, however, they are grown commercially. They have long, thin stems and petite round caps. Prized by the Japanese for their delicate texture and appearance, enoki are frequently added to broths and used as a garnish for grilled fish or chicken.

Matsutake, or "Pine Mushrooms": Harvested in the pine forests of Japan and Korea (where they are called *songi*), these mushrooms likewise appear in the Pacific Northwest, where they are gathered in the fall and sold to Japanese markets and specialty food stores.

Oyster Mushroom: Earning their name from their shape and texture (some say their flavor), oyster mushrooms grow on dead or dying trees.

Shiitake, or Black Mushroom: The most common mushroom used in Chinese cooking, dried shiitake has a concentrated flavor and features prominently in such dishes as braised cabbage and steamed fish. Fresh and dried shiitake are also used in a range of Japanese and Korean dishes, including soups and vegetable stir-fries.

Tree Ears: Found dried and labeled as *black fungus* in Asian markets, tree ears can be gathered in parts of Northern California and the Pacific Northwest. They vary in size and color, ranging from tiny black flakes to large two-toned varieties known as "cloud ears." They have a firm, almost crunchy consistency and are often added to hot-and-sour soup and mu shu pork. They also play a feature role in many Buddhist vegetarian dishes.

BEVERAGES

Coconut Water, or Juice: Found at the heart of a green coconut, the water is a sweet, refreshing liquid much enjoyed as a beverage by Southeast Asians.

Coffee: In the 19th century, France introduced Southeast Asians living in French Indochina to café au lait, a mix of coffee and milk. Since dairy did not keep well due to the tropical climate, Indochinese accustomed themselves to the addition of condensed milk, which heavily sweetened the traditional French beverage. Today, coffee with condensed milk is widely enjoyed by Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians still living in their native lands as well as by those who have migrated to the United States.

Fruit Drinks: Fruit juices, including pineapple, mango, coconut, dragon fruit, melon, and guava, are eagerly imbibed on a daily basis.

Rice Wine: Given the importance of rice throughout Asia and the myriad ways in which it is prepared, it is not surprising that fermented rice is by far the most prevalent alcoholic beverage. Every country brews its own rice wines, and the flavors vary widely according to the type of rice used, the length of fermentation, the yeast used to start the fermentation process, along with many other variables.

Tea: Throughout Asia, tea preparation is considered an art form and tea drinking is a much-revered ceremony. The classifications of tea are complex and varied, but the three main categories are grouped according to the amount of fermentation the leaves have undergone. *Green*, or unfermented, tea leaves are dried immediately after picking to prevent fermentation. *Oolong*, or semifermented, tea leaves are larger than those used for green tea and are partially fermented. *Black* tea leaves are wilted, bruised, and fermented before being dried.

Flavored Teas and Tisanes: The most popular ingredients used to make flavored teas and tisanes include chamomile, chrysanthemum, jasmine, orange blossom, lotus flower, ginseng, ginger, roasted barley, mint, apple, and mango.

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Cooking

By the 1930s, Chinese cookery had established itself as an indelible part of mainstream American food culture. It would be another 50 years before the cuisines of Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam would become major players within the mainstream American culinary landscape. The comparative speed at which these latter cuisines moved from the margins into the mainstream corresponds with the gathering momentum of two complementary forces—namely, the opening of the U.S. borders to mass immigration in 1965 and the rise of globalization. From 1970 to 2011, the Asian American population has risen from just under 7.3 million to over 18 million, with three-quarters of the adults being foreign-born.

With such large numbers of foreign-born immigrants, the demand for Asian restaurants, food supplies, and cooking implements has skyrocketed. In turn, globalization has meant that American and European foods, cooking techniques, and restaurants have spread rapidly throughout Asia. As a result, Western and Eastern food cultures have increasingly come into close contact with one another, often fusing into new forms and flavors. Alongside such fusion foods stand a growing number of nuanced and sophisticated representations of the regionally inflected cooking styles found throughout China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Mainstream Americans have become curious enough about the wide array of flavors, wrappers, and cooking techniques that characterize Asian dumplings, for example, to sell out classes that demonstrate how to prepare wontons, rice wrappers, fluffy buns, and flaky pastry from scratch as well as the basic techniques needed to poach, steam, pan-fry, and deep-fry tasty dumplings at home.

Accompanying this national appetite for the signature flavors and cooking techniques drawn from particular cities, provinces, or regions of Eastern and Southeastern Asian nations, the number of cookbooks has likewise skyrocketed as Asian Americans look toward cooking and cookbook writing as a way of honoring and learning more about their heritage. Non-Asians are likewise eager to recreate the dishes from their Asian travels or their restaurant favorites in the comfort of their home kitchen. With an ever-growing audience, the publication of Asian culinary memoirs, cookbooks, and gastronomic histories has proliferated in the 21st century, giving rise to such elegantly written, evocative, and informative texts as Linda Furiya's *Bento Box in the Homeland: My Japanese Girlhood in Whitebread America*; Cheryl Lu-Lien Tan's *A Tiger in the Kitchen: A Memoir of Food and Family*: Rachael Laudan's *The Food of Paradise: Exploring Hawaii's Culinary Heritage*; Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan's *Memories of Philippine Kitchens*; Andrea Nguyen's *Asian Dumplings*; Jennifer 8. Lee's *The Fortune Cookie Chronicles*; and Hi Soo Shin Hepinstall's *Growing up in a Korean Kitchen*.

ASIAN COOKING PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNIQUES

As the oldest culture in Asia, China has had a profound influence on the development of East and Southeast Asian cuisines. Of particular influence would be a belief in food as medicine; an emphasis on variety of texture, flavor, and color; and an absolute insistence on freshness. Overall, Asian cuisines work to obtain a balance of textures and flavors, especially among dishes served on special occasions. One of the primary goals in cooking, in fact, is to obtain a texture that best captures an ingredient in its prime of freshness and succulence. Stir-frying is particularly suited to this goal, as it enables precise timing. Vegetables, for example, can be cooked to the exact point at which they taste simultaneously fresh, crisp, and succulent. In such cases, a matter of 2–3 seconds extra cooking time can ruin a dish.

Asian cuisine likewise works to include a range of textures, from crisp and crunchy to slippery and gelatinous, or gummy. Because Westerners tend to cringe at gelatinous textures, mainstream Asian American restaurants often exclude such traditional delicacies as sea cucumber, chicken feet, and jellyfish, although non-Asians are beginning to gain an appreciation for gelatinous foods. In addition to a balance of textures, Asian cooking also works to incorporate each of the five tastes—sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami. The latter taste denotes a savory, fulfilling mouthfeel. Although umami-rich ingredients have played an essential role in Asian cuisines for millennia, the scientific discovery of umami receptors only dates back to 2000. In Eastern cuisines, umami is frequently imparted through seaweed; fermented bean and fish pastes; dried fish, shellfish, and mushrooms; and fermented sauces made

from either soybeans or fish. In addition to these tastes, pungency is likewise highly valued. Technically a sensation, pungency is derived from ingredients such as Sichuan pepper corns, chili peppers, and vinegar, which cause a burning, numbing, or biting sensation on the tongue.

The main methods used in Asian cookery can be categorized to correspond with those used in Western cookery. These include boiling, simmering, and poaching; braising; stewing; steaming; deep-frying; and roasting. Pan-sautéing is the final method for cooking, but in Asian cookery the ingredients are cooked in a wok and at a higher temperature. The method is known as stir-frying because the ingredients are stirred and tossed vigorously in order to quickly sear them, thereby imparting an elusive flavor to a dish known as *wok hei*, or the breath of the wok. Boiling entails submerging ingredients in a liquid and cooking them while the liquid is properly boiling with large bubbles. Simmering entails a gentle boil. Poaching requires less liquid (not enough to cover the main ingredient) raised to a low simmer. Braising entails briefly pan-frying ingredients before adding liquid. The cooking vessel is then covered and set on a simmering heat until it is completely tenderized. Stewing omits the brief pan-frying and incorporates more liquid so that the ingredients are completely submerged.

Food can be steamed in a bamboo or a metal steamer and may be marinated before cooking, a technique that imparts more flavor to the final dish. Deep-frying entails battering an ingredient and fully immersing it in hot oil, a method that, if properly done, results in a crisp exterior and a tender, succulent interior. Roasting involves cooking by dry heat, either in an oven or over a fire. Grilling and broiling are forms of roasting. Although a sauté pan can be used to stir-fry, a wok is especially well suited to the task because it quickly and evenly distributes heat. The shape of the wok likewise enables foods to cook rapidly with a minimum of oil. Each ingredient must be cut uniformly, as this precision enables each piece to cook in the same amount of time. Above all, meat, vegetables, and seafood should not be overcooked.

Aside from the wok, the most important utensil in the Asian kitchen is the cleaver. Unlike in the West, Asian dishes do not require diners to cut their own food into bite-sized pieces. Rather, the cook performs this labor in the kitchen. As a result, meals can be eaten with chopsticks, which vary from one Asian culture to another. Chinese chopsticks, which sport a blunt end for picking up food, are typically longer and thinner than those used by Japanese or Koreans. They are most frequently made of bamboo, wood, ivory, and, most recently, plastic. Japanese chopsticks typically have pointed ends and tend to be made from disposable materials such as inexpensive wood or plastic, although special-occasion chopsticks may be fashioned from bone, metal, or ivory. Traditionally made of copper, brass, or silver, Korean

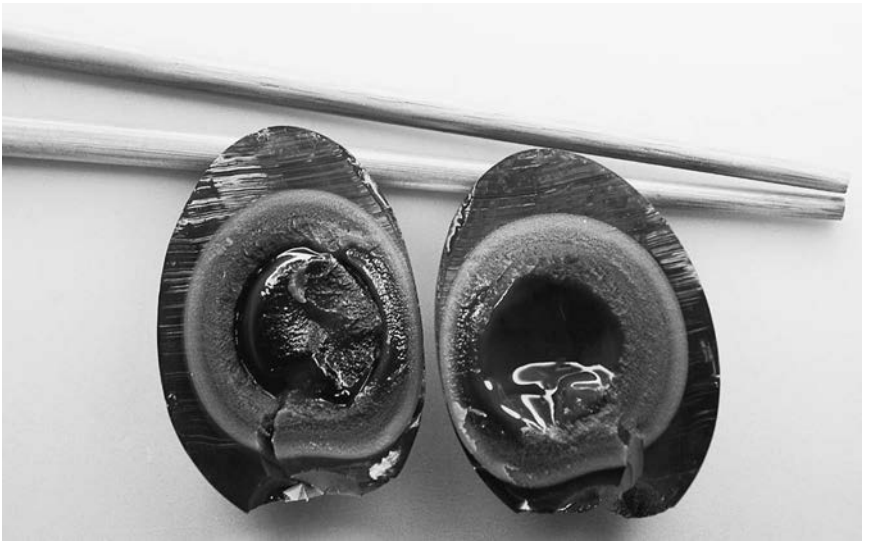
chopsticks today are most frequently made of stainless steel and tend to be flatter than Chinese or Japanese versions. Like the Chinese version, Vietnamese chopsticks are long with a blunt end. They are typically made from bamboo but may also be made from plastic or lacquered wood.

Because the shape of a cut determines the texture of an ingredient as well as how quickly it cooks, long, thin vegetables such as celery and carrots will be cut on the diagonal, a technique that maximizes the surface area so that the ingredient cooks more quickly and absorbs as much seasoning as possible. Leafy vegetables such as cabbage are typically shredded for use in a stir-fry. Broccoli and cabbage are cut into florets so that each piece contains a similar ratio of stalk to flower. Mushrooms may be thinly sliced or cut into cubes. Vegetables such as garlic, ginger, and spring onions may be cut on the diagonal, finely minced, or sliced into what are known as "silken threads." Meat may be cut into fine strips that are known as matchsticks, fashioned into long slivers, made into small cubes or rectangles, sliced paper thin, roughly minced, finely hashed, or shredded.

In addition to the methods of cooking that require heat, food preparation techniques include fermentation and pickling. Fermented beans, fish, and shellfish, in fact, form a core flavor component of Asian cuisine, one that differentiates it from the Western flavor palate. A few of the most important fermented foods in Asian cuisine include fermented bean paste; whole fermented beans; fish sauce; and soy sauce. Fermentation can be initiated by salting an ingredient and letting it begin to break down, or digest itself, naturally. During the process, complex compounds are broken down into simpler forms, which have a more stable shelf life. For example, fish sauce is made from fish that are salted and left to ferment in barrels for several months, during which time they will produce a clear, amber liquid that is siphoned from the solids. The first batch of liquid that is siphoned is the highest quality.

The fermentation process is often initiated with a starter known as *koji*, which typically consists of a grain or legume that has been inoculated with the fungus *Aspergillus oryzae*. Once introduced to a food, *koji* nourishes the fermentation process and controls the flavor profile of the finished product. For example, three different koji starters—rice koji, barley koji, and soybean koji—are used to make three different types of miso. Soybean koji is likewise used to make Chinese soy sauce and fermented black soybeans, and rice koji is used to make sake.

Pickles and Preserved Eggs: While pickles play a role in all Asian cuisines, they are staple foods present at every traditional Japanese and Korean meal. Chinese pickles are made with salt or with salt and vinegar made from rice, wheat, peaches, or grapes. Main pickling ingredients include vegetables, meat, fruit, and nuts. In Japan, vegetables may be pickled in salt, salt and



Eggs such as those figured above, known as thousand-year-old or century eggs, are usually cured for two to four months in a paste that seeps through the porous shell. With enough time, the paste preserves the egg, which can be eaten straight from the shell, diced and added to a variety of savory dishes, or mixed with fresh eggs to make an omelet. (Oleg Blazhyievskyi/Dreamstime.com)

vinegar, soy sauce and mirin, miso, sake, sake lees, or rice bran. The most common pickled ingredients are *ume* (a species of apricot usually translated as "Japanese plum"), Chinese cabbage, daikon radish, carrot, bamboo, turnip, burdock root, ginger, cucumber, and eggplant. Although the term *kimchi* has become synonymous with spicy pickled cabbage, the term technically refers to a wide variety of pickled condiments. Such condiments can be fermented with loads of spicy chilis and garlic, as with the widely known cabbage kimchi, or they may be pickled in water with a bit of garlic and rice vinegar to make a mild condiment.

One of the most prized condiments in Asian cookery, the so-called one-hundred- or one-thousand-year-old eggs are usually cured for two to four months. These eggs are traditionally made from duck eggs. In the United States, however, chicken eggs are often preserved instead as they are far easier to come by. The eggs are often covered in a paste made of calcium oxide (quicklime), salt, ash, and sometimes tea leaves and rice husks. The paste seeps through the porous shell and preserves the egg, which can be eaten straight from the shell, added to porridge, diced and sautéed with vegetables, chopped and served with tofu, and mixed with fresh eggs to make what is called an old-and-fresh omelet.

CHINESE COOKERY AND ITS REGIONAL VARIATIONS

Whereas the vast majority of 19th and early 20th-century Chinese immigrants came from Guangdong Province, the Pearl River Delta, and the coast of Fujian province, today's immigrants represent a much broader swath of China. In particular, a flow of immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan began in the 1950s, and, more recently, students have been emigrating from the educational city centers of Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. Although debate exists about how many distinct culinary regions exist, Western scholars of Chinese cuisine generally agree on the broad regional divisions of Southern, Eastern, Western, and Northern. The majority of restaurants in the United States that serve more traditional foods of China as opposed to Americanized forms of it represent the regional cuisines of Guangdong, Hunan, and Sichuan provinces. The cuisines of Beijing, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, however, are on the rise.

Some general characteristics differentiate the four main regional cuisines of China. Southern cuisine refers to foods of the Guangdong Province, also known as Cantonese. Because this region boasts a year-round fresh supply of produce, seafood, meat, and poultry, stir-frying predominates as it enhances the natural flavors of each ingredient. Fish and poultry are cooked so that they still hold a blush of pink close to the bone. Chicken stock is often used as a cooking medium. Soy sauce, oyster sauce, chili sauce, mustard sauce, chili peppers, vinegar, sesame oil, and fermented black beans are made into dipping sauces or incorporated directly into a dish. Roast pork, poultry, and fried rice are favored. Regional specialties include dim sum as well as banquet dishes made from birds' nests and sharks' fins. Just a few of the favorite fruits and vegetables include lychees, coconuts, papaya, apricots, kumquats, watercress, pea leaves, chrysanthemum leaves, cilantro, and water chestnuts. Southern cuisine also includes the cookery of the ethnic Hakka, a mountainous people especially skilled at cooking offal such as tripe, liver, and kidneys. Other popular dishes include salt-baked chicken as well as tofu and fresh vegetables stuffed with fish paste.

Eastern Chinese food includes that of Shanghai, Gansu, Zhenjiang, and Fujian provinces. Basically covering the lower Yangtze Valley, the region is lush with fresh and saltwater fish, shellfish, and plants. Among these, crab, shrimp, a variety of seaweeds, and tender vegetables are prized. The regional dishes often include a sweet-and-sour blend of vinegar and rock sugar as well as a variety of oils and liquors. The most revered vinegar in China comes from the area around Zhenjiang (Chinkiang) city. It is often aged for decades. Many dishes are red-cooked, which means they are simmered or stewed in soy-based sauces. Deep-fried foods are common as well. The prevalence of

Dim sum, which translates to "dot the heart," refers to a morning or mid-day meal of bite-sized savories and sweets such as those pictured here, including bamboo steaming baskets filled with dumplings. In addition to being steamed, dumplings stuffed with vegetables, seafood, meat, and even sweet custards and pastes are also fried, baked, and boiled. (Shoutforhumanity/Dreamstime.com)

Buddhism in this region has lent it a particular skill with vegetarian cookery. The cookery of northerly Shantung tends to blend eastern and northern styles and is, perhaps, best known for its wheat dumplings. Further south, the Fujian province specializes in soups, which range in density from a clear consommé to a thick stew. The Mongolian hot pot is commonly used and lard is a favored cooking medium. Dishes tend toward longer cooking times than in Cantonese cookery, and dipping sauces are popular.

A subvariety of Fujian, Teochew cuisine combines southern and eastern cookery. Specialties include stewed turtle, fried fish and seafood, deep-fried vegetables, and taro desserts. The cooking of Taiwan is some of the lightest

and most delicate of the region, an inheritance of the area's colonization by Japan from 1895 to 1945. The produce capital of China, Taiwan grows an astounding array of fruits and vegetables. Dried bean curd is a popular snack. It is frequently simmered with tea, soy sauce, and eggs to make a quick and comforting dish.

Western Chinese food includes that of Sichuan and Hunan provinces, although the latter region is geographically classified as southwestern. Dishes are typically spicy, often including chilies and Sichuan peppercorns (prized for their pungency, as they cause a numbing, tingling sensation in the mouth). They are also flavored with garlic, cassia, star anise, five-spice powder, cilantro, and dried citrus peel. Both rice and noodles serve as staples, and fresh fish abound. In addition to cabbages and radishes, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, and roots and herbs that grow in mountainous conditions are common. Sichuan province relies heavily on broad beans, mung beans, peas, and soybeans. Mountain winters necessitate pickling. Meats are cured by smoking and drying as well as made into sausages. Three of the region's most distinctive dishes have gained widespread popularity in the United States—namely, hot-and-sour soup, mapo tofu, and tea-smoked duck. Flavored with vinegar and chili peppers, hot-and-sour soup typically includes thin strips of pork, coagulated duck's or pig's blood, bamboo shoots, ginger, and daylily buds. Mapo tofu consists of mashed bean curd and minced pork that are stir-fried with sesame oil, spicy bean paste, garlic, ginger, and green onion.

Northern cuisine largely centers around Beijing. As the capital of China for over 800 years, Beijing's cookery is informed by imperial court cuisine, international influences, and a bitterly cold winter climate. Because rice could not be grown in the north until quite recently, wheat, soybeans, and millet developed as the staple foods. The cold weather likewise led to a predominance of heating foods, such as garlic and scallion. Root vegetables, and cabbage predominate. More so than other regions, northern cuisine relies on dark as opposed to light soy sauce and incorporates lamb, the latter of which was introduced by minority Muslim and Mongol ethnic groups. A few of the region's most celebrated specialties include Mongolian hot pot; hand-pulled noodles; boiled or pan-seared dumplings served with soy sauce, vinegar, and chili oil; and snacks made of wheat flour such as savory and sweet pastries and crepes. Perhaps the specialty most widely appreciated in the United Sates, Peking duck is traditionally served as three separate courses—an appetizer of crispy skin; a second course consisting of the meat, which is either rolled into a pancake or stir-fried with bean sauce; and a final course of broth made from the carcass.

JAPANESE COOKERY

Far more than any other culture, Japan prizes raw fish and has developed its preparation into an internationally renowned art form. The preparation

of raw fish for sashimi and sushi requires skilled knife-work. Dipping sauces for the sashimi and sushi typically consist of soy sauce, which may include additional flavorings. Sashimi, which refers to raw fish without rice, typically includes elaborate garnishes that add color, texture, flavor, and aroma to the finished dish. When paired with rice, raw fish becomes sushi. One of the most popular Japanese dishes in the United States, sushi was developed as a means of preserving fish, which was salted and packed in cooked rice. Eventually it came to be associated with fresh fish served on top of vinegar-seasoned rice, a combination that is sometimes wrapped in seaweed. One of the most popular forms of sushi is made with tuna. Typical sushi accompaniments include soy sauce, wasabi, and vinegar-pickled ginger. In addition to tuna, prized seafood for sashimi and sushi includes conger eel, abalone, shrimp, yellowtail, squid, sea bream, octopus, sea urchin roe, and salmon roe. In addition to being served raw, fish may be grilled; pan-fried; steamed; simmered; deep-fried; made into salads, soups, and stews; or dried for use as a protein-rich condiment.

As in other Asian cultures, rice appears at every meal unless it consists of a one-pot noodle dish. In addition to being steamed and served as a base for everyday meals, rice is transformed to make three of the basic flavoring

One of the most popular Japanese dishes in the United States, sushi was developed as a means of preserving fish, which was salted and packed in cooked rice. Eventually it came to be associated with fresh fish served on top of vinegar-seasoned rice, a combination that is sometimes wrapped in seaweed. Typical sushi accompaniments include soy sauce, wasabi, and vinegar-pickled ginger. (Shutterstock.com)

agents in Japanese cooking—namely, mirin (a sweet rice wine), vinegar, and miso. It is also made into the popular beverages sake (dry wine) and *shochu* (alcohol). Cakes made from glutinous rice (mochi) play an essential role at every ceremonial meal. Noodles, whether made from a mixture of buckwheat and wheat (soba) or wheat (udon and ramen), are the Japanese equivalent of fast-food in that they are easy and inexpensive to make into a hearty one-pot dish. Noodles can be served in a simple broth on their own or with a wide range of additions and toppings. A few of the most popular toppings include tempura, egg, poultry, seafood fritters, fried tofu, raw or cooked vegetables, seaweed, and breaded fried pork (*tonkatsu*). In addition to their starring role in soups, noodles are also stir-fried or boiled and served cold with a dipping sauce. In addition to wheat and buckwheat, Japanese noodles are also made from rice, mung beans, and yam.

Dashi, a delicate broth made from kelp and dried bonito (a type of tuna) flakes, serves as the foundation for nonvegetarian soups, simmered dishes, and sauces. A basic vegetarian broth is made from shiitake mushrooms, which are boiled with or without kelp. Soups are classified as clear broth or as miso broth, the latter of which is thickened with fermented bean paste (miso). Clear broths are made into soups with the addition of three ingredients: a piece of protein such as tofu, fish, or chicken; a sliver of seasonal vegetable; and a seasoning or garnish such as soy sauce or an herb. Miso soups are heartier and may contain seasonal vegetables and tofu.

Nabe, a hearty one-pot dish, might be made with monkfish and mizuna or with chicken, watercress, and shiitake. Similar to the Mongolian hot pot, *shabu-shabu* is a dish of sliced meat and vegetables that are cooked by diners in a communal pot that simmers on the table.

Favored vegetables for pickling include daikon radish, Chinese cabbage, carrot, burdock, zucchini, cucumber, eggplant, and turnip. One of the most important pickles in Japanese cuisine *umeboshi* is made from *ume* fruit, an apricot that is generally referred to in English as "Japanese plum." Ume plum vinegar is one of the most popular souring agents in Japanese cuisine. In addition to being pickled and fashioned into vinegar, ume are often added with sugar to a mild-flavored alcohol to make the popular cordial *umeshu*. Another fruit, yuzu (a variety of citrus) is a key ingredient in ponzu, a staple dipping sauce made often with a 1:1 ratio of yuzu juice to soy sauce.

Favorite meat dishes include simmered pork belly; pork and flowering mustard stir-fry; miso-marinated pork that is rolled, coated in panko crumbs, and deep fried; sweet-and-sour braised pork with pickled plums (*umeboshi*); steamed pork with ponzu sauce; and pan-seared dumplings stuffed with pork and cabbage. Beef sashimi is the Japanese version of carpaccio, finely ground or diced raw beef. Thinly sliced beef is pan-simmered with vegetables, mirin, and soy sauce to make the hearty stew *sukiyaki*. Like beef and

pork, chicken is cooked in a wide variety of ways. It may also be diced finely and served raw.

KOREAN COOKERY

Korean cooking shares two main characteristics that differentiate it from Chinese cookery and align it with that of the Japanese—namely, a fondness for raw seafood and a penchant for raw vegetables. A wide variety of fish as well as squid and abalone are consumed raw. Unlike in Chinese cookery, deep-frying is not a common method of cookery. As a result, egg-battered vegetables are typically pan-fried as opposed to deep-fried. A few of the most popular vegetables among Koreans include radish, spinach, mustard leaves, scallion, and seaweed, which may be dressed with red pepper powder, sesame oil, and rice vinegar or with fish sauce, sugar, and garlic. In addition to being served raw, parboiled, or lightly sautéed, Korean vegetables are often pickled. The Korean penchant for pickling extends to seafood, which may be salted and served as a side dish or as a condiment. Every traditional meal will include at least one pickle dish, if not several. In addition to its pervasive use of pickles, Korean cuisine is characterized by the prevalence of grilled meats and flavorful barbecue sauces. In fact, many Korean barbecue restaurants have grills built into each table so that diners can prepare their own meats and vegetables. Serious home cooks will also have a smokeless grill that can be used at the dining table.

Kimchi Travels

Although ready-made kimchi is widely available, many Korean families still prepare kimchi in the fall. The annual kimchi-making ritual, known as *gimjang*, ensures each household an annual supply of the spicy vegetable staple, which can be served with rice, added to a broth, or mixed with pancake batter and fried to form a simple meal. Traditionally, each family would follow its own kimchi recipe, and families would help one another in rotation. The basic kimchi recipes usually include cabbage, radish, herbs, chili pepper, mustard greens, garlic, fermented fish, and ginger in some combination. The vast quantities of kimchi made in the fall are stored in pots to undergo fermentation. The salt and chili peppers as well as the fermentation process serve as natural preservatives, ensuring a store of vitamin- and mineral-rich vegetables on hand all winter. During the warmer months of the year,

a summer variant of kimchi is regularly prepared, one that can be eaten immediately or aged for up to a couple of weeks.

As Koreans began to migrate in the 20th century, kimchi became a link to their homeland. Today, kimchi has attained mainstream status within the United States, where it can readily be found in grocery stores and home fridges across the country as well as in the rapidly rising number of Korean-fusion and pan-Asian restaurants that have begun to proliferate. First adopted by the health food movement during the 1970s, kimchi only began to enter the American culture at large within the 21st century, when a confluence of factors helped fuel the kimchi craze. Just a few such factors include a growing nationwide fascination with fermentation, a rising concern with healthy eating, an American-born Korean population drawn to the culinary arts, a national addiction to spicy food, and a well-funded campaign by the South Korean government to make its nation's cuisine one of the world's most popular by the year 2017. To date, kimchi festivals have been held regularly in cities including Los Angeles, Albuquerque, and Boston.

