

Traditional Chinese New Year Foods By Jennifer Jay

- Lotus seed - signify having many male offspring
- Ginkgo nut - represents silver ingots
- Black moss seaweed - is a homonym for exceeding in wealth
- Dried bean curd homonym for fulfillment of wealth and happiness
- Bamboo shoots - sounds like "wishing that everything would be well"
- Whole Fish - represent togetherness and abundance
- Whole Chicken or Duck symbolizes completeness
- Noodles represent long life
- Scallops or clams - which have a shape similar to coins, represent wealth and prosperity
- Lettuce represents good fortune and prosperity
- Crab or Lobster for life and energy of the dragon



2003 Year of the Sheep (Birth years: 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003)



Those born in the Year of the Sheep are said to be charming, elegant and artistic, who like material comforts. A bit of a worrier, they also have a tendency to complain about things. Jobs as actors, gardeners or beachcombers would suit. **Recipes** The recipes that follow are not the recipes of Cal Wok. The recipes are gathered them from cookbooks and the Internet to represent the various dishes that we will be having.

Chinese Cold Plate

The first course in a formal Chinese meal is always to be seen as an anticipation of what is to come. Thus, an elaborate opening dish, made up of a wonderful assortment of delicacies, is a great compliment to the guests, and a signal to "get serious." They are meant to prepare the palate for the nine or ten other dishes that will follow.

Chinese Brine Pickles

Makes 4 cups of pickles:

- 2 tablespoons salt
- 1 tablespoon Szechwan peppercorns
- 2 to 4 small dried red chile peppers
- 1/2 cup boiling water
- 3 1/2 cups cold water
- 4 to 5 slices fresh ginger, each the size of a 25-cent piece
- 1 tablespoon vodka or dry sherry
- 4 cups total of any combination of the following, cut into bite-size pieces: Broccoli stems, Napa or Chinese celery, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, daikon, green string beans, red



sweet bell pepper

In a mixing bowl combine the salt, peppercorns, chile peppers, and boiling water, and stir until the salt dissolves. Stir in the cold water, fresh ginger, and vodka or sherry. Put the vegetables of your choice into a Chinese pickling jar or 2-quart glass jar. If using a Chinese pickling jar, seal with water according to the instructions. If using a regular glass jar, simply cover with plastic wrap. Do not wrap tightly as gas must escape. Allow the pickles to sit, unrefrigerated, for 24 hours and serve. The pickles will keep for several days if sealed and in the refrigerator.

Looed Beef

Serves 6-8 as an appetizer course, or 4-6 as part of a Chinese meal

2 tablespoons peanut oil
2-3 pounds boneless chuck roast
5 cups Looing Sauce (recipe below)

Heat a large frying pan and add the oil. Brown the meat on both sides, and brown it well. Place the meat in a heavy stove-top covered casserole and add enough looing sauce to cover. Bring to a boil and turn to a simmer. Simmer covered for 1 hour and 20 minutes, or until the meat is tender. Serve the meat hot with a bit of sauce or turn off the heat and allow the meat to cool in the sauce and then slice it thinly for an appetizer course. Save the sauce for other uses.

Looing Sauce

This is often called a "master sauce" since it is used in one of the major methods of cooking in China, simmering in a very rich sauce. This sauce can be used over and over again, as long as you keep it refrigerated and bring it up to boiling temperature before each use. As the flavors change and mellow you can add more of this or that and thus develop your own special master sauce.

4 cups water
1 cup light soy sauce
1 cup dark soy sauce
1 star anise
1/2 cup Chinese rice wine or dry sherry
5 tablespoons sugar
4 slices fresh ginger

Mix all together in a stainless-steel pot and bring to a boil. You can simmer any kind of meat in this that you wish, and the sauce just gets better with each use. Do not put fish of any kind in this sauce as it will be ruined, but chicken, duck, goose, quail, pork, beef, and even lamb will do nicely. A bit of sesame oil and green onion garnish are added just as the dish is served. Remember that now and then you must add more of the ingredients to the sauce.

