

For Review Only Celebrate!

Top Picks from the Chinese Table

Celebrate! Top Picks from the Chinese Table promises to brighten your dinner table with 28 classic recipes from the late Mrs Leong Yee Soo, culinary matriarch and acknowledged authority on Singapore food.

Specially selected to spice up any celebration or gathering, this indispensable collection of recipes includes all-time favourites such as seven-treasure steamed duck, *yu sang* and braised hot pot as well as traditional crowd-pleasing snacks such as spicy prawn rolls, pineapple tarts and *kuih bangkit*.

With fun and entertaining snippets on the diets of the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac, this book makes an ideal keepsake and is an absolute must-have for all occasions!



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COOKERY

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Mrs Leong Yee Soo

Celebrate! Top Picks from the Chinese Table

Marshall Cavendish Cuisine

华族美味佳肴精选



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Contents

All the recipes in this book are selected from the late Mrs Leong Yee Soo's cookbooks in "The Best of Singapore's Recipes" series: *Nyonya Specialties, Hearty Meals, Festive Cooking, Hot & Spicy Treats and Tea time Delights*.

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Introduction

Celebrate! Top Picks from the Chinese Table is a special collection of recipes selected from "The Best of Singapore's Recipes" series, a six-book collection of favourites from the late Mrs Leong Yee Soo, culinary matriarch and acknowledged authority on Singapore food.

This indispensable collection of recipes includes entertaining snippets on the diets of the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac. Based on the traditional Chinese belief that eating foods complementing one's zodiac characteristics can help boost health and in turn, generate prosperity, these fun insights include advice such as consuming calcium-rich food for those born in the Year of the Ox to enjoy good health and a long life span.

Cook together with family and friends and create invaluable memories with loved ones over meals!



