

*Red Jade House's Guide of Feasting for  
Their Serene Majesties*

by  
His Serene Holiness,  
Mongo Chinua,  
Master of Tea Dreams  
and  
Aigiarn Daruu

Translated and annotated by  
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and  
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'doch

AS

XLIX



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## An introduction and acknowledgement

It was purely by fortune that Master Drake and I came across the manuscript of the Red Jade House's Guide of Feasting for Their Serene Majesties while we were rummaging through a selection of old musty books in that dimly-lit back section of that curious shoppe. Neither of us could have imagined just what we would find there and yet, here we are several years later, with this translation and partial redaction of the original tome. Unfortunately, the original authors did not date their work but it is obviously sometime in the later part of the Yüan period of Chinese history. They often refer to two earlier manuscripts of the Yüan period and, like Marco Polo, they seem to have a decent overview of the history and culture of the place.

Whenever they created this book, it can be said that the recipes are certainly from the Yüan period. Both the Cloud Forest Hall Collection of Rules for Drinking and Eating by Ni T san and Yin-shan cheng-yao (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink) by Hu Szu-hui are acknowledged in the forward notes and their manuscript copied examples of recipes and feasting practices from both. That there are several very good translations of at least two Yüan period manuscripts with quite different foods and flavours, makes for interesting research.

This work on the Red Jade House's Guide of Feasting for Their Serene Majesties, and Yüan Dynasty feasting in general, has been compiled in honour of Kinggiyadai Khagan I and Altani Y eke Khatun I in the year AS XLIX. It was presented to their Majesties at Rowany Festival of that year.

It is our hope to see more feasts centring around the Yüan Dynasty as the vast land holdings of the this dynasty and its interest in assimilating the cultures, art, and flavours of the people who lived there - and nearby - surely deserves more recognition.

In the following pages you will find a brief overview of the feasting traditions and foods of the Yüan court as outlined by His Serene Holiness, Mongo Chinua, Master of Tea Dreams and Aigiarn Daruu, who is presumed to be his student. We have also provided the English translations and redactions of many of the foods and drinks from their work. Towards the end of this pamphlet is an essay by Master Drake Morgan on kumiss and its fermentation. It is our hope that the cooks of Lochac, and the Known World at large, will take our work and expand upon it.

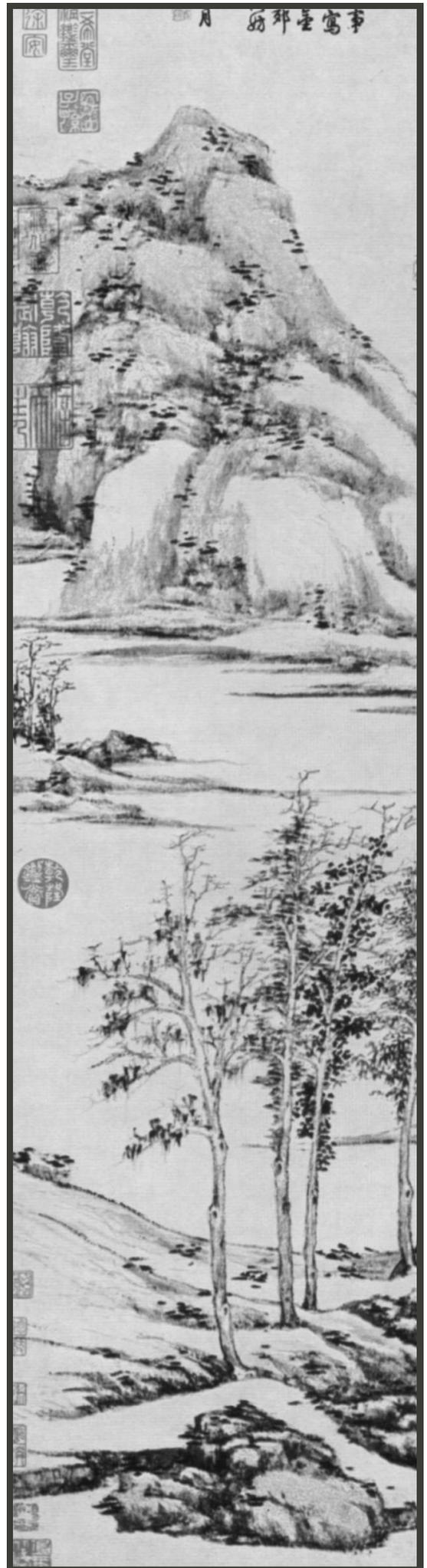
This is only the beginning. Both Master Drake and I will continue our research into this period and I expect to update this pamphlet in the future with a more in-depth introduction to the traditions of feasting in the Mongolian Court.

Master Drake would like to thank all those people, over the years, who he has tortured. For those special folk who were there for the serving of the boiled sheep's lung, I am deeply sorrowful; for Baroness Bloddeuwedd, who suffered through a 'kumiss explosion' and to Mistress Bess, who's first act as a laurel was to sample my first attempt at kumiss, I am deeply regretful; and finally, to my Jade Princess, you are my soul, my muse - without you I am naught.

For my own part, I would like to thank my family and my friends, who have suffered through slimy meatballs, bitter flavours, foul smells, and near poisonings with spicing over the years. Thank you to Alasa Gagarina and Hrolleifr skrauti for allowing me my research time, and the time to write this pamphlet.

We sincerely hope that this pamphlet is both useful and sparks your love for this tasty fare.

~ Master Drake Morgan and Lady Natal'ia Vladimirova 'doch



# The Red Jade House's Guide of Feasting for Their Serene Majesties

By His Serene Holiness, Mongo Chinua, Master of Tea Dreams and Aigiarn Daruu

It was an adventure to ride with one of the Khan's household from Khanbaliq to the summer palace in Šandu. His Serene Holiness, Mongo Chinua, Master of Tea Dreams had seen to my travels throughout the great Khan's lands and in fair honesty, I am no less nomadic than the others of my kind. But, I had never been to Šandu.

Like the other palaces I had walked through, this was a display of wealth in excess. A city within a city and a palace as well, the imperial city and palace were made of quarried rocks and fine marble. Amazing paintings of bright colours and gold enveloped the walls and the floors and roofs were lacquered and shiny.

We had spent two weeks in the Imperial City; that is, we had our rooms in one of the greater buildings and were invited to wonder the large gardens there. I was amazed at the variety of flora and fauna found within. The Khan was a fair falconer and he kept many of these flighted beasts within a great mew. But it was not just the birds that took my attention. As I would stroll quietly in the forested places of this park, I would often happen upon a large white stag. Birds flushed from the late summer bushes often showed the jewel-colour of exotic animals from far distant lands.

Alas, my days could not be spent wholly in this wondrous place. I was sequestered many hours daily in the imperial kitchens, learning the flavours and fare of this place. With such foods I had not much experience and I studied the ways of the kumiss as they related to this food. Any imbalance in the menu could cause imbalance in the Court. The cooks and physicians explained it all to me. I was fortunate to look into the book of medicinal foods for the Khan. To spend even a few minutes in the presence of this tome was well worth the long journey to get to Šandu.

I was sitting reviewing my notes from my latest venture to the kitchens when the room servants brought in the ornate scroll and handed it to Mongo Chinua. He, and thus I, had been invited to the last banquet of the season.

Mongo Chinua sat at the low table below the dais and I beside him. My cushion was a riot of gold and green, causing me to think it better for show than for actual function. The low table was set with gold cups and bowls with handles forged as imperial dragons. The ceramic plates were in hues of pale blues and browns; my own plate was light olive with two carp swimming along the surface.

A servant carrying an ornate gold pouring vessel sidled to our table and began to fill our gold goblets with the thick white liquid. I placed the cup to my lips and allowed the trickle of kumiss to run down my throat. I had long before this become accustomed to the flavour and intoxication.

Soon, a silver basin was brought before the Khan. He took a fair share of what was within and spoke quickly to the server. From here, the man went to several of the guests and family members and discharged the cuts required by the Khan to those he had selected. After this, all in attendance receive a small taste of the roasted lamb within. My bite was succulent and cooling.

The first of the food settings were then produced upon platters of artful design. Here were the delicate flavours and light dishes. I was surprised to see that both fish and fowl courses - for certainly we were far from the large waters of the seas on the coast. But these were fish of the river and lake waters and Mongo Chinua explained unto me that the Khan had servants who tended to the breeding of these fish for the occasion of want to feed those at His table.

