

The
RECIPE BOOK
— OF SOUTHERN SHAN —
Culinary Heritage Through the Eyes of Rural Women



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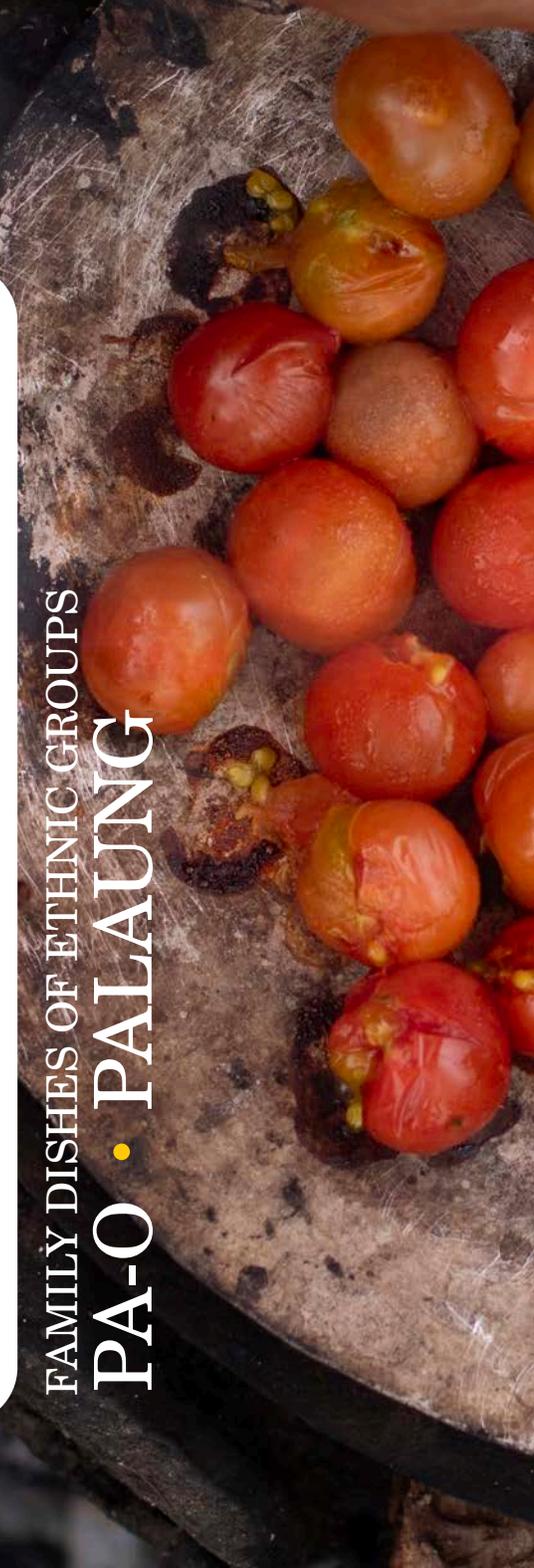
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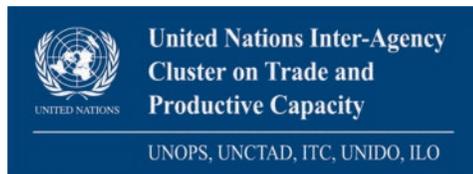
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Preface

This report was carried out within the framework of the Myanmar- SECO-UN Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity Project “Upgrading horticulture supply and sustainable tourism to develop business linkages”. Project activities were financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) as a portion of the Government of Switzerland’s contribution to the Global Aid for Trade (AfT) initiative and as a part of a long-run engagement of Switzerland in Myanmar.

The enhancement of women’s position in society and in the economy was one of the goals of the project which focused on women farmers and women micro and small entrepreneurs in the Shan State.¹

To adjust to the changed political environment that occurred in the middle of project implementation and to act in accordance with United Nations rules and instructions, in February 2021 the UNCTAD project team decided to refocus the gender component of the project and to highlight, inter alia, the resilience and creativity of women in Myanmar. This collection of recipes is therefore meant to provide visibility to one of the ways in which women are contributing to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the country, particularly the culinary heritage of Shan State, and keeping their families and communities afloat despite all odds.

Most recipes included in this unique collection have as ingredients agricultural products - such as rice, pickled tea leaf, soybean, garlic, turmeric, sweet beans, tomatoes, ginger and avocado, to mention a few, that women grow and consume in their household or sell to other women in wet markets.

¹*“Activities will contribute to ensure that outcomes of gender equality and women’s empowerment are realized through this project and sustained on the long term”. Chapter 4 of the project document, Gender equality sustainability*

Among the many possible ways to contribute to restore peace, there is farming, trading, and cooking. This publication wishes to highlight these.

For the collection of recipes and the stories behind them, consultation meetings were conducted with key stakeholders from ethnic cultural associations, sectoral associations and organizations in southern Shan, and private cooking class in Inlay.

The preparation of the dishes listed in this recipe book took place in the kitchens of women farmers in Taunggyi, Pindaya, Aung Ban, Inlay, Kalaw and Pin Laung.

I

Introduction





Introduction

1.1. Geography

Myanmar lies in the South-East Asian region and boasts a rich and varied landscape, including vast plains, mountain ranges and coastal areas. Shan State is located in the eastern plateau and mountainous region of the country, bordering China to the north-east, Thailand to the south and Lao People's Democratic Republic to the east. The average elevation of Shan State ranges from 900 to 1200 metres, with some mountainous areas rising as high as 2100 metres above sea level. It is one of the largest states in Myanmar, stretching across 155,800 square kilometres.

The most prominent river in Shan State is the Salween River, known as Nam Khao in the Shan language. It is a long river with a narrow basin, originating in the Tibetan Plateau in the west of the People's Republic of China, passing through Shan State, and flowing into the Gulf of Mottama, part of the Indian Ocean.

The lowlands of Shan State are comprised of the Hseni, Hsi-paw, Kyaukme, Heho and Kyeng Tong plains. In ancient times, these lowlands were the site of large lakes. The lake that remains today is Inn Lay Lake, also called "sea on the mountain." Inn Lay Lake is renowned for its picturesque views and is the second-most visited tourist destination in Myanmar.

1.2. People and Ethnicities

In Myanmar, the dominant ethnic group is the Myanmar (Burma) people, who constitute around 68 per cent of the population. The Myanmar Population and Housing Census estimated the population of Shan State at 5.8 million in 2014, with more than 30 ethnic groups, including the Shan, Pa-O, Palaung, Inn Thar, Wa, Kokang, Kaw, Lar Hu, Danu, Taung Yoe, Yinn Kyar, Yinn Net, Kachin and Lisu people, among others. Buddhism is the predominant religion in Shan State, but other religions, deity worships and spiritual beliefs are also practiced.

Among the different ethnic groups in Shan State, the Inn Thar are known for living around the Inn Lay Lake, and are distinctive from other ethnic groups in that they traditionally live in floating houses on the waters of the lake. The Inn Thar are also known for their distinct manner of transporting themselves on the lake, as they stand on their boat while rowing with their legs. The Inn Thar as well as the other ethnic groups that make their home in the region mostly rely on agriculture, aquaculture, livestock and floating cultivation to make their living. Tomato cultivation on floating lands is a particularly distinctive characteristic of the region. Also notable is the Inn Thar people's expertise in weaving and silversmith works.

In the highlands of Shan Plato region, the predominant ethnic groups are the Shan, Danu, Taung Yoe and Pa-O, while the Taung Yoe and Paluang ethnic groups live in the higher mountainous areas of the region. According to ancient mythology, the Pa-O people are descended from a dragon and a Watezar, a mythical creature from pre-Buddhist times. People leave offerings for the two creatures at a shrine near the town of Pin Laung in southern Shan State. The traditions and beliefs of each ethnic group are closely interconnected with their livelihood and culture. Such is the importance attached to these traditions that without them it is supposed that the ethnic groups and their respective cultures would soon disappear.





1.3. Livelihoods

Agriculture is the main livelihood for most of the ethnic groups in Shan State. Conventional upland farming is the most prevalent agricultural activity, including cultivation of corn, upland rice, garlic, turmeric, ginger and soybeans, among other crops. In orchards and household compounds, a variety of fruit trees such as avocado, coffee, orange, pear, and quince are grown on a smaller scale. Avocado is cultivated mostly in the Hopong region.

Tea is grown in high mountainous areas, with most tea cultivation in the Pin Laung and Pindaya Townships in southern Shan State. Over 80 per cent of Myanmar's tea cultivation is in Shan State. The harvest for tea leaves is from March to May/June, with the period between planting and harvesting lasting one year. Chemical fertilizers are rarely used in this tea cultivation. The production of dried and pickled tea leaves from Shan State is distributed and sold throughout the entire country.

