

CHINESE CUISINE SERIES
SICHUAN CUISINE

中国大菜系

川菜



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序

中国是世界文明的四大发祥地之一，其独具特色的饮食文化是中华民族对人类文化的突出贡献之一。中国烹饪在世界上堪称一绝，颇受其他国家和地区的喜爱。中国烹饪技术历史悠久，博大精深，历经火爨、石烹、陶烹、铜烹、铁烹等各个历史发展阶段，在内外交流中逐渐成熟。中国常用烹饪原料有 3000 种左右，调味品近 500 种，烹调方法 100 余种，刀工技法不下 40 种。不同原料、不同调料、不同刀法、不同烹法的搭配组合，产生出了千姿百态、丰富多彩、不可胜数的美饌佳肴。

中国烹饪有完善的技术体系，其特点可以概括为：广采博取，充分利用原料优选；刀工细腻、组配平衡的切配加工；讲究火候、注重滋感的烹制技法；善于调和、追求风味的调味工艺。这些都具有鲜明的民族特色，构成了有别于其他国家烹饪的基本特征。

中国烹饪有独特的菜肴审美标准，即色、形、香、味、滋、养。色是菜肴的色泽；形是菜肴的形态；香是菜肴的香气；味是菜肴的味道；滋是菜肴的质地感觉；养是平衡膳食肴饌养生。此六者结合构成视觉、嗅觉、味觉、触觉的综合艺术享受，其中又以味为核心，以养（健康长寿）为目的。

中国烹饪有著名的四大菜系，即黄河流域的鲁菜、长江上游的川菜、长江下游的苏菜、珠江流域的粤菜。由于地理、物产、民族、风俗等因素的影响，形成了不同的风味特色。鲁菜选料广泛，烹法全面，口味讲究纯正醇浓，工于制汤；川菜好麻辣辛香，擅调复合味，菜式朴实；苏菜刀工精细，注重火候，调味清淡醇和，善烹江鲜家禽；粤菜精于烹制海鲜，口味注重鲜爽，烹调讲究出新。鲁菜、川菜、苏菜、粤菜是中国烹饪区域性的主要表现。

《东方美食》杂志社社长兼总编辑刘广伟先生，是位特一级厨师，有丰富的烹饪学识，并一直热心致力于中国烹饪事业，对弘扬中国烹饪文化作出了贡献。这次他与山东科学技术出版社共同组织策划出版的大型中英文对照画册《中国大菜系》（鲁菜、川菜、苏菜、粤菜……），由全国各地的烹饪专家学者参与编写，以“继承、发扬、开拓、创新”为宗旨，挖掘传统，整理创新，以精美的形式、非凡的气派展示中国烹饪风貌于世人。我深信它能更好地服务于世界各地的中餐从业者，能为世界人民的身体健康作出更大的贡献，故乐为之序。

世界中国烹饪联合会会长

姜 习

1996 年 5 月

PREFACE

China is one of the birthplaces of world civilizations, and the Chinese food culture has contributed greatly to the culture of mankind. Chinese culinary art is rated as the best of its kind the world over and has been praised and admired by peoples of other countries. With a long history and a comprehensive and profound theory, it has undergone different historical stages of development with regard to the way of cooking, starting with roasting by fire and then with stone utensils, pottery utensils, copper utensils and nowadays with iron and stainless steel utensils. The raw materials that are used for Chinese cooking are of about 3,000 different kinds with 500 condiments available. As far as cooking methods are concerned, as many as one hundred ways of cooking have been put into practice apart from almost 40 ways of cutting, therefore, a great variety of delicious and delicate dishes of different patterns can be produced by using various ingredients, condiments and different ways of cutting and cooking.

Chinese cuisine is characterized by its complete and perfect technique system which includes the careful selection and extensive use of a wide range of raw materials, the meticulous care of cutting style and skillful mixture of ingredients, the enormous attention to the heat used that plays an important part in the texture of dishes, and finally, the way of ingeniously blending condiments. These constitute the basic and distinctive characteristics of Chinese cooking.

The special aesthetic criteria by which Chinese dishes are assessed include colour, shape, flavour, taste, texture and nutrition that the dishes possess. The combination of the six elements provides the whole artistic enjoyment of the senses of vision, smell, taste and touch, with the satisfaction of the sense of taste as the key point and good health and longevity as the main purpose.