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NGOH HIANG

Dried bean curd skin 2 pieces

Eggs 2, *lightly beaten*

Pork 455 g (1 lb), *minced*

Prawns 225 g (8 oz), *shelled, deveined and coarsely chopped*

Onion 1, *peeled and finely chopped*

Crab meat 170 g (6 oz), *steamed*

Cooking oil *for deep-frying*

Cucumber 1/2, *sliced for garnishing*

SEASONING

Salt 1 tsp

Sugar 2 tsp

MSG 1 tsp, *optional*

Soy sauce 2 tsp

Dark soy sauce 1 tsp

Pepper 1 tsp

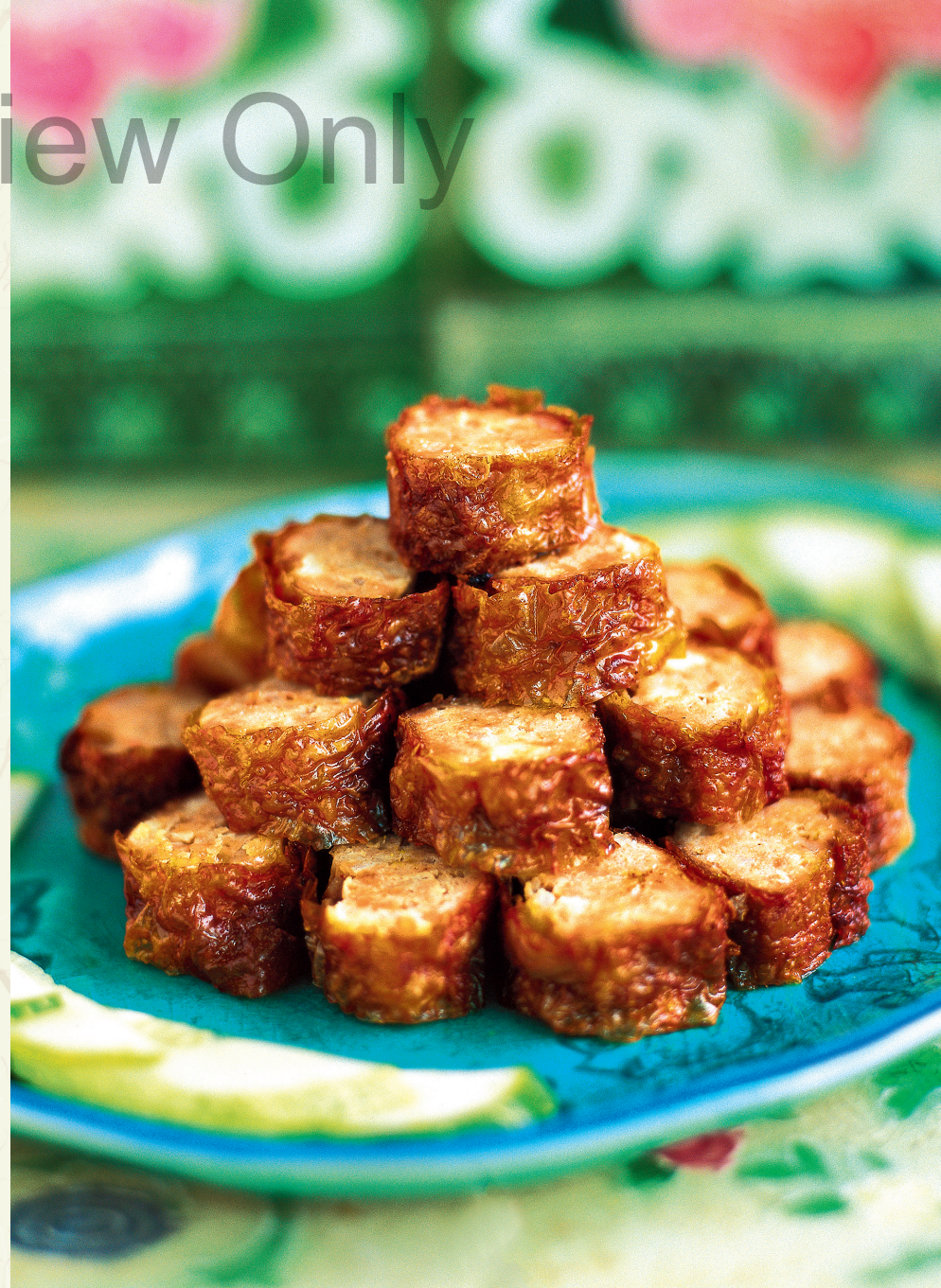
Lard or cooking oil 1 Tbsp

Plain flour 1 Tbsp

Five-spice powder 1 rounded tsp

1. Cut bean curd skin into rectangles 15 cm x 18 cm (6 in x 7 in). Set aside.
2. Prepare the filling: In a large bowl, combine seasoning ingredients with the eggs, then add pork, prawns, onion and the crab meat. Mix well.
3. Place a small portion of the filling mixture on a piece of bean curd skin and roll into a cigar shape. Seal ends with a little plain flour mixed with water.
4. Steam the *ngoh hiang* for 10 minutes, then leave to cool.
5. Now, deep-fry them.
6. When cool, slice and serve with cucumber.

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FRIED PRAWNS IN GINGER AND TOMATO SAUCE

Prawns 600 g (1 lb 5 oz)

Cooking oil 4 Tbsp

Ginger 12 thin slices, peeled

Garlic 3 cloves, peeled and chopped

Salt a pinch

Spring onions 2, cut into
2.5-cm (1-in) lengths

Red chilli 1, seeds removed and
sliced lengthwise

Lard 1 Tbsp, optional

GRAVY

MSG $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp, optional

Sugar $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp

Salt a pinch

Soy sauce 1 tsp

Pepper $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp

Chilli sauce 1 tsp

Tomato sauce 4 Tbsp

Sesame oil 1 tsp

Cornflour 2 tsp, mixed with
4 Tbsp water

1. Trim prawns, leaving the shell on. Wash and drain.
2. Combine gravy ingredients in a bowl and set aside.
3. Heat a wok until hot. Add cooking oil and fry the ginger and garlic until light brown. Add the prawns and a pinch of salt and stir-fry for a minute.
4. Cover wok and cook over moderately high heat for 2-3 minutes or until prawns change colour. Reduce heat.
5. Stir in the gravy ingredients, heat through for $\frac{1}{2}$ minute, then add in spring onions, chilli and the lard. Heat through, then transfer to a serving dish. Serve hot.

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HOT AND SOUR SOUP

Pork fillet 115 g (4 oz), shredded
 Chicken 900 g (2 lb), quartered
 Water 1.5 litres (6½ cups) and
 225 ml (1 cup)
 Peppercorns 1 tsp
 Salt ½ tsp
 Dried Chinese mushrooms 4,
 soaked and thinly sliced
 Carrot 1, peeled, parboiled and
 thinly sliced
 Bamboo shoots 115 g (4 oz),
 thinly sliced
 Ham 55 g (2 oz), thinly sliced
 Cooked crabmeat 55 g (2 oz)
 Egg 2, beaten with 2 Tbsp water
 Lard 1 Tbsp
 Sesame oil ½ tsp
 Spring onions 2 Tbsp,
 coarsely chopped
 Pepper

MARINADE

Salt a pinch
 MSG a pinch
 Sugar a pinch
 Tapioca flour 1 Tbsp, mixed with
 1 Tbsp water

SEASONING

Salt 1 tsp
 MSG 1 tsp, optional
 Soy sauce 1 Tbsp
 Thai fish sauce 2 Tbsp
 Sugar 1 tsp
 Vinegar 2 Tbsp
 Tapioca flour 2 Tbsp mixed with
 225 ml (1 cup) water

