



Culinary Institute
of America

Asian Cuisine



Learning Objectives

- List the culinary regions within South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, and China.
- Explain the elements of taste in each Asian country.
- List the key ingredients used in each Asian country.
- Explain the common cooking techniques used in each Asian country.
- Describe the popular dishes representative of each Asian country.
- Prepare a variety of dishes representative of these Asian countries using standardized recipes.

Kitchen Responsibilities



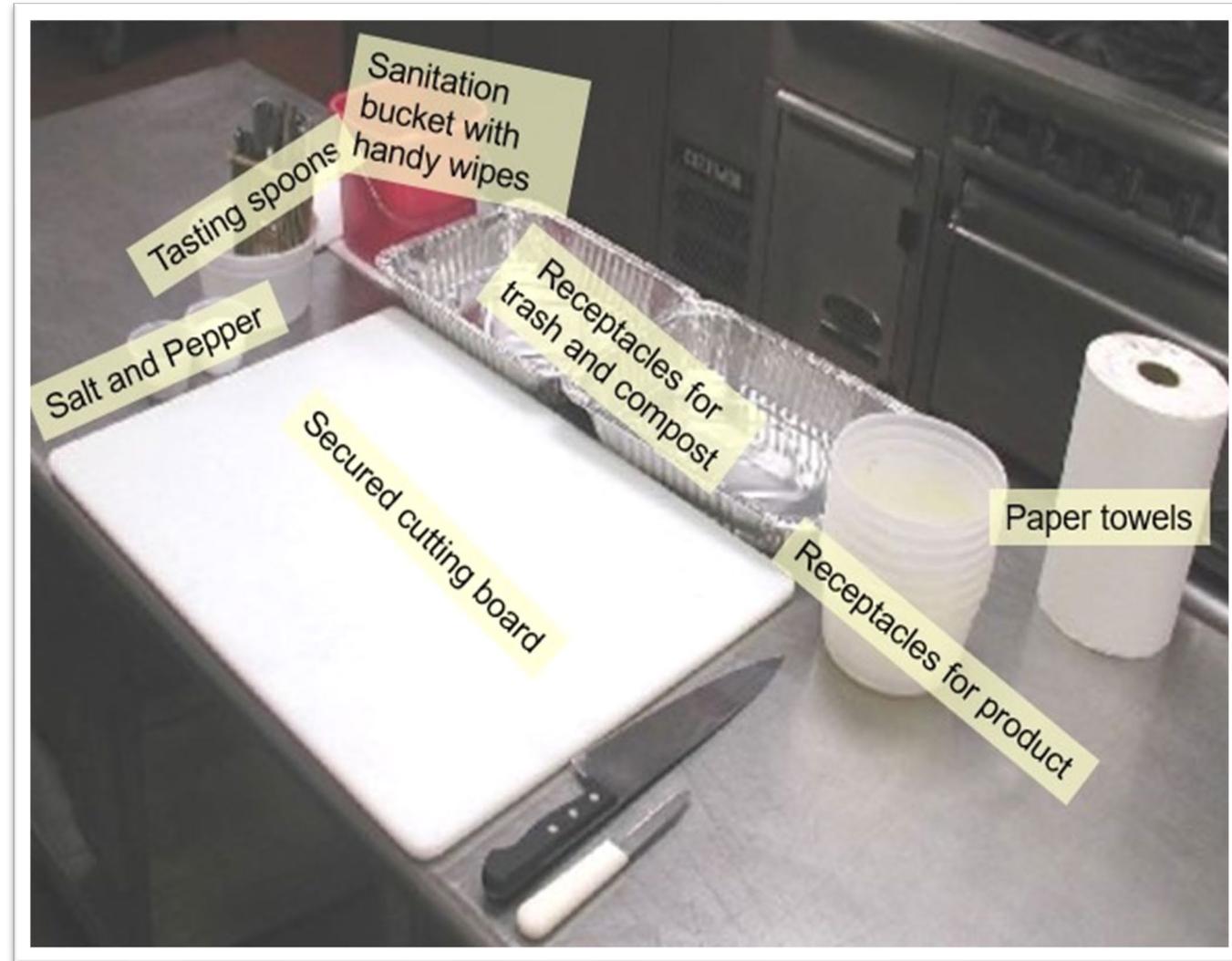
- Keep stations clean
- Clean small equipment as you go
- Wash hands, cutting boards, knives, etc. when switching between meats/ vegetables
- Properly handle and store all food
- Wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat food
- Store equipment correctly
- Leave kitchens clean at class end

Mise en Place

French term for “everything in its place”

What does this mean?

- A clean, organized workstation
- Recipe mise en place (MEP)
- Make sure you read through the **entire** recipe, making note of “pre” steps, yield, temperature, & cook times
- Prep time vs. service
- Physically ready to cook
- Mentally prepared to cook – proper state of mind!



Basic Culinary Preparations



- *Sachet d'épices*: bag of spices
- *Bouquet garni*
- *Mirepoix*: diced celery, onions, carrots, parsnip (variation)
- Onion *brûlé* (burnt onion)
- Onion *piqué*: onion, bay leaf, cloves
- *Remouillage*
- Infusion