In the Pindaya, Aungban and Nyaung Shwe areas, a large variety of vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, potato, chili, chayote², carrot, sweet beans and tomatoes are grown. They are then sold throughout the country through wholesale wet markets. Tomatoes in particular are grown on the floating lands on the Inn Lay Lake. The fishery business of Inn Lay Lake is also a particularly important industry for Shan State's local food industry. The fish from Inn Lay Lake are sent for sale to Nyaung Shwe, Heho, Taunggyi, Aung ban, Pwe Hla and Kalaw. The fishery business of Inn Lay is conducted mainly between the end of the rainy season (October) until the end of the summer season (March). A fish house called Inn Eain was purposefully built on Inlay Lake to catch fish. Bamboo sticks called Hu are stacked in a round shape in the water to enable the fish to come into Inn Eain, with peanut oil cake used as bait. The types of fish found in Inn Lay Lake include Nga Phain, Nga Phae, Nga Yant, Nga Gyinn and Nga Khone Ma. Among these, Nga Phain, with its fresh and salty taste, is particularly popular and is closely associated with Inn Lay Lake.

²Chayote is a plant belonging to the gourd family. Originating in Central America, it was introduced into southeast Asian countries during the eighteenth century. The roots, shoots and leaves of the chayote are widely used in much of Asia, especially in tropical areas.

1.4. Markets

“Markl Khai Paw Paw Khai Paw” [“Come and buy...very cheap and abundant products...”].

This is the call heard on market days in villages throughout Shan State. Regular daily markets are held only in four or five major cities of Shan State, while itinerant markets held once every five days are held in many locations across the state. Major cities with daily markets also have itinerant markets in the areas surrounding them. The itinerant markets rotate around the towns of Shan State, including Nyaung Shwe, Heho, Taunggyi, Minethauk, and Shwe Nyaung. The itinerant market is quite special in that it can only be found in Shan State. If market day coincides with a religious or otherwise significant date, it is shifted ahead one day.

On market days, all local goods can be bought, including agricultural products, local foods and many household supplies. These markets are famous for having fresh tea leaves, dried tea leaves, Shan rice, pickled vegetables, sticky rice slices (Kaw-poat), and assorted fresh vegetables.





Red sign with white text, likely a market notice or advertisement.

Vertical red sign with white text, possibly a market notice or advertisement.

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K...
K...





1.5. Foods and Culture

Eating habits in Shan State are similar to those of the neighbouring countries with which the state shares a border, namely China, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand. In fact, Shan State shares certain cultural traditions and languages as well as eating habits and foods with the people residing in the border areas of these countries. The intertwining of the cultures across the geographical borders can be clearly felt by looking at the closeness of the local foods in Shan State to those of bordering neighbouring countries. Just as many rivers and creeks flow from neighbouring countries into Myanmar, culture, living styles and religious beliefs similarly flow across the border.

As in other countries in South-East Asia, rice is the staple food of Myanmar. As everywhere else in Myanmar, Shan people eat rice and curry as the main food, three times a day. Local foods, traditions and beliefs of the people in southern Shan State are to a large degree based on their local geographic and climatic conditions. The main diet of the cold plateau regions is low in fat and less salty. The inhabitants of this region cook and eat in a way that highlights the distinct flavours of the vegetables and rice grown locally. Shan food is cooked based on the natural flavour of the vegetables. In the areas near the rivers and creeks, fish and aquatic crops are grown and consumed frequently.

The typical breakfast for farmers as they go to work in their fields in the early morning is local sticky rice, which serves to keep their stomachs full for many hours. Sticky rice slice (Kaw-poa) is also a very popular traditional Shan food. The main ingredients in the foods in southern Shan are local agricultural products. Garlic is one of the most important ingredients, as well as onion, ginger and leek. Traditional Shan food contains little oil.

Dried and pickled tea leaves are popular food items among local southern Shan food products. Pickled tea leaf salad is considered

an essential food item at various ceremonies in Myanmar culture. For its part, the tradition of roasting dried tea leaves in a pan and selling it as black tea on market days goes back a very long time. Similarly, green tea leaves are traditionally sold at markets together with assorted vegetable tempura and a cup of salt to add to the green tea.

Dried soybean cakes are a staple in most homes in Shan State. For the Shan people, the cakes are as ubiquitous as fish paste is for the people living in lower Myanmar or the delta regions. Since ancient times, it is a tradition that women give a pack of rice and spicy soybean cake fries to their partner when he is about to set off on a long journey. Soybean cakes are a type of dry ration that can be replaced by other meat and fish curries. The cakes have the benefit of being affordable for most households.

For their part, the Yinn Net and Yinn Kyar ethnic people rarely eat fish, meat or oils and instead are fond of eating vegetables. They also make their own soybean cake. They tend to drink bitter tasting teas and consume betel, whose tooth-darkening effect is sought after, as darker-colored teeth are seen as a symbol of beauty. The Yoon ethnic people in Shan State usually keep pickled tea leaf in their mouth. There is a tradition of Yinn Net and Yinn Kyar people offering pickled tea leaves with cash to the mid-wife when she helps a mother give birth to her baby.

In summary, Shan State has a long history and a diverse food culture. This book presents some popular dishes that are common across the different ethnic groups of Shan, such as the Danu, Inn Thar, Pa-O, Palaung and Taung Yoe, all of whom reside in areas in southern Shan State.





1.6. Major Ingredients in Traditional Dishes of the Southern Shan State



1.6.1. Soybean and Soybean Cakes

Soybean is one of major crops for smallholder farmers in southern Shan State. It is grown during all three seasons of the year by farmers in different topographic land plots during pre-monsoon, monsoon and post-monsoon periods. Soybeans are eaten in several forms by people living in Shan State: crispy roasted, fermented-wet, fermented-dried seed, fermented grinded, and dried thin or thick slice forms with different blends and spiciness. These types of preserved soybeans can be stored year around in rural houses and are major ingredients in several types of ethnic dishes such as fish curry, assorted vegetable curries, vegetable soups, soybean and tomato spicy dishes and various salads. Hence, soybeans are a key protein source for the people in this region.

1.6.2. Spring Onion

Spring onion is one of the vegetables most commonly used by people in this region. Farmers grow spring onions from shallots, and the onions are always available in fresh markets throughout the year. Chopped spring onion is used for garnishing several Shan State dishes. The famous curry pack (Hin-Htote) is mainly made from chopped spring onions and sticky rice flour, meat-free or with pork. Hin-Htote is eaten by ethnic peoples as breakfast, lunch or dinner, and it is easily available at street-side shops even in the small cities of southern Shan State.





1.6.3. Garlic

Garlic is the major income-generating crop for many farmers in Shan State. It is largely grown during the winter season after the harvest of lowland paddies. Garlic is also grown in highland plots with good accessibility to water in the winter season. Garlic is harvested between February and the end of March across the region. Garlic produced in southern Shan State is highly preferred by the people of Myanmar for its pungent and good smell. Two major types of garlic are grown in southern Shan State, white skin and reddish skin. Farmers mostly use only organic manures when growing garlic.

Rural households store their garlic for household consumption for the whole year by hanging it on bamboo poles in the kitchen without cutting the dried stem. Garlic is a mandatory spice in all dishes of the ethnic people living in Shan State. Sliced or chopped fried garlic is used for garnishing many vegetable salads. Most elderly people prefer to eat fermented tea leaves (Laphet) with peanut and fried garlic only. In addition, garlic is a domestic medicinal item used in rural households for the treatment of indigestion and other stomach problems.

1.6.4. Turmeric

Turmeric rhizomes are cultivated by smallholder farmers in both higher and lower elevations of southern Shan State mountains. Turmeric produced from the southern Shan region, especially Pin Laung and Heho townships, is famous for its bright orange colour and big size. Turmeric is normally grown using organic methods, without chemical fertilizers. The soft leaves of turmeric are also eaten fresh, tossed with spicy tomato curries. Ethnic households use large turmeric leaves to wrap a steaming and spicy hot fish dish because the leaves have a good smell when burnt.





1.6.5. Garlic Chive Roots (Indian Leek)

Garlic chive roots are widely grown by rural ethnic people residing on high-elevation hillsides in southern Shan State and are distributed to fresh markets across Myanmar. The big and long white roots of garlic chive grown in the Shan hills are especially famous for their pungent smell and unique taste. The peak harvest season starts in October and runs until the end of January.

Garlic chive roots are eaten as a raw fresh vegetable or in cooked form, particularly in sour soup with fish and tomatoes. The famous Shan fish-rice is eaten with fresh garlic chive roots. The grinded roots with fresh chilies are one of most famous side dishes of the main menu of this region. The recipe differs a little from one place to another.

1.6.6. Ginger

Ginger is largely grown by most smallholders living in the highlands. For commercial purposes, farmers grow the Chinese variety (yellow ring) or Shan variety (blue ring) that form large rhizomes. Rhizomes of indigenous ginger variety are quite small but have a very strong smell and are tasty. Rural farmers in Shan State grow small plots of indigenous ginger for home consumption as well as a little extra to sell in local villages.

