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## Eat Well, Live Long 長壽食譜

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Every cuisine has its benefits, but what do the societies that live the longest eat? We talk to chefs from the world's Blue Zones and countries with the highest life expectancy to find out. 所有菜式都有其好處，但長壽社會的人通常吃什麼？我們訪問了多位廚師，他們均任職於以居民長壽見稱的藍區和國家，嘗試找出箇中秘訣。 **By Rachel Duffell**

# 長壽食譜

# Eat well, live long

As much as 90 percent of how long we live is determined by our lifestyle, with just 10 percent dictated by our genes. While cuisine and culinary traditions are not the only elements of a person's lifestyle that contribute to longevity, they do have a significant role to play.

Explorer, journalist and National Geographic Fellow Dan Buettner identified the five places in the world where people live the longest, healthiest lives. Termed Blue Zones, they are Okinawa, Japan; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Loma Linda, California, USA; Sardinia, Italy; and Ikaria, Greece. Buettner looked at inhabitants' lifestyles, including diet, and analysed how they contribute to longevity.

Of diet, he identified various characteristics that the cuisines share. They are predominantly plant-based, carbohydrate-heavy and include a wealth of beans and nuts. Some alcohol is consumed, but liquid intake is mainly water or tea. Buettner also found that physical activity is part of daily lives, there are moments for reflection and people enjoy a sense of purpose and of community, all of which are key contributing factors to longevity in addition to diet.

While some of these Blue Zones also top the longevity lists – Japan and Italy feature in the top 10 for longevity according to UNDP data from 2018 – another region that's home to some of the world's longest-living people is Hong Kong, where Cantonese food is consumed and which came in first place in the UNDP 2018 list.

So, what is it about these cuisines, from distinctive ingredients and dishes to techniques and traditions, that contribute to the health and happiness of the people who consume them? We asked food and beverage professionals from some of the places where people live the longest.

人的壽命有多長，九成是由我們的生活方式決定，基因的影響只佔一成。雖然菜式和飲食傳統不是唯一會影響壽命長短的生活方式，但卻在當中扮演舉足輕重的角色。

探險家、記者兼國家地理學人Dan Buettner找出五個居民最長壽和健康的地方，分別為日本的沖繩、哥斯達黎加的尼科亞、美國加州的羅馬琳達、意大利的薩丁尼亞島和希臘的伊卡利亞島，並將這些地方稱為藍區。Buettner研究過當地居民的生活方式如日常飲食等，分析他們的長壽原因。

在飲食方面，他發現這些地方的菜式擁有多個共通點，譬如多菜少肉及含有大量碳水化合物、豆和果仁。居民也會喝點酒，但主要喝水和茶。Buettner也發現，他們日常生活中有適當的身體活動，有反思的時刻，有明確的目標和團體意識等，這些均是飲食以外的長壽因素。

根據2018年聯合國開發計劃署的數據顯示，高踞長壽榜的除了有部分藍區——當中日本和意大利均躋身全球十大長壽國家之列，飲食以粵菜為主的香港更榮登榜首。

我們訪問了這些以長壽見稱的地方的餐飲業專家，根據特別食材、菜式，以至烹調技巧和傳統等因素，分析這些地方的飲食為什麼能讓人身體健康、心境愉快？





## Okinawa, Japan

Japanese cuisine is often considered among the world's healthiest, but it's Okinawan cuisine specifically that's most often highlighted for its status as a Blue Zone and its low rates of cancer and cardiovascular disease. The prefecture of Okinawa comprises 161 islands located in the East China Sea between Taiwan and Japan's mainland, and is home to Okinawan or Ryukyuan cuisine.

Kiyoko Yamashiro runs Garamanjaku restaurant in Okinawa, which serves Ryukyu longevity cuisine. She believes that the reason the cuisine is so healthy is that it uses nutritious vegetables and medicinal herbs in its cooking that not only cure but help to prevent disease.