Chinese cuisine can be geographically divided into four categories. The dishes that are produced in the area around the Yellow River are called Shandong cuisine. Those dishes produced on the upper reaches of the Changjiang River are Sichuan cuisine; the dishes enjoyed by the people along the lower reaches of the Changjiang River, are Jiangsu cuisine and finally dishes that are popular along the Pearl River are Guangdong cuisine. Shandong cuisine, with soup as the best of its kind, has the features of extensive selection of raw materials, the use of all cooking methods and its pure and rich flavour. Sichuan cuisine, with its simple style and hot taste, is good at creating a complex taste. Jiangsu cuisine attaches much importance to the cutting skills and handling of heat, taking river fishes and poultry as the main cooking materials and committing itself to the production of simple taste and rich flavour. What distinguishes Guangdong cuisine from the rest is the freshness of the taste and the innovation of the cooking technique. Besides, it takes sea fishes as the main raw materials. The four categories of Chinese dishes demonstrate their regional differences created by such factors as geography, natural products, nationality and customs.

Mr. Liu Guangwei, director and editor-in-chief of the journal *Oriental Food*, is himself a first class cook and has for many years devoted himself to Chinese culinary cause, and has contributed a lot to the spread and development of Chinese food culture. In his cooperation with Shandong Science and Technology Press for the publication of the magnificent Chinese-English pictorial book *Chinese Cuisine Series* he has organized the culinary experts throughout the country to explore the tradition, systematize what is left from history and make further additions, so that the book can present to the public in elegant form and with boldness the whole image of the Chinese cooking and provide better service to the people engaged in this profession and promote better health and long life for the people of the world. Therefore, I feel it a great honour to write the preface for this book.

Jiang Xi

Chairman of the Chinese Culinary Association of the World

May, 1996

前 言

川菜是中国主要菜系之一，享有“一菜一格，百菜百味”之美誉，并以其特有的调味品和独特的烹调技法而著称。

川菜具有取材广泛、风味独特、调味多样、菜式适应性强等特点。在烹调技法上，有炒、煎、烘、余、炸、熏、泡、炖、糝、焖、烩、贴、爆等 50 多种；在风味上，特别讲究色、香、味、形、养的统一，并以味的多、广、厚著称于世。川菜菜系兼有南北之长，对长江中上游及滇、黔地区的饮食文化有较大影响。近年来，川菜更是不断创新，已走出国门，在世界上享有“吃在中国，味在四川”之说。

大型豪华画册《中国大菜系—川菜》集川菜之精华，菜品按畜肉、禽蛋、鱼、海鲜、珍品、甜菜、素菜、小吃、攒盒与其他分类，选入最具特色的传统和创新川菜 400 种，并配有四季宴席菜单和烹饪术语解释；以精美的彩色图片为主，中、英文对照菜谱为辅，一菜一谱，图文并茂，融系统性、知识性、实用性和科学性于一体。可供饭店、宾馆人员和广大烹饪工作者、爱好者使用，也可作为烹饪学校的教学用书。

川菜历史悠久，技艺高超，菜点丰富，风味各异，堪称世界之冠。我们编写出版《中国大菜系—川菜》一书就是为了全面、系统、直观、形象地展现川菜，为继承发展川菜这一地方菜系，弘扬中华民族优秀的传统饮食文化作出贡献。

本书在编写过程中得到四川烹饪高等专科学校、《四川烹饪》编辑部及众多川菜烹饪大师的大力支持和帮助，在此一并致谢。

编 者

1996 年 5 月

FOREWORD

Sichuan cuisine, one of the main culinary schools in China, has always enjoyed the reputation of "One dish, one character; hundred dishes, hundred flavours". It is celebrated for its distinctive flavours, special condiments and unique culinary art.

