

3A FOOD STORIES

Cecilia Amaya

My Favorite Foods

I am a person with some problems because I like to eat a lot, but I like to cook too. I try to cook different dishes from new recipes that I find on TV shows, in the newspaper, or from a friend. But in my country my grandmother made me pupusas. Pupusas is a Spanish dish. My grandmother prepared them with blended red beans, special mozzarella cheese, and pork skin. Everything was put into special mashed corn. They were very delicious. Now I try to make them for my family and friends.

When I came to the USA, I found different delicious dishes, for example Italian, Arabic, Asian, and American food. I like American breakfasts: pancakes, omelets, and orange juice. For Arabic food, I like kebabs with brown rice. For Italian food, I like spaghetti with meatballs. And for Asian food, my favorite is salmon with sesame broccoli and oven-baked potatoes.

I don't have any allergies to food, but one time I ate fish and I had an allergic reaction. I went to the doctor and he said he didn't know what happened—maybe the fish had been out of the refrigerator for a long time.

I like to eat fruit, for example, oranges, mangos, pineapples, cantaloupes, watermelon, bananas, grapes, pears, apples, coconuts, and many more.

Anmee Chen

My First Time Cooking

When I was a student in high school, I didn't think I was a good student because I didn't like to study. I thought it was too boring. I didn't finish my homework and I usually slept in class.

During summer vacation, I told my mother I wanted to learn to cook. My mother smiled. She asked me, "Why do you want to learn to cook?"

I told her "I like my school chef's cooking. I want to be like her. I will be a good cook."

My mother said, "Well, all right. Today when I cook lunch, you can watch me."

I was happy. After that, I tried cooking myself. When I stayed at home, I got ready to cook. First, I washed my hands and then cut the vegetables and washed the meat. When I was ready to cook, I turned on the stove and put oil in the pan, added vegetables and meat, and I stir-fried them and I put in some salt and some sugar. I tried to eat it. I didn't think it was good, but it wasn't too bad. I thought I could eat it, but it wasn't delicious. Next time, I will try to cook better.

Li Ping Chen

Noodles

Long, long ago, when I was five or six, my father or mother used to get breakfast ready for me, and then they went to work.

One day, as usual, my father made noodles for me. The problem was there were too many noodles. The bowl was bigger than my head. I thought I really couldn't finish such a bowlful of noodles. So I made a stupid decision.

After my father left home, I stood at the window, and looked at my father until he had passed out of sight. I got a chair and climbed up on it, and I poured all the noodles out of the window.

A few hours later, my father came back while I was watching TV. He shouted at me and spanked me.

A few days later, I knew that while I poured the noodles out of the window, my father's leader was going to work. He lived on the first floor, and we lived on the fourth floor.

This story tells us that if you really want to destroy crime, you should trust your bathroom but not the window. I am still repentant and in pain.

Shu Fang Chen

Sweet Food

When I was a child, I remember my grandfather really liked to eat sweet food. Sweet food is my hometown's local specialty. When my grandfather wanted to eat sweet food, my grandmother was busy all day because it is difficult to make. She needed to make it for thirteen people to eat because she had eleven grandchildren. We all liked to eat sweet food. She usually cooked it once a year for Chinese New Year. We really liked New Year, but my grandmother didn't like it because she needed to spend the whole day making it.

In 2005, one day I went to my friend's house. When I arrived at her house, I smelled a bad smell. I wanted to ask her, "Why does your house have a bad smell?"

Suddenly she put something in my mouth. I was very scared. She just told me it was a delicious fruit, but it had a bad smell. She said, "This is a very expensive fruit. I know you've never eaten it. It is especially for you."

"This is indeed very good," I said, "but the smell is very bad." The fruit was durian. After that time I've never eaten it again because I don't like it.

Xiu Zhen Chen

I Like Durian

A few years ago, my mother-in-law brought a durian from Hong Kong. Because at that time, my town didn't have durians for sale. When she came home and opened a box, the box had pieces of durian in it. It smelled very bad to me. I pinched my nose with my fingers. I went to the bedroom as soon as I could, and I shut my bedroom door. My husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law, and his brothers liked eating the durian. They ate it in the dining room. Except me, I didn't like it.

Later, my husband thought he could take the durian seeds and skin to our bedroom. He said he really liked this flavor, but I didn't. I told him, "You need to brush your teeth and change your clothes." He patiently talked to me, and he put the rest of the durian in the refrigerator, and then he asked me to try it again. But I still didn't like it.

Over the years, my husband asked me to try durian again and again. Now, I can eat durian. Whenever I see a durian, I want to eat it. I think durians are healthy, but you shouldn't eat too much each day. Durians are my favorite fruit!

Yu Yu Chen

Seafood in My Hometown

My hometown is Taishan, China. It is a very beautiful city. It has a lot of beaches and it is by the sea. So it has a lot of seafood too. And Taishan City is famous for its seafood.

The seafood in my hometown is very fresh and cheap. The fishermen sell seafood everywhere. Some sell to the restaurants, some sell to the stores, some sell to the people who are visiting the beach. And

if you know how to buy seafood in the seaport, it will be cheaper. But the fishermen are very smart. If they know you are not from Taishan, they will charge you more. They don't do that to the natives.

We usually go to the beach in the summertime. We play there and eat seafood there. It is very delicious and fun. I don't like seafood very much, but I have a favorite seafood dish: it is scallops with mashed garlic rice noodles. It is some rice noodles at the bottom, then put the scallops in the middle, and then put the mashed garlic and some mashed scallions on top and steam them for about fifteen minutes. Then you can get a very delicious dish. It tastes very good. I like it very much.

Taishan also has many kinds of seafood, like crab, shrimp, oysters, etc. People also make dried seafood, especially fish and shrimp. People kill the fish and wash it, then put a lot of salt on the fish. After that they put the fish under the sun. The salted fish will shrivel up in the sun. Many people like to eat that too.

If you ever go to Taishan, try the seafood!

Si Ting Fan

Delicious Food

I want to talk about my favorite food. Actually, I have two favorite foods. One is cherries. The other is durians. They are both delicious.