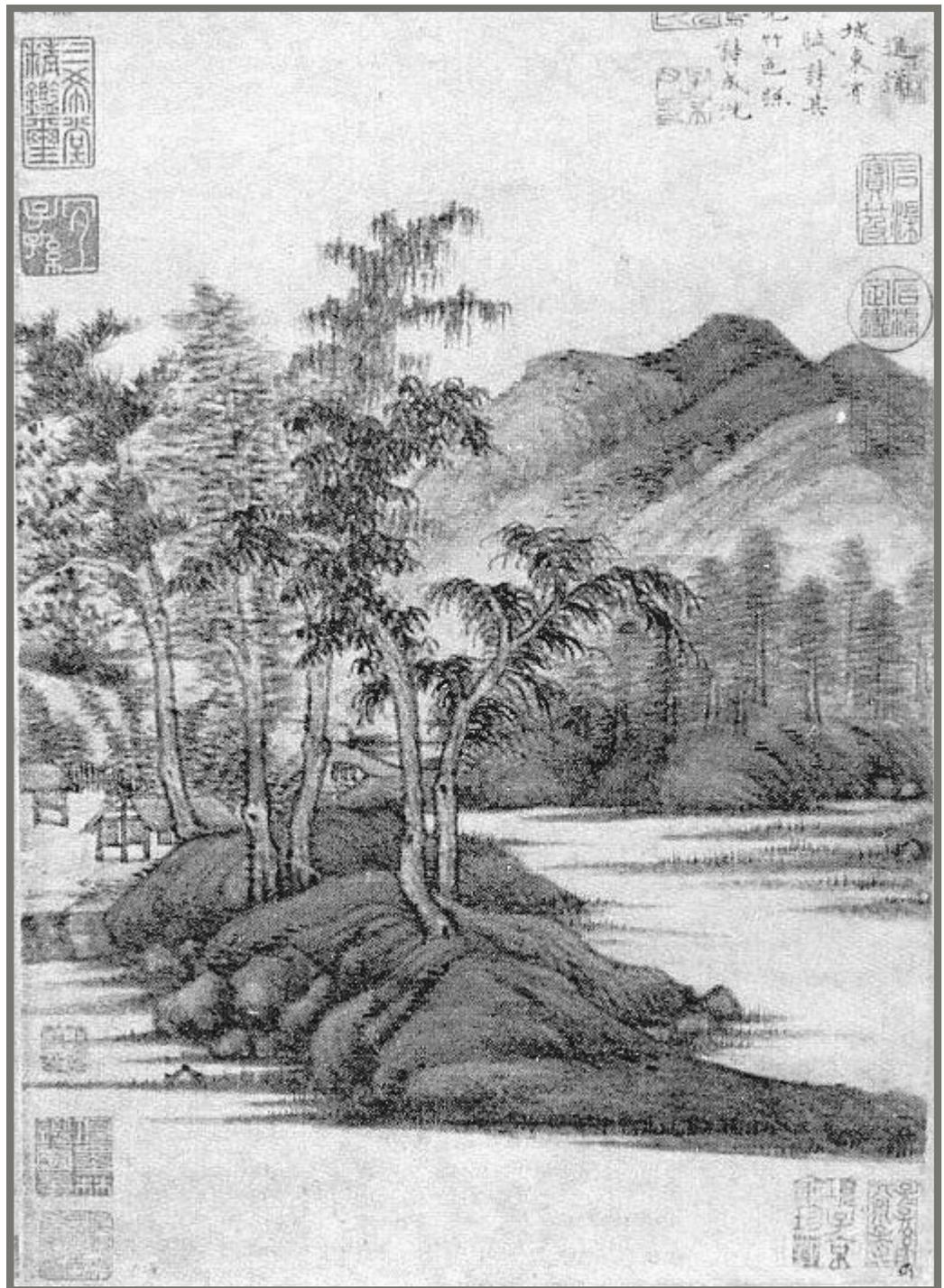
The fowl was plentiful and lightly seasoned as to bring out the nutrition and goodness of the meat. Here too were vegetables and milk cakes and all things light and tasty.

Upon completion of this course, and goblets recharged, we set about our next level of food. All that was of greater or heavier flavour was served here - meats from cow, horse, wolf, bear, badger, and, of course, lamb or sheep - and all as good as the last except for the badger which was bitter. We ate until we were full. And all was washed down with kumiss, wine, and tea.

When all in attendance were satisfied and ready to fast, the tables were secreted away and a space in the room before the plinth the Khan sat upon was transformed for performance. Hereafter, the kumiss and wine were offered freely and those in the party did sing and dance before the Khan. There was poetry and feats of magic, offerings to the gods.



# Recipes for the beginning of the evening



## BBQ Pork



### Original:

Wash the meat. Rub spring onion, Chinese pepper, honey, a little salt, and wine on it. Hang the meat on bamboo sticks in the saucepan. In the pan put a cup of water and a cup of wine. Cover. Use moist paper to seal the pan. If the paper dries out, moisten it. Heat the pan with grass bunches; when one is burned up, light another. Then stop the fire and leave for the time it takes to eat a meal. Touch the cover of the pan; if it is cold, remove the cover and turn the meat over. Cover it again and seal again with the moist paper. Heat again with one bunch of grass. It will be cooked when the pan cools again.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 3 Kg Pork Long Loin (600g each), in 6 pieces
- 12 green shallots, very finely diced.
- 6 tsp Salt
- 200g Honey (I used Cherry Blossom)
- 4 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground)
- 6 cups of Sweet White Rice Wine
- 6 cups of Water

#### Method:

- Marinade the loins in the salt, honey, shallots, and pepper overnight.
- Place 4-6 long bamboo skewers through the pieces of loin crossways. Check that the loin balances in the middle of the wok, with the skewers touching the sides. You might need to cut each skewer to match. The idea is to suspend the meat in the middle of the wok, with no part of the meat touching the bottom or the sides.
- Add 1 cup of wine and 1 cup of water to the base of the wok.
- Put the lid on the wok, and place pulped paper (I used wet toilet paper!) around the seal.
- Cook on low heat on a gas stove for 20 minutes.
- Turn off the heat and leave for 20 minutes.
- Open the wok and turn the pork over. Add more water and wine if it's getting low.
- Reseal, place more pulped paper around the seal. Cook for 20 minutes. Leave to cool. Serve.

#### Notes:

Watch the pork carefully. My first attempt failed as too much honey dripped into the wok, the water dried out, and the honey burned into a thick black gunk. Use a low gas heat, don't be tempted to turn it up (trust the steam). You might have to adjust the times depending on the wok and stove.

#### Assumptions:

I used a wok instead of an earthen pot to good effect. The cooking action of the meat is unusual, being steam roasted.

**Translator's Note:** This is a version of the modern Cantonese 'cha sui'. Francois Sabban disagrees that the recipe should be entitled BBQ Pork as *shao* is not the correct word for barbecue but more as braising. Perhaps this recipe should be entitled Braised Pork.

## Cooked Radish



### Original:

Cut into small squares and put these in a small bowl. Sprinkle raw ginger strips and flower pepper grains on them. Boil a mixture of water and wine with a little salt and vinegar. While the mixture is still boiling, pour it onto the radish, and cover it up immediately and let it sit. The mixture should cover the radish.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 3Kg of Oriental White Radish (Daikon) (60g per person)
- 200g Ginger Root
- 4tsp of Whole Szechwan Pepper
- 2tsp Salt
- 1 ½ Litre Water
- ½ litre Sweet, White Rice Wine

#### Method:

- Peel Radish and cut into small squares.
- Peel and julienne the Ginger, place on top of radish. Sprinkle pepper and salt over.
- Heat water and wine together until boiling.
- Pour liquid over radish in bowl and seal tightly. Leave to cool.

## Green Shrimp Rolls



### 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. Use spring onions, Chinese pepper, salt, wine, and water to season. Grind up the head and shell, boil, and filter to make a stock. Quick-boil the shrimp meat in this stock, till clear. Then add bamboo shoot and preserved ginger slices to the stock. Do not use spiced wine. Do not cook too long.

**NOTE.** The term implies exceedingly quick cooking - little more than a quick dip in the boiling stock.

Master Drake and Mistress Kiriel 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:

- Remove heads from Prawns. Add prawn shells also when you have them.
- 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.
- 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
- Prepare prawns by de-veining them and slicing up top vein (backbone). This causes the prawn to curl up into a 'roll'.
- 10 minutes before serving bring the broth to the boil. Add pepper, wine, shallots. Allow to gently boil for 8 minutes
- Add Prawns, Ginger, & Bamboo Shoots. Bring back to boil for 2 minutes.
- 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».

## Honeyed Stuffed Crabs



### Original:

Cook in sailed water. When the colour begins to change (to red), take out. Break up the crab and extract the meat from claws and legs. Cut this into small pieces and stuff into shell. Combine egg with a small amount of honey and mix with meat in shell. Spread some fat on the egg. Steam until the egg has just solidified. Do not overcook. For eating, it can be dipped into ground orange peel 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:

- 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.
- Very finely mince some fresh mandarin orange peel and add to the Rice Wine Vinegar. Shake vigorously and chill.
- 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).
- Trim and clean carapaces (this will take a few volunteers). Have some pre-prepared if you can.
- Shred crab meat and mix with beaten egg, honey, and salt. Mould into each crab shell and lightly brush with heated, liquid lard.
- Steam for 5-10 minutes or until the mixture has set.
- 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 Françoise 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.

## Imitation Scallops from River Fish



### Original:

Cut the meat on the back of the river fish into portions. Cut each portion into six chunks, shaped like scallops. Marinate in salt and wine, then steam. Use the remaining fish to make stock. Remove the bones in the head, use only the mouth and cheek. Those without gold color...(here the text breaks off).

### 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:

- 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).
- Marinade for 1-2 hours in the Sweet Rice Wine and salt.
- 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.
- Steam both for 5-10 minutes (until the fish is done).
- 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 T san was from, as they are not available in Australia.

## Pickled Ginger



### Original:

Use a clean cloth to clean away the roots of the ginger. For every catty of ginger use one and a half catty of brewing lees and one and a half ounces of stir-fried salt. Mix and put into a bottle, and sprinkle some more stir-fried salt on the surface. Cover it up.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 2 Kg of Ginger Root (40g per person)
- 3 L brewing lees (again you could fake it by dissolving a little brewer's yeast in a sweet rice wine).
- 100g rock salt.