As in Japanese cookery, soups are placed into two categories: thin, or *guk*, and thick, or *tang*. Korean stews (*jigae*) are typically spicy concoctions that have been seasoned with either soybean paste or chili paste and may contain vegetables, seafood, or meat. *Tang* and *jigae* can be served as a side dish, a main dish, or even as a one-dish meal. One of the most popular seafood dishes comes in the form of a spicy stew laden with crab, clam, shrimp, fish, radish, chili pepper paste, and the ubiquitous green onion and garlic. Many beef broth soups use bone broth, which is made by boiling the bones to extract vital nutrients. During the hot summer months, cold soups are common. Popular versions feature cucumber or seaweed or roasted chicken and sesame. Most noodle dishes, whether hot or cold, are served in broth.

Noodles are made from rice, wheat, buckwheat, and sweet potato, the latter of which features in *japchae*. For this simple dish, sweet potato or cellophane noodles are tossed with stir-fried vegetables. For a refreshing snack or lunch, buckwheat noodles are drenched in cold beef broth and topped with beef, cucumber, pear, and egg. Steamed rice appears at every meal unless it consists of a one-pot noodle dish. Ground rice is used to thicken sauces and to make a batter for such iconic dishes as the seafood and scallion pancake, *haemul pajeon*. Pan-fried pancakes are made with a variety of meats and vegetables.

Marinated or lightly salted meats and seafood are often grilled over a high flame or broiled. Perhaps the most popular fruit in Korean cooking would be the Asian pear, which is an essential ingredient in the marinade typically used for meat and poultry. The pear's juice acts as a tenderizing agent. In addition to being grilled, meat and fish are simmered in soy sauce–flavored liquids, a method that not only tenderizes but also seasons the main ingredients. As is witnessed in Korean American restaurants, Koreans have a fondness for beef that far surpasses the rest of Asia. Pork also plays a key role in contemporary Korean cuisine. A popular way of preserving beef, pork, or crab is to marinate it in a soy sauce, sugar, and rice wine mixture.

Three of the most popular Korean meat dishes in the United States include *bulgogi*, thinly sliced beef or pork that has been marinated in soy sauce, pear juice, garlic, and green onion and then grilled; *galbi*, grilled beef or pork ribs with a sugar, soy sauce, and garlic marinade; and fried chicken. Rather than achieving a crisp finish as in Southern fried chicken, the Korean version is fried twice and then slathered in a sticky sweet-and-hot sauce. Other popular chicken dishes include grilled ginger chicken, baked chicken wings, and braised chicken with shiitake mushrooms. Beef is finely minced, mixed with soy sauce, honey, garlic, and sesame oil, and served raw with an egg yolk, pine nuts, and Asian pear. As do the Vietnamese, Koreans often wrap

Bulgogi, thinly sliced beef or pork that has been marinated in soy sauce, pear juice, garlic, and green onion and then grilled, is served with a variety of side dishes (*banchan*) including kimchi and pickled bean sprouts. Tabletop grills are common features in Korean restaurants and homes alike. (James Camp/Dreamstime.com)

thin slices of grilled meat in lettuce or perilla leaves. Rice and boiled pork are also eaten in tidy leaf-wrapped packages. Known as *ssam*, these wrapped foods are served with a variety of dipping sauces.

FILIPINO COOKERY

Perhaps the most popular method of cooking among Filipino Americans, *adobo* entails marinating and braising meat, seafood, or vegetables in a vinegar-based sauce that typically includes garlic, chilies, and soy sauce. Stuffed dishes, or *rellenos*, are made from meat, poultry, seafood, and even chicken and fish skins. Many vegetable dishes are prepared using a method called *guisado* in which vegetables are added to a base sautée of fried garlic, onion, and tomatoes. *Inihaw* refers to grilled foods, and *sinigang* refers to a sour stew of meat or fish, often incorporating tamarind as the souring agent. A Spanish inheritance, mixed seafood, sausage, meat, and vegetable dishes include *paella* and *arroz Valenciana*.

Common flavoring ingredients include coconut oil, coconut milk, vinegar, tamarind, ginger, fish sauce, garlic, chilies, pepper, lemongrass, oregano, curry powder, cilantro, banana ketchup, sweet pickles, black bean sauce, raisins, soy sauce, and kalamansi juice. Given the lush climate of the Philippines, a wide variety of fruits abound in the Filipino diet. They are used to flavor soups and stews as well as eaten for dessert. Green papayas and mangoes are made into pickles and relishes. Jackfruit, papaya, and mango may be consumed as a sweet dessert or eaten as a vegetable when green. Bitter melon is used as a vegetable, featuring in an array of dishes. Bananas may be eaten as a sweet or savory dish and are likewise made into ketchup.

Of all the flavors in Filipino cookery, sourness might be considered the most characteristic. The vinegar in adobo, the sour tropical fruits in *sinigang*, the vinegar or kalamansi in *kinilaw* each form the backbone of the dish in which they appear, acting as a structural component that melds and accentuates the other flavors. Vinegars made from a variety of fruit abound in the Philippines, including those made from coconut, Java plum, and wild guava. Other popular vinegars are made from palm, Chinese laurel, and even sugarcane. Sour fruits such as tamarind and the native lime, kalamansi, feature regularly in soups, stews, and dipping sauces. Because of U.S. colonization and the mass export of American goods to the Philippines, Heinz apple cider vinegar is one of the most commonly used souring agents among Filipinos and Filipino Americans alike.

White, purple, and glutinous rice are used in Filipino cooking. A wide range of cakes and buns are made from rice flour. They can be sweet or savory and are variously steamed, baked, or fermented. Rice wrappers are used to make fresh and fried spring rolls, or lumpia. Clearly a Chinese descendent,

the Filipino spring roll differs from its progenitor in that its pastry wrapping is thinner and lighter than that of the traditional egg roll and does not include egg. Lumpia seasonings likewise differ. Whereas egg rolls might contain soy sauce and ginger, lumpia often include cilantro, coconut, and chili peppers.

Many Filipino soups incorporate a souring agent meant to stimulate appetite. Soup bases vary from thin vegetable or meat broths to rich coconut milk and coconut cream concoctions. Regardless of their base, Filipino soups tend to be heavy in nature and are seasoned with such ingredients as ginger, garlic, tamarind, kalamansi juice, and fish sauce. Chinese-style soups such as wonton soup, bitter melon soup, and chicken and noodle soup abound, yet they are made Filipino with a large splash of fish sauce. Soups of Spanish heritage include garlic soup, meatball soup, and bread and oil soup. The native Filipino soup *sinigang* contains seafood or meat, vegetables, and kalamansi juice. Two popular beef soups include *kare-kare*, made with oxtail, peanut butter, and eggplant, and *bularo*, made with beef marrow.

Fish and shellfish are typically pan-fried, braised, steamed, or marinated in citrus juice or vinegar. When seafood is marinated with a variety of additional ingredients, much as ceviche is prepared, it is known as *kilawin* or *kinilaw*. The seafood might be mixed with chilies, tomatoes, and coconut or with vinegar, garlic, onions or shallots, and salt. A few popular seafood dishes include a Spanish-style stew, with shrimp, squid, raisins, and peas; steamed fish stuffed with tomatoes and onions; and coconut-braised fish, shrimp, and crab. Fermented seafood sauces and pastes (*patis* and *bagoong*) are pantry staples, which are commonly made from anchovies, oysters, clams, shrimp, or small fish. They may be made from fish and rice (*buro*) or with salt and fish or shellfish, the latter of which is made into two products—the sediment is used as a paste (*bagoong*) and the liquid that rises to the top becomes the Filipino fish sauce *patis*. Spanish sailors contributed a favored dish made from salted, dried codfish (*bacalao*), which appears at the Good Friday dinner table.

Like other Asian cultures, poultry is typically prepared with the bone, as it imparts flavor and provides valuable nutrients. A few popular dishes include chicken adobo; chicken soup with green papaya; coconut chicken with pineapple; chicken *asado*, which is simmered in tomatoes and cane vinegar; and chicken stew with vegetables and garlicky eggplant sauce. Filipino fried chicken might be served with banana ketchup or a vinegar-flavored dipping sauce. A popular version entails simmering the chicken in cane vinegar, garlic, and soy sauce before deep-frying.

All parts of the pig are savored. The blood is used to thicken stews; livers and kidneys are skewered and grilled; tripe appears atop rice porridge; knuckles and fat are deep-fried; offal features in several hearty soups; the cheeks, snout, and tail are finely chopped and deep-fried to make *sigsig*; and pig trotters are deep-fried and dipped in vinegar and soy sauce. For what might be

the nation's most festive dish, a whole suckling pig is spit-roasted to make *lechon*. For special occasions, home cooks prepare *lechon kawali*, pork belly or pork shoulder that is marinated and then baked. Pork is likewise mixed with seafood, sausages, and vegetables to make special occasion dishes such as *paella*. Beef is turned into meatballs, made into stews, braised and roasted, coated with crushed coriander seeds and pan-sautéed with a fermented black bean sauce, or cut into steaks and grilled.

VIETNAMESE COOKERY

More so than most other Asian cuisines, Vietnamese cookery is heavily dependent on fresh herbs and vegetables. Raw herbs and leaves are used to wrap small packets of food at the table, which are dipped into one of the many sauces in the Vietnamese culinary repertoire. The most essential, *nuoc cham*, is made of fish sauce, lime, sugar, and optional additions of Thai chili pepper and garlic. Appearing in most dipping sauces, chili and sugar are added in varying proportions, depending on the amount of heat and sweetness desired. Vegetarian sauces substitute soy for fish sauce.

One of the most distinctive cooking methods for vegetables, fish, and meat alike entails simmering the main ingredient in a caramel sauce. Caramel sauce is so ubiquitous in Vietnamese cookery that serious cooks keep a steady supply on hand. Made from white or brown sugar that has been caramelized in water, this sauce can serve as the main cooking medium or it can be added to a dish to give it flavor as well as to provide a glazed appearance. As they are in Filipino cookery, fried shallots and fried garlic are frequently used as a finishing garnish. They provide depth of flavor and aromatic complexity as well as a crunchy texture.

Leafy greens such as mustard, chrysanthemum, amaranth, and water spinach are commonly sautéed with garlic. Pickled and preserved vegetables are popular, as they add texture and flavor to a range of dishes. Carrot and daikon pickle appears at most meals. Bean sprouts are pickled and served as a light, refreshing salad to accompany dishes of pork or fish that have been simmered in caramel sauce. Pickled shallots are an essential component of Tet (New Year's) celebrations.

Just a few of the most popular Vietnamese salads are made with cucumber and shrimp, green papaya; spicy cabbage and chicken; and banana blossoms. Onions, carrots, and fresh herbs are tossed with sautéed garlic and silverfish to make a salad that is often scooped up with shrimp chips and eaten as a snack. Another popular combination includes grilled shrimp with pummelo, cucumber, and carrots. Most salads include an allium such as shallots, garlic, or onion and are dressed with a variation of the dipping sauce *nuoc cham*, typically including lime, fish sauce, sugar, and chili peppers. Salads usually contain minced fresh herbs such as Thai basil, Vietnamese coriander, and mint.

Fresh herbs and leafy greens likewise feature in myriad soups, including beef with Vietnamese coriander, beef with water spinach, chicken dumpling with chrysanthemum leaves, and tofu with chive buds. Two of the most popular soup noodles include *bún* and *mì*. Bún is a thin, round rice noodle resembling vermicelli, which appears in spring rolls. Three of the most popular soups with bún include *pho bo*, a beef and noodle soup; *pho ga*, a chicken and noodle soup; and *bún bo hué*, made with beef, pork, and shrimp paste. Mì are Chinese egg noodles, which are often paired with pork bone broth and pork or duck.

As in other East and Southeast Asian cultures, noodles are stir-fried with meat, tofu, poultry, and vegetables. They may be served cold as a salad that is topped with fresh herbs and meat. Fresh noodles can be drenched in honey or doused in dipping sauce and eaten as a snack. Thin Shanghai-style noodles can be pressed into a pancake, fried until crisp, and topped with delicate shellfish. As in other Asian cuisines, steamed rice appears at most meals. It is also stir-fried and made into porridge. Sticky rice is formed into square and round cakes and stuffed with meat, seafood, vegetables, and sweet or savory beans. Rice flour is fashioned into wrappers and crepes to enfold savory fillings.

Like rice, fish plays a major role in everyday meals. Because Vietnamese prize freshness, many seafood dishes tend to be simply prepared. Whole fish is often steamed, poached, pan-fried, or grilled with a bit of fresh lemongrass, ginger, or makrut lime leaves added for a touch of bright flavor. Lobster, shrimp, and crab are often boiled or steamed and served with a light dipping sauce. A popular snack prepared at home and served at street stalls, *chao tom* consists of fresh shrimp flavored with loads of seasonings and ground into a paste, which is then wrapped around a sugarcane skewer, grilled, and eaten with peanut dipping sauce.

Whereas complicated or time-consuming beef dishes feature regularly on restaurant menus, home-cooked beef dishes tend toward simpler, more comforting fare. One of the most popular comfort dishes is a beef stew with star anise and, depending on the cook's preference, one or more additional flavorings such as lemongrass, annatto seeds, beer, curry powder, or tomatoes. Beef flank is paired with ginger and slow-simmered in caramel sauce or stir-fried with Chinese celery, while steaks are pan-fried. Sliced beef is also pan-fried and served atop watercress to make "shaking beef" salad. Pork is frequently minced or ground and added to dishes ranging from salads and stuffed tomatoes to crepes and braised dishes. Pork is also shredded and dried to make a chewy condiment. Pork chops are marinated, grilled, and sliced to serve over an herb noodle salad or steamed rice. Spare ribs are barbecued or glazed; pork shoulder is simmered in coconut water or deep-fried and drenched in a sweet-and-sour sauce.

Chicken plays a far greater role in everyday Vietnamese American cookery than it does in traditional Vietnamese cuisine. Whole chicken is rubbed

with lemongrass or garlic paste and roasted. It is also poached with makrut lime leaves and ginger. Chicken is cut into pieces and prepared in a hot pot, stir-fried, marinated with five-spice powder and grilled, or steamed with mushrooms. It is ground into a paste and fashioned into meatballs, dumplings, and made into *gio lua*, a silky sausage that is the most popular of all Vietnamese charcuterie. Chicken and duck eggs are placed in a brine and cured for a few weeks to make the delicacy *trung muoi*. For special occasions, a whole duck might be roasted. Duck is also cut into pieces and simmered in coconut juice, stewed with pineapple, or made into a soup that includes bok choy and egg noodles. Game birds such as quail and squab are favored for special occasions.

COOKING EQUIPMENT

Wok: Arguably the world's most versatile and efficient cooking instrument, the wok has earned a valued place among home cooks and chefs throughout the United States. Invented by the Chinese, wok cookery migrated throughout East and much of Southeast Asia, where it serves as the primary cooking vessel. Because the wok works less efficiently on an electric burner, many Asian Americans with an electric stove use Western pots and pans rather than woks. More recently, however, flat-bottomed woks that have been designed for use on an electric burner have become readily available. Typically a round-bottomed pan, the wok requires little oil in stir-frying as the oil collects at the bottom. The small uniform cuts of meat and vegetables used in stir-frying enable the ingredients to be seared quickly at high heat, a technique that maintains and enhances the natural flavors of food; lower temperatures require longer cooking times during which flavors can be dulled or watered down. The wok's sloped sides lead to less spillage and also encourage foods to slide back to the bottom rather than sticking to the sides of the pan.

Woks must be seasoned before first use in order to seal the porous metal with a layer of fat so that foods do not stick to the surface. Wok sizes vary depending on their main purpose and the quantity of food regularly cooked in them. They come with two looped handles or a single long handle. Woks are made from a variety of metals, but the most prized are cast-iron or carbon steel. Cast iron skillets in the United States tend to be heavy and difficult to maneuver, although lighter versions are imported from China. Carbon steel woks heat and cool more quickly than cast iron, which prevents food from overcooking. They may be hand-hammered or factory-made and do not come with flat bottoms. Because of their shape, woks can function as a pot or as a pan. As a result, they are not only used for stir-frying, but are also used for deep-frying, poaching, braising, boiling, steaming, and smoking.

Wok Rings and Wok Lids: The circular metal frame that holds the wok in place is known as a wok ring. It is needed when steaming, boiling, or deep-frying in the wok. It may also be used to secure a round-bottomed wok for use on an electric burner, although the food will not cook as quickly and efficiently as it will on a gas burner. Wok rings and lids are typically made from aluminum. Rounded lids are the norm for wok cookery, as the curvature means that less condensation will form on the lid and drip onto the food below. Lids are essential for stewing, steaming, or smoking foods.

Wok brush: This wooden brush with wide, thin bristles is used to clean a wok.

Wok spatula and ladle: A round-edged spatula is preferable for use with a flat-bottomed or a shallow wok. For deeper woks, a ladle works best as it fits the steeper curve better than the smaller spatula.

Perforated ladle: Ladles are used for lowering and lifting foods from hot liquids.

Skewers, bamboo or metal: Varying in length, skewers hold small pieces of food together and keep them from falling into the grill. Longer skewers may be used to hold an entire fish. Bamboo skewers must be soaked in water for 20–30 minutes before use to prevent them from burning.

Steamer, bamboo or metal: Steaming is a delicate way of cooking and enhances the fresh flavors of the ingredients. Bamboo steamers may be placed directly in a wok to which water has been added. They may be stacked so that different dishes can be steamed at the same time. Bamboo steamers have a plaited cover that absorbs the moisture that accrues as the steam condenses, thereby preventing droplets from falling onto the food and thereby damaging its texture and appearance. Because bamboo steamers are prone to mildew, however, some cooks prefer metal steamers, which can be placed directly on the burner. Metal steamers consist of a solid-bottomed pan into which water can be poured directly and a steaming basket, which rests suspended above the water. Baskets with small holes are used for delicate ingredients such as rice or dumplings, while baskets with larger holds are used for heavier foods such as meat.

Cleaver: A skilled cook can perform a remarkable range of cutting tasks with this one instrument, including slicing, paring, dicing, mincing, shredding, and even deveining shrimp.

Clay Pot: These vessels can be used on top of the stove and in the oven. Clay pots are typically heated on the stove top and used for slow braises, a method that produces a tender, aromatic dish. Because the clay from which they are made is highly porous, it absorbs the braising liquid and releases it as steam. Traditionally, clay pots were used for making rice, as they create a prized layer of crusted rice on the bottom.

Chopsticks: Long bamboo chopsticks are used in cooking because they are durable and resist warping. Like the wok, chopsticks are used for a wide range

of tasks. They can be used like tongs to maneuver hot ingredients or like a fork or spoon to mix, stir, or whip ingredients.

Mortar and Pestle: Made of stone, granite, or porcelain, mortar and pestle are used to grind or blend ingredients and are used most commonly in Southeast Asian cooking. They are particularly prized for making smooth pastes. Tough, dry ingredients are ground first and wetter ingredients are added toward the end. Granite mortars and pestles are used for grinding hard spices, while wood or clay implements are fashioned for softer ingredients such as chilies, garlic, and ginger. Many modern cooks prefer to use a blender or a food processor.

Banana and Taro Leaves: Used in Southeast Asia to wrap food for grilling, steaming, or placing directly onto hot coals, these leaves impart a subtle flavor. Aluminum foil may be substituted.

Bamboo mats: Useful for rolling rice inside wrappers of seaweed to make Japanese sushi or Korean *kimbap*. They are also used for rolling up Japanese omelets and for squeezing the liquid out of cooked vegetables.

Omelet Pan: Unlike the round Western omelet pan, the Japanese version is rectangular. It is typically made of iron or aluminum. An 8-inch nonstick skillet is a fine substitute.

Rice Cooker: Asian Americans who consume traditional home-cooked meals on a regular basis will typically have a rice cooker. Not only does it ensure that the rice does not overcook, but it can also be preset to start at a given time and keeps rice warm throughout the day.

Grater: Usually made of porcelain or bamboo, this implement is used for grating ginger or horseradish, as it breaks down the fibers.

COOKBOOKS

Chinese

The first Chinese cookbook written for an American audience, *Chinese Cookery in the Home Kitchen*, was published in 1911. Three years later came the *Chinese-Japanese Cook Book*, which was the first Japanese and perhaps the second Chinese cookbook written in English. Coauthored by Sara Eaton Bosse and her sister Winnifred (children of a Chinese mother and an English father), the book includes Chinese recipes for bird's nest soup, sweet-and-sour fish, and lychee chicken as well as Japanese recipes for satsuma soup, boiled whale, and water chestnut cream. In order to avoid prejudice for her Chinese ethnicity, Winnifred, oddly enough, wrote under the pseudonym Otono Watanna, becoming famous for her Japanese romance novels, while her elder sister, Edith, adopted the pen name Sui Sin Far and became famous for her fiction about downtrodden Chinese immigrants.

Until the 1940s, most Chinese cookbooks were published for a Western audience and took pains to convince their readers that Chinese cuisine was "safe" and "clean." Americanized dishes such as chop suey and chow mein were widely represented. Published in 1945, Buwei Yang Chao's *How to Cook and Eat in Chinese* marked a shift toward representing the nuances of Chinese dining etiquette and cookery. Although some of the dishes are distinctively Americanized, the book sought to teach Americans how to dine like Chinese. In fact, the first 50 pages explain the Chinese art of eating and introduce Americans, familiar solely with Americanized Cantonese, to the notion of regional cuisines. Buwei Yang Chao herself was born and lived in China as well as Japan, where she obtained a degree from Tokyo Women's Medical College. Her husband, a revered linquist from China, helped her write the text while the couple were living in Cambridge, Massachusetts, during World War II.

For 20 years after the publication of *How to Cook and Eat in Chinese*, most Chinese cookbooks were published by non-foreign-born Chinese Americans who worked to educate non-Chinese and Chinese Americans alike about Chinese culinary customs. The first book to directly address the difficulty of being an ethnic minority, Calvin Lee's *Chinese Cooking for American Kitchens* (1959) acknowledges the dilemma he faced in trying to simultaneously assimilate into American culture and maintain his cultural heritage.

By the end of the 1960s, Americans had developed a passion for Chinese food that would alter the national palate, attuning it to the regional inflections of Chinese cookery. Helping fuel the American craving for Chinese food, *The New York Times* dining critic Craig Claiborne awarded his highest honors to a Chinese restaurant in 1969 and began to review the myriad non-Cantonese restaurants opening in the city. In 1972, he coauthored *The Chinese CookBook* with his Chinese cooking instructor Virginia Lee. By the close of the 1970s, Chinese regional cooking and Chinese fusion cuisine had become an integral part of the American culinary landscape. The tail end of the 20th century saw the rise of the Chinese American culinary memoir. Perhaps the first of the genre to be aimed at a Chinese American audience, Ken Hom's *Easy Family Recipes from a Chinese-American Childhood* (1997) clearly articulates itself as an expression of Chinese American identity.

JAPANESE

After the *Chinese-Japanese Cook Book* was published in 1914, over 40 years would pass before the steady publication of Japanese cookbooks in English would begin in earnest. John and Jan Belleme's *Culinary Treasures of Japan* (1960) introduced Americans to staples of the Japanese pantry, while *The Japanese Country Cookbook* (1969), which was penned by the owner of a

Japanese restaurant in San Francisco, provided a beautifully illustrated guide to everyday rural dining in Japan. Matao Uwate followed his *Japanese Cook Book for Sanseis* (1974) with *Sushi* (1975). Elisabeth Lambert Ortiz with Mitsuko Endo compiled and wrote *The Complete Book of Japanese Cooking* (1976), which includes suggested menus and a glossary of Japanese culinary terms. Still considered the premier English language book on Japanese cuisine, *Japanese Cooking: A Simple Art* (1980) by Shizuo Tsuji was rereleased in 2006 in honor of its 25th anniversary. William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi followed up their *Book of Tofu* (1987) with *Book of Miso*. Although not strictly a Japanese cookbook, *Book of Tofu* was predominately researched in Japan and informed by Japanese tofu artisans.

KOREAN

What may be the first Korean cookbook published in the United States, Harriet Morris's *The Art of Korean Cooking* first appeared in 1959. Morris, who worked for the Methodist Mission in Korea for 20 years, taught home economics in Seoul. Many of the ingredients readily available today were unobtainable in mainstream markets so Morris substitutes candied ginger for fresh ginger and fresh chili pepper for dried. Two staple foods *gochujang* (red pepper paste) and *doenjang* (fermented soybean paste) are conspicuously absent, as they would have been virtually impossible for mainstream Americans to find. Despite such substitutions and absences, the book still manages to capture the essence of Korean cuisine.

A book published in Tokyo in 1963 and distributed in the United States, *The Art of Korean Cookery* by Cho Choong-Ok was written in order to introduce Korean cookery to Westerners. Unlike Morris's endeavor, the book pushes its readers to gather such ingredients as *gochujang*, *doenjang*, and gingko nuts. *The Korean CookBook* by Judy Hyun was published in 1970. In addition to introducing her readers to basic ingredients such as tofu and mung bean noodles, Hyun provides an overview of Korean culture.

More recently, a spate of Korean American cookbooks has worked to create an historical narrative that bridges the authors' Korean heritage with their American lives. In *Dok Suni: Recipes from My Mother's Kitchen* (1998), Jenny Kwak pays homage to her immigrant mother, recalling food memories and recording recipes for her favorite childhood dishes as well as recipes from *Dok Suni*, the Manhattan restaurant that Kwak and her mother owned and ran for 21 years. In *Growing Up in a Korean Kitchen: A CookBook* (2001), immigrant Hi Soo Shin Hepinstall writes of her journey to learn more about the rich Korean culinary heritage passed down to her through her own mother and grandmother. Cecilia Hae-Jin Lee's *Eating Korean* (2005) weaves together the author's Korean American food memories, family recipes, and reflections on growing up as a Korean in America.

FILIPINO

Published in Manila yet written with an American audience in mind, Nora and Mariles Daza's *Galing-Galing Philippine Food* (1974) claims itself to be the "First Philippine cookbook for use in the United States." The book bears witness to the American colonial influence on Filipino cuisine, calling for such imported goods as Carnation evaporated milk, Vienna sausages, and maraschino cherries. Recipes include those for traditional Filipino dishes such as adobo and the stewed pork in coconut milk dish Bikol express as well as American-inspired Filipino classics such as meatloaf and macaroni salad, both made with a splash of soy sauce. Aside from books published in the Philippines and Australia, Filipino cookbooks written for a Filipino American and Filipino audience include Dominga L. Asuncion's *Cooking Filipino Dishes in America* (1971); Marilyn Ranada Donato's *Philippine Cooking in America* (1982); and Jennifer Aranas' *The Filipino-American Kitchen* (2006). Perhaps the most ambitious, historically inclined, and aesthetically oriented of the American endeavors, Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan's *Memories of Philippine Kitchens* explores Filipino family kitchens in the United States and the Philippines through recipes, stories, and photographs.

VIETNAMESE

Because Vietnamese fled their homeland as refugees, Vietnamese American cookbooks take part in a form of cultural recovery. These cookbooks articulate memories from Vietnam and reconfigure them for an Anglo audience by creating a cohesive historical narrative. This narrative, in turn, codifies a culinary heritage that bridges Vietnam with the United States, and, in doing so, constructs a narrative that is palatable to the American reader. Just a few such cookbooks that work to construct an historical narrative centered around the kitchen include Nicole Routhier's *The Foods of Vietnam* (1989), Corinne Trang's *Authentic Vietnamese Cooking: Food From the Family Table* (1999), Thi Choi Trieu's *The Food of Vietnam* (2000), Mai Pham's *Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table* (2001), and Andrea Nguyen's *Into the Vietnamese Kitchen* (2006).