I remember when I was a child, I didn't like durians because the smell is very bad. But my aunt said it was very delicious and good for health. I didn't believe her. Then she ate it once or twice a week. The durian smell was around the house. After I saw her eat it so many times, I wanted to try it. The first time, I just tried a little piece. But I didn't feel bad when I ate it. After that, I really liked to eat durian. It's very good for health, but don't eat too much at one time.

Now let's talk about another delicious food. I like to eat it but it's very expensive in China. I don't know why I like to eat cherries. I could eat them every day. In New York, they're cheaper than in China. So I really like living in New York because I can buy them any time I want to eat them. Cherries are good for health too.

Many foods are delicious; you just keep trying and trying. If you don't try, you'll never know how it tastes.

Hua Jiang

My Experience with Sashimi

Sashimi is a famous food in Japan. A lot of people like to eat sashimi with wasabi. A long time ago, when I first came to the U.S., I went to a Japanese restaurant for the first time with my friend and my family. I saw people eating raw fish with wasabi and they enjoyed it. I thought it was strange. Oh my goodness, there is raw fish! How can they like raw fish! I couldn't believe that. In China, I had never seen this before. My friend encouraged me to try it but I said no. I was stubborn about it because I don't like to try new things. The only food I want has to be cooked.

A few years later, my family owned a Japanese restaurant and sold a lot of sashimi in the restaurant, but I still didn't try sashimi. Until one day, I decided to try some. I cut some raw tuna, salmon, and yellow tail into small pieces and put something crunchy with spicy mayo and wrapped it into a roll. Oh my, it was delicious. After that, I ate it very often. However, I'm still afraid to eat a large piece of sashimi with wasabi. I think this is the strangest thing I have ever eaten. I don't usually try strange things.

Chui Chun Lee

Food Story

I think health is very important for me because without health you cannot do anything. Last year I tried the strangest fruit. The name is durian. It smelled terrible, so I didn't want to eat it. But someone said it was a very healthy fruit, so then I wanted to try to eat it. The first few times, I couldn't stand it, but at last I loved its taste.

I used to like to eat fatty food like pizza, fat meat, and candy. Also I ate a lot of junk food. I always ate big portions of food. I didn't cook often and I always got take-out. One day I went to the doctor for my yearly check-up. My doctor suggested that I should change my eating habits. Then I cut the junk food and started eating healthy food instead of fatty food.

I am concerned about my health. I have a balanced diet. Now I cook almost every day, I only get take-out from the restaurant once a week. I always buy more vegetables than meat. When I cook, I use less salt and less oil. I eat junk food two times a week. When I buy food, I will read the nutrition labels and check how many carbohydrates the food has. My favorite food is vegetables like broccoli, lettuce, and celery. My favorite fruit is apples. I always drink water instead of soda. And I exercise three times a week. Now my cholesterol is normal. I feel happier.

Wei Run Li

My Food History

When I was five years old, my parents and I moved to Mexico. It was like a new life to me. Everything was so different. First of all, the food. Mexican food is very spicy. I remember the first time we went to a Mexican restaurant and I ordered tacos, I saw a very flat and thin tortilla with some vegetables and meat inside like pork, beef, onions, radish and some cilantro on top. It was very delicious but really spicy. My parents ordered seafood with yellow rice. That rice had a little shrimp, lobster, squid, crab, and many kinds of vegetables in it. My sister ordered birria soup. That soup was red and it had pieces of beef, some beans, carrots, and potatoes in it. It was spicy too. After that day, my parents and I thought almost all Mexican food was spicy, but over time I got used to eating spicy food.

In Mexico, there are many different types of sauces for food. Almost all are spicy sauces. That's why now my sister and I love spicy food.

When I was sixteen years old, I was so skinny because I ate a lot of junk food and I didn't like vegetables or fruits, so I told myself, "I don't want to be skinny anymore." That's why I started going to the gym because I wanted to look like a big man, a strong man with more muscles.

The first thing I had to do was change my diet, so I started to search on the internet for a healthy diet to gain muscle mass and not eat junk food, fatty food, or drink sugary beverages. So I had to eat more vegetables, fruits, beef, and chicken breast. I had to do more exercise and work out very hard, too.

So right now I am a strong man.

Xiao Xia Li

Cake

I like to eat cake, especially birthday cake. When I was a child, I always thought my birthday was every day. So I could eat cake every day. If I did not eat birthday cake on my birthday, I thought I did not grow up.

There are various styles and different flavors of cake. But they have some food additives, some food pigments, and too much sugar. They are also expensive. I wanted to eat healthy cake. So I had an idea. I had to learn how to make healthy cake.

First, I read a lot of baking books and watched videos on the internet and researched how to make the recipe. Then I made one simple eight-inch cake—sponge cake. I bought a mixing bowl, a cake pan, and a hand-held electric mixer. Next, I prepared one cup of flour, five big eggs, half a lemon, half a cup of oil, and half a cup of sugar. I had to separate the egg whites and yolks. Then I used the hand-held electric mixer to mix the egg whites and a little lemon juice. In another bowl, I mixed the yolks, oil, flour, and sugar. After that I mixed the two bowls together, but didn't use the electric mixer. After that, I put the soft dough into the oven. I set the temperature at 310 F. Then I waited for forty-five minutes. Finally, I saw my sponge cake was risen and golden brown.

I chose my favorite recipe, mixed it together with confidence, and waited for the golden moment to bite into it. It was soft and delicious. I was happy.

If you like to eat cake too, you might as well try to make a healthy cake yourself. What an interesting thing it is!

Xiu Yun Li

Soy Sauce Goose

Geese are animals; they're a kind of bird. Geese are very famous in my hometown. People cook them in many ways, like five-flavor geese, roasted geese, and barbecue geese. But in New York, it's hard to buy geese. Even if you buy one, it is different from those in my hometown. Here the geese do not have much flavor.

My mother is a good cook. She can cook every dish I like. She cooked soy sauce goose for me before I came to New York. It was very delicious. I'm reminded of the flavor once in a while. I never taste that flavor in New York.