#### Method:

- Peel ginger and thinly slice.
- Layer in a shallow crock pot and cover with brewing lees.
- Sprinkle the rock salt over the top.
- Leave for an unspecified amount of time (at least a few weeks).

**Notes:** Do not tightly seal the crock as there is a chance that the yeast in the lees could start re-fermenting, if it does, you will need to let it vent or it will explode.

**Translator's Note:** Salt is, or was, typically sold in large corn-like grains in China, and these were stir-fried to break them up and provide a slight scorched taste. Impurities could be driven off or, at least, made safe.

## Water Dragonlets



### Original:

Chop finely two portions of lean pork meat to each one portion of fatty meat. Add a little spring onion, Chinese pepper, apricot kernel paste, and dry steamed cake powder (ie similar to breadcrumbs), and mix. Moisten hands with vinegar and roll the dough into balls. Cover the outside with real starch flour. Boil in soup. Take them out when they float to the surface. They can be served with clear or piquant stock.

NOTE: The charming name may indicated that these were originally steamed (*lung* 'small steamer' being a homonym of *lung* 'dragon'). Yet another lung is a type of sack, whose shape may have inspired the name. Use of apricot kernel paste in meat dishes is found also in the YSCY {*lin-shan cheng-yao*}, in basically Near Eastern dishes so it may be a borrowing. (It substitutes for the very similar almond butter of the Near East). If so, it had certainly been naturalised, since Ni T san's recipes show no direct Near Eastern influence.

### Natal'ia's Redaction:

#### Redaction (for feast of approximately 50)

##### Ingredients:

- 2 kg Pork Mince
- 1 1/3 cup Spring Onion, very finely chopped
- 2 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground works best)
- 2 tsp of Apricot Kernel Paste
- 2 cups fine breadcrumbs
- White Vinegar
- Wheat Starch
- 4 litres Stock for cooking
- 4 litres Broth for serving (pork or chicken clear or piquant stock)

##### Method:

- Mix mince, spring onion, Szechwan pepper, apricot kernel, and breadcrumbs until thoroughly incorporated.
- 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.
- 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.
- Boil the balls in a clear, low flavour soup (chicken or vegetable stock, low in salt). Once the balls float to the top, boil for another 5 minutes and then test one ball to judge if the meat is fully cooked.
- 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.

#### Redaction (for high table or smaller feast)

##### Ingredients:

- 1/2 kg Pork (this needs to have a bit of fat on it - 1 part fatty meat to 2 parts lean meat)
- 1/3 cup Spring Onion, very finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground works best)
- 1/2 tsp of Apricot Kernel Paste
- 1/2 cup dry steamed cake powder - available in some spice stores (fine breadcrumbs will work if you cannot get a hold of the other, but make sure that the breadcrumbs are finely crushed before adding them)
- White Vinegar
- Wheat Starch
- 2 litres soup for cooking (we used a stock made from vegetables found during the yuan dynasty)
- 1 litres Broth for serving (clear pork stock)

##### Method:

- Chop the pork until it is similar to a fine mince.
- Mix pork, spring onion, Szechwan pepper, apricot kernel, and dry steamed cake powder until thoroughly incorporated. Do not chop in; rather, mix it through.
- 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.
- 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.
- Boil the balls in a clear, low flavour soup (we used a stock made from vegetables found during the yuan dynasty, low in salt). Once the balls float to the top, boil for another 5 minutes and then test one ball to judge if the meat is fully cooked.
- 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 Natalia'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>

#### 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 hue 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.

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

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.

## Wheat Noodle in Broth



### Original:

If one want to cut the noodles at noon, at dawn use salted water to make up a (wheat flour) dough. Knead thirty or twenty times. Cover and let stand. In a short while, repeat. Do this with the dough four times. Sprinkle fine starch powder on the board, roll the dough out and cut up. To cook: Bring water to a boil, stir, put in the noodles. When the water boils again, cover the fire. Turn up the fire again, let boil, then take out and put in broth.

### 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:

- 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.
- Bring stock to the simmer.
- Bring a pot of salted water to a strong boil. Add noodles. Cook for 3-5 minutes until cooked.
- Add cooked noodles to a tureen.
- Cover noodles with stock.
- Garnish with some sliced shallots and serve.

**Translator's Notes:** The dough has to stand and undergo repeated kneadings to bring out the gluten. The amount specified is a counsel of perfection, and would bring China's rather soft flour as close as possible to the ideal texture (Lacking durum, China cannot produce Italian chewiness in noodles). Like many Chinese works of the sort, this book directs the cook to stir the boiling noodles, to allow them to cook evenly without sticking. The word translated 'broth' could imply soup, stock, or sauce.

# Recipes for later in the evening



## Ark Shells (Cockles)



Original:

Break open four or five live cockles. Immediately put them in a bowl and pour their juices over them. Cook in extremely hot wine and cut without pepper or salt. When trying to break open the cockles, use a big sewing needle to pierce them first, and opening will be easier.

Drake's Redaction:

Ingredients:

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

Method:

- Put water and wine in a large stock pot.
- Raise to the boil.
- Add Cockles, turn the heat to low and put the lid on to steam the cockles for 3-5 minutes.
- 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.

## BBQ Goose



Original:

Use the 'Barbecued pork' method. Also: use salt, Chinese pepper, spring onions, and wine to rub inside the bird, and wine and honey on the outside. Put in the pan. The rest is as before. But the first time it is put in the pan, the stomach should be facing up; then it should be turned over with the stomach facing down.

Drake's Redaction:

Ingredients:

- 3 Geese (@ 4Kg each) (120g per person)
- 6 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground)
- 12 Shallots
- 500ml of Sweet White Rice Wine
- 300ml Honey (Cherry Blossom)

Method:

- Mix pepper, finely sliced shallots, and 200ml of Rice wine together.
- Rub the inside of the geese with this mix.
- Mix 300ml honey with 300ml of wine. Baste the geese with the mixture.
- Place in roasting pan on wire tray. Put 3-4 cups of water under the geese. Build a foil jacket over the geese so they steam.
- Steam for 2 hours. Baste regularly (and top up water if required).
- Turn birds over onto their fronts. Baste more. Roast for another hour with the foil jacket off.

Assumption:

This would lead to a very insipid taste. Instead, I've decided the best course is to steam and then roast (as is done when the Chinese cook duck).

## Cooked Wheat Gluten



### Original:

Use the fine wheat gluten (noodles or pieces) from Wychung (Suchou), newly steamed and not cooked by water. Tear into thin slices. Cut licorice into inch-long pieces, put these in wine and cook with water till the liquid boils off. Then use perilla leaf, tangerine peel slices, and ginger slices with the gluten and cook. Let cool. Then mix in hot oil, soy paste, flower pepper, black pepper, and apricot kernel powder, so that the flavors are well blended. Dry under the sun and put in a sugar jar and seal. If it is left too long and gets hard, steam it when you want to cut 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:

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

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.

## Eggplant Manta



### Original:

Mutton, sheep's fat, sheep's tail, onion, prepared mandarin orange peel (cut up each finely), "tender eggplant" (remove the pith).

[For] combine ingredients with meats into a stuffing. But [instead of making a dough covering] put it inside the eggplant [skin] and steam. Add garlic, cream [or yoghurt etc.], finely ground basil. Eat.

### Master Drake & Mistress Acacia's Redaction:

#### Ingredients (Manta):

- 5 Finger Eggplants
- 250g Fatty Lamb Mince
- 3 French Shallots - finely chopped (should be about 3/4 cup)
- 1/2 teaspoons of Fresh Mandarin Peel, finely grated (about 1 Mandarin) (note: Used Blood Orange peel - mandarin was out of season)
- Light Pinch of Flaky Sea Salt

#### Ingredients (Sauce):

- 4 Cloves of Garlic, finely minced.
- 125g Low Fat Greek Yoghurt (can use full fat).
- Pinch of Black Pepper.
- 2 generous pinches of Flaky Sea Salt.
- Handful of Basil Leaves (1/4 cup), finely chopped.

#### Method:

- Slice top end of the finger eggplant off, core out the eggplant with an apple corer and a knife.
- Finely dice shallots and sweat with a tiny bit of oil (or melted lamb fat) off. Add lamb and fry until brown. Fully cooking the lamb is not required.
- One minute before lamb is done, add orange peel and pinch of salt.
- Let mixture cool
- Setup Bamboo Steamers
- Stuff meat mixture into eggplant, use the back end of a wooden spoon to tamp the mixture in.
- Steam the Manta for 15-20 minutes. Eggplant should be tender but not falling apart.
- Whilst eggplant is steaming, finely mince garlic and fry in saucepan with a drop of oil.
- When garlic is soft, add salt, pepper and yoghurt, turn down to very low and gently simmer. Just before serving add sauce.
- Serve the eggplant, pouring the sauce over the top.

