



COLORADO SPRINGS
CHINESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE
科泉市中華文化協會

茶葉香談

冬 WINTER



TEA LEAVES

WINTER 2014

COLORADO SPRINGS CHINESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

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CHINESE PROVERB

A bit of fragrance clings to the hand that gives flowers.

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Chinese New Year Celebration

By Eric Woods

In America, New Year Eve celebration is a one-day event, but in China, New Year, or more accurately the Spring Festival is a 15-day celebration full of food, family, and fireworks. The Spring Festival is the largest celebration of the year in China and represents many aspects of Chinese culture. In the weeks leading to the festival, families decorate their houses with red lanterns and red banners of luck, happiness, and health. On New Year's Eve, dumplings are traditionally made and eaten during a family gathering as they watch CCTV's famous show that hosts the largest celebrity performances in the country.

On New Year's Day, many families offer blessing to their ancestors, setting aside part of the meal and burning paper money (紙錢) and incents. These offerings are to thank their ancestors and to ask for protection for their family and children. After this, close families splurge and have the most bountiful traditional meal they can make. Out of the many diverse dishes, families almost always have a whole fish to wish for surplus for the next year. The story behind this tradition of the fish dish is that in Chinese, fish is pronounced "yu" (魚) which is sounds the same as surplus (餘).

After New Year's Day, relatives visit with their extended family for several days, every day feasting and strengthening family bonds. It is customary for the men to drink expensive liquor. Typically, the tables are divided by generations. The young adults show respect to their elders by walking to the older generations' tables and wishing them health and prosperity by giving individual toasts. Often during the Festival, the older generation will give red envelopes or Hong Bao (紅包) to children and unmarried adults to wish them luck and success. (To learn more about this tradition read the "Hong Bao" article).

The 15th day that ends the Spring Festival is called Yuan Xiao Je (元宵節) or Lantern Festival. On this day, lanterns are lit across the country and are often arranged into the shapes of animals, especially the zodiac animal of that year. It is common for families to make lantern poems and riddles for fun while they walk around the city looking at the displays. Another longstanding tradition during the Lantern Festival is eating Yuan Xiao (元宵), glutinous rice balls filled with sweets and crushed nuts (extremely tasty). Days before the Lantern Festival, the process of making the Yuan Xiao begins as children and parents work together to grind sweet rice to prepare it for dough, traditionally on a grinding wheel. Once the sweet filing is made, the parents wrap the Yuan Xiao and cook them. Some of my mom's happiest childhood memories are of making and eating Yuan Xiao with her parents and siblings. Finally, during that last night of the Spring Festival, dragon dances and firework shows light up towns and cities.

Last, but not least, a special tiding for the Spring Festival is Gong Xi Fa Cai (恭喜發財), or "wish you prosperity." So CSCCI hopes you enjoy your Chinese New Year and have a healthy, happy, and prosperous year. Gong Xi Fa Cai!



Homemade Yuan Xiao

Erhu and Me

By Liping Woods

An erhu (二胡) is a two-stringed Chinese musical instrument that's often known as the Chinese Violin as its tone is similar to a western violin. It consists of a horsehair bow, a long vertical shaft, two tuning pegs, a sound box covered with python skin, two strings, and a tiny bridge. Traditionally, erhu is played sitting down held upright with the sound box placed on the top of the left thigh. Although using a specially developed belt-clip, performers can now play while standing up. The bow is played horizontally with the right-hand which alters the bow's pressure against the strings.

Erhu was first mentioned in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). It was originally described as a plucked string instrument and had evolved from a barbarian instrument called "huqing" in northern China. This precursor eventually came to resemble today's erhu in the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368) under the Mongolian's rule. In modern China, erhu is extremely popular as an instrument for both traditional and contemporary music.

