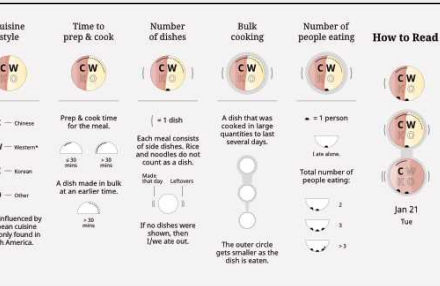


# THE FOOD YOUR GRANDMOTHER MADE

## Eating Routines

A data documentary of what and how I ate for 40 days in 2020.

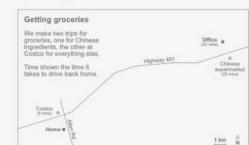


## How a place influences how we eat

Geography plays a large role in how we eat. In Toronto, I encounter all types of people and their food. If I grew up in Hunan, China, the chances of meeting people from other countries is much lower than living in Toronto. In Toronto, I have friends who are from all over the world. I can communicate with them because we all speak English. It's easy to take it for granted how English has connected people and allowed cultures to be shared.

Living in Toronto, my diet is largely a mix of Chinese, Western, and Korean food. Western is a broad term that defines food with European influences. For example, in the morning I have oats with soy milk. Oatmeal has a long history throughout Europe and is a staple in many cultures in North America. Typically, oats are served in some milk. But, I am lactose-intolerant and I supplement with homemade soy milk instead, which was inspired from China. Together, this breakfast is a combination of Western and Chinese cuisines. More recently, I have been eating a lot of Korean food because my boyfriend is Korean. I am constantly influenced by my environment and the people around me.

A diet that incorporates various types of cuisines means visiting different types of supermarkets. It's impossible to find one supermarket that has it all. We live in an Italian neighbourhood so there aren't any large Asian grocery stores nearby. My room's office is in the east side of Toronto, which is filled with Asian supermarkets. She would pick up Chinese ingredients after work on her way home. We live very close to Costco and we make a trip there every other week. When I visit my boyfriend, we sometimes visit the Korean supermarket near his place. When I think about where I want to live, being close to Asian supermarkets is top of the priority. If I can't eat the food I grew up eating, it would affect my quality of life and health. Eating Chinese food is more than sustenance, it's a way to experience joy, comfort, and love.



## Cooking in bulk

Cooking meals in bulk is a smart way to save time and money. This usually translates to stews in Chinese cooking. Mom loves to make them in her large ceramic pot. Her stew uses pork bones as the base for the broth, which she cooks for hours. It is a welcome meal during the cold winters in Toronto.



## Eating together

Mom only cooks her stews when there are people to feed. There were a few years when she lived alone. This usually translates to stews in Chinese cooking. Mom loves to make them in her large ceramic pot. Her stew uses pork bones as the base for the broth, which she cooks for hours. It is a welcome meal during the cold winters in Toronto.

I think eating alone is becoming more common in cities. It might be why the Korean trend mukbang has become so popular. Koreans view eating as a social activity, food plays a very important role in bringing people together. But, not everyone can eat with someone else. Urbanization, smaller families, rising cost of living and many other factors make it more likely for someone to live and eat alone. This is where mukbang comes in. It fills the strong desire Koreans have to eat with someone else, even if it's over the screen.

## Traditions

We practice traditions as a way of participating in a culture. Traditions are social and they bring people together. Food plays a key role in traditions. Whether it's the mid-autumn festival and we eat Jjajang (black bean paste) or it's someone's birthday and they eat 寿面 (longevity noodles), it's hard to deny that food plays a big part in traditions.

The biggest holiday that many families look forward to in Asia is the Lunar New Year. In Chinese, it's known as 春节 (Spring Festival). It's a time when the young receive 红包 (red packets) and visit with money and family members reunite for a meal together.

In 2020, the New Year was on January 25. Typically, families have dinner together on New Year's Eve, which is called 年夜饭 (New Year's Eve dinner). We had 15 people (including me) eating at the dinner. We ate at a Chinese restaurant that cooked traditional food and sat at a big round table. All of my relatives in Canada were there: my aunt, uncle, cousins, nephews, and nieces. The table was filled to the rim with more than a dozen dishes: shrimp, scallops, fish, pork, duck, vegetable, lamb, dumplings, noodles, rice. It was abundant and delicious. We had so much leftover: I packed some to bring home to eat the next day.

My favourite food I eat during the Lunar New Year is 年糕 (nian gao, also called rice cake). It's made of glutinous rice flour and sweetened with sugar. The character 年 means year, and 糕 means cake which is a homophone to 高 (tall). For the year cake is a metaphor wishing that the new year will be a good year. My mom always said 年糕 will be to me when I was younger, which means "grow taller every year". Chinese myths are always associated with their old physical height. It's a way to indicate health and good luck. In some way, height is closely tied to one's future prospects for finding a good partner and a good job. It's a sweet tradition to make, but that's just what parents believe.

## Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

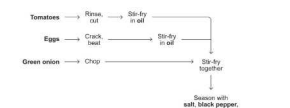
西红柿炒蛋  
xi hong shi chao dan

**Prepare the ingredients**  
Rinse tomatoes and remove the bit where the stem was. Cut in half, then each in quarters. Set aside. Crack two eggs in a bowl and beat with chopsticks until the egg yolk is mixed with the egg whites. Wash and remove stem of the green onion. Chop thinly.

**Cook tomatoes**  
Add oil into a wok on high heat. Stir-fry tomatoes, 30 seconds or until the skin starts to peel off. Remove from the wok.

**Cook eggs**  
Add more oil to the wok, pour the eggs in, do not stir it. Once the eggs are slightly solid, turn the heat to medium and begin stirring and breaking up the eggs into smaller chunks. The eggs will start to get a bit fluffy as you add air by stirring it.

**Putting it together**  
Combine the tomatoes and egg in the wok and stir-fry. Add in the green onions and stir. Season the dish with salt, black pepper, and soy sauce.



This dish is as close as you'll get to a real Chinese home-cooked dish. The ingredients used for this dish could also be made into a soup as a dip or a broth for noodles. It's also very easy to make. If you go down to the market, you'll find a lot of tomatoes. The tomatoes are usually very soft and ripe. You can use them to make a soup or a dip. The tomatoes are usually very soft and ripe. You can use them to make a soup or a dip.

## Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

西红柿炒蛋

What you need

Core ingredients

2 roma tomatoes

2 large eggs

1 green onion stalk

Additional ingredients

2 tsp vegetable oil

1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp grounded black pepper

1/2 tsp soy sauce

Equipment

Chinese chef's knife

Cutting board

Chopsticks

Wok

Wok spatula

Notes

Roma tomatoes are great, but if you have a bit more in your budget to spare for groceries, try tomatoes on vine. They are very fragrant and add a nice kick to the dish.

Prep & cook time

15 mins

Serves

2 people

Equipment

Chinese chef's knife

Cutting board

Chopsticks

Wok

Wok spatula

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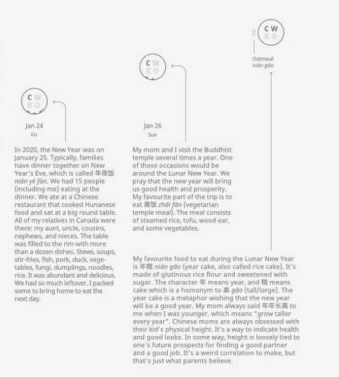
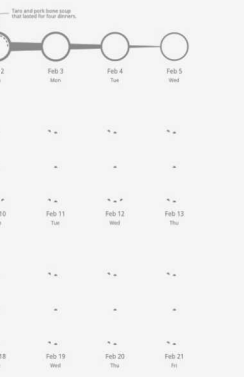
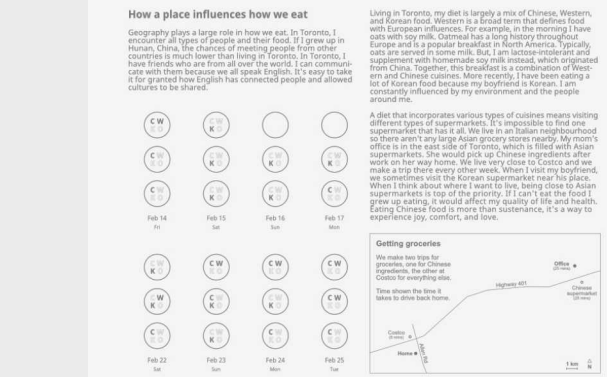
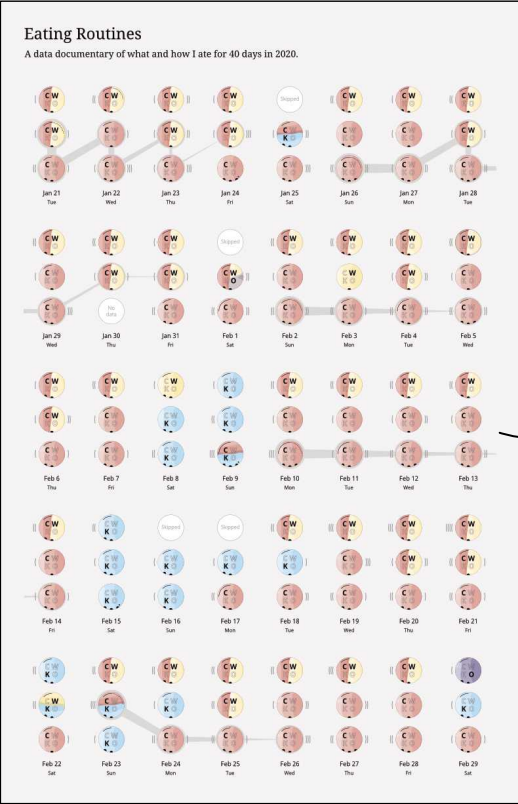
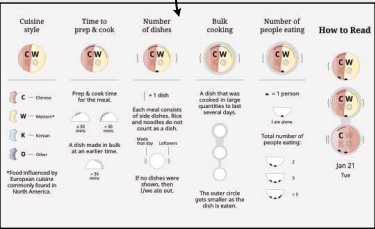
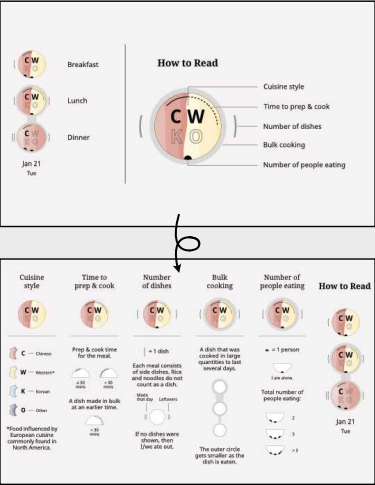
# Preserving culture

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For a very long time, I've had a fear of losing my culture. It's an inevitable trend I see among my peers. I live in Toronto, it's filled with many, many pockets of different cultures. People from all over the world come here. When people settle and start a family, their children will become distant with their heritage due to the environment they live in. An obvious case of this is language and customs. I struggle to speak Mandarin formally. I can carry out a casual conversation, but that's about it. I can read and write some Chinese, if I went on Chinese social media, I would be able to understand about 40%-50% of it. I am afraid of my culture disappearing over the next couple of generations in my family. I think if certain customs are forgotten, it would be such a shame. This project aims at preserving an aspect of my family through food.

I believe food is the most accessible aspect of any culture. It's something anyone can easily enjoy eating and making. Food allows us to share an experience our ancestors have enjoyed. One day when I am no longer alive, I hope this project can give future generations in my family a way to learn about us. Maybe they will better understand themselves in this process. Maybe they will find comfort and love in the food their grandmother makes.