## Fragrant Citron Fry



### Original:

Use mature citron. Remove everything inside including the seeds. Cut into strips. Put in boiling water and let boil once or twice. Remove from water and let it drip dry. Then, use honey, a little water - one chien per ounce of honey, and beat in a silver-stone pot under slow fire until the honey becomes thick and sticky. Add the citron peel, stir slightly, remove pot from fire. Wait overnight and beat again. Remove when slightly boiling. Let cool; beat once more. When it has cooled down, store it in a pot, and seal the opening. 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.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients :

- 1 Kg Citron Peel - can substitute Lemon Peel.
- 1 1/2 Kg Honey (Cherry Blossom) - can use other (I used this as I had access to it, and suspected the Chinese also did)
- 50ml Water (this is optional, just seems to make the honey reduction take longer)

#### Method :

- Remove the citron peel from the seeds and pulp, ensuring as little white pith as possible.
- Cut the peel into strips,
- Scrape pith from the inside of the peel.
- Put the honey and water in a heavy based saucepan. Gently boil down the mix until it is thick and reduced by a half.
- Add citron peel and allow a few minutes for the honey to permeate the peel. Repeat this a few times over 24-48 hours.
- Dry the peel on trays (covered with grease-proof paper).
- Place in an air-tight container until use.

Comment by Francoise Sabban: As the recipe clearly shows, its title has to be translated as: « Candied Citron Peel ». The word jian has various meanings; it can actually mean “fry”, but it is also a common verb for “decoction” in a medical context and it also designates “candied fruits”, especially in the time of Ni T san.

## Pickled Bamboo Shoots



### Original:

Use the juice of bamboo shoots, add white mei, white sugar or white granulated sugar, and raw ginger juice. Mix to taste. Put with the bamboo shoots and let soak a while. This should be eaten cold. Do not store for long.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients :

- 1 Kg Fresh or Canned Cooked Bamboo Shoots (if whole, slice)
- 2 tbs of Either Chinese Rock Sugar or Caster Sugar
- Juice squeezed from 500g Ginger

#### Method:

- Mix the bamboo shoots with ginger juice and sugar.
- Serve cold.

Notes by Francoise Sabban: How to Pickle Bamboo Shoots “White mei” has to be translated as: «x Chinese apricot (Prunus mume (Sieb.) preserved by salt ». In this recipe two types of sugar are used and their difference is of importance. The first one is tangshuang, Literally “sugar frost”, which at Ni T san’s time is sugar candy, and the second one is baisha tang, Literally “white sand sugar”, which is White cassonade or “white granulated sugar” as it is correctly translated here.

Drake Notes: Important note, if you are using freshly freshly foraged bamboo shoots, they contain hydrocyanic acid (very toxic). Before it's ready to be used in cooking, bamboo shoot needs to be pre-cooked with rice bran flour to remove the hydrocyanic acid. By cooking the bamboo shoots with rice bran, the rice bran's starch removes the hydrocyanic acid from bamboo shoot and absorbs it. It's a simple process (google it or look here: <https://cookpad.com/en/recipes/171541-how-to-boil-bamboo-shoots-to-remove-their-bitterness>).

## Quick-cooked Meat Stew



### Original:

Use meat from the backbone (i.e. tenderloin), remove the tendons, and cut into pieces an inch long. Slightly score the meat, so it looks like lychees. Marinate in spring onions, Chinese pepper, salt, and wine. Put into boiling water, slightly stir, then take the meat and broth and put into a bowl to soak. Take some clear meat broth, combine with ginger, or mountain medicine pieces, or bamboo shoots pieces and cat. Use the original broth.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 3 Kg Pork Loin (60g per person)
- 6 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan pepper (very finely ground)
- 12 Shallots, sliced very fine
- 500ml of Dark, Salty Rice Wine
- 300ml of Chicken Stock
- 100g Ginger, julienned
- 200g Bamboo Shoots

#### Method:

- Slice the pork loin into 4mm thick scallops. Score both sides of each scallop with a fine series of cross-hatches.
- Marinate the meat for 2-3 hours in pepper, wine, and shallots.
- Stir-fry meat with Chicken Stock until cooked
- Add ginger and bamboo shoots. Serve.

#### Assumptions:

The concept of cooking pork by pouring hot water over it failed dismally when I tried. A much better result was obtained when I stir-fried the pork in stock.

Translator's Notes: Lychee shells are rough and ridged; the direction means that one should score the meat with shallow crisscross cuts, to take the marinade. 'Mountain medicine' is the wild Chinese yam (*Dioscorea spp.*).

## 'Snow Temple' Vegetable



### Original:

Use the hearts of green Chinese cabbage. Cut a few leaves in half and place in bowl. Cut milk-cake into thick pieces and cover the vegetables with it. With the hand tub out some flower pepper powder - a small amount is enough. Add pure wine and a little salt. Put in a pot and steam soft, then eat.

### Drake's Redaction:

I initially redacted this using a simple white milk curd. However it's been pointed out that milk-cake, may actually mean silken tofu. As the source is late Yuan Chinese and contains some residual Mongol influence in the source, I offer both options.

### Ingredients :

- 3 Kg Chinese Cabbage,
- 1 Kg Milk Cake:
  - ◇ 4 Litres of Fresh Milk
  - ◇ Salt
  - ◇ Type A Cheese Starter
  - ◇ 10 Litres of 20% Brine Solution
  - ◇ Rennet

OR

- 1 Kg Silken Tofu,
- 2 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper,
- 2 tsp salt
- 200ml Sweet White Rice Wine

### Method (milk-cake) :

- Add Pasteurised milk and bring it to 32degC. Add 80 ml of prepared Type A Cheese Starter. Mix in well. Leave for 60 to 90 minutes.
- Add 1 ml rennet concentrate (use a syringe). Dilute the rennet with at least 10 times its volume of distilled (THIS IS IMPORTANT - Chlorinated water destroys rennet) water. Then pour the diluted rennet immediately into the milk, taking care to pour it over as much of the surface as possible, stirring all the time while pouring it in.
- Mix in well for no less than one minute and no more than three minutes. Maintain setting temperature of 32degC.
- Allow the milk to set. This should take 30 to 35 minutes.
- Cut the curd into two cm cubes.
- Allow the curd to sit for five minutes.
- Turn all the curd over gently once with large fiat ladle or similar utensil.
- Repeat previous twice, at 10 minute intervals.
- Drain off one third of the whey, and replace with warm distilled water. The mixture should now be at 35degC.
- Allow the curd to sit for five minutes.
- Drain off half of the whey and pour the remaining curd into hoops. The hoops should be placed onto a draining tray lined with cheesecloth.
- Invert the hoops after 10 minutes and again after half an hour and then at three, five, and eight, hours. This can best be done by having a second cloth lined tray placed on top of the hoops, then firmly holding both trays, turn over.
- Leave overnight.
- Next morning, take the cake from the hoops and place into a cold 20% brine solution.
- Here they remain for 20 minutes to one hour, depending on the size of the cake. To make the brine, add 200 gm salt to 800 ml of boiled water and allow to cool.
- Remove from the brine.
- Place on a wire rack to dry for 24 hours at room temperature. Store in the fridge (for up to a week before use)

#### Method (cook):

- Break cabbage roughly into pieces (whole leaves into half).
- Place cabbage into large bowl in steamer, so that it holds the curd in.
- Cut up the milk cake into rough cubes and place on top of cabbage.
- Season with salt, pepper and wine.
- Steam until the cabbage is soft.

Notes from Françoise Sabban: The beginning of the recipe has to be translated as: “Use the hearts of Chinese green cabbages. Trim the largest leaves, cut every heart in two pieces and put them in a bowl.” As for the commentary by the translators. I’m not sure that “temple” here is the right translation for *an* whose first meaning is the name of a precious archaic vessel. As for “Milk-cake”, *rubing* in Chinese, it clearly designates a kind of ‘fresh cheese, type cottage cheese’ which was well known in China at that time and very much appreciated.

Notes from Drake: Another Method I’ve used is to dust pieces of milk cake (or silken tofu) in pepper, wine, and salt and wrap in a cabbage leaf (in spring roll like shapes). Gently steam for a few minutes...

### Wonton in Broth



#### Original:

Chop the meat finely. Add riced bamboo shoots or wild-rice shoots, chives, or *Basella rubra* tips. Use Szechuan pepper and a bit of apricot kernel paste. Wrap. The skins should start out thick and small when cut out. Then flour them and roll them out. (When stuffed) put into fully boiling water. Stir; do not cover. When they float up, take them out, stirring no longer. Do not use Chinese cardamom in the filling, except to warm the *ch'i*.

#### Drake’s Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- Wonton Wrappers (200) (4 per person in 300ml of broth)
- 750g minced Chicken
- 100g finely diced Picked Bamboo Shoots
- 1 tsp Brown Cardamom Seeds, finely crushed
- 2tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground)
- 50g Apricot Kernel Paste
- 4L Chicken Stock

#### Method:

- Gently cook chicken mince until it is just done.
- Mix in bamboo shoots, cardamom, apricot kernel paste, and pepper.
- Roll out Wonton Wrapper.
- Place a small amount of mixture into the wrapper, and fold.
- Raise a pot of salted water to the boil and poach the wontons for 3 minutes or until they are cooked. Arrange in tureen.

#### Assumption:

I used finely sliced bamboo shoots as the easily available option.

## Yellow Bird Buns



### Original Recipe:

#### 8. How to cook yellow-bird buns

Take yellow birds and chop up the wing and chest meat with spring onions, brown pepper and salt. Stuff into stomach (ie, probably, body cavity). Use leavened dough to wrap it. Make long small rolls, flattening and rounding down the ends. Put into bamboo container and steam them. After steaming they can perhaps be treated like 'lees buns': use brewing lees and fragrant oil and fry them.

### Recipe 1: Natal'ia's modifications to Drake's redaction

Note: Although I did the original redaction, Natal'ia has done massive amounts of work to refine this recipe and get the pastry to work well... It's truly her recipe, not mine.