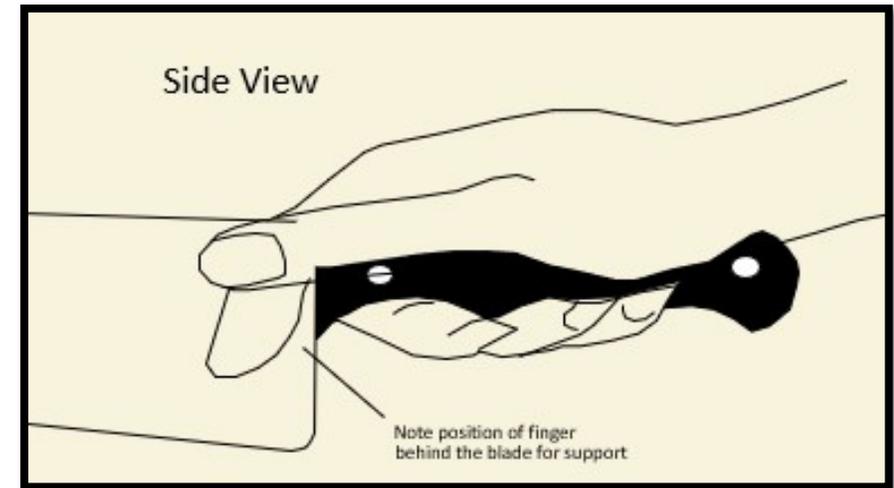
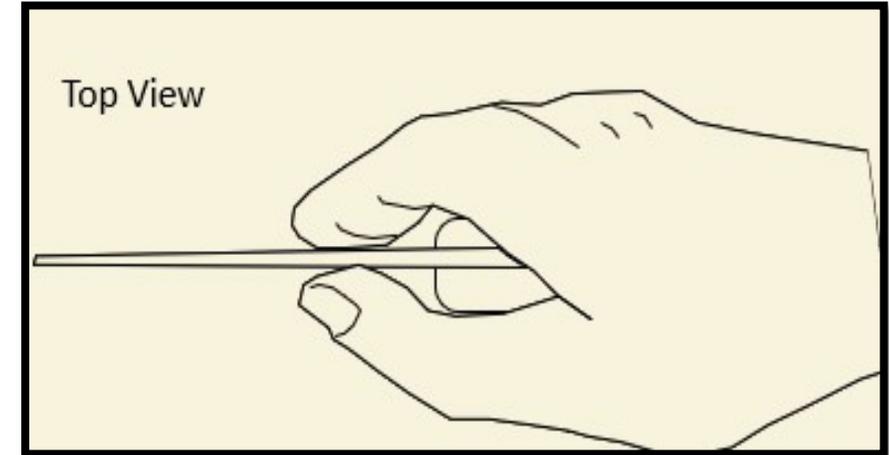
Knife Safety

Always...

- Use a sharp knife
- Use a cutting board
- Place knives on flat surfaces away from table edge
- Have the blade facing away from you
- Keep knives in clear sight – never covered
- Hold knives firmly & cut away from you

Never...

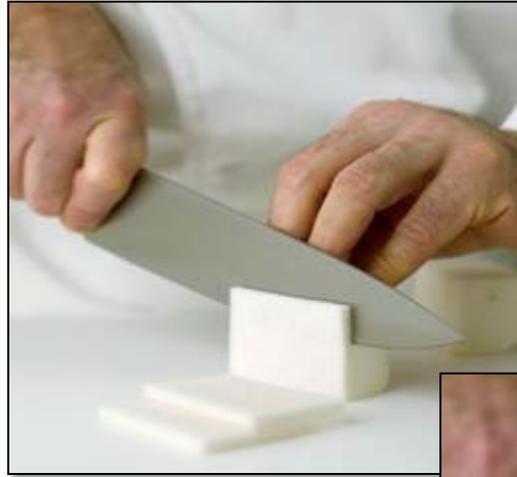
- Grab blindly for a knife
- Pass a knife using the blade
- Carry knives with the point up



Basic Knife Cuts

Julienne & Dice

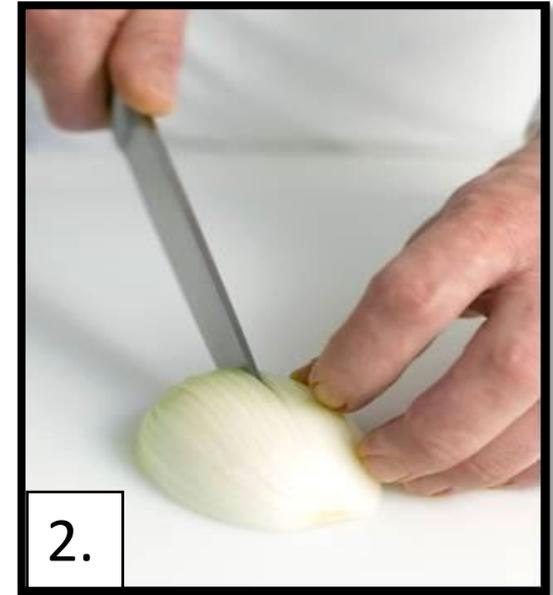
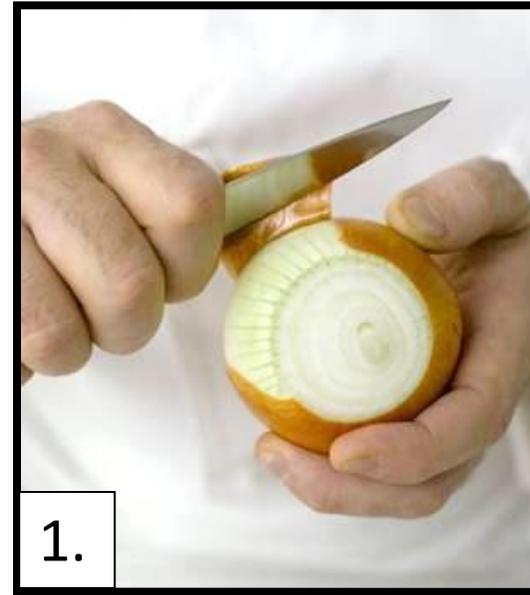
1. Square off the ends and sides.
2. Slice into even slabs of the same thickness.
3. Stack the slabs and slice into even sticks (julienne).
4. Gather the sticks and cut into even cubes (dice).



Basic Knife Cuts

Dice & Mince (Onions)

1. Cut off tip end, peel, and cut through root to tip.
2. Make several evenly spaced parallel cuts, without cutting the root.
3. Make two to three horizontal cuts, without cutting the root.
4. Make even crosswise cuts working from tip to root.