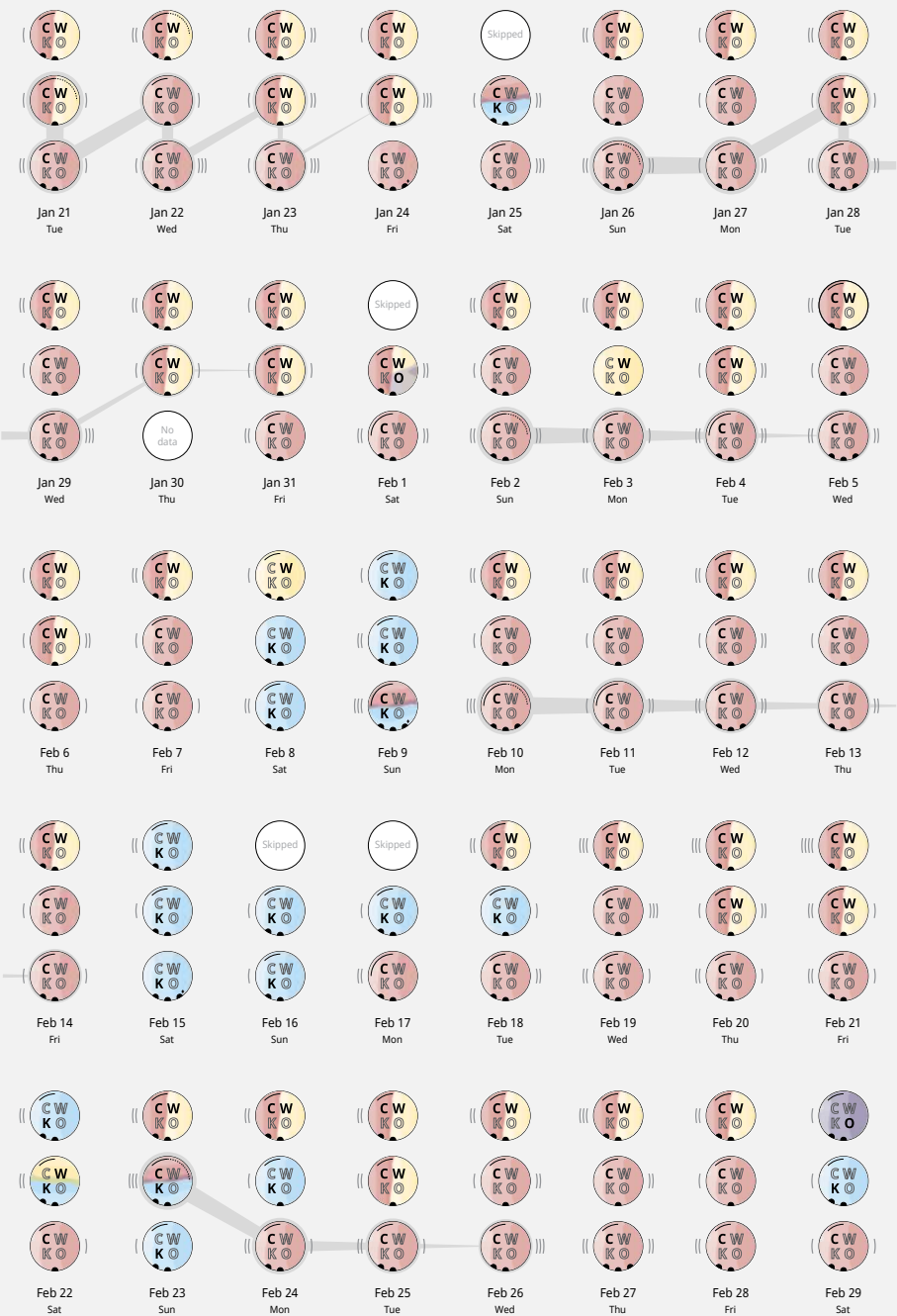
# Section 1: A data documentary of how I eat





Eating Routines

A data documentary of what and how I ate for 40 days in 2020.



Themes in the data

I have captured how I eat for 40 days. You can learn a lot about what life is like just by looking at how I eat.

Being smart with time

Living in the city, we are constantly working. We work to make an income that can support our life. The pace is fast and we feel we don't have enough time to do anything. It's a feeling of being in a race without a finish line. It's hard to find time to cook meals when you work full-time. Delivery services have been on their side and more people are ordering take-out. But, this isn't the case for my mom. My parents divorced when I was entering my teenage years. During those times, my mom still found time to cook homemade food for us. When she was in a pinch for time, she got help from her sister and niece. To this day, my mom rarely eats out. She prefers to cook her own food. Even as a busy business owner, she manages to squeeze in time to buy groceries and cook at home. She always finds ways to make things work. The biggest hack she has is cooking food in bulk. She loves to cook stews and they last for days. As you browse the data, you will see how often she makes food in bulk. The time we prepare and cook meals rarely take more than 30 minutes.

Cultural mosaic

Over 30 years ago, my mom lived in China and only ate Chinese food. She never ate anything outside of that. Western food wasn't prevalent in China so it would've been hard to have access to food like pasta, salad, burgers, and steak. Now that she lives in Toronto, she has access to a wide variety of cuisines. Our environment influences how we eat. I eat a lot of Chinese food, but most of the day I am snacking on food like peanut butter and waffles, saltine crackers, and hummus. If I was to include snacks in the data, you'd see more variation in the cuisine styles I am eating.

I have identified three cuisine styles that are most prominent in my diet: Chinese, Western, and Korean. The way I show cuisines mimics how water colors blend together. I see the way I eat come together and augment each other. For example, I often have some leftovers with rice for lunch (usually Chinese dishes) and fry an egg to go with it. I prefer to fry the egg sunny side up, which is not found in traditional Chinese cooking (I have never seen eggs cooked where the yolk was still liquid, unless it's in a soup. Even then, the yolk and the white has been mixed together, they wouldn't be separate). This lunch is a simple example of how the way I eat is an amalgamation of two distinct cultural styles coming together.

A social tradition

Traditionally, everyone starts to eat when every family member is at the table. In modern urban life, it has become more common for people to eat alone. As an introvert, I enjoy being on my own. I have my space to think and reflect. But, I still enjoy eating with other people. Eating is one of the few moments in life where food tastes better with good company. The way the table is set up in Chinese cuisine is designed for everyone to share.

Typically, the table is round so everyone has access to the side dishes in the middle. Everyone has their own bowl of rice they eat with the side dishes. There are usually 2-3 dishes for a small family. The number of side dishes should be equivalent to the number of people eating. When we eat at a restaurant, there is usually a turntable at the center to rotate dishes so everyone can access them. As a child, I couldn't reach the side dishes because I was too short. I would sit beside my mom and she would take bits of the dishes with her chopsticks and add it directly to my bowl. Adults also do this to teach others as a way to show affection. A friend might offer the first piece of meat to another friend to show camaraderie. The way food is laid out on the table makes it easy for people to share food and show how much they love and care about each other.

How data was collected and processed

This data was collected from January 21, 2020 to February 29, 2020 via Google Forms. The data was exported to and cleaned in Excel. It was manually visualized using Adobe Illustrator.

I collected data of what I ate during breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I also collected data on snacks I had throughout the day, but wasn't visualized. At first, I tried to record the data right after the meal, but this was very hard to keep up. So I got into the habit of recording the data at the end of the day. Sometimes, I would forget to track the data and would record it the next day. This meant there could've been errors in recording data as I might recall incorrectly. There was an instance when I forgot to record data. On January 30, I didn't record what I ate for dinner because I recorded the meal on January 31 and I lost track of it.

I had challenges categorizing some of the data. For example, I would have my first meal of the day around noon. Typically, this is a brunch. But, I categorized this as lunch and consider breakfast 'skipped'. Another example was categorizing cuisine styles. For example, *budaejjigae* (which means army stew) is a Korean dish heavily influenced by Americans after the Korean War. It's a stew made of kimchi, *gochujang* (red chili paste), baked beans, spam, and sausages. Objectively, this dish isn't traditionally Korean and was a recent invention, so it could be categorized as a mix of Korean and Western cuisines. However, it's unlikely you would find this in a non-Korean restaurant. Thus, I categorized it as Korean.

Why I made this project

Dear future generations of the fam,

As the first Chinese-Canadian in the family, I faced complex challenges understanding my identity. In Canada, I am seen as Chinese. In China, my relatives say I'm Canadian. I never felt like I belonged in either place. I always felt a tug-of-war between traditional Chinese values and Western ones. You will have your own struggles with identity, especially if you are part of an interracial or transnational family. In Toronto, you will find people from all over the world: Croatia, Portugal, Jamaica, Vietnam, China, Ukraine, Philippines, Ireland, Eritrea, Italy, India, Colombia, South Africa, Korea, Israel, Germany, Tibet, Argentina, Somalia, Pakistan, Armenia, Japan, Poland, the list goes on and on. The chances of different cultures and nationalities coming together to form new families is very high. It's a wonderful and beautiful thing to happen. Given this, I suspect that you will become more distant from your Chinese heritage. And this is why this project exists.

How could I give you access to your Chinese heritage? To give you a glimpse into your family's past? Perhaps there are things you could learn from our mundane lives. Maybe you might see a bit of yourselves in your ancestors. I know I do. I love asking my mom about her life in China and what it was like to be raised with 7 siblings by my grandmother. I never met my grandmother because of China's one-child policy (my mom already had my older brother). The more I learn about my grandmother, the more I identify with her. She was a trooper and defied all odds. She was illiterate, never knew how to read or write her own name. But, she was entrepreneurial and was smart with money. She worked harder her entire life, she farmed and sold her crops to make a living. She believed all her children, including her two daughters, deserved an education. My mom was the only one of her siblings who had the luck and talent to successfully immigrate to Canada and build her own business to support her relatives in China.

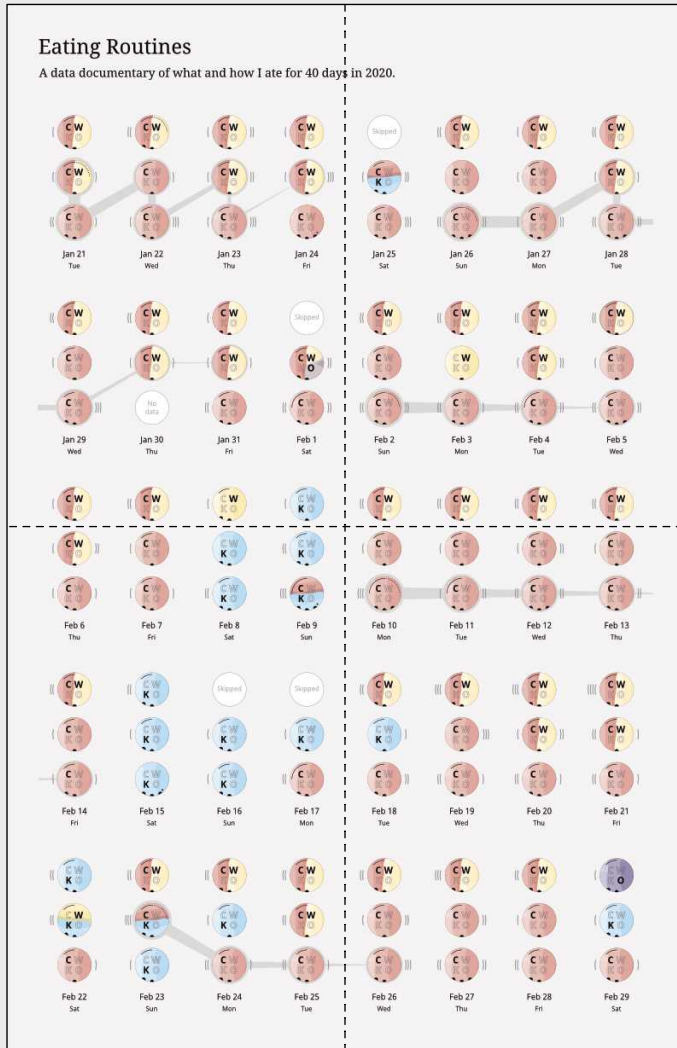
This project is my attempt to record our family's recent history. There are two parts to this project. The first part is a documentary of my eating routine. This gives you context of the role food plays in our life. The second part is a collection of my mom's recipes. I chose to preserve recipes because I believe it is the most accessible aspect of a culture. I don't expect you to know any Chinese, or even to practice any of the traditions we have. But, the least I expect is that you have some knowledge of Chinese cooking. I hope you feel proud of who you are and your roots.

Love,

Jane.

The Food Your Grandmother Made

A project by Jane Zhang



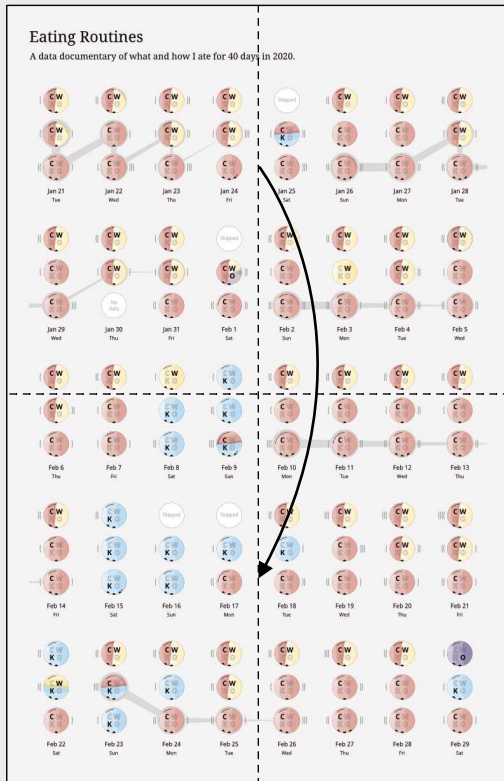
## Inside

This is a data documentary, which is similar to film documentary, except the situation unfolds through data. This documents 40 days of my eating routine. It is double-sided and can be folded into a booklet.

