



## DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

## Coal or gas, a scuttle still seems appropriate

The dated card from Grant had come telling me when he would arrive to give my free-standing gas stove its annual checkup.

My hearth had a number of items on display that would have to be removed for his work. I decided I could move all but two of them off of the hearth, the anvil and the scuttle of coal which he usually willingly did for me.

The filled coal scuttle is a metal bucket or pail of sorts with a sloped lip in front for pouring and an attached bail with which to carry the coal to keep a fire burning. Why did I need it there, you might ask, when my stove burned natural gas. One shouldn't ask because it brings up another story from memory.

When I was a young girl — see what I mean? — we lived on the hill in a house (chalet-style) built by my grandfather. A potbellied stove heated the two-story house centralized in the lower floor living room.

At one end of the room, a door opened out at the side of the house connecting it to a small woodshed and a little farther on a free-standing building that was used for dual purposes.

Early on, the shed held the milk-wagon where at the open front the horse could be backed into it and harnessed for delivering milk to town. In the back of the shed a load of coal was stored and accessible through the door at the rear by filling the pail/scuttle with the chunks of black coal and carried to the house via a sidewalk and side door to the house.

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## BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

## Patience pays off, in gardening as in life

Pottery and gardening are a lot alike, really. They are both practices which believe in the future. The whole of both consist of waiting at each stage for something to happen so the next stage can take place.

Believing in the future through all that snow has begun to pay off in little ways. On my daily walk I have noticed crocus blooming all over town. Several daffodils are now beginning to form buds. Spring is going to happen even though on the bleakest days of the snowed-in-ness we did not dare to dream of the spring.

The Chinese say that whoever plants a garden, plants happiness. I really am bonding with the Chinese. I have great respect for their culture, their food and their philosophies. They have succeeded in many things. I believe that their success is because everything they do is based on respect for others and respect for life in general. This of course doesn't refer to big government or big politics. I am talking about the individual citizen.

Respect for others extends to their respect and reverence for the environment. The Native Americans had the same reverence for all living things. I still think it is presumptuous to think that we can really own land.

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## Flavors From The Far East



E. Jason Wambsgans/Chicago Tribune-TNS

Pork and red chile kimchi stew, re-created from a favorite Korean restaurant, is built on the spicy and sweet/tart flavors of the pickled vegetable staple plus gochujang (red chile paste) and gochugaru (red chile flakes).

# KOREAN COOKING

By JeanMarie Brownson  
Chicago Tribune

Several basic Korean ingredients hold a place of honor on my condiment shelves. Kimchi (fermented cabbage or other vegetables), gochujang (fermented red Chile paste), gochugaru (ground red chile flakes) and doenjang (fermented bean paste) have transformed my everyday cooking.

These basic, yet totally distinctive, ingredients remind me of our embrace of the best pantry staples from around the world. Where would we be without Italy's olive oil, Parmesan and balsamic vinegar or France's Dijon mustard, truffles and walnut oil or China's soy sauce, dark sesame oil and Szechuan peppercorns? Or Mexico's chipotle chiles, tomatillos and cilantro and the Middle East's Aleppo pepper, spice blends and pomegranate vinegar? Back to bland I fear.

Like their international counterparts, these Korean staples have migrated beyond their home country into supermarkets and our kitchens around the world. And we are better cooks for it.

My love affair with Korean ingredients begins with kimchi-fermented vegetables with the banchan (side dishes) served at Korean barbecue restaurants. All manner of red chile and garlic fermented vegetables arrive in small bowls for nibbling between bites of grilled meat and white rice. Crunchy-soft cabbage is my favorite, but I also like kimchi-style cucumbers, daikon radishes, turnips, bean sprouts and bok choy.

When I'm in a Korean supermarket, such as H Mart, I love to watch the cooks don plastic gloves to toss mounds of cabbage with a red chile pickling brine before packing the mix into containers. There, I also find jars of radish and cucumber kimchis. The first bites are crisp and mild. A few days in my refrigerator changes the pickles into softer, bolder nibbles. Ditto for cabbage kimchis. I always set the containers on a paper towel in the refrigerator as these active pickles can bubble up a bit as they age.

Luckily, most large supermarkets everywhere stock bottled kimchi in the refrigerated produce section. These are usually made from tender napa cabbage with plenty of garlic and ginger, and are labeled mild or hot, depending on the amount of red chile. When I'm serving kimchi as a side to grilled steak or chicken, I choose the mild pickle. As an ingredient in fried rice or stews, I opt for the hot version for bold final dishes.

