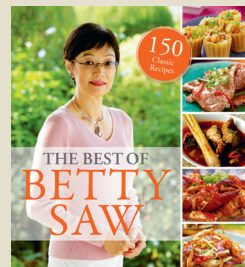
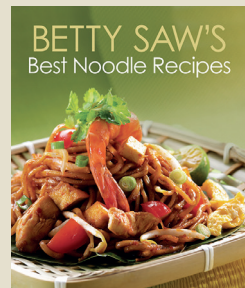


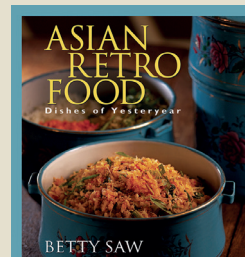
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Betty Saw

Best of MALAYSIAN COOKING

Best of MALAYSIAN COOKING



Betty Saw



Betty Saw is a veteran chef with more than 30 years of experience. She is a well-loved and respected food consultant, as well as a household name in Malaysia, where she lives. Betty has appeared on a number of television programmes and is a prolific author of more than 15 cookbook titles, including *The Best of Betty Saw*, *Betty Saw's Best Noodle Recipes* and *Asian Retro Food*.

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PREFACE

Have you ever lived in Malaysia? Stopped over? Perhaps you live here. A steady rhythm is apparent after a while. It is there in the serenity and languor of the country and suburbs, in the continuity of lifestyle of the rural people — a secure, timeless quality to be savoured in their industry, their daily rounds, and not less in their food and the way they serve it.

Malaysian cuisine is rich in its variety — the result of multicultural influences, both past and cosmopolitan present. The blend is exotic: Malay, Chinese, Peranakan, Indian, Eurasian. Yet, paradoxically, there is a unique taste attributable to the distinctive way of cooking in each particular state.

In this book, I shall introduce those intriguing tastes peculiar to the various states as we go through some of the Malaysian favourites enjoyed by everyone. There are also traditional specialties gathered firsthand from many dear *makciks* and *neneks*. Their epicurean capabilities, total recall and *agak-agak* culinary skills are rare. The ability of the older generation to lavish tender care in the preparation of their specialties and their enduring patience in so doing are qualities that deserve emulation.

For easy reference, I have attempted a systematic grouping of states, from south to north of Peninsular Malaysia, and then to East Malaysia. This is not done with any bias in mind and should not be taken as a reflection of the order of importance of the nation's states. Malaysian cities have varied Eastern and Western cuisines, as well as delightful arrays of provincial fare and Chinese food. For this reason, I have included a few recipes for Chinese favourites in Malaysia.

In the process of writing this book, I have derived immense pleasure and satisfaction discovering for myself the infinite possibilities in style and preparation that make cooking a constantly challenging endeavour. Discover this heritage of Malaysian cooking with me. I believe you will find the journey rewarding and enjoyable.

Betty Saw

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For Review Only

Johor

Occupying the entire southern portion of the Malay peninsula, as well as rich with pineapple plantations and oil palm and rubber estates, is Johor State. Johor Bahru, its modern capital city, is situated at the southernmost tip and is connected to the island-state of Singapore by two busy causeways.

Johor has a strong Malay culture and Malay cuisine is interestingly varied with a taste of Javanese. Laksa Johor or Laksa Bersantan, Mee Rebus and Sayur Lodeh, an enticing mixed vegetable curry, are some of the tempting favourites to match healthy appetites.

The Chinese population in Johor is mainly Teochew and some of their popular offerings are Teochew Duck, Five-spice Meat Rolls and Steamed Fish Teochew Style. Teochew cooking is generously spiced with five-spice powder and is renowned for its variety of braised meats in dark soy sauce, normally eaten with bland porridge or flat rice noodles.

Acar Rampai

Preparation: 15 minutes Cooking: 12 minutes

Ingredients

Cucumbers	2, seed portions discarded, cut into 4 x 0.6-cm strips
Carrot	1, large, peeled and cut into 4 x 0.6-cm strips
Preserved radish (<i>chye poh</i>)	2 Tbsp, washed and chopped
Shallots	14, peeled; 10 halved and 4 sliced
Garlic	6 cloves, peeled and halved
Red chillies	4, seeded and cut into strips
Green chillies	4, seeded and cut into strips
Ginger	150 g, peeled and shredded
Salt	1 tsp
Sugar	1 tsp
Ground turmeric (<i>kunyit serbuk</i>)	1 tsp
Mustard seeds	1 dsp, washed and drained
Cooking oil	5 Tbsp
Sultanas	1 Tbsp

Ingredients to be ground

Dried chillies	20
Turmeric (<i>kunyit</i>)	2.5-cm knob, peeled

Ingredients to be combined

Vinegar	125 ml
Water	65 ml
Sugar	1 dsp
Salt	1/4 tsp

Method

- Into a mixing bowl, put cucumbers, carrot, preserved radish, shallot halves, garlic, chillies and ginger. Mix well with salt, sugar and ground turmeric. Leave for 1 hour. Drain well of collected vegetable juices before use.
- Heat a dry wok and fry mustard seeds for 1 minute. Remove and set aside.
- Add oil to heated wok and when hot, lightly brown sliced shallots. Then, add ground ingredients and fry until oil separates.
- Add combined ingredients and bring to the boil. Simmer gently for 3 minutes, then add in prepared vegetables, mustard seeds and sultanas.

Note: If short of time, lightly squeeze vegetables using a piece of cloth to remove vegetable juices instead of waiting an hour for them to emerge.

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Otak-Otak Tenggara

Preparation: 25 minutes Cooking: 20 minutes Makes 16 packets

Ingredients

Spanish mackerel (<i>ikan tenggiri</i>)	600 g, central portion
Salt	3 tsp
Eggs	5
Coconut cream	250 ml, squeezed from 1 grated coconut with a little water added

Banana leaves
Bamboo toothpicks or
cocktail sticks

Ingredients to be ground

Dried chillies	15, soaked
Bird's eye chillies (<i>cili padi</i>)	10
Shallots	5, peeled
Garlic	2 cloves, peeled
Lemon grass (<i>serai</i>)	2 stalks
Galangal (<i>lengkuas</i>)	3 slices, peeled
Dried prawn (shrimp) paste (<i>belacan</i>)	1.25-cm square piece
Ground turmeric (<i>kunyit serbuk</i>)	1 tsp

Ingredients to be finely sliced

Kaffir lime leaves (<i>daun limau purut</i>)	3
Turmeric leaves (<i>daun kunyit</i>)	2
Pointed pepper leaves (<i>daun kaduk</i>)	20

Method

- Wash and fillet fish, then cut fillets into 5 x 4-cm pieces. Season fish pieces with 1 tsp salt and leave for 15 minutes.
- Beat eggs lightly with a fork and stir in ground ingredients and finely sliced leaves. Mix in coconut cream and 2 tsp salt. Set aside.
- Run banana leaves over flame or a heated electric stove until softened, then cut into 18 x 15-cm pieces. Make sure cut leaves have no holes or slits or gravy will seep through. Wash and dry prepared leaves.
- On the centre of each banana leaf rectangle, put a piece of fish. Then, lift 2 long sides and bring them together over fish.
- Fold in one end by pushing lower edge 90° upwards so a triangular flap forms on either side. Fold flaps toward the centre before adding in 2 Tbsp egg mixture. Then, fold in the other end and fasten parcel with a toothpick or cocktail stick.
- Trim off excess leaf at parcel's top to neaten. Repeat until ingredients are used up.
- Steam parcels for 20 minutes.