South Korea: Culinary Regions

Gyeonggi: balance of sweet, salty, spicy flavors

- *Bibimbap, jajangmyeon*

Jeolla: rich, savory, earthy flavors

- *Jeon, kimchi, banchan*

Gyeongsang: bold, spicy, seafood-centric

- *Haejangguk, milmyeon*

Chungcheong: light, mild, clean flavors

- *Tteokgalbi, chueotang*

Jeju: smoky, savory, slightly sweet flavors

- Black pork, fresh seafood



Elements of Taste

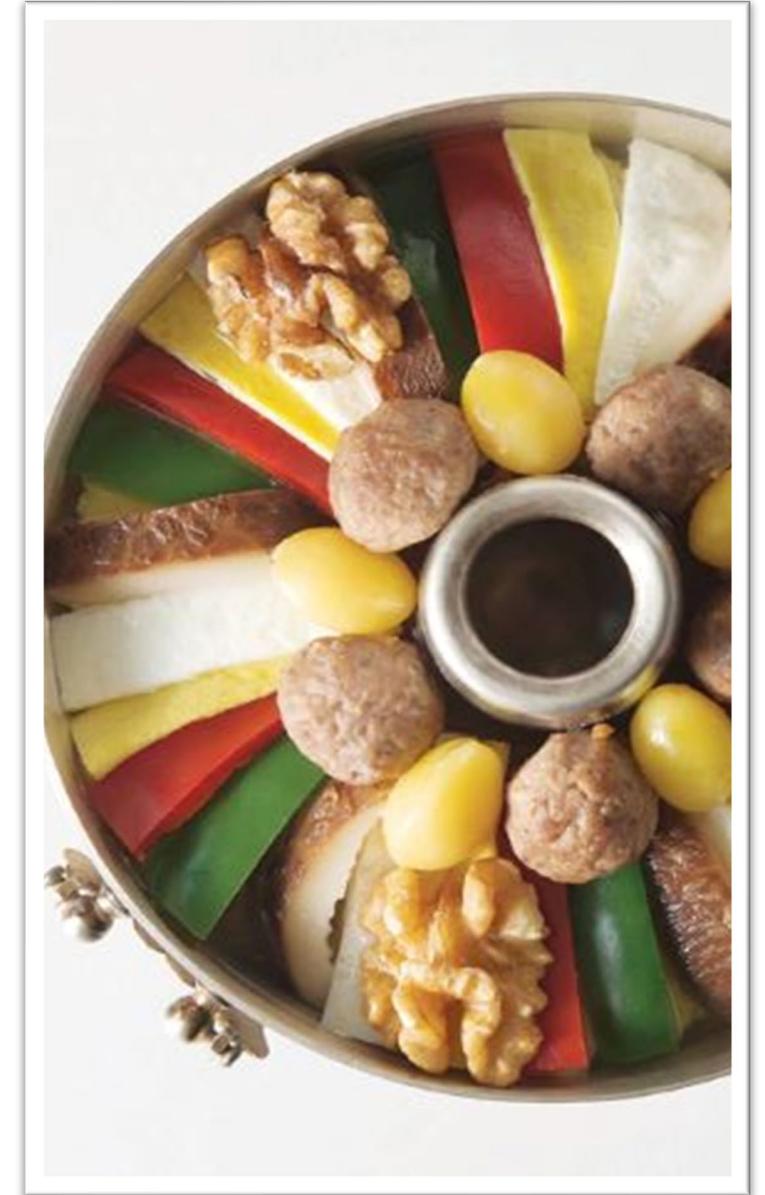
Flavors

- **Savory:** provides depth; fermented ingredients
- **Spicy:** bold heat
- **Subtly sweet:** balance/enhances savory flavors
- **Sour:** tangy sharpness, cleanses the palate
- **Salty:** enhances flavors, adds depth

Aroma: ginger, garlic, scallions

Textures: diverse range

Colors: 5 directions (red, yellow, white, green, black)



Key Ingredients

- Red chili powder (*gochugaru*)
- Sesame seeds, ginkgo nuts (*eunhaeng*)

Starch: glass noodles, rice

Protein: beef, pork, seafood, eggs

Vegetables: cabbage, radishes, spinach, mushrooms, carrots, onions, bell peppers, bean sprouts

- Kimchi: fermented vegetables

Condiments: soy sauce (*ganjang*), fermented red pepper paste (*gochujang*), fermented soybean paste (*doenjang*), fermented fish paste (*jeot*), rice wine (*mirin*), sesame oil



Cooking Techniques

Fermenting: preserves vegetables, develops depth

Simmering: for stews, soups, broths

Steaming (*jjim*): seals in flavor, nutrients

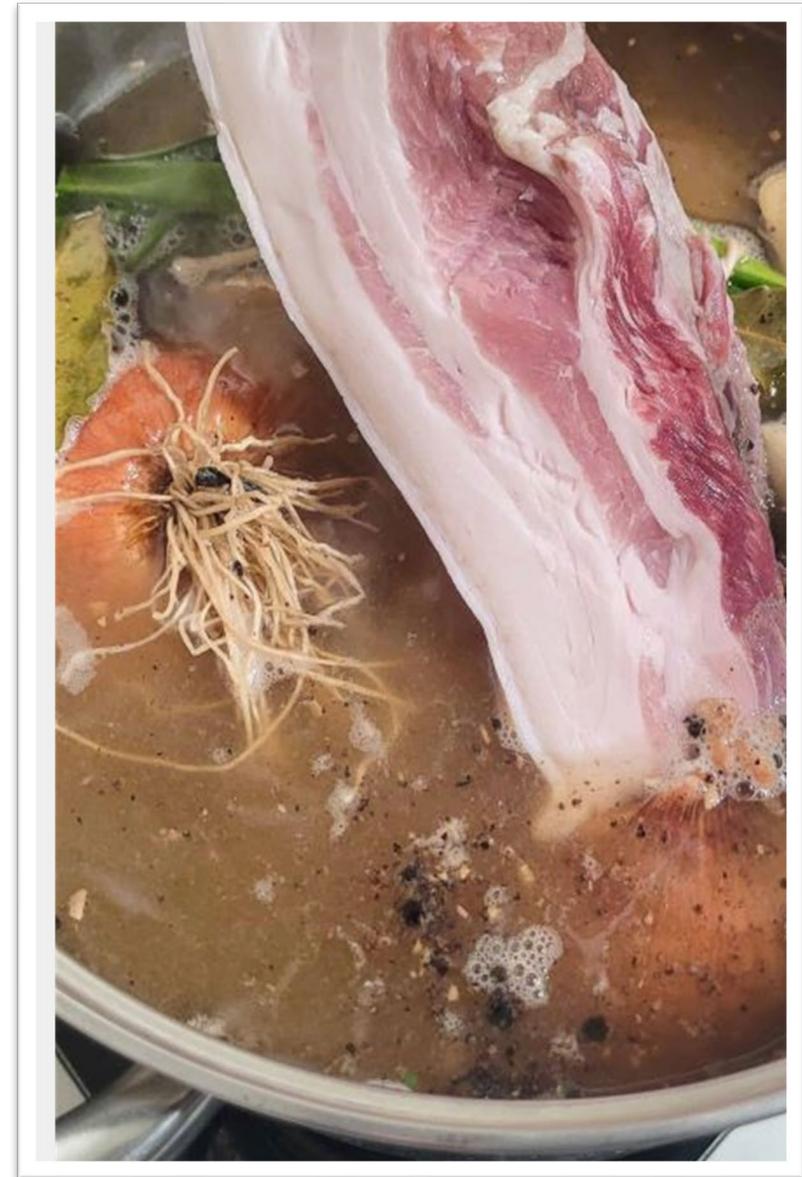
Braising: slow-cooks tough meats, veggies

