

一、照秋影遊眺  
二、傾佳處香



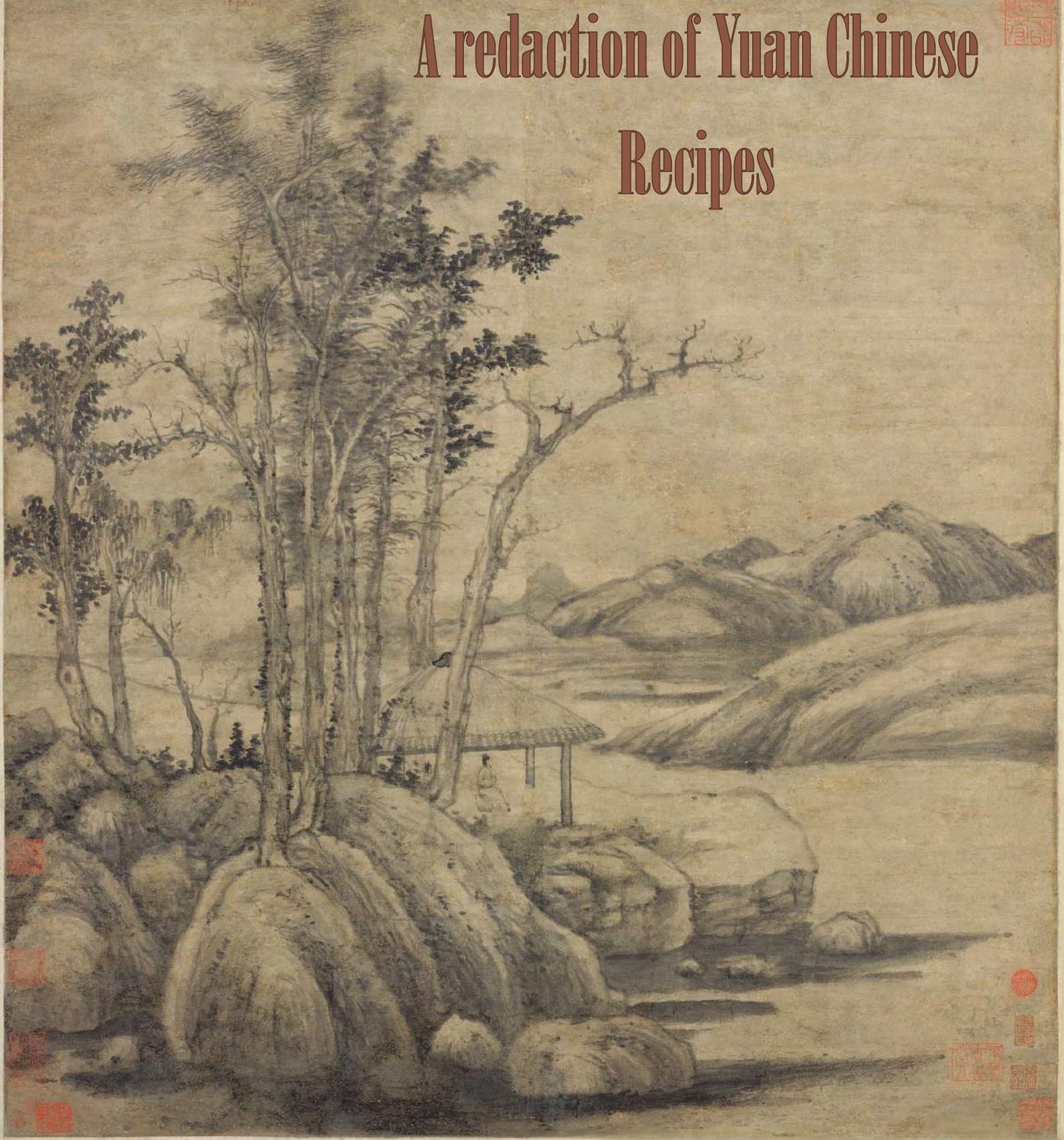
# The Cloud Forest Hall

## Cookbook:

### A redaction of Yuan Chinese

### Recipes

公年壽山中十月余欲復甫出南浦  
後及德再其松歸以相示蓋識其友  
不黃若名其家分一時獨此山孤今有六  
年矣其然如博世之變立顯其空而還  
十九日  
余遊山山仙秋林野興甚九月中山山房以索題  
通一月望日經鉅亦前木屏歲開因賦十章  
今年自春徂秋無一有外興味佳賦此一章自  
于左方 啟喜秋二研席涼卷簾微露下衣  
叢林靡洞戶散新興翠雨黃雲籠遠松  
竹秋回風晴蕭 於憶秋月夜蒼林香  
庭萬添金鴨落葉仍空副枕象已那秋  
九月十四日雲林生倪瓚







### Image Acknowledgement:

All photography of food in this book were provided by the author.

Images of works by Ni Zan are in the public domain and can be located as listed below:



Woods and Valleys of Mount Yu, 1372  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



Enjoying the Wilderness in an Autumn Grove, 1339  
Metropolitan Museum of Art



Wind among the Trees on the Riverbank, 1363  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Portrait of Ni Zan is in public domain and can be located as listed below:



Portrait of Ni Zan by Qui Ying  
National Palace Museum, Taiwan

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**This book is dedicated to my family and friends, who have, thus far, survived the trials of my redaction process.  
Thank you for trying it - even the slime balls.**

# Acknowledgements

My sincerest gratitude to Alec Story. Mr Story has spent many hours translating *Yún líntáng yǐnshí zhìdù jí* into English, providing an excellent transcript for redaction work. He then published his work under a Creative Commons Attribution—ShareAlike 4.0 International License. This has allowed me to include the original recipes for each redaction in this work.

To my husband, Rob, and my daughter, Renee: Thank you for your support. Without it, I would not have the time nor ability to trial my redactions. You have graciously suffered redaction upon redaction for dinner, only offering your suggestions to improve my redactions and keeping most of your complaints to yourselves. You guys rock.

Master Drake Morgan has offered instruction, advice, and encouragement on this project from the get go. He has also lent me six of his redactions for inclusion. Thank you for everything. Do not worry. I am still working on the other redactions. Always working...

Mistress Kiriell du Papillon has also been an inspiration and has given me valuable advice many times. She has also listened to me whinge and moan about complications. Thank you, Kiriell, for always being there to listen and help. One of the redactions in this book is hers and Drake's redaction. It is well worth a try for anyone who likes shrimp (prawns).

As you might have guessed from my dedication, I have a group of very brave and foolhardy friends who have willingly allowed me to experiment on them. They have helped answer questions such as:

- Just how much Szechwan pepper makes something inedible?
- What's a good substitute for a dangerous ingredient? Don't worry, I am sure that trying just a little bit of that will not kill you...I hope.
- Just how thick a coat of starch on the outside of a meatball creates slime?

I would like to thank a few by name. The ones who repeatedly came back: Georgia, Braddon, Andrew, Chris, Pete, Jill, Mark, Sue, and Karlene.

Dr Paul Buell, a renowned scholar of medieval Asia, whose research I have followed for many years and who kindly answered my hundreds of questions. Thank you. My knowledge would be lacking without your guidance.

Lastly, I would like to thank Gavin and Katherine. It is because of your interest in medieval Mongolia and reenacting it to such a highly documented level that I worked to create my first handbook on Mongolian Feasting several years ago. That research has brought me here and I will continue to forge forward.

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# Introduction



One of the Chinese Four Masters, Ni Zan (Yuan Zhen 1301 - 1374) is known for his paintings during the Yuan and early Ming Dynasties. Born in Wuxi, Ni Zan's family was wealthy. They were able to afford the Confucian education that ignited his imagination and developed his talents in painting and scholarship. He travelled extensively during the political upheaval of the late Yuan Dynasty. It was during this time that he developed his unique style that incorporates tight landscapes and shuns portraiture of people. His brushwork, characterised by the use of a dry ink brush, and his unique style, formed a school of painting popular in Chinese art since. Many famous, more modern Chinese painters have attempted Ni Zan's style in their earlier work.

Throughout this book, you will find sections of three of Ni Zan's works: Woods and Valleys of Mount Yu, Enjoying the Wilderness in the Autumn Grove, and Wind among the Trees on the Riverbank.



Great art aside, why would a food researcher be interested in this man?

Ni Zan was noted during his day for his opinionated and fastidious lifestyle; and one thing that he seems to have been particularly dogmatic about was the running of his household. His preference were such that he wrote a household manual titled “Yún líntáng yǐnshí zhìdù jí” (Cloud Forest Hall Dietary System). Within this document are fifty-three recipes (grouped under fifty numbers, beginning with number two). A majority of these recipes are how to cook his food, however, there are also a few interesting recipes on ink preparation, ink stone care, and incense making.