A jar of kimchi and a takeout container of cooked rice yield a full-flavored dish even the nonprofessional cooks in my house can easily conjure.

Kimchi packs a punch in soups and stews too. I add a spoonful or two to black bean soup, chicken soup and ordinary beef stew for a surprise blast of umami and spice. I'm convinced there's no better way to ward off a cold or warm up an evening than a quick bowl of the following recipe for pork and kimchi stew. I had my first bowlful at a Korean restaurant in a strip mall in Schaumburg, Ill. At home, I use boxed broth for speed and ease. I also make a vegetarian version filled with silken tofu and greens. An egg poached in the stew



E. Jason Wambsgans/Chicago Tribune-TNS

Veggie noodle and kimchi pancakes make a great brunch dish, or serve them as a nibble with beer or iced soju.

adds extra richness and protein.

Serve the stew with plenty of cooked medium-grain white rice to temper the spice. I like to use the Nishiki brand sold in the Asian section of large supermarkets in my rice cooker. Calrose rice works well too.

For slightly more involved kimchi combinations, we dream of pancakes we enjoyed this past fall in Portland, Ore. To fortify ourselves before walking the gardens at The Grotto, we tucked into a funky corner restaurant on Sandy Boulevard called the Cameo Cafe & Steak. Home of the 14-inch "half-acre" pancake, boasts its plastic-coated menu. We opted for a savory Korean pancake made with mung beans, vegetables and kimchi they call Sue Gee's Pindaetok. It arrives larger than the plate, about 1/2-inch thick, and colorful from shredded vegetables and golden crispy edges. Moist and not at all heavy, the mildly spiced and tangy pancake tastes even better with a sweet soy dipping sauce.

I've been tinkering with a recipe ever since. "Koreatown," a cookbook by Deuki Hong and Matt Rodbard (Clarkson Potter, 2016), says that most Korean restaurants rely on a Korean pancake mix (containing flour, baking powder, cornstarch and seasonings) as the base. I prefer to make my own mix from all-purpose flour, rice flour and salt. I do heed their sage advice to refrigerate the pancake batter before cooking.

Rice flour proves the key to a crispy, light textured batter. Bob's Red Mill makes a delicious stoneground white rice flour; it's available at large supermarkets and online. I use very cold water and an egg yolk for the wet ingredients. Bottled kimchi and vegetables likewise add moisture. Cutting the vegetables into thin shreds, or a julienne cut, allows them to cook very quickly. To save time, I employ those long strands of zucchini and carrot vegetable noodles sold in the produce section of Whole Foods and other markets. Butternut squash "noodles" are delicious here too.

Serve the kimchi pancakes for brunch topped with a pile of baby spinach and a side of sliced tomatoes. Or, serve them cut in wedges as a nibble with beer or iced soju.

Note: Most of the Korean ingredients used in these recipes are sold at large supermar-

kets, Korean markets and online. They are worth procuring for the best flavor. However, I do give more readily available substitutes that make delicious, albeit somewhat different tasting, dishes.

### KIMCHI FRIED RICE

Simply saute a thinly sliced onion (or leek) with a chopped red or yellow bell pepper in a generous amount of butter and vegetable oil in the largest nonstick skillet you have until tender. Then stir in half of a 14-ounce jar of hot (or mild) kimchi and 1 cup diced cooked meat, such as roast pork, ham, chicken or spicy sausage. Saute for a couple of minutes, add 3 cups cooked (white or brown) rice and stir to heat and mix well. If desired, stir in a couple of scrambled eggs (cook them in a separate skillet). Season everything with 2 tablespoons soy sauce, 1 tablespoon rice vinegar and 1 teaspoon sesame oil. Serve sprinkled with plenty of chopped cilantro and green onions. Pass the gochugaru (or crushed red pepper flakes) or gochujang ketchup (or sriracha in a pinch).

### PORK AND RED CHILE KIMCHI STEW

Prep: 20 minutes  
Cook: 45 minutes  
Makes: 2 to 3 main-course servings

I use boxed bone broth in my soups and stews these days when I have the choice versus boxed chicken broth. Most bone broths have a slightly meatier flavor and more velvety texture.

A more economical path to boxed broth is to employ the pressure cooker or the Instant Pot. I put 2 pounds raw chicken wings or pork bones into the cooker along with half a diced onion, 2 cloves garlic and a couple of pinches of black pepper and salt. Add water to the fill line in the pot. Cover and set to pressure cook for 1 hour.

Let the steam drop of its own accord, then strain the broth and refrigerate it in small containers for up to 1 week. Or freeze for up to several months.

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