Stir-frying: quick, high heat for tender ingredients

Roasting: gentle heat for large/tough cuts

Grilling: flame-cooked, ideal for thin, tender cuts

Boiling (*suyuk*): tenderizes meat in seasoned brine



Popular Dishes



Bibimbap:
rice topped with
vegetables, meat,
gochujang sauce



Kalbi:
grilled beef short-
ribs in a sweet soy
sauce marinade



Jap Chae:
sweet potato-based
glass noodles stir-fried
with meat and
vegetables

Key Ingredients



- **Shrimp Paste (*Belacan*):** pressed into a block; once roasted, adds flavor depth
- **Coconut Milk/ Cream:** coconut flesh grated with water, strained, pressed
- **Tamarind:** musky, sweet + sour flavor; fresh pods, paste, or liquid concentrate
- **Lemongrass:** lemon flavor, hint of ginger; use the main inner yellow stalk, minced very fine

Key Ingredients

- **Dried shrimp:** sundried, strong sea flavor and aroma, salty umami taste
- **Red Chiles:** fresh or dried, add varying degrees of heat
- **Palm Sugar:** unrefined sweetener from sap of palm flower, less sweet, caramel flavor
- **Dark Soy Sauce:** fermented longer, more intense flavor, less salty, adds caramel color



Spicy Dried Shrimp (*Hae Bee Hiam*)



- Popular condiment
- Made of dried shrimps, spices
- Spicy, salty, tinge of sourness, lingering umami taste
- Serve with rice or noodles, in stir-fries, or as a filling or topping

Hainanese Chicken Rice

- Poached chicken served with chili-ginger-garlic sauce, flavored rice
- Garnished with cucumber slices boiled in chicken broth, soy sauce, sesame oil
- Created by Chinese immigrants from Hainan province



Laksa



- Spicy rice noodle soup with chicken, prawns, or fish
- Soup base can be rich and savory coconut curry or fresh and sour tamarind broth
- Wide variety of regional and vendor-specific differences

Chili Crab

- **Mud crabs** deep-fried in oil, fried in **chili sauce** of lemon juice, vinegar, sambal, tomato paste, egg
- **Complex flavor blend:** umami of crab, tangy-sweet tomato ketchup, savory belacan, spicy chiles, hints of lemongrass, galangal



Stir-fried Noodles (*Char Kway Teow*)



- Flat rice noodles
- Stir-fried with garlic, soy sauce, chili paste, prawns, cockles, chives, Chinese sausage, bean sprouts
- Common breakfast dish sold at food stalls
- Variations can include fishcake, cuttlefish, squid, lobster

Malaysian Cuisine

- Multi-ethnic population: Malay, Chinese, Indians, indigenous peoples
- Culinary ties with Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines
- Arab, Thai, Portuguese, Dutch, British influences
- Complex symphony of flavors
- Wide variety of condiments, herbs, spices



Malaysian Cuisine

- West and east regions
- Each with unique cuisine, influenced by geography, history, cultural identity



Key Ingredients

- **Chicken sausage:** a fusion of flavors, cultural diversity
- **Pandan Leaves:** sweet, floral aromatics, vibrant hues
- **Water chestnuts:** nutritious, crisp texture, sweet
- **Gai Choy:** vegetable, spicy, vibrant coloration, crispy
- **Ghee:** clarified butter, versatile, nutty aroma, rich flavor



Common sweeteners



- **Palm sugar:** rich, caramel flavor, crystalized
- **Gula Melaka:** dense, sticky, toffee flavor, coconut aroma, smoky undertones
- **Gula Jawa:** less sweet, rich, caramel, butterscotch flavor, amber color, smoky

Spice pastes



- **Rempah:** paste of spices, aromatic alliums, intense flavor, wet blend
- **Curry paste:** pureed blend of aromatic spices, herbs, vegetables

Malay Spices: The 4 siblings

- **Cinnamon:** strong, rich aroma, spicy, used as sticks
- **Cardamom:** use whole pods, fragrant, sweet
- **Cloves:** strong, sweet, bitter flavor, warm
- **Star anise:** adds sweetness and complexity



