



MORE COMPETITION. Jackie Chan, left, and Chris Tucker, right, arrive at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party on February 26, 2017, in Beverly Hills, California. Chan says allowing more Hollywood movies into the Chinese market would pressure Chinese filmmakers to make better films. (Photo by Evan Agostini/Invision/AP)

Naan Pizza is a fun way to eat the flavors of India

By Elizabeth Karmel
The Associated Press

This naan pizza is a fun way to eat the flavors of India in America's favorite food. The popular chicken tikka masala is widely believed to have been created in England for the British palate and is actually the national dish. But it is so tasty that restaurant diners have demanded that the dish is made world-wide.

These days, naan — Indian flatbread — is available in nearly every grocery store. It can be plain or flavored, and even stuffed.

Naan used to be an occasional treat when I'd go out to eat at an Indian restaurant. It was hard not to fill up on naan before the meal arrived. But now that naan is as available as pita bread, you can enjoy it at home.

The small size and light and airy texture of store-bought naan makes it a shoe-in for a quick pre-made pizza crust. And because I wanted to keep the pizza in the spirit of India, I am topping the pizza with chicken tikka masala which is tailor-made for pizza as it is the sauce and toppings in one. The ever-popular dish is chock-full of chunks of chicken simmered in an aromatic, creamy, and slightly spicy tomato sauce full of onions, garlic, ginger, cumin, and turmeric.

This sauce is the perfect thing to brighten up a boneless, skinless chicken breast and will "dress" to impress grilled shrimp, pork, and countless vegetables. I used to think I could only have this exotic sauce in an Indian restaurant, but truth be



told, it is one of the easiest pan sauces to make.
Editor's note: Elizabeth Karmel

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Jackie Chan says Hollywood competition means better China films

By Louise Watt
The Associated Press

BEIJING — Jackie Chan says allowing more Hollywood movies into the Chinese market would pressure Chinese filmmakers to make better films.

China sets a quota on the number of foreign movies allowed to be shown in the country, trying to fend off a cinematic wave that could swamp local filmmakers and loosen the ruling Communist Party's grip on culture.

However, competition can be good, Chan said.

"It is this pressure that makes our filmmakers work harder and shoot better films," Chan told reporters at a news conference in Beijing. "If we had shot our own films behind closed doors without any competition, we wouldn't have had the growth in [the] box office we have today."

The Hong Kong action star is a member of the official advisory body to the national legislature, which met in the Chinese capital.

Negotiators from China and the U.S. are expected to reach a new agreement this year on how many foreign films to allow into China, now the world's second-biggest movie market after North America. An expanded quota would mean more competition for domestic films, which last year accounted for 58 percent of the total box office, or 26.7 billion yuan (\$3.8 billion).

In 2012, then-vice president Xi Jinping and then-U.S. vice president Joe Biden negotiated a five-year deal to allow 34 foreign films to be shown in Chinese cinemas each year on a revenue-sharing basis. State media reports have suggested that a new deal could see the quota increased by 10 films or more.

In addition to the quota, a handful of extra Hollywood movies were let in last year to try to boost a disappointing slowdown in box-office receipts.

Apart from expanding the quota, Hollywood executives hope to increase their share of ticket sales in China from the current 25 percent. They receive 40 percent of ticket revenues in other markets.

It's unclear how much effort President Donald Trump's administration will put into promoting Hollywood's interests in China. Trump has been criticized by various Hollywood stars and has fired off his own insults at others.

Philippines protests "Madam Secretary" portrayal of leader

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — The Philippine government has protested the depiction of a fictional leader of its country who makes a pass at the female U.S. Secretary of State in the CBS drama "Madam Secretary."

A video teaser of the episode showed the middle-aged Filipino character with a bloodied nose after being punched by the titular character, U.S. Secretary of State Elizabeth McCord, played by Tea Leoni.

The Philippine Embassy in Washington said it wrote to CBS to "strongly protest the highly negative depiction of a character purported to be the Philippine President" and called on the network to take necessary corrective actions.

It's the latest potential irritant between the United States and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who sharply criticized then-U.S. President Barack Obama for raising concerns over his deadly anti-drug crackdown and has called

his own country's foreign policy too dependent on the U.S.

The episode synopsis describes the "Philippines' unconventional new president" as exhibiting inappropriate behavior toward McCord.

"This highly negative portrayal of our Head of State not only casts doubt on the respectability of the Office of the Philippine President, but also denigrates the way our nation navigates foreign affairs," the Philippine Embassy said. "It also tarnishes the Philippines' longstanding advocacy for women's rights and gender equality."

While the Philippines has had two female presidents in its history, Duterte has been criticized for making crude and sexist remarks.

Duterte's spokesman, Ernesto Abella, said while it is clear the series is a work of fiction, "I think they are projecting something that they really would like to say about their own situation."

Beauty and the Beast shelved in Malaysia despite approval

By Eileen Ng
The Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Walt Disney has shelved the release of its new movie *Beauty and the Beast* in mainly Muslim Malaysia, even though film censors said it had been approved with a minor cut involving a "gay moment."

The studio said the film has not and will not be edited for release in Malaysia.

Screenings of the live-action re-telling of the animated classic were scheduled to begin in mid-March.

Film Censorship board chairman Abdul Halim Abdul Hamid said he did not know why the film was postponed, as it was approved by the board after a minor gay scene was axed. He said scenes promoting homosexuality were forbidden and that the film was given a P13 rating, which requires parental guidance for children under 13 years of age.

"We have approved it, but there is a minor cut

involving a gay moment. It is only one short scene, but it is inappropriate because many children will be watching this movie," Abdul Halim told The Associated Press.

The film's characters include manservant LeFou, who plays the sidekick to the story's villain Gaston, and, according to director Bill Condon, "is confused about his sexuality." Condon has described a brief scene as a "gay moment."

Russia approved the movie but banned children under 16 from watching it without the accompaniment of someone over 16.

Malaysia's censors in 2010 loosened decades of restrictions on sexual and religious content in movies, but still kept a tight leash on tiny bikinis, kisses, and passionate hugs. The new rules allowed depiction of gay characters, but only if they show repentance or are portrayed in a negative light. Sodomy, even if consensual, is punishable by up to 20 years in prison and whipping in Malaysia.

The staff at The Asian Reporter wish you and your family a safe and happy spring break!