How did my mother cook the goose? First of all, my mother would choose a good goose, not too fat or too thin, just the medium size. After washing it, my mother would add some oil to the pan, and put the clean goose in the pan. First she needed to fry the goose. It smelled good. After the goose turned gold, my mom would take out the fried goose and pour out the oil. After that, she put the goose back in the pan. Then she stewed the goose in soy sauce, added some pure sugar, some wine, and some vinegar.

Wow! It almost made me crazy at that time because the smell was very, very good. I loved it very much. After thirty minutes, a delicious dish was finished by my mom. My family would eat the goose in just one meal because it was very delicious. I liked it very much. Even now, I sometimes think about the goose my mom cooked for me when I was still in my hometown. Now, I'm just thinking about the flavor, but this year I will go back to China to taste the flavor again. I am waiting for that day.

Xue Ying Li

My Food Story

In China, there is a lot of delicious food. I like many different kinds of food. Seafood is my favorite kind. Seafood porridge and ginger fried crab are my favorites. Today is Christmas Day. So I want to buy some seafood to celebrate. I'll buy a dozen crabs and one pound of shrimp at a Chinese supermarket. I'll wash them, clean them, and cut them. When the rice in the pot is boiled, it will become porridge. I'll pour two crabs and few shrimp into it. And then cook it for a few minutes. So I can cook it according to my own taste. I can add green onions, garlic, and salt. Then I'll cook ginger

fried crab. I'll use a little pan and put a little salt, the ginger, and garlic in it. Then I'll add the crab and stir it to change the color. And then I'll put in a little water, soy sauce, and vinegar and mix them. Last I'll dish them up. And everything will be finished. My family will begin to party. We will enjoy ourselves and be happy. It'll be very delicious. Because this is my best.

Li Lian Liang

My Favorite Salty Pancake

When I was in elementary school, I had a favorite snack called salty pancake. There was a street food stall close to our school. When the class was over, we all went outside to buy salty pancakes. The boss of the street food stall was an old man. He couldn't make many salty pancakes to sell, so not all the children could get a salty pancake. Many times, when I arrived at the street stall, there was a long line there. If I wanted to buy one, I had to wait a long time. When I bought a salty pancake, I ate it immediately. It was very delicious. I still remember that taste. But sometimes when I waited for a long time and it was my turn, it was sold out. Everybody after me was disappointed. We had to wait for another day.

After I finished elementary school, I went to another town to go to middle school. Every vacation, I went back to my elementary school's street and found that street food stall to buy my favorite salty pancake. But in the second year of middle school, one day I went back to that street and I couldn't find that street stall. I asked the boss of the store on the street, and he told me the old man had passed away. I was sad. I missed the salty pancake and the old man. After that, I never ate salty pancakes anymore.

Dan Lin

Tang Yuan

In my hometown, there are a lot of famous foods, like fish balls, Chinese-style wontons, and tang yuan. When I was a child, I usually liked to eat them. Tomorrow is Chinese Dongzhi. In my hometown, people usually make tang yuan for their children. Tang yuan is a Chinese dish made from sweet rice flour mixed with a small amount of water to form balls and then it is cooked and served in boiling water. Tang yuan can be small or large, and you can make sweet tang yuan or pork tang yuan.

When I was a child, my mom usually made tang yuan for me. Now that I am a mom, I usually make tang yuan for my family. Tomorrow is Chinese Dongzhi. I will cook pork tang yuan for my family for breakfast. When I cook tang yuan, I will tell my son, "Wait a few minutes, don't eat it right now. It is hot and it will burn your tongue." Tang yuan is also served as a dessert on wedding days in China.

Sen Liang Lin

To Get Healthy

When I was twenty years old, I was unhealthy. I was skinny and I often got sick, so I often went to see the doctor. But the doctor told me, "You don't have any problems." But I felt bad. One day, I told my friend about my bad health. She was a gynecologist. She said, "Don't worry, I can help you get healthy. I'll cook some special food for you. You need to eat it twice a week."

Later, she often invited me to her home to eat her special food. The food was noodles. They weren't any different from other noodles, but they were delicious. I liked to eat them. After two months, I asked her, "What special things are in the noodles?" She smiled and said, "The noodles have some special thing from a placenta. It's a good drug for your health." But I was very angry because it was

from a pregnant woman. Since then I've never eaten her noodles. But I got healthy. Now I'm rarely sick.

Xiu Kui Ng

A Special Melon

Vegetables are good food for everybody. People eat them every day. It is healthy food. Some of them taste good, some of them don't taste good. When I was a child, we didn't have a lot of meat to eat, so vegetables was the main food for dinner. I remember one day, we had some stir-fried meat with bitter melon. The dish looked very delicious. I ate a piece of meat with bitter melon. The bitterness filled my mouth. I spit it out immediately. I didn't like the taste. Later, when we had bitter melon for dinner, we always had two or more vegetables to choose from.

Over many years, I tried little by little to eat bitter melon. I slowly began to like to eat bitter melon. Now I like to eat it very much because it is not only a vegetable, but also it is medicine. It can clean people's bodies of some unhealthy things. Some Americans like to eat bitter melon too.

Lily Sun

I Am Loving It

When I was twenty years old, I traveled to Thailand. The whole group liked to eat durian except me, because the smell is not good and it smells like poop. All the people told me it's very good and healthy, but I still refused to eat it. Then when we went back to the hotel, someone brought back the durian to the hotel. The hotel security guard stopped her and said don't bring a durian to the hotel, because the smell is not good for the other guests. In Thailand the durian is fresh and cheap.

During the whole trip, everyone ate durian almost every day except me. But on the last day of my trip, I finally tried it and loved it. The very first day we were back in Hong Kong, I made a special trip to the supermarket looking for durian. Then I realized the durian in Hong Kong is not as fresh and cheap as in Thailand.

A few years later, I went back to Thailand to visit again. But this time I came back not for the tour, but for my durian and I am loving it!

