



# I-20

## Food Issue

CENTER FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND AMERICAN CULTURE –ADVANCED WRITING

FALL 2015

## Strange Foods From Around the Globe

by Anh Do, Vietnam

Have you ever eaten strange food before? Maybe you have never seen or tried it before. Therefore, it will be good for you to know more about different food from some countries in the world such as Saudi Arabia, China, Japan, and Vietnam.

In these countries people usually eat pork, beef, and chicken...but they also eat unusual food. For instances, in Saudi Arabia nearly half the country is desert, so camel has become popular for transportation and as a food resource. Furthermore, Arabic people use lizards for food, which tastes like fish and chicken (a Saudi student said).

In Western countries, people love dogs and cats and regard them as a member of their family, but in China and Vietnam, they will become food. Dog and cat meat is very tasty only when eaten with sauce. Without sauce, it can't satisfy your taste and maybe no one would eat dog and cat meat. However, many

people who love animals think that killing dogs and cats is so cruel and horrible that they even protest against dog meat festivals, not only in China but in some neighboring countries as well.

Japan is a country that is surrounded by the sea, so catching fish is an integral part of their food industry. Dolphin is one of the main food resources in Japan. Besides, Japan also wins the quirky snack food game because of weird food such as Animal Donuts (made in animal shapes such as penguins, dogs, cats, and lions...), Every Burger (tiny cookie sandwich with a chocolate burger and white chocolate cheese) or even Candy Toilet (candy covered with a mini toilet toy).

There are a lot of weird foods in the world. Even though it looks like something is new and strange, remember it represents a country or variously colorful cultures all over the world.

## Taiwanese Food v. Chinese Food

by Mei Li Lin (Judy), Taiwan



Have you ever tried Chinese food? If the answer is yes, then: Have you ever tried Taiwanese food? You might ask what is the difference between Chinese food and Taiwanese food. It is similar but not exactly the same. Therefore, I would love to share the difference about ingredients, seasoning, and variation of Chinese food and Taiwanese food.

## Why Can't the Young American Cook?

by Mansour Almohaimeed, Saudi Arabia

Nowadays there are people asking why young Americans can't cook. Why can't they cook like the older people? There are a lot of young people (age 16 to 25) in the United States who can't cook, But there are answers to this question. And some of the most popular are the spread of restaurants in the United States, ready-made food, and family lifestyle.

First, what is the history of fast food restaurants? In 1951 we can say fast food grew in the United States, and became more popular in the early 70s. People here like to buy fast food because it is cheap and fast. They like to save themselves money, and save themselves time.

China and Taiwan are two countries with different identities but the same culture. The staple foods are rice and noodles but the different local ingredients will present diverse dishes. China uses traditional cooking methods on the cuisine. Chinese food uses heavy seasoning such as oil, soy sauce, and spices to increase the flavor. The most famous Chinese foods are sweet and sour pork (糖醋肉), spring rolls (春捲), Peking duck (北京烤鴨), spicy tofu (麻婆豆腐) etc.

Taiwanese food is influenced by Japan and Fujian province in China, and has several variations. Taiwan is a sea island with a tropical location. The cuisine includes lots of seafood and various fruit. In Taiwan you can find fresh ingredients in traditional markets. Taiwanese food is lighter, sweeter, and healthier. You also can find some snacks in night markets such as oyster omelet (蚵仔煎), beef noodles (牛肉麵), bubble tea (珍珠奶茶), pineapple cake (鳳梨酥) etc.

Are you interesting in Taiwanese food now? Here is a Taiwanese restaurant in Albuquerque that you can visit: Budai Gourmet Chinese: 6300 San Mateo NE H-1, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87109. [Tel:505-797-7898](tel:505-797-7898). Try it! You won't get enough of all the great food once you are there.



For this reason fast food became popular in the United States. Busy people can't cook for their children and teach them. So some people prefer to buy something cheap and fast.

Next, ready-made food was introduced as the sandwich in 1953 (according to the BBC), but it was not very popular until the microwave oven was invented in 1986. Moreover, a lot of people bought microwaves to save them time, so they supported ready-made food. Nowadays we have many kinds of ready-made food. There are foods from all over the world, because people don't want to lose time on cooking when they could eat frozen food.