Ginger is harvested in January and February, and farm households keep their ginger for their own consumption for the whole year. Ginger is also used as a major spice in several dishes of different ethnic peoples, especially in cooking meat and fish. Grated and preserved ginger threads are popular across Myanmar, eaten as salad together with assorted fried beans and garlic, and complemented by fermented tea leaves. Ginger is also a domestic medicinal crop for many people in Myanmar, especially to treat colds and indigestion.



II

Southern Shan Foods for Breakfast



2.1. Shan Noodles

Shan noodles are synonymous with Shan food. Shan noodles are one of the many types of breakfast found throughout Myanmar. The dish is a favorite food not only in Shan State but across the entire country. There are two types of noodles; sticky noodles (San zee) and loose noodles (San Phwe), and two types of cooking styles: salads and soups. The tastes of Shan noodles also differ between southern and northern Shan State.

Ingredients

Chicken	700 g
Tomatoes	400 g
Onion	700 g
Garlic	200 g
Ginger	1 inch piece
Oil	4 tbsp
Glutamate	½ tsp
Light soy sauce	1 tbsp
Sweetened thick soy sauce	3 tbsp
Chinese star anise	2
Pa Kaw-Sha Kaw (Shan spice)	2 tsp
Leafy vegetable (mustard leaf)	3 bundles (about 750 g)
Spring onion	60 g
Shan traditional fermented vegetable (sweet-sour-spicy taste) – 2 cups	
Salt	2 tsp
Ground roasted sesame	4 tbsp
Roasted groundnut	6 tbsp
Fried garlic	6 tbsp



Shan Noodles

Preparation

First, clean the chicken, tomatoes and vegetables with water and rinse. Cut the rinsed chicken into small pieces and season it to taste for 20 minutes. Cut the tomatoes into small slices. Mince the garlic and ginger. Finely dice the onions.

Put the pan on medium heat and fry the Chinese star anise in the cooking oil. Then put the ground garlic and ginger in the oil and stir. In a minute, when you can notice the nice smell, add the diced onion and sliced tomatoes to make tomato paste. Stir well for about 10 minutes on medium heat. Add the seasoned chicken to the tomato curry paste and cook until properly cooked, for 15 minutes. Add light soy sauce and Shan spice powder into the chicken curry. The roasted sesame and groundnut must be ground separately and set aside separately.

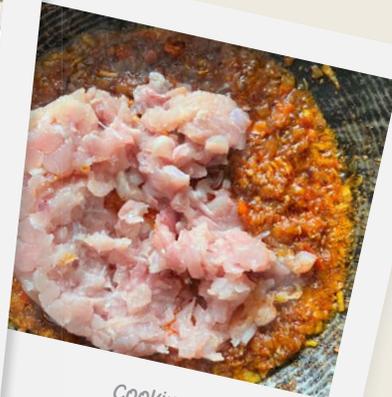
Chop a little garlic for making the soup, and boil half of the water in a large pot. Add chicken bones, garlic, onion, salt, pepper and glutamate when the water starts to boil. Put on the stove on a low heat for about 45 minutes. Cut the spring onion into small pieces and set aside.



Soaking noodle



Fresh spring onion



Cooking chicken with
tomato paste

Salad

Boil the water in a medium-size pot. Put the noodles and mustard leaves in the boiling water for three minutes. Drain and put them in a ceramic bowl. Add one teaspoon of sweetened thick soybean sauce and one teaspoon of fried garlic oil to the noodles and mix them well. Then, put two tablespoons of chicken curry, half a teaspoon of fried chopped garlic, half a teaspoon of roasted sesame and half a teaspoon of ground groundnut in the noodles. Garnish with chopped spring onion on top. Prepare the Shan traditional fermented vegetables separately as a small dish to add onto the noodle salad.

You can now enjoy Shan noodle salad with chicken soup. Stir well using chop sticks.



Shan Noodles Salad

Soup

The original Shan noodle is the soup type. Preparation of the ingredients and curry is the same as for the salad.

Take a slightly smaller amount of noodles than for the salad. Boil the noodles and mustard leaves in boiling water for three minutes. Rinse and put them in a deep bowl. Put two tablespoons of chicken curry, add half a teaspoon of fried garlic chips and pour the chicken soup onto the noodles and mustard leaves. Garnish with chopped spring onion. Enjoy the soup-type noodles by adding pepper powder and eat together with Shan traditional fermented vegetables.



Mixing chicken with
tomato paste



washed raw ingredients



Cooking chicken curry



Shan Noodle Soup



Warm Tofu Noodles
(Tofu Nway)

2.2. Warm Tofu Noodles (Tofu Nway)

Tofu Nway is also one of the most popular Shan breakfasts made with Shan noodles. Tofu Nway has a smell and taste that comes from chickpea tofu.

Apart from Tofu Nway with Shan noodles, chickpea tofu can also be enjoyed as fried tofu and tofu salad. Shan tofu salad is common in southern Shan State and is different from Myanmar tofu salad.

Ingredients

Chickpea flour	200 g
Salt	1 tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Sugar	1 tbsp
Water	6 cups
Toddy sugar	80 g (for warm tofu noodle only)
Green mustard leaves	1 bundle (250 g)

Preparation

Boil the toddy sugar³ first to get slightly thick syrup.

Put water into a bowl and add chickpea flour, salt, turmeric powder and sugar syrup, then stir them well until the chickpea flour has properly dissolved. Put a clean, thin cotton cloth on another bowl and filter the chickpea liquid slowly through the cloth. Leave to set for an hour. Put only the upper layer of clear chickpea liquid into the pot and boil the liquid on medium heat, then continue stirring by using a wooden or bamboo spatula. When the liquid starts to boil, add more water to the remaining part of the chickpea paste, stir well, and pour slowly while continuing to stir the pot on medium heat. Stir well for another 15 to 20 minutes and the boiled mixture will thicken and have a nice smell. The warm tofu is ready when the thick chickpea liquid becomes like a thread when pouring from the spatula into the bowl.



³Toddy sugar is a traditional unrefined brown sugar made from toddy palm sap. This is also known as palm jaggery, mostly used in preparing traditional dishes and desserts.

Put boiled Shan noodles (sticky or loose) and mustard leaves in a bowl and pour warm tofu paste on them. Chicken curry and other items, all the same as above, are added to the noodles. Add one teaspoon of toddy syrup and half a teaspoon of dark soy sauce. Mix well with chopsticks. Tofu Nway is best accompanied with Chinese bread sticks (E Kyar Kway).



Soaked sticky
noodle



Ready to cook
tomato paste



Ingredients



Warm Tofu Noodles
(Tofu Nway)

2.3. Shan Fish-Rice (Ngar Hta Min)

Ingredients

Khout Phar rice (Shan rice)	2 cups
Water	4 cups
Salt	1 tsp
Nga Gyin Phyu/Nga Yant	40 g
Cooking oil	4 tbsp
Tomatoes	5 (medium size)
Garlic	16 cloves
Turmeric powder	½ tsp
Glutamate	½ tsp (optional)
Coriander leaves	1 small bundle (50 g)
Garlic chives roots	1 bundle (200 g)
Spring onion	1 small bundle (50 g)





Shan Fish-Rice
(Ngar Hta Min)

Preparation

The cooking method for Khout Phar rice is important in making Shan fish-rice. It must be cooked unwashed and without rinsing with water, only adding some salt.

The fish meat is boiled in two cups of water by adding half a teaspoon of salt until thoroughly cooked. Allow it to cool down and remove the fish bones. Cook the fish meat in one spoonful of oil with ground garlic and a quarter of a teaspoon of turmeric powder to become a yellow fish paste. Set aside. Tomatoes are boiled until the water dries out. Remove the skins, stir well to become paste and set aside. Fry garlic oil in a pan with a pinch of turmeric powder.

When the rice is cooked, put it in a large tray and properly mash it until it becomes sticky. Add tomato paste, fish paste, one spoonful of garlic oil, and a pinch of salt, and mix well. Make the fish rice paste into handful-size balls. Place a piece of clean banana leaf on the plate, put one rice ball on it, flatten it, and add coriander leaves, garlic chive roots and spring onion. Dress with fried garlic and some fried chilly chips on top of the fish rice.



Boiling fish



Shan Fish-Rice
(Ngar Hta Min)



Mixing all ingredients to make
fish rice paste

III

Family Dishes of Six Ethnic Groups in Southern Shan State



Family Dishes of Six Ethnic Groups in Southern Shan State

It is noteworthy that daily meals of the six ethnic groups residing in southern Shan State – the Shan, Danu, Inn Thar, Pa-O, Palaung and Taung Yoe peoples – mainly centre around a cooked local sticky rice, with one main curry of fish or meat, a hot soup with various vegetables, vegetable fry or salad and spicy pounded dried soybean cake as the key dishes. Some of these dishes have similar cooking ingredients, with a few differences in their preparation between different ethnic groups. But they are nevertheless unique in their core style and flavour. Potatoes, tomatoes, black-eyed beans, bamboo shoots, garlic chives, mustard leaves and soybean cakes are all renowned local products of Shan State and are commonly used in the dishes, but the different cooking styles of the different ethnic groups produce distinct and delicious family meals. The recipes of these selected ethnic groups typically serve five to eight family members.