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Typical Meals

The degree to which recent immigrants will hold onto their native food culture depends on a range of factors, including whether they hail from urban or rural backgrounds and how traditional their household was in their homeland. For example, many of the second-wave Vietnamese immigrants came from rural areas of Vietnam where they fished and grew their own vegetables for daily consumption. Among those who settled in New Orleans, the elderly recreated as best they could the backyard gardens that they had worked in Vietnam. Their gardens include taro, eggplant, bitter cucumber, lemongrass, water spinach, Malabar nightshade, ginger, turmeric, Vietnamese coriander (*rau ram*), perilla, mint, and basil. Any crops that aren't consumed by the family that tends the garden are sold to neighbors, farmers' markets, local restaurants, and grocery stores. In addition to planting and tending their own gardens, rural Vietnamese often worked as fisherfolk. As a result, many refugees took up work in the seafood industry, enabling them easy and affordable access to one of the main staples of their diet.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are recent immigrants from Hong Kong who left before Britain ceded control of the region back to China. The vast majority of these immigrants spoke English upon arrival and hailed from relatively affluent backgrounds. Almost 45 percent of the 219,000 immigrants from Hong Kong settled in urban and suburban California, coalescing in regions already densely populated by Asian Americans—namely Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay Area. Another 40,000 have made the New York metropolitan area their home.

Having been under British control from 1842 to 1997, Hong Kong developed a striking blend of Western and Eastern eating habits. British,

American, French, and Italian restaurants stand alongside a range of Chinese establishments. This blend of Asian and Western food cultures extends to dining utensils—people living in Hong Kong dine variously with forks, knives, spoons, and chopsticks. Breakfast might be congee or dim sum or the British standard of sausage, eggs, and toast. Coming from a partially Westernized culture and speaking English, immigrants from Hong Kong, like other Asian immigrants from Westernized urban environments, have already incorporated American-style restaurants and Western dining habits into their lifestyle by the time they arrive in the United States.

For many immigrants, holidays and formal occasions will be the only time traditional dining customs will be followed. Like most immigrant groups, foreign-born Asian American adults, especially the elderly, tend to adhere more firmly to their native food culture. As individuals become more acculturated, they will begin to incorporate more American dishes, snacks, or meal structures into their daily routine. Most immigrants will eventually achieve a bicultural diet that includes both foods from their native country as well as distinctively American fare. The inexpensive cost of meat and the prevalence of dairy products in the United States, for example, mean that most Asian Americans consume more beef, chicken, pork, and dairy than they did in their home country. Although rice remains a staple food, Asian Americans will consume considerably more baked goods such as bread, crackers, and cookies than Asians do. They also consume more fast-food than do their Asian counterparts.

Young immigrants and the first-generation American-born will often work to Americanize their foods and their food habits as a means of blending into their new environment. In the recent past, this drive to Americanize has often been prompted by mainstream prejudice against unfamiliar dishes and ingredients. The rapid rise in the number of foreign-born Asian immigrants in the United States has begun to noticeably shift this dynamic, particularly in urban and suburban settings, as aspects of Asian food culture become increasingly mainstream. As a general rule, Asian Americans who prepare traditional Asian meals will do so most often for dinner, on weekends, and for special occasions. Immigrants living and working in ethnic enclaves will often eat traditional Asian meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Those living in ethnic enclaves but working outside of them tend to eat Western lunches. The diet of Asians married to non-Asian spouses will become Americanized more quickly than that of Asian couples. Although the lifestyle and dining habits of Asian Americans vary from all-American to traditional Asian, the following discussion focuses on more traditional Asian American meals.

GATHERING INGREDIENTS FOR HOME-COOKED MEALS

Although immigrants living in regions without a significant Asian population must learn to substitute ingredients, an increasing number of staple

Asian food items are appearing in mainstream grocery store chains. The post-1965 boom in Asian immigration has likewise helped large nationwide Asian American supermarket chains thrive. Despite the fact that Asian groceries keep their prices significantly lower than their non-Asian counterparts, nonrestaurant Asian food sales exceeded 1.5 billion in 2012. This success is due in large part to the fact that Asians Americans earn more than the average U.S. household and spend more of their income on groceries. To keep overhead costs down, chain stores are frequently located in suburban metropolitan areas.

Just a few of the more successful of these supermarket chains include Hong Kong Supermarket, 99 Ranch, H Mart, Island Pacific Market, Seafood City, Mitsuwa, Nijiya Market, and Shun Fat. Huge supermarkets anchored in Asian American malls bear some resemblance to the large chains that have begun to proliferate in wealthy urban areas in Asia. Strikingly, a Taiwanese American working in Silicon Valley can have a similar experience shopping at the local 99 Ranch as he would at the Carrefour in Hsinchu, the electronic capital of Taiwan. The globalization of the world's food supply is both nourished by and nourishes those immigrants who travel regularly between their country of origin and the country to which they have migrated, often for work.

Asian American supermarkets generally include sections devoted to rice, noodles, spices, sauces, snack foods, meat, seafood, teas and herbs, and fruits and vegetables. Shelves are filled with Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesian soy sauces; over 50 varieties of fish sauces from Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia, and Indonesia; upwards of 20 varieties of shrimp chips imported from countries throughout East and Southeast Asia; shelves of bean pastes as well as Chinese and Southeast Asian shrimp pastes; an aisle of rice bags weighing upwards of 50 pounds and another filled with noodles of all shapes and sizes; and shelves stocked with imported beverages ranging from rice wine and alcohol to bubble teas and lychee juice. In addition to the wheat and rice noodles found on non-Asian market shelves, noodles are made from a dizzying array of ingredients including buckwheat, mung bean, sweet potato, tapioca, agar agar, arrowroot, seaweed, potato, and yuba (bean curd skin).

Rows of freezers are stocked with dumplings and dumpling wrappers, seafood, herbs, banana, and taro leaves, as well as a wide range of prepared foods. The local and imported produce will include many fruits and vegetables found in non-Asian grocery stores along with scores of Asian favorites such as durian, kalamansi, dragon fruit, taro root, purple yam, pandan leaves, lotus root, and chrysanthemum leaves. Meat departments are common in larger markets. The seafood department will not only contain cases filled with fillets and steaks but also with whole fish, as the cooked bones and skin impart a depth of flavor much revered throughout Asia. In addition to their wide selection of whole fish, Asian markets also differ markedly from non-Asian

ones in that they stock tanks with live fish such as tilapia, catfish, sole, crab, eel, and lobster. Buckets likewise contain live mollusks like clams or mussels.

Because such supermarkets can be found in regions of the country boasting large Asian American populations, foreign-born immigrants living in these areas can create reasonable facsimiles of the traditional dishes from their homeland. In addition to such large markets, more intimate Asian groceries serve the needs of smaller immigrant communities and also carry goods that cater to specific nationalities or ethnic groups. Farmers' markets in key regions likewise sell a wide range of popular Asian vegetables and herbs including leafy greens such as chrysanthemum leaves, pea shoots, water spinach, a variety of Asian eggplants, holy basil, bitter melon, yard-long beans, opo squash, Chinese flowering cabbage, and lemongrass. In warm climates of the United States, farmers' markets carry a range of Asian fruits including lychee, carambola, jackfruit, jujube, dragon fruit, rambutan, and loquat. Live fish, specialty items such as *balut* (a fertilized duck egg prized by Filipinos), and prepared foods such as tofu can be found in urban farmers' markets boasting a large Asian population. In addition to the produce found in supermarkets and farmers' markets, foreign-born Asian Americans with access to a small plot of land will sometimes plant gardens in order to grow the vegetables and herbs they consume on a daily basis.

ASIAN AMERICAN MEALS

Traditional meals will include a bowl of rice and a soup as well as one or more complementary dishes. Soups range from thin to thick, the former referring to a consommé or broth with, perhaps, a small number of solid ingredients added. Two of the most widely consumed soups in the United States, sweet-and-sour soup and wonton soup are both categorized as medium-bodied soups. Thick soups contain more ingredients and seasonings. Chicken coconut soup, *pho*, and ramen soups exemplify the thick category. Thin soups may serve as the main "beverage" during a meal, and thick soups may be consumed as one-dish meals. Rice porridge is considered a restorative dish and is eaten for breakfast or lunch as well as during times of illness. Dishes that accompany rice and soup might be as light as a pickled vegetable such as kimchi or as heavy as a deep-fried pork belly. In general, the more diners, the more dishes will be served. If several dishes are served at a meal, they will be prepared using different cooking methods and contain a variety of textures, flavors, and ingredients.

Chinese American Meals

The Chinese preoccupation with cookery and devotion to the development of their cuisine into an art form greatly informs the Chinese American

food culture. Quality and freshness are paramount. Because the vast majority of Chinese have lived on meager means, much of Chinese cookery has evolved to be economical. Many dishes have short cooking times because wood and other natural fuels are limited.

As the foundational cuisine of Asia, Chinese cuisine has likewise had a profound influence on East and Southeast Asian food cultures. In particular, Japan, Korea, and most of Southeast Asia inherited the Chinese reliance on starch as the main staple; the prominence of vegetables, soy products, and seafood; wok cookery, wrapped foods, and noodles; an avoidance of dairy products; the use of foods for medicinal purposes; the habit of marinating meat and seafood before cooking to improve texture and flavor; and the practice of fermenting foods to produce umami-rich end products such as soy sauce and bean paste. Another important inheritance from Chinese food culture for much of Asia and Southeast Asia is the practice of setting many dishes on the table at once and eating communally out of the same serving dishes. Respect for the elderly likewise runs throughout Asian food cultures, demonstrated by the fact that the eldest at table are served first.

One of the key tenets of Chinese cookery mandates that a wide variety of ingredients, textures, flavors, and temperatures should be regularly consumed in order to promote health and aid the body's natural balance. This extends to Chinese American meals. Excessive eating and drinking should be avoided and foods should also be consumed in season. Every meal should include the five basic Chinese flavors including sour salt, sweet, bitter, and pungent. Foods are divided into two categories: *fan*, which refers to rice as well as other grains and breads, and *cai*, the vegetable or protein accompaniment for rice. Traditional meals are composed in order to achieve a balance between yin and yang, or cold and hot, foods. Foods that are mild in flavor are thought to have a cooling

Buddhists and Their Diet

Fourteen percent of Asian Americans identify themselves as Buddhists. Buddhism is most common among Vietnamese Americans, 40 percent of whom self-identify as Buddhists. Twenty-five percent of Japanese Americans, fifteen percent of Chinese Americans, and six percent of Korean Americans practice Buddhism. Because Buddhist monks and nuns are generally forbidden to eat foods that once lived and many Buddhist practitioners refrain from eating foods that once lived on specific days of the year, Buddhist cultures have sophisticated vegetarian cuisines with elaborate mock meat dishes made from tofu, yuba, tempeh, and seitan. Some Buddhist temples prepare lunches that are open to the public.

effect on the body and are classified as yin. These include vegetables and fruits such bean sprouts, cucumber, water chestnut, and watermelon. Foods that are spicy have a heating effect on the body and are classified as yang. These include chili peppers, ginger, garlic, and mustard. Foods that are more difficult to digest, such as fried foods or fatty foods are generally classified as heating, or yang, while lightly prepared dishes such as steamed or poached foods are considered cooling, or yin. A balanced dish, then, is prepared by combining yin and yang foods and a balanced meal combines yin and yang dishes. For example, a cooling vegetable such as bean sprouts might be stir-fried with a heating ingredient such as ginger, or a fatty deep-fried dish might be balanced by a steamed one. Foods are likewise consumed according to season. Cold, damp weather calls for consuming more heating foods and hot, dry weather requires more cooling foods. Rice and many legumes are considered neutral foods.

According to the 2010 Census, the largest number of Chinese live in California (over 1.4 million), New York (over 615,000), Hawaii (over 199,000), Texas (over 180,000), and New Jersey (over 149,000). As a result, these states boast the largest number of Chinese restaurants and food markets. Whereas the traditional Chinese diet is low in fat and in dairy, Chinese Americans tend to consume more fat, protein, sugar, and cholesterol the

Dairy

Although this century has seen a steady rise in dairy consumption throughout Asia as well as a significantly sharper rise among Asian Americans, dairy products have not traditionally been a significant part of the Chinese diet (or the diet of any Eastern or Southeastern Asian country). Two explanations have been offered. One derives from the fact that most Chinese, as do most Asians, cease producing the enzyme lactate at the age of six. As a result, they have difficulty digesting dairy. Yet, this explanation fails to take into account why Indians and Central Asians incorporate dairy so freely into their diets. Another explanation for the lack of dairy in East and Southeast Asian diets is that raising cattle and keeping dairy fresh are both difficult in these regions. Again this explanation fails to take into account why Indians developed strains of cattle that could withstand extreme humidity. Eschewing dairy as a significant source of protein, the Chinese developed a range of bean and preserved fish delicacies. Tofu, fermented bean products such as soy and bean paste, dried shrimp, and salted fish might be understood as the East and Southeast Asian equivalent of cheese and cream, which Western cooks rely on for added depth, flavor, nutrition, and texture.

longer they are exposed to American culture. For example, immigrants who arrive in the United States as middle-aged or elderly adults tend to maintain the traditional Chinese diet when dining at home, whereas American-born Chinese Americans may eat typical mainstream American meals. Milk, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream often become a regular part of the diet—at least for the 25 percent of Asians who do not experience lactose intolerance.

Within the United States, much of Chinese food culture has become mainstream. Chinese restaurants abound in small and large cities alike; key Chinese ingredients, cooking utensils, and chopsticks have become incorporated into the home kitchens of non-Asians throughout the nation. Numbering an estimated 2.2 million according to the 2011 Census, foreign-born immigrants from China are helping to create a growing national demand for increasingly specialized Chinese restaurants, which serve sophisticated regional dishes.

Table Settings and Service

Unlike the typical Western meal in which each diner receives an individual plate of food, Chinese meals are served and consumed in a communal fashion. For a traditional meal, a table of four might be served three to four dishes along with rice and soup. For larger groups, an extra dish will be prepared for every two people added to the table. Each diner receives a bowl for soup and rice, a spoon, and chopsticks. The accompanying dishes are placed simultaneously on the table. Banquets prove one major exception to this rule, as they include a sequence of courses. Most Chinese celebratory meals, such as banquets, are consumed in restaurants, where 10- to 12-course meals can be easily prepared and served.

Breakfast

The traditional Chinese American breakfast might consist of stuffed and steamed buns or dumplings. Heavier options include rice porridge, noodle soup, and leftover fried rice or stir-fried dishes. Eggs and tofu are the proteins most commonly consumed for breakfast; a popular breakfast soup is made from soft tofu flavored with soy sauce, mushrooms, coriander, and chilis. A dish of pickled vegetables might be included. Breakfast items such as deep-fried dough sticks tend to be bought and consumed at breakfast cafés and bakeries.

Lunch

One-pot meals are eaten for breakfast, lunch, and late dinner. Many of the simple dishes most favored for a quick lunch are popular street food in

China. Hawker noodle soup, for example, is loaded with pan-fried wheat noodles and finely minced pork, flavored with a combination of seasonings that might include soy sauce, Sichuan pepper, chilis, sesame oil, black rice vinegar, preserved radish, and scallion. Another popular lunch is made with cold wheat noodles, which are tossed with blanched bean sprouts and a sauce flavored with ginger, garlic, peanut butter, soy sauce, sugar, rice vinegar, sesame oil, and chilis. Pan-fried or steamed noodles (*chow mein*) are prepared with a chicken, pork, shrimp, or beef and with vegetables including carrot, cabbage, bean sprouts, celery, and onion.

Dinner

A simple dinner might consist of noodle soup or, for easy entertaining, a Mongolian hot pot. Soups are eaten with every traditional formal dinner. They can be as light as a simple consommé or a consommé with watercress or another light leafy green. The most popular Chinese soups in the United States, however, come from the medium-bodied category, which includes hot-and sour soup, egg-drop soup, pork with winter melon, chicken with noodles, and crab with creamed corn. A simple winter melon soup might be served alongside a stir-fried vegetable and a stewed or steamed meat or seafood dish. In addition to rice and soup, more elaborate dinners might include a sautéed or stir-fried vegetable; steamed or poached fish; a braised, baked, or stir-fried meat; and a stir-fried noodle or rice dish. Variety in flavor, texture, ingredients, and cooking methods plays an essential role in menu planning. Toward this end, a meat dish served with a sweet-and-sour sauce might be paired with a bitter melon soup; a mellow bean curd soup might be served alongside a spicy fried or barbecued meat or a crunchy fried vegetable. In addition to soup and rice, a large meal might include a fish dish, a meat dish, and a vegetable dish. If an appetizer is served, it will likely be cold. Shrimp toast, smoked fish, preserved duck eggs, meatballs, or cold chicken with lettuce wraps are all served as appetizers. If dessert is eaten, it might consist of a dessert soup, cookies, or rice or wheat cakes. Usually, however, dessert consists of a piece of fruit.

Snacks

Many typical breakfast foods are eaten as snacks. Among these are steamed buns and dumplings filled with sweet or savory ingredients, noodle soups, deep-fried dough sticks (*youtiao*), fried wheat crepes (*jianbing*), steamed rice rolls, and a wide variety of rice porridges. Other popular snacks include fermented, deep-fried bean curd, known as stinky tofu (*chou doufu*); all sorts of skewered meats and vegetables, which have been grilled or simmered in a spicy broth;

preserved eggs; and sweets of all shapes and flavors. As in other Asian cultures, desserts are typically eaten as snacks or on special occasions rather than at the end of a meal. Chinese desserts fall into a few main categories including wheat-based confections, candies, rice cakes and dumplings, shaved ices, jellies, and dessert soups. Among the latter, grass jelly is made from *Mesona chinensis*, an herb in the mint family. It is eaten as a soup or consumed as a beverage. Prized for their cooling (yin) properties, grass jelly beverages are widely available in cans at Asian supermarkets. Other popular jellies and dessert soups include ginger mint pudding, eight-treasure pudding made with preserved fruits, water chestnut cake, mango soup with tapioca, and red bean soup.

Beverages

Tea is drunk not only for its flavor but also for its health benefits. It is served during and after traditional meals. A typical tea shop in Chinatown will carry hundreds of imported tea varieties. Unfermented, semifermented, and fully fermented teas are made into scented teas by adding aromatic dried flowers. Dried flowers are also made into herbal teas. A few of the most popular include chrysanthemum, jasmine, rose, and orange blossom. Other popular beverages include soybean milk; coconut milk; cocoa, salt, and cheese; sour plum drink; and kvass. Alcoholic drinks include rice and grape wines; spirits distilled from rice, sorghum, millet, and wheat; and beer.

Japanese American Meals

Understatement and restraint are guiding principles of Japanese art that extend to its cuisine. The Chinese notions of yin and yang, opposite forces that must be held in balance, permeates Japanese food philosophy. So too does the Chinese emphasis on a visual balance obtained through five colors (white, black, red, green, and yellow) and on a flavor balance obtained through five tastes. Dishes are composed so that ingredients achieve a harmonious balance, and the presentation, or composition, of a dish is as important as its flavor. Meals are likewise reflective of the season. Short-grain rice is the grain of preference throughout Japan, although medium-grain rice is more commonly consumed by Japanese Americans. As in most Asian cultures, the name for cooked rice, *gohan*, is likewise used to designate "a meal." Although freshly made rice is desired at every meal, leftover rice may be made into Chinese-style fried rice or into rice balls (*onigiri*), which are eaten for lunch or an afternoon snack. Along with rice, which appears at every meal, *dashi*, a broth made with bonito flakes and seaweed, serves as the foundation for the clear and miso soups served at every meal. Soups are sipped directly from the bowl, and the solid ingredients are eaten with a pair

of chopsticks. The soup bowl should be lifted to the mouth before retrieving the solid ingredient and delivering it to the mouth.

In large part due to Buddhism, meat was largely absent from the Japanese diet until the Meiji era (1868–1912). The rise of Western colonialism during this period led the Japanese government to link American and European military prowess with heavy meat consumption. As a result, the government began to encourage meat eating, although it would take another century before meat would become a significant part of the Japanese diet. Because of the fascination with Western meat consumption and the economic, cultural, and political dynamics that fuelled it, Japan adopted some key Western dishes and reconfigured them to suit the Japanese palate. Not surprisingly many of these more Westernized meat dishes achieved early popularity in the United States. A few of the most well-known dishes include *yakitori*, skewered and grilled meat with a soy-sauce–based marinade; teriyaki, meat grilled with soy sauce and mirin; and *tonkatsu*, a breaded pork cutlet.

Meal Structure and Table Setting

A basic meal of rice, soup, and pickles may serve as a light dinner. If several side dishes are served, they may be placed on the table simultaneously at a casual lunch or dinner. Chopsticks or western utensils may be used. A bowl of rice will be set toward the left with a bowl of pickles above it. A bowl of soup will be placed toward the right of each place setting with a side dish above. Chopsticks will be placed horizontally beneath the food bowls. Formal or more elaborate meals progress from fresh, uncooked fish (*sashimi*) to a grilled dish (*yakimono*) to a simmered dish (*nimono*). The meal composition is arranged to achieve a balance of flavor, color, texture, and seasonality. Overall, Japanese American cookery is light, with gentle simmering being one of the most basic preparations. Seafood plays a larger role than beef or pork.

Breakfast

A traditional Japanese American breakfast might include rice or rice porridge, miso soup, pickles, a side dish such as grilled fish, and green tea. A large breakfast might also include an egg dish in the form of a rolled omelet or a soft-boiled egg as well as tofu or vegetables. At its simplest, breakfast might consist of a bowl of miso soup or rice porridge (*okayu*). Common Western breakfast items include bread, meat, and yogurt with fresh or dried fruits.

Lunch

Popular mid-day meals include one-dish items such as rice bowls or noodles soups as well as portable meals served in bento boxes. In Japantowns

Japanese bento, or obento, is a meal served in a portable compartmentalized box, and the term refers to both the box and the items it contains. Reflective of the Japanese meal, a traditional bento contains rice, pickles, braised vegetables, and a protein. (John S Lander/LightRocket via Getty Images)

throughout the United States, noodle shops abound as do markets and delis selling ready-prepared bento boxes. A quick lunch or breakfast eaten at home might consist of *donburi*, a one-dish meal consisting of rice topped with whatever ingredients or leftovers are on hand and typically drenched in *dashi* and seasoned lightly with soy sauce. Filled with rice, pickles, vegetables, and a protein, bento lunches are typically eaten within a few hours of preparation, as they are meant to provide fresh, healthy, and tasty sustenance.

Bento Boxes

Japanese bento, or *obento*, is a meal served in a portable compartmentalized box, and the term refers to both the box and the items it contains. Reflective of the Japanese meal, a traditional *bento* contains rice, pickles, braised vegetables, and a protein. The art of serving delicacies out of compartmentalized boxes arose during the Edo period, when nobility would dine out of tiered, lacquered boxes, or *jubako*. A "between-curtain" bento was eaten during intermission at kabuki plays. *Ekiben*, or "station meals," arose with the advent of the railroad in Japan and often contained regional delicacies. Today *bento* are not only purchased

at railroad stations but are also sold as general take-out meals in delis, markets, department stores, office buildings, and highway rest stops. Sales of the compartmentalized boxes, which are often made of lacquered wood, have risen sharply in the United States, as they provide an ecologically friendly way to carry lunches to school and to work. The Japanese convention of transforming foods into miniature pieces of art for inclusion in bento has likewise gained a foothold in the United States, where several bento blogs and bento cookbooks have captured a steady supply of readers. Americans, in particular, are drawn to bento because of the healthy nature of Japanese cooking as well as for the built-in portion control that the food compartments offer.

Dinner

The traditional evening meal will include soup, three side dishes, steamed rice with pickles and hot tea. A clear soup may be served after the appetizer at a formal meal. It may also be sipped as a beverage throughout the meal or served as an accompaniment to sushi. The three side dishes will each be prepared in a different manner. They may be fried, grilled, steamed, simmered, or raw. A one-pot dish (*nabémono*) may be served instead of the three side dishes.

Snacks

Many noodle and rice dishes are considered snack food. Arguably, the most familiar of these would be instant ramen. A favored energizing snack is made by pouring green tea over leftover rice and garnishing it with pickles. Other typical snacks include a wide range of savory and sweet rice cakes; rice crackers, rice bowls, sweet and savory dumplings; red bean pancakes; seafood, meat, or vegetable croquettes; chicken skewers; and steamed and fried fish cakes. Sweet snacks are made with rice, rice flour, sweet bean paste, and seaweed gelatin. Steamed cakes are made from kobocha squash, adzuki bean, and chestnuts. Custards, crepes, ice creams, and sorbets may be flavored with ginger, fresh or candied fruit, green tea, and adzuki bean paste. In addition to such sweets, another type of confection was developed to accompany the tea ceremony. Known as *wagashi*, these treats balance the astringency of tea.

Beverages

Green tea and sake (rice wine) are staple Japanese beverages. Daily consumption of green tea has long been believed to promote health and

longevity, a correlation that scientific studies have confirmed. Other popular beverages include soy milk and *kombucha*, a sweetened, fermented black tea that has gained widespread popularity as a health food in the United States. Rice wine, or sake, as well as beer are popular alcoholic beverages. Among the distilled spirits produced in Japan, two beverages in particular are gaining a loyal fan base in large cities throughout the United States—namely, aged whiskeys and *shochu*, the latter of which is typically made from rice, sweet potato, barley, or buckwheat.

Korean American Meals

As in Japanese and Chinese cuisines, the Korean meal strives to attain a harmonious variety of flavors, textures, temperatures, and colors. The five tastes are woven throughout Korean cuisine. So too is the pungent kick of chili pepper. Cold dishes complement hot and warm dishes at the same table. Special-occasion dinners will contain foods that are red, yellow, black, white, and green. Although Korean restaurants in the United States are largely meat-centered, the traditional Korean diet centers more firmly around vegetables. That said, the economic prosperity of South Korea over the past few decades has led to greater consumption of meat, poultry, and dairy and less consumption of cereals such as rice and wheat. From 1970 to 2000, consumption of animal products in Korea rose 20-fold. Nonetheless, despite the considerable rise in Korean meat consumption over the past 40 years, immigrants to the United States still eat significantly more meat than they did in their homeland.

A typical meal in contemporary South Korea as well as in a traditional Korean American home consists of a bowl of rice, pickled vegetables (kimchi), soup or stew, and small side dishes (*banchan*). The typical *banchan* conveys the quintessential flavors of Korea, which include fermented fish and soybean products, chili peppers, garlic, and green onion. Any kitchen stocked by a cook who prepares traditional Korean foods will include the following staples: medium-grain rice, soy sauce, fermented soybean paste (*doenjang*), chili peppers, chili pepper paste (*gochujang*), chili flakes, chili powder, sesame seeds, toasted sesame oil, rice vinegar, fermented shrimp, fish sauce, seaweed, kimchi, scallions, ginger, Korean radish (*mu*), and garlic.

Dishes, or *banchan*, can be made of meat, poultry, seafood, fish, or vegetables, which may be raw, pickled, or cooked in a variety of manners. Typically, though, they are flavored with several of the key seasonings in Korean cooking—namely, soy sauce, bean paste, chili paste or powder, rice vinegar, scallion, ginger, garlic, and sesame oil. In larger formal meals, the preparation and seasoning of *banchan* will be chosen to complement the main dishes. In addition to *banchan*, meals might also include a variety of dipping sauces.