Sichuan cuisine is markedly characterized by its great variety of ingredients, special flavours, diversity in the use of seasonings and adaptability to tastes. There are more than 50 different methods of cooking, such as frying, stir-frying, baking, scalding, deep-frying, smoking, pickling, boiling, pasting, stewing, decocting, brasing, quick-frying, etc. Sichuan recipes, which are famous for their diversification, wide-range and mellowness in flavours, put particular stress on colour, fragrance, delicacy, presentability and nutrition as their features. The culinary school of Sichuan has absorbed a lot of advantages from other schools, so that it has a great impact on the culinary culture in southwest China. In recent years, Sichuan cuisine is developing steadily, and has marched into other parts of the world and enjoyed the high reputation of "The best food in China and the best taste in Sichuan".

This large-scale pictorial collection, which records the cream of Sichuan dishes, includes more than 400 traditional and innovatory recipes and is classified into live-stock, poultry and egg, seafood, delicacies, sweet food, vegetable, snack, relishes, etc., complemented with menus of banquets for different seasons and annotated culinary terms. Exquisite colourful pictures are matched with bilingual notes. We are sure that this book, which integrates science, knowledge and usefulness with abundant pictures and vivid language, will be read or used as teaching material by the staffs of hotels, restaurants and vocational schools.

Owing to its long history, high skills, rich courses and different flavours, Sichuan cuisine rates as a fine work of culinary art in the world. Now we compile this book in order to present Sichuan food comprehensively, systematically, directly and vividly, and do our bit for promoting the merits of Sichuan cuisine and the inheritance of the fine tradition of culinary culture in China.

Finally, we wish to give our thanks to experts from Sichuan Culinary College, editors of *Sichuan Cooking* and masters of Sichuan cuisine for their all-out help and support.

The compilers

May, 1996

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概述

四川菜是中国四大地方菜系之一,是中国菜这个百花园中一株浓郁芬芳的奇葩。它历史悠久、风味独特、原料丰富、菜式繁多,以其特有的调味方式和独特的烹饪技法而著称。

(一)川菜的形成和发展

川菜的形成和发展,经历了漫长的历史过程。公元前的古代巴国和蜀国两地是川菜的发源地。当时的巴蜀已使用岩盐、川椒等做调味料。从四川已出土的文物看,当时巴蜀的陶质、铜质饮食器皿已有一定的制作水平。这是川菜的萌芽阶段。

秦吞并巴蜀,移民入川,带来了中原的文化和生产技术。到西汉时,成都已成为巴蜀地区的政治、经济、文化中心。此时,四川人在饮食上不仅“好辛香”、“尚滋味”,而且能调复合味,注意主辅料的配搭,并懂得了饮食与养生的关系。调味除用川椒外,还常用茱萸。这时川菜的端倪已见。四川西部出土了许多有关汉代巴蜀人活动的画像砖,其中不少是反映当时川人饮食活动的场面。这一时期为川菜的形成阶段。

三国时期,刘备以成都为中心建立蜀汉政权,刘备、诸葛亮这些川外人对川菜的发展也产生了一定的影响。如“馒头”就是诸葛亮南征时创制的。经过魏晋南北朝时期的铺垫,川菜到唐宋时期有了较大发展。唐时,川人已善于烹制各种鱼类菜肴,四川广汉人段文昌还总结川菜做法,写了一部50卷的食谱。五代时,四川富贵人家多办船宴,边观赏江河美景,边品尝美味佳肴。到了宋代,川菜已走出四川,进入汴京(今开封)和临安(今杭州)。南宋人吴自牧《梦粱录》中记载了临安“川饭店”经营的菜点100余种。宋代还出了一位大美食家苏东坡,他给我们留下了许多有关饮食和烹调方法的诗词。唐宋时期是川菜在烹饪原料、技法、理论等方面都有较大发展的阶段。

清初,随着两湖、两广和其他地区大批的移民入川,也带来了当地的饮食习俗和烹调技术,使川菜有了质的飞跃。到清代末期,四川人民在原有饮食习俗和烹调技法的基础上,博采北方、中原、南方等地的精华,在烹饪原料、技术、调味和理论等方面都趋于成熟,最终形成了与现在风格基本相似的川菜体系。1909年付崇渠著的《成都通览》一书中,仅收集的市肆川菜品种就达