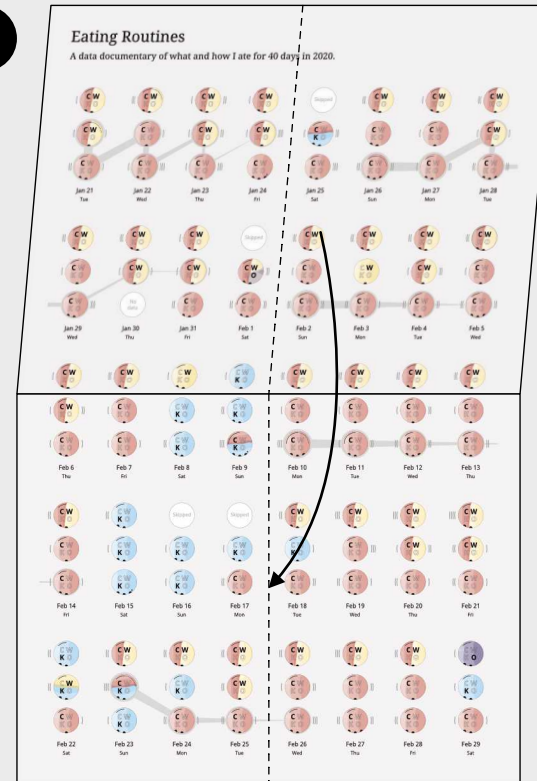


Outside

1



2



3

### Why I made this project

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How could I give you access to your Chinese heritage? I can only give you a glimpse into my family's past. Perhaps there are things that you could learn from our mistakes here. Maybe you might see a bit of yourself in your ancestors. I know I do. I have eating my meals almost the same in China and what I eat was like to be raised with 7 siblings by my grandmother. I never met my grandmother because of China. She died during my time already but I still remember her. The more I learn about my grandmother, the more I identify with her. She was a stronger and defined all sides. She was illiterate, never knew how to read or write her own name. But, she was entrepreneurial and was smart with money. She worked hard her entire life, she farmed and sold her daughter, discovered an education. My mum was the only one of four siblings who had the luck and talent to successfully immigrate to Canada and build her own business to support her relatives in China.

This project is my attempt to record our family's recent history. There are two parts to this project. The first part is a documentary of my eating routine. This gives you a peek at the life food plays in our life. The second part is a collection of my mum's recipes. I chose to preserve recipes because I believe it is the most accessible aspect of a culture. I don't expect you to know how Chinese, or even to practice any of the traditions we have. But, the least I expect is that you have some knowledge of Chinese cooking. I hope you feel proud of who you are and your roots.

Love,  
Jane.

### Themes in the data

I have captured how I eat for 40 days. You can learn a lot about what life is like just by looking at these icons.

#### Being smart with time

Living in the city, we are constantly working. We work to make an income that can support our life. The pace is fast and we feel we don't have enough time to do anything. It's a feeling of being in a race without a finish line. It's hard to find time to cook meals when you work full-time. Delivery services have been an innovation for me and my family. But, this isn't the case for my mum. My parents shared when I was eating my teenage years. During those times, my mum still had time to cook her husband food for us. When she was in a pinch for time, she got help from her sister and niece. To this day, my mum rarely eats out. She prefers to cook her own food. Even as a busy business owner, she manages to squeeze in time to buy groceries and cook at home. She always finds ways to make things work. But most of the day I am thinking on food like peanut butter sandwich, native crackers, and bananas. If I want to include marks in the data, for it to be more accurate in the future right I am eating.

#### Culture is a game

Over 30 years ago, my grandmother lived in China and only ate Chinese food. She never ate anything else. But, Western food wasn't present in China so it wasn't in her diet. Her access to food like pork, salad, burgers, and steak. Now that she lives in Toronto, she has access to a wide variety of cuisines. Our environment influences how we eat. I eat a lot of Chinese food, but most of the day I am thinking on food like peanut butter sandwich, native crackers, and bananas. If I want to include marks in the data, for it to be more accurate in the future right I am eating.

#### I have identified three cuisine styles that are most prominent in my diet:

Chinese, Western, and English. The way I chose different recipes has water, cornstarch, and oil. I see the way I eat come together and augment each other. For example, I often have cornstarch with rice for lunch (usually Chinese dishes) and fry an egg to go with it. I prefer to fry the egg every side up which is not found in traditional Chinese cooking. I have never seen eggs cooked where the yolk was still liquid, unless it's in a soup. Even then, the yolk and the white has been mixed together. They remain separate. This lunch is a simple example of how the way I eat is an amalgamation of two distinct cultural styles coming together.

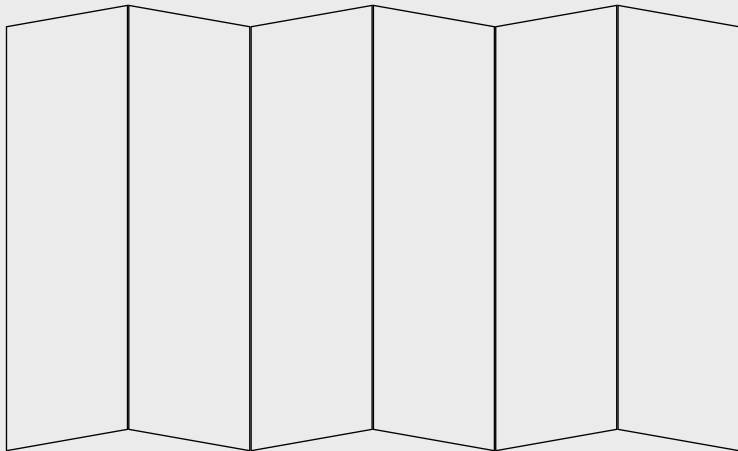
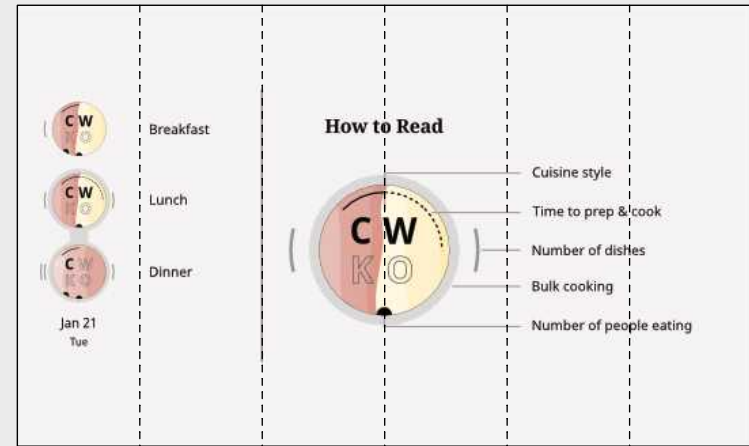
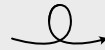
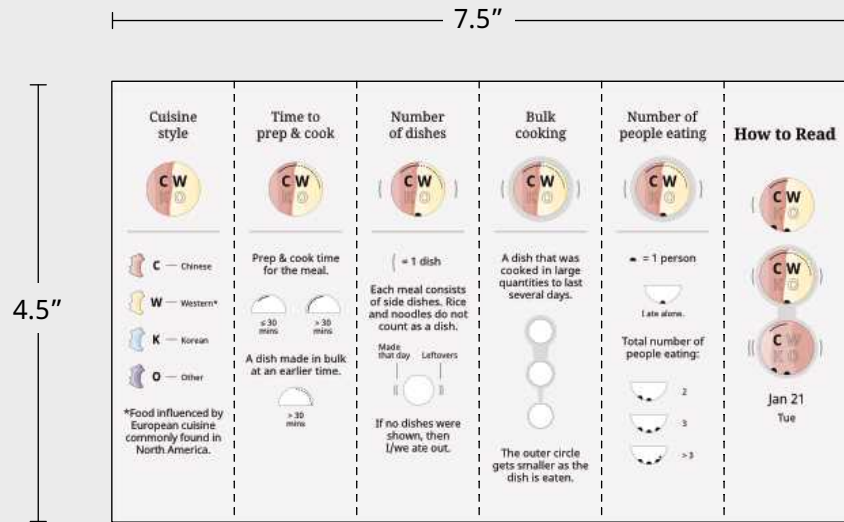
#### A social tradition

Traditionally, everyone starts to eat when every family member is at the table. In modern urban life, it has become more common for people to eat alone. An interesting thing I enjoy doing is cook. I usually cook to eat and reflect. But, I still enjoy eating with other people. Eating is one of the few moments in life where food comes together with good company. The way the table is set up in Chinese cuisines is designed for everyone to share.

4

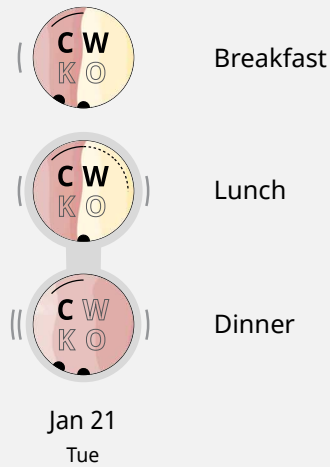
## The Food Your Grandmother Made

A project by Jane Zhang

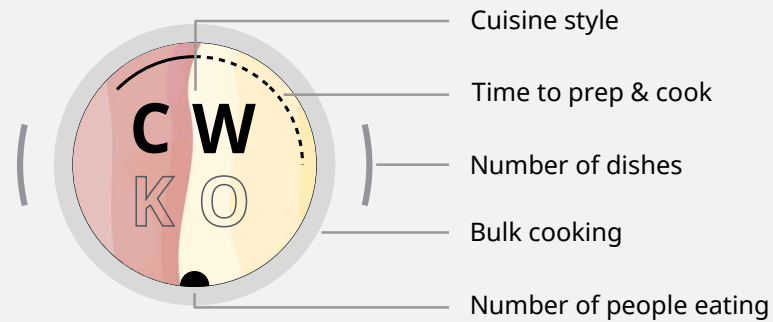


This legend explains how to read the documentary. It can be folded into a thin booklet.