#### Ingredients:

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

#### Optional Ingredients:

- Sesame Oil
- Brewing Lees

#### Method:

- Make leavened bread dough and set aside (allowing it to rise).
- Combine chicken mince, shallots, Szechwan pepper, and salt in a frying pan. Cook until the chicken is just done. Then let chicken mixture stand until cool enough to work with by hand.
- Break off a small piece of dough. Roll into a ball and then flatten so that it is not too thin. Add some 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.
- Steam for 10 minutes or until the dough is cooked.

#### Optional Part:

- Roll each steamed bun in brewing lees until coated.
- 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 T'san 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.

#### Note:

Yellow birds or yellow sparrows are, focally, Chinese yellow buntings (*Emberiza spp.*), but the name is used generally for any small yellowish or brownish bird. Brewing lees are a common pickling, marinating, coating and flavouring agent in China, especially the central east where Ni dwelt. 'Fragrant oil' is probably sesame oil. The word translated 'buns', here as elsewhere, is man-t'ou, probably a borrowing from Turkic manty or mantu (borrowing may have gone the other way, but this is unlikely on several grounds; Buell et al, ms). Today man-t'ou are unstuffed, but in medieval China they had fillings, as their cognates still do in Korea and the Altaic world.

## Recipe 2: Game Hen version

### Ingredients:

- 4 to 6 good sized game hens (when carcass is stripped you want 1.5 to 2 kilos of meat)
- 6 tsp Salt
- 2 tsp of freshly ground Szechwan Pepper (very finely ground and filtered through muslin to remove husks)
- 6 green shallots, finely sliced
- 2 kg white leavened bread dough of your favourite recipe

### Optional Ingredients:

- Sesame Oil
- Brewing Lees

### Method:

- Make leavened bread dough and set aside (allowing it to rise).
- Remove game hen meat from the bone and then discard the bone (or save to make a stock with later for another dish).
- Chop the meat into small pieces. Add shallots, Szechwan pepper, and salt. Chop together to mix creating a finely chopped but not minced texture.
- Cook the mixture until the game hen is just done. Then let mixture stand until cool enough to work with by hand.
- Break off a small piece of dough. Roll into a ball and then flatten so that it is not too thin. Add some meat mixture to the centre and make long small rolls, flattening and rounding the ends. The amount and size of your dough ball/game hen mix is dependent on how large you would like your final product. Smaller parcels seem to create a better outcome.
- Steam for 10 minutes or until the dough is cooked.

### Optional Part:

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

### Assumptions:

- I used game hen instead of buntings. It would probably be illegal or frowned upon to use any small bunting/sparrow like bird. I chose game hen over chicken because of the game hen meat processes a stronger flavour. I have not tried bunting but I assume it to be a more flavourful meat than chicken. 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 hen would be adequately cooked with such a short steaming time and thick dough.
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# On Millet and Rice



## On Rice and Millet: a brief annotation

Without question, both rice and millet would have been included in the diet of those living in the Yüan Dynasty. Domestication of both rice and millet predates this time and testing on bone fragments and finds of food stores date to long before the Mongolian Khans<sup>1</sup>. In modern times, rice and millet compose a substantial component of the Asian diet and it is believed that this was likely the case in previous eras as evidenced in chronicles such as William of Rubruck's, *Account of the Mongols*. So, why then have no rice or millet dishes been included thus far in this pamphlet?

The answer to this question is convoluted. The easiest response is that neither *Yin-shan cheng-yao* nor *Cloud Forest Hall Collection of Rules for Drinking and Eating* include plain rice or millet dishes. This is more than likely due to everyone in the period knowing how to cook these basic foods, as *Yin-shan cheng-yao* does list five types of millet and two types of rice as suitable for food and drink<sup>2</sup> (similarly, you might not find a recipe for toasting bread or making cereal in modern cookbooks - there is an assumed knowledge that if you are old enough to make these foods, you already know how to make them).

This then leads to the questions: Can we serve it at a feast? And, how do we cook it?

The answer to the former is a resounding, 'of course!' The answer to the later requires a bit of digging. We can find accounts of millet being cooked and eaten in William of Rubruck's account along with others who travelled to the Khan's court. Some translations of Marco Polo's *Travels* have similar selections on rice<sup>3</sup>.

"We cooked a little meat and a little millet with broth of the meat to drink."<sup>4</sup>

"Daily they gave us a bowl full of millet and a quart of millet mead, and they borrowed for us a kettle and a tripod to cook our meat; and when it was cooked we boiled the millet in the pot liquor [liquid]."<sup>5</sup>

Using these descriptions and investigating the current way these two grain crops are cooked, we can extrapolate recreations of the dishes. Plain rice and millet, made as we make them nowadays, would be perfectly acceptable to serve at a feast. If you wanted to try something a bit fancier, you could use lamb broth to make your rice/millet as William of Rubruck testified in his account. A fancier non-meat option would be to use a vegetable stock (for Yüan Dynasty vegetable suggestions, see Lady Natalia's website). Although I lack a suitable source of how this might have been done, we do have reference to vegetarian diets (or ones of lower meat protein). Thus there is the assumption that vegetable broth might have been used in a similar way to the meat broth used in William of Rubruck's version of millet.

When planning on serving millet at you feast, consider that there is a type of food that is effectively a millet drink or soup. Even today the Mongolian people make millet and green tea to give them warmth, sustenance, and hydration. Using such a dish would add uniqueness to the Mongolian feast.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information look into Early Chinese May Have Eaten Millet Before Rice [Balter (2009)] and Domestication: The birth of rice [Callaway (2014)]. Earliest domestication of common millet (*Panicum miliaceum*) in East Asia extended to 10,000 years ago [Houyuan Lu, et al. (2009)] is the original research for Balter's article and expands upon his information.

<sup>2</sup> Buell and Anderson (2000) and Buell and Anderson (2010)

<sup>3</sup> Polo, Marco and Rustichello of Pisa (1903)

<sup>4</sup> William of Rubruck (1900)

<sup>5</sup> William of Rubruck (1900)

# Drinks both fermented and sweet



# *Kumiss - A Practical Fermentation Guide by Baron Drake Morgan, OL.*

## History:

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Airag (or Kumiss, it's Russian name) is fermented horse milk, traditionally brewed by the Mongols and other horse tribes on the steppes. It was often drunk by other cultures, such as the Russians as a health tonic. William Rubruck was a Flemish Franciscan missionary and explorer who kept a journal of his travels to Karakorum, at that time, the seat of Great Khan Möngke in 1254. He not only is surprised to discover many Western Europeans living in Karakorum but even describes a great silver fountain built by a Parisian Silversmith. One of the spouts dispensed Caracosmos, a form of clarified Kumiss. The journal article states:

[The Khan's palace at Karakorum]

Mangu had at Caracarum a great palace, situated next to the city walls, enclosed within a high wall like those which enclose monks' priories among us. Here is a great palace, where he has his drinkings twice a year: once about Easter, when he passes there, and once in summer, when he goes back (westward). And the latter is the greater (feast), for then come to his court all the nobles, even though distant two months journey; and then he makes them largess of robes and presents, and shows his great glory. There are there many buildings as long as barns, in which are stored his provisions and his treasures. In the entry of this great palace, it being unseemly to bring in there skins of milk and other drinks, master William the Parisian had made for him a great silver tree, and at its roots are four lions of silver, each with a conduit through it, and all belching forth white milk of mares. And four conduits are led inside the tree to its tops, which are bent downward, and on each of these is also a gilded serpent, whose tail twines round the tree. And from one of these pipes flows wine, from another cara cosmos, or clarified mare's milk, from another bal, a drink made with honey, and from another rice mead, which is called terracina; and for each liquor there is a special silver bowl at the foot of the tree to receive it. Between these four conduits in the top, he made an angel holding a trumpet, and underneath the tree he made a vault in which a man can be hid. And pipes go up through the heart of the tree to the angel. In the first place he made bellows, but they did not give enough wind. Outside the palace is a cellar in which the liquors are stored, and there are servants all ready to pour them out when they hear the angel trumpeting. And there are branches of silver on the tree, and leaves and fruit. When then drink is wanted, the head butler cries to the angel to blow his trumpet. Then he who is concealed in the vault, hearing this blows with all his might in the pipe leading to the angel, and the angel places the trumpet to his mouth, and blows the trumpet right loudly. Then the servants who are in the cellar, hearing this, pour the different liquors into the proper conduits, and the conduits lead them down into the bowls prepared for that, and then the butlers draw it and carry it to the palace to the men and women.