Although I am interested in researching and redacting each of these recipes, I have only included twenty-four in this volume.

The first hurdle for redacting period recipes is locating period sources to redact from. I am aware of two English translations of Yún líntáng yǐnshí zhìdù jí. The first was published in 1998 in *Petit Propos Culinarie* volume 60. It is a translation and commentary by Teresa Wang and E.N. Anderson. Anderson is known for other works on Eastern food and foodways such as *The Food of China*. The arrival of this translation was exciting for many food researchers and there are several reviews about this article.

[Petit Propos Culinarie volume 61](#) published Francoise Sabban’s “Some Remarks about the Translation of *Yun Lintang Yinshi Zhidu Ji* Published in PPC60”. Sabban questioned several of Wang/Anderson’s translations and inferences. This set of remarks is a good addition to the original publication and outlines some of the leaps in logic of the original publication.

The second full translation has only just been published by the scholar, Alec Story, on his blog, *Medieval Sundries*, in 2018. Story has returned to the Chinese manuscript and fully translated it from this source. He also had the benefit of other food research done in the years since. His dedication to the translation is evident and has illuminated several issues I had with the original translation. This clarity of translations has encouraged me to re-redact all of my recipes from the Yún líntáng yǐnshí zhìdù jí.

The primary problem of an English-speaking food studies researcher that does not read Chinese is getting a reliable copy of the work in English. Having these three resources has opened my ability to make better decisions in my assumptions during my redactions.

As I continue with my redactions, I will be referring to both full translations, Sabban’s notes and several research articles and books on the subject of Asian Food History. Both fully translated works number the recipes slightly differently and have translated the titles differently. To standardise my redactions, I will refer to Story’s numbering and naming conventions. The translated original recipes in this book will be those of Story as he has licenced his work under the Creative Commons Attribution – ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

It is my hope that you will open this book, find a recipe, and cook it for your friends and family. Let’s bring the art of ancient cooking into our homes.

### 3. To Boil Noodles

Original:

If you wish to eat for lunch, at daybreak take salted water and dampen [the author is likely using 搜 “to search, to dig” where they meant 溲 “to soak,” as they are and were homophones - this interpretation will be used throughout] wheat into rounds, press down 20-30 times, and cover with something immediately, and then again press the rounds as before. Like this press the rounds four times, and if made with finely-grained pure flour, will resist cutting with a knife. To boil: when boiling water is agitated and moving, add the noodles. If the boil escapes, reduce the fire, and add a lid, and then bring back to a boil. Then, dredge out the noodles and put in the broth “sinking aromatic [diseased *Aquilaria agallocha* wood used as incense]” spines and sandalwood [*Santalum album* or possibly rosewood *Dalbergia hupeana*, *D. odorifera*] and for a short time patchouli [*Pogostemon cablin*] at the end.

Drake’s Redaction:

Ingredients (noodles):

- 12 cups 00 pastry flour
- 3 cups protein enriched flour (pasta will do)
- 7 cups water

Ingredients (rest):

- ...which makes... ~3 Kg Wheat Noodles (60g per person/200ml soup)
- 12 Litres of Water with 6tsp salt
- 7 Litres of Chicken or Vegetable Stock (if you want this as a vegetarian dish)
- Sliced Shallots for garnish

Method:

1. Make noodles:
  - Combine the two flours in a large bowl and slowly add water. Mix well and knead to a smooth dough. Cover with a wet towel and refrigerate overnight.
  - The next day, remove from the refrigerator and knead for about ten minutes until smooth and elastic.
  - Roll the dough into a long cylinder, 2 to 3 inches round.
  - Holding on to each end of the dough, raise the dough above your head and, with a wrist-snapping motion, whack it against the work surface. Fold the dough in half after each whack.
  - Repeat this process several times, being sure to lightly flour the surface with wheat starch to prevent the dough from sticking. This beating action relaxes the gluten and continually stretches the dough.
  - The dough is now ready for pulling and stretching. Holding both ends of the dough, pull and stretch and quickly fold the two ends together. Continue the pull-stretch-fold technique each time increasing the number of threads, until you end up with many whisker-fine strands of dough.
2. Bring stock to the simmer.
3. Bring a pot of salted water to a strong boil. Add noodles. Cook for 3-5 minutes until cooked.
4. Add cooked noodles to a tureen.
5. Cover noodles with stock.
6. Garnish with some sliced shallots and serve.

## 5. Honey-Drunk Crab

Original:

Rapidly boil them in salted water, and when the color changes immediately dredge them out. Break [the meat?] out the shells, keeping them whole. Take the meat out of the claws and legs, and chop the leg meat into small chunks. Then, take the above items and arrange them inside the shell, and then take a little honey and chicken eggs [literally “chicken pellet,” which is unusual but see “duck eggs” in recipe 29 for the same vocabulary], mix it evenly and pour it everywhere. Then, spread the fertile belly fat [roe? liver?] on top of the egg and steam it. When the egg congeals, then eat it; you may not fully steam it. Serve with sweet oranges [*Citrus sinensis*], pickled chopped meat / vegetables, and vinegar.

Drake’s Redaction:

Ingredients (Shells)

- 25 Blue Swimmer Crabs (1/2 crab shell per person)
- 8 Tbsp Salt (for pot)
- 12 Eggs, beaten
- 100g Honey
- 1 pinch Salt
- Lard

Ingredients (Dressing):

- 20g Finely Minced Mandarin Peel
- 80g Rice Wine Vinegar

Method:

1. Heat water in large (40L) stockpot to boil. Add 8 Tbsp salt, and Crabs. Boil (with lid on) until they turn red. Take out crabs and allow to cool.
2. Very finely mince some fresh mandarin orange peel and add to the Rice Wine Vinegar. Shake vigorously and chill.
3. Crack crabs (Retaining the top carapace) and extract all the meat and place in the bowl (watch for adulterants such as the nasty clear sinew bits and bits of shell).
4. Trim and clean carapaces (this will take a few volunteers). Have some pre-prepared if you can.
5. Shred crab meat and mix with beaten egg, honey, and salt. Mould into each crab shell and lightly brush with heated, liquid lard.
6. Steam for 5-10 minutes or until the mixture has set.
7. Take dipping sauce and shake vigorously again and pour into small dipping bowls.

Assumptions:

- A small amount of salt was added to the steamed mix.
- Blue Swimmer Crabs were used as the closest substitute to *Charybdis japonica* available.
- Mandarin peel was used rather than orange peel because mandarin is native to the region. It is possible that the original uses ‘orange’ as a mistranslation.

Note: The kind of crab (yu-moor or chriu-nou) is identified by Francoise Sabban as *Charibdys japonica*, a common crab found in the South China Sea. Crab is still dipped in vinegar dips today, to cut the fattiness and fishy flavor and to drive away ‘cold’. This is not cold temperature, but the cold ch’i that could injure an eater’s health.

## 8. Boiling Wontons

Original:

Finely mince meat, and add riced bamboo shoots or wild rice shoots [*Zizania latifolia*], garlic chives [*Allium tuberosum*], or vine flowers [“climbing or trailing vines, including various species of wisteria or liana”] - any of them work. Take Sichuan pepper [*Zanthoxylum simulans*], almonds and a little [soy?] sauce evenly mixed and bundle it all together, with a skin laid out slightly thick, cut square, and again use pure flour to withstand thinness. Add them to boiling water [or broth?]. When boiling, use a rolling boil so that they turn over, and do not cover the pot. Wait for them to float, and then lift them, but you may not stir. In the filling, do not use fructus amomi [*Amomum villosum*], which will cause burping.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

Wonton Wrappers

500g Minced Chicken

100g Bamboo Shoots, finely diced

2 tsp Szechwan Pepper, very finely ground

1 tsp Apricot Kernel Paste (or 1 tsp pasted almond and 1 tsp sweet juice)

Optional:

1 tsp Brown Cardamom, finely crushed

2 litres Chicken Stock (for serving)

Method:

Mix thoroughly: chicken, bamboo shoots, Szechwan Pepper, Apricot Kernel, and Brown Cardamom (if using).

Separate wonton wrappers and place on flat surface.

Place 1 tsp meat mixture into the centre of each wrapper and fold.

Raise a pot of salted water to the boil and poach the wontons for 4 minutes or until they are cooked through. Make sure not to over fill pot as they cook, allowing for movement of the wonton through the water.

