

## Fragrant Roast Pork Serves 4–6



1 tablespoon cooking oil  
500 g roast pork, cut into 3-cm pieces  
1 tablespoon oyster sauce  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 spring onion (scallion), cut into 3-cm lengths  
a handful of coriander (cilantro), chopped

1. Heat a wok over medium heat. Add oil and roast pork. Stir around wok for 2–3 minutes until pork is warmed through.
2. Add oyster sauce and sugar. Mix until roast pork is well coated with sauce. Taste and adjust with more sugar if necessary.
3. Stir through spring onion and coriander until well mixed.
4. Dish out and serve with rice.

## Sago and Taro Sweet Soup Serves 4–6



1.25 litres (5 cups) water  
80 g (1/2 cup) sago, rinsed and drained  
450 g taro, peeled, rinsed under cold water and diced  
60 g rock sugar + more if needed  
500 ml (2 cups) coconut milk + more if needed

1. Bring 500 ml (2 cups) water to a boil over high heat in a saucepan. Add sago and cook until translucent. Stir constantly to prevent sago from sticking to the bottom of the pan. Using a fine sieve, rinse sago under cold water. Set aside.
2. Boil taro in the same saucepan until soft. Drain and rinse. Set aside one-quarter of taro. Mash remaining taro with a fork until paste-like.
3. Bring remaining water and rock sugar to a boil over high heat. Reduce to medium heat, then add mashed taro and coconut milk. Stir well to loosen taro.
4. Bring soup to a simmer for 4–5 minutes. Stir constantly to prevent taro and coconut milk mixture from sticking to the bottom of the pan.
5. Once sugar has dissolved, taste and adjust seasoning with more sugar or coconut milk if necessary.
6. Add sago. Turn off heat.
7. Ladle into small soup bowls and serve.



In *The Little Cantonese Cookbook*, cooking instructor Deborah O'Neill-Lowe has put together a collection of 42 treasured home-style recipes, passed down from her grandmother and mother. From classic favourites such as braised pork belly with *mui choy* and fragrant chicken and *lap cheong* rice to comforting soups such as watercress, carrot and pork soup and lotus root soup, this handy cookbook showcases a cuisine known for its light use of sauces and braising and steaming cooking techniques.

Additional features such as informative headnotes, insightful cooking tips and recipe variations will encourage even those who are new to Cantonese cooking to recreate these flavourful dishes in their home kitchens.

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DEBORAH O'NEILL-LOWE KWOK YUN

*The Little* Cantonese Cookbook

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# *The Little* Cantonese *Cookbook*

A Collection of Classic Home-style Chinese Dishes



*Perfect Souvenir*  
4 full colour  
recipe postcards  
inside!

DEBORAH O'NEILL-LOWE KWOK YUN

## Watercress, Carrot and Pork Soup Serves 4–6



300 g (1 bunch) watercress  
2 litres (8 cups) water  
200 g lean pork  
3 dried honey dates  
1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped  
3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed  
1 mandarin peel (optional)  
2 tablespoons sweet and bitter Chinese almonds (optional)  
2 teaspoons salt

1. Wash and rinse watercress a few times. Soak and set aside.
2. In a stockpot over high heat, bring water to a boil.
3. Add lean pork, dried honey dates, carrot, garlic, mandarin peel and Chinese almonds (if using). Reduce to medium heat, then simmer for 1.5 hours with lid half-covering pot.
4. Add watercress. Give soup a quick stir and simmer for another 30 minutes.
5. Taste and adjust soup with salt to taste.
6. Ladle into soup bowls and serve with main meal.

## Steamed Garlic Prawns Serves 4–6



10–12 small/medium prawns, rinsed  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper  
2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely diced  
1 tablespoon light soy sauce  
1 spring onion (scallion), chopped  
a handful of coriander (cilantro) stems, chopped

1. Pat dry prawns. Trim legs, pointed nose of head and antennae. Remove intestinal tract and sprinkle with salt and ground white pepper. Keep prawns refrigerated until ready to use.
2. Place prawns on a steaming plate. Add garlic, light soy sauce, spring onion and coriander stems.
3. Steam for 4–5 minutes over medium heat. Do not overcook prawns as the meat will be chewy and dry.
4. Turn heat off and let prawns stand in steamer for 1 minute if slightly undercooked.
5. Carefully remove from steamer. Serve hot.



For Review Only

*The Little*  
**Cantonese**  
*Cookbook*

DEBORAH O'NEILL-LOWE KWOK YUN

# For Review Only



*The Little  
Cantonese  
Cookbook*

The publisher wishes to thank Kwok Shih Cheung for the use of the tableware featured on pages 9, 17, 21, 50, 54, 57, 62, 70, 86, 95, 96, 99 and 106 in this book.