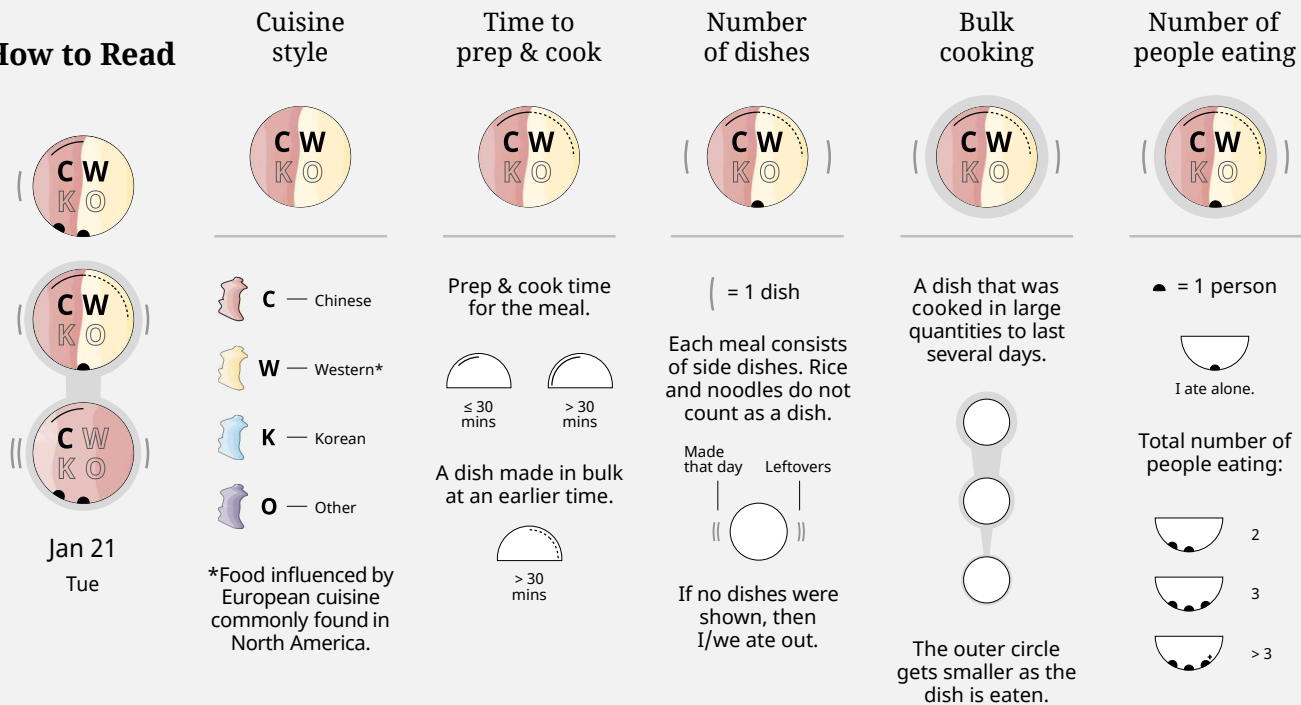




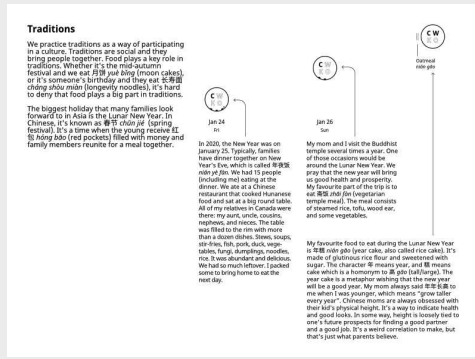
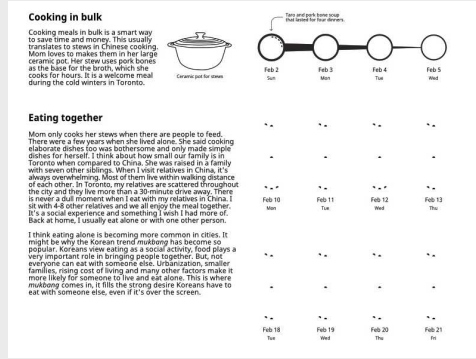
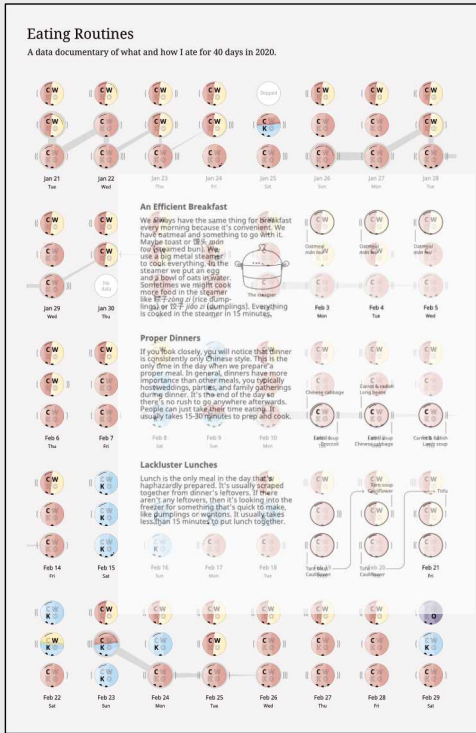
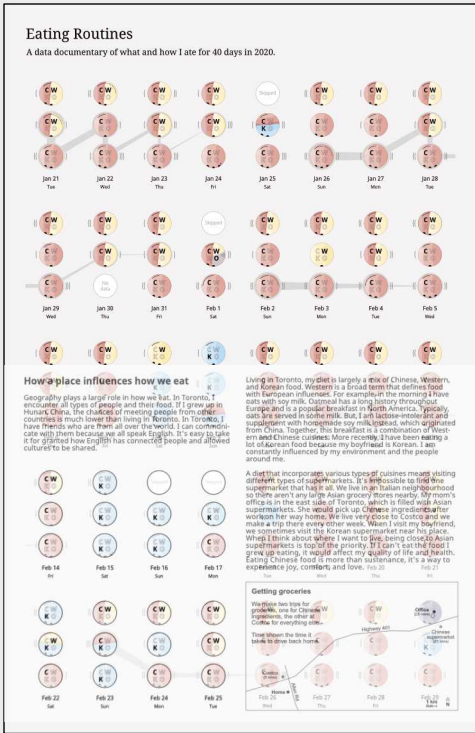
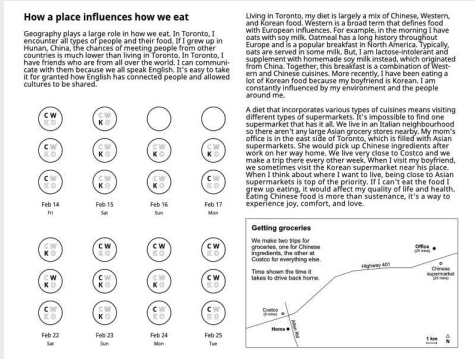
## How to Read



## How to Read



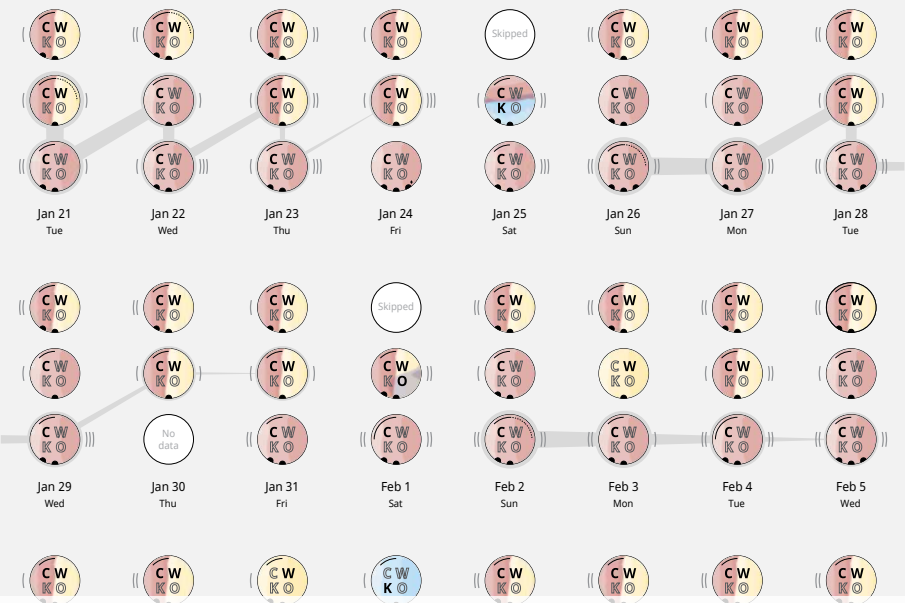




Four narratives were created to give context to the data. They were printed on vellum and can be laid directly on top of the poster.

# Eating Routines

A data documentary of what and how I ate for 40 days in 2020.

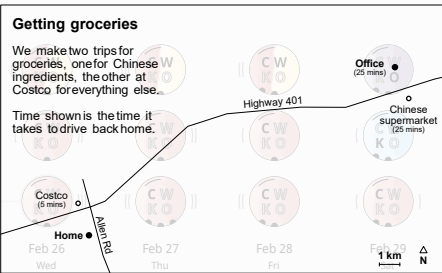


## How a place influences how we eat

Geography plays a large role in how we eat. In Toronto, I encounter all types of people and their food. If I grew up in Hunan, China, the chances of meeting people from other countries is much lower than living in Toronto. In Toronto, I have friends who are from all over the world. I can communicate with them because we all speak English. It's easy to take it for granted how English has connected people and allowed cultures to be shared.

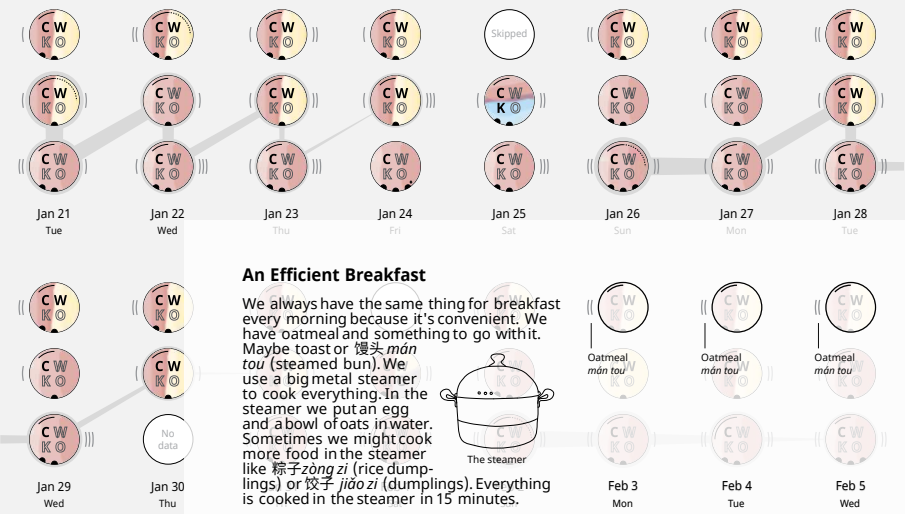
Living in Toronto, my diet is largely a mix of Chinese, Western, and Korean food. Western is a broad term that defines food with European influences. For example, in the morning I have oats with soy milk. Oatmeal has a long history throughout Europe and is a popular breakfast in North America. Typically, oats are served in some milk. But, I am lactose-intolerant and supplement with homemade soy milk instead, which originated from China. Together, this breakfast is a combination of Western and Chinese cuisines. More recently, I have been eating a lot of Korean food because my boyfriend is Korean. I am constantly influenced by my environment and the people around me.

A diet that incorporates various types of cuisines means visiting different types of supermarkets. It's impossible to find one supermarket that has it all. We live in an Italian neighbourhood so there aren't any large Asian grocery stores nearby. My mom's office is in the east side of Toronto, which is filled with Asian supermarkets. She would pick up Chinese ingredients after work on her way home. We live very close to Costco and we make a trip there every other week. When I visit my boyfriend, we sometimes visit the Korean supermarket near his place. When I think about where I want to live, being close to Asian supermarkets is top of the priority list. If I can't eat the food I grew up eating, it would affect my quality of life and health. Eating Chinese food is more than sustenance, it's a way to experience joy, comfort, and love.



# Eating Routines

A data documentary of what and how I ate for 40 days in 2020.



## An Efficient Breakfast

We always have the same thing for breakfast every morning because it's convenient. We have oatmeal and something to go with it. Maybe toast or 馒头 *mán tou* (steamed bun). We use a big metal steamer to cook everything. In the steamer we put an egg and a bowl of oats in water. Sometimes we might cook more food in the steamer like 粽子 *zòng zi* (rice dumplings) or 饺子 *jiǎo zi* (dumplings). Everything is cooked in the steamer in 15 minutes.

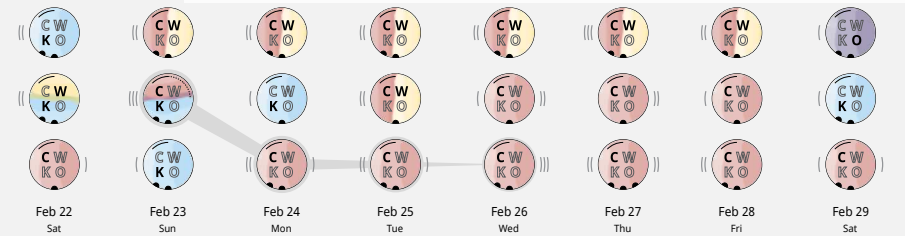


## Proper Dinners

If you look closely, you will notice that dinner is consistently only Chinese style. This is the only time of the day when we prepare a proper meal. In general, dinners have more importance than other meals, you typically host weddings, parties, and family gatherings during dinner. It's the end of the day so there's no rush to go anywhere afterwards. People can just take their time eating. It usually takes 15-30 minutes to prep and cook.