Setting the Table

The number of side dishes generally ranges from 3 for a basic meal up to 12 for a special occasion, though side dishes may dip below or exceed these numbers depending on the allotted budget and the occasion. Rather than being served in sequence, the many dishes comprising a meal are served simultaneously, so that at one time the table holds dishes that are of varying temperatures—from steaming hot to cold. In addition to rice and soup, the table will be set with a variety of condiments, sauces, and pickles, which might include *gochujang* (red chili paste), *chogochujang* (*gochujang*, vinegar, sugar, garlic, and sesame seeds), *ssamjang* (*gochujang*, fermented bean paste, sesame oil, onion, and garlic); cubed radish kimchi; cabbage kimchi; and vinegared soy sauce. Utensils for each diner will include a pair of chopsticks and a spoon. Rice, soup, and stews are eaten with a spoon, while the remaining dishes are eaten with chopsticks. Spoons and chopsticks are not used simultaneously and bowls should never be raised off the table, a tradition that varies from Chinese and Japanese etiquette. As in Japanese dining, however, loud slurping is not only allowed but even encouraged as a sign of enjoyment. For a meal centering around Korean barbecue, a smokeless grill might be set on the table so that diners can grill their own meats and vegetables.

Breakfast

Hearty traditional breakfasts and dinners can contain similar dishes, including rice, soup, and an array of side dishes. As in other Asian American cultures, rice porridge is a favored breakfast. Korean rice porridge might be served plain or with pine nuts, sesame seeds, red beans, pumpkin, beef, or, even, abalone. Like lunch, breakfast might consist of a range of one-pot dishes such as noodles, stews, and rice bowls. Leftover rice is fried with kimchi to make an economical breakfast, lunch, snack, or late dinner.

Lunch

Traditional Korean lunches tend to be lighter than either breakfast or dinner, although adherence to this custom varies from person to person. One-pot dishes are favored for lunch. Just a few of these include Chinese noodles and black bean sauce; *japchae*, noodles tossed with sautéed vegetables and, sometimes, meat; spicy tofu stew; chicken ginseng soup; rice cake soup; and savory rice porridge. Arguably the most popular one-pot Korean dish in the United States, *bibimbap*, designed to use up leftovers, has evolved into a trendy restaurant dish. Served hot or cold, it contains an array of vegetables such as dried seaweed, shiitake mushroom, spinach, zucchini, bean sprouts, or pickled radish. An egg or several thin slices of meat might be added. Each

ingredient is placed in an individual mound atop rice to be mixed at the table by the diner, who spoons as much red pepper paste into the mix as his or her palate desires.

Dinner

A traditional Korean dinner will include rice, soup, pickled vegetables, and side dishes. Side dishes are chosen to complement one another. Contrast and variety of color, temperature, flavor, and texture are key. Pickled vegetables add a crunchy texture to rice or noodles. Fiery hot chili pastes and sauces enliven any mild flavor, whether it be that of rice, soft tofu, or grilled chicken.

Stews or sautéed greens might be paired with grilled seafood, chicken, or meat dishes; a hot noodle dish might be accompanied by a cold meat dish; a cold, soothing cucumber soup might be served alongside spicy stir-fried meat or fried chicken. Crisp vegetable pancakes might accompany a soft tofu dish; a stir-fried noodle dish might be paired with a dish of braised short ribs.

Snacks

As with other East and Southeast Asian Americans, sweet and savory rice cakes are common snacks. Sweet snacks include *hotteok*, deep-fried rice dough filled with sugar, similar to a donut but with the icing melted inside; sweet pancakes; fish-shaped pancakes stuffed with sweetened red bean paste; and waffles. *Hangwa* are traditional sweets and cookies, which are made from rice flour, honey, sweetened red bean paste, fruits, flowers, and a variety of roots. Popular ices and ice creams are made from a variety of fruits as well as beverages such as green tea and the milky-white rice wine *makgeolli*. Savory snacks include baked sweet potatoes; skewered fish cake or grilled chicken; *tteokbokki*, a spicy dish of rice cakes, fish cakes, and chili pepper paste; fritters made from vegetables, shrimp, or squid; *gimbap*, made with rice, vegetables, and, an optional protein that are rolled and wrapped in seaweed; kimchi or seafood pancakes; and *nokdu bindaetteok*, mung bean pancakes.

Beverages

In addition to green tea, just a few of the most popular teas and tisanes are made from roasted barley, sweet citron (a citrus fruit), ginseng, and ginger. Honey-sweetened fruit beverages are made from citron, Asian pear, strawberry, mandarin, cherry, watermelon or peach. Alcoholic beverages include rice alcohol (*soju*), rice wine (*cheongju*), a milky-white sour wine made from rice (*makgeolli*), and ginseng wine (*insamju*).

Filipino American Meals

Traditional everyday Filipino American meals contain a comparatively large amount of meat. Tomato and onion sauces, vinegar marinades, the use of olive oil, and the consumption of breads are likewise inherited from Spanish cuisine. Because of Western colonialism, Filipinos likewise drink a modest amount of milk. Seafood pastes, fish sauces, banana ketchup, vinegar, soy sauce, and pickled green papaya might appear as condiments on the table, and dipping sauces appear at most meals. A few of the most popular sauces include ones made with vinegar and garlic; kalamansi juice, soy sauce, fish sauce, and garlic; and sweet-and-sour sauce made with vinegar sugar, ketchup, and hot sauce. Sautéed garlic and shallots appear as flavorful garnishes in many dishes.

Newly arrived immigrants to the United States living in Filipino enclaves have access to many of the native ingredients and prepared foods of the homeland. Filipino bakeries sell breads, cakes, and rice treats, while large "Fil-Am" markets carry many of the tropical fruits and Southeast Asian vegetables that abound in the Philippines. Just a few of the most common include coconut, mango, durian, pineapple, breadfruit, rambutan, native lime (*kalamansi*), purple yam (*ube*), water spinach (*kangkong*), bitter melon (*ampalaya*), moringa leaves (*malunggay*), taro (*gabi*), okra, and eggplant. A few of the most iconic indigenous dishes include *sinigang* (fish, meat, or fowl that has been stewed with vegetables and flavored with a souring agent such as tamarind); *laing* (taro leaves simmered in coconut milk); *pinakbet* (vegetables steamed in fish or shrimp sauce); and *kinilaw* (raw fish marinated in vinegar and chili peppers).

As its name suggests, the Filipino chain Seafood City carries many fish and fish products imported from the Philippines. New immigrants craving the flavors of their homeland can find milkfish, which are farmed especially for the market. Seafood City sells them whole, boneless, smoked, marinated, preserved in oil, and canned "Spanish style." Immigrants can also find the Filipino rice *milgrosa*, revered for its delicate and fragrant qualities, as well as the black rice and glutinous rice needed to make *kakanin*, or native desserts. The term itself derives from the word *kanin*, or cooked rice, and is also related to the term *kain*, which means "to eat." In addition to rice, *kakanin* may be made from cassava, taro, and sweet potato.

Setting the Table

All dishes are placed on the table simultaneously along with various dipping sauces, and rice is served at every meal. Fish sauce and fermented fish are typical condiments. As an inheritance of Spanish colonization, each diner uses a spoon and fork and each dish will arrive with its own serving utensil.

Because foods are either cut into bite-sized pieces or served tender enough to cut with a spoon, knives do not usually appear on the table. In turn, a fork is used to push the desired combination of rice, vegetables, and meat onto the spoon, which conveys each bite to the mouth.

Breakfast

Filipino American households that crave the traditional breakfast foods of the Philippines might dine on store-bought rice cakes. Filipino grocery stores even sell rice cake box mixes such as the White King varieties sold for *puto* (a steamed rice cake) and *bibingka* (a cake caramelized on top). *Pan de sal* (buns) are also commonly eaten for breakfast. So too are rice dishes such as *sinangag* (garlic fried rice) and *champorado* (chocolate rice pudding). Rice is often served with smoked, dried, or fermented fish. Popular proteins include fish, eggs, *tocino* (bacon), *longanisa* (sausage), Spam, *tapa* (jerky), and corned beef. Hearty breakfast plates might include *tocino* or *tapa* with garlic fried rice, eggs, and grilled plantains. Dried meat or fish might be crumbled over steamed rice and served with scrambled eggs and vinegar sauce.

Lunch

Lunch can consist of any of the breakfast foods, hearty soups, or one-pot dishes. One-pot meals include mung bean and spinach stew; *kaldereta*, a goat stew typically made with beef in the United States and oxtail stew (*kare-kare*) are all popular options for one-pot meals. One of the most favored dishes, chicken and rice porridge (*arroz caldo*, a name clearly donated by the Spanish) is an adaptation of Chinese breakfast porridge, which has been made into a distinctively Filipino dish with the addition of fish sauce (*patis*), juice from the native lime (*kalamansi*), and fried garlic. A light lunch might be made of hearty snack foods such as grilled chicken wings, empanadas, tamales, savory steamed rice cakes, steamed buns filled with meat or vegetables, or fresh spring rolls made with rice wrappers or egg crepes.

Dinner

Dinner might consist of a typical breakfast or lunch dish. More expanded or formal meals might include a soup, a salad or vegetable, a rice or noodle dish, and a meat or seafood dish. Hearty rice or noodle dishes such as *paella* often include an assortment of meat and seafood and can serve as the main starch and protein. Soups served with several other courses might include *sinigang*, a sour broth soup meant to stimulate the appetite; hot-and-sour soup; garlic soup; or bitter melon soup. Popular salads are made from

Balut, a duck egg fertilized between 16 and 20 days, is a delicacy prized by Filipinos and more recently enjoyed by Vietnamese Americans. Because Hawaii and California are home to large populations of Filipino Americans, these states boast businesses that specialize in *balut* production. (Michael Freeman/Corbis)

water spinach; bitter melon, tomatoes, and shrimp paste; tomato and salted duck eggs; and shredded green papaya and jicama. Vegetables might include *pinakbet* (mixed vegetables such as eggplant, bitter melon, okra, and long beans that are steamed in *bagoong*, or fish paste); stuffed eggplant; or taro leaves simmered in coconut milk. Rice dishes include Cuban rice with ground beef, black and white rice with seafood, and *paella* made from mixed meat and seafood. Favored *pancit*, or noodle, dishes include fresh coconut noodles, sautéed bean thread noodles, and rice noodles tossed in an annatto-infused shrimp and smoked fish sauce (*palabok*). Although many noodle and rice dishes serve as a main course, lighter fare such as garlic fried rice might be paired with a meat, poultry, or seafood main.

Snacks

Although the traditional mid-morning and afternoon *merienda* breaks are becoming rarer in the Philippines, snacks are a ubiquitous part of American culture. As a result, immigrants can snack on the wide variety of rice cakes sold in Filipino bakeries. Empanadas are likewise widely available in

Mexican and Filipino neighborhoods. Prepared empanadas stuffed with everything from green papaya to sausage are not only found in Filipino grocery stores, bakeries, and restaurants but also have recently become a hot trend in the urban food truck scene found in medium and large cities throughout the United States. Desserts are typically consumed as sweet snacks. A few of the most popular prepared desserts include sticky rice; *leche flan*; ice cream made with coconut, mango, or *ube* (purple yam); *halo-halo* (a dessert drink made with shaved ice and fresh or condensed milk, which is topped with assorted treats including sweetened beans, fresh or candied fruits, jellied candies, jams, nuts, and even ice cream); *turon saba* (banana and jackfruit slices that are wrapped in rice paper, coated with sugar, and deep fried); *yemas* (egg yolk candies); coconut sponge cakes; and *ube* (purple yam) pudding.

Beverages

Although hot tea made from the leaves of *Camellia sinensis* is not a popular beverage among Filipino Americans, fruit teas and American-style iced teas are commonly consumed, as are coffee and hot chocolate. Alcoholic beverages are made from rice and corn as well as from a wide variety of fruits such as palm tree buds, plum, and mango. The Filipino beer San Miguel is widely available throughout the United States.

Vietnamese American Meals

The Vietnamese diet features more fresh vegetables and raw herbs, perhaps, than that of any other East or Southeast Asian culture. Many dishes are eaten by hand, conveyed to the mouth in small leaf-wrapped portions. These leaf-wrapped parcels are flavored with a wide variety of dipping sauces. As in other Asian cultures, staple foods include rice, fresh fish, fermented fish products, and soups. Jasmine is the most commonly consumed rice variety. Steamed glutinous rice (*xoi*), however, is eaten for breakfast as well as on special occasions.

Setting the Table

In traditional Vietnamese homes, diners eat while seated on bamboo mats on the floor and dishes are placed on a low table. This practice, however, is comparatively uncommon in the United States. An individual place setting will include chopsticks, a flat-bottomed Chinese spoon or a Western soup spoon, a rice bowl, and a small saucer for dipping sauces. In the United States, a small salad plate will typically be placed at each seat as well. Dishes are generally served all at once and are placed at the center of the table so that diners can serve themselves. For a formal or festive meal, a starter and

soup may appear as separate courses. Otherwise the rice bowl doubles as a soup bowl. The table setting will also typically include a plate loaded with lettuce leaves and herbs such as Thai basil, mint, perilla, and Vietnamese coriander. These leaves are used to wrap foods as well as added as garnish to lend texture and flavor. Chopsticks are used to pick out bite-sized portions from a dish, which are then placed in the rice bowl. The bowl is tipped toward the mouth so that the chopsticks can effectively shovel the rice and its accompaniment into the mouth. Because meals often require the diner to assemble leaf-wrapped parcels of food, damp towels are part of the traditional table setting.

Breakfast

Hearty soups such as *pho* and *hu tieu* are commonly consumed for breakfast. One of the most well-known Vietnamese dishes in the United States, *pho bo* (pronounced fuh) consists of beef bone broth, noodles, and beef garnished with raw bean sprouts and assorted fresh herbs. *Pho ga*, or chicken pho, is

A range of hearty Asian soups have been eagerly embraced throughout the United States. One of the most popular, Vietnamese pho bo showcases noodles, beef bone broth, and beef cuts ranging from flank and brisket to tendon and tripe and is typically garnished with or accompanied by a range of fresh herbs, bean sprouts, scallions, and lime. (Sabina Pensek/Dreamstime.com)

another popular soup for breakfast. *Hu tieu* consists of rice noodles in bone broth to which a wide selection of vegetable and protein toppings might be added individually or in combination. Rice congee topped with fish or meat, sticky rice dishes, and *banh mi* sandwiches are also popular choices for a filling breakfast. Sticky rice cakes are a lighter option.

Lunch

A mid-day meal consumed at a Vietnamese restaurant, food court, or deli might consist of noodle soup; a *banh mi* sandwich; herb noodle salad with meat or seafood; crepes; or stir-fried or sautéed vegetables, noodles, or meat. When a traditional lunch is eaten with the family, it may mimic a lighter version of dinner with rice, soup, a stir-fried dish, and a curry. Lunch might also take the same form as a traditional dinner to include rice, soup with vegetables, and a stir-fry featuring meat, seafood, or vegetables.

Dinner

A traditional table might include individual bowls of steamed rice, a salad platter, a sautéed vegetable, a meat or fish dish, and a light soup or consommé, which is sipped throughout the meal in lieu of a beverage. The dishes served with soup and rice will be chosen for variety in preparation, flavor, and texture. For example, a heavy dish of meat with coconut milk and curry might be served alongside stir-fried vegetables. Scrambled eggs and pork might be served with a steamed whole fish and green papaya salad. A hearty bowl of pho might be paired with spring rolls and a lotus salad. Fruit will be served for dessert.

Snacks

The Vietnamese penchant for a varied diet of small bites extends to snacking. Among the most popular snack foods are deep-fried shrimp toasts, grilled beef skewers, beef and jicama rolls, salad rolls (also known as summer or spring rolls), *banh mi* (baguette sandwiches), and shrimp chips (the Asian equivalent to the potato chips). Sweets include rice cakes; cookies; crepes; pastries; fried bananas; coconut flan; and soup, or *chè*, which ranges in density from a thin liquid to a layered parfait. A few of the most popular *chè* combinations include banana, tapioca pearls, and coconut milk; mung bean and rice dumplings in gingered sugar water; and mung beans, adzuki, jelly, tapioca pearls, and crushed ice drenched with sweetened coconut milk. Favored ice creams and sorbets include durian, star anise, lemongrass, and coconut.

Beverages

Vietnamese Americans enjoy fruit shakes and fruit juices. One such beverage is made from limes or lemons that have been pickled in salt. A piece of the citrus pickle is crushed and then mixed with sugar and flat or carbonated water. Sweetened soy milk may be drunk plain. It is also mixed with club soda and egg yolk to make a popular soda cream. Coffee is served hot or iced and sweetened with condensed milk. Tea is consumed in a variety of forms—green, black, and floral. Among alcoholic beverages, beer, rice wine, and rice alcohol are commonly consumed.

HAWAIIAN LOCAL FOOD

Although typical Asian and American foods are readily available throughout Hawaii, the predominant everyday fare consists of *Local Food*, a term used to describe the hybrid cuisine of the islands that slowly began to develop after Hawaii became an American territory in 1898. Hawaiian Local Food is quintessentially a blend of Asian, American, and native

Loco moco, consisting of sticky white rice topped with a hamburger and a fried egg smothered in gravy, is an iconic Hawaiian dish. Such distinctive Hawaiian creations are known as *Local Food*, a term used to describe the hybrid cuisine of the islands that blends Asian, American, and native Hawaiian foodways. (Ekkaphan Phantanaangkul/Dreamstime.com)

Hawaiian foodways. The Chinese introduced rice, soy sauce, tofu, and the technique of simmering foods in soy sauce; the Japanese brought sushi, sake, miso, teriyaki sauce, and *tonkatsu* (breaded pork cutlet, which Hawaiians often make with chicken). Filipinos brought lumpia and the fermented seafood condiment *bagoong*, while Koreans contributed kimchi and Korean barbecue.

Perhaps Hawaii's most iconic dish, the plate lunch may have evolved from the food served to plantation workers from lunch wagons and the bento boxes (portable lunches packed in segmented boxes) that Japanese workers took with them into the fields. A hearty one-plate meal, plate lunches are served on segmented plates. They are filled with a heaping mound of rice; a large serving of meat, chicken, or fish, or a combination thereof; a scoop of macaroni or potato salad; and a pickle such as kimchi. The meats may include anything ranging from kalua pig, pot roast pork, Korean barbecue, or fried mahimahi to meat dumplings, spaghetti with meat sauce, or curry stew. Other iconic local dishes include loco moco, consisting of sticky white rice topped with a hamburger and a fried egg smothered in gravy; saimin, noodles covered with chicken or fish broth and topped with shredded eggs, green onions, sliced fishcakes, and Chinese roast pork or canned meat; poke, raw fish seasoned with salt, seaweed, and ground kukui nuts or a variety of other combinations; and Spam musubi, slices of the canned meat sandwiched in rice and wrapped in seaweed.

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Eating Out

The importance of food in Asian cultures and the skyrocketing number of Asian Americans, who now account for over 5 percent of the U.S. population, have not only fuelled a boom in traditional Asian eateries but also given rise to a new wave of Asian fusion cuisine. Restaurants in ethnic enclaves work to create dishes that resemble those found in Asia, often using imported ingredients to do so or gathering ingredients from the rising number of Asian food growers and producers in the United States. As a result, the favored street foods and special-occasion dishes found throughout Asia are now increasingly available in the United States. In addition to the restaurants, bakeries, cafés, and street vendors serving the traditional dishes of Asia, the Asian American culinary scene includes a range of restaurants and food trucks experimenting with fusion cuisine. Fusion cookery has its share of detractors, but at its best Asian fusion expands the American palate, fine-tuning it to appreciate previously unfamiliar textures, flavors, and culinary preparations. With a spirit of creativity and invention, Asian techniques are applied to American flavors; the foods of Mexico are fused with those of Asia; and Pacific Rim flavors are merged with those of the southern, eastern, northern, southwestern, and Midwestern United States. In some respects, all Asian foods and Asian-inspired dishes prepared in the United States participate in a form of fusion in that they dissolve and reconfigure national boundaries.

AMERICANIZED CHINESE FOOD AND THE RISE OF REGIONAL CHINESE RESTAURANTS

Eighty percent of Chinese restaurants today serve Americanized Chinese standards such as egg rolls, General Tso's chicken, broccoli with beef, and sweet-and-sour pork. So too do large chain restaurants such as Panda Express, P. F. Chang's, and Manchu Wok. The remaining 20 percent of the 40,000 Chinese restaurants in the United States serve dishes inspired by traditional Chinese cuisine, and these numbers are rising as Americans begin to turn away from the deep-fried, heavily sweetened, and heavily salted dishes that characterize Americanized Chinese food. American demand for the healthier, more nuanced dishes that characterize traditional Chinese cuisine corresponds with the skyrocketing numbers of Chinese immigrants to the United States, many of whom open restaurants with menus featuring regional dishes prepared with foreign-born Chinese palates in mind.

In 1965, just as the last of the "bachelor" generation were dying out, the Immigration and Nationality Act lifted immigration restrictions and a new wave of Chinese immigrants flooded into the United States, many of them arriving from Taiwan and Hong Kong. As with the first-wave Chinese

Begun in the 1970s by Chinese immigrant Andrew Cherng and his Burmese American wife Peggy, Panda Express has expanded to over 1,700 stores to become one of the nation's most lucrative fast-food chains, earning 2 billion dollars in sales in 2014 alone. (Nam Nguyen/Dreamstime.com)

immigrants from Guangdong Province, this new wave was heavily drawn to the restaurant industry, and the range of regional Chinese foods available in the United States has expanded exponentially to include the cuisines of Sichuan, Shanghai, Hunan, Fujian, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Because immigrants flooded in from other Asian countries as well, the growing number of Chinese restaurants began to experience strong competition for the first time from Korean, Japanese, and Southeast Asian restaurants.

Just as a new wave of Chinese immigrants, many of them highly trained chefs from Taiwan, began to revitalize and expand Chinese restaurant menus in the United States, Nixon reopened diplomatic relations with China. In 1972, millions of Americans watched as Nixon dined on Chinese food with Premier Zhou Enlai, setting in motion a craze for "authentic" Chinese cuisine in the United States. Americans flocked to restaurants serving traditional Chinese dishes and lapped up nine-course meals inspired by Nixon's internationally televised meal in Beijing, which included dishes such as "Four Treasures of Duck," "Fried Giblets," "Roast Duck," "Mushrooms and Sprouts," "Duck Bone Soup," and "Lotus Seeds Sweet Porridge."

By the 1980s, two styles of restaurants had come into existence—family-run restaurants and large banquet halls. As Cantonese began to retire, newly arrived immigrants from the Fujian province took over their restaurants. Unlike the Cantonese who arrived in California and spread eastward during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the late-20th- and 21st-century immigrants from Fujian province landed in New York and spread westward or southward from there. They were frequently drawn to those regions in the United States where the largest number of Chinese restaurants were for sale. Alongside family-run ventures, banquet halls burgeoned in the 1980s, funded by investors from Hong Kong and Taiwan and staffed with chefs trained in Hong Kong and mainland China. Unlike the late-19th- and early 20th-century banquet halls that catered strictly to Chinese clientele, however, these new restaurants drew a sophisticated non-Asian clientele, eager to taste delicacies such as shark's fin, sea cucumber, jelly fish, and bird's nest soup—precisely those dishes that had so terrified and disgusted earlier Anglo Americans.

RISE OF JAPANESE RESTAURANTS

Although it had been decimated by Japanese internment, Los Angeles's "Little Tokyo" had recovered by the 1950s to become the main hub of Japanese American life in California. Residents from cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Monterey would begin frequenting Japanese restaurants in significant numbers during the 1950s. The majority of the first non-Asians

to dine at Japanese restaurants were American soldiers who had been stationed in Japan during the Allied Occupation from 1945 to 1952. Having developed a taste for Japanese food, many returning soldiers, accompanied by friends and family, sought out Japanese restaurants. Not surprisingly, the majority of the first restaurants to draw non-Asians specialized in dishes that catered to the American palate such as *sukiyaki* (a stew often served as a one-pot meal), teriyaki (marinated meat or fish that has been grilled or broiled), tempura (lightly battered and fried food), and *shabu-shabu* (thin slices of meat cooked in simmering broth at the table). Riding on this wave, Tokyo Sukiyaki restaurant opened at San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf in 1954. It would draw almost 500 diners a day.

Adventurous Los Angeles diners were first introduced to sushi at the Kawafuku Restaurant in "Little Tokyo," which opened in 1966. Japanese businessmen so enjoyed the sushi that they soon brought their American clients. During the 1970s, a decade when Japanese businesses began expanding into the United States, sushi bars that catered to Japanese businessmen and their American clientele began to open throughout the country. With the invention of the California roll by the mid-1970s, Japanese sushi was officially Americanized. One origin myth for the California roll claims that a chef at Los Angeles's Tokyo Kaikan invented the combination because *toro*, the fresh fatty tuna belly much prized by Japanese, was hard to come by in the United States. So, the story goes, the chef took advantage of the abundance of fatty avocados and rich crab to create a roll that he could serve when *toro* was unavailable. With the largest concentration of Japanese Americans on the mainland, Los Angeles was home to 173 Japanese restaurants by the 1980s, up from 15 in 1965.

As far back as the 1930s, intrepid New Yorkers had ventured on occasion to Japanese restaurants that served Western-palate-friendly menus. Manhattan saw its first sushi bar in 1957, when Moto Saito opened Saito restaurant. During the 1960s, Americans outside of California would slowly become acclimatized to Japanese food through a series of Japanese American ventures. Prime among these would be Benihana of Tokyo. The brainchild of Hiroaki "Rocky" Aoki, a former alternate for Japan's Olympic wrestling team, Benihana opened in New York in 1964. The original eatery, which was housed in a former Chinese restaurant, served *tappanyaki* (a term designating a dish that has been cooked on a steel griddle) to a total of four large tables. Cloaked in an aura of "authenticity," Benihana served decidedly Americanized dishes that featured large amounts of beef, lobster, and chicken. Diners who were seated around metal grills watched as the chef theatrically prepared the dishes that they ordered, using lightning speed knife skills and flamboyantly tossing ingredients into the air. As much about entertainment as about food, Benihana quickly earned a favorable review from dining critic

Clementine Paddleford, and New Yorkers took heed. Today, Benihana boasts over 70 restaurants in the United States.

Gently introduced to "Japanese-style" dining by Benihana, Americans soon developed a taste for more "authentic" Japanese food, and enterprising chef-entrepreneurs ventured to the United States in order to meet the growing demand. One of the most famous of these—Nobuyuki Matsuhisa—would arrive from Japan via Peru. He would eventually open 14 high-end Japanese restaurants in the United States, including one co-owned by Robert De Niro—Nobu in New York. Today, Americans have become so enamored with traditional Japanese cookery that they clamor to dine on specialized *kaiseke* meals (multicourse, seasonally driven menus) and to order snack foods while sipping on sake and *shochu* at *izakaya* (drinking houses that offer foods meant to be consumed with alcoholic beverages).

THE RISE OF KOREAN RESTAURANTS

The recent spike in the number of Korean and Korean fusion restaurants as well as the Korean taco truck craze corresponds to an increase in the population of Korean Americans, which has grown 20-fold since 1970 to reach 1.4 million in 2010. Before 1970, few Americans had eaten at a Korean restaurant, in part, because so few existed in the United States. Despite Los Angeles's large Korean population, Korean restaurateurs largely ran Chinese-style restaurants until the 1970s. Opened in 1965, Korea House became the first Korean restaurant in Los Angeles to achieve mainstream success. With such illustrious patrons as the mayor of Los Angeles and the president of the Republic of Korea, Park Chung-hee, Korea House provided a glamorous introduction to Korean cuisine for many Angelenos. What some scholars believe may have been the first Korean restaurant in Manhattan, Mi Cin, opened in 1960. By the end of the decade, three more had opened their doors. This number more than quadrupled during the 1970s.