Jellyfish Salad

Serves 6-8 as an appetizer

This is one of the great dishes in Chinese cuisine. The texture is a bit firm and tender at the same time, and the Chinese love that sort of confusion in the mouth and tastebuds. Dried jellyfish is found in Chinatown. It may be an unusual salad for Westerners, but it is not unusual in China.

1 pound dried jellyfish

Dressing

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon MSG (optional)

2 tablespoons sesame oil

2 tablespoons light soy sauce

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon garlic and red chili paste or hot mustard or horseradish

1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar

1 cup fresh bean sprouts



Cut the jellyfish into 1/8-inch-thin strips. Rinse with water and place in a stainless-steel or glass bowl. Cover with water and refrigerate. Change the water every 30 minutes for a total soaking time of 2 1/2 hours. Drain.

Heat 2 quarts of water to boiling and remove the pan from the heat. Allow to cool for 5 minutes and then plunge the drained jellyfish into the water. Wait 5 seconds and drain and rinse in ice-cold water. Put ice cubes in the bowl at this point. This is the critical step. Do this whole step in a hurry or your jellyfish will not be tender and tasty. Drain well.

Mix the dressing and toss with the jellyfish and bean sprouts.

Shredded Chicken Sesame

Serves 6-8 as an appetizer

1 chicken, 2 3/4 pounds, lightly boiled, skin removed and discarded, boned and shredded.

Use the bones and skin for a later soup stock.

Sesame Garlic Dressing

1 teaspoon sugar

1/2 teaspoon MSG (optional)

2 tablespoons light soy sauce

2 1/2 tablespoons sesame paste (*tahini works fine*)

1 tablespoon sesame oil

1 tablespoon cider vinegar or Chinese red vinegar

1 tablespoon chopped green onion

1/2 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 cloves garlic, crushed
 1/4 tablespoon Chinese hot pepper oil, or to taste

Place the shredded chicken in a bowl. Mix the remaining ingredients together to form a salad dressing. Toss with the chicken and arrange on a platter. Garnish with more chopped green onion, if desired.

Cold Plate recipes from *The Frugal Gourmet Cooks - Three Ancient Cuisine* by Jeff Smith

Prawns with Honey Walnuts

Serves 4 as part of a multi course meal.

Prawn Coating

12 tablespoon cornstarch
 8 tablespoon flour

Marinade

1 tablespoon sesame oil
 3 tablespoon cornstarch
 1 tablespoon white pepper powder
 1 tablespoon chicken powder (Can be bought from Asian food stores)
 4 tablespoon olive oil

Honey Sauce

Thoroughly mix and blend the following ingredients:

1 tablespoon rice wine
 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
 2 tablespoon sugar
 8 tablespoon unsalted mayonnaise
 1/2 tablespoon honey
 1/2 tablespoon Asian hot mustard
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/2 tablespoon sweetened condensed milk

Honeyed Walnuts

8 ounces of walnuts
 1 tablespoon baking soda

Boil ingredients for 20 minutes. Let drain. (You may take off the skin or leave it). Use 6 serving spoons of sugar and 1 serving spoon of maltose. Add 2 cups of water. Cook and constantly stir over medium heat until half the water volume is reduced and mixture becomes thick. Then add walnuts and coat them with mixture. Deep-fry 15 to 20 seconds.



Shell and clean the prawns. Mix completely in the marinade and let it sit for half-hour. Remove prawns, and let them drain. Dissolve the prawn coating with water and then lightly coat the marinated prawns. Deep fry for 30 to 40 seconds until prawns are cooked. Place fried prawns on plate and thoroughly mix with honey sauce. Sprinkle honeyed walnuts on top and serve.

Recipe from Zheng Long Pan-Asian Bistro, 1448 South Main Street, Walnut Creek

Minced Poultry With Walnuts In Lettuce Cups

A favorite banquet dish that's often served on festive occasions as a symbol of longevity. The crisp, chilled lettuce makes a wonderful contrast to the warm filling, and the sweetness of the hoisin sauce marries all the flavors.



