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Tool of the Trade 創意廚具

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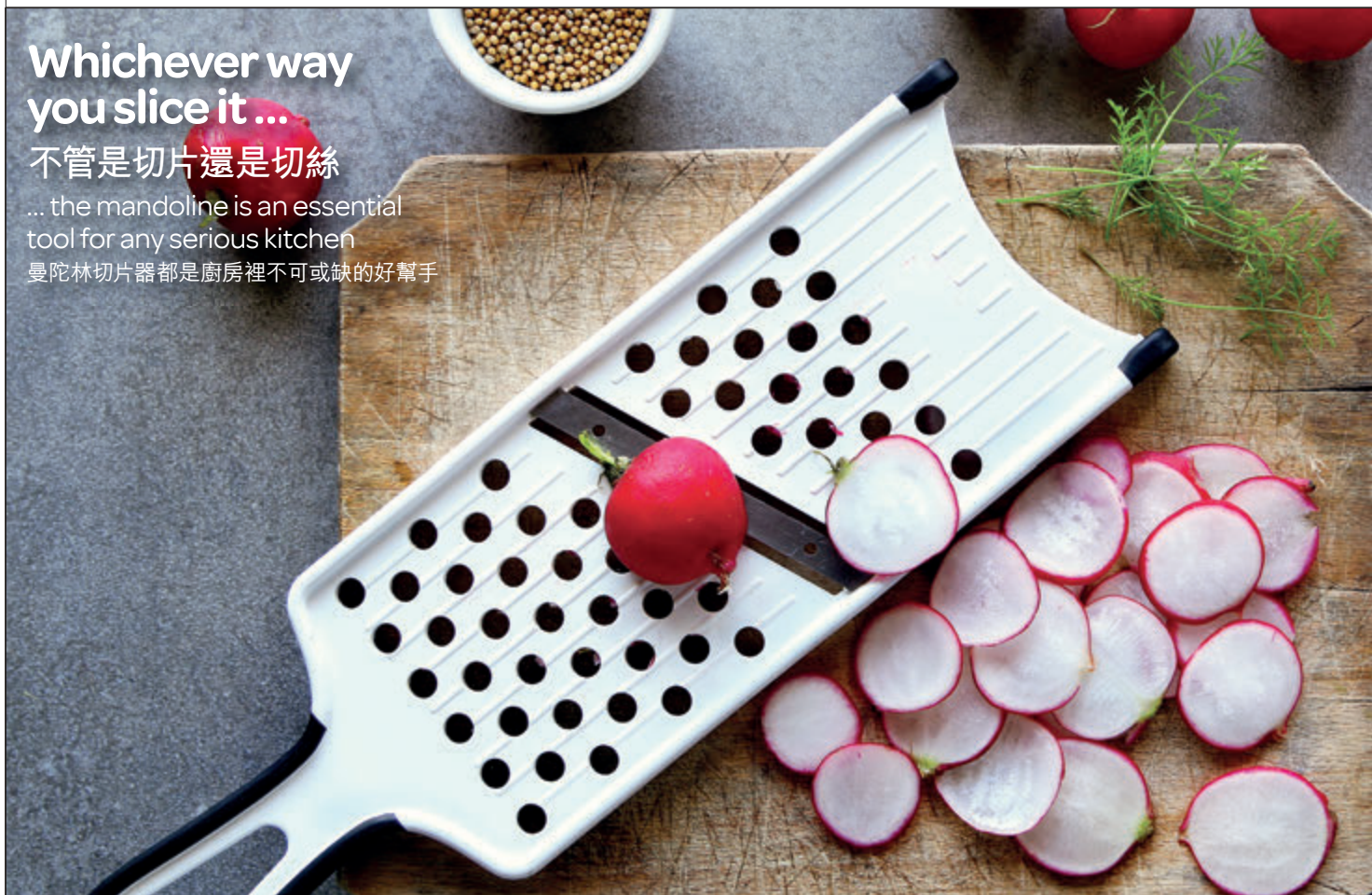
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Whichever way you slice it ...

不管是切片還是切絲

... the mandoline is an essential
tool for any serious kitchen

曼陀林切片器都是廚房裡不可或缺的好幫手



By Jon Wall

Named for the manner in which its manual operation resembles the plucking of the strings of the musical instrument that shares its name, the mandoline is a kitchen tool used for the rapid chopping of ingredients – usually vegetables, but also harder fruits – julienne style, in other words, into thin slices or matchstick-like pieces. Thus cut, the vegetables can be added to broths and stir-fries, or used as garnishes; thinly sliced potatoes can be layered on top of casseroles, baked with cream dauphinoise-style or even deep-fried as game chips (or crisps). Chopped apples and even mangoes and bananas can be added to vegetable or fruit salads, and unpeeled citrus fruit can also be julienned to decorate dishes and drinks.

Fairly recent in origin, the implement is thought to date back to the 18th century. According to

one theory, which may be fanciful in the extreme, it was invented by one Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, a French doctor and politician who in 1789 came up with the notion of a device to be used for “painless” human executions; later known as “Madame la Guillotine”, this gruesome killing machine became notorious during the French Reign of Terror and beyond.

At its simplest, the mandoline is inexpensive, hand-held and comprises a pair of parallel surfaces. The edge of one surface, which can be adjusted for height, is fitted with a sharp and often interchangeable blade, with different serrations offering a range of cutting widths and patterns. The vegetable or fruit to be sliced is slid along the surface of the base plate until it comes into contact with the blade.

Smaller and cheaper mandolines

are mostly made from plastic, while sturdier, professional-quality devices are likely to feature a greater proportion of stainless steel. Heavier-duty – and, indeed, the most practical – options have folding stands for greater stability and with one end angled higher than the other. A handguard is considered essential on these larger devices.

曼陀林切片器的名稱由來，源於其操作方式類似曼陀林的撥弦手法。這種廚房工具可以迅速地將食材（通常是蔬菜，或是質地較硬的水果）切片或切絲。切成片狀或絲狀的蔬菜可以加入高湯一起拌炒，或當作裝飾。切成薄片的薯仔可以作為法式烤鍋料理的最上面一層，或用來烤薯仔奶油千層批，又或是炸薯片。蘋果、芒果和香蕉都可以切片用來做沙律，將柑橘類的果皮切絲，則可以用來裝飾菜餚和飲品。

曼陀林切片器於18世紀面世。根據某

個比較富想像力的說法，它是由法國人 Joseph-Ignace Guillotin 所發明。這位法國醫生兼政治家在1789年忽發奇想，發明了一種「無痛」行刑工具，那就是在法國恐怖統治時期惡名昭彰，以及後來人所共知的「斷頭台」，也是曼陀林切片器的前身。

曼陀林切片器設計簡約，價格低廉，以手動操作，由兩個並列的平面組成，而其中可以調校高度的一面會鑲有鋒利的刀片。刀片通常可以更換，並配備不同大小和形狀的鋸齒，可以切出各種厚度和圖案。使用時，將蔬菜或水果置於平面上，然後沿著平面來回滑過刀片即可。

小型而便宜的曼陀林切片器多半以塑膠製造，較為堅固而專業的則會使用較多不鏽鋼材質。比較耐用也最實用的款式，通常附設折疊支架，或是其中一端高於另一端，藉此提高穩定度。此外，大部分曼陀林切片器都配備具有保護作用的把手。