1328个。

在辛亥革命和抗日战争时期,川菜同其他菜系相互学习借鉴,进入了新的发展阶段。由餐馆筵席菜、市肆大众便餐菜、家常风味菜、民间三蒸九扣菜和传统风味小吃5大类,组成了一个完整的风味菜系。新中国的成立,为川菜的发展开辟了更加广阔的前景。今天,川菜已走出国门、名扬五洲,在世界上享有“吃在中国,味在四川”的美誉。

川菜能形成菜系主要有以下原因:

一是自然条件优越。四川沃野千里,江河纵横,物产丰富,号称“天府”。在56万平方公里的土地上,猪牛羊兔鸡鸭鹅,禽畜兴旺;笋韭瓜豆芹茄藕,菜蔬常青。江河峡谷出产的江团、岩鲤、雅鱼、鲑鱼,堪称淡水鱼类之佳品;山岳丘陵盛产的银耳、竹荪、香菇、冬笋,乃营养健身之珍馐;高山草地生存的獐鹿兔鹿,更属野味饕餮之珍稀。烹饪原料种类之繁多,可谓取之不尽,用之不竭。

二是广大劳动人民勤劳智慧、讲究饮食的结晶。四川人讲究饮食的历史习俗和川菜烹饪技术的发展,一方面促进勤劳的四川人种植、开采和酿造出了众多的富有地方特色的优质调味品。如自贡井盐、汉源清溪花椒、乐山生姜、内江白糖、郫县豆瓣等,这些对制作各种风味的川菜、小吃起了特殊的作用。此外,四川的名酒和仙茗,对显示川菜浓郁的地方特色也起了辅助作用。另一方面,造就了一批精于烹饪技艺的烹饪大师。如近代名厨关正兴、王海泉、杜小恬、兰光鉴,当代名厨张德善、朱维新、刘建成、曾国华、曾亚光、张国栋、徐德章、李耀华、陈建新和曾其昌等等,都是川菜厨师的杰出代表,为川菜烹饪技艺的继承与发展作出了贡献。

三是善于吸取各家之长。川菜对于宫廷菜、官府菜、民族菜、寺院菜和民间菜以及外地的各种菜都兼收并蓄。远自秦统一中国后,始皇徙其豪侠入蜀,富豪之家带来了中原的饮食习俗。其后,历代治蜀的外来人,都把他们的饮食习尚与名馐佳肴带进了四川,也促进了川菜的发展。

(二)川菜的特点

丰富的烹饪原料,长期的烹饪实践,加之善于吸收外来菜的优点和历代川菜名厨的不断继承与发展,使川菜形成了一套比较完善的烹饪技

法和典型特征,从而自成体系,独放异彩。

1. 川菜的主要烹饪技法

早在清乾隆年间,四川李调元在其《函海·醒园录》中就系统地搜集了川菜的38种烹调方法。今天,川菜的烹饪方法就更多了,共有30余类、50多种。如热菜类就有炒、爆、熘、煎、炸、炆、烘、余、烫、炖、煮、烧、煨、烩、焖、煨、蒸、滑、烙、烤、腌、蒙、贴、酿、卷、摊、淖、粘、拔丝、油淋、炸收、糟、醉等30余类;冷菜类有拌、卤、熏、腌、腊、冻、糟、酱、烧、泡、渍、蜜汁等10余种。每类烹饪方法中又可分出若干种技法,如蒸可以有粉蒸、清蒸、烧蒸、炸蒸、酿蒸和旱蒸之分。

川菜烹饪技法中,最能体现其烹饪火候特色的是小炒、小煎、干煸和干烧。采用这些技法制成的菜,熟而不老,嫩而不生,浓而不腻,淡而不薄。小炒之法不过油,不换锅,临时兑汁,急火短炒,一锅成菜。掌握火候是烹制菜肴最重要的功夫。每位川菜烹饪大师都是善于掌握火候的能手。只有这样,才能保证每道菜特有的色、香、味、形、养。

川菜也很重视刀工。刀工对于川菜的造型、烹制、调味、消化以及营养卫生均有直接或间接的关系。烹调师都非常重视刀工的精细。根据不同的原料和菜式,可将原料加工成片、条、丝、块、段、丁、粒、米、茸、泥、丸、球等形状。并可将原料切配成栩栩如生,形态逼真,富于艺术形象的花、草、树、果、人、鸟、兽、鱼等动植物,给人以美的感受。