1/2 pound boneless, skinless chicken, turkey, or duck
 1 tablespoon oyster flavored sauce
 6 dried black mushrooms
 2 tablespoons cooking oil
 1 teaspoon minced ginger
 1 small carrot, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
 1 small zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
 1 cup diced water chestnuts or jicama
 1 tablespoon rice wine or dry sherry
 1 teaspoon sesame oil
 3/4 cup coarsely chopped toasted walnuts
 12 small iceberg lettuce cups
 Hoisin sauce

Method

Cut chicken into 1/4-inch pieces. Place in a bowl and add oyster-flavored sauce; stir to coat. Let stand for 10 minutes. Soak mushrooms in warm water to cover until softened, about 15 minutes; drain, reserving 1/4 cup of the soaking liquid. Trim and discard stems. Chop caps.

Place a wok over high heat until hot. Add cooking oil, swirling to coat sides. Add ginger and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Add chicken and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add carrot, zucchini, and water chestnuts; stir-fry for 30 seconds.

Add reserved mushroom soaking liquid and cook until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Add wine and sesame oil; cook until heated through. Add walnuts and toss to coat. Serve in lettuce leaves.

Shark's Fin Soup

Serves 4 to 6 as part of a multi course meal



Shark's Fin Soup is one of China's great delicacies. Because it is so expensive and labor-intensive to make, it is a treat that most Chinese equate with banquets or special occasions at home. Nothing compares to the taste of a bowl of Shark's Fin Soup that is well made. The strands have a rich gelatinous texture that is unique. It is extremely prized by the Cantonese, for it is considered to restore and replenish the body, especially if one is weak. Only a fine homemade chicken broth should be used to prepare the soup. Anything less would ruin the shark's fin.

Dried shark's fin can cost from \$60 to well over \$300 per pound, depending on its quality. In the dried form it can be sold as a whole fin, which is most prized, or in a rectangular block that has been processed from the fin. It is also available frozen and canned, but the dried has the best quality. Ideally, each blond strand of shark's fin should be as thick as a fine toothpick, but a fin of this quality is outrageously expensive. Choose dried shark's fin in a block (which is most common form). To prepare, you must first soak the shark's fin; sometimes, and will come out. The soaking is to wash the shark's fin, and the first boiling with the ginger is to rid the shark's fin of its fishiness.

1 block of dried shark's fin, about 7 ounces
3 ounces Smithfield ham with bone.
1 tablespoon light-brown sugar
3 slices (1/2 inch thick) ginger
1 1/2 quarts Homemade Chicken Broth (recipe below)

Cover the shark's fin in cold water and soak for 3 hours, or until softened. Drain the shark's fin, being careful not to lose even a strand of it.

Rinse the ham in cold water. In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup cold water to a boil over high heat. Add the ham and return to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Drain the ham and rinse under cold water. Pat dry with paper towels. Place the ham in a small heatproof dish and add brown sugar.

Bring water to a boil in a covered steamer over high heat. Carefully place the dish into the steamer, cover, reduce heat to medium, and steam 20 minutes, or just until ham is softened. Check the water level from time to time, and replenish if necessary with boiling water, keeping at a simmer. Carefully remove the dish from the steamer, and set the ham aside, discarding any juices that have accumulated in the dish.

In a 2 1/2 quart saucepan, bring 1 1/2 quarts of cold water to a boil over high heat with 1 slice of ginger. Add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil. Turn off the heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Drain in a colander and rinse under cold water again, being careful not to lose a strand of the shark's fin. Discard the ginger.

In a 2 1/2 -quart saucepan, bring the chicken broth to a boil over high heat with the remaining 2 ginger slices. Cut off about one-third of the ham and set aside. Add the larger piece, with the bone, to the broth. When the broth comes to a boil, add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil. Cover, reduce heat to a medium-low, and simmer for 3 hours, or until shark's fin is tender and separates into strands. Discard the ham.

Slice the reserved ham into paper-thin slices. Stack a few slices at a time and cut it into paper-fine shreds; then cut the shreds to make a superfine dust of ham.

When ready to serve, ladle the piping-hot soup into individual bowls and garnish with a sprinkling of ham dust. Serve immediately.