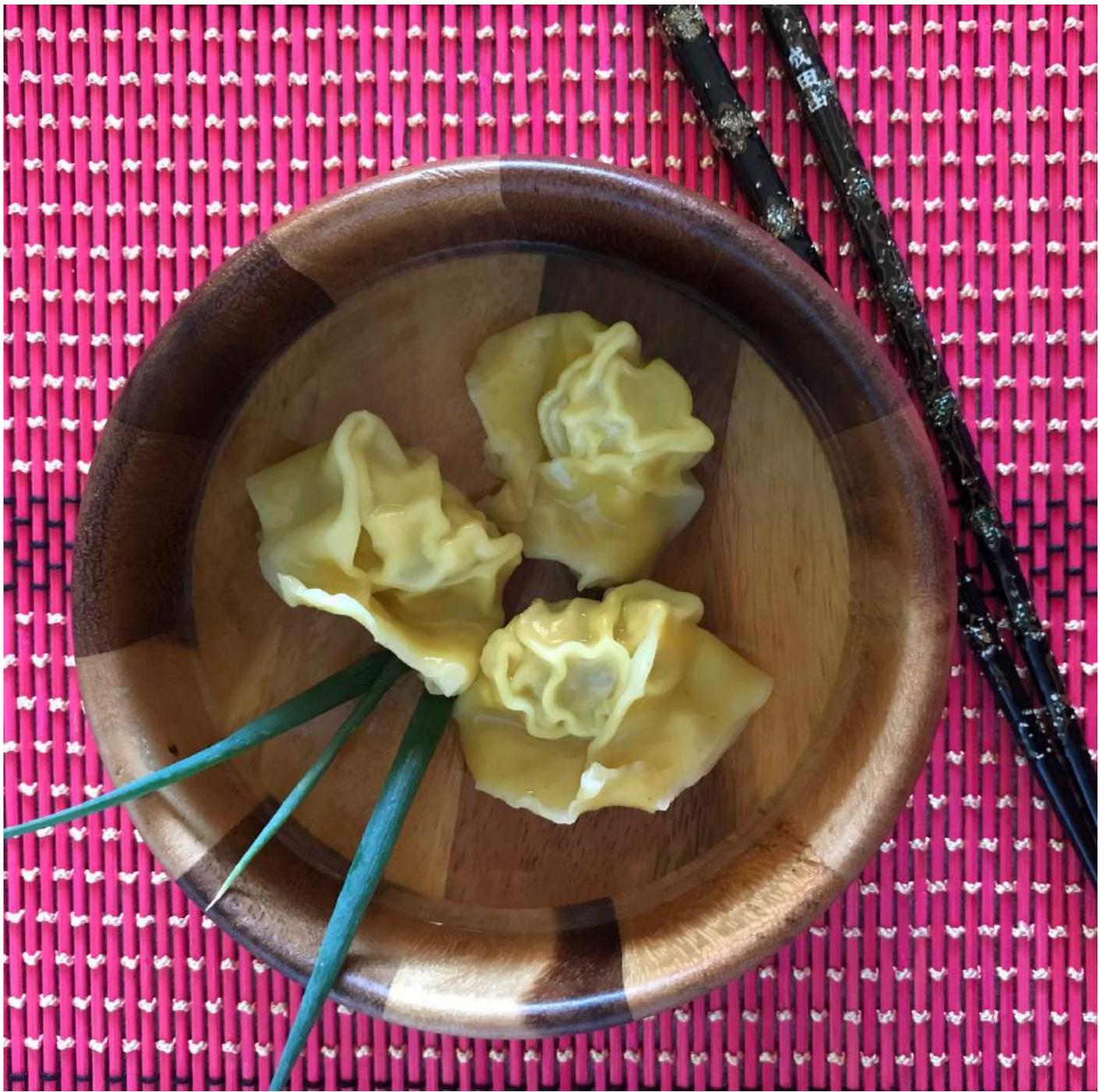
Arrange in tureen for serving. To keep wontons hot, cover with hot chicken broth.

Makes about 50 wontons.

Notes:

I used finely sliced bamboo shoots as they are easily available but any of the following could be used in their stead:

- Wild-Rice Shoots (*Zizania latifolia*)
- Garlic Chives (*Allium tuberosum*)
- *Basella rubratips*



## 9. To Make Eurasian Siskin Mantou

Original:

Take Eurasian Siskin [*Spinus spinus*] and use the brain [possibly head] and wings. Take scallions [*Allium fistulosum*], pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*] and salt and mince them together and stuff it inside the belly. Wrap it in leavened dough, making little long rolls, making both heads even and round. Steam on bamboo, or after steaming marinate in wine dregs as one does for wine dregs-mantou. A fragrant method is to fry these and it's wonderful.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 500g minced Chicken Breast
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground and filtered through muslin to remove husks)
- 2 green shallots, finely sliced
- 1 loaf white leavened bread dough of your favourite recipe

Optional Ingredients:

- Sesame Oil
- Brewing Lees

Method:

1. Make leavened bread dough and set aside (allowing it to rise).
2. Combine chicken mince, shallots, Szechwan pepper, and salt. Mix thoroughly.
3. Break off a small piece of dough about the size of a ping-pong ball. Roll into a ball and then flatten so that it is not too thin. Add a heaped table spoon of chicken mixture to the centre and make long small rolls, flattening and rounding the ends. The amount and size of your dough ball/chicken mix is dependent on how large you would like your final product. Smaller parcels seem to create a better outcome.
4. Steam for 20 minutes or until the dough is cooked.

Optional Part:

5. Roll each steamed bun in brewing lees until coated.
6. Shallow fry in sesame oil until golden.

Assumptions:

- I used chicken mince instead of buntings. It would probably be illegal or frowned upon to use any small bunting/sparrow like bird. Tunnel-boned quail is another option, but cost and amount of time to tunnel-bone each bird, make this option impractical for a feast.
- Although, strictly following the original directions, the meat mixture would not be pre-cooked, I have thoroughly cooked it before stuffing my 'bird buns' for food safety reasons. I do not believe that the chicken would be adequately cooked with such a short steaming time and thick dough.
- Ni Zan offers an optional part in his recipe, "After steaming they can perhaps be treated like 'lees buns': use brewing lees and fragrant oil and fry them." As Master Drake assumes in his original redaction of this recipe, the brewing lees seals the dough, allowing the dough to be fried without absorbing a hideous amount of the 'fragrant oil'. The resulting bun is both crispy and light.



## 12. Snow-Covered Vegetables

Original:

Take spring leafy vegetable [cabbage?] hearts with a few remaining leaves, and for every kind make two sections. Put them in a bowl, and take milk cakes [rubing, a kind of farmer's cheese] thickly cut into sheets and fully cover the top of the vegetables. Take ground pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*] and roll it in your palms on top. You don't need much pepper. Take pure wine and a little salt and pour it over the whole bowl, and then steam it on bamboo. When the vegetables are cooked, and soft, eat it.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 3 baby Bok Choy
- 1 Milk cake (fresh farmer's cheese)
- 1 teaspoon Szechwan pepper, ground
- Salt to taste
- 3 teaspoons white rice wine\*

Method:

1. Wash Bok choy and remove (and discard) the outer leaves so that only the young leaves and heart remain.
2. Using a bowl which can fit into your bamboo steamer, cut bok choy in two so that it fits into your bowl.
3. Cut cheese into thick strips and place over bok choy until the entire top of the vegetable is covered.
4. Lightly pepper the top of the cheese (this doesn't require much).
5. Add wine and a little salt (amount of salt needs to be tempered with the saltiness of the cheese. The saltier the cheese the less salt needed in this dish).
6. Place bowl into bamboo steamer and steam until the bok choy is cooked (soft but not mushy). Cook time depends on ambient temperature and size of bok choy but this takes about 10 minutes.
7. Remove bowls from steamer and serve. Warning: bowls are hot, and the soup is near boiling.

Note:

- Do not add too much fluid to the bottom of your bowl. The steaming process will increase the amount of fluid in the bowl.

\* The wine in this dish can easily be overpowering. Use a light rice wine or make the dish with no wine at all, substitute water.

## 13. To Boil Dry Seitan

Original:

Take fine [in size] gluten from [Wuzhong](#) newly put in a bamboo steamer but without water added. Tear it into thin small strips. First take some licorice root [*Glycyrrhiza glabra*] in inch-long pieces. Add a little wine, and boil in water until dry. Then, take purple perilla [*Perilla frutescens*] leaves and sourpeel tangerine [*Citrus reticulata*] skin sheets, and ginger sheets and boil them together with the gluten. Take it out and let it cool. Then, take some finished oil-sauce, pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*], black pepper [*Piper nigrum*], almonds, all ground and mixed, mix with the ginger, tangerine, etc., and knead it three times, so the flavor has evenly entered. Air it until dry, and put it in a sweets jar and seal it. If you try to eat it a while later and it's hard, then steam it.