Family Dishes of Six Ethnic Groups

3.1. Traditional Shan Dishes

The Shan people are the largest minority group in Myanmar, making up nearly 10 per cent of the country's total population. There are other ethnic groups living in Shan State, but about half of the population of Shan State are Shan people. Some Shan ethnic groups also live in the city of Mandalay, Kachin State, Karen State and adjacent areas of China. Most of the Shan people are Theravada Buddhists, while some practice spiritual and animist beliefs. The language spoken is part of the Tai-Kadai language family, and is closely related to Thai and Lao.

Traditional Shan dishes include fresh and nutritious local foods such as fish, pork, gooseberry bark, bamboo shoots, eggplant, soybeans and various vegetables. Each dish has its own unique cooking method, way to be eaten, and nutritional value. Traditional Shan soybean cakes, crushed green chilies and eggplant salad are also included on dining tables as tasty side dishes. Their distinctive soup, which is an essential item on dining tables, is cooked with vegetables cultivated in home gardens.

3.1.1. Baked Fish in Banana Leaf (Nga Phet Ohn)

Ingredients

Fish meat (Mrigal carp)	850 g
Onion	500 g
Garlic	16 cloves
Ginger	1 inch piece
Spring onion	1 small bundle (50 g)
Garlic chive roots	1 bundle (200 g)
Coriander leaves	1 small bundle (50 g)
Shan parsley leaves	1 small bundle (30 g)
Phat Phai leaves ⁴	1 small bundle (30 g)
Phat han spices powder ⁵	A small pinch
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Salt	2 tsp
Small green chilies	15
Soybean cake (thin slice)	2 slices
Cooking oil	2 tbsp
Banana leaf (clean and make into smaller pieces for packing)	1 medium size

⁴Phat Phai leaves, also known as Laksa leaves or Vietnamese coriander, classified as *Persicaria odorata*. It is an aromatic herb with robust, peppery, and grassy-herbal flavouring. It is mostly used in Asian curries, vegetables salads and in main dishes of meat, fish, seafoods or eggs.

⁵Phat han powder is a local aromatic spice, which is mostly used in preparing seafood and meat dishes to enhance the natural meaty flavour.



Preparation

Wash and rinse the fish. Cut the fish meat into small pieces about one inch in size. Grind the garlic and ginger, and squeeze them, while adding the juice to the fish. Add half a teaspoon of salt and the turmeric powder to the fish, mix well and set aside for 15 minutes. Finely mince all spicy leaves, chili and onion and mix all ingredients with the fish, including 1½ teaspoons of salt and



Mixing fish and ingredients



oil. Put mixture in banana leaf pieces and make small-sized packs. Steam the packs for about 30 minutes. Then bake the packs on an open fire for a few minutes to get the nice smell. The spicy baked fish is ready to eat warm.





Baked Fish in Banana Leaf
(Nga Phet Ohn)

“

Baked Fish in Banana Leaf and Memories of Her Mother

Being skilful at housework, including housekeeping and cooking, is one of the main characteristics of women throughout Myanmar, and it is considered highly honourable for ethnic women in Shan State. In a family, the inheritances that a mother passes on are in cooking and kitchen management skills and, most importantly, the etiquette of a woman.

Nang Moh has been living in Pauk Mai Lon (Shan Su Quarter), Kyaung Kyi Su village, in Taunggyi township which is her native place. She works as a casual labour in agriculture to supplement her family income. She met with us to talk about traditional dishes and household duties after returning home from her daily farm work. Without resting, she prepared meals for her children and family members.

As she quickly picked some spice leaves and banana leaves from her home garden, she shared a memorable story about her mother that involved a famous fish recipe.

“My mother was a champion in cooking and now I am preparing the dish called Nga Phat Ohn (Baked Fish in Banana Leaf) that my mom used to cook for us very often. I was familiar with this dish since my childhood and started to cook it by myself when I was 12 with the help of my mother. Every time I cook this dish, my childhood memories with my mother come through my mind and I feel like I am with her.”

”

3.1.2. Fried Minced Pork with Gooseberry Bark (Zee Phyu Thee Khauk Wet Thar Lone Kyaw)

Ingredients

Pork belly meat	850 g
Gooseberry	400 g
Spring onion	1 small bundle (50 g)
Garlic chive root	1 bundle (200 g)
Coriander leaves	1 bundle (50 g)
Tomatoes	400 g
Onion	3 bulbs
Garlic	3 heads (24 cloves)
Oil	0.5 litre
Turmeric powder, salt, Shan spice powder (Sharkaw powder)- small pinch of each	



Fried Minced Pork with Gooseberry Bark
(Zee Phyu Thee Khauk Wet Thar Lone Kyaw)

Preparation

Wash the meat, rinse well and mince. Add half a teaspoon of salt and a quarter of a teaspoon of turmeric powder in the minced meat. Scratch the gooseberry bark with a knife, mix scratched pieces well with the meat and leave to set for 15 minutes. Wash all spicy ingredients. Chop the garlic chives, spring onion, coriander, tomato, onion and garlic. Add all chopped ingredients into the meat, including the spicy powder, and mix well. Then make small-sized balls ready for frying. Put oil in the frying pan on medium heat. Fry the meatballs until they turn brown.



Scratching gooseberry bark

Mixing all chopped ingredients



Making small sized balls





Soft Fry
Bamboo Shoots

3.1.3. Soft Fry Bamboo Shoots

Ingredients

Young bamboo shoots	500 g
Onion	2 bulbs
Tomatoes	4 (medium size)
Ginger leaf tips	3 leaves
Garlic chive leaf	1 small bundle (100 g)
Basil	20 leaves
Oil	2 tbsp
Salt	½ tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Glutamate	¼ tsp

Preparation

Boil the bamboo shoots while changing the water about three times until the bitter taste diminishes. Grate the bamboo shoots into small pieces. Slice the onion and tomatoes. Cut the ginger leaves and garlic chive leaves into one-inch-size pieces. Put oil into the frying pan and add the sliced onion and turmeric powder. Add tomato and stir until very soft. Add bamboo shoots and salt, and stir well for about five minutes. Add garlic chive and ginger leaves until they give out a nice smell, and wait for two minutes. Add green basil leaves and remove the pan from the fire. Best served hot.



3.1.4. Turkey Berry Salad

Ingredients

Turkey berries ⁶	200 g
Garlic chive	1 small bundle (150 g)
Phat Phai leaves (spice)	1 small bundle (30 g)
Fresh green small chili	15
Limes	2 (medium size)
Ground roasted peanut	5 tbsp
Ground roasted sesame seeds	3 tbsp
Salt	½ tsp

Preparation

Wash and rinse the turkey berries and cut them into small pieces. Mince all herbal leaves and spices. Mix all. Put the ingredients in a bowl, add ground peanuts and sesame powder. Add lime juice and mix well. The spicy salad is ready to serve.

⁶Turkey berry is the green, rounded fruit of the *Solanum torvum* plant, commonly found in Asia, tropical Africa, and South America. It can be consumed whole as raw fruit, in salads, or fried.



Turkey Berry
Salad



Fresh raw ingredients

3.1.5. Mixed Vegetable Soup with Pumpkin and Chayote Shoots

Ingredients

Eggplants	2 (medium size)
Pumpkin	1 (small)
Boiled black-eyed peas	3 tbsp
Tomato	1
Turkey berries	20
Pumpkin shoot	1 bundle (200 g)
Ridge gourd shoot ⁷	2 bundles (200 g)
Chayote shoots	2 bundles (400 g)
Basil leaves	20
Soybean cake	2 thin slices
Salt	1 tsp
Water	6 cups

Mixed Vegetable Soup with
Pumpkin and Chayote Shoots

⁷Vegetable from the Cucurbitaceae family, grown throughout the whole year in Asia. In Myanmar, it is mostly consumed as vegetable soup or stir fried.



Preparation

Wash and cut the vegetables into 2-to-3-inch pieces. Roast the soybean cakes until they become fragrant and crispy. Allow the roasted soy cakes to cool down and grind them to get a fine powder. Put water into the pot and bring it to a boil. When the water starts boiling, add salt as needed. Then add the roasted soybean cake powder. Then put all the chopped vegetables and let sit for about five minutes. The small pieces of vegetables will begin to become fragrant, and the vegetable soup is ready. It is delicious served hot.



Preparing the ingredients



3.1.6. Ground Chili and Soy Cake

Ingredients

Dried or green chilies	30 (small)
Garlic	8 cloves
Soybean cake	3 thin slices
Groundnut oil	2 tbsp
Salt	½ tsp

Preparation

Finely grind all the chilies together with garlic and salt. Roast the soybean cake slices until fragrant and crispy. Allow the soybean cake slices to cool down and grind them to get a fine powder and mix well with the ground chili and garlic. Put the mixture into a bowl and pour the oil on it. This is best served with boiled assorted leafy vegetables and warm rice.