Reina Takami

My Sweet Memory

Children love snacks very much. When I was a child, I loved snacks too. At that time, my parents didn't have enough money to buy me snacks. But my mother always tried to make snacks for me. My favorite snack was my mother's handmade pancake. It was very delicious.

Popcorn was also one of my favorite snacks. It is different from American-style popcorn. Usually, a popcorn vendor carried a popcorn machine to go to many places where many children were living. When the vendor arrived at a new place, he shouted "Popcorn!" with a loud voice to make everyone hear him. When I noticed the popcorn vendor was right there, I always asked my mother to give me a cup of dried corn or rice, a big bowl, and 3 RMB. At the same time, the vendor used coals to make fire and prepared his popcorn machine. When the children came, he started to make popcorn. He put dried corn or rice into his machine, and he also added some sweetener to it. When I was a child, I just knew the sweetener was sweet. But now I know it's a kind of chemical and it's harmful to my body. But at that time, I didn't care about that.

The popcorn machine is a kind of pressure cooker. It takes almost ten minutes to make popcorn. When the popcorn vendor finished his cooking, he used a big net to cover the popcorn machine, and opened the machine with a big noise like an explosion. The children all covered their ears. At last, the vendor poured the popcorn into a big bowl which the children brought from home and took the money. When I ate that popcorn, I thought I was the happiest person in the world. The vendor came to my hometown irregularly; we didn't know when he would come again. So when I finished eating my popcorn, I looked forward to seeing him again.

When I grew up, I learned the popcorn machine was made from lead. It's very harmful to our bodies. I didn't eat that popcorn anymore. But the memory is still so sweet.

Ingrid Villanueva

My Food Story

When I was a child in my country, we ate a lot of vegetables, for example, tomatoes, onions, beans, avocados, carrots, potatoes, and corn. I think we ate healthier food because we were poor but we didn't have money to buy snacks like chips or candy and we ate at home every day.

My grandmother cooked soup and she made tortillas. She liked to cook. We usually ate bean soup or chicken soup because my grandmother raised animals like chickens, pigs and ducks. At my house we grew lettuce, avocados, coffee, lemons, oranges, and mangoes. A lot of fruits.

When I came to live in North America, the food was different. Everything here is bought in supermarkets. We can't grow and we can't eat fresh vegetables and fresh fruit. I miss the food in my country. In the U.S., we changed our eating habits. We eat more unhealthy food. Here we eat a lot of sugar, fried potatoes, and chips, and we cook with a lot of oil.

Now I have a big problem because my daughters do not like vegetables and they like to eat food that is similar to their school food: pizza, sandwiches, rice, fries, and chicken nuggets. They want to put ketchup on everything. I make salad at home but they don't like to eat it. I buy a lot of fruit and they don't like to eat it. I don't know what I can do. When I make healthy food, they don't eat it. They only drink a cup of milk.

Qiong Wu

Special Fruit

In 2004, I took a trip to Malaysia with my good friends. We had a good time and visited many famous places and ate a lot of delicious food. On the second day, we went to a restaurant. We had a very good dinner. After dinner, I smelled something very strange. It was like the smell of a public bathroom. We asked the waiter, "What is that?"

The waiter told us, "This is a dessert. It's called crispy durian cake."

My friends wanted to try it, so they ordered one each. I was very curious, so I tried a little. Then I went to the bathroom and threw up. I lost my appetite that night, but my friends all loved it. They even bought more to take home. But they got stopped at the airport because durian is fruit.

After many years, I didn't try it again. In 2008, I came to the U.S.A, and I worked with Malaysian people. They always brought durians to the shop, and they taught me how to eat it. The first time you eat durian, you should hold your nose, then eat it. You will love it. I was afraid, but I tried it again because everybody says durians are delicious. It was. Now I eat durian and I love it.

Alyssa Xie

Food Story about My Son

My son, Sky, is nineteen years old right now. When he was about eight years old, I brought a durian home one day. After he got home from school, he asked me why it smelled like someone pooped in the house. I laughed at him and told him it was the smell of durian, which is the king of fruits. I opened the durian that night and wanted to share it with my family. But Sky refused to eat durian and he stayed very far away from it. I thought I should not let him be picky, so I told him it tasted delicious and he should really try it. Then I forced him to eat a little bit. And he didn't like it.

After one week or so, I brought another durian home, and this time I forced him to eat a little bit as well. But he started to change his opinion a little bit. He ate a little bit more than the first time. About one year later, Sky asked me, "Mommy, why don't you buy durians anymore?" I was surprised by what he said. Then I asked him, "Do you like durians now? I thought you hated it! Don't you?" He told me he liked it now. I was so happy that he wasn't being picky and that he started to like what he hated before. In my family, we all like to eat durians!

Joyce Yang

Ma Po Tofu

We all know that tofu is white in color. When I was a young girl, one day my father made pork with ma po tofu for lunch. This is pork-braised tofu in soy sauce. My sister and I told my father to make it again. Since then I have fallen in love with ma po tofu. I felt that the food was especially delicious.

My mother told me tofu was good food. And I slowly began to like tofu. Tofu is rich in plant protein. There are many ways to cook tofu: steamed, fried, boiled, or braised in soy sauce.

Now tofu is my favorite food. But I like ma po tofu best. Ma po tofu is hard to cook. When I go out to eat, I need to order ma po tofu every time because ma po tofu at the restaurant is very delicious. In a restaurant, there is a large fire and a large pot. Almost every day I have to eat tofu.

Wei Wen Zeng

The First Time We Cooked

In my earliest memory, my mom was always very busy. She was a biologist. She did her job very well. She also needed to take care of her four children. She was good at cooking. When my sisters and I had birthdays, my mom always cooked delicious food for us, but she never cooked for herself.

I don't remember which year it was, but it was my mom's birthday. She still went to work as usual. My oldest sister told us, "Today let's work together and cook a birthday dinner for mom." We put money together that our parents sometimes gave us for snacks. We went to a street market to buy a chicken, some pork, tofu, peppers, mushrooms, and spinach. That was the first time we cooked. We didn't know how to do that. We just followed our imagination and cooked them. We tried to cut the pork into pieces, but we weren't able to cut too small. We washed the mushrooms and spinach. We put a whole chicken into a pot and boiled it. After two hours, we made four dishes: fried tofu, pork fried peppers, steamed spinach, and chicken mushroom soup.

