

14 Chinese Cuisines (Culture Session)

I LEARNING GOAL

Gain appreciation of the Chinese food culture and Chinese vocabulary describing tastes.

II LANGUAGE POINTS

1. 年夜饭
2. 南甜北咸东酸西辣
3. 川菜
4. 点心
5. 北京烤鸭

III SCRIPT

Tingting: Hello and welcome to “Everything about Business Chinese”. I’m Tingting.

Colin: Hi, I’m Colin. Back in January, we celebrated the Chinese New Year. Is it always natural to talk about food in a holiday season? What do you call the Chinese equivalent of American Thanksgiving feast?

Tingting: Yes, we call the Chinese New Year Eve feast “Nian Ye Fan”, which means the feast we have on the eve of Chinese Lunar New Year to celebrate family reunion and the coming of the New Year.

Colin: “Nian Ye Fan”. Good to know. To tell you the truth, I am a huge fan of Chinese food! Would you please tell me more about Chinese food culture in general?

Tingting: Sure! A well-known Chinese proverb says “Nan tian bei xian, dong suan xi la”, which means “people from the south like sweets while those from the north favor salty food. The easterners are into sour dishes while the westerners cannot get enough of spicy food.” China is a big country, so the geographic distinctions are significant. People living in different regions have developed their unique tastes and cuisines based on the local produce and climate.

Colin: I see. No wonder Sichuan restaurants usually serve spicy dishes. Szechuan province is located in the southwest of China.

Tingting: Traditionally there are eight cuisines, and they are Anhui, Guangdong, Fujian, Hunan, Jiangsu, Shandong, Sichuan, and Zhejiang. Sichuan cuisine has a long history and it is very famous throughout the world.

Colin: They sound very mouth-watering! I love Sichuan dishes such as Mapo Tofu and Kung Pao Chicken. I am also a huge fan of Cantonese dim sum. The snacks are very delicate and tasty!

Tingting: Dim sum, which is called “Dian Xin” in Chinese, is a specialty of Guangdong Cuisine. Dim sum refers to a wide range of Chinese snacks like shrimp dumplings and Cha siu bau.

Colin: I heard Beijing roast duck is also very famous and a must-eat Chinese dish. Which genre does it belong to?

Tingting: Beijing Roast Duck is a typical Beijing Cuisine. The dish is made of crispy fat duck and served with steamed buns. It usually goes with shallot

segments, cucumbers, and green turnips with plum sauce to highlight the taste. You know, one of the top Beijing Roast Duck restaurants called Da Dong will launch its New York branch near Bryant Park soon.

Colin: Cool! We should go and check it out!

Colin: Thank you for listening. Today's question for our audiences is how main streams of Chinese Cuisines are there? Please email your answer to CIB@Chinamericaradio.com, we will post the first answer on our twitter account @Confuciusbiz. You can download today's transcript for free at chinamericaradio.com, and email your questions at CIB@Chinamericaradio.com . See you next week!