Tomoaki Goeku, whose company Taste of Okinawa offers cooking classes in Okinawa, concurs. "Okinawan people have said 'food is medicine' for a long time," he says. "People eat local ingredients and take vitamins, minerals and protein in their daily dishes, which contributes to longevity."

Okinawan cuisine incorporates a wide range of island vegetables, known as shima yasai, particularly sweet potatoes and bitter melon, as well as mugwort, turmeric and other medicinal herbs. Tofu is a popular protein.

Typical dishes, which a culinary experience with Taste of Okinawa introduces, include goya champuru, a stir-fried dish made with tofu and bitter melon; and mozuku-su in which the local seaweed mozuku, considered a superfood, is marinated in a vinegar sauce.

Meanwhile, at Garamanjaku, Yamashiro serves a Garamanjaku Detox set, which is a medicinal mix of fresh vegetables, wild plants and herbs, and is based on a traditional recipe from the Ryukyu Dynasty. "It uses plenty of Okinawa's native vegetables and wildflowers, and is made with plant-only ingredients," she says. "Due to the influence of coral reefs, Okinawa's soil is rich in nutrients, and vegetables and medicinal herbs are rich in nutrients, too."

**This page: An Okinawan Ryukyu Dynasty longevity spread, using vegetables and medicinal herbs, at Garamanjaku restaurant.**

**Opposite page: Kiyoko Yamashiro's Garamanjaku restaurant**

**本頁: Garamanjaku 餐廳由蔬菜和藥草做成的沖繩 Ryukyu Dynasty 長壽餐**

**對頁: 山城清子的 Garamanjaku 餐廳**

"Vegetables produced in Okinawa are exposed to strong ultraviolet rays, which is said to have a big effect on oxidation. Since its soil is also mixed with seawater due to frequent typhoons, the vegetables are also rich in minerals," adds Mitsuhiro Wada, ambassador & consul-general at the Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong.

In Okinawa, when meat is consumed, it's usually pork, which is cooked traditionally: it's first boiled to remove unnecessary fat and then simmered with soy sauce. Alternatively, it can be steamed with Okinawa's traditional sake Awamori. Both methods negate the need for oil. Alternative cooking methods include using bonito stock, an umami-rich broth that means less or no salt is required. Bonito stock is used across Japan, but Okinawa boasts the highest consumption of bonito flakes.

How people eat in Okinawa also contributes to longevity, with different generations gathering together to share food and drinks. Community ties are strong and tea is drunk twice a day. "Those life customs might reduce people's stress, which might contribute to life expectancy," says Goeku. "Also, it's not a concept specific to Okinawa, but in Japan, hara hachibu is part of our culture. It means you should stop eating when your stomach is 80 percent full in order to maintain your health."

How can other cuisines learn from Okinawa? Yamashiro extols the virtues of using local vegetables native to an area. "The use of longevity foods that are appropriate to the country or region rather than modern nutritional theory" are, she says, the ones that should be used. "Choose the right material for your body, regardless of trends and popularity. For example, seaweed is generally said to be indigestible to Westerners, even though it's a healthy food in Japan. Healthy foods vary from country to country and region to region."

Ultimately, she adds, "Okinawan cuisine gives me everything my body needs and lets me feel the wisdom of our ancestors and our roots as Ryukyuan. It communicates a culture of appreciation for food and life."



## 日本沖繩

日本菜向來被譽為是全球最健康的料理，沖繩菜又尤甚，能夠躋身藍區，以及低比率的癌症患者和心血管病患，就是最好的證明。沖繩縣位於台灣和日本大陸之間的東海，由161個大小島嶼組成，飲食以沖繩或琉球料理為主。

山城清子在沖繩經營的Garamanjaku餐廳專門供應讓人長壽的琉球菜式，她認為以營養豐富的蔬菜和藥草烹調佳餚就是琉球菜式健康的原因，這些食材不僅能幫助病者加速康復，更可預防疾病。

