

# FOOD FORUM

DOROTHY JOHNSON

## The Classic Cuisine Of China

With the President's visit to China we've all become aware of the cuisine of the Forbidden City of Imperial China. The kitchens of the Imperial menage are of enormous proportion, and countless varieties of dishes are served at each meal.

In grandeur, the repasts of the Peking court are unrivaled. The fine Imperial seasonings are classified as "salty, sweet, sour, peppery, and spicy." Garlic, ginger and onions are common seasonings, as in most of the regional styles of Chinese cuisine. Wine, soya, ginger, as well as sesame, and water chestnut flour are used.

The Peking dish which has brought world-wide fame, is Peking Roast Duck, with its fragrant, shiny golden skin and tender, white neck. The ducks used for the authentic Peking Roast Duck are fattened in what may seem to be a rather cruel system. Food pellets are made from a paste of wheat, millet, and maize flours and are force-fed to the ducks morning and night. The ducks are kept in cages so small that they cannot move about and thereby work off any of their gained weight. In about three months the ducks are fat enough for roasting.

Students of cuisine in Peking are required to take a one-year course devoted entirely to the art of preparing Peking Roast Duck.

The first three months of the study are concerned only with the fattening, slaughtering and cleaning of the fowl. The ducks are slaughtered by breaking the neck by hand, but leaving it intact. The duck is plucked, singed and drawn, then the entire bird is inflated by forcing air into it. This used to be done by the cook himself blowing into a small hole in the neck; the more recent hygienic method employs a mechanical blower. Next, after the duck is dipped in boiling water, the entire skin surface is brushed with a syrup of malt sugar and the fowl is hung up by the neck for an hour or more. Again this used to be done by suspending the duck out on a breezy porch, and is accomplished today with an electric fan.

The duck is then roasted suspended in an open-mouth oven. It is turned often and roasted for about an hour. Regulation of the oven temperature is important, for if it is too low, the skin will not be crisp and succulent; and if too high, the skin will shrink and stretch thin. It is the skin which is relished so much, for when served at a formal meal, the skin will be carefully carved from the duck in about two-inch squares and served.

The skin is either eaten with the "thousand leaf bread" of the Peking bakeries or placed on a thin wheat "daily" (similar to a wheat torilla, only thinner), spread with a sweet condiment made from soya beans, red rice and garlic, then sprinkled with chopped spring onions, rolled up and eaten. The flesh of the duck is carved and served as a less-appealing side dish or else served for left overs.

(GING-GERNG AAP) PEKING ROAST DUCK AMERICAN STYLE

- 1 tender whole duck, (head attached)
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 tbsp. red vegetable sauce
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 tsp. fine fragrance spice
- 2 tbsp. rice wine or sherry
- 1 tsp. distilled vinegar
- Chinese Plum Sauce

Clean duck, then submerge it in boiling water for 1 minute. Drain and dry the skin with paper towels. Combine the honey and boiling water and rub into the skin of the duck until thoroughly imbued, Rub the inside of the duck with the salt and spice powder. Hang up the duck by the neck and allow to dry for 10 hours until the skin is hard. Combine the red vegetable sauce, wine, sugar and vinegar and rub inside the duck. Roast the duck, preferably over an open barbecue.

PLUM SAUCE (SO MUEY JERNG)

A canned sauce prepared from plums, apricots,

## NLV Host Lion Club & Boys Club Movie

Lions Club and Boys Club extend Friday night free movies for boys and girls of North Las Vegas for eight (8) more weeks. Every Friday night 7 P.M. at the Boys' Club Building, Carey and Webster Streets, North Las Vegas.

### SCHEDULE OF FILMS

- March 3 Toby Tyler (Disney Production)
- March 10 Tonka (Disney Production)
- March 17 Moon Pilot (Disney Production)
- March 24 Melody Time (Disney Production)
- March 31 NO MOVIE IN OBSERVANCE OF: GOOD FRIDAY
- April 7 Festival of Folk Heroes (Disney Production)
- April 14 The Horse without A Head (Disney Production)
- April 21 Dr. Syn--Alias the Scarecrow (Disney Production)
- April 28 So Dear To My Heart (Disney Production)

All children are invited to attend these movies.

several other fruits, vinegar and sugar. It is a kind of chutney served mostly with roast duck, hence it is called Duce Sauce.

### DUCK'S FEET (HOONG-SHEW AAP-GERK)

Considered by some people the most delicious part of the duck.

- 10 pair duck's feet
- 4 large dried black mushrooms, (soaked and cleaned)
- 1/2 cup sliced water chestnuts
- 1 tbsp. soya sauce
- 1/2 cup sliced bamboo shoots
- 1 cup stock
- 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 2 tbsp. rice wine or sherry
- cornstarch binder

Clean the ducks feet then soak them in boiling water for 5 minutes. Remove and discard skin, chip off the claws, then pull all the bones cutting into each foot into two pieces. Saute' the feet for 5 minutes, than add the bamboo shoots, mushrooms and water chestnuts. Saute' the feet for 5 minutes more. Add the soya sauce, sugar and wine. Season with salt then add the stock. Simmer until the feet are tender. Thicken the broth with cornstarch binder.

### FOOTNOTE:

The duck's head is also used but I haven't been able to get an authentic recipe.

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**NEGRO HISTORY WEEK**--Lee Gates, a student at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and president of the campus' Black Scholars United, studies the craftsmanship of a carved bust of a Kenyan chieftain. The bust is part of a large exhibit on the history of the Black people being displayed during Negro History Week on the campus.

Other activities marking the observance have been a lecture by Black attorney Florynce Kennedy, a concert by the Zebula Dancers of Los Angeles and poetry reading by the Modern American Music and Arts Society.

A picnic Saturday open to all students featured food indigenous to the Black people.

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