## Lackluster Lunches

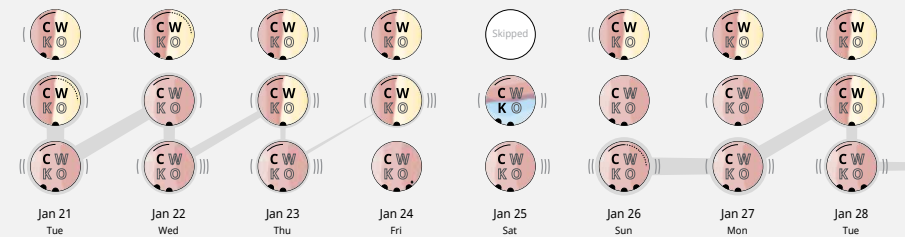
Lunch is the only meal in the day that's haphazardly prepared. It's usually scraped together from dinner's leftovers. If there aren't any leftovers, then it's looking into the freezer for something that's quick to make, like dumplings or wontons. It usually takes less than 15 minutes to put lunch together.





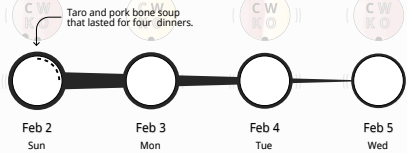
# Eating Routines

A data documentary of what and how I ate for 40 days in 2020.



## Cooking in bulk

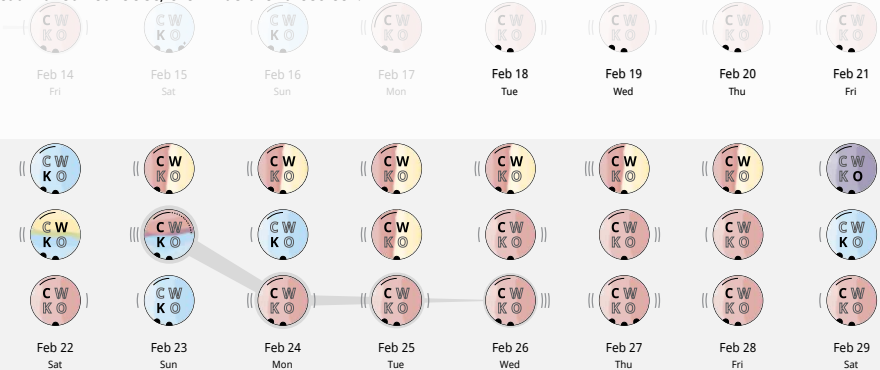
Cooking meals in bulk is a smart way to save time and money. This usually translates to stews in Chinese cooking. Mom loves to make them in her large ceramic pot. Her stew uses pork bones as the base for the broth, which she cooks for hours. It is a welcome meal during the cold winters in Toronto.



## Eating together

Mom only cooks her stews when there are people to feed. There were a few years when she lived alone. She said cooking elaborate dishes was too bothersome and only made simple dishes for herself. I think about how small our family is in Toronto when compared to China. She was raised in a family with seven other siblings. When I visit relatives in China, it's always overwhelming. Most of them live within walking distance of each other. In Toronto, my relatives are scattered throughout the city and they live more than a 30-minute drive away. There is never a dull moment when I eat with my relatives in China. I sit with 4-8 other relatives and we all enjoy the meal together. It's a social experience and something I wish I had more of. Back at home, I usually eat alone or with one other person.

I think eating alone is becoming more common in cities. It might be why the Korean trend mukbang has become so popular. Koreans view eating as a social activity, food plays a very important role in bringing people together. But, not everyone can eat with someone else. Urbanization, smaller families, rising cost of living and many other factors make it more likely for someone to live and eat alone. This is where mukbang comes in, it fills the strong desire Koreans have to eat with someone else, even if it's over the screen.



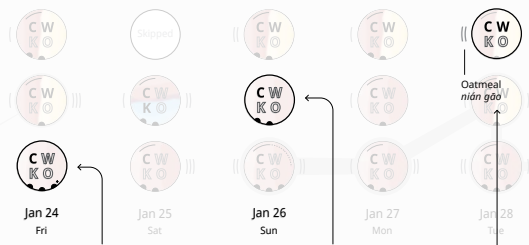
# Eating Routines

A data documentary of what and how I ate for 40 days in 2020.

## Traditions

We practice traditions as a way of participating in a culture. Traditions are social and they bring people together. Food plays a key role in traditions. Whether it's the mid-autumn festival and we eat 月饼 *yue bing* (moon cakes), or it's someone's birthday and they eat 长寿面 *cháng shòu miàn* (longevity noodles), it's hard to deny that food plays a big part in traditions.

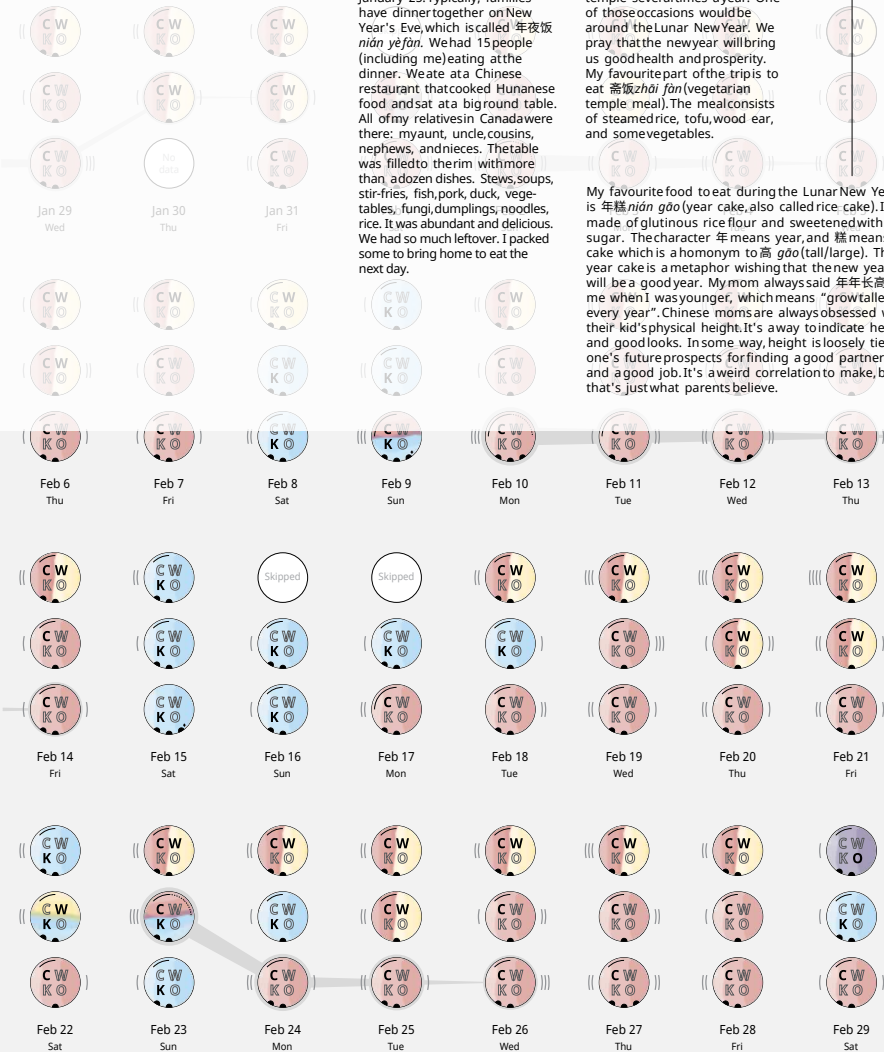
The biggest holiday that many families look forward to in Asia is the Lunar New Year. In Chinese, it's known as 春节 *chūn jié* (spring festival). It's a time when the young receive 红包 *hóng bāo* (red pockets) filled with money and family members reunite for a meal together.



In 2020, the New Year was on January 25. Typically, families have dinner together on New Year's Eve, which is called 年夜饭 *nián yè fàn*. We had 15 people (including me) eating at the dinner. We ate at a Chinese restaurant that cooked Hunanese food and sat at a big round table. All of my relatives in Canada were there: my aunt, uncle, cousins, nephews, and nieces. The table was filled to the rim with more than a dozen dishes. Stews, soups, stir-fries, fish, pork, duck, vegetables, fungi, dumplings, noodles, rice. It was abundant and delicious. We had so much leftover. I packed some to bring home to eat the next day.

My mom and I visit the Buddhist temple several times a year. One of those occasions would be around the Lunar New Year. We pray that the new year will bring us good health and prosperity. My favourite part of the trip is to eat 斋饭 *zhāi fàn* (vegetarian temple meal). The meal consists of steamed rice, tofu, wood ear, and some vegetables.

My favourite food to eat during the Lunar New Year is 年糕 *nián gāo* (year cake, also called rice cake). It's made of glutinous rice flour and sweetened with sugar. The character 年 means year, and 糕 means cake which is a homonym to 高 *gāo* (tall/large). The year cake is a metaphor wishing that the new year will be a good year. My mom always said "年年长高 to me when I was younger, which means "grow taller every year". Chinese moms are always obsessed with their kid's physical height. It's away to indicate health and good looks. In some way, height is loosely tied to one's future prospects for finding a good partner and a good job. It's a weird correlation to make, but that's just what parents believe.



# Section 2: Recipe cards and sheets



Recipe card

**Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry**

**What you need**

**Core ingredients**

- 3 roma tomatoes
- 2 large eggs
- 1 green onion stalk

**Additional ingredients**

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp grounded black pepper
- 1/2 tsp soy sauce

**Equipment**

- Chinese chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Chopsticks
- Wok
- Wok spatula

**Good to know**

**Prep + cook time**  
15 mins

**Serves**  
2 people

**Notes**  
Roma tomatoes are great, but if you have a bit more in your budget to spare for groceries, try tomatoes on vine. They are very fragrant and add a nice kick to the dish.

*This one of the first dishes I cooked for my first boyfriend and it blew his mind. He couldn't believe how tomatoes could be cooked this way. He has tried many dishes since then, but still claims tomato eggs to be his favourite. I agree. This dish has a sweet and sour taste and the soft fluffy egg goes down so smoothly. It's also very easy to make.*

*-Jane*

The ingredients used for this dish could also be made into a soup as a side or a broth for noodles.

The ingredients used for this dish could also be made into a soup as a side or a broth for noodles.

Recipe sheet

**Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry**

**西红柿炒蛋**  
xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

**Prepare the ingredients**

3 roma tomatoes  
2 large eggs  
1 green onion stalk

**Cook tomatoes**  
1 tbsp vegetable oil

**Cook eggs**  
1 tbsp vegetable oil

**Putting it together**  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp black pepper  
1/2 tsp soy sauce

Rinse tomatoes and remove the bit where the stem was. Cut in half, then each in quarters. Set aside. Crack two eggs in a bowl and beat with chopsticks until the egg yolk is mixed with the egg whites. Wash and remove stem of the green onion. Chop thinly.

Add oil into a wok on high heat. Stir-fry tomatoes, 30 seconds or until the skin starts to peel off. Remove from the wok.

Add more oil to the wok, pour the eggs in, do not stir it. Once the eggs are slightly solid, turn the heat to medium and begin stirring and breaking it up into smaller chunks. The eggs will start to get a bit fluffy as you add air by stirring it.

Combine the tomatoes and egg in the wok and stir-fry. Add in the green onions and stir. Season the dish with salt, black pepper, and soy sauce.

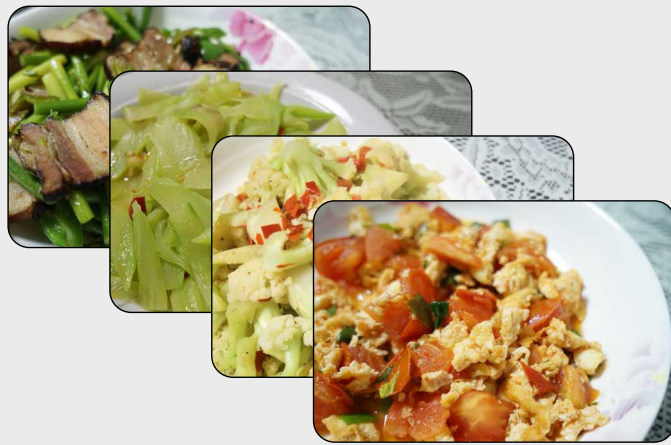
**Tomatoes** → Rinse, cut → Stir-fry in oil

**Eggs** → Crack, beat → Stir-fry in oil

**Green onion** → Chop → Stir-fry together

Season with salt, black pepper, soy sauce





Recipe cards

### Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

西红柿炒蛋  
xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

---

3 roma tomatoes

2 large eggs

1 green onion stalk

1 tbsp vegetable oil

1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp black pepper

1/2 tbsp soy sauce

**Prepare the ingredients**

Rinse tomatoes and remove the bit where the stem was. Cut in half, then each in quarters. Set aside. Crack two eggs in a bowl and beat with chopsticks until the egg yolk is mixed with the egg whites. Wash and remove stem of the green onion. Chop thinly.