2. 川菜的主要特征

川菜的主要特征是取材广泛、味型多样、工艺精湛和菜式适应性强。其特色是清、鲜、醇、浓并重,且善于运用麻辣,这使川菜形成了“一菜一格,百菜百味”的典型特征。川菜最突出的特征是讲究调味的多样性与复合味。川菜味型之多,是中国其他地方菜系不能与之比拟的。

川菜常用的味型有:四川首创的口感咸鲜微辣的家常味型,咸甜酸辣辛香兼有的鱼香味型,融咸甜麻辣酸鲜香为一体的怪味味型,以及表现不同层次、不同风格的麻辣各味型。如世人皆知的“麻婆豆腐”一菜中就有麻、辣、鲜、香、酥、嫩、烫等多种味别的微妙组合。还有在香字上做文章的酱香味型、五香味型、甜香味型、香糟味型、烟香味型以及白油味型、咸鲜味型、荔枝味型、糖醋味型、姜汁味型、蒜泥味型、豆瓣味型、麻酱味型、芥末味型、葱油味型、咸甜味型等等,共有几十种。川菜味型的多样性,是与烹饪原料的广泛应用分不开的。川菜的味别之多堪称中外菜肴之

首,调制之妙令人叫绝。

川菜菜式种类繁多。川菜菜式可以达到1年365天,天天不同;1日3餐,餐餐变样。据统计,现在比较有名的菜肴就有5000多种,风味小吃500多种,并且还在不断地挖掘与创新。这些菜式和小吃的绝大多数,对我国乃至世界各地、各阶层的人民,都有广泛的适应性。麻辣味型的菜式,仅占川菜的25%左右,且主要是大众菜和家常菜。

3. 川菜的组成

川菜主要由餐馆筵席菜、市肆大众便餐菜、家常风味菜、民间三蒸九扣菜和传统风味小吃5大类构成。餐馆筵席菜选料精而工艺要求高,味重清鲜,组合考究。多采用山珍海味,再配以时鲜蔬菜,成菜极富营养价值。其代表菜如菠饺鱼肚、樟茶鸭子、干烧岩鲤、家常海参、清蒸江团、虫草鸭子、芙蓉鱼翅、鸡蒙菜等。市肆大众便餐菜,以烹制速度快、经济实惠、适应性强为特点,以炒、烧、熘、爆、拌为主要烹饪技法。其代表菜式有宫保鸡丁、鱼香肉丝、水煮肉片、豆瓣鲫鱼、口袋豆腐、魔芋烧鸭和蒜烧仔鲊等。家常风味菜取材方便、操作简单、经济实惠、易于普及。如蒜泥白肉、麻婆豆腐、回锅肉、肉末豇豆、连锅汤菜等,深受广大四川人的喜爱。民间三蒸九扣菜,以民间“田席”常见菜品构成而得名。这类菜式荤素兼备、菜汤并重、朴实无华、经济实惠。如粉蒸肉、清蒸肘子、扣鸡、扣鸭等。传统风味小吃,源于小吃,而今亦已成菜。其典型代表为夫妻肺片、小笼牛肉、棒棒鸡、灯影牛肉等。

川菜在四川省内没有明显的味型和烹饪技法的差异,因而不存在什么流派。若要找微细区别,主要在川东北和川西南,以重庆为代表的川东北,口味稍重于以成都为代表的川西南。如重庆的麻辣调料比成都的麻辣调料放得更重,其味更浓。

(三)当代川菜的发展趋势

川菜的发展遵循“继承、发扬、开拓、创新”的方针。继承是为了发展与创新,没有继承,发展与创新就无从谈起。中国烹饪和四川烹饪的历史,就是继承与创新的历史。为了继承和发展川菜烹饪技法的传统特色,要十分注意吸收借鉴国内其他地方菜系和世界上其他国家烹饪技法的长处,积极运用现代科学技术,不断地改革和提高调味技术,注重菜肴的营养卫生指标,做到菜肴的色、香、味、形、养俱佳,使川菜的烹饪技艺达到更高的境界。

近几年来,川菜的发展主要表现在以下方

面:

1. 在继承传统的基础上发掘名优菜点

第一,挖掘和创新地方风味小吃。为了适应广大群众的消费水平不断提高和旅游业迅速发展的需要,四川省曾多次举办风味小吃的评选活动,促进了小吃业的繁荣与发展。

第二,恢复有特色的名菜。如早在汉代就盛行西蜀的连锅菜,具有汁白味鲜、荤素兼备、清淡爽口、味型咸鲜的特点。最近在成都被进一步挖掘和发展的菜肴品种已达450余种,有的还组合成连锅系列筵席。这些都深受消费者的欢迎。

第三,开拓、创新山珍野味和昆虫菜。为迎合人们回归大自然的心理学,烹食森林野菜、野生动物和昆虫菜肴已逐渐盛行。

2. 风味筵席的推陈出新

第一,小吃筵。这是四川省近几年发展起来的一种风味突出、经济实惠、快捷方便的筵席。如小吃筵、饺子筵等。现在川味小吃筵席已走出四川,走向了全国。

第二,火锅筵。火锅筵具有气氛浓烈、自己动手、清洁卫生、经济实惠等特点,近几年来发展迅猛,从重庆到成都,再向全省各中小城镇辐射,现在的四川可谓无处不火锅。川味火锅类型很多,档次也有高中低之分。按味型分,有辣味火锅、白味火锅、双味或鸳鸯火锅;按主料分,有毛肚火锅、啤酒鸭火锅、什锦火锅、海鲜火锅、素火锅(即麻辣烫)和羊肉火锅等;按作用分,有风味营养火锅和药膳火锅。

第三,药膳筵。随着人们对食物追求天然、无农药、无污染热的掀起,四川人对“食养结合”、“药食结合”的药膳逐渐重视起来。餐饮业也相应地推出了药膳筵席、道家益寿健身药膳筵席等。

第四,佛道筵。这是在四川省一些著名的佛教、道教寺庙里的素食菜肴基础上发展起来的素食筵。这也是适应世人崇尚素食之风而产生的。四川峨眉山、新都宝光寺、成都文殊院和青城山的素食筵,都招来众多包括外国人在内的旅游者的光顾。

3. 新派川菜的产生和发展

近几年来,四川派往和流入北京、上海、广东、山东、新疆、甘肃、西藏和国外的一批川菜厨师,在继承传统川菜烹制理论和技术的基础上,吸收当地菜系的烹制方法、原料、加工切配、调味、盛器与装盘等方面的长处,遵循“以味为核心”、“以养为目的”和“适口者珍”的原则,发展创新了具有川菜特色的“京派川菜”、“海派川菜”、“粤派川菜”、“海鲜川菜”、“塞外川菜”、“高原川菜”和“洋派川菜”等等,以适应当地顾客饮食的需要。新派川菜的队伍还在壮大。

4. “正宗川菜”不断发展变化

四川本地的“正宗川菜”也随着时代的前进而发展变化。对国内外其他菜系的优点继续兼收并蓄。如对泊来品鲜贝、龙虾、鲍鱼、西兰花、芥兰、芦笋等优质原料的选用;将有辣味的新疆香料孜然用于牛羊肉的蒸、炒、烧及汤菜的调味;在菜肴的装饰点缀上借鉴西餐的做法,采用一些经适当艺术加工处理的蔬菜、水果来烘托气氛,增添喜色;在营养平衡上,注意减少油脂、食盐和糖的用量,力求作到“三低一高”,即低脂肪、低盐、低糖、高蛋白质。

5. 川菜风味菜肴和调味品生产社会化

随着科学技术的进步和市场对川菜的名特风味食品包括调味品需要量的增大,一些川菜菜肴和调味品的生产开始由独家独户作坊式手工操作,改进为半机械化、机械化的社会化生产。如东坡肘子、涪陵榨菜、新繁泡菜、成都酱腌菜等都采用了小袋包装或罐装生产线生产。

6. 川菜已走向国门,走向世界

今天,川菜已经走向世界,名扬五洲四海。美国、加拿大、法国、英国、德国、奥地利、埃及、泰国、新加坡、马来西亚、卢旺达、坦桑尼亚、日本和俄罗斯等许多国家都有川菜馆。川菜受到了世界人民的欢迎。川菜在中国和世界人民之间架起了一座友谊之桥,促进了世界烹饪文化的交流。

川菜仍需要用现代的科学技术加以改善和提高,使之由经验型的烹饪升华为科学化的烹饪,从而更好地造福于中国和世界人民。

INTRODUCTION

Sichuan cuisine, one of the four major culinary schools in China, is a surprisingly sweet and beautiful flower that bursts into bloom in the food garden of this country. Owing to its long history, unique flavour, rich ingredients and varied culinary methods, Sichuan cuisine is now celebrated for its unique style.