在沖繩開辦Taste of Okinawa公司並提供烹飪班的護得久朝晃也有同感，他說：「沖繩人長久以來都說『食物就是藥物』，居民吃本地食材，從日常飲食中吸收維他命、礦物質和蛋白質等對長壽有益的東西。」

沖繩菜式喜歡採用各種各樣的島上野菜如番薯、苦瓜等，另外亦有艾蒿、薑黃和其他藥草。豆腐則是受歡迎的蛋白質來源。

Taste of Okinawa的烹飪班教授的經典菜式包括有炒苦瓜豆腐，以及用有超級食物之譽的當地海藻海葡萄做的醋泡菜式。

Garamanjaku餐廳的山城女士則為客人準備了Garamanjaku排毒套餐，以新鮮蔬菜、野生植物和藥草等遵照琉球王朝時期的傳統食譜炮製。她說：「這份套餐的菜式採用許多沖繩本土的蔬菜和野生鮮花烹調，沒有任何肉類。沖繩的土壤受到珊瑚礁的影響，營養非常豐富，以至蔬菜和藥草也含有豐富的營養。」

日本駐港大使兼總領事和田充廣解釋：「沖繩出產的蔬菜受到強烈的紫外光照射，而紫外光擁有強大的氧化作用。另外，由於颱風頻繁的關係，島上的泥土會混有海水，出產的蔬果因此含豐富物質。」

在沖繩，肉類以豬肉為主，並以傳統方法烹調：先用滾水燙走多餘的脂肪，然後浸泡在豉油裡，或是用沖繩傳統清酒泡盛清蒸，不用食油烹調。另外，沖繩人亦會用鮮美的鰹魚高湯煮豬肉，以減少用鹽甚至完全不用鹽；鰹魚高湯通行日本各地，但沖繩使用的鰹魚片數量卻是全國之冠。

沖繩人喜歡幾代同堂一起享用美酒佳餚，這樣的用餐方法也是他們的長壽秘訣之一。每天喝兩杯茶的習慣跟緊密的團體關係一樣，都是當地居民的長壽秘訣。護得久表示：「這些生活習慣或許可以減輕人們的壓力，對長壽或許有幫助。此外，沖繩以至日本全國都有『腹八分目』的文化，意思是，吃東西時只吃八分飽對身體健康有好處。」

那其他地方的菜式可以從沖繩料理那裡學到什麼？山城女士推崇採用本土食材的美德。她認為吃用本土食材才是關鍵：「比起遵從現代營養學，吃用適合本國或所在地區的長壽食物更恰當。身體會自己選擇合適的食材，不要跟隨坊間的飲食趨勢和潮流。舉例說，海藻在日本是健康食物，但對西方人來說卻是不易消化。健康食物會因國家和地區而異。」

說到底，「沖繩料理給我身體所需的一切，讓我感受到祖先的智慧及琉球的根源，它反映了我們珍惜食物和感恩生活的文化。」她補充道。







Sardinia ... has managed to preserve a lot of its traditions and old-fashioned methods of production

薩丁尼亞……保存了許多傳統和舊式的生產方法

## Sardinia, Italy

The benefits of the Mediterranean diet – to which Italian cuisine adheres – have long been extolled, with its lean protein, olive oil, and abundance of fresh fruit and vegetables. Sardinia, an island off the west coast of Italy, follows the principles of this diet and, identified as one of the planet's Blue Zones, is home to a number of centenarians.

Sardinian cuisine could be considered the ultimate version of Italian food. Letitia Clark, chef and author of *Bitter Honey: Recipes and Stories from Sardinia*, is certainly convinced of this.

## Duffell: Eat Well, Live Long ????



"Sardinia is quite isolated and cut off from mainland Italy, and because of this it has managed to preserve a lot of its traditions and old-fashioned methods of production," Clark says. There's little industrialised farming and instead the focus is on small-scale production, with many of the things that its inhabitants eat made by hand using traditional methods. "There's that preservation of the old ways of doing things. There's a real authenticity and a focus on quality of ingredients."