Drake's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 2 Kg Wheat Gluten Chunks (40g per person)
- 2 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper
- 2 tsp of freshly ground Black Pepper
- 2 Bunches of Perilla -1 bunch for cooking, 1 bunch for garnish.
- 6 drops of licorice essence
- 20g Tangerine Peel slices (use a potato peeler)
- 40g Ginger Slices (again, use a potato peeler to remove the skin, and then use the peeler to keep slicing)
- 20g Apricot Kernel Paste
- 40g Dark Soy Sauce
- Sesame oil

Method:

1. Slice Gluten Chunks into thin slices.
2. Put Gluten chunks in wok with a little sesame oil.
3. Add licorice essence, perilla leaf, tangerine peel, and ginger slices.
4. Cook in wok for 5 minutes. Add peppers, soy sauce, apricot kernel paste, and more sesame oil.
5. Toss until well blended. Garnish with more perilla and serve.

Note:

- Perilla (*Perilla frutescens* var. *crispa*) is a red herb that looks like basil with fine crenellations on the tips of the leaves and is found in Chinese and Japanese grocery stores.

## 14. Blood Clams

Original:

Take live blood clams [*Tegillarca granosa*], split four or five open in succession, and immediately arrange them in a bowl. Trickle sauce on top, and take very hot wine and boil them, and then eat them. Do not use pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*], salt, etc. When you break them open, first take a big cloth needle and pierce their mouth to open them more easily.

Drake's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 3Kg of Cockles (60g per person)
- ½ Litre Water
- ½ Litre Sweet, White Rice Wine

Method:

1. Put water and wine in a large stock pot.
2. Raise to the boil.
3. Add Cockles, turn the heat to low and put the lid on to steam the cockles for 3-5 minutes.
4. Check to see if they are all open. Strain and pour out onto plate. Remove any cockle that hasn't opened.

Assumptions:

- The needle comment is not required as the cockles available in Australia open readily without them.

## 15. To Cook Rolled-Up Blue-Green Shrimp

Original:

Take fresh [live?] blue-green shrimp and remove the heads and the shells leaving a small tail. Take a small knife and thinly slice it from the large head to the tail, leaving the meat linked to the tail and not severing it. Immerse in scallions [*Allium fistulosum*], pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*], salt, wine and water. Pound the heads and shells until they break down, and then boil and take the broth. Cook the shrimp meat in the broth after it is clear. Consider adding bamboo shoot slices, wine dregs, and ginger slices. (Basically, if the broth does not have spiciness, the wine does not need to be a lot) Cook until done.[The PPC translations render the cooking verb here as “cook very quickly” but *Student’s* doesn’t support anything more than just “cook.”]

Master Drake and Mistress Kiriell du Papillion’s Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 5 Kg Uncooked King Green Prawns (100g per person/300ml soup)
- 12 Green Shallots (saving 1/2 of the green for garnish)
- 2 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground). An option is to slightly roast the pepper, crush, and filter the powder through muslin to remove the chaff.
- 6 tsp Salt
- 1 Cup of Rice Wine (The light sweet one, not the dark, salty one), Mirin works.
- 1/2 Cup Preserved Ginger Slice (or use the Preserved Ginger recipe also in this source)
- 1/2 Cup Commercial Preserved Bamboo Shoots

Method:

1. Remove heads from Prawns. Add prawn shells also when you have them.
2. Add heads to 10L of water with the salt, and boil gently for several hours in a stock pot to make stock. Strain out the prawn heads. You can use standard clarifying techniques on the stock if you wish.
3. Prepare prawns by de-veining them and scalloping. Cut the prawns into strips length ways to 2/3 the way down. This causes them to curl up like a 'flower OR
4. Prepare prawns by de-veining them and slicing up top vein (backbone). This causes the prawn to curl up into a 'roll'.
5. 10 minutes before serving bring the broth to the boil. Add pepper, wine, shallots. Allow to gently boil for 8 minutes.
6. Add Prawns, Ginger, & Bamboo Shoots. Bring back to boil for 2 minutes.
7. Transfer to Tureen, garnish with spare shallots and serve quickly.

Assumptions:

- From my own understanding of this recipe and the notes of Francoise Sabban, I’ve presented this recipe as Prawns cooked and served in a stock base. I'd also use a very light, sweet rice wine (such as a good quality Mirin) to keep this dish delicate.
- The part of the Original "From fresh green shrimp remove the head and shell. Leave the small tail. Use a small knife to cut them into thin pieces from the larger end to the tail. The tail should not be cut from the last piece of meat." is difficult to understand. The Chinese traditionally prepare prawns in rolls, or occasionally as 'flowers' and thus I have given the option here.
- Francoise Sabban: The end of the recipe has to be translated as: «Cook very quickly into this having filtered the stock, add sliced bamboo-shoot, slices of ginger and serve. Don't put spiced wine in the stock>>. There is another possibility depending on where you put the punctuation! It could also be interpreted as: if you don't use the stock (to serve with the shrimps) use spiced wine, but not too much.

## 17. River Flying Fish

Original:

[*Exocoetidae*, or possibly skates since all flying fish are marine. PPG thinks this is scallops but scallops are also all marine.]

Take the meat from fresh ones, wash in wine and finely julienne it to the size of a chopstick head. Boil in very hot wine and serve. Or, finely make it into filaments and when fresh add black pepper [*Piper nigrum*] and vinegar and serve it. Add the pepper and vinegar to a little sugar and salt and serve cold.

Drake's Redaction:

Ingredients (Scallop):

- 3 Kg European Carp Fillets (70g per person)
- Scallop shells (could get a potter to make pottery ones)
- 6tsp Salt
- 3 cups of sweet rice wine (Mirin), or the Chinese Dark Cooking Rice Wine (omit the salt if you use this)

Ingredients (Roe):

- 500g European Carp fillets, minced
- 50g Mandarin Peel, finely minced
- 50g Honey
- 2 pinches of Saffron, finely powdered (optional)

Method:

1. To make the scallop, take a fresh carp fillets, make sure they are flat, and cut the fillets into round shapes about 1 to 1 ½ inches in diameter. This can be done weeks in advance and the results frozen on flat trays (don't stack them deeper than 1 or you will never get them apart).
2. Marinade for 1-2 hours in the Sweet Rice Wine and salt.
3. Mince up 500g of carp fillet finely, mix in honey, saffron, and mandarin peel. Shape into small oval shapes (smaller than the scallops). Add saffron if necessary to get the bright yellow/orange colour.
4. Steam both for 5-10 minutes (until the fish is done).
5. Arrange on Scallop shells (either washed scallop ones or artificial porcelain ones) and serve.

Assumptions:

- As the recipe was cut off, I assume the trick to this recipe is to make the humble river fish look like scallops, a much more expensive commodity. I assumed that the part of the recipe to make the scallop roe was omitted.
- I used European carp to replace the numerous carp species prevalent in the Yellow River, where Ni Zan was from, as they are not available in Australia.

On the riverbank, the evening tide begins to fall:  
 The frost-covered leaves of the windblown grove are sparse.  
 I lean on my staff—the brushwood gate is closed and silent:  
 I think of my friend—the glow is nearly gone from the hills.



江渚暮潮初落風林霜葉渾稀倚  
 杖柴門閒寂懷人山色依稀至巳癸  
 卯九月望日 歲為  
 勝伯徵君寫此并賦小詩倪瓚

蘇公八世孫而子勝伯尤密故有是作較他幅又日不同也原  
 藏項墨林淡坪高江并載入清夏錄不知何時而漫修  
 文子以藏壬午秋聲客吳門以朋人手洋易符之携歸  
 視奪并屬題數言以記顛末  
 道光七年歲次丙戌仲春于滄子倦翁識

Multiple red seals on the left margin, including the name seal '倪瓚' (Ni Zan) and other collector's seals.

Multiple red seals at the bottom right, including the name seal '倪瓚' (Ni Zan) and other collector's seals.

## 20. Boiling Meat Stew



Original:

Use backbone meat, but first remove the tendons and membranes. Clean and cut the meat into inch-long pieces, and chop up the small pieces. Journey [score?] the top of the meat [so that it appears] like litchis. Take scallions [*Allium fistulosum*], pepper [*Sichuan, Zanthoxylum simulans*], salt and wine and submerge for a little while, and then toss it into boiling broth, and immediately stir to disperse it. Quickly take the meat with the broth and put it in a vessel so that it is well soaked. Allow the meat broth to clear. Serve with wine dregs, sliced ginger or mountain medicine [yams *Dioscorea polystachya*?] chunks or bamboo shoot chunks together, in the original broth.