Last thing that I would like to explain is family lifestyle. Men and women work hard in the United

States, so there is no time to teach their children how to cook. They feel they have just time to play with them, so they cook something quick or they use ready-made food. This is why children grow up without learning how to cook. They just know how to use ready-made food or to eat out at restaurants.

How can the people in the U.S. fix this problem? First of all, families could reserve at least one hour twice a week to teach their children how to cook. Secondly, the government should support activities that help the student, like in schools, for example. There are some countries that have cooking classes in the schools. With these two suggestions the United States could solve this problem.

## Fast Food Permeates America

by Xiaoru Huang, China



In the very fast-paced life of the American, fast food has been the most popular in the U.S. It can be said that ready-made food can be found anywhere. For instance, McDonald's, KFC, Pizza Hut and are always readily available for all

tastes. People obviously know it's harmful for humans, but they still cannot live without it. Why did fast food industry can apace develop in the US? How will the disadvantages of fast food influence people?

With the accelerated pace of American life, Americans often just "grab a quick bite." As a result, snack food was produced. The sandwich is one of the most typical American fast food. Anything can be sandwiched between two slices of bread. Peanut butter and jelly is an all-American favorite. Fast food chains pervade the U.S., offering a variety of fast food, such as hamburgers, roast beef, steak, ham, sandwiches, fried chicken, fried rice, fried potato chips, baked pies, ice cream and a variety of carbonated drinks for busy Americans. Yet, many people believe that these goodies are unhealthy "junk food" and

tend to choose the healthier and even "all natural" foods. They reject foods with any chemicals or additives.

American-style fast food has spread to China as well. But the food of KFC China and KFC U.S. is completely different. In order to meet consumer preference, KFC reinvented the menu and offers different flavors of food in different regions. For instance, Szechuan people like pungent and spicy food. So there KFC has spicy hamburgers. On the other hand, Shanghai people like sweet food, so KFC Shanghai is biased in favor of the sweet taste of the product.

Statistics show that of American and Chinese children from 3 to 9 years old, 90% eat at least one McDonald's food per month. Fast food is a pest for children.

Animal fried fries contain high fat and cholesterol which can easily lead to obesity and cardiovascular disease. Fast food is an alluring snack for a lot of children; and so the U.S. and China have more and more obese children. Nowadays, American teenagers are

overweight three times more than in the 1970s. It is humorous to say: "It is these junk foods that make America more massive." Therefore, some members of Congress, nutrition researchers, and parents encourage their children to stay away from fast food.

In conclusion, I hope the government can set up higher food safety standards in the cafeteria of the schools, and enact an unhealthy food-advertising ban for children.

## Cheap Chicken

by Cheng-En Ho (Eric), Taiwan



The world changes so fast, people have more desire for food than in the past. Some people may assert that American chicken is cheaper than other food. Other people say it is not, that it has the same price as compared with other food. Is American chicken really low priced in the supermarket? Do Americans truly like chicken? And why is chicken price so cheap in United States? Personally, I agree chicken is too cheap

in America because of these reasons: they are using drugs to foster chickens and they are sold through supermarkets

The main reason why I agree with the above statement is that they are using drugs. According to "Science of America" magazine, chicken size is larger and they grow up faster than in the past.

More than 94% of chickens die after 47 days. Chickens get a fat

body and cannot move anymore. Because of using drugs, their legs cannot support their body weight. Chickens grow up very soon and die fast, even though they just want to live a normal life. So they hatch and eat corn with drugs, and produce eggs with poison chemistry. In addition, humans have standard operating procedures to control the chickens. Their food, exercise and sleeping time are all controlled, and they have no chance to escape. Thus, Americans have chicken factories

which can provide infinitely cheaper chickens.