The Sardinian diet is rich in vegetables, but the island is also home to at least 120 local varieties of beans. "Beans and other legumes, especially favas and chickpeas, are historically a mainstay of Sardinian food," says Clemente Contestabile, consul general of Italy in Hong Kong.

There's also Sardinia's renowned red wine, cannonau, which contains three times the level of polyphenols, which are linked to better cardiovascular health, compared to other red wines. And of course, heart-healthy olive oil is the fat of choice, used for cooking, dressing and seasoning.

More meat and animal products feature in Sardinian food than other Blue Zone cuisines, though it's goat and sheep's milk that are most popular, particularly for making cheese, and these have a higher nutritional value and are more easily digested compared to cow's milk. Much of the cheese that these are made into is also made naturally by small-scale producers.

"I think it's the way food is produced, without additives and without GM," says Clark. "That means you have a healthy diet. You can still eat a lot of animal fats, cheeses and salamis, but the fact that everything is made without chemical additions makes a contribution."

Sardinians are also perfectly happy to place pulses at the centre of a meal – something other cuisines could consider. "A bowl of lentils that's been well seasoned or braised with different vegetables can be a main meal; it doesn't have to be a side dish. That's one thing that I think is really good about Italian food," says Clark.

Sardinian cooking is simple, which fits with the relaxed pace of life on the island. And it's a simplicity common to many of the cuisines eaten by the world's oldest people.

Take the Sardinian way of preparing broth. "It's one of the things that I've enjoyed most about the cooking here: poaching meat in water with aromatics and vegetables," says Clark, "so you get a really aromatic broth. It's a very economical way of cooking. You eat the meat as one dish, the veg as another dish, and you use the broth in three or four different dishes – in a risotto, or in a minestra [pasta cooked in broth]. I really like that way of stretching meat."

"There's an expression in Sardinian dialect: *sa cucina minore no timet su fuste* – simple cuisine makes the home great," says Contestabile. "Whole grains, seasonal vegetables and very little animal proteins. The best recipes are rustic, hearty and straightforward in their preparation."

## 意大利薩丁尼亞島

意大利料理所屬的地中海飲食文化，一直以少肉、橄欖油和大量新鮮蔬果烹調美食為人著稱。遠離意大利西岸的地中海小島薩丁尼亞也遵從這個飲食原則，這個被稱為藍區的小島住了多位百歲老人。

薩丁尼亞菜式可以被視為最正宗的意大利料理，著有《Bitter Honey: Recipes and Stories from Sardinia》的大廚Letitia Clark深有同感。

她解釋：「薩丁尼亞遠離意大利大陸，遺世獨立，因此許多傳統和舊式的生產方法都得以保存下來。」這裡的農業並沒有大規模工業化，以小規模的生產為主，因此居民食用的東西許多都是以傳統方法人手製作。「它保留了昔日的做事方法，正宗，並且注重食材的品質。」

薩丁尼亞的飲食裡含有大量蔬菜，島上亦種有至少120種豆類。意大利駐港總領事Clemente Contestabile表示：「豆和其他莢果，特別是蠶豆和雞豆一直以來都是薩丁尼亞菜的支柱。」

另外，小島也以紅酒cannonau聞名，其多酚水平是其他紅酒的三倍，而多酚對心血管健康有益。當然，薩丁尼亞料理的食油選擇也是對心臟健康有益的橄欖油，烹調菜式、做沙律醬和調味一律用橄欖油。

比起其他藍區的飲食習慣，薩丁尼亞人食用的肉類和動物製品雖然比較多，但主要是山羊和綿羊奶製品，特別是用羊奶做的芝士。羊奶不僅營養價值比牛奶高，也更容易消化，而這些芝士大部分都是以天然方法少量生產。