Like Chinese restaurants before them, the first Korean restaurants offered two types of dishes—those for the non-Asian American customers and those for Korean immigrants. Koreatown restaurants catered primarily to the Korean palate while those outside of Koreatown created dishes more attuned to the mainstream American palate—using less fermented fish, for example. Because meat had entered their everyday diet by the time Koreans began to enter the United States in large numbers, the Korean restaurants that began to proliferate in the 1980s often specialized in meat dishes, several of which soon held a strong crossover appeal to the American palate. It would take until the early 21st century, however, before Korean food would gain acceptance by mainstream Americans—albeit a hip, urban swath of the mainstream.

Although the first Korean restaurants that wanted to reach non-Asian diners needed to Americanize their menus, the past decade has seen a remarkable change. For example, the suburbs surrounding Washington, D.C., have seen a sharp rise in Korean restaurants of late. As in Korea, many of these newcomers specialize in a particular dish, such as stews, soups, rice bowls, or ribs. Given that large Koreatowns inevitably boast a vibrant nightlife, some restaurants specialize in communal dishes, which are traditionally shared by Korean drinking parties. Many of the Koreatown restaurants are owned by foreign-born Korean Americans. The owner of the chain BCD Tofu House, Hee-sook Lee arrived in the United States in 1989, and in 1996 she opened the first Tofu House where she served one simple dish in several different ways. Her original versions of soft tofu soup (*soon dubu*) were so popular that her first restaurant not only draws non-Asian and Asian locals

Manhattan's Koreatown boasts a range of traditional Korean restaurants, bakeries, and grocery stores as well as Korean fusion eateries. (Daria Wilczynska/Dreamstime.com)

alike but also serves as a tourist destination for South Koreans. Since 1996, Lee has not only expanded the menu but also expanded her venture into an international chain, with restaurants in New Jersey, New York, Tokyo, and in cities throughout South Korea.

FILIPINO AMERICAN RESTAURANTS

Unlike other Asian immigrant communities, restaurants have not been a major source of income for Filipinos to date. As a result, Filipino food is still relatively unfamiliar to non-Filipino Americans, with the exception of a few iconic dishes—namely, adobo, lumpia, and *pansit*. Home to the largest concentrations of Filipinos, California (1.4 million) and Hawaii (340,000) likewise boast the most Filipino restaurants and, in turn, are regions that enjoy the most familiarity with Filipino cuisine.

Filipino restaurants date back to the 1920s in California when they began to spring up in urban areas. As with Japanese immigrants, Filipinos congregated in and around established Chinatowns and as their own population density grew, Little Manilas took form in such cities as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Stockton. Given that the variations in regional cookery are so pronounced in the Philippines, restaurants often specialized in the foods of a particular area. Because most of the early immigrants to Hawaii and the West coast hailed from the Visayan and Ilocano areas, many restaurants devoted themselves to their regional dishes. Yet other restaurants created menus with a wide-based appeal, which tended to offer the dishes most popular throughout all of the Philippines.

Los Angeles's Little Manila boasted dozens of Filipino restaurants, including the Universal Café, which opened its doors in 1938 to serve such dishes as Ilocano vegetables, chicken with bitter melon, and fermented shrimp paste (*bagoong*) with onions. Stockton's Little Manila was likewise home to a large number of Filipino restaurants, including Filipina Café, Luzon Café, Mayon Restaurant, and Lafayette Lunch Counter, the latter of which offered credit to their regular customers and a permanent address to which migrant laborers could have their mail sent. By 1927, Brooklyn, New York, could even boast its own Filipino restaurant; E.G. Lopez's Manila Karihan Restaurant served pork adobo (*adobo baboy*) and fish in sour broth (*sinigang Visaya*). Such Filipino American ventures have become more commonplace, especially in the last 20 years, as Filipinos have become the second largest nationality to immigrate to the United States, outpaced only by immigrants from Mexico.

Cashing in on the growing Filipino population, Philippines-based restaurant chains have begun to spring up in locations throughout the United

States appealing to recent immigrants who miss the taste of their homeland. The largest fast-food restaurant in the Philippines, Jollibee, has opened 20 stores in California alone, as well as branches in Nevada, New York, Washington, Hawaii, and New Jersey. Jollibee initially opened in the Philippines as an ice cream shop in 1975 but had morphed into a burger restaurant by the end of the decade. It opened its first U.S. restaurant in Daly City, California, in 1998. Goldilocks is another Philippine venture that has opened its doors in the United States. Although the chain offers a few prepared foods to go, it specializes in Filipino baked goods including breads, cakes, and pastries.

Given the exponential growth of the Filipino population over the past 40 years, the United States has likewise seen the proliferation of Filipino American restaurants and bakeries, especially in locales where large numbers of Filipinos congregate such as the San Francisco Bay Area, Southern California, Hawaii, Seattle, Brooklyn, and southern Louisiana. Like other Asian groups, Filipino Americans tend to create menus that are inspired by the foods native to their country of origin. They might, however, draw on a range of other Asian cuisines. Such fusion restaurants meet with a mixture of applause and dismay. Whereas some decry fusion ventures as decidedly un-Filipino, others convincingly argue that they embody the global spirit of the 21st century and that Filipino food is itself a fusion of Eastern and Western cuisines.

Rise of Vietnamese Restaurants

Thousands of Vietnamese immigrants have opened restaurants throughout the United States, many catering to non-Asian palates and Asian palates alike. In metropolitan regions with large concentrations of Vietnamese, including Los Angeles, Houston, San Jose, Dallas, New Orleans, and Washington D.C., Vietnamese coffee houses, bakeries, and restaurants specializing in such iconic dishes as *pho* and *banh mi* abound. What is believed to be the first *pho* house in Houston dates back to the 1980s. Today, *pho* is served in well over 100 restaurants in the Houston metropolitan area alone. The prevalence of raw and lightly cooked vegetables and herbs and the avoidance of animal fat as a cooking medium have helped popularize Vietnamese cuisine in the United States. A growing number of vegetarians have likewise been drawn by the lunches offered at many of the Vietnamese Buddhist temples found throughout the country.

Because of their heavy investment in the seafood industry, many Vietnamese own restaurants that specialize in seafood. (Eighty percent of Vietnamese living in the Gulf Coast region work in the industry accounting for

about fifty percent of the total fishery workforce.) Two types of distinctively Vietnamese American seafood ventures have migrated from the Gulf Coast to California—the "you buy, we fry" seafood market and the Asian Cajun restaurant. Popular among African Americans, Vietnamese-owned "you buy, we fry" stores primarily sell seafood caught or raised by Vietnamese fisherfolk and offer a menu with a mix of quintessential Southern and Asian dishes. For example, J & J Seafood Market in Houston serves hush puppies, fried catfish, and seafood gumbo alongside shrimp fried rice and egg rolls. Asian Cajun restaurants range from primarily Cajun with a Vietnamese flair to Vietnamese restaurants that have adapted recipes to incorporate American ingredients.

Chief among the American ingredients adopted by Vietnamese Americans, crawfish multiply rapidly in freshwater, finding themselves especially at home in the bayous, swamps, and rice fields of the southern and southeastern United States as well as in the rice fields, streams, and rivers of the Pacific coast. Much enjoyed by the French (yet denigrated by the British), crawfish became a staple seafood among Louisiana's Acadian, or Cajun, population. Of French descent, Cajuns helped establish Louisiana's commercial crawfish industry and created a food culture that celebrates crawfish season.

Many of Louisiana's Cajun and creole dishes incorporate crawfish, including gumbos, etouffées, jambalayas, bisques, stews, cornbread dressing, beignets, among dozens of other dishes. Arguably the most popular dish of crawfish comes in the form of a Cajun boil, in which the shellfish are cooked in a huge pot of water filled with onion, garlic, lemon, cayenne, peppercorns, and, perhaps, potatoes, carrots, and corn on the cob. Working in the Louisiana seafood industry since the mid-1970s, Vietnamese were introduced to the Cajun food culture and its spicy crawfish boils. They were inspired to create their own version, adding spices and herbs prevalent in Vietnamese cuisine.

One ingredient used to flavor Asian Cajun crawfish—namely, Sriracha sauce—serves as one of the nation's most prominent example of Asian American entrepreneurship and its impact on the national palate. The brainchild of David Tran, a Chinese Vietnamese businessman who immigrated to the United States in 1980, Sriracha is based on a popular Thai sauce made with chili peppers, vinegar, salt, sugar, and garlic. Despite the fact that Tran has yet to invest in advertising or hire a salesman, Sriracha sauce has become one of the nation's most beloved condiments. In 2013 alone, Tran's Huy Fong Foods sold over $60 million worth of Sriracha. Today, the hot sauce is found in home fridges throughout the United States and serves as an essential ingredient in professional kitchens ranging from diners and seafood shacks to David Chang's internationally acclaimed restaurants.

CONTEMPORARY DINING

Ethnic Enclaves

Although non-Asians have been venturing into Chinatowns for almost two centuries, more recent ethnic sectors that reproduce Asian cities in miniature have begun to draw especially large numbers of non-Asians. Unlike the early Chinatowns and Japantowns, which developed in large urban areas, the more recent enclaves tend to coalesce in suburban areas. Both urban and suburban enclaves offer most of the amenities found in Asian cities, including Asian-language street signs, advertisements, and restaurant menus.

Being home to large numbers of recent Korean immigrants and Korean Americans, Los Angeles, New York City, Washington D.C., and, most recently, Atlanta boast thriving Koreatowns. These enclaves are home to restaurants, bakeries, noodle houses, barbecue joints, and karaoke bars. The restaurants serve such quintessential Korean fare as barbecue ribs (*galbi*); marinated, grilled meat (*bulgogi*); fried chicken; leaf-wrapped steamed pork dipped into a chili sauce or a pickled shrimp sauce (*bossam*); bowls of rice loaded with a combination of fresh and pickled vegetables, meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, and fiery chile paste (*bibimbap*); scallion pancakes (*pajeon*); glass noodles sautéed with vegetables (*japchae*), and piles of kimchi. Catering to those who drank too much rice liquor (*soju*) the night before, some restaurants specialize in spicy soups and stews such as "hangover soup" (*haejang guk*), which is made with bone broth, cabbage, radish, and congealed ox blood; kimchi stew; potato stew made with pork bone broth (*gamjatang*); and ox bone soup (*seolleongtang*).

Food from the Philippines is available in the bakeries, restaurants, cafés, and delicatessens of the Little Manilas found throughout the United States. A cross between a buffet and a delicatessen, *turo turo* eateries are popular for quick, hearty lunches and dinners. Developed in the Philippines, *turo turo* (meaning point, point in Tagalog) restaurants are so named because diners point at the dishes they would like to taste, signalling servers to place a generous scoopful on a plate. Restaurants and delis serve such staples as adobo, grilled milkfish (*bangus*), crispy minced pork (*sigsig*), pork blood stew (*dinuguan*), paella, rice vermicelli with pork, chicken, and vegetables (*pancit bihon*) and menudo. Bakery shelves are filled with flan, coconut pudding (*maja blanca*), rice cakes (*biko*), cassava cakes, egg yolk candies (*yemas*), and purple yam pudding (*haleyang ube*). Capitalizing on the dramatic rise in Filipino immigration, several fast-food chains from the Philippines have expanded to Hawaii and the mainland. A family-friendly venture similar to McDonald's, Jollibee serves such Filipino dishes as noodles with pork, garlic, cracklings, and shrimp; Spam and eggs; ube tapioca pearl coolers; and *halo-halo* (a mixture of shaved ice and condensed milk, topped with fruit

Since it was founded in the Philippines in 1975, Jollibee has become the archipelago's largest fast food chain and has opened over 600 stores on foreign shores. Today over thirty Jollibees are located throughout the United States, serving treats ranging from ube pearl coolers to pancit laden with garlic, fried pork skin, shrimp, and egg. (Oliver Perez/Dreamstime.com)

and sweetened beans). Like Filipino American bakeries found throughout the United States, the Philippines-based Goldilocks serves dinner rolls (*pan de sal*); pastries filled with beans, taro, or ube (*hopia*); and a shortbread made from toasted flour, milk, sugar, and butter (*polvoron*). Famous for its crispy fried chicken, Philippines-based Max's restaurant has recently opened branches in California, Hawaii, New Jersey, and Nevada, where it serves Filipino classics such as *sinigang* (sour soup); chicken and pork adobo; *kare-kare* (a stew thickened with peanuts); and *pata* (deep-fried pork trotters).

Since the mid-1970s, Little Saigons have sprung up around the nation, with several in California and two in Texas, the states with the largest Vietnamese populations. Because so many Vietnamese have landed in Texas, a state passionate about beef, *pho* houses are especially beloved by non-Asians. So too are beef dishes such as the shaking beef salad, *bo luc loc*, endearingly called "rock-and-roll beef" by non-Asian Texans. *Bo nuong xa*, a dish of grilled beef and herbs tucked inside rice wrappers has earned the moniker of Vietnamese fajitas. Likewise, Vietnamese dishes have become creolized by mainstream restaurants; the *banh mi* burger has begun to appear on diner menus around the country.

In East New Orleans, the eateries of Little Saigon draw large numbers of non-Asians eager to dine on fresh, flavorful dishes. Just a few of the iconic Vietnamese dishes enjoyed by New Orleanians include summer rolls filled with thinly sliced fresh gulf shrimp (*goi cuon*); lotus root salad (*goi ngo sen*); sea snails with lemongrass, chili pepper, and ginger (*oc luoc xa*); steamed buns stuffed with savory ingredients (*banh bao*); savory crepes with pork, shrimp, onion, and bean sprouts (*banh xeo*); and catfish simmered in caramel sauce (*ca kho to*).

Home to the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam, the Little Saigon in Westminster, California, is home to over 200 restaurants. Its major food court alone draws scores of vendors selling homemade comfort foods. Just a few traditional Vietnamese street foods sold by these vendors include chicken with ginger and garlic rice (*com ga*), ground beef porridge (*chao bo*), fried spring rolls (*cha gio*), shrimp brochettes (*banh mi tom chien*), and shrimp paste on sugarcane skewers (*chao tom*).

Asian Fusion

Asian Fusion in the United States is typically the purview of chefs rather than of home cooks, although chefs such as Ken Hom and Karen Lee have authored cookbooks in order to introduce such cookery to home cooks. First published in 1987, *Ken Hom's East Meets West Cuisine* and Karen Lee's *Nouvelle Chinese Cuisine* taught American home cooks to prepare dishes that fused Western techniques with Asian flavors and Asian flavors with Western techniques. The West Coast Asian fusion movement gained momentum in the early 1980s, when Wolfgang Puck's Chinois on Main and Roy Yamaguchi's 385 North opened in California. Both pioneering ventures merged Asian, French, and Californian culinary traditions. By the late 1980s, Yamaguchi's first restaurant closed, and he moved to Honolulu in order to open Roy's, which merged European techniques with Pacific Rim flavors. Roy's was so successful that it expanded its operations throughout Hawaii and the continental United States before making its way back to Yamaguchi's hometown of Tokyo, Japan. A dinner at Roy's might consist of the "Canoe Appetizer for Two" (which includes "Thai Peanut Chicken Satay, Vegetable Spring Roll, Szechuan Ribs, Spicy Tuna Roll, Kim Chee & Shrimp") and Roy's Signature Maine Lobster Pot Pie (made with potatoes, English peas, *honshimeji* mushrooms, pearl onions, and Thai coconut lobster cream). Just a few side dishes to choose from include spicy Korean chili fried rice, tempura, Szechuan-style green beans, and kim chee vegetables. Yamaguchi eventually partnered with several other Hawaiian fusion chefs to found Hawaii Regional Cuisine in order to create and promote Hawaii's own version of Californian cuisine.

The Asian fusion movement has seen an explosion in the 21st century, especially among young Asian American chefs who are eager to incorporate a wide range of culinary influences into their menus. Within the past decade, several Korean American chefs have taken a place at the vanguard, successfully catapulting Korean barbecue and Korean fried chicken into the trendy culinary sphere. They did so by creating menus that temper the unfamiliar flavors, ingredients, and composition of Korean dishes with those of more mainstream ethnic cuisines such as Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican. In particular, young Korean American chefs have helped pioneer twenty-first-century fusion trends in urban cooking found at food trucks and in high-end restaurants alike. Roy Choi's Korean tacos have earned him national acclaim. Growing up in Los Angeles, Choi decided to intermarry Korean and Mexican ingredients and flavors to develop take-away fusion dishes. His signature taco enfolds Korean barbecue beef, *salsa roja*, cilantro-onion-lime relish, and slaw inside a homemade tortilla. His food truck, Kogi (meaning meat in Korean) fueled a taco craze that spread like wildfire throughout the United States, inspiring other young entrepreneurs to open Korean taco trucks in such urban locales as New York, Austin, and San Francisco.

Korean American chefs have likewise made a splash on the New York restaurant scene. Most famously, David Chang has earned international acclaim for his restaurant empire, which began with Noodle Bar, a 650-square-foot dive, and eventually expanded to include 11 restaurants in New York, Sydney, and Toronto. In 2011, Chang launched the irreverent, edgy food magazine *Lucky Peach*, which won the Gourmand International Award for Best Food Magazine in the World. In 2013, Chang won the James Beard Foundation Award for outstanding chef, beating out three other nominated Korean American chefs—Corey Lee (Benu, San Francisco), Edward Lee (610 Magnolia, Louisville, Kentucky), and Danny Bowien (Mission Chinese Food, San Francisco). The dishes that Chang's restaurants prepare are clearly inspired by Asian cuisines yet remain resolutely American in their execution and in their refusal to be stymied by tradition. His first restaurant, Noodle Bar, began by serving traditional Japanese ramen but didn't hit its stride until it had morphed into a fusion venture. For example, one of its large party offerings consists of two whole chickens, one prepared Korean style (triple fried with a spicy glaze) and the other prepared Southern style (fried with a buttermilk batter). At one of his restaurants, Chang translated the Korean *ssam* (wrap) to fit the New York palate by exchanging the traditional perilla leaf wrapping for flour pancakes, bibb lettuce, and toasted seaweed—wraps that Chinese and Japanese restaurants introduced long ago to the American diner. Brooklyn-born chef Edward Lee hit his stride by marrying Korean flavors with southern-style barbecue, eventually creating a culinary memoir,

Smoke & Pickles, which elegantly expresses his Korean American identity through food. His Louisville, Kentucky, restaurant, 610 Magnolia, marries Asian and Southern flavors to produce dishes such as beets dressed with perilla leaves and buttermilk.

Riding the wave of Roy Choi's Korean-Mexican food trucks, San Francisco's Senor Sigsig transforms a popular Filipino grilled dish into easy-to-eat street food by wrapping it in a tortilla. To make the burrito more appealing to a mainstream audience, the food truck likewise switches out the main ingredient, substituting pork shoulder for the traditional pig's head. Los Angeles's White Rabbit, which promotes itself as a Filipino-Mexican-American food truck, gained such a following with its *sigsig* (made from pork belly) and chicken adobo burritos that the owners were able to open a brick-and-mortar café, where diners can nosh on Spam burgers and *champorados*, a chocolate rice pudding. Houston's Flip 'n Patties serves empanadas as well as Jeepney burgers, which are named after the popular public buses that run throughout the Philippines. Jeepney burgers consist of *longanisa* sausage, fried egg, and aioli served on a fluffy steamed bun.

Another fusion trend to spread across the nation was created by Vietnamese who immigrated to the coastal fishing areas along the Gulf of Mexico. Inspired by Louisiana crawfish boils, Vietnamese began to prepare crawfish using the flavors of their homeland. By early 2000, stalls and small restaurants serving crawfish began cropping up in Asian malls and supermarkets in large Gulf Coast cities such as Houston. From there, the trend migrated to California, Las Vegas, Dallas, Atlanta, Denver, and all the way east to New York and Boston. At an Asian Cajun restaurant or stall, the crawfish might be boiled in water flavored with the traditional Cajun ingredients, but these will be augmented with Vietnamese flavors such as lemongrass or ginger. In the Vietnamese tradition, diners can mix their own dipping sauces, which range from the traditional *nuoc cham* (made from fish sauce, lime juice, garlic, and Thai chili pepper) to a blend of ketchup, mayonnaise, cayenne, and Louisiana hot sauce or Sriracha. By 2010, the Asian Cajun trend had become so pervasive that it gave rise to chains such as Rockin' Crawfish, Boiling Crab, and SJ Crawfish.

The Rise of Asian Cajun and the California Crawfish Industry

Although present in California and Oregon waterways, crawfish failed to capture the West coast appetite except for their use as bar food, a trend that began in the late 1800s but died out with Prohibition. The same species so prized for eating in Louisiana, red swamp crawfish thrive

in the rice paddies and rivers of the Sacramento Delta region. Rather than being celebrated as a food, however, they have typically been treated with pesticides. This started to change in the late 20th century when fisherfolk began to contract with rice growers in order to harvest the crawfish that multiplied in the paddies. The Pacific coast palate for crawfish has been revitalized in part thanks to Vietnamese immigrants who have created a demand for Asian Cajun crawfish dishes. Within the past decade, the national proliferation of Asian Cajun restaurants has provided the California crawfishing industry with a steady seasonal demand, enabling the development of California's own commercial crawfishing industry. As a result, crawfish have once again become a popular bar food, but his time around they are prepared with a Viet Cajun twist on the pre-Prohibition snack.

Louisiana has not only inflected Vietnamese cooking but Vietnamese cooking has begun to make its mark on New Orleans' rich culinary tradition. Chefs have drawn inspiration from the flavors of Little Saigon, to which they are inevitably introduced by Vietnamese coworkers. As a result, a growing number of restaurants and cafes are serving creole and Cajun dishes with an Asian twist. Chef John Besh has begun to add lemongrass and chili paste to his shrimp creole, and chef Emeril Lagasse so enjoyed the fried chicken wings stuffed with pork, shrimp, and fish sauce prepared by a Vietnamese cook that he added them to the menu of his restaurant NOLA. Fusion street foods have likewise begun to make their mark. Two popular dishes include the bayou *banh mi*, which is stuffed with boudin sausage, and Viet dogs, which feature pork that has been marinated overnight in a blend of soy sauce, fish sauce, green onions, and sesame oil.

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Special Occasions

In Asian cultures, the sharing of food to mark special occasions serves as a means of developing and honoring communal, familial, and ancestral relationships. Generosity and affection are often gauged by the care and effort that went into preparing a meal or an alimentary gift. Whereas everyday meals eaten at home might consist of as little as a bowl of rice topped with a pickled vegetable or a form of fermented fish, celebratory meals veer toward the opposite end of the spectrum, and the most revered festive foods tend to be those that are the most time-consuming to prepare, such as the countless forms of rice cake essential to Asian celebrations.

Particular cakes are linked with specific holidays. Moon cakes, for example, are eaten in celebration of the Harvest Moon Festival, held originally to mark the end of the agricultural harvest season. They often include a duck or chicken egg yolk in the center to symbolize the moon. On a figurative level, rice cakes in Asian American culture have come to embody an Asian heritage, and consuming them becomes a means of honoring the past. In Vietnam, for example, two of the most legendary rice cakes—*banh day* and *banh chung*—are said to have been created during the golden era of Vietnamese civilization when King Hung VI challenged his sons to a contest, declaring that the one who created the best dishes to please his palate and to honor the family's ancestors would be named his successor. While his brothers scoured the kingdom for the most exotic foods they could find, Prince Tiet Lieu chose to stay at home with his father. One night he had a dream in which a fairy told him how to make a round glutinous rice cake to symbolize the sky and a square rice cake stuffed with bean paste and ground

meat to symbolize the earth. After tasting the cakes, the king declared Tiet Lieu his successor and had the recipes distributed throughout the kingdom. These legendary Vietnamese cakes were incorporated into the New Year celebration. Today families still prepare and eat these cakes as a tribute to their ancestors and to their nation, and they are readily found in Vietnamese groceries, bakeries, and delis the weeks preceding the Lunar New Year.

As with all immigrant food cultures, how meticulously individuals follow the rituals of their homeland and how tightly they hold onto traditional beliefs will vary significantly. For example, most traditional Asian cultures practice a form of ancestor worship, honoring the dead who are thought to offer protection to living family members. Modernization, globalization, and urbanization, however, have curtailed the practice of such rituals, and for American-born Asian Americans, the original meaning of such rituals may be diluted or obscured. Rice cakes, for example, are ubiquitous in ethnic enclaves and are consumed throughout the year by many Asian Americans, although the legends behind these cakes and the cultural nuances of rice's symbolism have been lost to many. Nonetheless, they still remain beloved comfort foods.

On the other hand, many recent immigrants hold on tightly to traditional rituals in order to maintain a link to their homeland and to their familial identity. Within the Asian belief system, the material and the spiritual realms mirror one another. As a result, living family members provide ancestral spirits with sustenance in the form of food and monetary offerings. In return, the spirits protect the living. Believed to sustain the spirit of the departed, food offerings play a substantial role in funeral rites. Money or fake money is also burned, as the smoke is believed to carry the cash's value into the spirit realm. The offerings made at funerals, on death anniversaries, and on designated holidays such as the *qing ming* festival are a means of nurturing and maintaining relationships with the dead, who are considered an essential part of the family. In fact, many Chinese American families will have the bodies of deceased relatives in China shipped to the United States for burial. For many Vietnamese immigrants, erecting a home altar provides a means of maintaining a relationship with their ancestors. Making regular offerings and worshipping at the ancestral altar is of special importance for refugees whose family members were killed during the war or in its aftermath. In such cases, erecting a home altar to honor the deceased becomes a means of reconstructing the Vietnamese family and family values on American soil.

NEW YEAR

Asian countries celebrate the New Year according to the Gregorian or the Lunar calendars. The Gregorian calendar was first introduced to the

Philippines by Spanish colonizers in 1844, so Filipinos celebrate New Year's Day on January 1. So too do Japanese and most Koreans. Relative latecomers to the Gregorian calendar, both China and Vietnam celebrate the Lunar New Year as do the sizable community of Chinese Filipinos. Immigrants who celebrate the Lunar New Year have established elaborate festivals to celebrate in most major ethnic enclaves.

For Asians and Asian Americans alike, New Year's celebrations are meant to augur joy, good fortune, and prosperity for the forthcoming year. Before New Year's Day, homes will be meticulously tidied so that the year will begin with a clean slate. In the same spirit, debts and animosities will be settled so that the coming year is filled with friendship and good will. The New Year is likewise a time to pay homage to ancestors; if treated with respect and duly honored, they are believed to protect the living from harm. In ethnic enclaves, the color red and firecrackers abound because both are thought to ward off evil spirits.

As in most cultures, certain foods are linked with the holiday. Rice cakes, in particular, play a prominent role in the New Year's feasts of East and Southeast Asian immigrants. Rice symbolizes strength and divinity, and rice cakes are thought to contain the essence, or spirit, of rice and to provide a material form for gods who visit the earth during certain times of the year. For many Asian Americans, rice cakes have become a form of comfort food, as consuming them evokes and pays tribute to their cultural heritage.

HONORING ANCESTORS AND APPEASING GHOSTS

In addition to New Year's, food offerings are made to ancestors on the anniversary of their deaths as well as on designated holidays. Although many Asian Americans no longer practice the rituals of ancestral worship, for foreign-born immigrants, the holidays provide an important link to their homeland as well as a reminder of the importance of maintaining strong family ties, a cornerstone of Asian culture inherited from Confucianism. In addition to days designated for ancestral worship, Asian American harvest festivals (also known as mid-Autumn festivals) are held in many ethnic enclaves. As their name implies, harvest festivals were traditionally held to celebrate the year's plentiful harvest, much like Thanksgiving. Because ancestors are traditionally thought to determine the success, or failure, of a family's fortune, the harvest festival is a time for giving thanks to and honoring ancestors in the form of food offerings.