**Cook tomatoes**

Add oil into a wok on high heat. Stir-fry tomatoes, 30 seconds or until the skin starts to peel off. Remove from the wok.

**Cook eggs**

Add more oil to the wok, pour the eggs in, do not stir it. Once the eggs are slightly solid, turn the heat to medium and begin stirring and breaking it up into smaller chunks. The eggs will start to get a bit fluffy as you add air by stirring it.

**Putting it together**

Combine the tomatoes and egg in the wok and stir-fry. Add in the green onions and stir. Season the dish with salt, black pepper, and soy sauce.

---

```

graph LR
    Tomatoes --> Rinse[Rinse, cut]
    Eggs --> Crack[Crack, beat]
    GreenOnion[Green onion] --> Chop[Chop]
    Rinse --> StirFryTomatoes[Stir-fry in oil]
    Crack --> StirFryEggs[Stir-fry in oil]
    StirFryTomatoes --> StirFryTogether[Stir-fry together]
    StirFryEggs --> StirFryTogether
    Chop --> StirFryTogether
    StirFryTogether --> Season[Season with salt, black pepper, soy sauce]
  
```

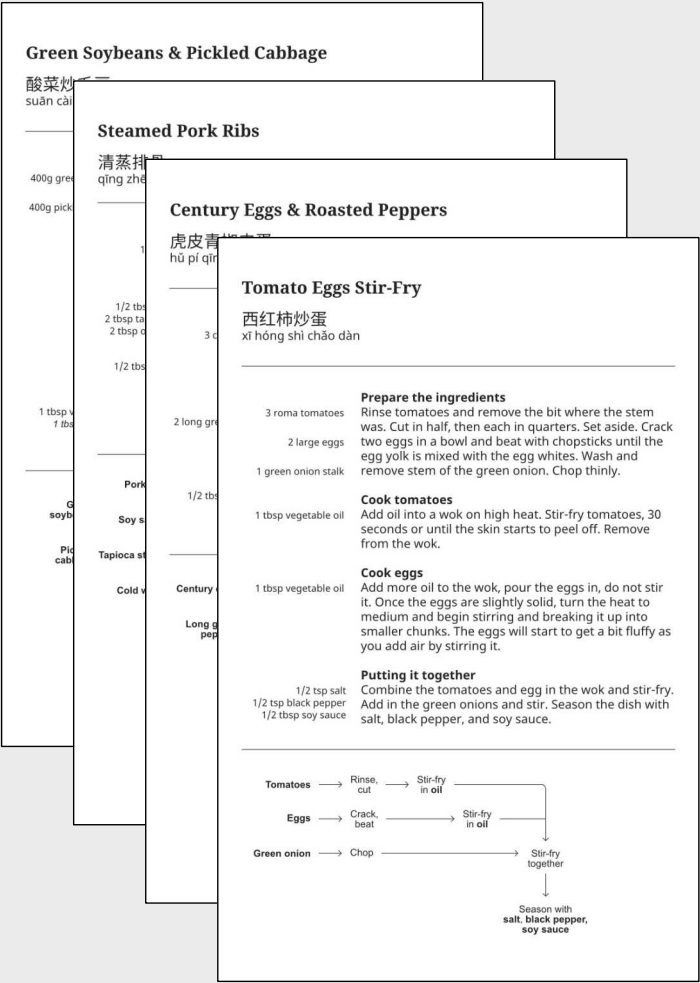
Recipe sheets

Every recipe card has a corresponding recipe card. The sheets contain the instructions of how to make a dish. The cards were created to make it easy to browse through the recipes. It acts as a table of contents in visual format.

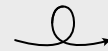
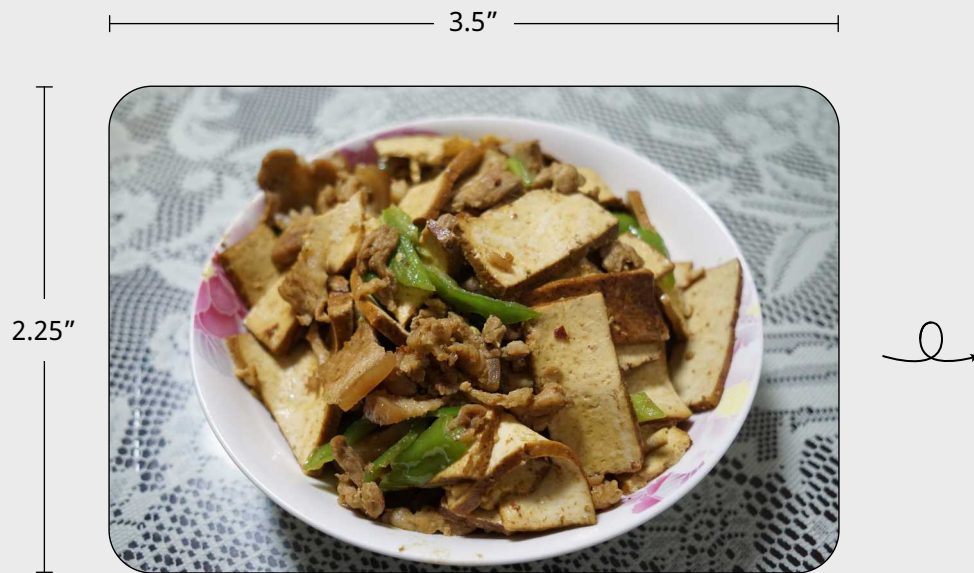
Recipe cards: front and back



Recipe sheets: inside only



Every recipe card has a corresponding recipe sheet. The sheets contain the instructions of how to make a dish. The cards were created to make it easy to browse through the recipes. It acts as a table of contents in visual format.







The front of the cards show the image of the dish. The back provides more details to help you choose what to try. Details include: time to cook, core ingredients, flavours, textures, and cooking method.



7.5"



4"

**5. Textures:** categorizes how food feels. Soft/Firm defines all food. Chewy/Tender and Mushy/Crunchy is an additional way to define Soft/Firm.

 Soft: easy to chew and swallow  
e.g. soft tofu  
 Firm: solid, hard, fibrous  
e.g. cabbage, lotus root, apple

 Chewy (meat): hard to break apart  
e.g. pork trotters, intestines  
 Tender (meat): easy to break apart  
e.g. fish, pork ribs,

 Mushy: easy to break apart with tongue  
e.g. boiled potato, taro stew  
 Crunchy: makes a loud sound chewing  
e.g. bok choy, pickled cabbage

 Thin (liquid): watery, translucent  
e.g. clear soups, winter melon soups  
 Viscous (liquid): thick, opaque  
e.g. pumpkin stew, congee

**6. Cooking method:** methods used to make the dish. Could be a combination of more than one method.

Stir-fry: the most common method of cooking. Ingredients are cooked in oil while moving them around to distribute heat among them.

Boil: cooking ingredients in water for a brief amount of time.

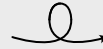
Stew: cooking ingredients in water for several hours.

Steam: placing ingredients over boiling water and using the steam and high temperature to cook it.

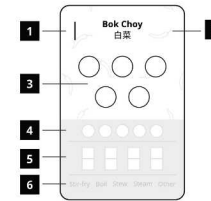
Other: roasting, combining raw ingredients, deep-frying, smoking, etc.

How to use

## Recipe Cards



Each card is an overview of one recipe. The cards help you decide what you want to try based on factors such as how much time you have and your preferences. Once you've chosen a recipe, find the corresponding recipe sheets for more details.



**1. Time:** total time to prepare and cook the dish. Time is categorized into " $\leq 30$  mins" and " $> 30$  mins".

Left side:  $\leq 30$  mins: can be made right before the meal.  
Right side:  $> 30$  mins: ideal for bulk cooking and made in advance.


**2. Spicy:** the dish is spicy when the background has peppers. The range of spiciness varies from mild to hot.




**3. Core ingredients:** the ingredients vital to the dish. Seasonings are not included. Each ingredient can be fresh, frozen, or preserved.

 Vegetables  
 Meat  
 Seafood  
 Legumes, fungi, eggs


other: Fruit, dairy, grains, etc.


 Fresh: will perish in 2-4 weeks

 Frozen: stored or bought frozen


 Preserved: canned, pickled


## 4. Flavours

 Sweet: a sugary and pleasurable flavour

 Savoury: a rich deep flavour, commonly described as umami

 Sour: a tangy taste you'd get from vinegar

 Salty: comes from adding salt

 Bitter: not a pleasant flavour at first, usually an acquired taste

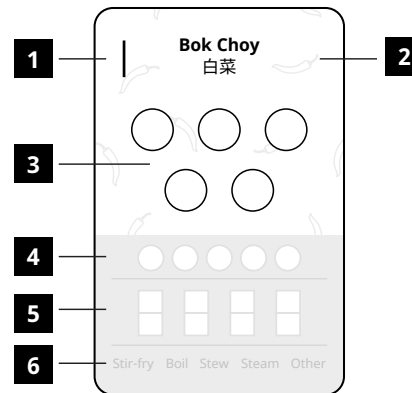
This booklet explains in detail how to read the back of the cards.



## How to use

### Recipe Cards

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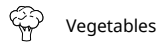
Right side  
> 30 mins: ideal for  
bulk cooking and  
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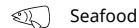
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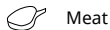
**3. Core ingredients:** the ingredients vital to the dish. Seasonings are not included. Each ingredient can be fresh, frozen, or preserved.



Vegetables



Seafood



Meat



Legumes,  
fungi, eggs

other Fruit, dairy,  
grains, etc.



Fresh: will perish in 2-4 weeks



Frozen: stored or bought frozen



Preserved: canned, pickled

#### 4. Flavours



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**Stew:** cooking ingredients in water for several hours.

**Steam:** placing ingredients over boiling water and using the steam and high temperature to cook it.

**Other:** roasting, combining raw ingredients, deep-frying, smoking, etc.



In total, 36 cards were made. By design, these cards make it easy for me to add more to it in the future. If it was designed in the traditional cookbook format, it would be challenging to update. This format is dynamic.



Browsing recipes in card format makes it easy to compare variables. For example, in this lot of cards, you can quickly identify which one would take more than 30 minutes to prepare (green soybeans & pickled cabbage).





Spiciness defines Hunan food. The background of the card was chosen to show spiciness because it was obvious, yet not overpowering. The fullness of the peppers scattered on the card portrayed how it defined the entire dish.





The way the core ingredients were shown was in the order of frequency. Most Chinese dishes are filled with vegetables and meat. The way it is laid out makes it relatively easy to determine if a dish is vegetarian.



1

### Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

西红柿炒蛋  
xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

---

**Prepare the ingredients**  
 3 roma tomatoes Rinse tomatoes and remove the bit where the stem was. Cut in half, then each in quarters. Set aside. Crack two eggs in a bowl and beat with chopsticks until the egg yolk is mixed with the egg whites. Wash and remove stem of the green onion. Chop thinly.

**Cook tomatoes**  
 1 tbsp vegetable oil Add oil into a wok on high heat. Stir-fry tomatoes, 30 seconds or until the skin starts to peel off. Remove from the wok.

**Cook eggs**  
 1 tbsp vegetable oil Add more oil to the wok, pour the eggs in, do not stir it. Once the eggs are slightly solid, turn the heat to medium and begin stirring and breaking it up into smaller chunks. The eggs will start to get a bit fluffy as you add air by stirring it.

**Putting it together**  
 1/2 tsp salt Combine the tomatoes and egg in the wok and stir-fry.  
 1/2 tsp black pepper Add in the green onions and stir. Season the dish with  
 1/2 tbsp soy sauce salt, black pepper, and soy sauce.

---

Tomatoes → Rinse, cut → Stir-fry in oil  
 Eggs → Crack, beat → Stir-fry in oil  
 Green onion → Chop → Stir-fry together  
 ↓  
 Season with salt, black pepper, soy sauce

2

### Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

西红柿炒蛋  
xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

---

**Prepare the ingredients**  
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---

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 Eggs → Crack, beat → Stir-fry in oil  
 Green onion → Chop → Stir-fry together  
 ↓  
 Season with salt, black pepper, soy sauce

3

### What you need

**Core ingredients**  
 - 3 roma tomatoes  
 - 2 large eggs  
 - 1 green onion stalk

**Additional ingredients**  
 - 2 tbsp vegetable oil  
 - 1/2 tsp salt  
 - 1/2 tsp grounded black pepper  
 - 1/2 tbsp soy sauce

**Equipment**  
 - Chinese chef's knife  
 - Cutting board  
 - Chopsticks  
 - Wok  
 - Wok spatula

### Good to know

**Prep + cook time**  
 15 mins

**Serves**  
 2 people

**Notes**  
 Roma tomatoes are great, but if you have a bit more in your budget to spare for groceries, try tomatoes on vine. They are very fragrant and add a nice kick to the dish.