When my mom came back home, my youngest sister held her hands and took her to the dining room. She was so surprised and happy. She hugged all of us and said, "Thank you, babies!" We sat around the table and began to eat. The tofu was really salty. The pork was too tough. The spinach was overcooked. Only the chicken soup was okay. My parents were still smiling. We enjoyed our first time cooking and ate it all.

3P FOOD STORIES

Noelia Cardoso

My First Recipe

As is customary in my town, girls when they enter the stage of adolescence have to learn how to cook. We were five sisters at home and each had an activity to do that afternoon. My mom said that with the help of my younger sister I had to cook. The food I had to prepare would be chicken milaneza with rice and green sauce. I was very nervous because it would be the first time I would do it without the help of my mom. I always thought it would be easy but it was not like that.

I started looking for the ingredients—for the rice, garlic, onions, and tomatoes; for the green sauce, jalapeños, cilantro, and tomatillos; and for the chicken milaneza, chicken breast, eggs, and bread crumbs. First I cooked the rice because it was the one that takes more time to cook. Then I started to cook the ingredients for the sauce and finally the chicken milaneza was when the problems began.

Every time I fried the chicken something was not normal. The bread separated from the chicken, but I was very happy to be in charge of the food, so I did not dare to ask what was wrong. I continued to finish but the milaneza did not look like it had to be. When my mom asked if the food was ready, I answered “Yes!” But wait a minute now. I know what happened with the chicken milaneza: I forgot to put the eggs in the chicken before I started to put in the bread crumbs. That was the problem.

Susana Chan

Changing My Diet

One day in 2000, my doctor told me my blood test report showed that my sugar level was high. “Now you are a diabetes patient,” the doctor said. I couldn’t accept this report. My doctor gave me pills to control my sugar level, but I never took them. I think this was the first time to find out my sugar level was high. How come I needed to take pills to control my sugar level? I could try to change my diet to control it.

The next day, I changed my breakfast habit. I ate oatmeal and a piece of bread. Before, I usually ate instant noodles with eggs every day. For my lunch and dinner, I also changed to a healthy diet. At lunch time, I usually ate salad without sauce and sugar-free cookies. For my dinner, more vegetables, less meat, and only steamed vegetables—no oil and no salt.

After a month, I went back to do a blood test. My sugar level was back to normal. So the doctor asked me, “How many pills do you take every day?”

I answered the doctor, “I never took the pills. I only changed to a healthy diet.”

He was so surprised and told me to share my healthy diet with other diabetes patients. I have kept to this healthy diet to control my sugar level. But in 2013, my sugar level wasn’t under control. I asked my doctor, “Why?”

He said, “Because you’re getting older.”

He suggested that I start to take the pills to control my sugar level. This time, I accepted and I still keep my healthy diet. Thank God, for these three years, my sugar level has been under control. I will keep this healthy diet until I go to my Father God's home. Because I know diabetes can damage my eyes, cause heart disease, and also some other serious problems.

Ji Wen Chen

Thing about Diet

About fifteen years ago, when I was a pregnant woman, I went to see the doctor. The doctor told me I had pregnant woman diabetes. I ate brown rice, red rice, and whole wheat bread, and I had to eat less sugar. I also exercised half an hour every day.

I bought red rice, brown rice, and black rice to cook. There were always three vegetables during dinner. I walked for forty-five minutes every day. I ate whole wheat bread and oatmeal for breakfast. I remembered what the doctor had said. If I ate bananas, I should only eat half. I followed the recipes. I changed my diet. I controlled myself. I did not take any medicine.

In 2016, my lab test result showed that I needed to take medicine. The doctor said my age had changed, so my diet must change. My breakfast did not include the whole wheat bread anymore. He suggested that I make some vegetables and oatmeal for my breakfast.

Now I eat oatmeal, grapefruit, and cranberries every morning. Some nuts and fruits are my snack. My coffee has skim milk in it. When I cook, I use less oil and salt. I put vegetables on one half of my dish. I put a quarter meat and a quarter brown rice on my dish. I exercise. I hope all these things can help me.

Qi Wen Chen

First Time in the Kitchen

Before I came here, I had never gone into the kitchen because we have a chef at home—my father! I thought cooking was none of my business. I always ate too much and did too little!

When I started living here, I found out that fewer people here eat rice every day because rice is high in sugar. Eating a lot of it is not healthy. But my father only knew how to cook Chinese food, and we always ate the same thing. It was so boring. So I started to learn how to cook different dishes for my family.

The first time I cooked Western food, I made cheese-baked steak with broccoli, onions, and corn, mushroom cream soup, and fried pasta with the red peppers. When it was ready, I put all the food on the table. My family was scared because the food looked terrible. At first no one wanted to eat it, but finally they started eating. They were happy and they all said the food tasted good!

Now I always cook different food for my family, and they enjoy trying new food. Everything has a first time. Maybe it looks difficult, but when you do it with your heart, it is easy!

Wan Chang Chen

Rice

I come from China. Most people in China eat rice every day. We usually have meat, vegetables, and soup for a meal. I left my home when I went to middle school. I went home once a week. So I had to eat at school from Monday to Friday. The food at my school was not so good, so we threw away our rice and vegetables then we bought junk food at the school store. So we spent more money on food.

We were happy on the weekend because we could go home, and my parents made meals for us. Sometimes we ate two bowls of rice.

My family likes rice very much. They often feel hungry if they eat other things. Sometimes someone invited us over to eat when he or she had a happy day. They usually prepared a lot of food: chicken, duck, goose, roast pork, and many kinds of vegetables. So we often ate meat and drank soda. Then we felt full. But later, we were hungry again, so my parents cooked rice for us.

I still remember now. I lived alone at my school two years ago. After work, I played badminton with my co-workers, so I skipped dinner and I ate some bread and fruit at night. One day, two days... I almost always felt hungry. Finally I cooked rice, and I put an egg on it. It smelled very good. At that moment, rice was my favorite food!