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# For Review Only

## *Introduction*

The origins of Cantonese cuisine began in the Guangdong province located at the South-Eastern coastline of China. Bustling cities like Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou are part of this region. Its geographical location shaped the way of the cuisine to become what it is well-known for today. With its subtropical climate and distinct four seasons, Guangdong has the perfect conditions for a thriving agricultural industry. The Pearl River Delta is a richly cultivated farming area located South of the city of Guangzhou (Canton as it was once known). It was this area that opened the doors of China to the rest of the world and so the people of Guangzhou were introduced to exotic and new imported produce and ingredients. Cantonese food is known to have adapted many foreign ingredients to incorporate new flavours into their traditional dishes. Ingredients like curry powder, tomato sauce, Worcestershire sauce and evaporated milk are a few that spring to mind.

The Cantonese are also one of the largest groups of mainlanders to emigrate from China to the four corners of the Western world. With this mass exodus, they introduced foreigners to “westernised” Cantonese foods and what the world associates with food typically found in Chinese restaurants. The Cantonese enjoy an abundance of fresh seafood and produce because of the region’s close proximity to the sea and farming areas. They preserve the sweetness and freshness of the ingredients by only using mild seasoning to capture the natural flavours. The common cooking techniques of steaming and stir-frying are preferred, as they require little intervention to the ingredients.

Savouring all parts of certain produce and livestock is essential to the cuisine and to the people. It is very common for internal organs, duck tongues and chicken feet to be roasted or braised and seen on display or hanging in the front windows of a Chinese roast shop. They do not waste much and even believe that certain parts of offal should be consumed for health and well-being benefits.

As much as the cuisine focuses on freshness, the Cantonese also have ways of preparing ingredients that have strong odours. They have an extensive list of pickled and preserved goods that are used to get rid of the odours. It is with such ingredients

that the cooking techniques of braising or frying will be used to overcome strong unpalatable flavours. Unlike their Northern counterparts, chillies are rarely used in Cantonese cuisine; they have more mild, delicate flavours.

If you have even known a Cantonese you would know their love for soups. Soups are essential to their food culture and help keep the yin-yang in one’s body and soul balanced. The soups are light and usually clear, simmered for a few hours to get the maximum nutrients out of the ingredients. Lean meat or fish as well as bones are used along with vegetables and Chinese herbs to enhance the health benefiting properties. If one’s body system is considered weak, strong, cooling or heaty then only certain ingredients are prepared and consumed. There are many combinations and varieties of soups for the whole family. There are “neutral” soups that don’t require much and can be prepared quickly and easily for a family meal. The family meal usually consists of soup, vegetables and dishes that will go well with rice. The serving sizes for these recipes are based on the dish being part of a shared family meal. Cantonese are superstitious so the number of dishes placed on the table is important. We would never have 4 dishes as the number 4 can be read as death in Cantonese and 7 dishes are only ever served at dinners held after a funeral. Rice is not counted as a dish.

The recipes in this book are the ones I remember the most as a Cantonese. Recipes that my Grandma cooked for us, my Mum cooks for her grandchildren and I cook for my family. I learnt a lot from watching my Grandma Gops in the kitchen. She never had measuring equipment, fancy kitchen appliances or recipes to follow. Her way taught me to use my senses and instincts to cook and perfect a dish. Her dishes always came out tasty and faultless. Grandma always used whatever she had on hand and I admire her for being so resourceful. A trait, I like to think, she’s imparted to me. Use my recipes as a guide and adapt them to suit your family. I have included cup measurements for my recipes which can be measured with a dry measuring cup. Cooking is quite easy and fun once you have the confidence in yourself to try. The most important skill you need when making every dish is patience.

Deborah O’Neill-Lowe Kwok Yun



For Review Only

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# For Review Only

## Watercress, Carrot and Pork Soup Serves 4-6

This nourishing soup is full of goodness. Use pork ribs instead of lean pork if you want to include the health benefits of bone broth. Remember to blanch the ribs before adding to the soup. Watercress is rich in nutrients and antioxidants and low in calories. While the pork can be simmered for some time, the watercress need only be added towards the end of the cooking process to retain its lovely green colour and nutrients.

300 g (1 bunch) watercress  
2 litres (8 cups) water  
200 g lean pork  
3 dried honey dates  
1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped  
3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed  
1 mandarin peel (optional)  
2 tablespoons sweet and bitter  
Chinese almonds (optional)  
2 teaspoons salt

1. Wash and rinse watercress a few times. Soak and set aside.
2. In a stockpot over high heat, bring water to a boil.
3. Add lean pork, dried honey dates, carrot, garlic, mandarin peel and Chinese almonds (if using). Reduce to medium heat, then simmer for 1.5 hours with lid half-covering pot.
4. Add watercress. Give soup a quick stir and simmer for another 30 minutes.
5. Taste and adjust soup with salt to taste.
6. Ladle into soup bowls and serve with main meal.