4

### Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

西红柿炒蛋  
xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

This dish is as close as you'll get to scrambled eggs. The cooked eggs are fluffy and go very well with tomatoes.

The ingredients used for this dish could also be made into a soup as a side or a broth for noodles.



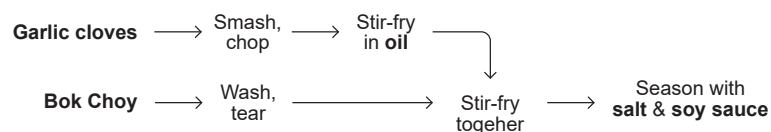


## Bok Choy with Garlic Stir-Fry

### 蒜蓉炒白菜

suàn róng chǎo bái cài

3 garlic cloves	<b>Prepare the ingredients</b> Smash and peel the garlic. Remove stems and chop into smaller pieces.
4 large bok choy stalks	Wash the bok choy thoroughly in a large bowl of water. Peel each branch off and carefully wash the ends. Manually scrub the dirt at the base of the branch as you soak in water. For each branch, tear into 2-3 sections. When you get to the core, if the stem is not clean, chop a thin bit off.
1 tbsp vegetable oil	<b>Stir-fry</b> In a wok on high heat, stir-fry garlic for 30 secs or until fragrant. Add bok choy and stir fry for 1 minute. Add water and cover the wok on medium heat for 2 minutes. The bok choy is ready if they are soft and the leaves are curled. Season with salt and soy sauce.
1/4 cup cold water	
1/2 tsp salt	
1/2 tbsp soy sauce	



## Bok Choy with Garlic Stir-Fry

### 蒜蓉炒白菜

suàn róng chǎo bái cài

In Chinese, 白菜 (*bái cài*) translates to "white vegetable". Bok choy is a type of cabbage that is has a nice crunch when cooked. Like many Chinese vegetables, Bok choy has a subtle bitter and sweet taste.

Stir-fry these with garlic for the perfect side to add to you meal.

## What you need

### Core ingredients

- 3 garlic cloves
- 4 large bok choy stalks

### Additional ingredients

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup cold water
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tbsp soy sauce

### Equipment

- Chinese chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Large bowl
- Wok
- Wok spatula

*Bok choy grown and harvested during cold temperatures are very sweet. I've tasted this a few times and indeed, it is completely different. I once had bok choy that was crisp and sweet. The taste blew my mind, I couldn't believe it.*

- Jane

*We used to harvest vegetables in the fields during winter in China, they had a layer of snow on them. We would bring them back home and cook it in hot pot. It was so delicious. Vegetables grown in the winter was expensive. Your grandmother used to sell them for ¥1 per bunch. At that time, the monthly salary was about ¥30.*

- Mom

## Good to know

### Prep + cook time

20 mins

### Serves

2-3 people.

### Notes

Bok choy are usually sold in bags. Each bag usually has about 8 bok choy stalks. I use about half of the bag for each meal.

There are many varieties of bok choy. The ones I use are large stalks, about 10-15 cm. You can use any you find.

# Century Eggs & Roasted Peppers

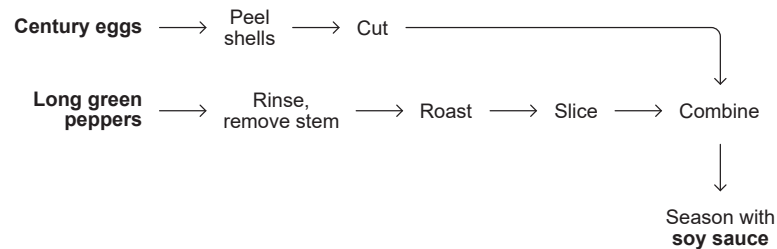
虎皮青椒皮蛋  
hǔ pí qīng jiāo pí dàn

- 3 century eggs

**Prepare the eggs**  
Depending on the eggs you get, it may be coated with a type of mud and rice husk mix. If so, peel them off and rinse the eggs. Crack and carefully peel the shells. Cut the eggs in half, then each in half again.
- 2 long green peppers

**Prepare peppers**  
Rinse the peppers and pat dry. Cut the stem off. Place the peppers over a stove element to roast. After roasting, slice into smaller strips.
- 1/2 tbsp soy sauce

**Putting it together**  
Drizzle the eggs in soy sauce and gently mix in the peppers. Don't be rough when handling the eggs as they can break apart.



## Century Eggs & Roasted Peppers

虎皮青椒皮蛋  
hǔ pí qīng jiāo pí dàn

Century eggs look nothing like the typical egg. It's black inside-out, and what was typically the egg white becomes translucent. They are jelly-like on the outside but soft and creamy on the inside. The way this dish is made requires you to roast the peppers by putting directly on heat. In a modern city home, this means putting the pepper directly on the stove element.

There are many ways to enjoy this dish, this recipe is a small you can put together very quickly.

### What you need

- Core ingredients**
- 3 century eggs (皮蛋, pí dàn)
  - 2 long green peppers

- Additional ingredients**
- 1/2 tbsp light soy sauce

- Equipment**
- Chinese chef's knife
  - Cutting board
  - Stove top element (the key is to burn the peppers directly in heat, e.g. if you are outdoors with a hotpot stove, you can roast the peppers directly in the fire)

*When I introduced century eggs to a friend, I wasn't sure how they'd react to it. They were cautious eating it and almost disgusted by how it looked. But, after a few bites and mixing it with rice, they really enjoyed it.*

- Jane

### Good to know

- Prep + cook time**  
10 mins

- Serves**  
2-3 people.

- Notes**  
You can find century eggs in Asian markets. Check the the aisles for them. They are usually packaged in styrofoam boxes of 4 or 6 eggs.

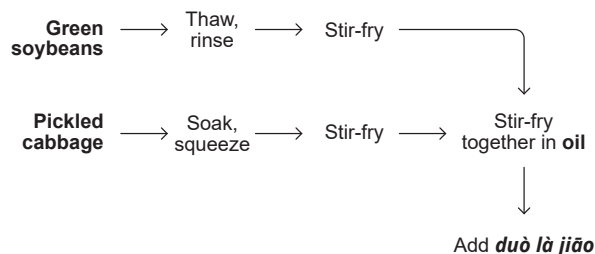
- Long green pepppers are spicy and sometimes sweet. There is a lot of variation in the effects depending on the batch. I've had them very mild to very spicy. Substitute with bell peppers if you can't find them in the market.

## Green Soybeans & Pickled Cabbage

### 酸菜炒毛豆

suān cài chǎo máo dòu

400g green soybeans	<b>Prepare soybeans and cabbage</b> Thaw soybeans ahead of time. Rinse in strainer.
400g pickled cabbage	Soak pickled cabbage in a bowl of water. Squeeze the water out with your hands. This is to wash it and make it less salty.
	<b>Stir-fry</b> Turn the stove on to medium heat to warm up the wok. Cook soybeans in the wok without any oil for 2-3 minutes. The goal is to remove as much moisture as possible.
	In the wok, move the soybeans to the side to clear out some space. Add in the pickled cabbage. Cook for 2-3 minutes without any oil.
1 tbsp vegetable oil 1 tbsp duò là jiāo	Add oil to the wok and toss in the pickled cabbage. Stir fry for about 2 minutes. Season with duò là jiāo. Do a quick stir and serve.



## Green Soybeans & Pickled Cabbage

### 酸菜炒毛豆

suān cài chǎo máo dòu

When you buy soybeans they are usually yellow. The soybeans used for this dish are green because they are not mature and haven't turned yellow yet.

The pickled cabbage is called 雪菜 (xuě cài), which translates to "snow vegetable". When pickled, the flavour is salty and sour.

This dish is packed with protein and is ideal to cook in bulk. The flavour and texture of this dish is optimized when mixed with freshly cooked rice.

## What you need

### Core ingredients

- 400g frozen green soybeans (毛豆仁)
- 400g pickled cabbage (雪菜)

### Additional ingredients

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp duò là jiāo

### Equipment

- Scissors or can opener
- Big bowl
- Strainer
- Wok
- Wok shovel

*When I was in school, my mom and I used to cook extra food for dinner and I would pack some for lunch the next day. We had an international Chinese student in my class and I shared this dish with him. When he first ate it, he said this was his favourite dish in China. He didn't have relatives in Toronto so, I began sharing my lunch with him for the rest of the school year. Over time, we became good friends and I learned a lot about life from him.*

- Jane

*When I brought this to the office, one of the lawyers (who was Jewish) loved to eat this. I cooked a little extra for him once and he said it was so good, he sat in his car and ate half of it.*

- Mom

## Good to know

### Prep + cook time

15 mins + thaw overnight

### Serves

4 people

### Notes

Buy the green soybeans in the frozen vegetables section. These are also called edamame. Each bag of soybeans comes as 400g.

For the pickled cabbage, they are usually in plastic packages or in cans. Find them in the aisles. Each pack of these is usually around 200g. I use two packs of pickled cabbage for one bag of soybeans.

This version is vegetarian. If you like, you can also cook with pork.

# Spicy Shrimp Stir-Fry

剁椒炒虾  
duò jiāo chǎo xiā

- 1 lb shrimp

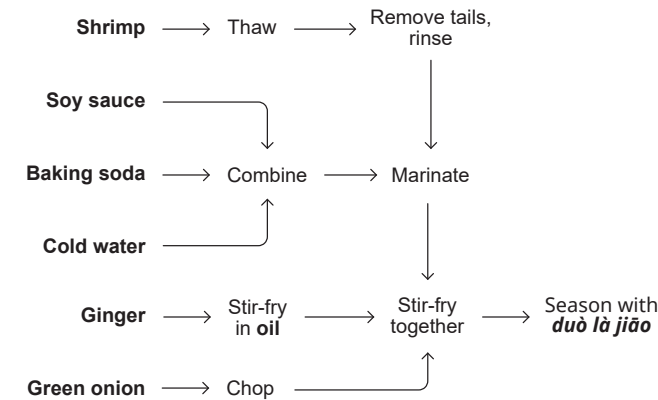
**Prepare the shrimp**  
Thaw shrimp. Rinse the shrimp and remove the tails by ripping them off. Keep the shell on.
- 1/4 tsp baking soda  
1/2 tbsp soy sauce  
2 tbsp cold water

**Make marinade**  
Mix baking soda, soy sauce, and water. Marinate the shrimp in this mix for 15 minutes.
- 2 slices of ginger  
1 green onion stalk

**Prepare vegetables**  
Cut two thin slices of ginger and chop into matchsticks. Chop green onions into 1 cm sections.
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

**Stir-fry**  
Add oil to the wok and cook for 1 minute on high heat. Stir-fry ginger for 30 seconds. Add shrimp and for about 3 minutes until the colour changes to orange.
- 1/2 tbsp *duò là jiāo*

Season with green onions and *duò là jiāo*. Stir for 30 seconds.



## Spicy Shrimp Stir-Fry

剁椒炒虾  
duò jiāo chǎo xiā

This dish is soft with a satisfying crunch. The ginger in this recipe helps tone down the fishiness taste of the shrimp. The baking soda makes the shrimp soft.

I find that it tastes better with the shell on when cooking it. Try cooking with and without shell to see which one tastes better.

Everytime I take a bite of the shrimp, my mom would ask “好吃吧” (delicious right?), she would then reveal that the secret is the baking soda (she’s revealed this secret to me countless times). Not too much baking soda, just a little bit is enough. She claims that the baking soda is what makes the shrimp soft.

- Jane

## What you need

- Core ingredients**
- 1 lb frozen shrimp
  - 2 slices of ginger
  - 1 green onion stalk

- Additional ingredients**
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
  - 1/2 tbsp soy sauce
  - 2 tbsp of cold water
  - 1 tbsp vegetable oil
  - 1/2 tbsp *duò là jiāo*

- Equipment**
- Chinese chef's knife
  - Cutting board
  - Large bowl
  - Wok
  - Wok shovel

## Good to know

**Prep + cook time**  
25 mins + 1 hr to thaw

**Serves**  
2-3 people.

**Notes**  
Buy shrimp in the frozen section. Each bag is one serving. I get the ones with shells and the head removed.



## Steamed Pork Ribs

### 清蒸排骨

qīng zhēng pái gǔ

1 lb pork ribs

#### Prepare the ribs

If ribs were frozen, thaw them ahead of time. Cut the ribs between the bones into small chunks.