Sing Cheng

Food Story

Food! We need food to live. Without food we will die. Each place has its local specialty.

About eight years ago, I was so lucky. I found my first job. This company sold Japanese soup, noodles, and sushi to hotels and cafés. I could try many different foods when I worked there. But I was so sad because I only worked there for three years. So that's why I'm crazy about Japanese food.

Whenever I eat sushi or Japanese noodles, I miss this company and my co-workers.

Wing Man Cheung

Eggs

When I was a child, my mom boiled an egg for me every morning, and then she went to work. So boiled eggs became a fixed breakfast every day. After I ate boiled eggs for three months, I began to hate eggs. When I saw an egg, I felt sick. So I told my mom, "I don't want to eat boiled eggs for breakfast."

But my mom said to me, "Eggs contain protein. They are good for your body. You can't not eat them!"

Then I had an idea. When my mom went to work I would put the boiled egg in the trash can. My mom would never think I would do this thing, because I was a good girl. But one day my mom came home early because she was sick. When I came home after school, my mom was very angry and asked me, "Did you eat the boiled egg today?"

I didn't know my mom already knew my secret, so I answered and said, "Of course I ate it." After hearing my answer, my mom took the trash can and asked me, "What's this?"

I saw an egg in the trash can. And then my mom said, "You know, there are still a lot of people who do not have anything to eat. You can't waste food."

I said, "I'm sorry, mom. I will not waste food." After that day, my mom never cooked boiled eggs for me again.

Nian Ci He

Bitter Melon

Bitter melon is a vegetable. It is green and the shape is oval. Chinese medicine says bitter melon is a healthy food. It can help clean your stomach.

I remember when I was a child, my mom usually cooked bitter melon once a week because my dad had a habit of smoking. My mom thought bitter melon could help detox his body. She knew my brother and I didn't like bitter melon because it tastes very bitter, so she cooked it in different ways, like bitter melon fried eggs, bitter melon braised ribs, bitter melon pig bone soup, etc., but we still didn't like to eat it.

One time, we only had bitter melon braised ribs and rice for dinner. I didn't like to eat bitter melon, but I didn't have any choice, so I just ate ribs, one piece, two pieces, three pieces... My dad looked at

me. He was angry. He said, “Bitter melon is good for you! You should eat it! Try it!” I was very afraid of my father, so I had to take a piece of bitter melon into my mouth, but I really did not like the taste, too bitter. Eating, eating, my tears flowing out.

Later my dad saw me eat so hard, and he said, “Forget it, do not eat it” and told my mother to put some other dishes out. When I saw the other dishes, my sadness turned to happiness.

Now every time I eat bitter melon, I think of this thing as a child, and I think of my dad. I miss him a lot.

Mina Hosokawa

Change Our Eating Habits

I didn’t think about healthier meals until I got married. My husband is fat because he likes to drink sugary beverages and eat fast food, but I don’t like them because I used to eat home-made meals made by my mother every day in Japan. So I was surprised by his eating habits. We got married last year, and I started to control his meals. I tried giving him fresh fruits and fresh vegetables for every meal. But he didn’t eat them. I got angry many times because I want to change his bad eating habits.

So I thought about making healthier meals. I tried many ways. One day he didn’t eat a green salad, so I changed the vegetables. The next day I made a green salad without lettuce. Instead I made steamed broccoli and beans for his salad. Then he ate all his salad. I was very happy. So I still keep trying to choose vegetables for his meals.

And I also changed my eating habits. When I was living in Japan, I often skipped breakfast. I was very busy all day, so I couldn’t take a break every work day. So I caught a cold easily. But now I don’t live with my mother. My husband is not good at taking care of other people. He only gives me medicine when I am sick. But my mother used to make healthier meals for me when I was sick. So I decided to keep good health by myself. So I don’t skip meals, and I don’t eat too much.

Nicole Li

My First Chicken Dish

I still remember my first time cooking chicken. When I was a child, my father taught me how to cook some easy dishes, such as fried eggs, fried vegetables, steamed fish, and soups. They were all easy to cook. I couldn’t say I was good at cooking, but I was able to make some dishes.

But one thing happened that let me down. When I was fifteen years old, my grandmother’s birthday was coming up, so my parents and I discussed how to celebrate it. Finally, we decided that I would cook the dinner. It was a big dinner because when our family got together, there were about twenty people. I was excited because it was my first time to cook for my family.

On that day, I got up early. I bought food with my parents. We bought a chicken, some fish, and some vegetables—many kinds of food. I started to cook at 3 PM. At the beginning, everything was okay. But when I wanted to cook the chicken, there was a problem. I forgot it was still alive, and I didn’t know how to kill it. I picked the chicken up and held a knife. The chicken was moving and yelling. I felt scared, I threw the chicken down, and ran out of the kitchen.

My father asked me what happened. I told him I couldn’t cook the chicken because it was still alive. My parents laughed. But we didn’t have enough time to cook the chicken, so I went out to buy a deli chicken. During dinner, my family was laughing at me. It made an impression on me. Now I still don’t know how to kill a chicken.

Zhu Li

My Favorite Food

My favorite food is seafood, which is shrimp, lobster, fish, hairy crab, etc. I have particularly loved eating seafood ever since I was a little girl, because I lived on the coast of China. Many kinds of seafood were sold by fishermen in the supermarkets in my hometown. My mother often bought seafood because she loved to eat seafood too.

One day, I got food poisoning. Its primary cause was a few baby fish. At the time, I could not believe that I had a problem with seafood. But it only happened one time in my life, so I can still enjoy eating seafood.

In November, 2016, I went to see my family doctor and I got a blood test. After one week, I got the results, which were that I had high cholesterol, my blood sugar was a little high, and some other problems with my body. From then on I have had to be very careful about my health.

So I eat green vegetables and one apple every day. I have to eat less seafood, too. I sometimes cannot control myself because I always think eating seafood twice a week is not very serious.