This soup is considered 'cooling' according to Asian diets so best to not consume if you have a cold or are feeling light-headed. The addition of mandarin peels makes the soup less cooling while Chinese almonds add to the nourishing properties for the soup





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# For Review Only

## Fried Rice Vermicelli Serves 4

It was exciting for me when Grandma used to make this because it was a welcomed change from the mandatory meals of rice. Noodles are a lighter and healthier option. If you do not have roast pork, feel free to use whatever leftover meats you may have such as bacon, ham, roast duck, *char siew* or *lap cheong*. Grandma used to eat this dish with a dollop of English mustard. Out of curiosity I tried it and I've been eating it the same way ever since. Give it a go!

200 g (½ packet) rice vermicelli (*bee hoon*), soaked in warm water to soften then drain  
1 tablespoon light soy sauce + more if needed  
1 tablespoon cooking oil  
1 small onion, peeled, halved and sliced  
2 stalks celery, sliced  
1 small carrot, peeled and julienned  
3 shiitake mushrooms, soaked and thinly sliced  
80 g (1 cup) roast pork  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
50 g (½ cup) garlic chives (*kucai*), cut into 5-cm lengths  
200 g (1 packet) bean sprouts, washed and ends removed  
English mustard, as needed

1. In a bowl, season rice vermicelli with light soy sauce. Mix well.
2. Heat a wok over medium heat. Add oil and sauté onion for 30 seconds.
3. Stir through celery and carrot for 1–2 minutes to combine. Stir through shiitake mushrooms and roast pork. Fry for 1 minute.
4. Add a handful of vermicelli at a time and toss to mix thoroughly.
5. Push vermicelli to one side of wok. Add egg into wok and scramble slightly. Push vermicelli to centre of wok over scrambled egg mixture. Toss to ensure that noodles and eggs are well combined.
6. Add garlic chives and bean sprouts. Toss well to combine.
7. Taste and adjust vermicelli with more light soy sauce to taste.
8. Dish out and serve with mustard or condiment of choice on the side.

Congee makes a great accompaniment with this dish.



For Review Only

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## Stir-fried Scallops and Sugar Snap Peas Serves 4

Cantonese love using the freshest ingredients. They believe that if your ingredients are fresh, then there is no need to flavour them much when cooking. If you are unable to get fresh scallops, substitute with frozen scallops or prawns. Scallops do not take long to cook but they require high heat so cook in small batches to avoid overcooking. With stir-fries, make sure you have everything ready and close by when you start cooking. Add different varieties of vegetables to the dish for a more colourful presentation.

4 large sea scallops, halved lengthways  
water, as needed  
50 g (1/2 cup) carrots, peeled and  
thinly sliced  
55 g (1/2 cup) baby corn  
150 g (2 cups) sugar snap peas  
1 tablespoon cooking oil + more if needed  
1-cm piece ginger, peeled and smashed  
2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed  
3 shiitake mushrooms, sliced