*Qan Möngke*



*18th century Artist's rendition of the silver tree at Karakorum, as described by William of Rubruck.*

Another source, Selections from the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* by Mirza Muhammad Haidar, Dughlat (1546-47), backs up the story of the potency of Kumiss:

V. [On the medicinal powers of kumys (fermented mare's milk).]

At this time a certain Ahmad Mirza, one of the Timuri Mirzas of the line of Mirza Shah Rukh, having fled [from his own country] had come [to Moghulistan]. He had [with him] a sister, for whom Amir Sayyid Ali conceived a great affection; so much so that Amir Khudaidad and others begged her to become Amir Sayyid Ali's wife. She, however, refused, saying: "I cannot stay in Moghulistan, but if he will accompany me to my own country, it can be arranged." She then immediately set out for her own country, accompanied by Amir Sayyid Ali. When she arrived at Andijan) Mirza Ulugh Beg dispatched a man to kill Ahmad Mirza, and himself married his sister, at the same time throwing Amir Sayyid Ali into prison at Samarkand, where he remained one year. Here he fell sick of dysentery, and when on the point of dying, Amir Ulugh Beg sent for the doctors, whose remedies, however, were all without effect. One day somebody brought some kumiz. The Mirza implored the doctors, saying: "As the medicines have done me no good, I should much like to try a little kumiz, for which I have a great craving." They at last agreed [to grant his request] as a desperate experiment, saying: "It will very likely give him strength." They then gave him as much kumiz as he



wanted, and from that moment he began to show signs of recovery. On the following day they gave him some more, and he became perfectly well. [Sayyid Ali eventually made his way back home, where he became involved in the ultimately successful rebellion by which Vais Khan, with Timurid support, seized the throne.] [Ü ]

We even have a description from William on how it tasted:

This cosmos, which is mare's milk, is made in this wise... When they have got together a great quantity of milk, which is as sweet as cow's as long as it is fresh, they pour it into a big skin or bottle, and they set to churning it with a stick [...] and when they have beaten it sharply it begins to boil up like new wine and to sour or ferment, and they continue to churn it until they have extracted the butter. Then they taste it, and when it is mildly pungent, they drink it. It is pungent on the tongue like rapé wine when drunk, and when a man has finished drinking, it leaves a taste of milk of almonds on the tongue, and it makes the inner man most joyful and also intoxicates weak heads, and greatly provokes urine.

There are variants made from donkey, cow (Kefir), and camel (shubat) milk also. A distilled version called arkhi was known but not before the 13-14th century at the very earliest.

## So, Why Kumiss?

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Horse milk is very high in Lactose (40% higher than cow's milk) but low in Fat and Protein, which would make it a very rich source of nutrients for steppe cultures that relied heavily on the horse. The only issue is that many Central Asian Tribes have very high levels (over 90%) of Lactose Intolerance. Although it's not known if the fermentation of Kumiss was accidental or intentional, it is a very efficient way of removing lactose from milk making it very digestible, with the positive side benefit of a small amount alcohol, usually 1-3%.

The lactose in milk is not normally able to be consumed by Brewer's Yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*), but in a complex culture with *Lactobacillus*, there is the ability to efficiently breakdown the lactose, rendering it safe to drink. The *Lactobacillus* cultures excrete Lactase, an enzyme that breaks down Lactose into Glucose, absorbs the Glucose and excretes Lactic Acid. The yeast robs the Glucose and excretes Alcohol and Carbon Dioxide. The reaction is feed-forward. The more the yeast robs the glucose, the more the *Lactobacillus* produces lactase. This results in a very efficient method of removing lactose, thus rendering the Kumiss relatively low in lactose.

## How the Mongols Made It:

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Although we don't have any descriptions of how the Mongols of old made Airag, we do have a lot of information on how it is currently made.

During the foaling season the Mongolian herds-people milk the mares. This is done by leading the foal to his/her mother and allowing the foal to feed naturally for a while. The foal is then led to one side and the mare milked, usually by the woman.

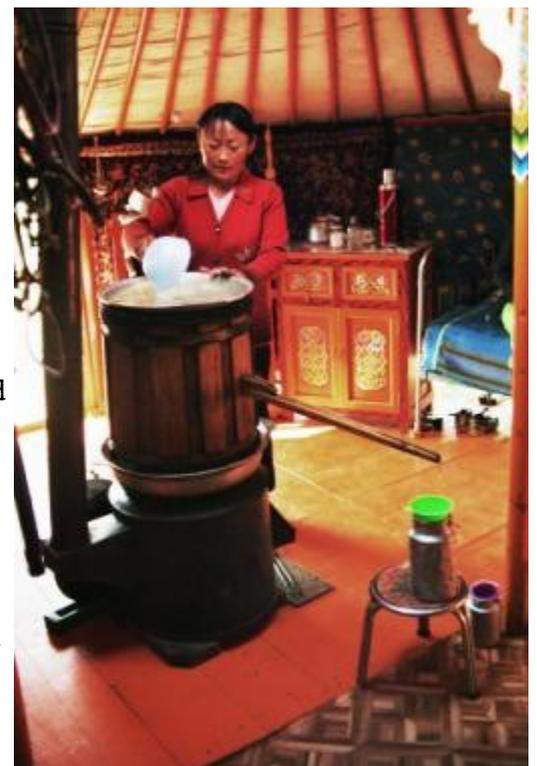
The milk is filtered through a fine sheet of muslin and is then placed in a leather or goatskin bag that hangs in the Southwest part of the Ger (round felt tent, also called a Ger) where it is churned traditionally for 1000 times. The Southwest is the warmest part of the Ger. Sometimes a vat of larchwood (Gan) is used, where a wooden masher called a buulur is used to stir the Kumiss.

No culture is normally added, but the bags or vats would normally be inoculated with the correct culture. Cultures would be shared if they went sour. Stirring it in the bag in the warmth along with the culture would start the fermentation process that creates a mild alcoholic "liquidy" yoghurt style drink. The stirring would assist in the breaking up of the curd.

When a guest arrives they are traditionally asked to churn the milk in the leather bag.

After a few days, the Airag is filtered again, and is ready to drink. The left over curds were often dried and pressed into a cake form, called Aaruul.

Hospitality mandates to present a bowl of airag to each visitor. A Mongolian will normally empty it, but it is also acceptable to just take a sip and return the bowl. To reject the offer right away would be gravely impolite.



*A Modern Arkhi Still.*

Occasionally, the Mongols distilled the airag to make a clear spirit called Arkhi with their homemade distillery. A bowl of airag is placed in the bottom of the metal barrel shape container, an empty bowl is fitted inside it towards the top of the barrel and a third bowl of cold water is placed at the top. All of this is placed on top of the stove, which is heated by dried animal dung. The airag is heated, evaporates and condenses on the bottom of the cold bowl and drops into the empty bowl. This can produce Arkhi upto 10-20% alc depending on the still.



*Kumiss in a carved wooden serving bowl.*

## How Can You Make It?

Making Kumiss is quite easy to do. The important thing to remember, for people brewing other things, you need to keep Kumiss and it's cultures well away from your normal brewing in case of cross-contamination.

Firstly, get your milk:

- If you are lucky and you've got Mares Milk, you don't need to adjust your milk.
- If you have cows milk, you need to select a milk that is close as possible to horse milk, and add extra powdered lactose (available at good homebrew shops) to match the % required for Horse Milk (see the table in the next section)

Gently heat your milk to 38 degrees Celcius.

Add your Cultures:

*Lactobacillus* (several cultures are capable of doing the job (*Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Streptococcus lactis*, etc.). You can either go crazy trying different cultures or you can use a yoghurt culture. You want to aim for a *Lactobacillus* strain with a habit of not firming up too much. A drinking yoghurt culture is perfect for this.

Yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) - a simple plain, neutral flavoured beer yeast suffices here. Don't use a wine or any other high attenuating yeast. Avoid Baker's yeast, as it will impart a strong yeast flavour to your kumiss.

Put into a small homebrewing fermenter, leaving some head space as the kumiss can foam quite a bit. One option is to get a winecask bag after the contents have been drunk, take off the lid, and place a rubberbung and airlock in it's place... This does a fine job at simulating a goatskin and allows for easy agitation. You need to agitate every few hours for a couple of days.

When the kumiss has stopped bubbling, you filter the liquid though a muslin cheesecloth and chill.

Serve with a side of boiled mutton or dumplings, and enjoy.

## The Biochemistry Behind it...

Animal Species	Water%	Dry Matter%	Protein%	Fat%	Lactose%	Ash%
Cow	87.8	12.2	3.5	3.5	4.5	0.8
Horse	90	10	2.2	1.1	6.1	0.5
Sheep	82.5	17.5	6.5	6.1	4.5	1
Goat	85.8	14.2	4.4	4.4	4.6	0.8
Pig	80	20	7.3	8.4	3.3	1

For 100ml of milk, you want to be adding about 10-20 grams of lactose. You can either do the math to balance or just overpitch the lactose. Over-pitching doesn't seem to have too much effect, the product stays about the same, but you'll get some higher alcohol and some bleed through of lactose.

According to Joyce Toomre (Koumiss in Mongol Culture: Past and present), kumiss nowadays is prepared with 2 starter cultures, *Streptococcus lactis* and *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*... (both cultures should be available from cheese making supply companies). Although her article does not discuss yeast, a yeast is also required to make kumiss work.

Other minor cultures that have been identified in Kumiss Cultures have been:

- *Streptococcus cremoris*
- *Streptococcus diacetylactis*
- *Leuconostoc cremoris* (this culture will give the kumiss a slimy texture, and is probably an unwanted contaminant, but is desired in some milk products such as Kefir and Vili)

- *Lactobacillus plantarum*
- *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* (adds a buttery flavour, diacetyl, to the flavour profile)
- *Lactobacillus casei*
- *Saccharomyces florentinus*

*Streptococcus lactis* (also known as *Lactococcus lactis*) produces quantities of lactic acid, partially hydrolyses milk proteins, and increases digestibility of milk. It also produces chemicals (bacteriolysins) that inhibits other harmful micro-organisms. *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* has been used to culture yoghurt in Eastern Europe for a very long time and it's no surprise to see it in Kumiss cultures... It has similar properties to *Streptococcus lactis*. *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* also produces small amounts of acetaldehyde which is apparently important for the final flavour profile.