1. The formation and development of Sichuan cuisine

The evolution of Sichuan cuisine underwent a long history and its birthplace may be traced back to the ancient kingdoms of Ba and Shu (several centuries B.C.). At that time, halite and chilli were already used for seasoning by the Ba and Shu peoples. Judging from the unearthed cultural relics, the technique for making pottery and bronze cooking utensils had come up to a considerable standard. It was the initial stage of Sichuan cuisine.

When the Qin Dynasty annexed the Ba and Shu states, the immigrations into Sichuan took the culture and means of production from the Central Plains to this region. During the period of the Western Han Dynasty, Chengdu became the political, economic and cultural centre of the Ba and Shu states. At that time, Sichuan people were not only particular about refined tastes, fragrance and sharp flavour of food, but were also capable of preparing a diversity of seasonings and a variety of ingredients. They used not only hot pepper but also ailanthus prickly ash for seasoning. They also knew the relationship between food and health. The inkling of Sichuan cuisine formed. Among the unearthed pictured bricks of the Han Dynasty, many depicted the scene of cookery of Sichuan people at that time. It was the days for the formation of Sichuan cuisine.

During the period of the Three Kingdoms, Liu Bei established the kingdom of Shu Han with Chengdu as its centre. Both Liu Bei and Zhuge Liang had a certain influence upon the evolution of Sichuan dishes. After the Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties, Sichuan cuisine achieved rapid development during the Tang and Song Dynasties. During the Tang Dynasty, Sichuan people were already good at cooking fishes. Duan Wenchang from Guanghan County, collected the ways of doing Sichuan dishes and wrote a cook book in 50 volumes. During the period of Five Dynasties, many of the rich people in Sichuan gave banquets on boats, so that they could admire the scenery while savouring tasty dishes. During the Song Dynasty, Sichuan cuisine moved to Bianjing (now Kaifeng) and Lin'an (now Hangzhou). According to *Records of a Dream of Grandeur* written by Wu Zimu, of the Southern Song Dynasty, the Sichuan restaurant in Lin'an had more than 100 different dishes on its repertoire. Su Dongpo, a famous scholar and a great gourmet of the Song Dynasty, left lots of poems about food, drink and cookery. So Sichuan cuisine got rapid development in materials, methods and theories in the Tang and Song Dynasties.

During the early days of the Qing Dynasty, the immigrations from Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong, Guangxi and some other provinces into Sichuan brought in their eating habits and cooking skills, which brought about a qualitative leap in Sichuan cuisine. By the end of the Qing Dynasty Sichuan people absorbed the quintessence of culinary culture from many provinces so that the cooking materials, methods, condiments and theories of Sichuan dishes became fully mature, and finally formed the system of Sichuan cuisine almost in conformity with the style today. In the book *General Guide to Chengdu* written by Fu Chongju in 1909, 1328 dishes served in the restaurants were recorded.

From 1911 to 1945, Sichuan cuisine, by drawing on the experiences and characteristics of other schools of cuisine, entered a new stage of development and formed an integral local cuisine with 5 major systems, namely banquet dishes, popular dishes, homely dishes, folk dishes and traditional typical local snacks. The founding of the People's Republic of China opened up good prospects for the development of Sichuan cuisine. Today, Sichuan cuisine has marched into the world, become world-renowned, and enjoyed the high reputation of "The best food in China and the best taste in Sichuan".

The main reasons for the formation of Sichuan cuisine may be as follows:

First, Sichuan is a place richly endowed by nature. Sichuan province is praised as "the land of abundance" for its material wealth. On the fertile land of 560,000 square kilometers, there are a lot of local products and specialties such as fruits, vegetables, fishes, mountain products, livestock, and game, which are widely scattered all