Shu Yan Lin

Durian

I like to eat fruit. Last summer, my mother-in-law brought home a strange fruit. I had never seen it before. She told me it was called durian. I looked at it. It had a lot of thorns. I was wondering how to open it. Then she told me, "It smells like hell and tastes like heaven." Then she put on gloves and used a knife to open it. I saw a few pieces of yellow things and it smelled so terrible. I covered my nose with my hands and walked away immediately. "It smells like shit," I said. My mother-in-law and my daughter were laughing. They were so happy with the food. At my daughter's suggestion I tried a little bit. "It tastes great," I said. It was sweet and smooth. I couldn't stop my mouth. I ate three pieces of it by the end.

Recently I passed through Grand Street in Chinatown. I saw they sold durians. But the prices were different. The smaller one was more expensive. It was about \$9 per pound. One of my friends told me that durians grow in tropical areas. She went to Thailand last year, and they were very cheap there. "It is a kind of fruit that is good for the skin and health," my friend told me. I always bring one home every time I see it now.

Angie Rojas

The Most Delicious Seafood

When I was twenty years old, I went to Spain alone, but on the plane I met a girl. Her name was Eira. She sat next to me. The flight took twenty-two hours, so during this time we talked about many things. She told me about her family. Her father was born in Colombia but her mother was born in Barcelona, so she is Catalana. She was flying to Spain because she had a lot of family in this country, like her grandmother and her father.

Eira was a beautiful woman and she was very friendly. I was going to visit a friend in Barcelona and I was going to sleep at his apartment, but the Eira's family didn't live in Barcelona. They lived in a little city next to Barcelona, so at the airport her grandfather picked her up and he drove to Qremallera.

She told me that she wanted me to visit her in Qremallera. Maybe three weeks later I went to Qremallera. It took me three hours to get there. When I arrived, I was surprised because in my country a little city is small. Qremallera is next to the sea and it's very big and beautiful. Her family had a fancy restaurant next to the sea. It was wonderful. I could see the sea because the restaurant

was on the beach. I ate many things. Everything was delicious and to my surprise I didn't pay anything. This food was the most delicious seafood that I had eaten in all my life.

Jian Ting Ruan

Friends! (Dog)

My father bought a big male dog when he was two years old. I still remember he bit me when we first met. My father wanted us to make friends. My father held him and I touched him, and then something happened. He turned his face and bit my finger. It was bleeding. My father took me to the hospital because my father was afraid I would get rabies. My aunt worked there. She was a nurse. "Why are you both here? What happened?" she asked. My father told her I was bitten by a dog. And then I got five shots once each month. After that I never got close to the male dog.

The first time I ate dog meat was when I was five years old. It was very delicious! It had a different taste than beef or pork. I think eighty percent of people still eat dog meat in my hometown. You know why? Because during one holiday season most people eat them in my hometown, and some people sell the cooked dog meat. Do you know how to cook it? First thing: kill it, clean it, burn it with dogs tail. Second thing: add fried bean curd skins, Chinese south bean curd, anise, some sauce, and burnt ginger. That is all I know.

When I went to China in April, 2015, I heard my neighbor had locked up her dog but some thieves had tried to steal it. "Why are you stealing my dog?" my neighbor yelled. The thieves tried to beat my neighbor and leave, but my neighbor saved her dog. Because dogs are expensive in my hometown. Too many dogs are stolen by thieves.

I know I'm not a good person to talk about dog meat and cook dog meat here. I stopped eating dog meat when I was eighteen and I don't recommend people eat it because dogs are always our friends. They will protect you in danger. They will make you happy if you get mad. Guys, stop eating them, please! I love dogs. Sorry about sharing my little story. Peace!

Wei Hong She

Shanghai Food

In China I never cooked, but when I came to the U.S., I couldn't stand the meat here. It was gamey. Even when I boiled the meat before cooking it, the smell was still there. I missed the food in my hometown. But everything was very expensive here because when I just got here, I didn't have any money. So I had to cook for myself. I didn't enjoy eating food here just because you have to eat for survival.

I missed Shanghai street food because in Shanghai every morning in our neighborhood there are so many choices: steamed buns, egg wraps, pork with sticky rice in the bun, etc. The smell went through to my windows, so yummy! We never worried about what to have for breakfast. But in New York you have to buy a whole week's food. In the morning, you put the food in the microwave to heat it up. Otherwise there's only bread or muffins—not many choices.

One year my husband and I went to Shanghai to the famous restaurant in Yuan Garden. It's famous for its steamed dumplings. There was a long line. We waited in line, and after half an hour I said to my husband, "This is too slow."

The people near us said, "You want fast? Go to the second floor. They charge a little more but they're fast."

We went to the second floor and we only waited for a few minutes. But the taste was different. It didn't have the same flavor from my childhood. The lady next to my table told us, "You want really good flavor? Go to the third floor." Funny!

When I was little, we were not rich. Everything you ate tasted delicious even though it was not expensive. Now people try to charge more but there's no quality.

Nu Tran

Vietnamese Food

I remember two years ago, I visited my sister's family in Albany, New York. My sister's name is Anna. She is nice and she cooks very well. Anna's fried lamb chops taste delicious. And I can make shrimp rolls, noodles, and vegetables. We eat this food together with Vietnamese sauces. Another one I make is noodles with chopped vegetables and chopped fried tofu. You can eat this food with fish sauces. I like these two kinds of food because you can eat them with your hands.

I can make food that tastes delicious, for example, I like "Pho Beef." It's a soup that you make with beef and beef bones. You eat it with noodles, too. And another kind is "Bun Bo Hue." This is my favorite food. I like to eat it, but this food takes two hours to make, so I cook it twice a month.

I think Vietnamese food is healthy because I know a lot of Vietnamese dishes don't use a lot of oil. Almost all the food is steamed, like steamed shrimp and fish. There are a lot of American people who eat it and people from other countries like India, Canada, Australia, etc. Now in the U.S. I know every state has Vietnamese restaurants. In the future, I think if people want to go on a diet, they will eat Vietnamese food.