Ground Chili and Soy Cake

3.2. Traditional Danu Dishes

The Danu people are the Tibet-Myanmar ethnic people. Danu people are known as Shan Danu or Myanmar Danu depending on the language they use. Those who are culturally closer to the Shan people wear traditional Shan clothing, whereas those who are closer to the Myanmar people wear clothing more typically worn by them. The culture, music and ceremonies of the Danu people are close to those of the Shan people. They mostly live in Mandalay, Pyin Oo Lwin, Ywa Ngan, and Pindaya between Shan State and central Myanmar. They also live in the Myay Latt area. A wide variety of meat curry and local vegetable dishes are often found on Danu people's dining tables.

3.2.1. Fried Minced Beef Balls (Ahmae Kin Paung Lone Kyaw)

Ingredients

Beef	800 g
Garlic chive (bud tips)	1 bundle (150 g)
Garlic	16 cloves (2 heads)
Onion	3 bulbes
Tomatoes	3
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Salt	½ tsp
Ginger	2 inches piece
Cooking oil	0.4 litre

Preparation

Clean the beef thoroughly and mince. Chop the tomatoes and mix with the minced beef. Grind the garlic, onion and ginger, and mix well with the beef and tomato, adding salt and turmeric powder. Knead and mix the meat well with the other ingredients and after that make it into small balls. Cut the garlic chive bud about three inches long. Put the oil in the thick frying pan and spread the cut garlic chive buds on it. Arrange all the beef balls on the garlic chive. Set on medium heat for three minutes and then put a small amount of water in the pan, just covering the balls. Cover the pan with a lid. Do not stir while cooking. Fry until all the water is gone and the beef balls turn a red-brown colour. Delicious and fragrant fried beef balls are now ready.

Fried Minced Beef Balls (Ahmae Kin Paung Lone Kyaw)



Arranged beef balls on
Garlic chives tips



Frying beef balls



3.2.2. Nga Hpain -Peanut Curry (Carp Fish)

Ingredients

Carp fish (Nga Hpain)	1 whole fish (about 800-900 g)
Peanut (fresh)	200 g
Tomatoes	3 (medium size)
Onion	3 bulbs
Garlic	8 cloves (1 head)
Green chilies	5
Culantro (Shan coriander)	5 leaves
Light soy sauce	2 tbsp
Oil	4 tbsp
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp



Cooking tomato curry paste



Roasted peanuts

Nga Hpain -Peanut Curry (Carp Fish)



Preparation

Remove the skin from the fish, wash well, rinse and cut into chunks of two inches. Add fish with salt and turmeric powder and let sit for 15 minutes. Grind the peanuts into a fine paste. Chop the tomatoes. Grind the chili, onion and garlic. Put oil into the cooking pan on medium heat and fry the fish until it turns a light brown colour. Remove the fish from the pan and set aside. Put ground items into oil and stir well. When the onion and garlic become aromatic, add the chopped tomatoes, chop, and stir well. Put the fried fish into the tomato curry paste, and add salt, soy sauce and ground peanut with a small amount of water. Cover the pan with a lid. Once the peanut is cooked and fragrant, add the chopped culantro leaves and remove the pan from the fire.

3.2.3. Yay Phyu Kin Paung (Vegetable Fritters)

This type of traditional vegetable tempura is famous among the Shan mountain ethnic people and is an essential dish that is offered in various ceremonies at monasteries. It is accompanied with steamed sticky rice. It can last for three to four days without cold storage.

Ingredients

Ash gourd	1 small fruit (about 1650 g)
Bamboo shoots	160 g
Garlic chive	160 g
Garlic	24 cloves (3 heads)
Onion	5 bulbs
Tomatoes	5
Rice flour	2 cups
Chili powder	3 tbsp
Oil	0.5 Litre
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp

Preparation

Remove skin of ash gourd. Grate the ash gourd and squeeze to remove the water in the flesh. Cut the bamboo shoots and garlic chives into small pieces. Slice onion, tomato and grind the garlic. Mix all ingredients in the bowl by adding a very small amount of water to make a good dough. For those who like a spicy taste, add chili powder. Make mixture into small balls for pan frying. Slightly flatten the balls and fry in oil until they turn a brown colour.



Preparing all ingredients

Yay Phyu Kin Paung (Vegetable Fritters)



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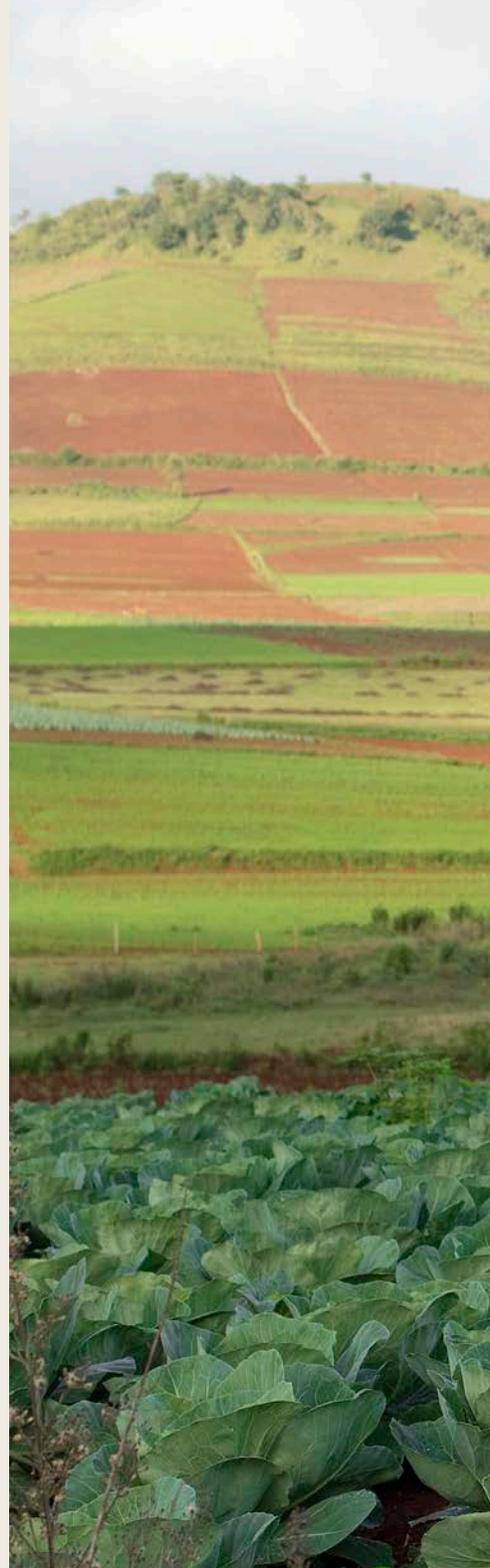
Vegetable Fritters Bring Back Memories of Home

Among the many ethnic groups in southern Shan State, the Danu people are known for their crop cultivation on upland farms. Most Danu people of these hilly lands are Buddhists and avoid regularly eating meats, so vegetables are essential for their daily dishes.

They normally grow various vegetables, herbs and spices in their backyards mainly for home consumption. On the way to collect tips for southern Shan cuisines, the authors of this book met, Daw Aye Mya, a Danu woman farmer who grows cabbage, chili and maize seasonally in the plot near her village. She also has a one-acre tea plantation in a high elevated area, which is a bit far from her home.

While she was cleaning a small ash gourd from the backyard to make vegetable fritters, she said, “I used to cook this recipe for my family very often. I inherited the recipe from my eldest sister. I am the seventh and youngest among my siblings. I moved to stay in this village after my marriage. I miss my elders and my home whenever I cook this, but I am happy because I can communicate easily with them nowadays by phone. This curry makes me remember my native home. The recipe is very simple and I love to cook this for my family.”

”





3.2.4. Konjac⁸ Salad

Ingredients

Steamed konjac	420 g
Ground Peanut	3 tbsp
Chickpea flour	2 tbsp
Green chili (small)	10
Garlic	8 cloves
Spring onion	1 small bundle
Garlic chive leaves	1 small bundle (150 g)
Coriander leaves	1 small bundle (30 g)
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Oil	3 tbsp

⁸Konjac is a processed food in the form of jelly made from the root of the Konjac plant. It is also consumed in the form of noodles or powder in bakery products. The Konjac plant is also known as “elephant yam” and is originally grown in Southeast Asia.



Mixing cut konjac and ingredients

Preparation

Cut the konjac into small slices. Roast the peanut until fragrant and grind into a powder. Crush the chilies. Slice the garlic and fry garlic oil with turmeric powder. Cut the spring onion, garlic chive leaves and coriander leaves into small pieces. Put all ingredients in a bowl and mix well. The salad is very tasty eaten fresh.