## Natal'ia's Redaction:

### Ingredients:

- 500g Tenderloin (Pork, Beef, or Lamb)
- 1/2 cup Cooking Rice Wine
- 1/2 cup Spring Onion (*Allium fistulosum*)
- 1/2 tsp Sichuan Pepper
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 4 cups Broth
- For Garnish:
  - Wine Dregs
  - Sliced Ginger
  - Sliced Chinese Yam
  - Sliced Bamboo Shoots

### Method:

1. Prep all items: slice spring onions, coarsely grind Sichuan Pepper, remove the membrane and tendons from meat, and prepare stock (if you are making your own).
2. Cut tenderloin into medallions, 1/2 inch thick. Score each medallion in a cross-hatch pattern across one side. Be careful not to cut through the entire medallion.
3. Combine spring onions, Sichuan Pepper, salt, and wine. Mix. Add meat, stir, cover and refrigerate for 2—3 hours.
4. Heat broth to a rolling boil.
5. Pour meat and marinade into broth. Allow pot to return to a gentle boil and remove from heat.
6. Once the meat is cooked and the broth has cleared (sediment has settled), the stew is ready. This takes about 5 minutes.
7. Plate in bowl with some of the clear broth, meat, and garnish.

### Assumptions:

- I'm going to use chicken/vegetable stock as my broth because of time constraints, but I could have used the pork offcuts and veg to make a nice stock.
- I think that we need to cut the meat fairly thinly (1/2") because we are not 'cooking' the meat for an extended period. We want to flash cook the meat so that it stays tender. This recipe looks very much like a larger volume is going to cook for a longer period of time due to the heat leach and retention.
- Scoring on one side will help to speed up the cooking time and will cut long fibers to help soften the overall meal.
- The use of 'submerge' to me means 'to cover', this would require enough liquid to cover the meat.
- Set aside for a 'short time'. What is a 'short time'? Traditionally, it is believed that 2 to 3 hours is required for meat to pick up flavors.

### Notes:

- Do not allow meat to stand for too long in the boiling water as this seems to toughen the meat.
- Chinese yam is beautiful to look at, but it has an unusual mouth feel and flavour that some people do not care for.
- The marinating meat is a 'flavourful' smell.
- Because the meat came out of the refrigerator, I allowed the broth to regain a gentle boil before removing the pan from the heat. The cook took 5 minutes once the pan was removed.

## 22. To Make Vinegar Bamboo Shoots

Original:

Take bamboo shoot juice and put it in white plum [PPC 61 suggests *Prunus mume* preserved in salt] sugar frost or white sand sugar and the natural juice from fresh ginger. When mixed, add cooked bamboo shoots. Immerse for a little while. Eat cold. You may not keep them long.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 1 can (225g) Bamboo Shoots
- 1/2 c bamboo juice
- 1/4 c raw ginger juice
- 1 tsp sugar (see notes)

Method:

1. Mix bamboo shoot juice, ginger juice, and your sweetening choice.
2. Once combined, added bamboo shoots and allow to marry for a while (2-3 hours minimum).
3. Serve cold.

Assumptions and Notes:

- I am interested in the title translation of this recipe (Wang/Anderson: How to Pickle Bamboo Shoots; Story: To Make Vinegar Bamboo Shoots) as this recipe is not a true pickling of the shoots. Because of this, the recipe warns not to store the shoots for long.
- Both fresh or canned shoots could be used.
- I will need to make my own ginger juice because the local markets do not stock (special order) and I have waited too long to get it in.
- The bite of the dish will depend on the strength of the ginger juice.
- This is not meant to be a sweet dish but a balanced sharp/sweet dish.
- <https://cookpad.com/us/recipes/171541-how-to-boil-bamboo-shoots-to-remove-their-bitterness> An excellent recipe for cooking bamboo shoots, should you wish to cook your own. It is very important that fresh bamboo shoots be cooked properly before they are used in this recipe because the shoots are toxic (they contain hydrocyanic acid). The above recipe outlines how to cook the shoots with rice bran flour to remove the hydrocyanic acid. It is a fairly simple process in which the rice bran flour's starch absorbs the acid in the cook.
- Hydrocyanic acid can be found in many food items. See for example, Natalie's article on Apricot Kernels and their use in redactions (<http://mongolmusings.weebly.com/>).



## 23. To Cook Radishes

### Original:

Take [radishes, *Raphanus sativa*] cut into four small chunks the long way, and put them in a clean vessel. Put julienned fresh ginger and pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*] grain powder on top. Add a little water and wine and add mixed salt and vinegar to a cauldron and boil. When hot, pour it over the radishes, and immediately cover. Ensure that you completely immerse the ground, so that the radishes are soaked.

### Natal'ia's Redaction:

### Ingredients:

- 500g oriental white radish (Daikon)
- 15g ginger, julienned
- 1/2 tsp Sichuan Pepper, rubbed and then coarsely ground
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 c water (3 parts)
- 1/3 c cooking rice wine (1 part)
- 1/3 c rice wine vinegar (1 part)

### Method:

1. Clean and cut radishes into 4" long sections. Cut each section in to eighth lengthways.
2. Place radishes in a bowl that you will be able to cover. Add the Sichuan Pepper and ginger to the top of the radishes.
3. Heat water, wine, salt, and vinegar in a pan.
4. When liquids reach a rolling boil, pour over radishes (this needs to be a true rolling boil. Get that liquid HOT). Ensure that the radishes are covered fully. Cover the bowl immediately to seal.
5. Allow to cool on a side bench.
6. Serve when cooled.

### Assumptions:

- I am assuming that this would be a novelty dish to the modern palate.
- Amounts of each item: This dish is very difficult to assume percentages. What was it meant to taste like? I used my knowledge of pickled carrots from Vietnam and pickled cactus from Mexico to determine flavours. These two dishes do not produce a true 'pickle' (you cannot store either for long periods of time even with refrigeration) and this recipe doesn't seem to be making a pickled radish, but rather, is a way to cook them and infuse them with a bit more flavour.
- I lightly peeled the radish to remove blemishes. One member of the taste team doesn't like radish of any sort, so I was hoping that making it 'pretty' might encourage them to try.
- A sharp knife is essential. The radish will split otherwise.
- 500g of radish ended up being about 8" long. This gave me 16 sections, suitable for 8 to 16 people.



## 25. To Boil Vegetables

Original:

[*Metaplexis* ssp? It's a specific kind of vegetable, not generically vegetables.]

Take water and wash some four, and wash out any sand and mud. Then add chicken meat broth to it.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

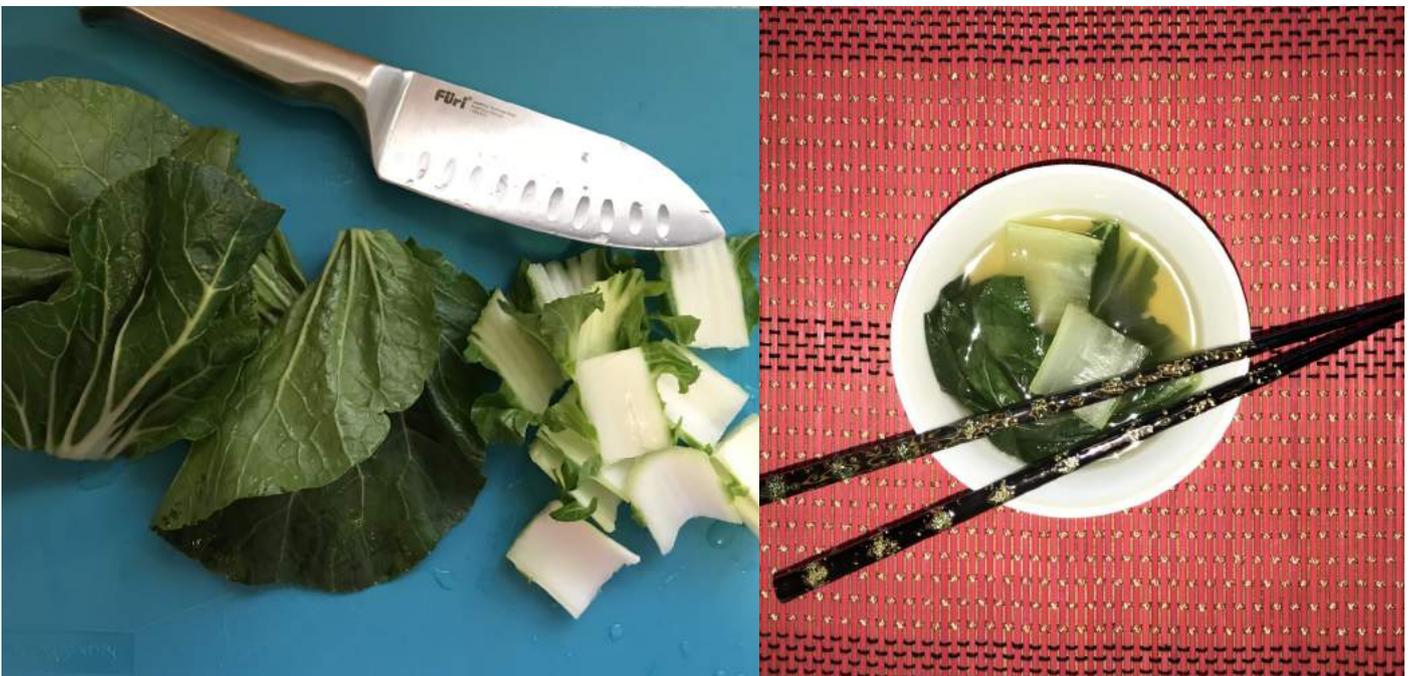
- 1 or 2 Bok Choy
- 1 litre Chicken broth (or vegetable broth for vegan/vegetarian dish)

Method:

1. Clean leaves well; remove all dirt and grit.
2. Cut leaf from stock and cut stock into bite size pieces.
3. Put broth in pot to boil.
4. Add stock pieces and boil for 2 minutes.
5. Add leaf pieces and boil a further 2 minutes or until the leaves are wilted and the stocks are al dente.
6. Serve warm with some of the broth.