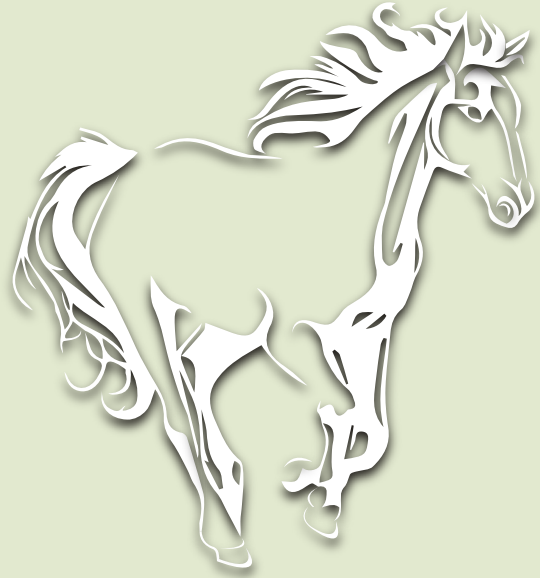
The erhu has a special meaning in my life. I grew up in Chongqing, China during the chaotic decade of Cultural Revolution that was launched by Chairman Mao in 1966. I first learned erhu when I was a teenager in 1975. I decided to learn an instrument hoping to have a skill that may provide me better job opportunities. My parents were very supportive and bought my first erhu using an entire month of my mom's salary of 50 renminbi. In 1976 the death of Chairman Mao and the arrest of the Gang of Four ended the turbulent and chaotic decade of the Cultural Revolution. Due to this, in 1977 China restored its national wide university entrance examination that was previously banned during the decade long Cultural Revolution. I felt hope, a kind of hope I had never felt before: the possibility of going to a college. I stopped doing everything else, including learning erhu, my passion, instead devoting 100% of my time studying and preparing for the college entrance exam. I went to college and graduate schools in China and played erhu for pleasure.

I came to the USA to pursue graduate studies in 1991 in Oklahoma and moved to Colorado Springs in 1996. For the past many years, I have been honored to play erhu at the Chinese New Year Festivals and dinner events held by Colorado Spring Chinese Cultural Institute. I was amazed how much my audiences liked the sound of the erhu and appreciated their interest to this unique instrument. I enjoy playing Chinese and even some western folk songs. I am looking forward to many more years of sharing my erhu music with our Colorado Springs community at future Chinese New Year Festivals.



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The CSCCI is committed to fostering understanding of Chinese culture by promoting opportunities for events, networking, travel, education and services available to the people of Colorado Springs.



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CSCCI Hot Pot Dinner

By Eric Woods

CSCCI's first hot pot dinner event at the Jade Dragon last November went so well that we would like to make it an annual tradition! From the delicious food, to the fun of hot pot cooking, to the beautiful music we enjoyed, the dinner was incredibly enjoyable in every aspect.

Whenever I have hot pot at home, my family usually uses premade, frozen meat, but at the Jade Dragon, all the ingredients were made by their head chef that morning and everything was scrumptiously fresh. For meat, we had fish, beef, pork, shrimp, chicken, and even squid, all of which were tender and full of flavor. My favorite food was the fish balls made by our chef because they soaked by the hot pot broth's flavor so well. For even more flavor I dipped them in a special fish sauce that was served on the side. It was thoroughly enjoyable.

For those who didn't eat as much meat, napa, kale, and green onions were just a few of the vegetables that were also served. No matter their food preference, everyone had more than enough to eat as the Jade Dragon kept serving plates full of ingredients even after we were all stuffed.

After our filling dinner, we were lucky to enjoy a wonderful erhu (chinese violin) performance from our CSCCI board of director Liping Woods. Her performance was at times moving and at others fun as she played traditional Chinese folk songs like "Longing" and "Jasmine Flowers" and famous American pieces like "Scarborough Fair." Throughout the event, everyone was in a cheery mood, and even once the dinner ended, no one left because we were comfortably socializing. Our organization enjoyed holding our first hot pot dinner and would be delighted to share the hot pot experience with you. We will be hosting another hot pot dinner next year. So next autumn, make sure to check our website, www.cscCI.org, or keep reading our Tea Leaves Newsletters to find out more details about our next hot pot dinner.



Hong Bao

By Eric Woods

If you have been to Chinese celebrations such as New Year festivals, birthdays, or weddings, you might have noticed that some gifts were little red envelopes, often given to children and young adults. These presents are called Hong Bao (紅包) or "red pockets" for their distinct vibrant red color. If you have never seen Hong Bao, they are thin and rectangular, bright red to symbolize luck, happiness, and longevity, and often have golden writing or images to wish the receiver prosperity in the coming year.

In ancient times Hong Bao was used to ward off evil spirits on New Year's Eve, but the tradition soon spread to become the most popular gift for all occasions (from the birth of a child to celebrating a significant success). Hong Bao is given with money inside, the amount depending on the importance of the event and how close the relationship is between the giver and receiver. However, much more important than the material value of Hong Bao is the goodwill and caring that it represents. In fact, opening Hong Bao in front of the person who gave it to you is considered disrespectful because it seems like you care more about the money than the person's wishes. Giving a friend or relative Hong Bao lets them know that you wish them a healthy, happy, and successful year.