The next factor which supports my position is that they sell the food by supermarket. For instance, in the Walmart market, we usually see chicken meat on sale, especially chicken legs. Sometimes we can see chicken legs price lower than one dollar per pound, which mean we can eat chicken all day, including supper. Therefore, poor children like it, homeless love it, customer buy it and merchants get money. I would like to say this is a win-win situation and the only victim who experiences a little pain is the chicken. Furthermore, merchants use advertising to imply chicken meat is healthy for human body.

So, it becomes a positive cycle, people want to eat chicken more and humans foster more chicken. Chicken price becomes close to free.

Certainly, things always have two sides. Some people may assert that chicken is not cheap. In Whole Foods Market, as you can see, organic chicken meat is still high in price. Rich people could get high quality food and then avoid getting sick. Even though everyone can eat chicken, the chicken meat still has different levels of quality. The poor can only eat chicken legs or chicken feet. However, I still think these cases are extreme between the rich and poor.

Compared with other food, chicken still has a low price. If we cannot buy chicken, we could not buy other food either. As a good saying goes “nothing is lower priced than chicken, except for inferior chicken.” Besides, no matter if the chicken price is low or high, they taste the same.

In summary, Americans love to eat chicken and use many ways to make cheap chicken. Like an old saying goes, “My name is chicken, for we are many” (Mark 5:9). Although chickens die again and again, they still are not afraid to die. We should respect those chickens and make more genetically modified chickens to feed guilty human people.

## How to Cook Kabsah

by Saleh Bn Talah, Saudi Arabia



When it comes to Saudi food, kabsah is one of the most popular

dishes. Kabsah is very traditional and common in the Arabic countries. Kabsah has a lot of spices which makes it full of flavor. It was the first dish that I tried to cook. In the beginning, I thought it was very difficult to cook because I saw many steps to do, but now, I would like to talk about how to cook perfect kabsah.

First, you need to cut half an onion and one tomato then put them in a pot with a little butter. Second, add less than half a cup oil. Third, fill the pot halfway with water and add some spices such as saffron, cardamom, black pepper, cumin, garlic and salt. Once these ingredients are combined, put a whole chicken with one to

two cups rice inside the pot and cover it. Fourth, cook on low heat stirring occasionally for 35 to 45 minutes or until the mixture dries.

In Saudi Arabia, usually you can find kabsah served with chicken but many Saudi people love kabsah with lamb. Moreover, Kabsah is normally presented on a big plate. Some Saudi prefer to eat kabsah with their hands, especially with their right hand. To sum up, kabsah is one of the most popular and delicious dishes in Saudi Arabia. In addition, kabsah is one Saudi dishes that uses a lot of rice which means it's cheap.

## Restaurant Reviews

### Panda Express

by Wenbo Chen, China



Panda Express is a fast-food Chinese restaurant founded by a Chinese man named Andrew Cherng. Some Americans like Chinese food and more and more Chinese are

coming to the U.S. to work and study.

When you come to Panda Express, you can order many kinds of Chinese food. The Chinese food from Panda Express is the same as real Chinese food, but the flavor suits American flavor. Most American like sour flavor. For example, I tasted the orange chicken.

It's sour and sweet. I ate fried sweet and sour tenderloin in China. It is almost the same as the orange chicken.

Why is Panda Express different from Chinese food? Because American condiments are different from Chinese condiments. The different condiments cook different flavor.

Cooking real Chinese food requires many steps. It takes more time to cook real Chinese food. But Panda Express is a fast-food Chinese restaurant. The chefs don't spend a lot of time cooking the food. Real Chinese food is more flavorful than fast Chinese food. If you want to taste real Chinese food, you won't go to Panda Express because the flavor is different from Chinese flavor. However, the prices at Panda Express are lower than other Chinese restaurants. You order at the Panda Express fast and you don't need a lot of time to wait.

### O Ramen & Curry House

by Yuji Yabuzaki, Japan: Winner of Intermediate Level Writing Contest



As a Japanese food, sushi is very famous around the world. However, the noodle called ramen is a popular food too. Curry is originally from India, but it is popular in Japan as well. I think, Japan has an original curry which is different from Indian one. There is a restaurant near UNM that serves Japanese ramen and curry. The name of the restaurant is O Ramen and Curry House. It is along Central Avenue. It takes about



two minutes from the McDonald's on Yale Boulevard which is across from UNM. O Ramen and Curry House is my favorite restaurant where we can easily enjoy Japanese food in Albuquerque.