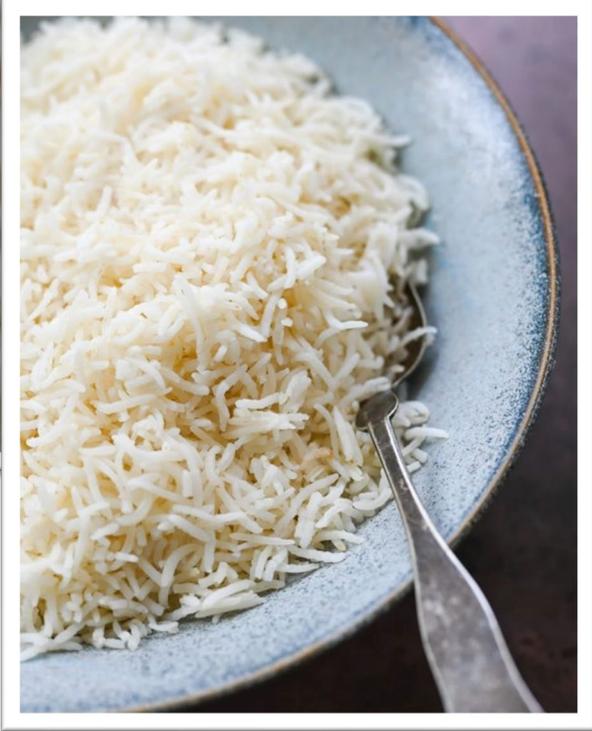
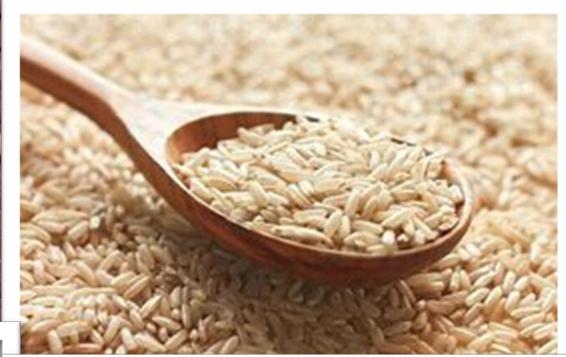
Aromatics



- **Candle nuts:** pleasant, warm, subtle earthy fragrance
- **Lemongrass:** fresh, citrusy aroma, hints of rose, earthy notes
- **Coriander:** spicy, warm, nutty, citrusy smell,
- **Turmeric:** citrusy aroma, woody, floral, earthy notes
- **Cumin:** pungent, earthy aroma

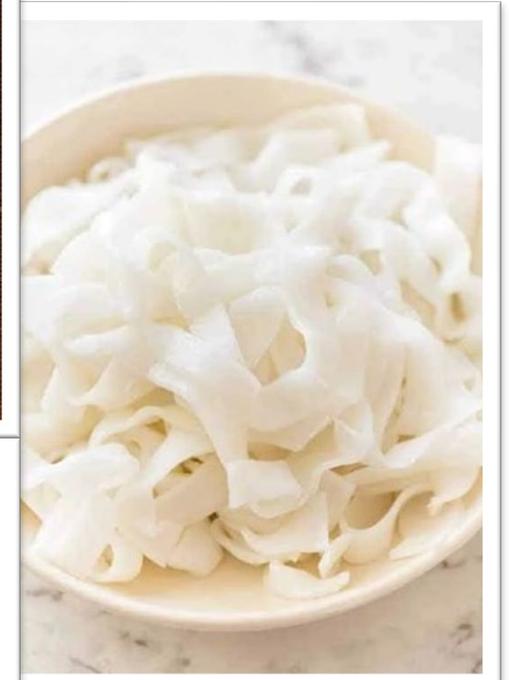
Rice

- **Polished white rice:** most common, boosts metabolism
- **Brown Rice:** more common in rural areas, heart healthy
- **Round grain rice:** in the South, supports nervous system
- **Basmati Rice:** in the North, high in fiber and antioxidants



Noodles

- **Mee:** chewy, springy, yellow hue, used for stir fry's
- **Kway Teow:** thin rice noodles, soft, chewy, stir fry's, soups
- **Mee Hoon:** thin, delicate strands, used for soup, salads, stir fry's
- **Rice noodles:** smooth texture, thicker version of Mee Hoon



Cooking Techniques

- Stir-frying
- Steaming
- Deep-frying
- Simmering
- Boiling
- Smoking
- Roasting



Vietnam: Culinary Regions

Northern

- Less spicy, sour flavors: tamarind, limes
- Light + balanced flavors highlight natural taste of ingredients

Central

- Intensely spicy: chili peppers, shrimp sauces

Southern/ Mekong Delta

- Pronounced sweetness: palm sugar, coconut milk
- Melting pot of regional, foreign flavors



Elements of Taste

Flavors

- **Sweet:** balance sour/bitter (sugar, fruits, certain vegetables)
- **Sour:** tangy (vinegar, tamarind, unripe mangoes)
- **Salty:** depth, enhances flavors; fish/soy sauce
- **Spicy:** pungency (chili peppers, ginger, garlic)
- **Bitter:** cleanses the palate (cilantro, bitter melon, dark chocolate)

Textures: contrasting in a single dish

Colors: vibrant hues from turmeric, pandan, beetroot, ramie leaves



Key Ingredients

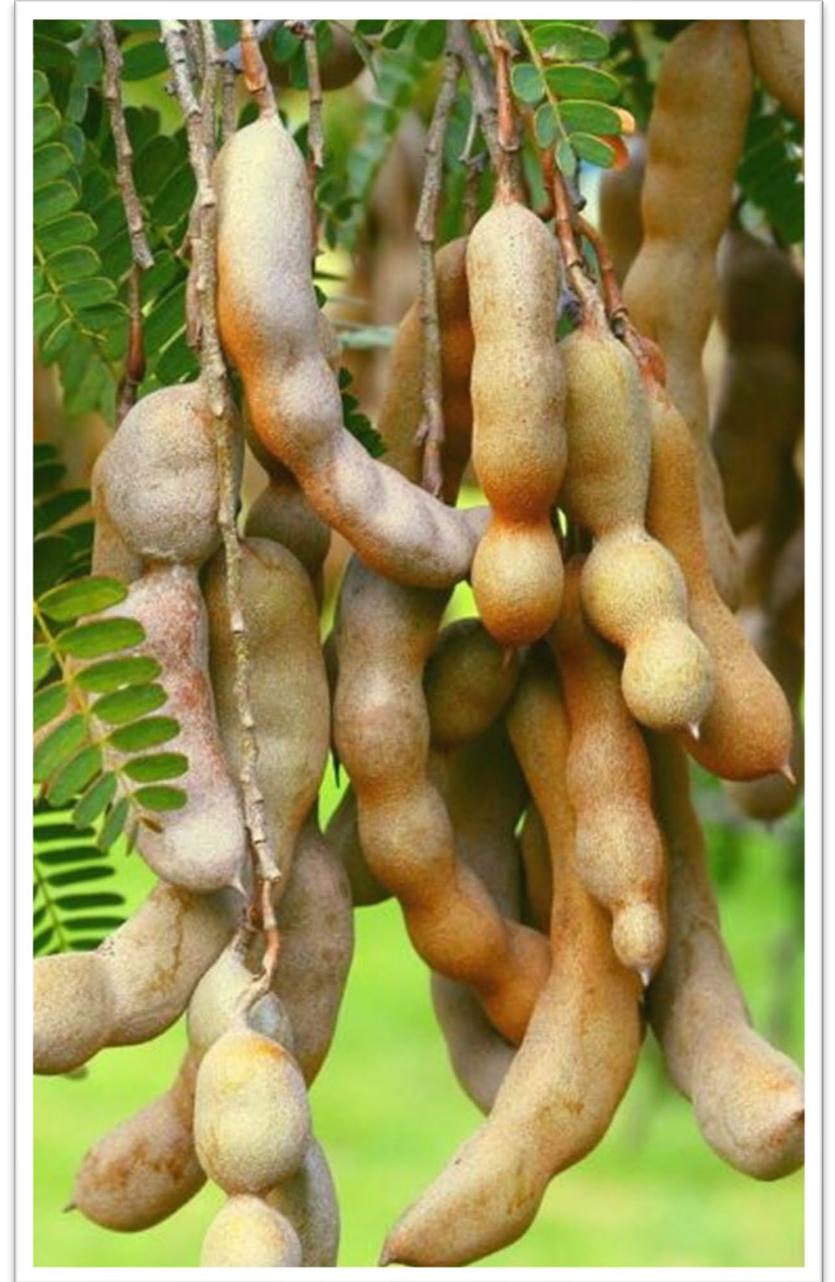
- Banana blossoms
- Tamarind fruit
- Salted black beans
- Peanuts