The third culture required is a yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*), of which the Kumiss maker can select any low alcohol neutral tasting version they wish. The important thing is that the 3 cultures work in unison and not to select a yoghurt bacteria strain known for a high rate of firming (clabbering) the curd and to avoid any culture that gives a ropy or slimy consistency.

## Main References

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(1994) Milk and Milk Products from Medieval to Modern Times -Proceedings of the 9th International Conference on Ethnological Food Research - Edited by Patricia Lysaught. It contains an article: "Koumiss in Mongol Culture: Past and present" by Joyce S. Toomre. - This article is a great help for those interested in Kumiss.

There is also a GREAT website which contains many period texts of travellers to Mongolia and are available here:

<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/texts/texts.html>

<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/culture/food/food.html>

The main Cookbook on Yuan Chinese (Yin Shan Cheng Yao) is actually completely devoid of references to milk products. Theories here is that they were 'too mundane' to be mentioned, considered to have no medicinal qualities at that time/place and thus omitted (unlikely) or that milk products weren't available in that time/place (1456/Capital) and were omitted. Perhaps it was because the author was Chinese. The recipes themselves record the intrusion of alien (and some believe unsophisticated) Mongol cookery based on mutton into Chinese cuisine. It was written by Hu Szu-Hui, who probably came from a bilingual Chinese-Turkic family in northwest China and who served as imperial dietary physician to several short-lived descendants of Qubilai Qan in the early 1300s. Although useless as a reference for Kumiss, it does contain information on other Mongol/Yuan Chinese alcoholic drinks.

## Duke Cheng's Method for Brewing Mung Bean Wine



### Original:

Thirty catties of white flour. A peck of mung beans, cooked soft. An ounce of t'ui sha-wood aromatic. An ounce of official-quality cassia powder. Thirty lotus flower buds; use only roots and petals and grind them - do not use branches or styles. Mash and grind sweet melon. Use a piece of cloth and grind about one bowl of the sweet melon meat. Mash smartweed to obtain its juice. Mix all these together till the damp and dry are combined. Wrap with a piece of cloth. Tread it out firm. Wrap it again with two layers (?) of mulberry leaves, then tie in a sack and let it air out tied to a beam. Take it out after a month, remove the mulberry leaves, and apply leaven thoroughly to the surface. Leave it out to sun and to be covered with dew at night. After about a month, put it in a pot and seal it. Every thirty catties of flour can be made into seventy of wine dough.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients :

- 6 Kg Mung Beans, cracked (not powder, just cracked into 2-4 pieces)
- 2 Kg Light Malt Extract (with Diastatic Potential) - More advanced brewers could either malt and mash 8 kilos of mung beans or react 8 kilos of mung beans with Amylase enzyme or use a Koji
- 25g Red Sandalwood Powder ( t'ui sha-wood)
- 25g Cassia Bark, broken up pieces.
- 500g of Musk Melon Meat (if available). If not, use Champagne Melon.
- 4 Bunches Smartweed - (was Polygonum hydropiper now reclassified to Persicaria hydropiper - you can get dry at good chinese grocers if you know what you are looking for)
- 7g Yeast Nutrient
- 7g Yeast

#### Method :

- Arrange for Mung Beans to be roughly cracked in a grain Crusher.
- Raise 18 Litres of water 71degC. Add mung beans to water.
- Add Malt or Amylase to water. Make sure the water is 65.5degC (add a little cold or boiling water to set temp)
- Insulate the pot and keep at 65.5degC for 1 1/2 hours.
- Drain Liquid into Boiler. Sprinkle with another 8 Litres of water at 65degC. Over the top of the cracked mung beans. (NOTE: Experience brewers use your normal mash techniques)
- Add Melon Meat (Mashed up and pushed through a strainer). Add Red Sandalwood Powder & Cassia Bark & Smartweed.
- Boil for 1 to 1/2 hours until the volume is reduced to 22 Litres.
- Add Nutrient.
- Quickly cool.
- Add to sterilized fermenter. Add and yeast and ferment.

#### Assumptions:

- This recipe has not been completely explained, but there is enough detail for an experienced Brewer, I hope.
- This recipe is effectively unworkable for modern brewing, and to create a successful recipe involved going back to basics and take the recipe as a 'guide'... The recipe advocates a method of sour mashing that probably would not work in Australia (differing flora available in the air). This recipe is similar in concepts to Belgian Lambics.
- Maltose sugar was very common in use in Medieval China. Although not mentioned in the original, the only alternate to 'sour mashing' would be to add malt to the Mung Beans or to use a mould, such as Koji, to breakdown the sugars into starches.
- This may not even be a brewing recipe but a weird recipe for Yeast leaven even.

Translator's Notes: 'Duke Cheng' may be an error for Duke KIM, a well-known brewing-expert.

Drake's Notes: This is an oldish redaction and tastes pretty sour, like a medieval unhopped ale. After 5 years of aging, it wasn't too bad... I'd love someone to re-redact this better...

## Lotus Flower Tea



Original:

### **Making the Tea:**

In the pond, before breakfast, as the sun rises, choose slightly opened lotus buds. Separate the petals with your fingers and put in tea leaves, filling them up. Tie with a piece of rope. Wait overnight, then pick the lotus the next morning, remove the tea, and wrap it up with paper and let it dry. Repeat it for three times. Put it in a tin container to store. The opening of the tin container should be tightly tried.

### **Brewing the Tea:**

Use a silver vessel to boil water to the crab-eye stage (i.e. just barely boiling). Now use another container to carry the tea. Pour in a small amount of water from the silver container. The water should immediately just cover the tea. Wait till the tea leaves are thoroughly soaked. Put the silver vessel on the fire again until the water sounds boiling. Then immediately pour in the tea leaves. Take the vessel away soon, return briefly to fire, then drink. It is excellent.

### **Drake's Notes:**

I understand that this is available commercially.

### **Translator's Notes:**

This is a level of refinement worthy of the nun Adamantine in the *Hung Lou Meng*.

## Tangerine Flower Tea



Original:

### **Making the Tea:**

Jasmine tea is the same. Use average quality 'small sprout' tea, and use the pot for boiling. First, lay down a layer of flower, a layer of tea, a layer of flower, and layer of tea till the pot is full. Then lay down a layer of flower on the very top and cover it up. Put the pot under the sun and turn three times. Pour a shallow layer of water into a saucepan and steam the pot under a slow fire. Steam until the cover of the pot reaches its hottest, then take out. Wait till it is completely cooled down, then remove the tea from the pot. Take away the flowers, leaving only the tea. Use 'lotus seed' paper to wrap up the tea and put it under the sun to dry. The paper should be opened frequently to shake the tea inside, so that it is evenly distributed, and it will be dried easily. Each pot of tea should be divided into three or four paper bags to dry. Repeat the steaming and drying processes three times, changing the flowers each time. Then the tea will be extremely good.

### **Brewing the Tea:**

Use a silver vessel to boil water to the crab-eye stage (i.e. just barely boiling). Now use another container to carry the tea. Pour in a small amount of water from the silver container. The water should immediately just cover the tea. Wait till the tea leaves are thoroughly soaked. Put the silver vessel on the fire again until the water sounds boiling. Then immediately pour in the tea leaves. Take the vessel away soon, return briefly to fire, then drink. It is excellent.

### **Drake's Notes:**

I understand that this is available commercially.

## Rice Wine<sup>1</sup>



### Original:

Wash (glutinous rice) grain in river water. Soak it for about ten days, then remove it and pour more river water over it. The water should be saved and filtered for later use. For every *shih* of glutinous rice used, take away one peck and save. Soak for three days. Then, for every two of rice, use eight cattles of the water strained off. Then for the *shih* of flour, use four or five cattles (of the rice?). To make clear wine, used only three cattles. One *shih* of rice can be brewed per pot used. Grind up leaven and combine with the rice. Divide into four portions, one by one. Use a small pot to pour some water over it. Smooth out the mixture, put in leaven between batches of rice (?) and press it down with your hands. Use a wooden ladle to pour some water in the pot and cover it with straw. Look at the surface the next morning. If it has a big crack, put your hands inside and feel. If it is hard, hit it with a bamboo stick. After hitting it three times, add the fermented glutinous rice. Use some undistilled wine to melt some of the fermented rice and pour that mixture in the pot. Cover it up again. Repeat the hitting if a crack appears again. It will be ready in about a month. Then, for every two *shih* (of the mix), use eight measures of powder-dough. Put one half in the undistilled wine mix and use another bag to squeeze it. The other half is put in a bag which is in turn put into the wine. Filter twice. Pour off the debris. Add to the wine dough and cook. For clear wine, do not use fermented rice mix (but use the flour/rice mix instead?)

How to make the powder-dough: Take ground mulberries, ground millet, and ground fresh sprouted milled. Add hot water and roll into a ball. Heat by fire till shiny red. Heal it three or four times. Grind to powder before use.