Clark表示：「我認為食物就該這樣製造：食物沒有添加劑和沒經過基因改造，就是健康的飲食。你仍然可以吃肉類、芝士和莎樂美腸，但重點是不能添加化學物質。」

薩丁尼亞人喜歡以豆類為主食，這方面其他地方的人可以參考一下。「一碗調味恰到好處或跟不同蔬菜一起燉煮的小扁豆可作為主食，不必是配菜。我覺得這是意大利菜的優點之一。」Clark續道。

薩丁尼亞菜的烹調方法很簡單，很符合島上輕鬆的生活步調。世上最老的人所吃的許多菜式都是以簡單見稱。

Clark解釋，以薩丁尼亞煮高湯的方法為例，「這是在這裡最喜歡做的菜式之一：將肉跟香料和蔬菜一起放進水裡焗煮，可以熬出香氣撲鼻的高湯。這是非常經濟實惠的烹調方法，肉可以當一道菜，蔬菜又是另一道菜，然後高湯可以用來煮三、四道菜式，如意大利飯和湯意粉。我很喜歡這樣善用肉類的烹調方法。」

Contestabile補充：「薩丁尼亞方言裡有句俗語：簡單的菜式讓家庭生活更如意。全穀物、當季蔬菜加上少許肉類便足夠，最好的食譜都是樸實無華和充滿熱誠的。」

Clockwise from below: Pane frattau; bream with baked potatoes; Letitia Clark at work in the kitchen

下圖起順時針方向：由牧羊人麵包做的 Pane frattau；燻薯仔鯛魚；在廚房裡炮製美食的Letitia Clark





## Ikaria, Greece

Greece's cuisine conforms to the healthy Mediterranean diet, but it's only the remote island of Ikaria that's been identified as a Blue Zone, sharing both its isolation and renown for the longevity of its residents with the island of Sardinia.

Greek chef, cookbook author and culinary school owner Diane Kochilas has spent summers on the island of Ikaria since she was a girl. "Everything we ate was from people's gardens, an experience about as far as possible from having grown up eating the weekly food shopping from our neighbourhood supermarket in Queens," says Kochilas, who was brought up in New York.

Yet she says that no one really thought of Ikaria and the diet of its inhabitants until it was discovered to be a Blue Zone. "In Ikaria, isolation and poverty dictated what people ate more than any other single factor. It was never historically important. There are no natural ports. People learned to live with very little and to be joyous despite that."

Inhabitants lived mainly on fish, and people kept gardens. She identifies a few standouts in the local diet – taro root and sweet potatoes, as well as corn, greens and wild mushrooms, with kid as the prevailing meat. Attributes of the Mediterranean diet also feature, with olive oil, lots of greens, and herbs including oregano, pennyroyal, savory and wild fennel.

"The cooking is simple," says Kochilas. "Lots of vegetable and legume one-pot stews and casseroles." Local specialities include soufiko, a summer-vegetable medley similar to ratatouille, and mageirio, a green-bean, potato and corn casserole, not dissimilar to succotash. Many dishes are plant-based or plant-forward. Wild mushrooms are popular, particularly in winter. Figs, grapes, local apples and pears feature, alongside cherries and plums.

"These are things people cherish in season, as well as delicacies like wild fiddlehead ferns and wild asparagus. Searching for many of these foods in the wild provides exercise, too," says Kochilas of another contributing factor to the longevity of the island's inhabitants. "One habit that's still a living tradition is the extensive consumption of herbal teas, mostly herbs one picks and dries at home. It's still the folk medicine and people know which herb to boil for specific ailments. These are diuretic, too, so they contribute to the relative lack of hypertension among older Ikarians," says Kochilas. Then there's strong – but watered-down – wine, consumed in moderation.

Many of the positive attributes of Ikarian cuisine can easily be adapted to other cuisines. "Don't eat processed food; grow as much of your own food as possible, even using hip new techniques like hanging gardens and indoor planting," says Kochilas. "Eat food that's in season and local as much as possible. For every meal where meat is the main course, make the next 10 plant-based. Learn to cook simple vegetable dishes as main courses."

