



STAPLE SNACK. Owner Leung Kin-kung tastes chicken feet at his snack shop in Hong Kong. January 28 marked the start of the lunar Year of the Rooster and families in China reunited for festivities, fireworks, and food. While tradition calls for feasting on “auspicious” foods, many also munched on staple snacks like “phoenix claws,” the Chinese name for chicken feet. (AP Photo/Vincent Yu)

‘Phoenix claws’ grace menus welcoming the Year of the Rooster

By Kelvin Chan
The Associated Press

HONG KONG — January 28 marked the start of the lunar Year of the Rooster and families in China reunited for festivities, fireworks, and food. While tradition calls for feasting on “auspicious” foods, many also munched on staple snacks like “phoenix claws,” the Chinese name for chicken feet.

With reptilian looks and lowly status from scratching around farmyards and coops, humble chicken paws are considered a throwaway in the west, where farmers often grind them into feed for pets and livestock. But across much of Asia, where diners prefer eating meat on the bone, they’re considered a delicacy.

“Not only are they tasty, but it’s believed they have a lot of collagen so if you eat them it’s good for your skin and makes you look beautiful,” said Liza Chu, author of a guidebook to Hong Kong dim sum dishes including chicken feet.

At this time of year, Chinese like to eat foods considered lucky, like dumplings and fish. Chicken feet don’t actually have any special meaning for the Year of the Rooster, though that doesn’t mean it’s not a good excuse to eat them, Chu said.

“We all need some rooster energy. Roosters are energetic. They can be very aggressive. They are not shy,” said Chu. Those born in the Year of the Rooster are “very outgoing people.”

Chicken feet are of such culinary importance in China that they have even played a role in trade tensions between the U.S. and China, which imports poultry because of production shortfalls. In 2009, the Obama administration slapped tariffs on Chinese tires and Beijing retaliated by imposing taxes of up to 105 percent on U.S. chicken feet.

Two years ago, China banned poultry imports from the U.S. over bird flu, sending chicken-paw producers in other countries racing to fill the gap.

For the uninitiated, chicken feet have a chewy, fatty, and succulent texture, bordering on the gelatinous.

In Hong Kong, they’re served at dim sum teahouses with garlic, chili, and black bean sauce.

Or they can be paired with a beer while watching football matches, said Leung Kin-keung, who runs a chicken feet stall.

“I grew up eating chicken feet,” said Leung. “We were not wealthy,” so the family used every part of the chicken, he said.

In Manila, the Philippines, street vendors grill skewers of them over charcoal.

“They taste different from ordinary chicken parts. I like eating the bony parts,” said Jacklyn Sun. “Chicken feet are delicious to eat.”

Associated Press video journalists Josie Wong in Hong Kong and Joael Calupitan in Manila, the Philippines contributed to this report.

Silk, steam, and slogans: Inside a North Korean factory

By Wong Maye-E
The Associated Press

PYONGYANG, North Korea — As the morning light poured through large windows, women wearing olive-colored overalls, pink aprons, and headscarves stood at stations where silkworms were being boiled. Some used their bare hands to pull silk thread from the boilers and winced as the steam rose toward their faces. But the heat didn’t seem to slow them down.

The Kim Jong Suk Silk Mill, named after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s grandmother, is where 1,600 workers — mostly women — sort and process silkworms. The worms, from the countryside in South Pyongan province, ultimately produce silk thread that officials at the Pyongyang factory say is made into roughly 200 tons of silk a year.

Seen prominently on a red-and-white sign hanging above a main corridor was a propaganda slogan: “Let us step up the victorious advancement of socialism through self-development!” Lining the walkway were names of supervisors and workers that were leading teams, placed as a form of encouragement for the workers.

In his New Year’s address, leader Kim Jong Un called on the North Korean people to step up production



SILK, STEAM & SLOGANS. A North Korean woman sorts silkworm cocoons to be boiled later at the Kim Jong Suk Silk Mill in Pyongyang, North Korea. In his New Year’s address, leader Kim Jong Un called on the North Korean people to step up production in order to raise the nation’s standard of living, which is among the lowest in Asia. (AP Photo/Wong Maye-E)

in order to raise the nation’s standard of living, which is among the lowest in Asia. Kim himself visited the silk mill in early January.

The Associated Press also toured the factory in early January. Though the temperature outside was minus 6° Celsius (21° Fahrenheit), there was little heating in the high-ceilinged building. And though it was noisy — both from the machinery and from loudspeakers blasting propaganda music — no one seemed to be wearing ear plugs.

Groups of eight to 10 women stood

before heavy machinery along the processing line, sorting out silkworms as they were washed and later boiled. In another room, women examined sheets of unfinished silk with tweezers, looking for impurities as a glowing tabletop illuminated their faces.

The mill was proud to showcase its “sci-tech center,” where workers could take classes conducted via an intranet system. It also boasted a childcare facility where 200 children are enrolled while their mothers work at the factory.

"We were American citizens. We were incarcerated by our American government in American internment camps here in the United States. The term 'Japanese internment camp' is both grammatically and factually incorrect."

— George Takei

Actor and Camp Rohwer and Camp Tule Lake survivor



**PCC REMEMBERS
EXECUTIVE ORDER
9066**
JAPANESE-AMERICAN INTERNMENT

Tuesday, Feb. 21
2:00–4:00 pm

PCC Southeast Campus
Community Hall

pcc.edu/E09066





FIX-IT FAIR
HEALTHY FAMILIES, HEALTHY HOMES
¡Clases en inglés y español!

FREE

- Over 60 Exhibitors
- Lunch provided
- Hourly workshops
- On-site childcare
- Great giveaways
- Raffles

Saturday 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

NOV 19, 2016 — **Ron Russell Middle School** — 3955 SE 112th Ave
 JAN 28, 2017 — **George Middle School** — 10000 N Burr Ave
 FEB 25, 2017 — **Madison High School** — 2735 NE 82nd Ave

www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/fif | 503-823-4309
Presented by the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Read The AR – exactly as it’s printed here – online at <www.asianreporter.com>!