Recipe from *The Wisdom of the Chinese Kitchen* by Grace Young

Homemade Chicken Broth

Makes about 2 quarts

One 4-pound chicken
2 teaspoons salt
2 slices ginger, 1/2 inch thick

Remove any fat pockets from the chicken and rub the chicken all over with salt. Remove as much skin as possible, and rinse the chicken under cold water. Place the chicken in a pot large enough to hold it, and add 10 cups cold water, then place it over medium-high heat. As the water heats, skim the scum that rises to the surface, adjusting the heat so the broth never boils; skim until most of the scum has been removed. Add the ginger, and bring to a boil over high heat. Cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer 3 to 4 hours. Allow it to cool and then strain the broth, discarding the chicken and ginger; cover the broth and refrigerate. shark's fin can cost from \$60 to well over \$300 per pound, depending on its quality. In the dried form it can be sold as a whole fin, which is most prized, or in a rectangular block that has been process from the fin. It is also available frozen and canned, but the dried has the best quality. Ideally, each blond strand of shark's fin should be as thick as a fine toothpick, but a fin of this quality is outrageously expensive. Choose dried shark 's fin in a block (which is most common form). To prepare, you most first soak the shark's fin; sometimes, and will come out. The soaking is to wash the shark's fin, and the first boiling with the ginger is to rid the shark's fin of its fishiness.

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3 ounces Smithfield ham with bone.
1 tablespoon light-brown sugar
3 slices (1/2 inch thick) ginger
1 1/2 quarts Homemade Chicken Broth (recipe below)

Cover the shark's fin in cold water and soak for 3 hours, or until softened.

Drain the shark's fin, being careful not to lose even a strand of it.

Rinse the ham in cold water. In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup cold water to a boil over high heat. Add the ham and return to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Drain the ham and rinse under cold water. Pat dry with paper towels. Place the ham in a small heatproof dish and add brown sugar.

Bring water to a boil in a covered steamer over high heat. Carefully place the dish into the steamer, cover, reduce heat to medium, and steam 20 minutes, or just until ham is softened. Check the water level from time to time, and replenish if necessary with boiling water, keeping at a simmer. Carefully remove the dish from the steamer, and set the ham aside, discarding any juices that have accumulated in the dish.

In a 2 1/2 quart saucepan, bring 1 1/2 quarts of cold water to a boil over high heat with 1 slice of ginger. Add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil. Turn off the heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Drain in a colander and rinse under cold water again, being careful not to lose a strand of the shark's fin. Discard the ginger.

In a 2 1/2 -quart saucepan, bring the chicken broth to a boil over high heat with the remaining 2 ginger slices. Cut off about one-third of the ham and set aside. Add the larger piece, with the bone, to the broth. When the broth comes to a boil, add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil. Cover, reduce heat to a medium-low, and simmer for 3 hours, or until shark's fin is tender and separates into strands. Discard the ham.

Slice the reserved ham into paper-thin slices. Stack a few slices at a time and cut it into paper-fine shreds; then cut the shreds to make a superfine dust of ham. The next day, remove the hardened fat on top. Salt is not added, on the assumption that it will be added to the dish in which the broth is used.

Recipe from *The Wisdom of the Chinese Kitchen* by Grace Young

Braised Yee Mein

20 small Chinese dried mushrooms
1/4 lb Chinese barbecued pork
1/2 lb Bok choy
1 pk Pre-fried noodles (1/2 lb)
1 qt Chicken stock
3 tsp Oil
1/2 lb Bean sprouts
2 Green onions, slivered
1/2 tsp Salt
1/2 tsp Sugar
2 tbsp Oyster sauce
1 tsp Cornstarch



2 tsp Water

- Soak Chinese mushrooms in boiling water for 10 minutes.
- Rinse, squeeze dry, remove and discard stems;
- cut mushrooms into strips, julienne style.
- Cut Barbecued pork into very thin slices.
- Break branches off center stock of bok choy.
- Remove and discard any flowers.
- Peel outer covering off of center stock.
- Cut bok choy diagonally into 2-inch lengths.
- Bring chicken stock to a boil, add noodles, and cook for 5 minutes.
- Drain and set aside.
- Discard the stock, as it will be quite oily.
- Heat wok, add 1 tablespoon oil and stir-fry bok choy, beansprouts, green onions, barbecued pork, and mushrooms for 3 minutes
- Add 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon sugar and toss.
- Remove and set aside.
- Choose dried shark 's fin in a block (which is most common form).