Herbs: Vietnamese coriander, Thai basil, perilla leaf, lemongrass, sawtooth, fish mint

Rice: Jasmine, sticky, brown, purple, red cargo

Noodles: rice vermicelli, rice sticks, yellow/wheat/egg, glass, tapioca

Sauce: fish (*Nước Mắm*), oyster, hoisin, soybean, light soy



Cooking Techniques

Grilling: over open flame; adds smoky flavors, creates crispy edges

- Grilled pork with rice noodles (*bun cha*)

Stir-frying: quick cooking of vegetables, seafood, meat

Simmering: cooked in broth to develop flavors

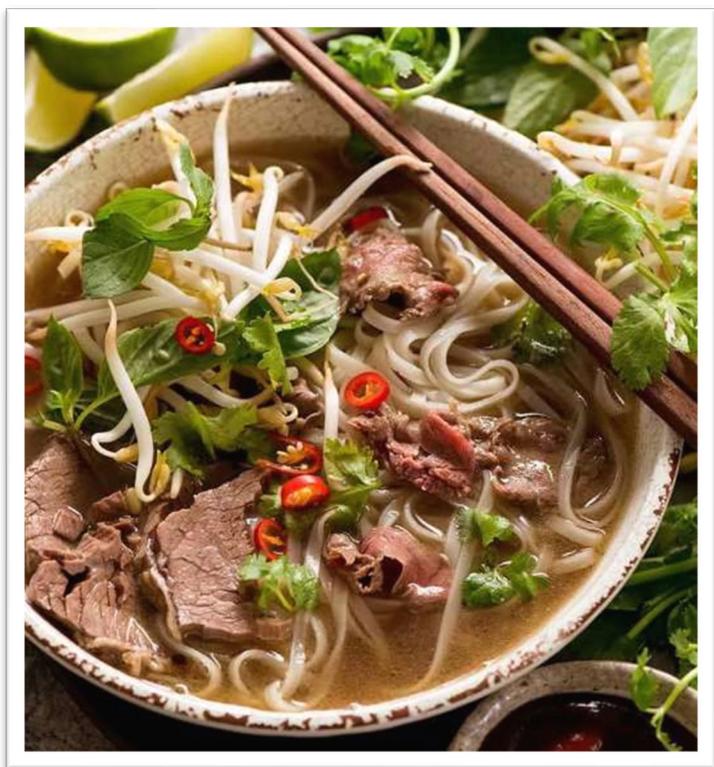
- Noodle soup (*Pho*)

Pan-frying: common for meats and vegetables

Blanching: quick cooking of vegetables; preserves color and texture



Popular Dishes



Pho:

salty broth with rice noodles, herbs, meat



Cha Ca:

Firm white fish marinated in galangal, turmeric, fish sauce, lemon juice

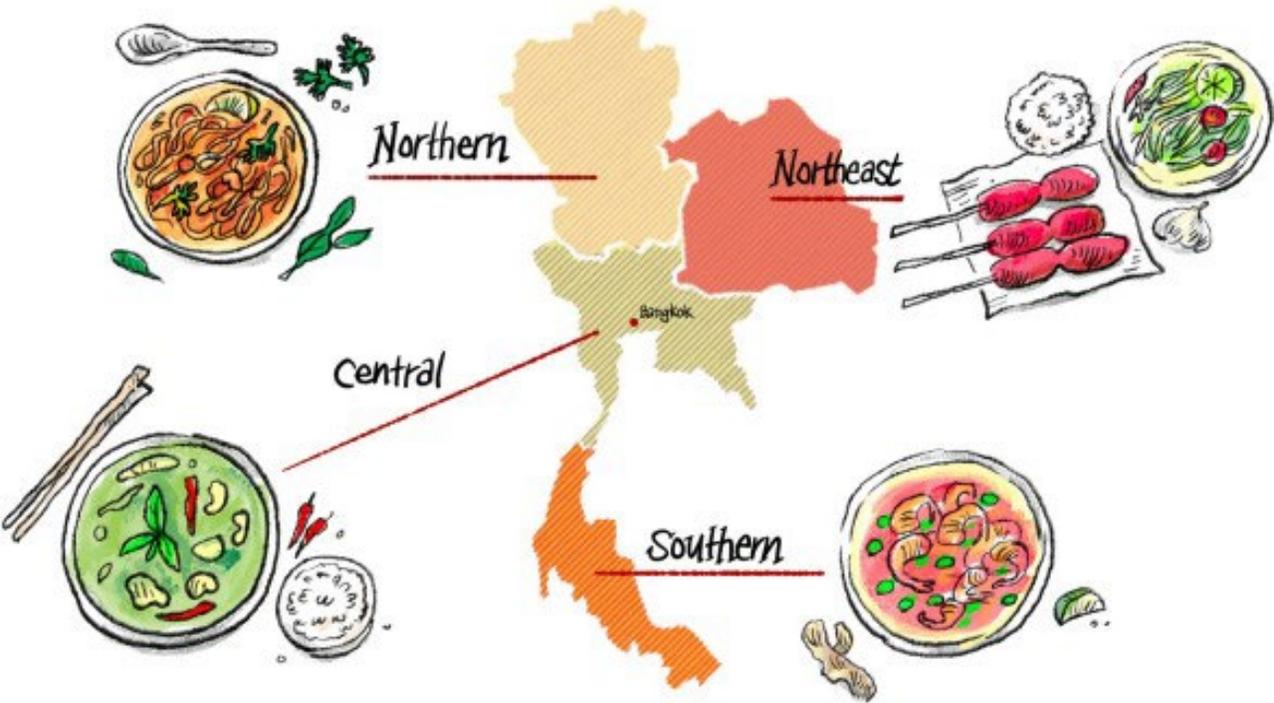


Summer Rolls

(*Gỏi cuốn, Nem cuốn*): rice paper wrappers filled with fresh herbs, vegetables, protein, vermicelli noodles

Thailand: Culinary Regions

Thailand's Regional Cuisines



Regional variations correlate to neighboring countries, climate, geography

Northern: cool valleys/ forested mountains; shares dishes with Burma, Laos, Yunnan China

Northeast: arid plateau; influenced by Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam

Central: flat, wet, rice-growing plains; coconut milk

Southern: bordered by seas; curries, chiles, spices; elements of India, Malaysia, Indonesia

Elements of Taste

Flavors

- **Sweet:** mild contrast to bold flavors (palm sugar, coconut milk, fruit)
- **Sour:** tangy, adds depth (lime, unripe fruit)
- **Salty:** balances sweetness, acidity (fish/soy sauce)
- **Spicy:** adds intensity; Thai chilies

Textures: varied; crispy, soft, chewy

Colors: vibrant, from chilies, basil, turmeric

Aroma: lemongrass, galangal, garlic, coriander, basil, cardamom, nutmeg



Key Ingredients

Noodles: egg (*bah mee*), glass (*woon sen*), rice

Rice: basmati, Jasmin, long/short, broken, black, sticky

Proteins: tofu, chicken, shrimp

Thai Bird's Eye Chili: fruity taste, mellow, lasting heat (50k-100k Scoville)

Galangal: peppery, spicy rhizome with a zesty bite and hint of pine

Herbs: lemongrass, cilantro, chives, Makrut lime leaves

Spices: tamarind

Condiments: fish/shrimp paste



Cooking Techniques

Stir-frying: in a wok, quick cooking

Grilling: charcoal fired

Steaming: often wrapped in banana/bamboo leaves, locks in moisture/flavors

Simmering: soups, develops flavors

Common daily techniques: deep frying, pan-frying



Popular Dishes



Pad Thai:

Stir fry with rice noodles, eggs, tofu (or other protein) and a sweet and savory sauce



Thai Curry:

Spiced coconut milk-based sauce with vegetables and meat



Mee Krob:

Deep fried rice noodles with sweet and sour sauce

China: Culinary Regions

Xin Jiang

- Muslim influence
- Stewed lamb dishes
- Kebabs
- Millet

Sichuan

- Hot/spicy food
- Szechwan "fagara" peppercorns
- Fu-yung -egg white thickened

North

- Wheat
- Corn
- Millet

South

- Rice

Beijing

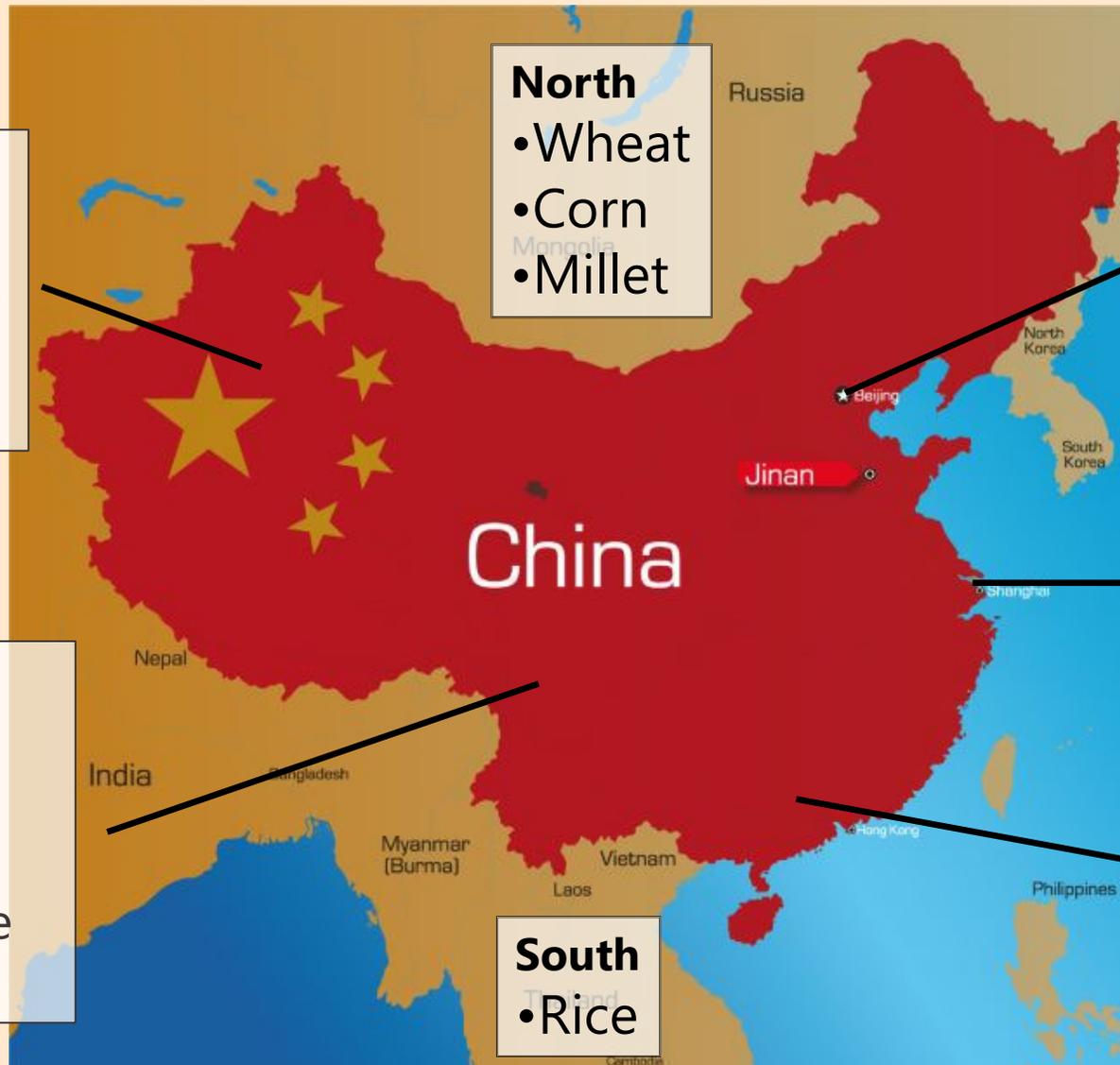
- Steamed buns
- Peking duck
- Table bbq
- Mongolian fire-pot