Such offerings are likewise made on special days designated to appease hungry ghosts or wandering spirits. Corresponding to Halloween or All Souls' Day, the Day of the Hungry Ghost (also known as the Day of the Wandering Souls) is a time when ancestors as well as "hungry" spirits and ghosts are thought to visit the earth. Food offerings are made to appease their hunger.

The following are among the most popular of the Asian ancestor and spirit rituals practiced in the United States.

Chinese American *Qing Ming* (Pure Brightness) Festival

During this holiday, families will prepare food to sacrifice at the graves of the deceased. Traditionally, the food is left at the gravesite. However, in 19th-century California, non-Chinese raided the sacrificial offerings so Chinese Americans began to bury the spirit food with the dead. Today, Chinese Americans who participate in the *Qing Ming* Festival will bring the sacrificial foods back home with them to eat. A typical offering might consist of a plate of white cut chicken (a poached chicken dish with ginger, scallions, garlic, and sesame oil), roast pork, rice, and rice wine.

Japanese American *Obon*, or Gathering of Joy

A day of remembrance for friends and family who have died, *Obon* is widely celebrated by Japanese Americans in the United States. The festival not only features a folk dance, *Bon Odori*, to welcome the spirits of the dead, but also includes traditional Japanese dishes such as dumplings (*gyoza*); lightly battered and fried foods (tempura); grilled dough brushed with a sweet-sour sauce (*yaki-manju*); and nori-wrapped sushi rolls (*makizushi*). The celebrations are held at Buddhist temples throughout the U.S. mainland and Hawaii.

Filipino American *Todos Los Santos*, or All Saints Day

On November 1, observant Catholic Filipinos celebrate their ancestors by making such dishes as pork blood stew (*dinuguan*), pork or chicken adobo, spring rolls (lumpia), steamed rice cakes (*puto*), and sautéed bean thread noodles (*sotanghon guisado*). Traditionally, the Feast of the Dead takes place at the cemetery, and some observant Filipino Americans have continued the tradition by bringing a picnic and an offering plate to the family's grave plot. Because most American cemeteries close in the evening, however, the gravesite festivities do not usually continue through the night as they do in the Philippines.

Korean American *Chuseok*, or Harvest Moon Festival

Traditionally a time to celebrate a bountiful harvest, *Chuseok* festivities are a means of thanking ancestors for the year's harvest. As with other holidays, special rice cakes are prepared. Traditionally made from the newly harvested rice,

songpyeon are round cakes filled with a variety of ingredients, including sesame seeds, chestnuts, and red beans. After being stuffed, these cakes are steamed on a bed of pine needles. Other traditional dishes served at *Chuseok* include braised short ribs (*galbijim*), stir-fried sweet potato noodles (*japchae*), and sweets and cookies (*hangwa*). For many Korean Americans, traditional *Chuseok* foods are served alongside traditional Thanksgiving dishes to make a uniquely Korean American holiday feast. A roasted turkey might be served with kimchi fried rice and dumplings or *galbijim* might be followed by a pumpkin pie.

Vietnamese American Wandering Souls and Chinese American Hungry Ghosts

The Buddhist equivalent to Day of the Dead, the Vietnamese American Wandering Souls Day and Chinese American Festival of the Hungry Ghosts begin on the 15th day of the 7th lunar month. During this time, the gates between heaven and hell are believed to release ghosts and spirits who roam the earth for an entire month and visit the homes of their kin. Because the spirits are believed to return hungry, the festival is marked by the preparation of feasts and sacrificial foods.

BIRTHDAYS

Throughout East Asia, the traditional birthday dish is seaweed soup, made of brown kelp and clam stock. The custom stems from a folk ritual that connects the soup to the deity believed to govern childbirth. The nutritive soup is also consumed by women just before they give birth and immediately afterward. Traditional birthday foods likewise include noodles for longevity and, of course, rice cakes. A tradition stemming from a time when high rates of infant mortality were the norm, a baby's first birthday is not traditionally celebrated until 30 or 90 days after birth. This custom is still upheld by traditional Asian Americans. For American-born Asian Americans, birthday celebrations may follow the traditional Western customs, adhere to the Asian tradition, or conform to a blend of both. Because of their Spanish inheritance, Filipino Americans celebrate birthdays with elaborate confections. Colorful chiffon cakes are often made with *ube* (a purple yam that gives the cake a brilliant hue) or flavored with pandan leaves, which are used in Southeast Asian sweets as they impart a bright green color as well as give off a delicate aroma and flavor often compared to a tropical version of rosewater, almond, and vanilla. Pandan-infused sponge cakes and tapioca cakes are popular Vietnamese American birthday cakes. So too are strawberry and cream layer cakes as well as strawberry or mango mousse cakes.

CHINESE AMERICAN FESTIVE FOODS

Many Chinese Americans celebrate the Lunar New Year, which falls somewhere between late January and early February and inaugurates two weeks of festivities. It is widely celebrated in Chinatowns throughout the United States. The year's most important feast is held Lunar New Year's Eve, the night before the first full moon of the year, when Chinese American families will gather for a celebratory dinner either at home or at a restaurant. Certain dishes are traditionally served because they symbolize prosperity or good luck. In general, red is equated with luck, so lobster and pomegranate will often feature in a traditional feast. Dumplings symbolize prosperity. Noodles symbolize longevity, so the longer the noodle the better. A whole chicken symbolizes family togetherness. A poached whole fish with its head and tail intact symbolizes a good start and end to the year; the fish is ideally selected from a tank of live fish in order to ensure that it has a fighting spirit, which portends long life and prosperity. Because mushrooms grow quickly, they symbolize abundance. Orange, or gold-colored, fruits such as tangerines and kumquats symbolize prosperity. Clams resemble Chinese coins and spring rolls resemble gold bars, so they too are thought to bring prosperity. These

Moon cakes are eaten in celebration of the Harvest Moon Festival, held originally to mark the end of the agricultural harvest season. (Leung Cho Pan/Dreamstime.com)

symbolic foods appear at other feasts and banquets throughout the year, including Qing Ming, Harvest Moon Festival, weddings, key birthdays (which include every decade from 60 onward). Traditional wedding banquets might include goose, as geese often mate for life.

Another Chinese celebration, the Dragon Boat Festival enjoys a lively incarnation in the United States. Traditionally held on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month, this festival is marked by boat races, the origin legends of which vary. According to one legend, the Dragon Boat Festival originated as a means of ensuring a bountiful harvest by paying homage to dragons who were believed to control water, including the rains that nourish crops. In order to pay tribute to the beasts and to earn their protection, Chinese carved elaborate dragons into their boats and rowed the rivers where dragons were thought to reside. A more recent legend attributes the boat race to a memorial for the poet Qu Yuan who drowned himself in 277 BC to protest political corruption. The annual race symbolically reconstructs the attempt to rescue Qu Yuan. The primary festival food is a glutinous rice cake that has been steamed in a reed or a banana leaf. It may be filled with jujubes, sweetened bean paste, meat, or an egg yolk. The Dragon Boat Festival has become a popular tradition in cities throughout the United States, including Boston, Denver, Queens, Seattle, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.

Chinese Banquet Menu

Unlike the everyday meal, Chinese banquets are served in a series of courses. Most Chinese celebrations are held in banquet restaurants, where 10 or more courses can be easily prepared and served.

Assorted Cold Appetizers

Sliced Roast Pork, Drunken Chicken, Jelly Fish Salad, Preserved Eggs

Stuffed Crab Claws

Seafood Soup

Red Cooked Meat with Buns

Sautéed Vegetables and Mushrooms

Lobster with Scallion and Ginger

Garlic Roasted Chicken

Tea Smoked Sea Bass

Chinese Sausage Fried Rice

Eight-Treasure Pudding

JAPANESE AMERICAN FESTIVE FOODS

To Celebrate the New Year (*o-shogatsu*), Japanese Americans following traditional customs will stay home to clean and to cook on New Year's Eve so that they can start the year with a pure home and a feast. At midnight, families snack on noodles that symbolize longevity. Crossing-the-year soba, or buckwheat noodles, are typically served in a hot broth with a bite of prepared seafood, such as tempura or fish sausage. On New Year's morning, the feasting begins with *osechi ryori*, traditional cold foods that can last for several days. This custom developed in Japan so that families would have food to last for the few days that shops were closed for the New Year's holiday. Mochi, or pounded glutinous rice cakes, are essential to the Japanese New Year celebration and are found at most Asian markets and at Japanese bakeries. In Japan, pounding rice for mochi (*mochisuki*) used to be done with a mortar and pestle. *Mochisuki* became linked with New Year preparations because the process of grinding the rice was thought to purify it, or to release its essence, or spirit. Serious Japanese American cooks still make mochi at home. Traditionalists gather friends and family to help with the extensive labor and to provide companionship during the pre-holiday ritual. Yet others employ an electric mochi maker, which performs all the grueling work. In addition to mochi, *osechi ryori* includes black beans (*kuromame*) for good luck; a clear broth with vegetables and mochi (*ozoni*); a soup made from adzuki beans and mochi (*oshiruko*); and a simmered dish, *nimono*, with burdock, taro, lotus root, carrots, and shiitake mushrooms. New Year's breakfast might also include spiced sake, candied fish or chestnuts, red snapper, sweetened black beans, and seaweed.

Aside from New Year's, the Cherry Blossom Festival is the most widely celebrated Japanese festival in the United States. In Japan, the cherry blossom symbolizes the ephemerality of life, and their growth each year is celebrated in Japan by picnics eaten under blossoming cherry and plum trees. This traditional Japanese festival has become a formal celebration of Japanese American culture held in cities throughout the United States. It was first celebrated in Washington, D.C., in 1935 to mark the budding of the cherry trees given to the United States by the mayor of Tokyo in 1912. Although the festival was suspended during World War II, today it draws upwards of 700,000 visitors annually. In addition to Washington, D.C., cities throughout the United States hold cherry blossom festivals that showcase Japanese food and culture. Some of the traditional foods eaten at these festivals include *tamagoyaki*, a rolled egg omelet; *sakura* mochi, so-called because the mochi is colored pink and wrapped in a cherry blossom leaf; *onigiri*, rice balls that might contain a filling such as a pickled plum or cooked salmon; and barbecued vegetables and fish. Ready-prepared bento boxes featuring festive foods are also common.

Kaiseki-Style Restaurants

The simplicity of an everyday Japanese home cooked meal contrasts dramatically with the elaborate meals served at kaiseki-style restaurants, which equate roughly with Western haute cuisine. Dating back to the 16th century, kaiseki-style dining arose from the vegetarian cooking traditions developed in Zen monasteries, which were eventually formalized into a seasonally attuned meal served after tea ceremonies. These relatively austere meals were adopted and transformed by the royal court for consumption by nobility, giving rise to a formal structure that inspires many special-occasion meals prepared by contemporary Japanese American home cooks and restaurant chefs alike. Although Japanese Americans have long prepared and eaten kaiseki-style meals to commemorate special occasions, this style of dining has only recently become familiar to non-Japanese Americans; urban chefs have been increasingly drawn toward the elegant structure, emphasis on composition, and homage to seasonality that characterizes kaiseke as a means of conveying their personal aesthetic.

Japanese Kaiseki Meal
Wakuriya Restaurant (San Mateo, CA)
Owner chef Katsuhiro Yamasaki
Menu for July 2014, Courtesy of Mayumi Yamasaki, Wakuriya Restaurant

***Sakizuke* (Starter)**

Hiyashi chawan-mushi shrimp, squid, okra, and tomato on chilled egg custard

***Zensai* (Appetizers)**

Homemade *goma-dofu* (sesame tofu) wasabi
Salmon and Japanese cucumber with cream cheese sorbet
Japanese eggplant and Maple Leaf Farms duck

***On Mono* (Hot Dish)**

Alaskan gindara no aoto an-kake
Steamed black cod, Sun Smiling Valley Farms *shimeji* mushroom, and vegetables with thickened sweet green pepper sauce

***Tsukuri* (Sashimi)**

Suzuki to hotate, Nihon kara
Wild sea bass and scallop from Japanese *su-miso* (vinegar-miso) sauce

***Age Mono* (Deep-Fried Dish)**

Lobster no harumaki
Deep-fried spring rolls with lobster, corn, and king-oh mushroom

***Hashi Yasume*: Granita**

Suika (water melon) sorbet ginger sauce with chia seeds

***Yaki Mono* (Grilled Dish)**

Snake River Farms American Wagyu beef no ishi-yaki
Kobe-style beef and vegetable grilled on heated *ishi* (stone) at your table and served with fresh tomato-ponzu sauce

***Gohan Mono* (Rice Dish)**

Maguro to avocado no chirashi-zushi
Pan-sautéed tuna and fresh avocado over sushi rice with egg omelet

Homemade Dessert

White peach crème brûlée and chocolate mochi (rice cake)

KOREAN LUNAR NEW YEAR (*SEOLLAL*)

Consumed on the first morning of the New Year, rice cake soup (*tteokguk*) remains the most iconic New Year's dish among Koreans and foreign-born Korean Americans alike. The rice cakes are cut into thin, round slices to resemble coins, and their rounded whiteness, which symbolizes the sun, augurs a bright new year. They are cooked in a clear broth, which portends a clear mind. On another level entirely, consuming rice cake soup on New Year's Day symbolizes that the eater is one year older.

Traditionally, *tteokguk* was made from pheasant stock, but in contemporary Korea and in the United States beef stock has become the norm. Less frequently *tteokguk* is made with chicken or anchovy stock. When dumplings (*mandu*) are added to rice cake soup it is called *tteok-manduguk*. Not surprisingly, some Koreans prefer chili-laden *kimchi mandu* in their New Year's morning soup, as the heat of the kimchi is thought to give rise to a spicy year. In addition to rice cake soup, the traditional New Year's breakfast feast includes stewed short ribs (*galbi jjim*); stir-fried sweet potato noodles with vegetables (*japchae*); potato pancake (*gamjajeon*); and mung bean pancakes (*bindaetteok*).

Festive foods naturally extend to wedding ceremonies. At a Korean American wedding, the parents of the bride and groom may throw dates and chestnuts at the bride. Tradition dictates that the number of dates she catches in her wedding dress will translate into the number of daughters the couple will have and the number of chestnuts she catches will signify the number of sons they will have.

Korean American Wedding Banquet

Galbijim
(beef rib stew)

Spicy Fried Shrimp

Hwal Uh
(Korean sashimi platter)

Beef Bulgogi
(marinated grilled meat)

Stuffed Cod Fillet

Japchae
(glass noodles, chicken, and vegetable stir-fry)

Pajeon
(green onion pancakes)

Crab Pancakes

Perilla Leaf Pancakes

Lotus Root Salad

Sautéed Spinach

Radish Kimchee

Cabbage Kimchee

Jelly Fish Salad

Feast Noodles
(somen in a clear beef broth)

Chestnut Rice Cake, Citron Rice Cake, and Sweet Rice Cake

Chestnuts, Jujubes, and Assorted Fruits

Steamed Rice

FESTIVE FILIPINO AMERICAN FOODS

Celebratory foods tend to include many dishes inherited from or inspired by Spanish cuisine. Given that Spain brought Christianity to the Philippines, religious holiday meals, in particular, have a decidedly Spanish flair. As a result, fiesta tables might include *arroz Valenciana*, *menudo*, *afritadang manok* (chicken braised in tomato sauce), and flan. Typical dishes include *lechon*, chicken relleno, *escabeche* (whole fish in sweet-and-sour sauce), *pan de sal*, *yemas* (egg yolk candies), and *leche flan*. Because Christmas coincides

with the rice harvest season, native Filipino rice cakes and puddings are likewise an iconic part of the festive table.

Because of the widespread adoption of Spanish Catholicism throughout the Philippines, Christmas is arguably the most important holiday among Filipino Americans, 65 percent of whom self-identify as Catholic. The Christmas evening dinner, or *Noche Buena*, is the year's most elaborate feast for Filipinos and for many Filipino Americans. For traditional Filipino American Catholics, the Christmas Eve feast will take place after midnight mass, although many religious and nonreligious families in the United States feast on Christmas Day. A typical Christmas Eve or Christmas meal exemplifies the synthesis of Western and Asian foods that characterizes Filipino cuisine. Traditional foods include roasted chestnuts; Edam cheese ball (*keso de bola*); macaroni salad; glazed ham or Chinese ham; turkey or chicken stuffed with forced meat, chorizo sausages, paprika and olives; beef stuffed with sausage or hot dogs, cheese, egg, carrots, and pickles (*morcon*); roast suckling pig (*lechon*) or pan-roasted pork (*lechon kawali*); brioche topped with cheese and sugar (*ensaimadas*); egg yolk candies (*yemas*); rolled meringue cake with custard filling (*brazo de Mercedes*); and *leche flan*. Favored beverages include hot chocolate and ginger tea. Naturally, rice cakes abound. Just a few festive favorites eaten during the Christmas holidays include purple rice cakes steamed in bamboo (*puto bambong*), rice cakes roasted in banana leaves (*bibingka*), and rice cakes cooked in coconut milk and steamed in palm leaves (*suman*).

Menu for Filipino American *Noche Buena*

From the blog "Pinay in Texas Cooking Corner"

Soups

Chicken *Sotanghon* (Bean Thread Noodle) Soup; Menudo (chili peppers and tripe)

Sides

Macaroni and Cheese; Garlic Mashed Potatoes; Green Bean Casserole

Entrees

Beef *Morcon* (rolled beef stuffed with eggs, cheese, pickles, and various meats); Roast Turkey

Desserts

Leche Flan; Brazo De Mercedes (rolled meringue cake with custard filling); *Haleyang Ube* (purple yams with condensed milk, butter, evaporated milk, sugar, and vanilla)

A one-pot meal or special occasion dish, *kare-kare* is an oxtail stew thickened with peanut butter, ground rice, or a combination of the two. Vegetables typically include eggplant, cabbage or bok choy, and green beans or long beans. The stew is flavored with garlic, onion, *bagoong* (shrimp paste), and annatto water. (Bill O'Leary/The Washington Post/Getty Image)

Although typically less elaborate than the Christmas Eve *Noche Buena* feast, the New Year's Eve feast will inevitably include noodles (*pancit*) for long life and sticky rice treats (*biko*) to enable good luck to stick around for the upcoming year. A whole fish, such as barbecued milkfish, might be served to symbolize prosperity. Other festive foods that regularly appear at special occasion meals include spring rolls (lumpia), vinegar-stewed meat (*adobo*), fried bananas, and purple yam (*ube*) cake. Because many Catholics forgo meat the week before Easter, the meat fast will typically be broken by a pork dish, which often plays a starring role in the Easter feast. It might take the form of crispy pork trotters (*patas*), *lechon kawali*, or ham. Favored seafood includes milkfish and tilapia. Deviled and candied eggs might be served to honor the occasion, as they symbolize new life.

VIETNAMESE AMERICAN FESTIVE FOODS

Ceremonial feasts feature a range of intricate dishes, which serious home cooks prepare from scratch. They are also found ready-prepared in Vietnamese

bakeries and delis. Common festive foods include beef or pork simmered in caramel sauce, sausages, pickled and preserved vegetables, candies and sweetmeats. As with much of Asia, rice cakes (*bahn*) play a key role in Vietnamese celebrations. *Bahn*, a general term used to designate a savory or a sweet made out of flour or legumes, embraces a range of starchy foods such as breads, buns, cakes, cookies, crepes, dumplings, and noodles. Just a few of the festive *bahn* include sticky rice cakes stuffed with pork; *banh loc*, which are rice dumplings topped with ground shrimp, green onions, mung bean paste, fried shallots, fish sauce, and rice vinegar; and *banh beo*, steamed tapioca starch dumplings stuffed with shrimp. The most widely celebrated holiday among Vietnamese and Vietnamese Americans alike, New Year's (*Tet*) celebrations include a range of dishes including candied fruit (*mut*), bean paste and pork-filled rice cakes steamed in banana leaves (*banh chung*), coconut candy (*keo dua*), and peanut brittle with sesame seeds (*keo me xung*).

Aside from the New Year, the Mid-Autumn Festival is the most widely celebrated holiday among Vietnamese Americans. It is a time traditionally devoted to children. During this holiday, moon cakes (*banh trung*) abound. They may be stuffed with lotus seeds, ground beans, orange peels, jujubes, or peanuts and may include a bright yellow egg yolk, which represents the moon. Cakes are also fashioned into the shape of carp, which symbolizes the soul of the moon.

Tet Celebration Menu

Spring Rolls

Stuffed Bitter Melon in Broth

Banh Chung
(pork-filled rice cakes steamed in banana leaves)

Green Papaya Salad

Baked Red Snapper Stuffed with Pork, Crab, Mushrooms, and Cellophane Noodles

Pork Braised in Coconut Milk
Pickled Bean Sprouts with Leek, Carrot, and Turnip

Mut & ***Keo Me Xung***
(candied coconut, ginger, and lotus seeds & peanut brittle with sesame seeds)

7

Health and Diet

FUNDAMENTALS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE AND ITS USE IN THE UNITED STATES

For the Chinese, how and what one eats is inextricably linked to health and longevity. As far back as the fifth century BC, the medical team that provided care for Chinese royalty included a dietary physician who took responsibility for ensuring that the King ate a balanced and salubrious diet. The foundational text of Chinese medicine, which was codified during the second century BC, lays out fundamental theories of nutrition and diet therapy. Known as *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*, the book famously declares medicine and food to be of the same origin, a tenet that played an integral role in the development of Chinese cuisine. *The Yellow Emperor's Classic* still serves as the philosophical foundation of traditional medicine as practiced in contemporary China as well as throughout the West.

Having already been practiced in China for millennia, traditional Chinese medicine arrived in the United States along with the first wave of Chinese immigrants to California and Hawaii. By the 1850s, herbal shops had begun to open in order to serve the growing number of Chinese immigrants, who deployed herbal medicines as the first line of defense against serious illness. For the vast majority of immigrants, in fact, traditional Chinese medicine was the only recourse for treating disease and injury, as Asians were typically barred from Western hospitals. If they were not banned outright, Chinese patients were often sent to hospitals that housed individuals with highly infectious diseases or to poorly staffed segregated facilities that catered

specifically to the Chinese population. Despite their resistance to treating lower-class Chinese immigrants, Western medical practitioners did treat select wealthy Chinese, many of whom had heard of the marvels of Western surgical procedures before leaving their homeland; when Jesuit missionaries first introduced China to Western surgery in the early 1800s, Chinese were so impressed that they worked to establish their nation's first Western medical school in 1866. As a result, well-heeled Chinese immigrants sometimes sought Western treatment for cases that required surgery, although they likewise utilized traditional Chinese medicine.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, well-trained Western medical doctors were a rarity in the American West, as they had long been throughout rural America. Because trained physicians were hard to find, not to mention prohibitively expensive for lower- and lower-middle-class households, American housewives had long been accustomed to prescribing herbal home remedies. In fact, up through the late 19th century, cookbooks typically contained a compendium of recipes for occasions ranging from treating snake bites to preventing scarlet fever.

Given the shortage of Western doctors and the tradition of herbal medicine in America begun by Native Americans and continued in a rudimentary form by rural housewives up through the late 1800s, many whites in the American West were predisposed toward Chinese herbal medicine by the time of its arrival in the mid-19th century. As a result, scores of Chinese herbalists found themselves treating a greater number of white patients than they did Asians. The most successful of these pioneers suffered repeated legal and political attacks aimed at undermining the reputability of traditional Chinese medicine and at driving its practitioners out of business. Despite these racist obstacles, Chinese herbalists continued to thrive in the United States until 1949. That year the Chinese Communist Party rose to power, and the U.S. government banned Chinese imports, effectively stymieing the medical supply for Chinese American herbalists.

After the embargo was set in place, another 21 years would pass before President Richard Nixon would lift the trade ban in 1971. The next year, Nixon made his historic eight-day trip to China, which was beamed via television into homes throughout the United States. Primed by a cultural shift in interest toward the East as well as by Nixon's highly publicized visit to China, Americans were eager to embrace Chinese cuisine and traditional Chinese medicine alike. This embrace of Eastern culture and cultural values initiated a trend that eventually became mainstream, so much so that close to half the practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine in the United States are not ethnic Chinese. In particular, Americans are drawn to Chinese medicine in response to the environmental and biological stresses that characterize postindustrial living, and Western physicians have become increasingly

open to the use of traditional treatments such as herbal formulas and acupuncture. As a result, scientists have begun to study many of the herbs used in traditional Asian medicine, and Western physicians have begun to incorporate herbal formulas into modern treatment regimens.

The philosophical crux of Chinese traditional medicine eddies around the notion that good health derives, in large part, from living in harmony with the natural environment and from maintaining a healthy balance between mind and body, a balance regulated through the heart. The human body is understood to be a microcosm of the universe, as opposed to the Western conception of the human body as a machine. Because the human body is believed to be a miniature version of the universe at large, much of Chinese medical philosophy is gathered from observing patterns in the natural world, which are, in turn, applied to the ecosystem of the individual body.

If an imbalance occurs between an individual and the environment, within the mind or the body, or between the psyche and soma, diet will be adjusted to help correct the instability. In general, the daily diet should include health-promoting foods as well as those that prevent sickness by shoring up the immune system. Food intake should likewise be varied, as striking the right balance of flavors, textures, and ingredients is one of the fundamental

Jars in San Francisco's Chinatown containing dried ingredients used in traditional Chinese medicine. (iStockPhoto.com)

ways of maintaining physical and emotional equilibrium. Because our physical status, emotional (psychological) state, and environment are in a constant state of flux, our dietary needs must follow suit. How and what we eat are not only essential to maintaining health and preventing illness but also play an integral role in the treatment of disease and injury. Once an imbalance is detected, the diet should be regulated to include foods to control disease and to correct its early symptoms. For more serious illnesses, foods may be prescribed to combat the side effects of strong herbal and dietary remedies. Yet another set of dietary prescriptions may be recommended to help restore strength and vitality during recovery as well as to repair any lingering damage wrought by an illness.

Traditional Chinese medicine focuses not only on the nutritional contents of foods ingested but also on their energetic properties, which are loosely categorized as cold, cool, neutral, warm, and hot. Chinese cooking works to provide energy, or *qi*. This energy is provided by the elemental forces of yin (cooling) and yang (heating). All matter is made up of yin and yang, and the two are codependent. The amount of yin or yang an entity contains, however, varies along a scale. Entities that fall in the middle section of the scale are deemed neutral, as they contain close to balanced proportions of yin and yang energies. Many grains, such as rice, fall in the neutral category. As a result, they may be consumed in large amounts. Yin is linked with moist, soft, interior, and dark conditions, so many foods that contain layers of loose, watery leaves such as lettuces and leafy greens tend to be cooling. Yang is linked to dry, hard, exterior, and sunny conditions, so many hard spices such as pepper, nutmeg, and clove are considered warming. In general, yin is equated with feminine characteristics and *qi* (energy) while yang is equated with masculine characteristics and *qi*.

For the body to function properly, yin and yang must be held in balance, and diet helps to attain this equilibrium as well as to correct imbalances. In general, heating foods are more caloric than cooling foods. As a result, the way a food is prepared and cooked impacts its categorization. For example, fried foods and alcohol are considered extremely yang (heating) and, thus, are only recommended for healthy individuals. Barely cooked or uncooked foods tend more toward yin (cooling), and heavily cooked or salted foods tend more toward yang (heating). Cool-colored, watery, and soothing foods tend to be yin, while hot-colored, dry, spicy foods tend to be yang. As a result, water chestnuts, cucumber, coconut, and watermelon are classified as yin, while onion, Sichuan peppercorn, coffee beans, walnuts, ginger, and chili pepper are classified as yang. Most staple foods are neutral.