Konjac Salad

3.2.5. Beef Intestine Soup

Ingredients

Assorted beef intestines	1600 g
Onion	5 bulbs
Garlic	24 cloves
Shan small ginger	1½ inch piece
Lemon grass	3
Marcut powder ⁹ (special spice)	1 tsp
Roasted rice flour	160 g
Light soy sauce	1 tbsp
Oil	2 tbsp
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp
Garlic chive (roots)	2 small bundles (400 g)

⁹Marcut powder is a traditional Shan aromatic spice, which is mostly used for preparing beef and poultry dishes to enhance the natural meaty flavour.



Beef intestine soup

Preparation

Wash and clean the beef intestine and cut into one-inch pieces. Grind all ginger, onion and garlic and add to the beef meat. Stir the mixture well with salt, soy sauce and turmeric powder. Put into a big pot and put on medium heat without adding water. Slowly, the water from the meat flows out. Let it continue to boil until all the water has cooked off. Put the crushed spring onion in the pot and add boiling water. Then add rice flour and leave to simmer on low heat for three hours until the meat becomes soft and tender. Fry the garlic chive roots to become crispy. Garnish with crispy fried garlic chive roots on top of beef intestine soup.

Beef Intestine
Soup



3.2.6. Mashed Garlic Chive Roots (Juu Myit Htaung)

This is a famous side dish that accompanies all three meals throughout the day. Other ethnic groups have a similar dish with small variations in the ingredients such as adding soybean cake, roasted sesame or dried prawns, a bit of oil, or other variations.

Ingredients

Garlic chive roots	300 g (cut in small pieces)
Fresh green chilies (Kala Aw Thee)	5
Lemons	2
Salt	1 tsp

Preparation

Rinse garlic chive roots, chili, and lemon after washing. Grind the garlic chive roots and then add chili. Add salt, lemon juice and mix all the ingredients. Spicy, fresh and sour mashed garlic chive roots can be enjoyed with fresh green vegetables.

Mashed Garlic Chive roots
(Juu Myit Htaung)



Mixing ingredients in mortar to grind

3.3. Traditional Inn Thar Dishes

The Inn Thar people are an ethnic group that lives in the Inn Lay region in Nyaung Shwe Township in southern Shan State. They are called Inn Thar because they established their villages and live on the water surface of Inn Lay Lake and on the shore of the lake. The culture and customs of the Inn Thar people are mixed with those of the Shan and Myanmar people, but still unique in their living style, culture and traditions. The Inn Thar people live in floating houses, and work on floating farming and cultivation. The most famous traditional production industry of the Inn Thar people is their silk production. Inn Lay handicrafts are also famous and attract tourists. The Inn Thar's inland lake fishery and fish culturing is also quite unique because they build fish houses called Inn Eain to catch fish. Inn Eain are built with bamboo side plates called Huu, which are inserted in circles in the water. Groundnut oil cakes are placed as bait in Inn Eain to attract fish.

When there is a religious or social ceremony being held in one village, the people from other villages go to help with traditional orchestras with musical instruments such as cymbals and dancing. In the village of Hera, there is a dramatic dance called Lam San, which includes speeches and royal-style decorations. It has been a prominent event since the time of the Inn Thar's ancestors. In terms of clothing, men usually wear Shan pants and a long-sleeve shirt, and usually put a towel over their heads. Pants and shirts are sewn from Inn Lay woven fabric. Inn Thar women dress in a way similar to Myanmar women. The Inn Thar also have their own language and literature.

Ngar Say Khar soup is a special soup of the people in the Inn Lay area. The bitter taste of the herb Say Khar ("King of Bitter") powder gives the soup a unique taste. Older people particularly like it. The soup is usually cooked in traditional ceremonies. Hin Htoke, vegetable tempura and many traditional snacks are also representative of the Inn Thar's food culture.

3.3.1. Pork and Spring Onion Pack (Hinn Htot)

Ingredients

Pork	250 g
Spring onion	10 bundles (500 g)
Rice flour	1 ½ cups
Fresh green chilies	5
Dried chili flakes	4 tbsp
Garlic	12 cloves
Cooking oil	2 tbsp
Banana leaves	5
Salt	1 ½ tsp
Water	¼ cup (estimate)



Mixing chopped spring onion with rice flour



Adding chopped garlic



Packing mixed ingredients with banana leaf

Preparation

Chop the garlic and fry in oil first, then put in a ceramic bowl. Put chili flakes and half a teaspoon of salt in a ceramic bowl, heat two tablespoons of oil and pour on the chili flakes. Fried garlic and chili oil are for dressing on Hinn Htot at final preparation. Cut banana leaves into 10 to 12 inch pieces, and clean them by wiping thoroughly with a clean cloth, ready to pack the ingredients.

Wash and rinse the pork meat, then cut into thin pieces, add half a teaspoon of salt and mix well. Crush the green chilies. Chop the clean spring onion into half-inch pieces and put into a large bowl. Add rice flour, oil and one teaspoon of salt, and mix them well by slowly adding water in small amounts. Then add the crushed chili peppers as preferred. To wrap the Hin Htoke, put a cooking spoonful of mixture on the banana leaf piece, add a tablespoon full of pork on top, and wrap the banana leaves tightly. Put the ready-wrapped Hin Htoke packets evenly in a steamer pot of boiling water. Steam the packs for about 30 to 40 minutes, until the smell from the banana leaves and the ingredients become aromatic and the banana leaves become soft. Hin Htoke can be enjoyed with chili flakes, oil and fried garlic dressing.





Pork And Spring Onion Pack
(Hinn Htot)

3.3.2. Fried Stuffed Fish (Ngar Dokkha or Nga Phain Dokkha)

The Nga Phain Dokkha dish is mainly cooked with famous Nga Phain fish (a type of carp) from the Inlay Lake, which is a traditional Inn Tharr dish famous across southern Shan State. It is called Ngar Dokkha when it is cooked with types of fish other than Nga Phain fish. It is also a popular dish nowadays in other regions of Myanmar.

Ingredients

Nga Phain	1 whole fish (about 750 g)
Garlic	6-8 cloves (1 head)
Ginger	1 inch
Spring onion	1 bundle (30 g)
Tomatoes	2 pieces (medium size)
Onion	1 bulb
Fish eggs	150 g (estimate)
Fresh chili	6 (small)
Culantro	1 bundle (30 g)
Mint leaves	1 bundle (30 g)
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp
Cooking oil	4 tbsp

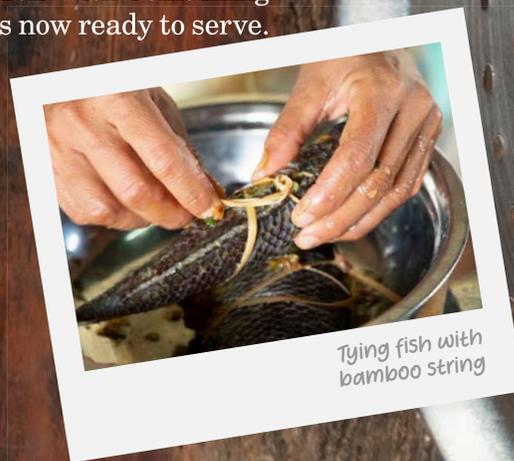


Preparation

Wash and rinse the Nga Phain fish. Add salt and turmeric powder to the fish and let sit for 15 minutes. Add salt and turmeric powder into fish eggs and set aside.

Grind ginger and garlic. Dice the onion into small pieces and chop all the chili. Clean the spring onion and chop into half-inch-size pieces. Chop the tomatoes. Put oil into a pan on medium heat. When the oil gets hot, add chopped onion, crushed ginger and garlic until it smells aromatic and has a brownish color. Add chopped tomatoes and stir for three minutes and then add spring onion, chopped culantro and half of the mint leaves. The curry paste is cooked in two minutes. Fill some amount of curry into the stomach of the fish and tie the fish tightly with bamboo strings to keep the stuffing inside. Put oil in the frying pan and fry the stuffed fish until it becomes aromatic and slightly brown.

Put the remaining curry on the heat again and add the fish eggs. When the eggs are cooked, put the fried fish in the curry paste, add a small amount of water and cover with lid. Keep on medium heat for three minutes and garnish with remaining mint leaves on top. The Ngar Dokka curry is now ready to serve.



Tying fish with bamboo string







Fried Stuffed Fish
(Ngar Dokkha Or Nga Phain Dokkha)



3.3.3. Bamboo Shoot, Boiled Bean Tempura (Myit and Paepyin Kin Paung)

This is also one of the Inn Thar's most famous dishes. It is usually eaten with rice, as well as accompanied with steamed sticky rice to eat as a breakfast meal.

