



My Impression About Chinese Food

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Abstract

This personal narrative reflects the journey of a Bangladeshi student in China, detailing the initial challenges of adapting to Chinese cuisine. Upon arrival in Kunming, the author experienced an underwhelming introduction to local food, contrasting sharply with the cherished flavors of home-cooked Bangladeshi meals. However, a transformative dining experience with classmates led to a newfound appreciation for Chinese culinary diversity. This exploration revealed the rich variety of Chinese dishes, the cultural significance of communal dining, and the harmonious blend of ingredients that define the cuisine. Ultimately, the author discovers that food is a powerful connector of cultures and emotions, encapsulating the essence of the Chinese experience.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Chinese cuisine, cultural adaptation, communal dining, culinary diversity, personal narrative, food experience, student life, food appreciation, cultural exchange

Introduction

I am a Bangladeshi student in China. I came to China for my higher studies. I had Chinese food for the first time in Kunming after I got off the plane when I first came to China seven months ago. To capture a person's heart, you must first capture his stomach. This is how I felt the moment I set foot on Chinese soil. As a person who loves food, I can't help but worry about eating exotic food that doesn't belong to my tongue. I like the food of my motherland and have a biased view of the dishes. I have always loved my mother's home cooking and think they are the best in the world. The first time I was away from home, finding good food was my top priority.

Obviously, the beginning of every journey is difficult. My experience in Chinese restaurants left a lot to be desired. I often eat in canteens near the university. My first experience with Chinese food was not good. I felt that it didn't suit my taste. But something unexpected happened that aroused my interest in Chinese food. From avoidance to love. Chinese food is unique and delicious.



One day, my Chinese classmate took me to a Chinese restaurant near our university. It was a treat from our seniors, and it was indeed a feast of food, a bit like a potluck. When we walked into the restaurant, I saw the big round table with a few chairs placed around it. It looked like a place for an event or a family gathering. Then my classmate called the waiter to take the order. Since I was a freshman, I asked them to help me choose the dishes. One dish after another was served. One dish after another, until the table was full of dishes. This was the first time I saw such a meal, with more than ten dishes on the table. It was not a buffet, but it was indeed suitable for group dining. Since I eat slowly, I was very hesitant to try all the dishes. Moreover, based on my past experience of eating Chinese food, I thought I should only choose what I could eat. Finally, a classmate sitting next to me convinced me to try every dish. I didn't say much and tasted it bit by bit. From then on, my concept of Chinese food seemed to have completely changed. There was no dish I didn't like. Every dish was to my taste, and I forgot to slow down.

There is a Chinese proverb that goes, "Eat more vegetables, less meat." This is one thing I learned during my quest to find good food. Chinese cuisine is carefully prepared with leafy vegetables and spices, and that is the secret to its diversity. Chinese people love to eat together as a group because it is the best way to relieve the stress of daily work. The experience with my classmates opened my mind and began to explore more Chinese cuisine. As I visited city after city, I was amazed at the diversity of Chinese cuisine, from street food to local high-end restaurants and even to foreign restaurants with a Chinese flavor.

In general, Chinese cuisine is very creative and resourceful in its style. In my opinion, not all ingredients are wasted. They blend harmoniously together to produce great flavor. I guess it is a basic Confucian principle that the taste of any dish depends on the proper blend of all ingredients and condiments, which is perfectly reflected in "Chao fan", a Chinese fried rice dish that has gone from a simple dish to one of the most famous foods in and around college. You won't leave China without eating it. "Hot Pot" is another famous delicacy in Sichuan, where I live. It is undeniable that food is one of the main sources of our happiness, and it is indeed our craving for survival. Chinese food won my heart the moment it entered my stomach.



Conclusion

My journey as a Bangladeshi student in China has been profoundly shaped by my evolving relationship with Chinese cuisine. Initially met with hesitation and unfamiliarity, my experiences gradually transformed into a deep appreciation for the richness and diversity of Chinese food. Through communal dining with classmates and the exploration of various culinary styles across different cities, I learned that food is not just sustenance but a vital part of cultural identity and social connection. This journey has highlighted the importance of openness in cross-cultural experiences, revealing that embracing new flavors can foster understanding and joy. Ultimately, Chinese cuisine has not only captured my stomach but also my heart, enriching my life in ways I never anticipated.

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