Sophia Wang

Food Story

I wonder why most people eat food too much and always spend time thinking what to eat for the next meal? When I was a little girl, I lived in a small place in Shanghai with my grandma who was not my real grandma, but she was the only one I depended on at that time. She was short, fat, and quiet. She rarely talked to anybody, including me. But she worked hard making money for our food. She had a special recipe for her own homemade seasoning. Whatever she cooked, she had to mix it in. Do you know what her secret seasoning was? It consisted of fat, hot red pepper, and extremely bitter herbs. She said the fat was for a healthy body, the pepper for nutrition, and the herbs for killing inner worms if you had any.

You know almost all kids like sweetness, and me too. I hated her seasoning and refused to eat it. I wondered how come it could help me grow up healthy? It just traveled through my organs: through my mouth, esophagus, stomach, intestines, and dropped out of my anus, that was all. I asked my grandma, "Why?" She just gave an unhappy look. I wondered and wondered and was full of questions in my heart when I was a child. I knew my grandma was really anxious and worried in her inner heart about my health; however, she just didn't know how to express her feelings with speech.

One day she brought me to see a Chinese medicine doctor who gave me some bitter herbs and told me to take them on time every day. Back at home, my grandma wanted to attract my attention to her delicious food, so she tried to make thousands of different dishes with her special seasoning. I had to eat more bitter herbs and my grandma's bitter meals again and again. In her serious manner she said, "Eat it, eat it!" angrily and I was angry too. I said, "I don't want it, I don't want it!" That is my food story with my dear grandma in my childhood in Shanghai, China.

Zujia Wang

Eating Habits

Let me tell you a story about my eating habits.

Twenty years ago, I came to the United States. I did not know how to choose food. American food is different from Chinese food. In New York City, there are many snacks on the street: McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, and Dunkin' Donuts. They serve various snacks: hamburgers, French fries, hot dogs, sandwiches, and doughnuts. Which one is cheaper and more delicious? I had to try them.

Finally, I liked the pizza at Pizza Hut and donuts with coffee at Dunkin'. I was poor then. I didn't have much money to buy healthy food. Pizza is delicious and makes me full for a long time although it is fatty. Doughnuts are appetizing although they have more sugar. Coffee refreshes me although it has caffeine. Therefore, pizza and donuts are junk food, and coffee isn't a good beverage.

Right now I sometimes get pizza and usually go to Dunkin' on weekends. Actually, I have formed a bad eating habit. We know it is difficult to break a bad eating habit because junk food is cheaper and more delicious than healthy food. I will try to change my bad eating habit.

Joyce Wei

Eating Crabs

Three years ago, my three close friends and I celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival in my apartment. At lunch time, we went to the supermarket to buy some crabs and vegetables. We bought twelve crabs and cauliflower for our lunch. I steamed the twelve crabs and fried the cauliflower. There were four people, so everyone ate three crabs.

The next day, we had to work. In my office, I had a stomachache. I drank a lot of water, but I didn't feel better. Then I had a rest on the sofa. I hoped I would be better. On the third day, I still had a stomachache, so I went to the hospital to see a doctor. The doctor said maybe I ate too much crab. It's very cold for my stomach. He gave me three shots, so I got one shot every three days. And then I felt better.

When I finished the three shots, it was the weekend. Every weekend, my co-workers and I went shopping, went to the movies, and ate at a restaurant. That day, we ate steamed shrimp. On Monday, in the office, I had a stomachache again. I guessed maybe the shrimp was also too cold for my stomach. I had a rest again, but the next day, I didn't feel better. I had to go to the hospital again. Oh my God.

After that, I thought about which seafood could make me have a stomachache. I knew that shrimp was good for me. Even though I ate too much of it, I still felt okay. So eating too much crab is too cold for my stomach. I usually ate one crab at once. That was okay. So I tried to eat two crabs at once. No problem also. I knew three crabs was too much for me, but I could eat two crabs at once.

Now I live in New York. My husband likes eating crabs. Every time we only buy six crabs. My husband eats four crabs and I eat two.

Qian Zhou

Food Story

I love to eat. That is the reason why I am fatter than most of my friends. I like eating food, but there are many foods I don't like, for example, I don't like fish because the bones are too small for me. One day I ate a bone and it was stuck in my throat. My mother took me to the doctor. From that time, I felt

scared and never eat fish. I also hate to eat many kinds of fruits. When I was a child, my mom could control my diet so that I ate a lot of vegetables and some fruit.

That changed when I studied in high school. My high school was far away from my home, so I lived in the dormitory and ate all day in the school's dining hall. The food was cheap and delicious. The white rice was unlimited. I liked the food and instead of ordering vegetables I always ordered fried chicken or pork. We studied all day and we had to do our homework in class until 10:30 p.m. We always ate our dinner at 5:00 p.m., so we felt hungry after finishing our homework. The restaurant prepared food for us like hot dogs, fried chicken, and fried rice. I went to get something to eat with my roommate every night although it was too late to eat. I didn't control my diet, which made my weight increase fast. My weight increased twenty pounds in one year. I regretted it and tried to lose weight, but it was too late because I felt hungry easier than before.

Yun Jin Zou

Food Story

I came to the USA in March, 2016. When I first arrived in the USA, I was very happy because my sister told me the USA has a lot of food from different countries. This was good news to me because I like delicious food and beautiful food. My sister brought me to a Japanese sushi restaurant. My sister was a waitress, so she knew what was delicious and what was not good. Sometimes she brought me out to eat at different restaurants. These were Chinese, Japanese, Thai, and Korean restaurants. They had some delicious food.

So I knew a lot of restaurants from my sister, but she never taught me how to order dishes. I think it was important for me. When I first brought my friends to go out to eat, I didn't know how to pronounce the names. It was so awkward for me. I didn't like this feeling, but I tried my best. One time I went to a Japanese restaurant to order something because I like sushi. I tried my best to order dishes. I ordered a shrimp roll, cucumber roll, and salmon roll in the end. They were delicious. I like putting sushi rolls in the wasabi and adding sauce. The taste is very tangy and hot. I like this feeling.