Assumptions:

- *Metaplexis* ssp. Is a leafy plant found in China. *M. japonica* is the most common variant eaten. Known as Rough potato or Ru Ru, the fruit, leaves and root of the plant are edible. Currently this is not commonly available in Australia.
- Research will reveal that bok choy is often substituted for Ru Ru. Bok choy is commonly available in Australia and so I used this plant as substitution.



### 33. Hand Cakes

Original:

Take ten parts of top-quality flour [leaven in the ctext version, but PPC 61 has a version that reads "flour."], and evenly mix in boiling water and salt and roll out. Knead adding flour so that they are extremely fully and dry, and perhaps make small bowls [take pieces the size of a small bowl?]. Grill the big cakes on a platter until done. People often sprinkle salted water over them. Finally, wrap them in a damp cloth to cover.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 500g finely milled white flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 300ml water
- Salt water for cooking process

Method:

1. Mix dry ingredients thoroughly.
2. Add boiling water and begin to incorporate with a fork. Switch to hands when mix is cool enough to handle and kneed until a formed, fully incorporated ball is produced.
3. Roll out about 1/2 cm thick and cut out small bowl sized circles.
4. Cook on hot, flat-bottom pan. Brush salt water on top of cake and flip. Do this several times until cooked.
5. Removed from pan and wrap in damp cloth.
6. Eat warm.

Notes and Assumptions:

- The big question with this recipe is whether the bread be leavened or not. I ran a redaction test with both leavened and un-leavened recipes. The outcome of the unleavened attempt was not as pleasant as the leavened recipe above.
- There is a note in Wang/Anderson that suggests that this could be sourdough rather than leavening. Alternatively, Francoise Sabban suggests that there should be no leavening.
- I used type 00 white flour because it says 'top-quality' in Story's translation. I wanted a fine and consistent mill.



## 36. Cooked Filled Lotus Roots

Original:

Take really good true flour, honey and a little musk [lit. musk deer *Moschus moschiferus*] and pour it inside lotus roots. Pour from the big head. Wrap in oiled paper, tie, and boil until cooked. Cut into slices and eat warm.

Natal'ia's Redaction Boiled Sliced Rhizome Version:

Ingredients:

- 1 pack frozen Lotus Rhizomes
- 1 cup Flour
- ½ cup Honey
- Musk Essence, to taste

Method:

1. Defrost rhizomes
2. Mix flour, honey, and musk.
3. Take a small amount of mixture (about 1 teaspoon) and flatten onto on piece of rhizome. Cover with another piece of rhizome to create a sandwich.
4. Boil in shallow water until rhizome is tender but not soft and dough is cooked (approximately 30 minutes).
5. Remove rhizome from water.
6. Serve warm.



## Natal'ia's Redaction: Fried Sliced Rhizome Version:

### Ingredients:

- 1 pack frozen Lotus Rhizomes
- 1 cup Flour
- ½ cup Honey
- Musk Essence, to taste
- Olive oil, as required for frying

### Method:

1. Defrost rhizomes
2. Mix flour, honey, and musk.
3. Take a small amount of mixture (about 1 teaspoon) and flatten onto on piece of rhizome. Cover with another piece of rhizome to create a sandwich.
4. Dip sandwich into flour to thinly coat both sides. (important step to avoid spitting oil)
5. Fry in shallow oil until rhizome is developing a golden colour (approximately 10 minutes).
6. Remove rhizome to drain plate with paper towel.
7. Serve warm.

[Either recipe makes about 20 rhizome sandwiches]

### Assumptions and Notes:

- These redactions use frozen, sliced rhizome because they are available year-round from most local Asian food shops. This did change the cook time and the preparation method. However, the outcome of the first recipe is similar to the original recipe. The second recipe is added because who doesn't like fried foods? The mouth feel is better on the fried recipe and it is not as fiddly as the boiling method.
- This is a very sweet recipe so would work well as a dessert course.
- For those not fond of musk, the recipe is quite nice without it being added.
- Be careful with the amount of musk being added to this recipe. A drop too much makes the finished rhizomes unpleasant.

### Inquiring Minds:

#### What is a Lotus Rhizome?

The rhizome, sometimes called the root, of the Lotus is a stemlike structure that helps the plant produce new leaves and to keep the leaves and flowers above the water-level.



## 37. Tangerine Tea

[Sourpeel tangerine *Citrus reticulata*]

(The same as jasmine tea [*Jasminum sambac*]) Take medium-grade fine sprout tea and use a hot water jar. First, put a layer of flowers, then a layer of tea, alternating until the jar is full. Then, take flower honey and cover the top. Air it in the sun. Turn the jar over three times, and then steam it in a wok with shallow water. After steaming for the appropriate time, the jar's lid will reach its hottest. Take it out. Wait until it's fully cool, and then open the jar. Take out the tea, remove the flowers, and wrap the tea in "construction-linking" paper. Air it in the sun until dry. While airing, often open the paper and shake it so that it's even in the hope that it will be easy to cool. For every jar, use three or four paper wrappers, and then it will be easy to air. Like this, change the flowers and steam. Air three times and it's wonderful.

Natal'ia's Redaction (untried)

Ingredients:

- Tangerine blossoms
- Young leaf black tea
- Honey

Method:

1. In a mason jar, layer flowers, then tea until the jar is full.
2. Cover the top with honey (this process is still seen in some current tea recipes. The honey is used like butter on a potted meat, just enough to fill the top of the jar). Cover.
3. Place in the sun. Turn the jar over three times. This is more than likely to mix the now liquid honey. The length of time in the sun would vary on the ambient temperature. However, when trying this type of tea making during the summer, it took 30 minutes for the honey to melt and the jar was turned every 15 minutes after that.
4. Heat the jar in a pan of boiling water (like working with preserves) for about 10 minutes. Be mindful of this process. If the jar is heated for too long, then the tea will have a smoky/burnt flavour.
5. Remove the jar and allow it to cool.
6. Once cold, open the jar and spread the tea on thick paper. Remove the flowers. Fold the paper to protect the tea and air in the sun until dry.
7. Change the flowers and re-steam. Then dry again on paper. Do this step two more times.
8. Ensure during the last drying that the tea is thoroughly dried.
9. Store in an airtight container.

## 38. Lotus Flower Tea

Before breakfast, before dawn [lotus flowers open daily with the sun], go to a pond and pick lotus flowers. Use your fingers to open them, and fill them with tea leaves like a vessel. Bind with hemp threads and tie firmly. Pass a night, and in the morning gather the lotus flowers. Take the tea in a paper bag and air it until dry. Do this three times. Store in a full tin/pewter jar.

Natal'ia's Redaction (untried)

Ingredients:

- Lotus flowers that are fresh and have not opened for the day.
- Black tea leaves

Method:

1. Carefully pry open the lotus flowers. Add tea and tie the flowers closed with kitchen twine.

Place these flowers someplace safe.

2. The next morning, open the flowers and pour the tea out into a paper bag. Air the tea until dry.
3. Repeat the above steps two more times.
4. Ensure the tea is thoroughly dry and store in an airtight container.

Natal'ia's Thoughts:

- I am not calling this a full redaction as I: 1) Have not trialled these two tea making redactions, and 2) I believe that both processes have difficult to obtain components (I, for one, do not have a lotus pond in my back garden).
- Tangerine tea, lotus flower tea, and jasmine tea are all available from quality tea shops throughout Australia. In the case of redaction for feasts or dinner, I would suggest just buying commercial tea. However, if you are interested in redaction for a historical or scholarly process, the redactions above would make a good starting point (and once I find a Lotus pond and some tangerine flowers, I am going to give them a try).