Shanghai

- Red cooking
- Bird's nest soup
- Chingkiang vinegar

GuangDon (Canton)

- Lacquer roasting
- Cha shiu "cha shao"
- Fruits in cooking "Sweet and sour"
- Black bean sauces



Elements of Taste

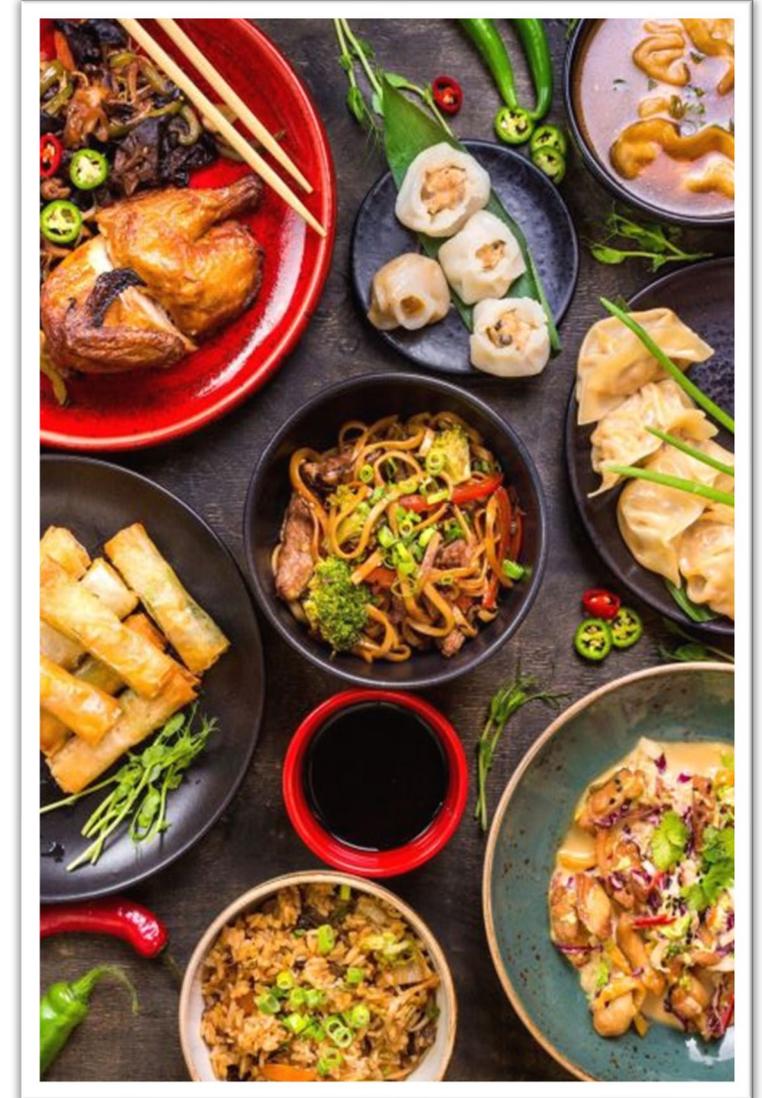
Aroma: 4 key ingredients: green onions, ginger, garlic, wine

Key aromatic pairings:

- Ginger + garlic + green onion
- Green & red chiles
- Hot chili paste + fermented soybeans
- Five spice powder: star anise, Szechwan pepper, cinnamon, clove, fennel
- Fermented black beans

Flavors: sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent/spicy

Textures: each dish offers one or several



Key Ingredients

Tofu: can be fresh or processed; varying softness levels

Vegetables: bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, string beans, water spinach, Chrysanthemum leaves (*Tong hao*), shitake mushrooms, dried lily buds, pickled vegetables

Noodles: various types/uses, enjoyed at all meals

Spices: Sichuan peppercorns, white pepper

Condiments: soy, oyster, hoisin sauces

Other: sesame oil, sesame seeds, peanut oil, black vinegar, Shaoxing rice wine



Cooking Techniques

Stir-frying: quick cooking, food cut into small uniform pieces

Velveting: marinating & gentle cooking, tenderizes proteins

Steaming: delicate foods, no stirring, locks in flavor/moisture

- Types: bamboo & wok

Hot pot: cooking various ingredients in a pot of broth at the dining table

Common daily techniques: deep-frying, simmering, boiling, smoking, roasting



Popular Dishes



Biang Biang noodles:
thick, broad, hand-pulled noodles seasoned with chili, garlic, Sichuan pepper



Dim Sum:
a variety of small, steamed or fried dishes, including dumplings, buns, pastries



Peking duck:
crispy-skinned duck served with thin pancakes, scallions, and a sweet bean sauce



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Any Questions?