Ingredients

Pae Pyin seeds (pea seeds)	2 cups
Boiled red bamboo shoots	400 g
Ginger	1 inch piece
Garlic	6 cloves
Onion	3 bulbs
Sticky rice flour, rice flour	1 ½ cups each
Water	¼ cup
Cooking oil	0.4 litre
Salt	2 tsp



Preparation

Boil the Pae Pyin seeds (peas) for 30 minutes until they become soft. Remove from water and set aside to cool. Crush garlic and ginger. Shred the boiled bamboo shoots. Slice the onions. Put the boiled peas, shredded bamboo, rice flour, sticky rice flour, sliced onion, salt, crushed garlic and ginger in a bowl and knead well by gradually adding small amounts of water until the paste is thick enough to be fried. Put oil into a thick frying pan with moderate heat and wait for the oil to heat up. When the oil heats up, put small pieces of the dough mixture one after another into the oil by using a large flat cooking spoon. Avoid high heat when frying. Avoid putting too many pieces in the oil at one time. It is important that the fried ingredients are covered by oil at all times when frying. When the fried ingredients become crispy and slightly brown, remove from oil and rinse thoroughly. Myit and Paeyin Kin Paung is delicious eaten warm.



Bamboo Shoot,
Boiled Bean Tempura
(Myit and Paeyin Kin Paung)

3.3.4. Garlic Chive Root Salad

Ingredients

Garlic chive roots	400 g
Black sesame seeds (roasted)	2 tsp
Tomatoes	3 (medium size)
Salt	½ tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Roasted chili flakes	1 tsp (optional)

Preparation

Cut the cleaned garlic chive roots into about 1.5-inch-long strips. Put clean water in the pot and boil the garlic chive roots with turmeric powder for 15 minutes. Grind the roasted black sesame seeds. After about three minutes of boiling, add the tomatoes into the boiling pot. When the boiled tomatoes take on a pale color, remove them, rinse well and set aside to cool. Remove the skin of the tomatoes and chop them. Mix all the ingredients in a bowl, adding mashed black sesame seeds and salt. A simple and easy traditional garlic chive root salad is now ready. If you prefer, chili can also be added.



Garlic Chive Roots Salad

3.3.5. Roasted Rice Soup with Fish and Bitter Herb (Ngar Say Kharr)

Ngar Say Kharr is a special fish soup cooked by residents of the villages in Inlay Lake. It has a special bitter taste from Say Khar (“King of Bitter”) powder, which gives this soup its unique taste. The soup is particularly popular among elderly people and is offered at various ceremonies.

Ingredients

Fish (carp)	400 g
Ginger	1 inch piece
Garlic	8 cloves
Say kharr powder	½ tsp
Salt	2 tsp
Roasted rice flour	2 tbsp
Coriander leaves	Small amount (30 g)
Mint leaves	1 bundle (30 g)
Turkey berries	10
Eggplant	1 (300 g)
Long beans	2
Water	2 cups

Preparation

Put water in a pot and boil it. Put clean fish and 1 teaspoon of salt in the boiling water and let cook for 10 minutes on a low heat. Cut cleaned eggplant into one-inch pieces and long beans into two-inch size strips. Take out the boiled fish and remove the bones. Add eggplant, long beans and Say Khar powder into the fish soup. Add roasted rice flour into the soup and stir well. Add mint leaves and fish meat into soup. When the soup becomes thick and is cooked through, add crushed ginger, garlic and corinader leaves to get the characteristic smell of the soup. For those who like a bitter taste, Say khar powder can be added.



Roasted Rice Soup with
Fish and Bitter Herb
(Ngar Say Kharr)

“

The Traditional Fish Soup of the Inn Thar People

Inlay Lake in Southern Shan State, known as the “sea in the mountains: is renowned for its traditional Inlay cuisine. Ngar Say Khar is a special fish soup of the Inn Thar people used in almost every traditional ceremony. The soup is particularly liked by elderly people because of its medicinal properties, while people visiting Inlay highly appreciate its unique taste.

Amid a number of people preparing various foods for a religious charity ceremony, the authors came across U Eh Doe, an elderly man who was stirring Ngar Say Khar soup in a large big pot on a firewood stove.

“In this region, as we are living on the water, we mainly eat fish caught from this lake,” he explained. “Besides its main ingredient of fish, the soup has many other nutrients and health benefits from assorted vegetable and the Say Khar powder. The recipe for this special dish is handed down by the ancient Inn Thar people. The unique thing at this place is that most of the cooking activities are done by the men before going to work in upland cultivations, as the women tend to take care of the children.”



Roasted Rice Soup with Fish and Bitter Herb
(Ngar Say Kharr)

”

3.3.6. Mashed Turkey Berries and Salty-Fish (Khayan Kazot and Ngapi Kaung)

Ingredients

Turkey berries	25
Chilies	10 (small and spicy)
Garlic	8 cloves
Eggplants	5
Salted fish	1 whole fish (450 g)
Cooking oil	3 tbsp
Water	2 cups

Preparation

Wash turkey berries and chop eggplants into slices. Boil them in water for 10 minutes. Remove from water, rinse and allow to cool down. Fry the whole salted fish until the skin becomes firm. Remove fish bones and mash the fish meat. Grind the garlic and green chili. Mash the boiled eggplant and turkey berries thoroughly. Add mashed salted fish, ground chilies and garlic, and mix well. It is not necessary to add salt because of the already salty fish flavour. This special dish mixes together a unique blend of sweet, salty, spicy and bitter tastes.



Mashed Turkey Berries and Salty-Fish
(Khayan Kazot and Ngapi Kaung)

3.4 Traditional Pa-O Dishes

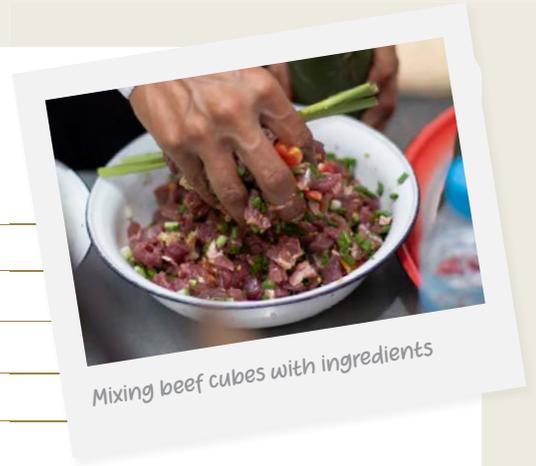
The Pa-O people are known as the second-largest ethnic group in Shan State, after the Shan people. Their homeland is in the area of the most popular destinations in Shan State, the Kalaw, Pindaya and Inle Lake region, among others. Most Pa-O people live in the eastern part of Taunggyi, including the Hopong, Taunggyi and Hsi-Seng townships to the south, bordered by Kayah State, including the Pinlaung, Kalaw and Nyaung Shwe townships. A subgroup, the lowland Pa-O, lives in Mon State.

In earlier times the Pa-O lived in the mountainous areas were called “Taung Thu,” which is a more formal version of the word “farmer” in the Myanmar language. Pa-O peoples also live in Thailand, Cambodia and the lower Mekong regions.

3.4.1. Beef Curry in a Bamboo Tube

Ingredients

Beef (tender loin)	800 g
Ginger	2-inch piece
Onion	3 bulbs
Garlic	16 cloves
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp
Culantro leaves	1 bundle (30 g)
Basil leaves	1 bundle (30 g)
Coriander leaves	1 bundle (50 g)
Dried chilies	6 (large)
Oil	2 tbsp
Water	3 tbsp
Mustard leaf	4 whole plants (big)
Fresh cut bamboo tube about	60cm long





Preparation

Wash and rinse the beef and cut it into about three-inch size cubes. Mix meat with some salt and turmeric powder and set aside. Grind the chili, ginger, garlic and onion. Chop all the spicy leaves into small pieces. Put all the ingredients into the meat bowl and properly mix with the meat by squeezing/pressing with fingers for five minutes while adding water. Properly clean the bamboo tube and stuff with the mixed ingredients. Tightly close the opening with whole mustard leaves. Place the stuffed bamboo tube in the firewood for 45 minutes. Turn over the bamboo tube every 10 minutes, so that the stuffed meat cooks uniformly. Take out the bamboo tube from the fire, open it and put the stuffing into a bowl. Spicy and fragrant beef curry is now ready to serve for six people.

Beef Curry in
a Bamboo Tube



“

Traditional Foods at Ceremonies of the Pa-O People

The Pa-O people are very devout Buddhists and attach great importance to their various religious events and ceremonies. The authors came across a group of Pa-O men and women gathered for a religious event, all dressed in dark blue. The Pa-O people often wear their traditional headdresses, and it is said that the headdresses worn at charity and wedding ceremonies are of great value. Arriving in Pin Laung Township in southern Shan State, the authors encountered a novitiation ceremony in the village. A large group of people were preparing many traditional dishes for the visitors. Two young women were making spicy mashed tomatoes in a large bowl after baking them and adding ingredients. Black-eyed beans were boiling in large pots ready to serve as the main soup.

A woman attending the ceremony explained, “For Pa-O people, while these dishes are prepared for lunch and served as meals to eat in the fields, they are also important for these kinds of ceremonies too. Spicy mashed tomatoes are always good to eat with vegetable salad and fried chickpea tofu, and black-eyed bean soup is normally served to invitees in almost all Pa-O ceremonies.”