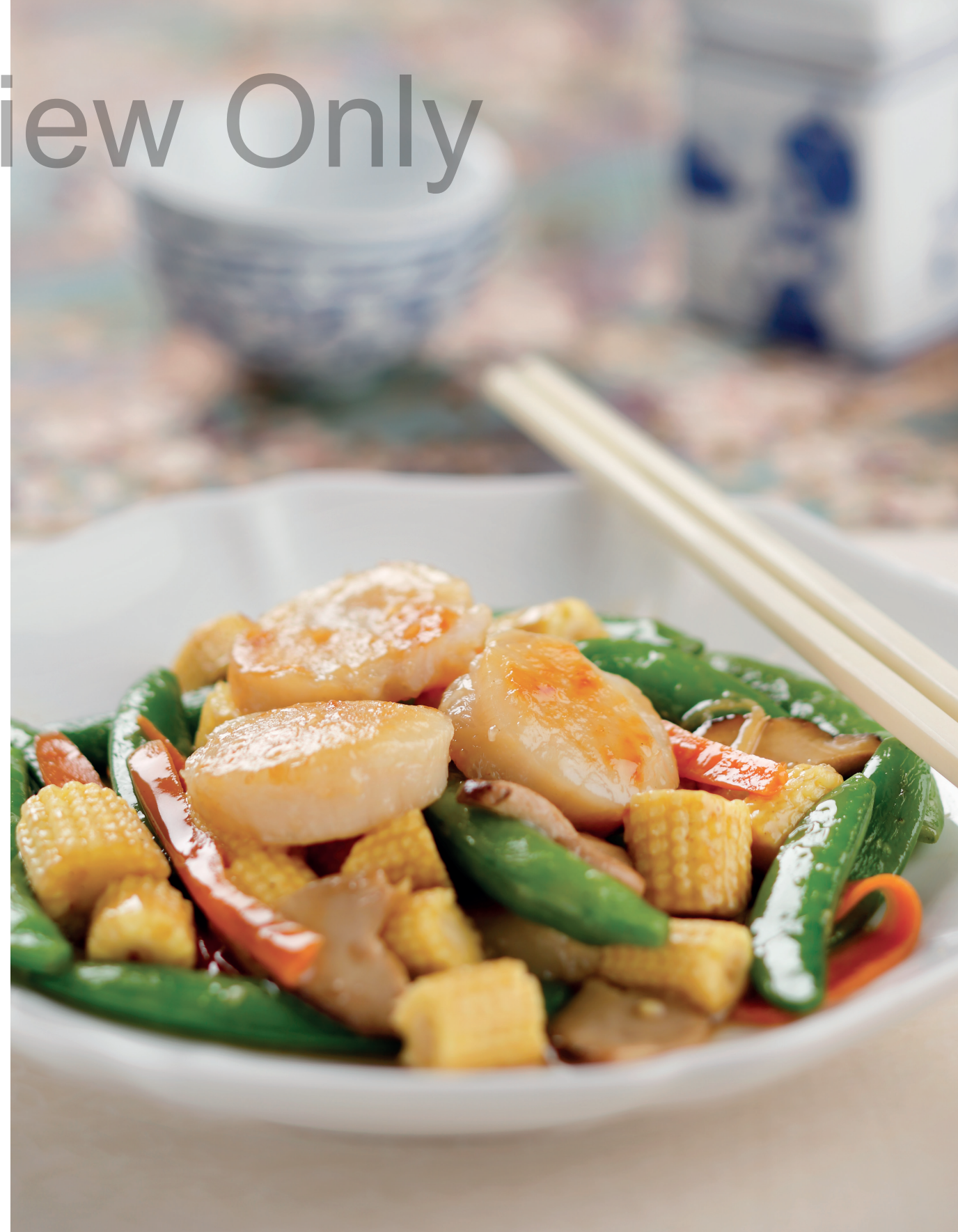
### MARINADE

1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon cornflour  
1 thin slice ginger, julienned

### SAUCE

1 tablespoon oyster sauce  
1 teaspoon cornflour  
2 tablespoons water

1. Prepare marinade. Combine all ingredients for marinade in a bowl.
2. Combine scallops with marinade and mix thoroughly. Set aside to marinate for 10 minutes.
3. In a pot of boiling water, blanch carrots, baby corn and sugar snap peas for 1–2 minutes. Remove, drain and do a quick rinse under cold water.
4. Heat a wok over high heat. Add oil and sear scallops for 1 minute on each side and in batches to avoid overcrowding wok. Remove and set aside on a plate lined with paper towels.
5. Add a little oil to wok if dry. Sauté ginger and garlic until fragrant.
6. Add shiitake mushrooms and fry until slightly softened.
7. Stir through carrots, baby corn and sugar snap peas until combined.
8. Prepare sauce. Mix all ingredients for sauce.
9. Stir sauce into wok to evenly coat ingredients.
10. Return scallops to wok. Gently toss all ingredients until well combined.
11. Dish out and serve.





# For Review Only



Debbie was born in Australia and grew up mesmerised by her maternal grandma cooking all sorts of Cantonese dishes. Grandma Gops never cut corners and was meticulous with every step of preparation. She also taught Debbie the invaluable lesson of using her senses and instinct to perfect a dish.

As a teenager, Debbie watched her mother cook quick meals to feed the family before rushing off to help out at the family restaurant. Being brought up in this environment of two completely different personas in the kitchen, Debbie has taken the best qualities from both women. She finds herself cooking a mix of traditional and modern, simple home-style meals for her own family. Debbie prides herself in preparing from scratch whenever possible, rather than resorting to store bought ingredients. This enthusiasm and passion now sees Debbie passing on her knowledge through her cooking classes to help encourage people to cook for their loved ones.

She currently resides in Singapore and loves being surrounded by all the wonderful fresh South East Asian produce.

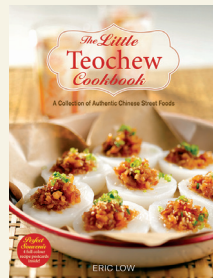
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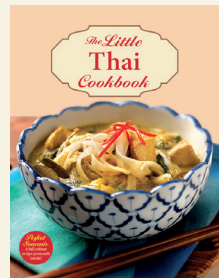
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