### 39. To Simmer the Above Teas

Boil water in a silver tea kettle, and when the time is right and the bubbles are crab-eye sized and moving, put the tea in another vessel. Pour out a little of the water in the kettle and soak the tea, and immediately cover it. Wait until the tea is wetted through, and then put the kettle back on the fire. Wait until the water has a sound, and then immediately add the soaked tea leaves. After a moment, take it up, and after another moment put it back on the fire. Finally, after it boils, you may drink it. Very good.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients/tools:

- A silver tea kettle (I am presuming that a silver kettle is suggested as iron and copper can transfer flavour to the tea)
- Another vessel (large enough for the tea and a bit of water)
- Your tea leaves

Method:

1. Fill your silver kettle with water and set it on a good cooking fire to boil. In your second vessel, put the amount of tea required for the size of the tea kettle.
2. When the water reaches pre-boil -when small bubbles begin to free themselves from the bottom of the kettle and head upward – add a small amount of the water to the dry tea. Then cover the rehydrating leaves.
3. Put the kettle back on the fire and wait for it to boil – a true boil. Add the soaked tea leaves to the kettle and leave it on the heat for the pot to regain its boil. Then remove the pot from the heat.
4. Wait until the water stops boiling (about a minute) and put it back on the heat until it boils again.
5. Serve.

Natal'ia's Thoughts:

- First off, how many of you do this anyway? Isn't this how everyone makes their tea?
- All comedy aside. When using older tea, brick tea, or tea made at home, this is a very similar process to how it is done in the small towns where I grew up. I would suspect that the process is important for two reasons. The first is that tea made in similar ways to recipes 37 and 38 can be very mild. To bring forth the full flavour, a longer steeping time is needed. Secondly, this is a process. It has an almost ritualistic component to it.

## 40. Candied Bitter Citron

Original:

[*Citrus medica*]

Take bitter citrons and even if they're old, remove the pulp and "sack." Julienne. Put it in water boiling at the first or second boil. Let drip dry. Separately put honey in a little water. For every *liang* of honey use one *qian* [= 1 *liang*?] of water and in a silver stone vessel boil over a slow fire until the honey is cooked, judging by its thickness. Add the julienned citron into it, stirring, and put it in a linked container. Pass a night and cook it again. Bring to a boil and then take it out. When it's cold, boil again. When cold, put it in a ceramic vessel and seal it well. Add less honey to offer wine, and if you will use it in soup slowly add more honey.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 2 kg citron or lemon (which ever is in season)
- 500 gram honey (a mild flavour type...cherry blossom)
- 20 gram water from boiling peels

Method:

1. Remove the pulp, seeds and pith from the fruit.
2. Cut the peel into strips (important that the strips be the size you want as they will be difficult to cut when process is complete).
3. Put peels into boiling water and bring back to boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Then bring back to the boil again.
4. Removed peels from water and allow them to drip dry. Conserve some of the water.
5. In a heavy bottomed pot (or a double boiler) combine water and honey. Use conserved water. Cook over low heat and reduce the mixture until the honey is thick and sticky.
6. Add peel, stir slightly, remove pot from heat.
7. Cool over night.
8. Heat again over low heat. When it brings to boil, remove from heat and let cool.
9. Heat again and then allow to cool enough to put into storage jar. Allow to cool completely. Cover and store.

Assumptions:

- Lemon can be substituted for citron if citron is not in season.
- Each step, though it might not see important, is important to the outcome (see redaction notes).
- Water should be conserved from boiling fruit to impart flavour to the honey. Why waste the flavour?
- This is not a 'candied' sweet like we have a tendency to think of this style of food. It seems that it can be used that way, but that it is also used as a flavour additive: "If less honey is used, this can be a dish to accompany wine. If it is to be used in soup, more honey should be used."

Notes:

- The first steps of boiling the peel seem to be unnecessary in today's produce (just make sure that the fruit is free of pesticides), however the special 'fry' does not happen if the peel is not boiled. Who knew!?
- The water in the honey seems to be a vital step as well. It does make the mixture easier to transfer from one container to another.
- There is a crazy frying sound each time the honey covered peel gets to the boil!
- The smell of this is penetrative. The whole house will smell of honey and citrus .



## 43. Water Dragons (Dragonlets)

Original:

Take the finest meat from a pig: two parts fat, one part meat. Chop it fine, and add scallions [*Allium fistulosum*], pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*], almonds, a little sauce, and a little crushed dry-steamed cakes, evenly mixed. Form into balls with your hands and vinegar. Coat in true flour. Add to boiling water or broth and when they float, take them out. Clear hot broth is appropriate.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients :

- 500g Pork Mince
- 1/3 cup Spring Onion, very finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp Szechwan Pepper, finely ground
- 1 tsp Apricot Kernel Paste \*
- 1/2 cup fine breadcrumbs
- Rice Wine Vinegar
- Wheat Starch
- 1 litre stock for cooking
- 500 ml stock for serving (pork or chicken clear or piquant )

Method:

1. Mix mince, spring onion, Szechwan pepper, apricot kernel, and breadcrumbs until thoroughly incorporated.
2. Moisten hands with white vinegar (keep a small bowl of vinegar close at hand to rewet hands) and roll mixture into small balls – perhaps bite size, though larger balls will work as well.
3. Empty a thin layer of wheat starch into a shallow bowl. Roll each ball in the starch to cover the entire surface with a thin layer of the starch.
4. Boil the balls in a clear, low flavour soup (chicken or vegetable stock). Once the balls float to the top, boil another minute.
5. Once fully cooked, use a slatted spoon to remove the dragonlets from the cooking pot. Place dragonlets in serving dish and ladle warm serving broth over the top.

Assumptions/Notes:

- As mentioned in the translation, dry steamed cake powder is similar to breadcrumbs. Doing my own research, I think that there are several differences between dry steamed cake powder and breadcrumbs. Certainly the modern ones that I can find in our spice shops are sweeter than breadcrumbs. That said, I have yet to find a recipe for steamed cake from a period source to actually make my own, so I used breadcrumbs in the larger feast menu redaction. The outcome is satisfactory. In the smaller feast recipe, I used the commercially available dry steamed cake powder and there is little taste difference in the final product and no mouth feel difference that I could discern.
- I used pork mince for the larger recipe because hand chopping that much pork into a fine chop for meatballs is labour intensive. The hand chopped (and then pounded and then chopped) version was smoother in consistency but the mince dragonlets were palatable (and in many ways more familiar in texture to the modern Australian palate).
- Wheat Starch can be a challenging item to acquire in some regions. If you cannot find it in your local grocery store, try an Asian or Indian market if you have one. Also look for wheat starch labelled as



non-glutinous flour or wheaten cornflour (check the label, it is not corn based). If you cannot find wheat starch, you can use corn maize starch (yes, this starch does come from corn and thus is not in period). After extensive experimentation, I found the corn maize starch to be the most palatable. All other starch and starch substitutes left the outside of the meatball slimy (some so much so that my tasting group refused to finish the small meatball on their plate). It is important to make the coating of whichever starch you use even and thin along the surface of the meatball. If too thick, the surface is slimy; if too thin (or not there at all), the dragonlet is soggy.

- I used white vinegar but other types could be used. I am thinking of trying apple cider vinegar for my next at home try.
- I rolled the meat into bite sized balls for ease of eating but there is really no reason that they could not be made bigger. The outcome is not dissimilar to a modern-day pork dim sim (without the wrapper found on some).

- The original translation calls for the meatballs to be cooked in 'soup'. I have changed this to stock in the larger feast version for ease; however, in the smaller version, a thin soup of vegetables in period to the Yuan Dynasty could be made and used (see article on Natal'ia's website for more information on vegetables in period). Alternatively, I guess a premade stock would work, again for ease. The big issue that I have with commercial stock is the amount of salt and its overpowering influences in this dish; not to mention that some vegetable stocks have vegetables which are not found in period in Asia.
- The translation goes on to say that the meatballs are done when they float to the service -I will go into the possible reason for this later. This will produce a mostly cooked pork meatball. I have included a 5 minute cook time after this rise to the top because the added time seemed to cook the meat through. I do not want to serve partially cooked pork. I did notice that the meat cooked better in a slow boiling pot rather than a rapidly boiling pot.
- One note on working with Apricot Kernel Paste (it is often found in recipes from the Near East and Mongolian region): Apricot kernels can be found in spice shops (you might need to ask the staff to help you find it, as they can be found in the spice section or the medicine section). You can purchase the paste already made, often called Persipan, but be careful of this. Most pre-made pastes that I have seen and heard of contain sweeteners (sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose syrup) and are not ideal for this dish. Apricot kernels are easy to mash into paste using a mortar and pestle. Notes on apricot kernel toxicity: ingesting raw apricot kernels in excessive amounts can cause cyanide poisoning. The toxin is found, predominately, in the dark skin around the seed. This skin should be removed before the paste is made (often the seeds come without the husk or skin).<sup>1</sup>
- Use pasted almond and apple juice (1 teaspoon each) in substitution of apricot kernel.
- Light powder of starch - Rolled on lightly powdered hands. My hands were still moistened with vinegar. No white colour change...see photos.
- The starch will dry your hands out. Make sure to wear kitchen gloves.