To prepare, you must first soak the shark's fin;

- The soaking is to wash the shark's fin,
- The first boiling with the ginger is to rid the shark's fin of its fishiness.

1 block of dried shark's fin, about 7 ounces

3 ounces Smithfield ham with bone.

1 tablespoon light-brown sugar

3 slices (1/2 inch thick) ginger

1 1/2 quarts Homemade Chicken Broth (recipe below)

- >Cover the shark's fin in cold water and soak for 3 hours, or until softened.

Drain the shark's fin, being careful not to lose even a strand of it.

- Rinse the ham in cold water.
- In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup cold water to a boil over high heat.
- Add the ham and return to a boil.
- Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes.
- Drain the ham and rinse under cold water. Pat dry with paper towels.
- Place the ham in a small heatproof dish and add brown sugar.
- Bring water to a boil in a covered steamer over high heat.
- Carefully place the dish into the steamer, cover, reduce heat to medium, and steam 20 minutes, or just until ham is softened.
- Check the water level from time to time, and replenish if necessary with boiling water, keeping at a simmer.
- Carefully remove the dish from the steamer, and set the ham aside, discarding any juices that have accumulated in the dish.
- >In a 2 1/2 quart saucepan, bring 1 1/2 quarts of cold water to a boil over high heat with 1 slice of ginger.
- Add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil.
- Turn off the heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes.
- Drain in a colander and rinse under cold water again, being careful not to lose a strand of the shark's fin.

- Discard the ginger.
- In a 2 1/2 -quart saucepan, bring the chicken broth to a boil over high heat with the remaining 2 ginger slices.
- Cut off about one-third of the ham and set aside.
- Add the larger piece, with the bone, to the broth.
- When the broth comes to a boil, add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil.
- Cover, reduce heat to a medium-low, and simmer for 3 hours, or until shark's fin is tender and separates into strands.
- Discard the ham.
- Slice the reserved ham into paper-thin slices.
- Stack a few slices at a time and cut it into paper-fine shreds;
- then cut the shreds to make a superfine dust of ham.
- Heat wok, add 2 tablespoon oil and noodles.
- Stir-fry for 2 minutes; then, add the oyster sauce.
- Mix well.
- Add all other ingredients, except cornstarch and 2-teaspoon water
- toss until well mixed.
- Add thickening made by mixing the cornstarch with the cold water.
- Cook for 1 minute, and serve.

Peking Duck

Serves 8 as part of a multi course meal.

4 1/2 pound duck, defrosted and patted dry

Inside Seasoning

1/4 tablespoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder
 1/4 teaspoon MSG (optional)
 1/2 teaspoon sugar
 2 quarts boiling water for blanching



Basting Syrup

1 cup malt sugar (dry or liquid)
 1 cup hot water
 2 tablespoons Chinese red vinegar or red wine vinegar
 3 slices lemon, peel and all

Garnish

Peking Pancakes (recipe below)

Hoisin Sauce

Green Onions or scallions

Mix the inside seasoning together and rub the mixture into the inside of the duck.

Sew up the duck, both head and end. You may use poultry pins for this. Make a large loop of string and place it under the wings of the bird so that you can hang him over a very large bowl. Use a kitchen-cabinet knob for the hanger. Pour the boiling water over the duck and continue ladling the hot water over the bird-about eight times. Allow to drain 10 minutes.

In the meantime, mix the ingredients for the basting syrup together. Drain the bowl beneath the duck of the water. Now, repeat the pouring process, this time using the basting syrup. Allow the duck to dry for about 3 hours. You may use an electric fan for this process.

Place the duck on an oiled poultry rack and place the rack in a pan. Roast at 400 degrees for 20 minutes. Then, turn the oven down to 375F and cook 25 minutes per pound, total cooking time. Include the first 20 minutes in the total time.

Serve the thinly sliced duck, along with the skin, which is the best part, in the pancakes, along with a bit of hoisin sauce and green onions. Make "brushes" of the onions or simply slice them the long way into nice slivers.