Although an overall consistency runs throughout much of the classification system that determines whether a food is hot or cold, the system is likewise somewhat dynamic, as a food's classification will depend on such

factors as the season in which it is consumed as well as the age, or life stage, of the person consuming it. Some nutrient-dense foods, such as bone broth soups, are classified as strengthening (*pu* or *bo*). Most strengthening foods fall somewhere along the yang end of the scale and are prescribed for weakened conditions, such as after childbirth or following surgery. Many prescriptions involve sympathy healing, or "like cures like." For example, a prescription for a poorly functioning liver might entail incorporating liver into the diet or a broken bone might be treated with bone broth.

The Chinese emphasis on a diet that achieves a balanced mix of sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and pungent derives from the corresponding link between each flavor and one of the body's main organs. In particular, the taste of a food will indicate its therapeutic properties as well as which organs it will stimulate or soothe. For example, pungent foods work in conjunction with the lungs and large intestines, promoting circulation and stimulating movement. Foods are likewise linked with the energy they promote—namely, lifting, floating, lowering, or sinking. What type of energy is used to treat an illness is dependent on its diagnosed cause. For example, vomiting, diarrhea, flu, and colds can be caused by excessive heat or by excessive cold and the remedies will be altered accordingly. Lifting foods are prescribed for imbalances of the lower body, such as certain types of diarrhea, and arrest the downward movement. Floating foods dissipate heat and toxic fluids, moving them from inside to outside of the body. Lifting and floating foods come from the yang category and are pungent or sweet in flavor. These include such ingredients as ginger, coriander, garlic, and green onion. Lowering foods move energy from the upper body to the lower body to arrest such imbalances as certain types of vomiting, hiccuping, or coughing. Sinking foods help keep energy inside the body to arrest such imbalances as certain types of diarrhea or vomiting. Lowering and sinking foods come from the yin category. As a result, they tend to be sour, bitter, or salty in flavor. These include such ingredients as lemon, vinegar, dandelion greens, rhubarb, seaweed, and clams.

JAPANESE HERBAL MEDICINE (*KAMPO*) AND MACROBIOTICS IN THE UNITED STATES

Chinese traditional medicine entered Japanese culture during the seventh through the ninth centuries, eventually being canonized in the text *Ishimpo*. One key way that Kampo differentiates itself from Chinese medicine is in its list of primary herbs and primary herbal formulas; to a large extent this difference was prompted by the limited number of medicinal herbs that grow in Japan as opposed to China. Today Japanese consume the most herbal medicines per capita in the world, and Kampo has been integrated into the

national health care system, with 148 herbal formulas having been approved for coverage by health insurance. Kampo came to the United States in 1975 via Taiwan, where it had been introduced a decade earlier. Taiwanese, Japanese, and Korean manufacturers distribute Kampo remedies for sale in the United States.

More well-known and widespread than Kampo, the dietary regimen known as macrobiotics first gained a following within the United States in the 1970s as people began to search for alternative diets to the preservative-laden conventional foods multiplying on grocery store shelves. In its most basic form, a macrobiotic diet jettisons refined, processed foods in favor of whole grains and vegetables. In other words, it takes the opposite tack of the mainstream diet, which consists largely of foods that are low in fiber and high in fat.

Although the roots of macrobiotics can be traced back to *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*, the ancient text upon which traditional Chinese medicine is founded, the term as it is used in contemporary parlance applies to a far more recent diet devised in Japan. Inspired by the book *A Method for Nourishing Life Through Food* (1897) by Sagen Ishizuka, George Ohsawa developed a diet based on consuming a balance of acid and alkaline foods, an equilibrium onto which he imposed the principles of yin and yang. Macrobiotics gained a foothold in the United States in the 1960s when Michio Kushi, a disciple of Ohsawa, moved to Boston, where he founded Erewhon, one of the nation's earliest natural food distributors. In the 1970s, another Ohsawa disciple Noburo Muramoto began to teach macrobiotics on the West Coast. Working on opposite sides of the United States, Kushi and Muramoto were largely responsible for popularizing the macrobiotic diet in the United States. Although Ohsawa's macrobiotic diet has been touted to prevent cancer, scientific evidence has not demonstrated the truth of this claim; scientific studies have shown, however, that diets high in red and processed meats, low in fiber, and high in animal fats are linked to higher incidents of gastric cancers, while diets high in vegetables and fruits are linked to a reduced rate of gastric cancers.

TRADITIONAL KOREAN MEDICINE (*HANBANG*)

By the first century AD, Korea had begun adopting Chinese medical theory, eventually developing a unique practice that utilized the herbs indigenous to the region and also incorporated the teachings of Buddhist monks dedicated to healing. As do most Koreans, many Korean Americans consult both Western physicians and practitioners of traditional Korean medicine. Dietary or herbal prescriptions and acupuncture are the most frequent forms of Korean medicine sought in the United States. One of the most prevalent foods in East Asian herbal medicine, ginseng is prescribed to restore balance;

improve the immune system; aid sexual performance; increase mental energy, promote digestive functions, improve the body's intake of vital nutrients, prevent or treat cardiovascular diseases, and combat the effects of aging. Given the breadth of the beneficial properties attributed to the root, ginseng appears in a wide variety of dietary therapies, ranging from teas and tablets to soups and desserts. One of the most popular ginseng dishes among Koreans and Korean Americans alike takes the form of a chicken and ginseng soup *samgyetang*, a dish thought to boost the immune system and to revitalize the body during the hottest days of summer.

TRADITIONAL FILIPINO MEDICINE

Long-term Spanish colonization of the Philippines led to a syncretic form of healing that blends Asian principles with the Roman Catholic belief system. Although traditional healers (*curanderos*) can still be found in pockets scattered throughout the islands, the most influential aspect of Filipino traditional medicine has been contributed by the herbalists (*herbolarios*). In particular, late-19th- and early-20th-century Spanish and American colonizers studied, wrote about, and utilized many of the local herbal formulas. In the 1920s and 1930s, the University of the Philippines conducted scientific studies on 17 of what were considered the most efficacious herbs in Filipino traditional medicine, ultimately concluding that they were helpful in treating appendicitis, chronic ulcers, laryngitis, leprosy, and hair loss. Eventually, the Filipino Department of Health approved 10 medicinal plants for widespread public use. In turn, these plants were incorporated into herbal remedy formulas prescribed in the United States. Several of the plants are likewise popular ingredients in everyday dishes consumed by Filipino Americans, including garlic, bitter melon, guava, and peppermint.

TRADITIONAL VIETNAMESE MEDICINE

As in Japan and Korea, the rise of traditional Vietnamese medicine was strongly influenced by China. Western medicine was first introduced to Vietnam by French colonizers in the 19th century and again in the 20th century by Japanese and American armed forces. The availability of Western medicine to the Vietnamese, however, was severely limited during the periods of 20th-century military conflict. As a result, Vietnamese traditional medicine became formalized and modernized beginning in the 1950s as a means of treating the vast majority of the population without access to Western medicine. The Vietnam War only heightened the need for standardizing a system of modernized traditional medicine in order to treat the millions of emergency-care cases, especially those involving life-threatening napalm

burns. In 1990, traditional medicine accounted for about one-third of the medical treatments prescribed in Vietnam.

For many Vietnamese, illness is believed to derive from physical or metaphysical causes. Because Western medicine focuses specifically on the physical nature of illness, Vietnamese Americans will most often seek Western medical treatment for illnesses or injuries attributed to a physical cause. Because Eastern medicine takes into account metaphysical causes that are believed to stem from an imbalance of *am* and *duong*, the Vietnamese equivalent of yin and yang, foreign-born Vietnamese immigrants may seek traditional Vietnamese medicine for the treatment of metaphysical imbalances. More acculturated Vietnamese Americans will likely seek Western medical attention, although they might supplement Western treatment with herbal remedies. Among Vietnamese and Vietnamese Americans who hail from a rural background, illnesses are likewise attributed to a third cause that is spiritual in nature. Given that the majority of the second-wave Vietnamese immigrants hailed from rural backgrounds, the practice of ritual healing is most common in regions of the United States where large numbers of second-wave Vietnamese settled. To treat spiritual illnesses, a healer or a Buddhist monk might be consulted.

Recipes

ALTERNATE NAMES AND SUBSTITUTIONS FOR INGREDIENTS

Herbs

Mint, sweet basil, cilantro, or some combination thereof work well as flavor substitutes for perilla, Thai basil, and Vietnamese coriander. See individual entries for particulars.

Perilla leaf (Perilla Frutescens)

Alternate Names: Also known as beefsteak plant, sesame leaf in Korean cookery, *tia-to* in Vietnamese, *shiso* in Japanese, and *zisu* in Chinese. Several varieties of this plant, which belongs to the mint family, yield leaves much prized for their medicinal properties. Each culture values its own particular varieties. Green jagged-leaved and red-leaved varieties are prized in Japan, where it is known as *shiso*. In Korean cookery, a variety with large leaves and a variety that is green on one side and red-purple on the other are commonly used to wrap parcels of food. Used as an herb in Vietnamese cookery, the smaller-leaved *tia-to* variety is especially aromatic and its leaves are green on one side and red-purple on the other.

Substitutions: For use as a wrapper, a lettuce leaf lined with mint and basil or an Osaka purple or red giant mustard leaf works well as a substitute. As an herb, mint or a combination of mint and basil can be used in its stead.

Thai Basil

Substitutions: Sweet basil or a combination of sweet basil and mint will work well as a substitute. Sweet basil should be added after a dish has been taken off the heat because the leaves are more delicate than Thai basil.

Vietnamese Coriander

Alternate Names: *Rau ram*, Vietnamese mint, Vietnamese cilantro, and laksa leaf.

Substitutions: As its names suggest, cilantro works well as a substitute as does a combination of cilantro and mint.

Water Spinach (*Ipomoea aquatica*)

Alternate Names: This semiaquatic plant is also called river spinach, water morning glory, water convolvulus, Chinese spinach, and swamp cabbage. In Asian stores, it might be classified by its Cantonese name, *ong choy*; its Mandarin name, *kong xin cai*; its Filipino name, *kangkong*; its Vietnamese name, *rau muong*; its Laotian name, *pak boong*; or its Khmer name, *trakuon*.

Substitutions: Any delicate green that is pleasant to chew in its raw state, such as spinach or watercress, will work in its stead. For a celery-flavored substitute, try chrysanthemum leaves (also known as *creste di gallo*), or for a delicate, yet nasal-clearing option, try the mustard greens Osaka purple, red giant, or mizuna.

Cooking with Mirin, Sake, and Siaoxing Wine

Mirin is a sweetened rice wine made especially for cooking. If it is not in your pantry, feel free to substitute sake, dry vermouth, sherry, or Siaoxing wine. Add just enough sugar to the substitute liquid to impart a note of sweetness. Sake, Siaoxing wine, dry vermouth, and sherry may be substituted for one another. If avoiding alcohol altogether, use water or nonalcoholic Mirin.

SNACKS, SIDES, AND APPETIZERS


Shrimp Brochettes

Serves 8 as an appetizer.

This recipe requires a large mortar and pestle or a food processor.

3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
3 shallots, roughly chopped
3 tablespoons fish sauce
⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon peanut or canola oil
½ pound fresh shrimp or prawns, peeled, deveined, and roughly chopped
1 teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 scallion, finely minced
½ tablespoon rice flour
1 egg plus 1 egg yolk, lightly beaten
1 baguette, cut into 1-inch round slices

Put the garlic and shallots into a large food processor or mortar. Pulse until minced or grind until pulverized. Add the shrimp, and pulse or grind until pulverized. Add the fish sauce and 1 tablespoon of oil and continue pulsing or grinding until a paste is formed. Transfer the shrimp paste to a medium bowl.

Add sugar, pepper, scallion, rice flour, and eggs. Mix until well blended.

Spread one side of each baguette slice with a light layer of shrimp paste, about 1 tablespoon. Be sure to cover the entire face of the bread.

In a large skillet, heat half of the remaining oil over medium. Place pieces of bread into the oil with the shrimp paste-side down. Add as many as will fit loosely into the pan. Cook for about 1 to 3 minutes, or until the shrimp paste begins to turn golden. Check by gently lifting and looking at the shrimp paste. Once the paste is golden, flip the bread over and fry the other side until golden. Remove from the skillet and drain on paper towels. Repeat until all the slices have been fried.

Serve with *nuoc cham*.

(Adapted from *The Little Saigon Cookbook* by Ann Le)

Nuoc Cham Dipping Sauce

3 tablespoons lime juice
1 tablespoon sugar
3 tablespoons water
2–3 tablespoons fish sauce, more or less to taste

Optional additions:
1–3 garlic cloves, finely minced
1–2 Thai chilis, finely minced

Whisk together the lime juice, sugar, and water. Make sure the sugar is completely dissolved. Add 2 tablespoons of the fish sauce and taste. If you feel the sauce is too sour or too sweet, add more fish sauce. Taste as you go

along until you achieve a flavor to your liking. Add as much garlic and Thai chili as your palate desires.

Variation: Add julienned carrots, ginger, or scallions to suit your taste.

Marbled Tea Eggs

These eggs can be eaten whole as a snack or cut in halves or quarters to serve as a garnish. The eggs should be refrigerated until needed and consumed within 4 days.

8 eggs
½ cup soy sauce
4 star anise pods
3 black tea bags

Place the eggs in a saucepan large enough for them to fit in a single layer. Cover with water and a lid. Bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and let the eggs sit for 15 minutes. Drain the hot water, fill the saucepan with cold water, and repeat.

After the eggs have cooled, drain the water. Take each egg and gently tap it with the back of a spoon to create fine cracks, while keeping the shell affixed to the egg. (The cracks will allow the tea to seep into the egg whites, forming a marbled surface and imparting flavor.)

Add 3 cups water to the saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the soy sauce, star anise, and the tea bags. Reduce the heat to medium low. Place each egg in a spoon and gently lower it into the water. If any portion of the eggs remains above the liquid, add enough water so that they are fully submerged. Cover the pan and simmer gently for 2 hours.

Turn off the heat and let the eggs sit for another hour. Refrigerate the eggs in the liquid and let them steep for at least 2 more hours. Twelve hours is even better, as the longer steeping time will impart a darker marbling and more flavor.

Drain and peel the eggs.

(Adapted from *The Asian Grandmothers Cookbook* edited by Patricia Tanumihardja)

Spam Musubi

Makes 10 pieces.

This Hawaiian comfort food is typically made with a Japanese musubi mold, which can be purchased online or from an Asian supermarket or cooking supply store for under $6. Furikake is a prepared Japanese rice seasoning, typically made with a blend of ground seaweed, bonito, sesame seeds, and, sometimes, perilla leaves. It is roughly comparable to a Japanese version of salt and pepper.

6 cups cooked sushi rice, brought to room temperature

5 sheets nori, cut in half lengthwise

1 (12 oz.) can of Spam

2 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons mirin (sweet rice wine) *or* 1 tablespoon sugar plus 1 tablespoon soy sauce

Furikake (optional)

Cut Spam into 10 slices. Measure out the soy sauce and mirin and whisk together. Heat a large nonstick skillet. Fry the Spam slices on medium-high until one side is browned and crispy. Flip and cook the other side until brown and crispy. Work in batches if necessary to avoid overcrowding. Once crisped, place all the Spam slices in the skillet, and add the soy sauce mixture. Make sure all the slices are coated with the mixture. Cook on low until the liquid has thickened or been completely absorbed by the Spam.

Lay a sheet of nori on a clean surface. Place the Spam musubi mold in the middle of the nori, and spoon in a large scoop of rice. Using the handle of the musubi mold lid, press down hard on the rice. The harder you press, the less chance of your rice coming apart as you are eating. The bottom rice layer can be anywhere from the thickness of the Spam slice to 1-inch thick depending on the ratio of rice to meat you would prefer. Three-quarter inch works well for most musubi-eaters.

Sprinkle the bottom layer of rice with Furikake and top with a slice of Spam. Add more rice and press hard with the lid until you have a top layer of rice approximately as thick as the bottom layer. Hold the lid on top of the musubi and pull the outer rim mold up and off of the musubi. Place the mold in a bowl filled with water in order to keep it moist and clean.

Fold the nori around the musubi and add a bit of water and rice to the nori ends in order to keep the wrap firmly in place.

Repeat. Wipe the musubi mold in order to clean off rice residue as needed.

STOCK AND LIGHT SOUPS

Dashi

Yields 1 quart.

Dashi is the basic stock in Japanese cooking, which serves as the foundation for countless dishes. Compared to Western stocks, dashi is practically effortless to make. Complete the entire recipe to make traditional ichiban *dashi, which includes bonito flakes and kelp* (kombu)*. If you do not have bonito flakes, which are made from dried tuna, or would like to make a vegetarian dashi, follow the first set of instructions. Continue onto the second set of instructions to make* ichiban *dashi. Either of these recipes can be used as a base for the miso soup and soba noodle recipes that follow. The dashi should be refrigerated if not needed immediately and consumed within 24 hours.*

1 ounce kombu seaweed

1 ounce bonito flakes (dried fish flakes)

Step 1: Wipe the kombu with a damp paper towel, but do not wipe off the white powdery substance. This imparts much of the desired savory flavor. Put 1 quart plus ¼ cup of cold water into a large pot and add the kombu. Heat the water uncovered until it is just about to boil. Remove the kombu. Discard or save for a second use. Stop here if a vegetarian dashi is desired.

Step 2: Add the bonito flakes and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat immediately. Let the flakes settle toward the bottom (30 seconds to 1 minute) and remove any scum that rises to the top of the broth. Drain the stock through a fine mesh sieve. Reserve bonito flakes for a second use or discard.

Miso Soup

Serves 4.

This is just one of countless ways to make miso soup.

1 quart dashi

4 tablespoons brown rice miso

8 ounces firm or soft tofu, cut into ⅓-inch cubes

4 scallions, thinly sliced

Optional

2 shitake mushrooms, sliced

Simmer the dashi over medium heat. Place the miso in a small bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of dashi and mix vigorously. This step will prevent the miso from clumping in the soup. Gently add the miso to the simmering broth. Add the tofu and, if using, the shitakes. Simmer for 1 minute. Ladle into bowls and garnish with scallions.

Watercress Soup

Serves 4.

Considered a healing tonic that cleanses toxins from the body, watercress soup is enjoyed year-round. The addition of the neck bones likewise makes the soup a restorative and strengthening one. The long cooking time helps to extract the nutrients from the bones. In traditional Chinese medicine, tangerine peel is used to help regulate the flow of qi*, or energy.*

1 slice of dried tangerine
2 bunches watercress
1½ pounds pork neck bones
½ teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

Soak the tangerine peel in ¼ cup water for 30 minutes. Discard the water.

Add the neck bones to a large stock pot and cover them with 2 quarts of cold water. Add the tangerine peel. Bring the liquid to a simmer and skim any impurities that rise to the surface. Cook for at least 2 hours, adding more water if necessary to keep the bones well submerged in water.

Carefully clean the watercress in at least two changes of water and remove any coarse stems.

After the broth has simmered for 90 minutes, remove the bones.

Coarsely chop the watercress leaves and add them to the broth along with salt. Simmer for 2–5 minutes or until watercress is just tender.

Remove from heat, and add more salt as needed.

VEGETABLES AND SALADS


Daikon and Carrot Pickle

1 cup water
6 tablespoons sugar
2¼ teaspoons salt
½ cup rice wine vinegar
½ pound carrots
½ pound daikon radish

Heat the water in a small saucepan until just below a simmer. Remove from heat, add the sugar and salt and stir until dissolved. Add the vinegar and stir.

Peel the carrots and radish. Julienne the vegetables using a mandolin if you have one. Otherwise slice them by hand so that the vegetables are about 3/16 of an inch wide and 3 inches long. Place the vegetables and prepared liquid in a jar. Make sure the vegetables are submerged in the brine. They will be ready to use within a half-hour, although they will be best after a few days. They can be refrigerated for up to three weeks.

(Adapted from *Momofuku* by David Chang and Peter Meehan)



Radish Kimchi

As with most Korean and Vietnamese recipes that call for chili pepper and sugar, the amounts you use of each will depend on your particular taste. Adjust accordingly. For a vegetarian version, substitute soy sauce for the fish sauce.

2 pounds daikon radish
2 spring onions, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon salt
Sweet rice paste
1 teaspoon glutinous rice paste
⅓ cup plus 2 tablespoons water

Spice Mixture:
1 tablespoon powdered chili pepper (*gochugaru*)
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon minced ginger
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 teaspoon salt (optional)

Peel the daikon. Rinse and dry. Cut the radish into ¾-inch cubes. Place in a large mixing bowl, sprinkle with salt, and toss well. Let it sit for 45 minutes. Discard the accumulated liquid every 15 minutes.

Heat the water over low heat, add the rice flour, and stir until it forms a thin paste. Set aside to cool.

Prepare the spice mixture leaving out the optional salt. Add the cooled rice paste and stir well. Combine the spice paste and green onions with the radishes. Thoroughly mix, rubbing the radish with the paste so that the cubes are evenly coated. Use gloves if mixing by hand or else the chili pepper will burn.

Taste the mixture. It should be a bit saltier than you would like the finished product, as the radish will continue to release liquid as it ferments. Add optional salt if needed and additional chili pepper paste should you desire.

Place in a large jar or 2–3 smaller jars. Press the mixture firmly with a spoon to remove any air pockets. Make sure the radish cubes are fully submerged under the seasoning paste. Only fill the jar 80 percent full, as the fermentation process will release gases that can break a tightly packed jar. Close the lid. Leave at room temperature for a day and then refrigerate. It is now ready to eat. Consume within 3 weeks.

Stir-Fried Water Spinach with Garlic

Serves 2–4

This recipe calls for parboiling the water spinach, dunking it in an ice bath to halt cooking, and squeezing the water spinach to rid the leaves of excess water. Parboiling in such a manner draws out a great deal of the water contained in the leaves, thereby enabling them to attain a crisp, yet tender texture when stir-fried as opposed to a more watery end result. The more water squeezed from the parboiled leaves, the better the dish will be.

1 pound water spinach (see substitutes for alternative ingredients)
4–6 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons peanut oil
salt or fish sauce, to taste

Trim off the bottom two inches of the water spinach stems and discard. Rinse and dry the water spinach. Slice into 1-inch pieces. Place ice cubes into a bowl filled with cold water.

Bring a pot of water to boil, toss in the water spinach, and blanch for 30 seconds. Quickly drain the water spinach in a colander and drop it into the ice water to halt cooking. Blanching the water spinach will help the leaves maintain a bright green hue.

Once the leaves have cooled, remove them, and squeeze out any excess water. Toss them to separate the leaves somewhat. Heat a wok or a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and garlic and cook for 10 seconds or until the garlic just begins to turn golden. Add the water spinach and stir until the stems are tender yet still crisp, from 1 to 4 minutes. The length of time will depend on how tender the leaves are to begin with. Once tender, remove immediately from the heat. Season to taste with fish sauce or salt.



Pork and Cabbage Salad

Serves 8 as a side.

If the pork and peanuts are omitted, this salad makes a fine slaw to pair with bulgogi or to serve as a side dish or a Korean taco topping. Without the pork, however, it will not need all of the dressing. Make the entire batch of dressing, and add until the slaw tastes well-seasoned. Use the reserved dressing for a dipping sauce.

¼ pound ground pork, cooked
***or* any meat or seafood leftovers, shredded; diced tofu; or crumbled vegetarian sausage**
¼ cup roasted peanuts, roughly chopped
1 small to medium red cabbage, with core removed and outer 4 layers of leaves discarded or washed and saved for another use, such as a wrapper
2 large carrots, peeled
1 large or 2 small shallots, peeled and diced
¼ cup lime juice, plus ½ lime
2 tablespoons fish sauce
1 tablespoon sugar, add more to taste if desired
1 or 2 Thai chilis (or serrano or jalapeno)
24 leaves Vietnamese coriander or Thai basil or a mixture of sweet basil, cilantro, and mint, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon cilantro, coarsely chopped

Use a grater with wide holes to shred the cabbage and the carrot. The shredded vegetables should measure around 3½ cups.

Combine the shallots, ¼ cup lime juice, fish sauce, chilis, and sugar. Add ½ tablespoon water. Whisk until well blended and the sugar has dissolved. Add the herbs.

Toss most of the dressing with the meat, cabbage, and carrots. Add more to taste if needed and adjust the flavor, adding more lime juice or fish sauce as desired. If you would like the dish sweeter, whisk equal parts of sugar and water. Add to taste.

Bitter Melon, Guava, and Nectarine Salad

Serves 4.

Long used in Asian dietary therapies, bitter melon has gained recent praise in the West for its capacity to lower blood glucose levels, making it potentially beneficial for individuals with Type 2 diabetes.

1 white or green bitter melon, thinly sliced

4 lemons, juiced

2 medium guava, seeded and thinly sliced

2 small cucumbers, peeled, seeded, and diced

10–12 cherry tomatoes, halved

4 firm nectarines, thickly sliced

8 small red radishes, cut into quarters (the radish and the cucumber should be diced about the same size)

Layer the sliced bitter melon on top of paper towels, and rub the slices with salt. Place a cookie sheet on top of the slices. Evenly weight the cookie sheet with books or some other heavy items. Let sit for 10 minutes. (The weight of the cookie sheet will gently press the melon to extract its bitter juices, much of which will collect in the paper towels.)

Remove the cookie sheet, discard the paper towels, and sprinkle lemon juice on the bitter melon. Place the guava, cucumbers, tomatoes, nectarines, radishes, and bitter melon together in a large bowl and gently mix together.

Sprinkle with lemon juice and salt to taste.

(Adapted from *Memories of Philippine Kitchens* by Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan)


Cold Noodles with Spicy Sauce

Serves 4.

6–8 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breast
6 ounces thin egg noodles
1 tablespoon and 2 teaspoons of sesame oil
2 teaspoons hot chili oil (more or less to taste)
scant ⅓ cup sesame paste
4 tablespoons warm water
4 tablespoons light soy sauce
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
Salt to taste
⅓ cup peanut or vegetable oil
2–3 tablespoons chopped garlic

Add 6 cups water to a large pot and bring to a boil. Add the chicken breast and simmer until just done. About 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the chicken breast.

Bring the water to a boil again. Add the noodles and cook until tender, stirring occasionally. Drain the noodles in a colander and run under cold water until they are cool. After they have been well-drained, place the noodles in a large bowl. Add a teaspoon of sesame oil and stir until all the noodles are coated. This will keep the noodle strands from sticking together.

Place the sesame paste in a mixing bowl and gradually stir in the water. Add the soy sauce, vinegar, sugar, and chopped garlic. Stir in the sesame, peanut, and chili oils. Whisk vigorously. Add salt to taste.

Shred the chicken and add to the noodles. Add one-half of the dressing. Taste and add more dressing as desired and serve.

(Adapted from *The Chinese Cookbook* by Craig Claiborne and Virginia Lee)


ONE-DISH MEALS


Banh Mi

Makes 1 sandwich.

1 small baguette or a 7-inch slice from a regular baguette
butter or mayonnaise
soy sauce
liver paté or other charcuterie, strongly flavored cooked meat, and/or tofu, sliced and brought to room temperature

3–4 strips seeded fresh cucumber *or* pickled cucumber
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped cilantro
3 or 4 thin slices jalapeno or Sriracha sauce, to taste
¼ cup daikon and carrot pickle, store-bought *or* made following the recipe on page 167

Preheat oven to 300 degrees.