1. For information regarding the toxicity of Apricot Kernels, see the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website: <<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/safety/Pages/Apricot-kernels-raw.aspx>>

Regarding other finishing techniques:

- Out of interest, I tried steaming several of my last batch of dragonlets as the notes in the translation suggest that there was the possibility that they were once steamed. The outcome was not horrible, but the steamed dragonlets were a bit chewier than the ones from the same batch that were boiled. If these meatballs were once steamed, my assumption would be that the cooks realised they were nicer boiled.
- Frying dragonlets became a topic as I was working with the 'sliminess issues' that I encountered. Many of the similar modern recipes seem to fry off the outside (thus nullifying any slime issue). Further research into cooking practices of the Yuan Dynasty finds that frying foods was not a common practice (nor considered good practice). Certainly you would never fry the food of someone who was not in perfect health, nor would you overcook the food.<sup>2</sup> I suspect that this undercooking of food (error on the side of raw) might be why the dragonlets are cooked until they float – producing a slight pink hew to the inside of the meatball. Of course, in modern cooking, our food handling and food safety says that we should always well cook (not overcook) meats such as pork and fowl.

2. As outlined in E N Anderson's *The Food of China* in Chapter 11: Traditional Medical Values of Food which goes into a decent summary of the Five Phases or Elements, the Five Smells, and the Five Flavors. The paragraph regarding the summary of cooking of food can be found on page 235.



*In the bright days, bamboo  
wave in the breeze:*

*In the dark nights, parasols  
of fir hold up the moon.*

*Burning incense I use [a  
censer in the form of] a  
gilded duck:*

*Gathering scattered petals, I  
place them inside my pillow.*

## 44. Eurasian Siskin

Original:

[*Spinus spinus*]

Remove the feathers. Take the brains [head?] and wings with scallions [*Allium fistulosum*], pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*] chopped and mixed to brew in the belly. Boil well in good sweet wine and then eat as a meal. Add a little salt to the wine.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 1 kg meat (game hen, chicken—thigh, tenderloin, breast)
- 500g minced chicken
- 1 cup spring onion, finely chopped
- 2 tsp Sichuan pepper, finely ground
- 1/4 cup sweet rice wine
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 litres stock
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- Bamboo skewers cut to length or kitchen string

Method:

- Combine minced chicken, spring onion, pepper, sweet wine, and salt. Mix well.
- Remove skin from whole meat and prepare the meat into portions (cut breasts in half and make pocket; debone thigh).
- Stuff meat with meat mixture. Close with bamboo skewer or kitchen string.
- In cooking pot, braise parcels until done.

Assumptions and Notes:

- As we cannot get siskin for consumption, I used chicken in this redaction.
- This is an attractive and quick dish. It could easily pass as a snack at a dinner party nowadays.
- I still had meat mixture left (went into the freezer for trying with breasts/hens later on).





## 46. Roast Pork Fat and Belly

Original:

[“Fat” is ambiguous here but probably refers to a specific cut or organ. “Belly” may mean stomach but could equally be belly meat.]

First boil the above things in water or broth until done. Add cut and mixed garlic [*Allium sativum* or rocambole *Allium scorodoprasum*] slices, coarse and dry, with a little salt. Add it to a wok on a bamboo platform. Cover over a slow fire and roast. Add a small cup of water to the wok.

Natal'ia's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- Pig intestine (sausage castings)
- 1.5 kilos Pork belly (or pork mince)
- 1 full clove Garlic, sliced
- 2 Pinch of salt
- 2 litres stock

Method:

1. Boil in stock the intestine and pork belly until done. Testing doneness of pork belly: a Chinese chop stick should easily pass through the meat (about 1 hour).
2. Chop pork belly finely. Mix with garlic and salt.
3. Stuff meat mix into skins. This is best done with a sausage filling device. Try to avoid air pockets.
4. Hang the completed sausages on bamboo sticks in a wok. Place 1/2 cup of water in the bottom of the wok and cover. Cook over low heat until heated. \*

Notes and Assumptions:

- I am assuming that we stuff the intestines with the meat mixture.
- A word of advice: DO NOT use collagen castings. These are generally not edible and must be removed before serving and the filling of this sausage does not have a good binder agent.
- Also, I removed some of the fat. I cut the pork belly into two pieces for the cook. Then I removed the upper fat layer from one of the pieces. This left a substantial amount of fat but not too much to make it just fat sausage.
- \* As this recipe calls for the meat and intestines to be cooked before the sausages are made, I am assuming that the second cook is to heat the food. I found as I worked with the meat that it quickly cools as it is chopped.



*We watch the clouds and daub with our brushes  
We drink wine and write poems.  
The joyous feelings of this day  
Will linger long after we have parted.*



## 47. Roast Pork



### Original:

Clean meat and use scallions [*Allium fistulosum*] and pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*] with a little honey, salt and wine and rub it. In a wok put it on a bamboo stick platform. Add to the wok one small cup of water and one of wine, and cover it using wet paper to seal the seams. When dry, use water to moisten it. Build a fire out of great grass, do not stir. After the appropriate time, again build a grass fire. Stoke it for a meal-time. Use your hand to feel if the wok lid is cool. Open the lid and turn the meat. Cover again and moisten the paper. As before, seal it. Again use build a grass fire and when cool it will be done.

### Natal'ia's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 500g Pork Tenderloin (8 x 60g after cleaning), remove tendons and silver skin
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- 1 tsp Salt
- 35 g Honey
- 1 tsp Szechwan Pepper, very finely ground
- 1 1/2 cups Rice Wine for cooking
- 1 cup water

#### Method:

1. Marinade pork: rub cleaned tenderloin with honey on all sides. Then rub spring onion, salt, and Szechwan pepper on pork.
2. Place in bowl and pour 1/2 cup cooking rice wine over the meat. Cover and place in refrigerator for at least 2 hours (better if you can allow to sit for 24 hours).
3. In a wok, place bamboo skewers to form a lattice so that there is a gap between them and the bottom of the wok. The gap needs to be large enough to allow the meat to sit above the liquid that will be placed in the bottom of the wok.
4. Place meat on the bamboo lattice. Try to keep the meat off the sides of the wok.
5. Add 1 cup of water and 1 cup of cooking rice wine to the bottom of the wok.
6. Put the lid on the wok and seal the seam with wet paper (keep this paper moist).
7. Put the wok on a medium heat and allow the liquid to boil. Do not open the lid until it is time to turn the meat and then reseal with wet paper. Indicative times: 15 minutes from when the wok is put on the heat. Open, turn the meat, and reseal. Cook another 5 minutes and then allow to sit until the wok is cool.

## 48. Roast Goose

### Original:

Use the roast meat method [above], using salt, pepper [Sichuan, *Zanthoxylum simulans*], scallions [*Allium fistulosum*] and wine rubbed over the inside. On the outside, smear wine and honey. Add it to a wok. Follow the rest as the above recipe, but when you first add it to the wok, point the cavity upwards, and later turn it so that the cavity points down.

### Natal'ia's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 1 Chicken (1.5 kilos)
- 2tsp Salt
- 2tsp Chinese Pepper
- 4 Spring Onion
- 1 1/2 cups Cooking Rice Wine
- 50g Honey
- 1 cup water

#### Method:

1. Clean bird and remove feathers.
2. Marinade bird: inside marinade: 2 spring onion, 1 tsp salt, 1 tsp pepper, 1/4 c wine; outside marinade: cover bird in honey, rub on (2 spring onion, 1 tsp salt, 1 tsp pepper).
3. Place in bowl and pour 1/4 cup cooking rice wine over the bird. Cover and place in refrigerator for at least 2 hours (better if you can allow to sit for 24 hours).
4. In a wok, place bamboo skewers to form a lattice so that there is a gap between them and the bottom of the wok. The gap needs to be large enough to allow the bird to sit above the liquid that will be placed in the bottom of the wok.
5. Place bird on the bamboo lattice breast up. Try to keep the bird off the sides of the wok.
6. Add 1 cup of water and 1 cup of cooking rice wine to the bottom of the wok.
7. Put the lid on the wok and seal the seam with wet paper (keep this paper moist—very important).
8. Put the wok on a medium heat and allow the liquid to boil. Do not open the lid until it is time to turn the bird and then reseal with wet paper. Indicative times: 40 minutes from when the wok is put on the heat. Open, turn the bird, and reseal. Cook another 20 minutes and then allow to sit until the wok is cool.



## Further Reading

### Books:

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### Podcast:

The Great Courses Plus. (2018). *Food: A Cultural Culinary History Podcast*. Ep 08 Yin and Yang of Classical Chinese Cuisine. [ONLINE]. 2 October 2017. Available from: <https://www.thegreatcoursesdaily.com/food-history-podcast/> [Accessed: 17 July 2018].