Recipe from *The Frugal Gourmet Cooks Three Ancient Cuisine* by Jeff Smith

Peking Pancakes

Makes about 24 pancakes

2 1/2 cups unsifted flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup boiling water
1 tablespoon lard, cut up into little pieces

Mix the flour and salt. Add the boiling water and stir with chopsticks. Add the lard. Knead all and let rest on a plastic counter under a bowl for 20 minutes. m aside, discarding any juices that have accumulated in the dish.

In a 2 1/2 quart saucepan, bring 1 1/2 quarts of cold water to a boil over high heat with 1 slice of ginger. Add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil. Turn off the heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Drain in a colander and rinse under cold water again, being careful not to lose a strand of the shark's fin. Discard the ginger.

In a 2 1/2 -quart saucepan, bring the chicken broth to a boil over high heat with the remaining 2 ginger slices. Cut off about one-third of the ham and set aside. Add the larger piece, with the bone, to the broth. When the broth comes to a boil, add the shark's fin and return to a rolling boil. Cover, reduce heat to a medium-low, and simmer for 3 hours, or until shark's fin is tender and separates into strands. Discard the ham.

Slice the reserved ham into paper-thin slices. Stack a few slices at a time and cut it into paper-fine shreds; then cut the shreds to make a superfine dust of ham.

Roll the dough into a snake about 1 inch in diameter and cut into pieces 1 inch long. Roll each into a ball and then press out flat to make a small pancake. Brush the top

of one pancake with sesame oil and place another pancake on top of the first. Using a rolling pin, and additional flour if needed, roll out the two pancakes together until they are about 5 inches in diameter. Roll all and keep under plastic wrap.

To cook the pancakes, place them, one pair at a time, in a hot SilverStone-lined pan. Cook until tiny brown spots form on the bottom and then turn the pancake over, cooking the second side in the same way. When the pancakes are done they can be separated into individual Peking Pancakes. To reheat them, simply warm them in a bamboo steamer.

Note: You can save a bit of work in this process if you use a tortilla press. Roll the cut dough into balls and flatten them with the press. Oil one, put another on top, and press the two. Then, using the rolling pin, finish the rolling-out process.

Recipe from *The Frugal Gourmet Cooks Three Ancient Cuisine* by Jeff Smith

Fresh Crab with Ginger and Scallions

Serves 4 to 6 as part of a multi course meal.

This is messy to eat but will worth the effort. Pass a basket of damp hot towels at the table for wiping hands.



- 1 live Dungeness crab (1 1/2 to 2 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6 quarter-size slices fresh ginger
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 4 green onions (including tops), cut diagonally into 2-inch pieces
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1-tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Shao Hsing wine or dry sherry
- 4 teaspoons cornstarch mixed with 2 tablespoons water

Preparation

To kill the crab, hold crab from the rear and place crab on its back. Place the tip of a heavy cleaver on the middle of the crab's body. Hit the top blade of the cleaver with a hammer so that the blade will pierce the crab killing it instantly.

For an alternate method, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Immerse the live crab and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove crab and cool quickly under cold running water.

Pull off large top shell in one piece. Remove and discard gills and spongy parts under shell. Rinse shell and body of crab. With a cleaver, cut body into 6 parts. Twist off large pincers and break off legs. Set aside.

Cooking: Place a wok or wide frying pan over high heat until hot. Add oil, swirling to coat sides. Add ginger, garlic, green onions, and salt and cook, stirring, for 1 minute

or until fragrant. Add crab body and legs. Stir-fry for 30 seconds. Add top shell, broth, and sugar. Cover and cook for 6 minutes. Add soy sauce, wine, and cornstarch solution and cook, stirring until sauce boils and thickens.

Arrange crab legs and body pieces on a platter. Set top shell over crab to serve as garnish.

Recipe from *Martin Yan's Culinary Journey Through China* by Martin Yan



Stir-Fried Chinese Broccoli

Serves 4 to 6 as part of a multi course meal.

Chinese broccoli needs to be washed and drained several hours before stir-frying. Choose broccoli that has buds and no flowers. Flowers indicate that the broccoli is too old. The vegetable is better in colder months, but is available year-round in Chinese produce markets and the Concord Farmers Market.