As soon as I entered the restaurant, I felt that O Ramen has some special features which are different from Japanese ramen restaurants. First O Ramen has stylish design. The dishes and lights are black, the chairs are black or red, and the tables and the counter are wood-grain tone. There are some decorations which allow me to remember Japan. The server of sake which is a pouring machine of sake and the bamboo make the atmosphere of the restaurant better.

Second, we can enjoy the unique greeting too. When customers come into the restaurant, they will hear the Japanese greeting phrase "Irassyaimase". The meaning is "welcome to our restaurant." All clerks said the greetings in Japanese. I felt the enthusiasm of the restaurant. We can feel these special characteristics of the restaurant.

Deluxe O Ramen is one of my recommended foods on the menu. That was highlighted by a red line on the menu to let us know that it is the signature dish. The ingredients were three pieces of pork called chashu,

menma (bamboo shoots), wood ear, spring onion, corn, ginger, shiitake mushrooms, three sheets of seaweed, and a whole marinated hard-boiled egg. Due to the variety of ingredients, the inside of the bowl was so colorful. The smell was also good too. The smell of the soup which is called tonkotsu soup was rich. The smell of seaweed is aromatic. The scent of ginger works like an accent of the smell. Those smells are mixed, then the smell turns into peculiar aroma of tonkotsu ramen. The taste of the soup is rich and thick.

In Japan, we think it is important not only the taste, but also umami. Umami is a word from Japanese. Umami is one of the basic tastes. To extract umami from the bone of a pig, special techniques are needed. Just boiling the bone will cause a bad smelling soup. Actually, there are some restaurants like that in Japan. But the soup of O Ramen smells good and has umami. It is like a real soup in Japan. If I am allowed to wish so much, I wish a little stronger taste for the soup. The texture of the noodle was also good. It was not hard and not soft. I enjoyed the texture of the noodle. In Japan, we can choose the hardness of the noodle from five



levels in most of tonkotsu ramen restaurants. In this point, Japanese ramen restaurants are better than here. In sum, you can enjoy the deluxe O Ramen, because of these special characteristics.

Curry with fried pork is also my recommended food. First, we can enjoy the appearance. It's gorgeous. There is big fried pork on the curry. And the curry is colorful. The steamed rice is white, the curry sauce is brown, the ginger is red, and the spring onion is green. The texture of curry sauce is mellow. I like this texture. We can choose the hotness level from five levels. I think, this system is good for people who live in New Mexico, because they tend to like the hottest taste. For your information, I ordered level three, but

it was too hot for me. The fried pork was fried appropriately. The meat was still juicy, but not pink. In addition, the way it was cut is another point. The fried pork was cut a little thin, so it was easy to eat. Because of these reasons, I recommend this curry with fried pork.

The cost is also a good point of this restaurant. The cost of this restaurant is not very cheap in comparison with other American fast-food. Deluxe O Ramen was \$10 and curry with fried pork was \$8. But we cannot make the ramen by ourselves at this cost, so it is worth it to pay.

In summary, O Ramen and Curry House" is my favorite restaurant in Albuquerque. The ambience is stylish, the ramen and curry are worth trying, and the cost is reasonable. If you are a UNM student and want to try Japanese ramen for a reasonable cost, O Ramen and Curry House can be the first choice to try.

## I-20 IS A PUBLICATION OF THE A.M. ADVANCED WRITING CLASS AT CELAC.

Writers: Salim Al Tubi, Xiaoru Huang, Jiayi Liang (Gloria), Wenbo Chen, Chris Sieczkowski, Danny Choi, Zaid Maaytah, Anh Do, Monica Tovar Coll, Mansour Almohaimeed, Mei Yi Lin (Judy), Saleh Saad Bn Talha, Josselin Chun, Cheng-En Ho (Eric)

Guest Writer and Winner of Intermediate- Level Writing Contest: Yuji Yabuzaki

Faculty Editor: Gail Guengerich