She has plenty to say in praise of Ikarian cuisine. "I love everything that comes straight from the garden on to the plate. Warm summer tomatoes. Sea salt we harvest ourselves. Periwinkles and sea urchins scraped off rocks in the sea. Dozens of different greens and herbs in the wild that create complex but subtle flavours in savoury pies and stews. The honey." And that's just for starters ... Fortunately, many of Ikaria's inhabitants have a century or more to discover and enjoy the fruits of their island.



Clockwise from below: Diana Kochilas (right) at her cookery school; Ikara-style longevity pie of greens and filo pastry; Kochilas' Greek cook book  
 下圖起順時針方向：在自己的烹飪學校裡教學的Diana Kochilas (右)；伊卡利亞的長壽蔬果酥皮批；Kochilas的希臘菜食譜

## 希臘伊卡利亞島

希臘菜也遵從健康的地中海飲食習慣，但只有偏遠的小島——伊卡利亞島才被稱為藍區。伊卡利亞島跟薩丁尼亞一樣，都是位置偏遠、遺世獨立的小島，居民亦同樣長壽。

著有烹飪書及開設烹飪學校的希臘廚師Diane Kochilas，自童年時代開始曾多次到伊卡利亞島度假。在紐約市長大的Kochilas表示：「我們在島上吃的所有東西都出自某人的菜園，跟從小到大一直從皇后區住家附近的超市購買食物的經驗相比，簡直南轅北轍。」

不過，她說在伊卡利亞島被稱為藍區之前，沒人關心伊卡利亞島及島上居民的飲食習慣。「在伊卡利亞島，窮鄉僻壤的先天地條件對島上的食物影響最深。這個地方在歷史上從來沒佔一席之地，島上沒有天然港口，居民學會以有限的資源過活，並活得輕鬆愉快。」

島民主要吃用魚類，並且擁有自己的菜園。她指出當地飲食中一些比較獨特的食物，包括有芋頭、番薯、粟米、綠葉蔬菜和野生菇菌，肉類則以小山羊肉為主。這裡也可以找到地中海飲食的特色，譬如使用橄欖油、大量蔬菜，以及牛至、薄荷、香薄荷和野生茴香等香草。

Kochilas表示：「這裡的烹調方法很簡單，就是將大量蔬菜和豆放在一鍋裡燜燉。」本土特色菜式包括有夏天常見的燜燉蔬菜soufiko，以及由綠豆、薯仔和粟米煮成的燉鍋mageirio等。當地的菜式許多都以植物為主，包括非常受歡迎的野生菇菌（尤其是冬天），還有無花果、葡萄、本地蘋果和梨子，以及車厘子和布林等。

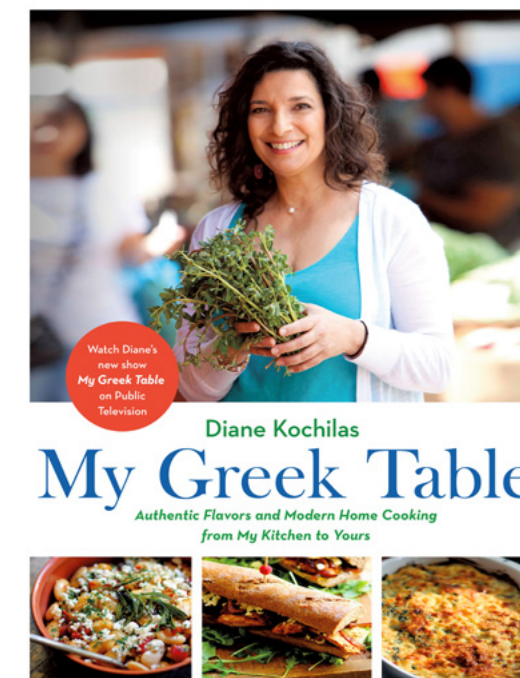
☞ The cooking is simple. Lots of vegetable and legume one-pot stews and casseroles