If you would like to try out in this tradition of giving Hong Bao, stop by the CSCCI station during our Chinese New Year Festival to buy your own Hong Bao to wish someone special a lucky and prosperous year.

Year of the Horse Celebrities

By Eric Woods?

People born during the Year of the Horse are known to be hard working, energetic, sociable, cunning, and headstrong. Considering all these traits, its no surprise that so many people born in the Year of the Horse are very successful. All of the famous people listed below share the Horse as their Chinese Zodiac, how many have you heard of?

Nelson Mandela
Neil Armstrong
Clint Eastwood
Warren Buffet
Buzz Aldrin
Shel Silverstein
Muhammad Ali
Paul MacCartney
Harrison Ford
Jimmy Hendrix

Stephen Hawking
Barbara Streisand
Joe Biden
Jackie Chan
Oprah Winfrey
James Cameron
David Cameron
Kobe Bryant
Jep Robertson
Emma Watson

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與誰共廚

作家 - 曉食世界

我，出國留學之前，生活無憂無慮，茶來伸手，飯來張口。從未進廚房一步，吃的方面，毫無品味可言。爸媽吃什麼，就跟著吃什麼，從來也不嚷著要吃什麼特別的菜，日子的重心完全放在學業和前程上，順利留學是爸媽的唯一心願。

群，出國留學之前，生活挺有規矩，要茶自泡，吃飯自煮。常常下廚做羹湯，吃的方面，必須考慮家人。爸媽要什麼，就試著做什麼，從來也不為自己做什麼特別的菜，日子的重心完全放在家人和學業上，三從四德是爸媽的唯一心願。

異國定情，相與共廚，樂趣無窮！群已經在臺灣學了所有的烹飪廚藝，做菜一級棒，正好能當我的最佳老師，但是對我而言，食譜的輔助還是需要的。

出國時，就算從來沒有計劃學習做菜，親友仍然為我準備三本書，味全食譜黃淑惠編著的"中國菜"，按食材分類，有拼盤、湯、主菜和飯麵點心的家常菜食譜。自然科學文化事業公司出版的"中國家常菜"，按照烹飪方式，炒、炸、煮、蒸和拌來分類。當然，絕不能缺的是傅培梅編著的"培梅食譜"，按照不同省分的菜來分類。三本書各有所長，交互使用，效果非常好，至今仍然放在我的書架上，隨時取用。留學苦讀期間，除了大嫂的長途電話授課之外，由這三本書學會了基本功，不斷的練習，經驗的累積，倒也能做得有模有樣。不懂得食材的講究，只求複製出濃郁的家鄉味，做好吃的家常菜，成為生活的樂趣。

吃的經驗不斷累積，美國大學餐廳的混搭沙拉，豐富而營養。煎烤炸的美式食物，紮紮實實。曾為第一次吃義大利海鮮麵的驚艷而興奮不已。舊金山的法國餐廳，紐奧良融合美南和法式的料理，也讓人印象深刻。有了學習美式、法式和義大利料理的衝動。

不好高騖遠，食譜之類的書，很難賺得到我的錢，現在常去信義誠品，瀏覽成千上萬的食譜，心想，都買回去了，就能成大廚了嗎？我不認為如此！倒覺得跟著一本可靠的食譜，用心學習，耐心操作，成果不難讓人刮目相看。

學西餐的心態，也是買兩本信譽好、有份量的食譜，好好把基礎打好最重要。我

們用的是歷史悠久的經典好書。Better Homes and Gardens 出版的"New Cook Book"以及McCall's Cooking School 出版的"Step-by-Step Directions for Mistake-Proof Recipes"，兩本食譜都是按照食材及餐廳菜單出菜種類分類，美國和歐洲菜系的食譜算是非常完整。前菜、主菜和甜點，都能學得有模有樣。

我不贊成用中文的西餐食譜。翻譯的，常常有校對不周全的問題，差之毫釐，失之千里。有時更可能是劣質翻譯，不知所云。創作的，往往加入個人的意見，而失去原始的風格。英文食譜，對一般人雖不易閱讀，但是由烹飪學習英文，是樂趣，也是知識，看西餐餐廳的菜單也較能得心應手些。