### Drake's Redaction:

#### Ingredients:

- 12 Kg Sake Glutinous Rice (Glutinous rice with 50% of the Husk removed)
- Koji (*Aspergillus oryzae*) culture
- 100g Amylase Enzyme or 2Kg Light Malt Extract
- 7g Yeast Nutrient
- 7g Sake Yeast

#### Method:

- Arrange for sake glutinous rice beans to be roughly cracked in a grain crusher.
- Steam rice until cooked.
- Add just enough water to create a slurry.
- Add Koji (*Aspergillus oryzae*) culture.
- Leave for a week until the strands of *Aspergillus oryzae* mould are readily visible in the slurry.
- Raise 18 Litres of water 65.5 degC. Add rice to water.
- Raise 18 Litres of water back to 65.5 degC. Add Amylase to water.
- Insulate the pot and keep it at 65.5 degC for 1 ¼ hours.
- Drain liquid into boiler. Sparge with another 8 litres of water at 77 degC.
- Boil for 1 to 1 ½ hours until the volume is reduced to 22 litres.
- Quickly cool (using a wort chiller)
- Add to sterilized fermenter. Add nutrient and yeast.
- SG 1.090 (12% alcohol)

#### Assumptions:

- This recipe has not been completely explained, but there is enough detail for an experienced Brewer.
- This recipe is effectively unworkable for modern brewing, and to create a successful recipe involved going back to basics and take the recipe as a 'guide'. The recipe was modified along the making of Modern Rice Wines with Koji culture. This culture would have been prevalent in Chinese Brewery areas but unknown in areas outside, hence the use of Koji culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Translator's Notes: This recipe is hard to follow and inadequate without specialist knowledge. Glutinous rice - the kind almost always used for brewing in China - is cooked down, mixed with leaven (a yeast started from a previous wine batch, probably), and left to ferment. Then sugary, maltose-rich powder is added. The whole is mixed with enough water to prepare a mash. 'Cook' at the end is confusing; cooking it would kill the yeast. Either slight beating is intended, or the yeast is to be reinoculated, or we are to understand that the wine is left to brew and then poured off and heated for drinking.

## Cassia Syrup



### Original:

It produces saliva and stops thirst, augments ch'i, and harmonizes the center. It eliminates dampness and expels retention of fluid. Sprouting ginger (three chin; take the juice), boiled water (two tou), red China root (three liang; remove skin and make a fine powder), cassia (three liang; remove skin and make a fine powder), finely ground yeast (half a chin), apricot kernels (100 nuts; blanch in boiling water, and remove the skin and tips; grind fresh to make a mash), malted wheat (half a chin; make into a powder), crystallized honey (three chin; refine).

For ingredients use the aforementioned medicinals, the honey and the water and combine together evenly. Put into a clean crockery pot. Close up the mouth with several layers of oiled paper and seal well with mud. Allow to ferment when fermentation is finished leave for three days in an ice cellar and it will be ready. To drink strain with floss silk. Put the strained slush into water. Drink during the hot months.

### Drake's Redaction:

Note: I've not done this in the traditional fashion, which is a brewing recipe. I have, however, adapted the concept of Cassia Syrup as a simple non-alcoholic drink.

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups of Sugar or 2 Cups of Honey or 2 Cups of Chinese Rock Sugar,
- 1 1/2 cups of water,
- 100g of Cassia Sticks(not cinnamon sticks), broken into pieces. Cassia is coarser, less hot with a vague undertones of rosewater under cinnamon in smell.
- 20g ginger root, peeled and finely sliced.

### Method:

- Add Sugar or Honey to water. Bring to the boil and stir. Wait for sugar/honey to dissolve.
- Steep Cassia and ginger in syrup for 1 hour.
- Strain and bottle.

## Red Currant Puree (Drink in Place of Grape Wine)



It brings forth saliva and controls thirst. It warms the essence and augments ch'i. Red currants (one chin; clean the meat), purple perilla leaves (six liang), ginseng (four liang; remove the green shoots and cut up), crude granulated sugar (two chin). For ingredients use two tou of water. Boil down to one tou. Strain and remove dregs. Let clear. Drink when one likes.

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups of Chinese Rock Sugar,
- 2 cups of water,
- 100g of Red Currants, destemmed and crushed. Original recipe would call for closely related Ribes humile (Swamp Currant) which isn't available outside of china. Red Currents (Ribes rubrum) are a reasonable substitute.
- 15g Perilla leaves, coarsely shredded.
- 10g Dried Ginseng - try to find a sustainable farmed source.

### Method:

- Add Sugar water. Bring to the boil and stir. Wait for sugar syrup to reduce down to half. Remove from Heat.
- When only warm (rather than hot), steep redcurrants, perilla, and ginseng for 1 hour.
- Strain and bottle.

## Ginseng Puree (Drink in place of liquor)



It accords the ch'i, opens the diaphragm, controls thirst and brings forth saliva. Korean ginseng (four liang; remove green shoots and cut up), prepared mandarin orange peel (one liang; remove the white), purple perilla leaves (two liang), crude granulated sugar (one chin). For ingredients use two tou of water. Boil down to one tou. Remove the dregs. Let clear. Drink when one likes.

### Ingredients:

- 2 Cups of Chinese Rock Sugar,
- 2 cups of water,
- 40g Dried Ginseng - try to find a sustainable farmed source
- 20g Perilla leaves, coarsely shredded.
- 10g Dried Mandarin Peel, shredded into small slices. Not easy as it's very hard.

### Method:

- Add Sugar water. Bring to the boil and stir. Wait for sugar syrup to reduce down to half. Remove from Heat.
- When only warm (rather than hot), mandarin peel, perilla, and ginseng for 1 hour.
- Strain and bottle.

## Cutting the Fat

Although the *Red Jade House's Guide of Feasting for Their Serene Majesties* is purely a fictitious work in so far as its narrative, it still portrays our current understanding of feasting in the Khan's court. When planning and putting together a Mongol Feast from this text, please keep in mind the following points:

- It is believed that Yüan Mongolian feasts would have been elaborate events with great riches and spectacular sights; however, the subtleties found in Western feasts would not have been common because everyone at the feast ate the same food. Some of the items found in Yüan cookbooks are fairly amazing in themselves and their beauty alone make them 'subtleties'.
- The head table was elevated above the other tables and there was a hierarchy of who sat were. The high table would seat the Khan and his favoured wife and children. Below them, his other family in order of precedence. Amongst these tables would sit special guests and envoys; each foreigner would be flanked by trusted members of the household who would see to the needs of the guest and help them through the etiquette of the evening. Those who did not hold high enough place in the court, would be seated on the floor behind the tables or outside if the feast was too large to fit in the feasting hall.
- In China, like in the Western lands, there was a well-developed and sophisticated system of the value of foods. Many cooks may be familiar with the 'humours' of foods and the Chinese and Mongols used a system of the cosmos and how things inter relate. A good, basic breakdown of this system is outlined in *The Food of China* by Anderson.
- *A Soup for the Qan* outlines how *Yin-shan cheng-yao* suggests that dishes would be severed together based on the system of Five Smells and Five Flavours. Certain foods would be served together and others would not. In general, lighter dishes would be served earlier in the meal moving towards more substantial dishes later in the evening.
- Palace courts from the Steppes and pastoral lands would have more meat dishes and dairy dishes provided from the herds and the wildlife in the area. Palace courts located close to the larger rivers or coastline, would serve more fish dishes and vegetable dishes. This is due to the ease of acquisition of food items. It is still important to remember that aquaculture was practiced during the Yüan period and lakes by palaces would have been stocked with fish for supplementary dining.
- Most, if not all, of the Yüan period travel journals suggest that once the eating was finished, the tables were cleared away and singing, dancing, feats of amazement and magic, and poetry readings were common.

Regarding the recipes in this pamphlet:

- Each of the redactions were completed by either Master Drake Morgan or Lady Natal'ia Vladimirova 'doch (or both) and come from either the *Cloud Forest Hall Collection of Rules for Drinking and Eating* by Ni T san or *Yin-shan cheng-yao (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink)* by Hu Szu-hu.
- The watermarked image on each recipe indicates which reference it comes from:



*Cloud Forest Hall Collection of Rules for Drinking and Eating* by Ni T san



*Yin-shan cheng-yao (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink)* by Hu Szu-hu

- Lighter (and thus to be served earlier in the feast) items are in the first section of the redactions. Dishes for later servings are in the second section.
- Each recipe would make a sampling dish for 50 and, in some recipes, serving sizes are given.
- Master Drake's drink section is added for those who enjoy brewing. Kumiss is believed to have been served at all feasts and was the first item served to those eating.

Continuing Research:

- Both Master Drake and Lady Natal'ia will continue their research into medieval Mongol/Chinese feasting. They intend to publish their work on their websites.
- Master Drake Morgan's website can be found at: <http://www.diningwiththekhan.com/>
- Lady Natal'ia Vladimirova 'doch's website can be found at: <http://mongolmusings.weebly.com/>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Food of China* by E.N. Anderson, Chapter 11: Traditional Medical Values of Foods, 172. And the Project Gutenberg EBook of *the Travels of Marco Polo*, vol 1.

<sup>2</sup> This is most detailed in the *Travels of Marco Polo* but can be found in snippets in several other contemporary travel books: including sections of William of Rubruck's *Account of the Mongols*.

<sup>3</sup> *The Food of China* by E.N. Anderson, Chapter 11: Traditional Medical Values of Foods, especially pages 231-235.

<sup>4</sup> *A Soup for the Qan*, by Paul D Buell and Eugene N Anderson.

<sup>5</sup> *The Food of China* by E.N. Anderson, Chapter 11: Traditional Medical Values of Foods, 176. And the Project Gutenberg EBook of *the Travels of Marco Polo*, vol 1.

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