這裡的烹調方法很簡單，  
 就是將大量蔬菜和豆放在一鍋裡燜燉 ☞

「島上居民喜歡這些當季食材，也喜歡嫩蕨菜和野生蘆筍等美食——在野外找尋這些食物也是不錯的運動。」Kochilas認為最後一點也是島民長壽的原因之一。她又說：「大量飲用香草茶是島上另一個至今仍然流行的傳統習慣，島民通常會親自採摘這些香草並自行在家裡製乾。香草茶仍然是島民的民間藥物，他們知道哪種草藥針對哪種症狀。這些有利尿作用，可舒緩年老居民的高血壓問題。」除此之外，當地人也會有節制地飲用兌水的烈酒。

伊卡利亞島料理的好處可以輕鬆地應用在其他菜式，Kochilas解釋：「不吃加工過的食物，盡量自己種植農產，甚至可以用最新的懸吊菜園和室內種植方法等。盡可能吃當季食物和本地出產的東西。每吃一餐以肉類為主菜的膳食後，接下的十餐就要以蔬果為主。學習烹調簡單的蔬果菜式作為主菜。」

她對伊卡利亞島菜式讚不絕口，「我喜歡一切用直接來自菜園出產的食材烹調的東西。夏天溫暖的番茄、自製的海鹽、海邊石頭上刮下來的玉黍螺和海膽，為各種鹹批和燉肉增添複雜但微妙的味道的數十種野生綠葉蔬菜和香草，還有蜜糖，都喜歡。」好處多得不能盡錄……幸好，許多伊卡利亞島居民都長命百歲，有很長的時間可以慢慢發掘和享用島上的美食。





## Hong Kong, China

Hong Kong may not be a Blue Zone, but it often features at the top of longevity lists, and diet plays an important role in that. Cantonese cuisine is consumed in Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong province in mainland China, and has much in common with the cuisines of some of the Blue Zones.

“The emphasis of Cantonese cuisine is on the freshness and flavours of the ingredients, and less seasoning is usually used during cooking,” says chef Angelo Wong of Yi at City of Dreams Macau, who’s also a graduate of the Master Chef Course in Chinese Cuisine of the Chinese Culinary Institute (CCI), highlighting the simplicity of the cuisine.

“The most important aspect of Cantonese cuisine is to taste and keep the original flavours of the ingredients in a dish. Seasonality is also important; the chef will pick the most seasonal ingredients for his creations,” adds Daniel Cheung Long-Yin, executive Chinese chef at Shang Palace in the Kowloon Shangri-La, Hong Kong, another CCI Master Chef graduate.

Cantonese cuisine features lightly cooked, seasonal ingredients. Given the proximity of the places where it’s consumed to the coast, seafood dominates in terms of protein, and is usually cooked using techniques that require little oil and light seasoning – though tofu is also popular, as in Okinawan cuisine.

“Steaming, for example, keeps all the flavour in the same dish. It’s rare for Cantonese cuisine to have strong flavour – hence it’s relatively light and healthy,” says Cheung.

“Cooking relies on the control of the flame temperature to bring out the quality and freshness of the ingredients,” adds Wong.

Instead of seasoning, some of the key healthy ingredients that add flavour to Cantonese dishes include fresh ginger, spring onions, garlic and leeks. “They play a very important role, not only enhancing the taste of the dishes, but also bringing positive effects to the body,” says Cheung, who adds that ginger can relieve colds and abdominal pain; garlic can help to lower blood sugar; spring onions can prevent cardiovascular, digestive and respiratory disease, and improve immune function; and leek, which is rich in allium and fibre, can help reduce bad cholesterol.