1. Season pork with marinade ingredients and set aside.
2. To make stock, boil chicken in 1.5 litres (6½ cups) water, peppercorns and salt. Boil rapidly for 10 minutes, removing scum as it rises.
3. Add 225 ml (1 cup) cold water and continue boiling over moderate heat, uncovered, until stock is reduced to 750 ml (3½ cups). Strain stock.
4. Thickly shred chicken thighs and set aside, leaving the rest of the chicken in the pot.
5. Bring chicken stock to a boil. Add mushrooms, carrots, bamboo shoots, ham and marinated pork. Boil for 3 minutes, then gradually pour in seasoning. Stir until stock returns to the boil. Add crabmeat. Slowly stir in the beaten eggs, lard and sesame oil.
6. Add shredded chicken meat. Remove from heat as soon as it comes to a boil. Pour into a large soup bowl, sprinkle with spring onions and dust with pepper. Serve hot.

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Rabbit 

Those born in the Year of the Rabbit are said to have gentle and compassionate natures and will take well to the lean protein and variety of vegetables in this dish.

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KUIH BANGKIT

Rice flour 225 g (8 oz)

Tapioca flour 455 g (1 lb)

Coconut 455 g (1 lb), *skinned and grated*

Eggs 5

Sugar 400 g (14 oz)

Salt $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp

1. Place rice flour in a dry wok and stir over low heat until very light and fluffy. Remove rice flour and set aside. Repeat with tapioca flour.
2. Combine the two flours and sift together in a basin. Leave overnight.
3. Using a piece of muslin, squeeze coconut to extract No.1 milk. Set aside. You should get 225 ml (1 cup).
4. In a mixing bowl, combine eggs and sugar and beat until thick and creamy. Add salt and coconut milk and beat until well blended.
5. Set aside 115 g (4 oz) of the sifted flour for dusting.
6. Set aside 200 ml ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) of the egg mixture.
7. Mix the remaining egg mixture into the flour to form a dough. Take a handful of the dough and place it on a dusted board. Keep the rest of the dough covered with a damp cloth.
8. Flatten the dough with palm of hand. Dust with flour and roll dough out to 0.5-cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ -in) thickness.
9. Cut dough with a *kuih bangkit* cutter. Pinch the dough, using a jagged-edged pincers (usually used for pineapple tarts) to form a pattern.
10. Mix leftover dough cuttings with another lot of new dough and a little of the beaten egg mixture each time. Mix dough to a smooth texture before rolling out and repeating process.
11. Place biscuits on greased baking trays and bake in an oven for 20–30 minutes at 175°C (350°F). Cool biscuits on a rack before storing in an airtight tin.

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Basic Recipes

ALKALINE WATER

White alkaline crystal 625 g (1 lb 6 oz)

Hot water 680 ml (3 cups)

1. Place alkaline crystal in a porcelain jar or bowl. Add the hot water and stir with a wooden spoon to dissolve the crystals. Let it stand overnight.
2. Strain alkaline water through a fine muslin. Store the alkaline water in a bottle for future use.

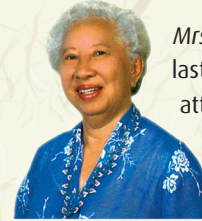
NOTE

- Prepared alkaline water can be kept for almost a year. Store in a bottle.
- Alkaline water is now available at specialty bakery suppliers such as Phoon Huat.

CRISP-FRIED SHALLOTS

1. Many recipes call for crisp-fried shallots to be used as a flavourful garnish.
2. Peel and slice shallots thinly and dip in salt water for a while. Rinse and drain well.
3. Scatter sliced shallots on absorbent paper to dry or roll up in a tea towel for 1/2 hour. Heat enough cooking oil for deep-frying until smoking hot. Add the sliced shallots and stir-fry over high heat until shallots turn light brown.
4. Reduce the heat and continue stirring until the shallots are light golden brown. Remove at once with a wire sieve to drain. Scatter on absorbent paper to cool.
5. Store in a clean, dry bottle immediately. The shallots keep crisp for months in an airtight bottle.

About the Author



Mrs Leong Yee Soo represented the last bastion of Peranakan cooks whose attention to detail was legendary and in whom cooking skills were developed to a fine art. She spent the major part of her life experimenting with, and teaching, food preparation, and her legacy lives on in this new book, lovingly compiled from “The Best of Singapore’s Recipes” series, which revisits fond memories of dishes in our grandmother’s kitchen and well-thumbed copies of Mrs Leong’s classic cookbooks.

All the original comments, notes and methodology have been carefully and lovingly retained so that the recipes continue to reflect Mrs Leong’s personality and perspective. This new contemporary edition will remain a treasury of recipes to inspire and encourage future generations of home cooks.