

(Continued from front flap)

A chef by profession, Florence has worked in five-star hotels around the country. She also develops recipes for food and kitchen equipment companies, presents cooking shows on TV and judges cooking competitions. In addition, Florence contributes recipes regularly to popular women's magazines to share her knowledge and love of cooking. In promoting Nyonya cooking, Florence hopes to preserve the cuisine so that future generations can continue to produce and savour these authentic flavours.

Also by Florence Tan:



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 **Marshall Cavendish**  
Cuisine

# For Rev



**FLORENCE TAN'S**  
TIMELESS PERANAKAN RECIPES

*Florence Tan's Timeless Peranakan Recipes* features 70 delightful recipes that reveal the heart of authentic Nyonya (Peranakan) cuisine from Malaysia's most popular Nyonya chef, Florence Tan. The well-loved chef also shares concise notes and cooking tips throughout the book to provide insight into each recipe.

Learn how to prepare all-time favourites such as Hee Peow Soup (Dried Fish Bladder Soup), Udang Masak Lemak (Prawns in Coconut Gravy) and Ayam Buah Keluak (Chicken in Black Nut Gravy), and whip up crowd-pleasing snacks and desserts such as Kuih Pie Tee (Top Hat) and Apam Balik Nyonya (Nyonya-style Pancake). Indulge your nearest and dearest with these timeless Peranakan classics!

Marshall Cavendish Cuisine



FLORENCE TAN'S TIMELESS PERANAKAN RECIPES



FLORENCE TAN'S TIMELESS PERANAKAN RECIPES



Florence Tan is recognised as Malaysia's sweetheart for authentic Nyonya (Peranakan) cuisine. She received a merit of appreciation from the Tourism Promotion Division of Melaka State Government for her efforts in promoting Nyonya cuisine in the United Nations from 2008 to 2009. The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) and Tourism Malaysia also recognise that her expertise in Nyonya cooking, coupled with her passion for the cuisine and generosity of sharing her knowledge, make her the perfect international ambassador for Nyonya cuisine, and she is often invited to promote the cuisine in various countries such as Japan, Australia, England, France, the Netherlands and America (New York).

(Continued on back flap)

For Review Only



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For my dearest husband, John  
and my beloved son, Nicky

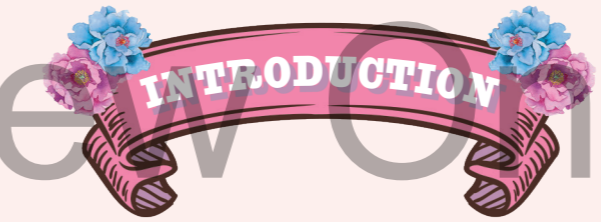


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Much has been written about the Peranakan or Straits Chinese community: the opulent lifestyle of the Babas and Nyonyas, their cultural heritage, and, in particular, the interweaving of Chinese and Malay cultures that has given them a cuisine (popularly known as Nyonya cuisine) which is unique.

Although there is no record of the significance of Nyonya cuisine on Malaysia's culinary art, the first aromas of a mixed cuisine came from the Peranakan kitchens. It is only in recent decades that Nyonya cuisine has received worldwide exposure. In a way, Nyonya cuisine represents authentic Malaysian cuisine—a taste of Chinese with a dash of Malay herbs and Indian spices; cooked in the Malay-style in a Chinese wok or an Indian curry pot. Mention Nyonya food and eyes light up, the tongue caresses the lips and a knowing nod accompanies accolades when conversations turn to dishes like Ayam Buah Keluak, Itik Tim or Ayam Pongteh.

Penang Nyonya cuisine differs slightly from Melaka Nyonya cuisine. The Penang Nyonyas prefer a sweet-sour or tangy taste with nuances of

Thai, particularly noticeable in their *kerabu* (salad) dishes. The Nyonyas in Melaka enhance their dishes with the aroma of fragrant leaves, flowers and herbs. Both, however, agree on the liberal use of chillies and coconut milk, prominent in Malay cooking.

At the heart of Nyonya cuisine lies the skill of the Nyonyas, seen in their creations of dainty, delicate cakes and sweets. These delicate morsels reflect their fastidious ways, and the recipes and methods of cooking them are closely guarded. Such family secrets are customarily handed down by word of mouth from mother to daughter.

The Peranakan kitchen is the domain of womenfolk, with Mother and Bibik orchestrating the symphony of meals to be served in a large household. Bibik is the commanding presence no Peranakan kitchen is complete without. Her culinary expertise is unquestionable, her repertoire of recipes inexhaustive. She demands the very best from kitchen retainers and cooks. As she flits from flaming wok to boiling cauldron, she sniffs and tastes like a five-star chef. Her culinary standards must never be challenged or disputed.

I grew up in such an environment in Tranquerah, Melaka. My very first lesson in Bibik's presence was a complete disaster when I burnt a pot of rice. Luckily my Mother saved the day. Growing up in such an environment, it was only natural that I would make cooking my profession. The lessons I learnt have stood me in good stead and this book is my tribute to my Mother and, of course, Bibik.

I would like to express my special thanks to my mentor, a noted international cooking master, Mr Lim Bian Yam; my culinary associates, in particular Celine J Marbeck; all my relatives who have helped in one way or another; my television fans and viewers of my cookshows; and to my husband John; son Nicky and my niece Patricia Lee, whose tremendous support helped me through the writing of this book.