Herbal and tonic soups are also key to Cantonese cuisine, blending seasonal ingredients with foods known for their curative effects. “Spring is good for soups that benefit the spleen and liver and remove toxins inside our body; summer is the time to drink soups that can help cool down the body and get rid of dampness; autumn is the season to enhance lung function and nourish the body; winter is to care for the kidney and liver, and to balance the moisture of the body,” says Wong.

Consuming Cantonese cuisine is often a communal affair, with various generations gathering around large tables to share food. Yum cha, in particular, brings people together to “drink tea” – and usually to eat dim sum – a practice that can contribute to longevity for the sense of belonging that it creates, but also because tea – particularly Pu’er – has been shown to lower bad cholesterol, help with digestion and improve gut health.

Cantonese cuisine focuses on ingredients that benefit the body, which are lightly cooked to retain both their nutrients and flavour. As the Chinese proverb goes, “He that takes medicine and neglects diet wastes the skills of the physician.” 🍵



This page, from right: Chef Angelo Wong; fried tile fish with egg whites and crab coral  
本頁右圖起：大廚黃贊奇；  
蛋白紅蟹炒馬頭魚



This page, from left: Sautéed Angus beef and leek with gravy; chef Daniel Cheung Long-Yin

本頁左圖起：韭蔥肉汁嫩煎安格斯牛肉；大廚張浪然



### 中國香港

香港雖然不是藍區，但卻是長壽榜的常客，飲食習慣應記一功。在香港、澳門和廣東省最受歡迎的粵菜，跟部分藍區的料理有許多共通之處。

畢業於中華廚藝學院大師級中廚師課程、現時於澳門新濠天地的天頤餐廳任職總廚的黃贊奇指出：「粵菜強調食材新鮮和原味，烹調時少用調味料。」特別強調粵菜的簡單。

同樣畢業於中華廚藝學院大師級中廚師課程、現時任職香港九龍香格里拉大酒店香宮行政總廚的張浪然補充：「粵菜的最大特色在於保留食材的原味，強調不時不吃，廚師傾向選用當季食材。」

粵菜喜歡採用當季食材烹調，不會煮得過熟。由於地理位置靠海，海鮮是主要的蛋白質來源，並且通常採用少油的烹調方法，調味偏向清淡。跟沖繩料理一樣，豆腐在粵菜中也很受歡迎。

張浪然指：「舉例說，蒸煮可以保留一道菜式裡所有食材的味道。粵菜甚少使用濃烈的調味料，偏向清淡和健康。」

黃贊奇亦補充：「粵菜烹調講究火候，控制火的溫度以突顯食材的品質和新鮮。」

粵菜喜歡以新鮮健康的食材如薑、蔥、蒜和非蔥等代替調味料，為菜式加添風味。「它們扮演非常重要的角色，不僅可提升菜式的味道，也有益身體。」張浪然指出，薑可以驅寒和舒緩肚痛，蒜能夠降低血糖，蔥可預防心血管、消化和呼吸道疾病及提升免疫力，韭蔥則含有豐富的纖維，可降低壞的膽固醇。

Seasonality is important; the chef will pick the most seasonal ingredients  
強調不時不吃，廚師傾向選用當季食材

以當季食材和富療效的食物熬成的藥膳湯也是粵菜的重要菜式，黃贊奇解釋：「春天適合飲用健脾益肝及有排毒功能的湯水，夏天宜飲用清熱祛濕的，秋天要強肺進補，冬天則需要補肝腎和滋潤身體。」

享用粵菜許多時候是一種團體活動，適合幾代同堂或一班朋友圍著圓桌分享美食。飲茶吃點心特別適合親友歡聚的場合，當中體會到的親密感覺當然也對長壽有所貢獻，但更重要是喝茶，尤其是普洱茶，因為茶可以降低壞的膽固醇、促進消化和改善內臟健康。

粵菜強調食材對身體的益處，因此不會煮得太熟，以保留其營養和味道。正如諺語有云：「吃藥不忌口，枉費醫生手。」 🍵