1/2 tbsp soy sauce  
2 tbsp tapioca starch  
2 tbsp of cold water

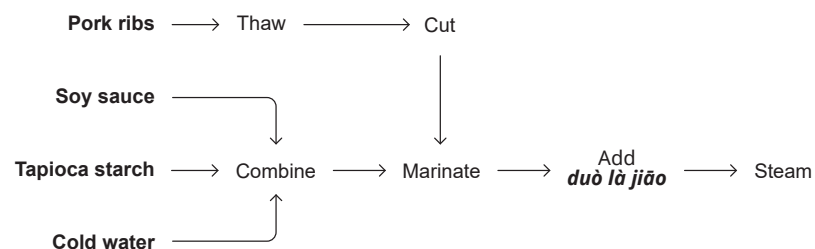
#### Make marinade

Mix tapioca starch and water, the mix should still be watery. Marinate ribs for 15 mins.

1/2 tbsp *duò là jiāo*

#### Steam ribs

Add some *duò là jiāo* to the ribs. Steam for 15-20 mins. Make sure the ribs are on a flat plate and not in a bowl. Cooking in a bowl will have uneven cooking and it will take too long to cook. Do not layer the ribs, they all need to be flat on the plate.



## Steamed Pork Ribs

### 清蒸排骨

qīng zhēng pái gǔ

These ribs are very juicy as you steam it. The marrow from the bone seeps out and adds that savoury flavour to the ribs. This dish doesn't require much seasoning.

You know you've cooked this properly if the meat is easy to bite off the bone.

*Typically, ribs take about 15 minutes to cook when steamed. I once made the mistake of steaming them in layers in a bowl. It just wouldn't cook, it probably took an hour or two. Lay them flat on plate and don't layer them!*

- Jane

## What you need

### Core ingredients

- 1 lb pork ribs

### Additional ingredients

- 1/2 tbsp soy sauce  
- 2 tbsp tapioca starch  
- 2 tbsp of cold water  
- 1/2 tbsp *duò là jiāo*

### Equipment

- Chinese chef's knife  
- Cutting board  
- Steamer

## Good to know

### Prep + cook time

30 mins + thaw overnight

### Serves

2-3 people

### Notes

You can find these ribs cut into strips in Chinese supermarkets. You can use larger ribs, but they might be harder to eat. Ask the butcher if they cut the ribs into 1.5 inches.

The ribs can be frozen. Thaw by leaving them in the fridge overnight.

If you can't find tapioca starch, you can use corn starch. Use half the amount of tapioca starch.

## Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

### 西红柿炒蛋

xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

#### Prepare the ingredients

- 3 roma tomatoes Rinse tomatoes and remove the bit where the stem was. Cut in half, then each in quarters. Set aside. Crack two eggs in a bowl and beat with chopsticks until the egg yolk is mixed with the egg whites. Wash and remove stem of the green onion. Chop thinly.
- 2 large eggs
- 1 green onion stalk

#### Cook tomatoes

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil Add oil into a wok on high heat. Stir-fry tomatoes, 30 seconds or until the skin starts to peel off. Remove from the wok.

#### Cook eggs

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil Add more oil to the wok, pour the eggs in, do not stir it. Once the eggs are slightly solid, turn the heat to medium and begin stirring and breaking it up into smaller chunks. The eggs will start to get a bit fluffy as you add air by stirring it.

#### Putting it together

- 1/2 tsp salt Combine the tomatoes and egg in the wok and stir-fry.
- 1/2 tsp black pepper Add in the green onions and stir. Season the dish with salt, black pepper, and soy sauce.
- 1/2 tbsp soy sauce

## Tomato Eggs Stir-Fry

### 西红柿炒蛋

xī hóng shì chǎo dàn

This dish is as close as you'll get to scrambled eggs. The cooked eggs are fluffy and go very well with tomatoes.

The ingredients used for this dish could also be made into a soup as a side or a broth for noodles.

*This one of the first dishes I cooked for my first boyfriend and it blew his mind. He couldn't believe how tomatoes could be cooked this way. He has tried many dishes since then, but still claims tomato eggs to be his favourite. I agree. This dish has a sweet and sour taste and the soft fluffy egg goes down so smoothly. It's also very easy to make.*

-Jane

## What you need

### Core ingredients

- 3 roma tomatoes
- 2 large eggs
- 1 green onion stalk

### Additional ingredients

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp grounded black pepper
- 1/2 tbsp soy sauce

### Equipment

- Chinese chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Chopsticks
- Wok
- Wok spatula

## Good to know

### Prep + cook time

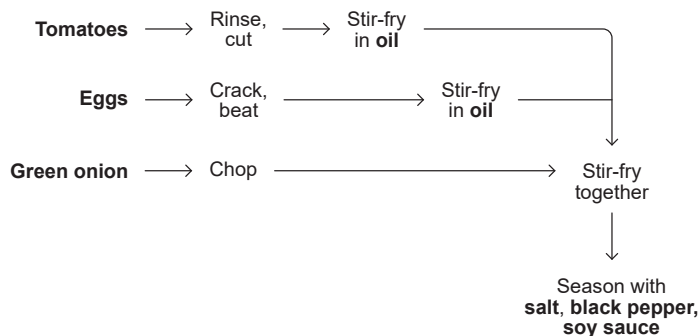
15 mins

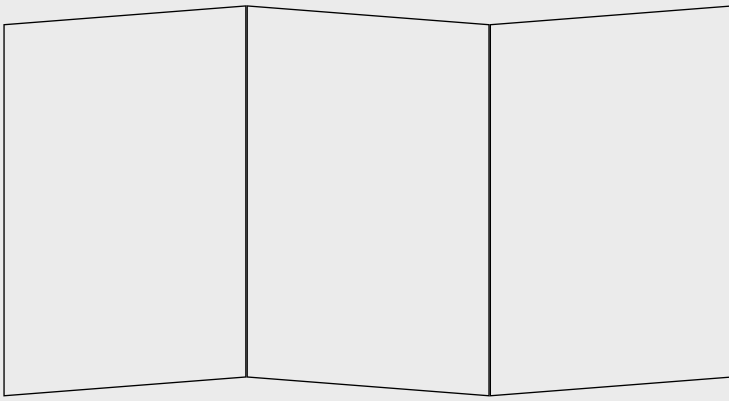
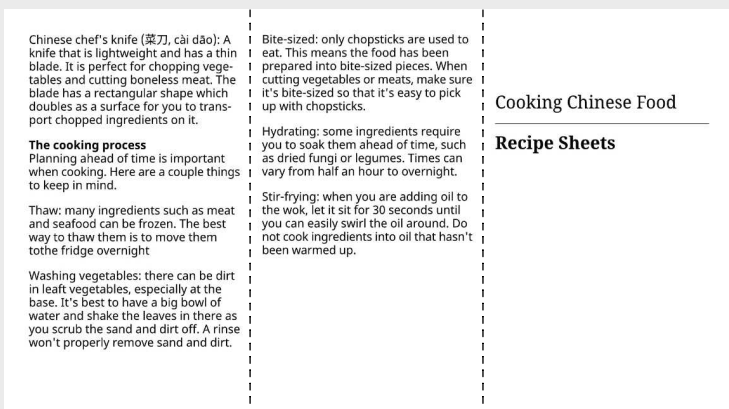
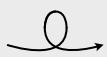
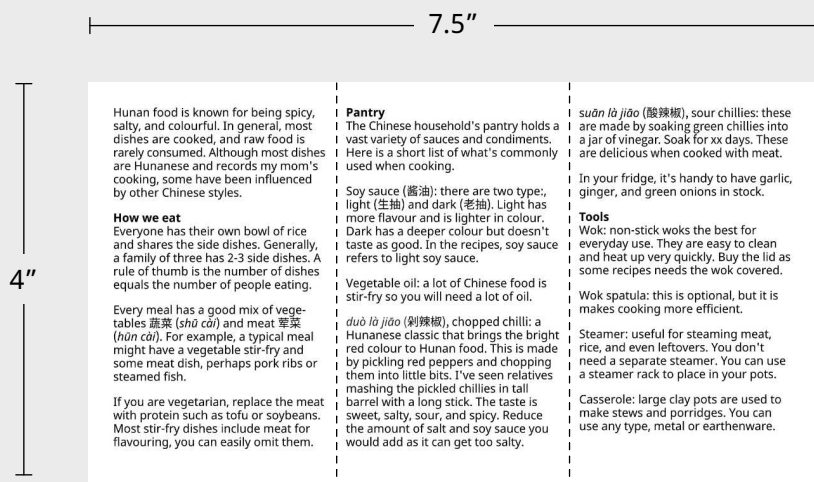
### Serves

2 people

### Notes

Roma tomatoes are great, but if you have a bit more in your budget to spare for groceries, try tomatoes on vine. They are very fragrant and add a nice kick to the dish.





This booklet accompanies the recipe sheets as a form of an introduction to cooking. It's a simple guide on what's good to know.

## Cooking Chinese Food

### Recipe Sheets

Hunan food is known for being spicy, salty, and colourful. In general, most dishes are cooked, and raw food is rarely consumed. Although most dishes are Hunanese and records my mom's cooking, some have been influenced by other Chinese styles.

#### How we eat

Everyone has their own bowl of rice and shares the side dishes. Generally, a family of three has 2-3 side dishes. A rule of thumb is the number of dishes equals the number of people eating.

Every meal has a good mix of vegetables 蔬菜 (*shū cài*) and meat 荤菜 (*hūn cài*). For example, a typical meal might have a vegetable stir-fry and some meat dish, perhaps pork ribs or steamed fish.

If you are vegetarian, replace the meat with protein such as tofu or soybeans. Most stir-fry dishes include meat for flavouring, you can easily omit them.

#### Pantry

The Chinese household's pantry holds a vast variety of sauces and condiments. Here is a short list of what's commonly used when cooking.

Soy sauce (酱油): there are two types, light (生抽) and dark (老抽). Light has more flavour and is lighter in colour. Dark has a deeper colour but doesn't taste as good. In the recipes, soy sauce refers to light soy sauce.

Vegetable oil: a lot of Chinese food is stir-fry so you will need a lot of oil.

*duò là jiāo* (剁辣椒), chopped chilli: a Hunanese classic that brings the bright red colour to Hunan food. This is made by pickling red peppers and chopping them into little bits. I've seen relatives mashing the pickled chillies in tall barrel with a long stick. The taste is sweet, salty, sour, and spicy. Reduce the amount of salt and soy sauce you would add as it can get too salty.

*suān là jiāo* (酸辣椒), sour chillies: these are made by soaking green chillies into a jar of vinegar. Soak for xx days. These are delicious when cooked with meat.

In your fridge, it's handy to have garlic, ginger, and green onions in stock.

#### Tools

Wok: non-stick woks the best for everyday use. They are easy to clean and heat up very quickly. Buy the lid as some recipes need the wok covered.

Wok spatula: this is optional, but it makes cooking more efficient.

Steamer: useful for steaming meat, rice, and even leftovers. You don't need a separate steamer. You can use a steamer rack to place in your pots.

Casserole: large clay pots are used to make stews and porridges. You can use any type, metal or earthenware.

Chinese chef's knife (菜刀, *cài dāo*): A knife that is lightweight and has a thin blade. It is perfect for chopping vegetables and cutting boneless meat. The blade has a rectangular shape which doubles as a surface for you to transport chopped ingredients on it.

#### The cooking process

Planning ahead of time is important when cooking. Here are a couple things to keep in mind.

Thaw: many ingredients such as meat and seafood can be frozen. The best way to thaw them is to move them to the fridge overnight.

Washing vegetables: there can be dirt in leafy vegetables, especially at the base. It's best to have a big bowl of water and shake the leaves in there as you scrub the sand and dirt off. A rinse won't properly remove sand and dirt.

Bite-sized: only chopsticks are used to eat. This means the food has been prepared into bite-sized pieces. When cutting vegetables or meats, make sure it's bite-sized so that it's easy to pick up with chopsticks.

Hydrating: some ingredients require you to soak them ahead of time, such as dried fungi or legumes. Times can vary from half an hour to overnight.

Stir-frying: when you are adding oil to the wok, let it sit for 30 seconds until you can easily swirl the oil around. Do not cook ingredients in oil that hasn't been warmed up.