10 stalks Chinese broccoli, about 12 ounces
 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 3 slices ginger
 3/4 teaspoon sugar
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon Shao Hsing rice cooking wine

Wash the broccoli in several changes of cold water and drain thoroughly in a colander until dry to the touch. Trim 1/4 inch from the bottom of each stalk. Stalks that are more than 1/2 inch in diameter should be peeled then halved lengthwise. Cut the broccoli stalks and leaves into 2 1/2 inch-long pieces, keeping the stalk ends separate from the leaves and buds.

Heat a 14 inch flat-bottomed wok or skillet over high heat until hot but not smoking. Add the oil and ginger, and stir-fry 30 seconds. Add only the broccoli stalks and stir-fry 1 to 1 1/2 minutes until the stalks are bright green. Add the leaves, and continue cooking for 1 minute until the leaves are just limp.

Sprinkle on the sugar, salt, and rice wine. Stir-fry 2 to 3 minutes, or until the vegetables are just tender but still bright green. Serve immediately.

Steamed Rock Cod

Serves 4 to 6 as part of a multi course meal.

For steaming a whole rock cod, it's best to use a cake rack set



into a 14-inch skillet. Most oval platters large enough to hold the fish will not fit into a bamboo or metal steamer basket. The platter used for steaming should be heatproof and have slightly sloping sides, so that the juices that form during cooking do not spill over. Rock cod is known as *seck ban* in Cantonese, and has a delicate texture. It is widely available in California, where several species of rock cod, also known there as rockfish, are found along the Pacific Coast. Black sea bass, snapper, or small striped bass would be appropriate substitutes.

One 1 1/2 pound rock cod, cleaned and gutted, with head and tail intact
1 1/2 teaspoon salt
4 Chinese dried mushrooms
1 1/2 teaspoon finely minced garlic
3 tablespoons finely shredded ginger
2 scallions, finely shredded
1 tablespoon Shao Hsing rice cooking wine
1/2 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons thin soy sauce
Cilantro sprigs

Thoroughly rinse the fish in cold water and drain. Gently rub the cavity and outside of the fish with salt and rinse again. Place fish on a rack and allow to air dry. In a medium bowl, soak the mushrooms in 1/4 cup cold water for 30 minutes, or until softened. Drain and squeeze dry. (Reserve remaining mushroom liquid to flavor soups.) Cut off and discard the stems, and thinly slice the caps.

Place the fish on a heatproof oval platter with sloping sides (be sure it fits in the skillet to be used for steaming without touching its sides. Trim the fish tail, if necessary, to fit the fish onto the platter. Evenly sprinkle mushrooms, garlic, ginger, and half the scallions on the fish. Drizzle with rice wine and sprinkle with the sugar.

Set a cake rack in a 14 inch skillet and pour in about 1/2 inch of water. Cover the skillet, and bring water to a boil over high heat. Carefully place the platter over crab to serve as garnish.

Recipe from *Martin Yan's Culinary Journey Through China* by Martin Yan



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10 stalks Chinese broccoli, about 12 ounces
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
3 slices ginger
3/4 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt

into the steamer, cover, and steam 13 to 15 minutes on high heat or until fish flakes when tested. Check the water level and replenish, if necessary, with boiling water. Test fish for doneness by poking the thickest part with a fork or chopstick; flesh should flake. If not, resteam 1 to 2 minutes, or until fish just flakes. Remove skillet from heat, and carefully remove the platter from steamer and pour off any liquid in the platter.

In a small skillet, heat oil over high heat until hot but not smoking. Sprinkle remaining scallions over fish and drizzle with soy sauce. Carefully pour hot oil over fish. The oil will make a crackling sound as it hits the fish. Garnish with cilantro. Serve immediately.

Recipe from *The Wisdom of the Chinese Kitchen* by Grace Young

Sweet Tapioca Pudding

Serves 4

1/4 cup small tapioca pearls, soaked for 10 minutes
3/4 cup diced honeydew
2 cups water
1/3 cup evaporated milk
1/2 cup sugar



Combine water, evaporated milk and sugar in a pot. Bring to boil. Add tapioca pearls and cook 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add honeydew and cook until tapioca pearls are translucent, about 1-2 minutes.