Slit the baguette lengthwise, leaving the back attached.

Slather the inner sides of the baguette with mayonnaise or butter. Drizzle with soy sauce and, if using, Sriracha. Warm the bread briefly in the oven.

Layer the protein, cucumber, cilantro, jalapeno, and pickle on the bottom half. Close baguette, and cut it in half crosswise.

(Adapted from *Into the Vietnamese Kitchen* by Andrea Nguyen)

Ginseng and Chicken Soup (*Samgyetang*)

Serves 2.

A favored dish in the summer, samgyetang *is revered as a restorative. The heat of the broth and the ginger are thought to help drive toxins out of the body. Ginseng is a cure-all in Asian herbal medicine.*

2 Cornish game hens
½ cup glutinous rice
1 small ginseng root
2 one-inch pieces of ginger
8 cloves of garlic
8 jujubes
3 scallions, diced

Rinse the rice in cold water and transfer to a bowl. Cover with cool water and soak for at least one hour. Drain the rice.

Wash the hens inside and out.

Divide the garlic, jujubes, ginseng, ginger, and rice equally so that each Cornish hen contains the same amount of ingredients. Stuff the hens with the rice mixture. The rice will expand, so do not overstuff the cavities.

Place the hens into a pot in which they fit snugly and arrange the cavities so that the stuffing will not fall out. A tight fit in the pot will help with this, as will crossing the legs. Cover the hens with nine cups of water. Place a lid

on the pot and bring to a boil over medium-high heat for 10 minutes. Skim any impurities that rise to the surface.

Lower the heat so that the water maintains a simmer. Cook covered for another hour or until the meat is cooked through to the bone but the hens have not yet started to fall apart. Check the liquid level occasionally and add more water if necessary. The broth should almost cover the birds. Skim any fat that rises to the surface.

Evenly divide the hens and the broth between two bowls. Garnish with scallions. Eating the ginger, garlic, and jujubes is optional. The ginseng should be discarded.



Noodle Soup

Serves 4.

This basic noodle broth can be used as a base for a soup containing any sort of noodle, meat, or vegetable.

For the Basic Noodle Broth:

1 quart dashi
1 scant teaspoon salt
1½ tablespoons dark soy sauce
1½ tablespoons light soy sauce
2 tablespoons mirin

Heat the dashi to a simmer, and add the remaining ingredients. Keep hot while the noodles cook.

Noodle Soup

12 ounces dried udon or soba noodles
4 scallions, finely diced

Cook the noodles according to the package directions. Drain and divide among 4 large, deep bowls. Garnish with the scallions. Ladle the broth over the noodles and serve.

(Adapted from *Japanese Cooking: A Simple Art* by Shizuo Tsuji)



Congee, 2 Ways

Serves 6.

For a basic congee, follow step 1. For a more elaborate version, follow steps 1 and 2, but begin by poaching the pork. After the pork has been set to simmer, make the rice congee. As it simmers, complete the remaining instructions for step 2.

¼ cup short-grain rice

½ cup glutinous rice

Step 1:

Place the rice in a large pot in the sink. Add cold water and stir vigorously. Drain. Repeat until water remains clean.

Return the drained rice to the pot and add 8½ cups cold water. Bring to a boil and reduce to medium-low heat. Place a lid on top, slightly askew so that the pressure doesn't build and spew rice water over the stove top. Cook for approximately 50 minutes, stirring occasionally. The mixture should reach a porridge-like consistency. If eating the congee at this stage, add salt or salt and sugar to taste.

Step 2:

12 ounces lean boneless pork butt

1 onion, quartered

1-inch slice of ginger, peeled and lightly crushed

3 scallions, cut into thirds

2 teaspoons salt

½ pound 40 count shrimp, peeled and deveined

1 tablespoon Shaoxing wine

1 teaspoon light soy sauce

1 teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon salt

pepper, to taste

Place the pork in a large pot. Cover with 3 cups water. Add the onion, ginger, scallions, and 2 teaspoons of salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer on low. After 20 minutes, flip the pork and cover again. Cook until meat is done through, around 25 additional minutes.

Remove the pork and let it cool. Mix the Shaoxing wine, soy sauce, sugar, ½ teaspoon salt, and pepper. Add the shrimp and let them marinate. Once the pork is cool enough to handle, cut it into small, thin strips (julienne).

Five minutes before the congee is ready, raise the heat, add the reserved pork and incorporate it fully into the rice. Heat until the congee begins to boil. Add the shrimp and their marinade and mix well. Bring back to a boil. Cook until shrimp are done through, stirring gently. They should curl into a C shape and be mostly opaque all the way through before they are removed from the heat. They will continue to cook slightly after they are taken off the burner and will become tough if overcooked, so test as needed. Remove a shrimp and cut it in half. If it is almost opaque (with a speck of pink just at the center) or opaque in the middle, turn the heat off immediately and serve.

(Adapted from *Mastering the Art of Chinese Cooking* by Eileen Yin-Fei Lo)

Pancit Canton

Serves 4.

3 ounces dry bean thread vermicelli
¼ cup cooking oil
⅓ pound pork butt, cut into small strips
1 cup shredded green cabbage
1 cup carrots, julienned
5 green onions
3 cloves garlic, minced
1½ tablespoons soy sauce
1 lemon, cut into 8 wedges
2 boiled eggs

Soak vermicelli in water for at least three hours (overnight is best). Peel the cooked eggs and slice into quarters. Set aside. Heat a large frying pan, add oil and garlic. Cook over medium heat for 1–2 minutes. Add pork and cook until done. Add carrots and cook for 2–3 minutes. Add cabbage and green onion and cook for 3–4 minutes. Drain the soaking noodles well. Toss with the pork and vegetable mixture. Add soy sauce. Serve with lemon wedges and quartered eggs.

FISH AND MEAT MAINS

Sake-Steamed Sea Bass

Serves 4.

4 sea bass fillets (approximately 3 ounces a piece)
1 teaspoon salt
4 teaspoons sake

Cut 4 pieces of aluminum foil into 8-by-12-inch rectangles. Center a fillet in the middle of each piece of foil. Sprinkle ¼ teaspoon salt on each fillet. Splash each fillet with 1 teaspoon sake.

Bring the two 12-inch ends of the foil packet together above the fillet and roll them together to form a tight package. Bunch and roll the 8-inch ends so that no liquid can escape or enter the packet.

Fill a metal steaming pot or a wok with just enough water so that the steamer insert or the bamboo steaming basket rests at least 1 inch above the water line. Bring the water to a simmer. Place the fish packets inside the steaming basket or bamboo steamer and cover the pot or wok with a lid. Steam over medium-high heat for 20 minutes. Remove the packets and serve.

(Adapted from *Japanese Farm Food* by Nancy Singleton Hachisu)

Pork or Chicken Adobo

Serves 4–6.

Adobo keeps well and, like most braises, tastes even better the next day. If using chicken, you can buy one whole and ask your butcher to cut it for you. The chicken will typically be cut into 8 pieces for a dish such as adobo, yielding two drumsticks, two thighs, two wings, and two breasts. As with any cooked dishes that contain acidic ingredients, be sure to use a nonreactive cooking vessel. This simply means use one that will not discolor from the acid. Stainless steel and enameled ceramic work well. Raw aluminum and copper cookware will discolor. Anodized aluminum will not.

1½ pounds pork butt or shoulder, cut into 1-inch cubes

or

1 whole chicken (around 3½ pounds), cut up into parts

½ cup soy sauce
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons white vinegar
2 teaspoons whole peppercorns
4–5 bay leaves
4 large cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup water or more as needed

In a large stainless steel or glazed ceramic pot, mix the soy sauce, vinegar, peppercorns, bay leaves, and minced garlic. Add the pork or chicken, bring the mixture to a low simmer, and cook on low heat stirring occasionally until meat is tender (approximately 45 minutes). If the braising liquid gets too low, add water. Add it in ⅛-cup increments as needed. Once the meat is done, remove from heat and discard the bay leaves. Serve over white rice.

Stir-Fried Chicken with Cashews and Asparagus

Serves 4.

For this recipe, the chicken is marinated in a mix of egg white and cornstarch, a step that helps keep the meat from overcooking and produces a delightfully tender texture. Shaoxing wine and dried orange peels are readily available at Asian markets. As in any stir-fried dish, all of the ingredients should be carefully measured and placed easily at hand before you begin the process. Ingredients that are added together can be put in the same bowl. Otherwise, keep them individually contained so they may be added in a flash as needed.

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 egg white, lightly beaten
2 teaspoons Shaoxing rice wine or dry sherry
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon peanut oil
1 scant cup cashew nuts
5 strips dried orange peels
1 teaspoon grated ginger
4 garlic cloves, finely minced
3 tablespoons light soy sauce
½ pound asparagus, thinly cut crosswise at a gentle slant
¼ cup maple syrup
½ tablespoon Shaoxing wine or dry sherry
3 scallions, thinly sliced

Combine the egg white, salt, Shaoxing wine, and cornstarch. Mix well, making sure the cornstarch does not clump. Cut the chicken into ⅓-inch cubes and add to the marinade. Mix well and let it marinate for 30 minutes.

Place a metal colander in the sink. Add 1 quart water to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the oil. Add the chicken, stirring briskly for 2–3 minutes to keep the pieces individuated. Once the chicken has turned opaque, pour the contents of the saucepan into the colander. Gently shake the colander to remove any excess water. Place several layers of paper towels on a pan or plate, and place the chicken on them in a single layer. This will ensure that no excess water still remains. Dry the colander, and gently add the chicken to it. Set beside the wok.

Heat a wok on high. When hot, swirl in a tablespoon of peanut oil. Add the soy sauce. The moment it stops crackling, add the orange peels, ginger, garlic, and asparagus and stir-fry until they become aromatic. About 2 minutes. Add the chicken and cashews and toss quickly to incorporate. Swirl in the maple syrup and wine. Stir-fry until the chicken is just done through (no pink in the middle). Remove from heat, stir in the scallions, and serve immediately.



Bulgogi

Serves 4.

The success of this dish depends on the meat being cut as thinly and evenly as possible. In a Korean grocery, you can find precut bulgogi meat. You can also ask your butcher to slice the meat for you. To slice it at home, stick the meat in the freezer for 30 minutes beforehand, as this will make cutting much easier.

1½ pounds rib-eye beef, thinly sliced
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup Coca Cola
¼ cup soju, sake, or dry white wine
2 tablespoons sugar
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons pear juice (grate ½ pear and squeeze the flesh to extract the juice)
3 tablespoons spring onion, chopped
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds
1 tablespoon sesame oil

Excepting the meat, place all of the ingredients in a large bowl and mix until well blended. Put the meat slices in the bowl and knead them with the marinade until each piece is evenly coated. Let them marinate for 30 minutes.

Although bulgogi is typically cooked on a grill, a frying-pan will work as well. Cook the meat, working in batches so that the pan is not overcrowded.

Serve the bulgogi with lettuce leaves; herbs such as perilla, mint, and basil; *gochuchang* (chili paste); and rice. Wrap the meat and herbs in the leaves and add *gochuchang* to taste.

Korean Tacos

Yields 12 Tacos.

For a fusion twist to the bulgogi, cradle the meat made from the previous recipe, gochuchang, and herbs in a warm flour tortilla. For a more elaborate variation, follow the steps below.

Bulgogi, prepared as directed above

Cabbage Salad, prepared as directed on page 169 (minus the peanuts and meat) *or* diced radish kimchi, prepared as directed on page 167.

2 avocados, sliced or prepared guacamole

12 flour tortillas

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Wrap 3 stacks of tortillas 4 deep in aluminum foil. Place them in the oven 15 minutes before you eat.

If refrigerated, bring the cabbage salad or kimchi to room temperature while you prepare the bulgogi.

If using prepared guacamole, bring it to room temperature as well. If using fresh avocados, slice them and sprinkle with lime juice or reserved cabbage salad dressing to keep them from turning brown.

You can either assemble the tacos yourself or let diners do the work for you.

Beef Kaldereta

Serves 4–6.

¼ cup cooking oil

1 pound beef, cut into 1-inch cubes

1 sweet red pepper, coarsely chopped

1 sweet green pepper, coarsely chopped

1 large russet potato, cut into 1-inch cubes

1 small onion, coarsely chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 can tomato sauce (15 ounces)
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
½ cup pitted green Spanish olives

Heat the oil in a large pot. Add garlic and onion, cook over medium heat until the onions are almost translucent. Add beef and brown the meat. Add red and green peppers, salt, and black pepper. Cook over medium heat for 2–3 more minutes. Add potato and tomato sauce. Simmer the *kaldereta* over low heat for 45 minutes. Ten minutes before the dish is ready, add the olives. Serve over white rice.

DESSERTS

Butter Mochi

Makes 24 small squares.

A sweet snack or dessert enjoyed by Hawaiians, this treat is a distinctively Asian American rice cake.

3 cups glutinous rice flour (*mochiko*)
2½ cups sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 twelve-ounce cans of coconut milk
5 eggs
4 ounces melted butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Melt the butter in a small pan and set aside to cool. Place the rice flour, sugar, and baking powder into a large bowl. Break the eggs into a second large bowl and gently whisk together. Add the coconut milk, butter, and vanilla extract to the eggs. Whisk until well blended. Gently add the liquid to the dry ingredients and mix thoroughly.

Grease a 9–by-13-inch baking dish. Pour in the batter. Bake for 90 minutes. Let cool and cut into individual portions.

(Adapted from *The Food of Paradise: Exploring Hawaii's Culinary Heritage* by Rachel Laudan)

Shiso Granita

Makes about 3 cups.

15 perilla (*shiso*) leaves, green or red

¼ cup granulated sugar

Place the perilla leaves in a heat-proof mixing bowl. Add 3 cups water and the sugar to a pan, bring to a boil, and stir until sugar granules have dissolved. Pour the hot sugar syrup over the perilla leaves and let it steep until cool.

Strain the mixture through a sieve into a freezer-safe container. Discard the perilla leaves. Cover the container and place in the freezer for one hour. Remove the container and use a spoon to gently scrape the ice crystals that have formed on the sides of the container back into the unfrozen liquid. Repeat every half hour until all the liquid has frozen and been flaked off the sides of the container. The granita should ultimately acquire the texture of minutely flaked ice.

BEVERAGES

Green Tea (*Matcha*)

Serves 1.

Matcha *is a powdered green tea, which is drunk hot or cold. It is the most commonly consumed beverage in Japanese culture and is revered for its health-giving properties. Recently Western scientists have determined that green tea contains flavonoids that help repair oxidative damage to cells, helping to reduce the risk of certain cancers and heart disease. Unlike leaf teas,* matcha *is not brewed in a pot. Rather it is mixed in individual portions. Special tea whisks are used to create a frothy beverage. But a spoon will do. The powder is also used to flavor ice creams, ices, and cookies.*

½ teaspoon *matcha*

Add ½ teaspoon *matcha* to a cup. Pour a teaspoon of tepid water onto the tea. Using the back of a spoon or a *matcha* whisk, grind the tea and water into a paste.

Bring 1½ cups of water to boil. As soon as it reaches the boiling point, remove from the heat.

Add half the hot water to the cup and stir vigorously. Taste and add more water as desired.



Vietnamese Iced Coffee with Condensed Milk

Serves 1.

This recipe is best made with a Vietnamese coffee filter, or phin, which can be found online for under $7 or at an Asian market for under $5.

2 tablespoons sweetened condensed milk

2 tablespoons Café du Monde Coffee and Chicory or any medium-ground coffee

½ cup crushed ice

Place water on the stove to boil.

Add the condensed milk to a coffee cup, 8-ounces or larger. Place the filter on top of the cup. Remove the press and add the coffee.

Insert the press so that the coffee is tightly packed. Then loosen the press ever so slightly. Pour two tablespoons of the water into the phin. Once the coffee grounds have absorbed the water, fill the filter with water and place the lid on top.

The water will drip very, very slowly into the glass. The process will take anywhere from 4 to 6 minutes. The more tightly pressed the grounds, the more slowly the coffee will drip and the stronger the brew will be.

Add crushed ice to a tall glass. After the water has passed through the filter, remove the phin and stir vigorously. Pour the mixture over the ice and enjoy.


Glossary

CHINESE FOOD TERMS

bird's nest soup soup thickened with swiftlet birds' nests

cai vegetable or protein accompaniment for rice

ch'ao min fried noodles

char siu (cha siu) barbecued pork

char siu bao bun stuffed with barbecued pork

chou doufu fermented, deep-fried tofu, known as stinky tofu

congee rice porridge

dim sum a meal of dumplings and other finger foods

drunken a dish cooked with a heavy amount of wine or alcohol

egg drop soup broth in which a stream of whisked eggs is added while the liquid is being stirred, creating ribbons of egg

eight-treasure pudding a glutinous rice pudding sweetened with bean paste and "treasures" such as dried red dates and other preserved fruits

fan rice or other grain

hawker noodle soup pan-fried wheat noodles and pork in broth

hot-and-sour soup broth that contains ingredients such as pork, tofu, daylily buds, wood ear fungus, and bamboo shoots flavored with spicy peppers and vinegar

jianbing wheat crepes

jiaozi pot stickers

la mian pulled noodles

lap cheong sausages

mapo tofu mashed bean curd and minced pork that are stir-fried with sesame oil, spicy bean paste, garlic, ginger, and green onion

Mongolian hot pot a dish of simmering liquid in which diners cook their own ingredients

red cooked simmered in soy sauce

shark's fin soup a soup thickened with the cartilage of a shark's fin

siu mai open-faced dumplings

thousand-year-old egg or century egg chicken, duck, or goose eggs that have been preserved for 100 days in ashes, lime, and salt

tsap seui miscellaneous scraps

white cut chicken chicken poached with ginger, scallions, garlic, and sesame oil

wonton a dough wrapper or a dumpling made with the wrapper

wonton soup clear broth with wontons

youtiao cruller, or deep-fried dough stick

FILIPINO FOOD TERMS

adobo vinegar-braised meat, seafood, or vegetables

afritadang manok chicken braised in tomato sauce with potatoes and bell pepper

alugbati Malabar spinach

ampalaya bitter melon

arroz caldo rice porridge with chicken

arroz Valenciana a version of paella made with sticky rice

bacalao dried salt cod

bagoong fish paste

balut a fertilized duck egg

bangus milk fish

bibingka rice cakes roasted in banana leaves

biko sticky rice treats

brazo de Mercedes rolled meringue cake

bularo beef marrow soup

bunuelos a crispy sweet made of yeast dough

burong mangga pickled green mango

champorado chocolate rice pudding

dinuguan blood stew

ensaimadas brioche topped with cheese and sugar

escabeche whole fish in sweet-and-sour sauce

gabi taro

guinamos seafood paste, also known as bagoong

haleyang ube purple yam pudding

halo-halo ice cream or crushed ice with sweetened beans and fruits

hopia pastries filled with beans, taro, or ube

inihaw grilled foods

kakanin cake made of rice, cassava, taro, or sweet potato

kaldereta (caldereta) beef or goat stew

kangkong water spinach

kanin cooked rice

kare-kare ox tail stew

keso de bola Edam cheese ball

kinilaw seafood marinated in vinegar or lime juice

laing taro leaves

leche flan a thick custard topped with caramel sauce; also known as flan or crème caramel

lechon roast suckling pig

lechon kawali pan-roasted pork

longanisa sausage

lumpia spring rolls

maja blanca coconut pudding

menudo tripe soup

merienda snack

morcon meat roll stuffed with eggs, cheese, pickles, and other meats

pancit noodles

pancit bihon noodles with pork, chicken, and vegetables

pancit Canton a dish made with Chinese-style wheat noodles, seafood, meat, poultry, and vegetables

pancit palabok rice noodles in an annatto-infused shrimp and smoked fish sauce

pan de sal bread roll

patas crispy pork trotters

patis fish sauce

patola luffa gourd

pinakbet vegetables steamed with fish paste

polvoron shortbread

puto rice cake

puto bambong rice cakes steamed in bamboo

sigsig deep-fried, finely chopped pork cheeks, snout, and tail

sinangag garlic fried rice

sinigang fish, meat, or fowl stewed with vegetables and a souring agent such as tamarind

sofrito sautéed onion, garlic, and tomatoes

sotanghon guisado sautéed bean thread noodles

suman rice cakes cooked in coconut milk and steamed in palm leaves

tapa jerky

tocino bacon

toymansi dipping sauce made of soy sauce and kalamansi

toyo soy sauce

turon saba banana and jackfruit wrapped in rice paper and deep-fried

ube purple yam

yemas egg yolk candies

HAWAIIAN FOOD TERMS

inamona candlenuts ground to form an essential flavoring paste for poke

kukui candlenut

loco moco sticky rice topped with hamburger, fried egg, and gravy

poke raw fish seasoned with salt, seaweed, and ground kukui nuts (iamona) or a variety of other combinations

saimin noodles in chicken or fish broth topped with sundry ingredients

Spam musubi pan-fried Spam layered onto sushi rice and wrapped in seaweed

JAPANESE FOOD TERMS

bainiku pickled plum (umeboshi) paste

bonito the fish from which the dried flakes (katsuobushi) essential to dashi are made

dashi a staple broth made from kelp and katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes)

donburi rice and dashi topped with sundry ingredients

gohan cooked rice

gyoza dumplings

izakaya drinking establishments that serve snacks

kaiseki a formal multicourse dinner featuring seasonal, artfully plated ingredients, akin to a chef's tasting menu

kinpira a dish that has been sautéed and then simmered; one of the most popular versions, kinpira gobo, is made with burdock root

kombucha sweetened black tea that has been fermented with the kombucha culture

makizushi nori-wrapped sushi rolls

mirin sweet rice wine

miso Japanese fermented bean paste

mochi cakes made from glutinous rice flour

natto a goopy, stringy, and highly odiferous fermented bean cake

nimono a simmered dish

okayu rice porridge

okazuya take-away delis

onigiri rice balls

osechi ryori cold foods served for the Japanese New Year

oshiruko adzuki bean and mochi soup

ozoni soup with rice cakes

ponzu a dipping sauce made with yuzu juice and soy sauce

ramen wheat noodle

saimin noodle soup

sake rice wine

sakura mochi pink rice cake wrapped in a cherry blossom leaf

sansho the dried fruit of a prickly ash tree, which has a numbing effect on the tongue

sashimi raw seafood

shabu-shabu thin slices of meat cooked in boiling liquid

shiso perilla leaf, a member of the mint family

shochu alcohol made from rice, barley, sweet potato, or buckwheat

shoyu soy sauce

soba buckwheat and the noodles made from buckwheat

sukiyaki beef stew

sushi raw fish served on vinegared rice

tamagoyaki rolled egg omelet

tappanyaki a dish cooked on a steel griddle

tempura lightly battered and fried food

teriyaki meat grilled with soy sauce and mirin

tonkatsu breaded pork cutlet

toro tuna belly

udon wheat noodle

ume an apricot that is typically translated into English as "Japanese plum"

umeboshi pickled ume

umeshu ume cordial

wagashi confections created to eat with tea

yaki-manju grilled dough brushed with sweet-and-sour sauce

yakimono a grilled dish

yuba tofu skin

KOREAN FOOD TERMS

banchan side dishes

bap steamed rice

bibimbap a steamed rice bowl topped with assorted vegetables and hot chili paste. It can also include meat and egg.

bindaetteok mung bean pancake

bossam leaf-wrapped steamed pork

bulgogi literally meaning "fire meat," the term typically refers to barbecued beef

cheongju rice wine

chogochujang gochujang (chili pepper paste), vinegar, and sugar

doenjang fermented bean paste

dubu tofu

haejang guk hangover soup, traditionally made with bone broth and ox blood

hangwa traditional sweets and cookies

hotteok deep-fried dough filled with sugar

galbi ribs

galbijim braised short ribs

gamjajeon potato pancake

gamjatang potato stew made with pork bone broth

ganjang soy sauce

gimbap rice and assorted ingredients rolled in seaweed

gochujang chili pepper paste

gui grilled food

guk a thin soup

insamju ginseng wine

japchae glass noodles stir-fried with vegetables

jeon literally meaning "grilled food," it refers to a vegetable pancake

jjigae stew

kimchi fermented vegetables

L.A. galbi beef ribs

makgeolli sour rice wine

mandu dumplings

manduguk dumpling soup

modeum jeon assorted meat, fish, and vegetables that are individually dipped in a light egg batter and pan-fried

myeon noodles

nokdu bindaetteok mung bean pancakes

pajeon green onion pancake

ra-myeon, or ramen noodle soup

samgyetang ginseng and chicken soup

seolleongtang ox bone soup

soju rice alcohol

songpyeon round rice cakes made from newly harvested rice that are filled with sundry ingredients such as seeds, beans, and nuts.

soon dubu jigae soft tofu stew

ssam wrapped food

ssamjang a dip for wrapped food made of doenjang and gochujang, with sundry optional ingredients

tang thick soup

tteok rice cakes

tteokbokki a dish of rice cakes, fish cakes, and chili paste

tteokguk rice cake soup

tteok-manduguk rice cake soup with dumplings

VIETNAMESE FOOD TERMS

banh bao steamed rice cakes

banh chung square rice cake stuffed with bean paste and ground meat

banh day round rice cake

banh mi baguette sandwich

banh mi tom chien shrimp brochettes

banh trung moon cakes

banh xeo savory crepes with pork, shrimp, and bean sprouts

bo luc loc a salad of thinly sliced meat over watercress, also known as shaking beef

bo nuong xa grilled beef and herbs in rice wrappers

bùn thin, round rice noodle

bùn bo hué noodle soup with beef, pork, and shrimp paste

ca kho to catfish simmered in caramel sauce

chao bo ground beef porridge

chao gio spring rolls with pork, crab, and tree ear mushrooms

chao tom shrimp paste grilled on a sugarcane skewer

chè sweet soup

com ga chicken with ginger and garlic rice

gio lua silky pork sausage

goi cuon summer rolls filled with shrimp

goi ngo sen lotus root salad

hu tieu rice noodles in bone broth topped with a variety of vegetables and proteins

keo dua coconut candy

keo me xung peanut brittle with sesame seeds

lau a hot pot or the dish cooked in it

mang tay nau cua asparagus and crabmeat soup

mì Chinese noodles

mut candied fruit

nuoc cham the basic Vietnamese dipping sauce made with fish sauce, lime juice, and sugar

nuoc mam fish sauce

nuoc tong soy sauce

oc luoc xa sea snails with lemongrass, chili pepper, and ginger

pho bo a hearty soup of beef, bone broth, and noodles

pho ga a hearty soup of chicken, broth, and noodles

rau muong water spinach

rau ram Vietnamese coriander

thit bo bay mon seven dishes of beef

trung muoi salt-cured duck or chicken eggs

xoi steamed glutinous rice

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Resource Guide

For an overview of historical cookbooks, see the Cookbooks section of Chapter 3, found on page 92.

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Center for Educational Telecommunications—http://www.cetel.org/res.html

ASIAN FOOD AND COOKING EQUIPMENT, ONLINE

Asian Food Grocer—http://www.asianfoodgrocer.com/
KOA Mart—http://www.koamart.com/
EFoodDepot—http://www.efooddepot.com/
Import Food—http://importfood.com/
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About the Author

Alice L. McLean, PhD, is a lecturer in Food Studies at University of the Pacific, San Francisco. A specialist in food writing and feminist food studies, she is the author of Greenwood's *Cooking in America, 1840–1945* and of *Aesthetic Pleasure in Twentieth-Century Women's Food Writing: The Innovative Appetites of M.F.K. Fisher, Alice B. Toklas, and Elizabeth David* (2012).