My appreciation and thanks go also to Marshall Cavendish and the photographer whose artistic flair transformed my dishes into gourmet creations.

With this book, I leave each and every one of you a legacy of simply delicious Nyonya cooking.

## MEE SUAH SOUP WHEAT FLOUR VERMICELLI SOUP

Soup Dish | 20-minute Preparation | 30-minute Cooking | Serves 6

3 tablespoons cooking oil  
4 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped  
200 grams | 7 ounces chicken fillet, minced (ground)  
1.8 litres | 58 fl oz | 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cups water  
200 grams | 7 ounces dried wheat flour vermicelli (*mee suah*), soaked for 1 minute in cold water just before use

400 grams | 14 ounces prawns (shrimps), shelled and deveined  
4 teaspoons light soy sauce  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon sugar

### GARNISH

3 tablespoons crisp-fried shallots (see page 122)  
2 spring onions (scallions), chopped

### CHEF'S NOTE:

Add 300 grams / 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> ounces peeled, sliced angled loofah (*ketola*), if desired.

1. Heat the cooking oil and sauté garlic until fragrant. Add the chicken and stir-fry for a minute.
2. Add the water, stir and bring to a boil.
3. Add the vermicelli, prawns and soy sauce to the soup. Season with salt and sugar. When prawns are cooked, about 3–4 minutes, remove from the heat.
4. Garnish with crisp-fried shallots and spring onions. Serve hot.

## STIR-FRIED CHICKEN WITH GINGER

Stir-fried Dish | 30-minute Preparation | 30-minute Cooking | Serves 10

3 tablespoons sesame oil  
10 cloves garlic, peeled and finely pounded  
12.5 cm | 5 inches ginger, peeled and sliced  
1.5 kilograms | 3 pounds, 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> ounces chicken, cut into small pieces  
2 tablespoons light soy sauce  
2 tablespoons thick soy sauce

3/4 teaspoon salt  
1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> teaspoons sugar  
600 ml | 20 fl oz | 25/8 cups water  
7 spring onions (scallions), cut into 2.5-cm | 1-inch lengths

### GARNISH

1 red chilli, cut into thin strips

1. Heat the sesame oil and sauté the garlic and ginger.
2. Add the chicken and fry until the meat changes colour.
3. Add soy sauce, salt, sugar and water. Stir and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer until chicken is cooked and gravy thickens.
4. Mix in the spring onions.
5. Garnish with red chilli before serving.



From top: Mee Suah Soup (Wheat Flour Vermicelli Soup), Stir-fried Chicken with Ginger.

## TITIK PAPAYA PAPAYA IN PEPPERY SOUP

Soup Dish | 30-minute Preparation | 15-minute Cooking | Serves 7

600 grams | 1 pound, 5 ounces  
almost-ripe papaya, peeled,  
seeded, cut lengthways into  
8 pieces and sliced into 0.5-cm |  
1/4-inch thick pieces

1.5 litres | 48 fl oz | 6 cups water

1 young turmeric leaf

300 grams | 10 1/2 ounces small  
prawns (shrimps), shelled and  
deveined

1 3/4 teaspoons salt

3 tablespoons sugar

1/8 teaspoon seasoning powder

### FINELY GROUND PASTE

2 red chillies

8 shallots, peeled

6 candlenuts

15 white peppercorns or 1/2 teaspoon  
ground white pepper

1 1/2 teaspoons crushed dried shrimp  
paste

### CHEF'S NOTE:

An almost-ripe papaya has  
a slightly green skin but firm flesh.

Chilli can be omitted, if desired.

1. Combine the papaya, finely ground paste and water in a pot and bring to a boil. Simmer for 7 minutes. Add the turmeric leaf and continue to simmer for 1 minute.
2. Add the prawns, salt, sugar and seasoning powder. Cook for 3 minutes until prawns are done and papaya is tender.
3. Serve hot with spicy shrimp paste (*sambal belacan*). (Recipe on page 122.)



## KING PRAWNS (JUMBO SHRIMPS) WITH SPICY SHRIMP PASTE

This recipe is another contribution from my elder sister, Koh Kim Lian.

Sambal Dish | 30-minute Preparation | 10–15-minute Cooking | Serves 5

500 ml | 16 fl oz | 2 cups cooking oil

500 grams | 1 pound, 1½ ounces  
king prawns (jumbo shrimps),  
feelers removed and seasoned for  
60 minutes with ¼ teaspoon salt  
and ¼ teaspoon sugar

120 grams | 4½ ounces | ½ cup  
coarsely pounded spicy shrimp  
paste (*sambal belacan*) (see  
page 122)

2 kaffir lime leaves

½ teaspoon anchovy stock granules

2 teaspoons kalamansi juice

### CHEF'S NOTE:

You can garnish this dish with  
tomato and cucumber slices.

1. Heat the cooking oil until very hot and deep-fry prawns for 30 seconds. Remove.
2. Leave 150 ml / 5 fl oz / ⅝ cup oil in the pan and stir-fry spicy shrimp paste for ½ minute.
3. Add the prawns, kaffir lime leaves and anchovy stock granules.
4. When prawns are cooked, switch off the heat and add kalamansi juice.