這種生活的樂趣，後來在美國的工作上，居然派上用場，有兩年的時間，我負責教授食品科學和食物製備與原理的科目，每個周末就和太太預習要教的課，每週一三五，先上課，後實習，和一群美國大學生共廚，一個來自臺灣的男人，以實力鎮住了一群美國洋娃娃，什麼基本原理和基本廚藝都得教，在教學的過程之中，了解了純正美國家庭的飲食習慣，也強化了我做西餐的能力和知識。在這段教學期間，用了兩本書，給學生一個完整的食物製備的基礎介紹、訓練和運用，非常實用，也挺適合一般家庭烹飪用的。The Culinary Institute of America (美國廚藝學院)出版的"The New Professional Chef"以及由Sarah Labensky 和 Alan Hause 著作的"On Cooking Techniques from Expert Chefs"，這兩本書非常適合初學者，如果能把這兩本中的任何一本，讀熟了，練會了，那麼您可由廚房白癡變成一位專業的廚師。如果您對歐洲菜有興趣，由 Konemann 著作的"Culinaia"會有幫助，它對歐洲大小國家的菜色都有詳盡介紹，並且也有很不錯的食譜。

一個還能做菜的人，就是用了那幾本食譜。希望食譜的出版社別別生氣，這是個人的觀念問題，買本品質高的書，用心學，必有所成！想要什麼都學，有時反而落得廚藝不夠紮實。

有了 iPad 之後，五花八門的應用程式 Apps，應接不暇，在食譜的功能運用上，也發生很大的作用，要學烹飪，更方便了。在此和大家分享最近常用的西餐食譜 Apps, Gordon Ramsay 高登蘭西的"和我一起烹飪" (Cook With Me)。如果您已經有基本的西餐廚藝，有平板電腦，用這個平板食譜比傳統的書，要方便許多，不妨考慮一下。

由地獄廚房(Hell's Kitchen)和美國主廚(MasterChef USA)這兩個節目，認識了高登，和許多人一樣，一開始，很討厭他的無禮，很受不了他狂妄張揚的態度，卻又被節目的戲劇性深深吸引著，每當看到參賽者努力烹飪的時候，自己也會入戲，假想我會怎麼做。進一步了解高登的背景，不得不對他有所尊敬。如果您對美國最高廚藝學院的廚藝學院(CIA, Culinary Institute of America)的教學方式和操作原則有所了解的話，高登還算是溫和的廚師了。世界各國，廚師這個行業，除了天份之外，所要吃的苦，非一般人所能體會。所以當您在一位名廚的餐廳吃飯時，請不要對價錢太嚴苛了，算算他(她)一路走來吃的苦，身為消費者，應當給予適當的尊重、肯定和回饋。

這個平板食譜有 104 個各式各樣的食譜，41 個基本廚藝和烹飪的短片，簡單明瞭，跟著一起烹飪，蠻有氣氛的。

食譜可按分類、困難度、季節、食材和烹飪時間來搜尋，或直接由特定食物的照片點進去。

點進特定食物，首先出現的是食物的簡介，從這個頁面，再點進，能看到詳盡的食譜內容。

進入食譜內容頁面，有食物的照片，食物簡介，需要的廚具，需要的食材和份量，有的食物也有短片可看。在此頁面中，可直接點進烹飪步驟的詳細文字敘述，每一個文字敘述的步驟，都有相關照片配合。

懂得基本廚藝的，可直接點進短片，看高登本人快速示範烹飪步驟，快、準和親切。

每個人，每對情侶，每對夫婦，每個家庭，都有自己在做菜時的參考依據，上面只是我們常用的工具書，我們常與它們共廚！

UPCOMING ASIAN CULTURAL EVENTS

January 25, 2014: Uta Gassen (Singing Competition) Denver Buddhist Temple Auditorium

January 25, 2014: CSCCI Chinese New Year Festival, City Auditorium, Co. Springs

Late June 2014: 42nd Annual Cherry Blossom Festival Sakura Square, Denver

Late July 2014: Colorado Dragon Boat Festival, Sloan's Lake Park, Denver.

February 14, 2014: Yuanxiao (Lantern) Festival 元宵節

April 25, 2014: Quin Ming (Pure and Bright) Festival 清明節

September 9, 2014: Mid-Autumn Festival 中秋節

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