”





3.4.2. Pork and Cucumber Curry

Ingredients

Pork belly meat	700 g
Big local cucumber	1 fruit
Onion	2 bulbs
Garlic	8 cloves
Tomatoes	3
Dried chilies	3 (large)
Turmeric powder	½ tsp
Salt	2 tsp
Light soy sauce	2 tbsp
Basil leaves	30
Oil	1 tbsp
Water	2 ½ cup

Preparation

Wash and rinse the meat, then cut it into medium-sized cubes. Add salt and turmeric powder to the meat, stir together and set aside. Grind the chili, onion and garlic all together. Slice the tomatoes. Cut the cucumber into large cubes of about 2 to 3 inches.



Preparing all ingredients

Put the pork meat, the ingredients already ground together, tomato, oil and soy sauce into a pot. Mix well by pressing with fingers. Place about 2 tablespoons of water on a stove with medium heat. Cover the lid. The liquid from the ingredients will run out. Wait for about seven minutes until the liquid has cooked off and the oil from the meat comes out. Add 2 cups of water and put the lid on. About 30 minutes later, when the skin of the pork becomes tender and the meat becomes soft, add the diced cucumber into the pot together with basil leaves and add a small amount of water. Wait for about five minutes after boiling. The aromatic watery pork curry is ready to serve hot.



Pork And
Cucumber Curry

3.4.3. Green Mustard Leaf Salad

Ingredients

Green mustard	2 bundles (500 g)
Soybean cake	1 big slice
Tomatoes	2
Garlic	3 cloves
Onion	1 bulb
Fresh chilies	10
Cooking oil	2 tbsp
Salt	2 tsp

Preparation

First, boil the water in a large pot. Wash and rinse the mustard leaves. Prepare a bowl of cold water aside for the boiled leaves to be cooled immediately. When the water boils, add half a teaspoon of salt and the green mustard leaves. Wait for about three to four minutes and remove the boiled leaves, soaking them immediately in the cold water. This ensures the boiled leaves maintain their bright green colour and crunchy leaf texture. When the leaves are cold enough, remove them from the water and rinse in a sieve. Grill the soybean cake slice for about two to three minutes on the fire until it becomes aromatic and the colour turns red with bubbles on the surface.



Grind the grilled soybean cake into a coarse powder. Cut the tomatoes into small pieces. Crush the garlic, onion, green chilies together. Put a pan with oil on the stove, and when the oil is hot add the crushed spices with turmeric powder. When it becomes fragrant and takes on a golden-brown colour, add the tomatoes. When the tomatoes become soft, add ground soybean cake powder and stir well. Then take the pot from the stove and let the mixture cool for a while. Cut the mustard into large strips about 3 inches long.

Put the mustard leaves into the mixture in the pot. Add salt to taste and mix them together. Place on a plate and enjoy the fresh green mustard salad with the sweet smell of soybean cake.

Green mustard
leaves salad



3.4.4. Crispy Fried Tofu

Tofu fries are often eaten together with morning meals such as Shan noodles, Tofu Nway, fish-rice and potato-rice. Sometimes, crispy fried tofu is also eaten as a snack.

Ingredients

Chickpea flour (uncooked)	160 g
Salt	1 tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Sugar	1 tbsp
Clean water	1.5 litres
Cooking oil	0.4 litre

Preparation

Mix fresh chickpea flour well with salt, turmeric powder, and sugar. Add 1 litre of clean water slowly and stir well until the chickpea flour is properly dissolved in the water. Put a clean, thin cotton cloth on another bowl and filter the chickpea liquid slowly through the cloth. Set the liquid aside for one hour. Put only the upper layer of clear chickpea liquid into a pot and boil it on medium heat. Stir the liquid continuously by using a wooden or bamboo spatula.



When the liquid starts boiling, add the remaining chickpea liquid along with more water, stir well and pour slowly while continuing to stir the pot on medium heat. Stir well for 15 to 20 minutes longer, and the boiled mixture will thicken and take on a cooked, aromatic smell. It is ready when the thick chickpea paste becomes like a thread when pouring from the spatula into the bowl. Place a tray on a table and pour the hot tofu paste onto the tray. Make a uniform surface and let it cool for one hour. The tofu paste will become firm once it becomes cooler. When the tofu has completely cooled down and is firm enough, cut it into two-inch square pieces with half-inch thickness. Place the frying pan on medium heat and put in the oil to fry the tofu cubes. The oil should be hot enough for crisp frying. When the oil is hot enough, add the tofu cubes slowly. Take out when the cubes become a golden colour and the surface has puffed up. Remove from oil and pat dry. The crispy crunchy fried tofu is ready to serve.

Crispy Fried
Tofu



3.4.5. Black-eyed Bean Soup

Ingredients

Black eyed beans	3 cups full
Ginger	½ inch piece
Garlic	6 cloves
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Salt	1 tsp
Pumpkin shoots	5 shoots
Chayote	1 (medium)
Tomato	3
Oil	1 tbsp

Preparation

Boil the beans until they become soft. Allow to cool down and slightly mash the beans. Crush the ginger and garlic into small pieces. Cut the tomato into pieces. Cut the chayote into medium-sized cubes. Put oil in the pot on medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the crushed ginger and garlic and stir well to become fragrant. Then add the turmeric powder, tomato, chayote, mashed beans, 3 cups of water and salt and let boil for 15 minutes. Cut the pumpkin shoots into suitable-sized pieces. When the soup is thick enough and tasty, add the pumpkin shoots and allow to sit for one to two minutes and remove the pot from the stove. The tasty bean soup is ready to serve hot.



Black Eyed Bean
Soup

3.4.6. Mashed Spicy Tomato

Mashed spicy tomato of Shan State is a popular side dish that is enjoyed throughout Myanmar. Mashed tomatoes are tossed in rice for breakfast, and are also eaten with baked fish that people prefer to eat in the afternoon and evening.

Ingredients

Sour cherry tomatoes	30
Coriander	1 small bundle (50 g)
Green chilies	15
Soybean cakes	3 small slices
Garlic	4 cloves
Salt	1 tsp
Peanut Oil	1 tbsp (optional)



Preparation

First, grill the soybean cakes until bubbles appear on the surface and there is a sweet smell. Let the chips cool down and crush them into a coarse powder in the mortar. Roast the tomatoes in a hot pan until the layers break and the fruit softens. Leave aside to cool down, remove the burnt skin and chop the flesh of the tomatoes with a knife. Wash the coriander leaves and cut into small pieces. Roast the garlic and green chilies on a hot pan until fragrant. Then, grind them all in a mortar. Add the crushed soybean cakes and mix them together. Add the tomatoes and salt in the mortar and press the mixture slowly with the pestle. Add salt to taste and place the tomatoes in a platter, add coriander and stir. The spicy mashed tomatoes with soybean cakes are now ready to serve. Adding uncooked peanut oil in the mashed tomatoes is optional, but some people prefer it.



Roasting Tomatoes

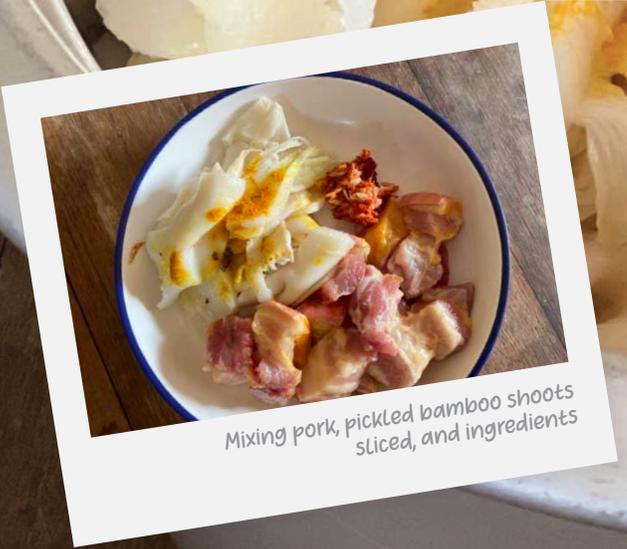
3.5. Traditional Palaung Dishes

The Palaung people have lived closely together with the ancient Pyu people. Most live in narrow valleys or along the slopes and ridges of the 2000-metre-high mountains around Kalaw in southern Shan State near the border with Thailand. The Palaung are also known as the Dang, Humai, Kunloi, La-eng, Palong, Ra-ang, Rumi, De'ang, Deang, Tang and Ta-ang. Palaung speak an Austroasiatic language in the Mon-Khmer group and traditionally believe in Buddhism as well as spiritual beliefs. Palaungs call themselves Ta-ang. They offer traditional foods at religious events and traditional deity ceremonies. Pork and bamboo shoot curry is a particularly popular dish. The sour taste of the bamboo shoots gives a unique taste to the pork.

3.5.1. Pork and Bamboo Shoot Curry

Ingredients

Pork meat	700 g
Pickled bamboo shoots sliced	160 g
Garlic	8 cloves
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Chili powder	2 tsp
Oil	1 tbsp
Water	3 cups



Mixing pork, pickled bamboo shoots sliced, and ingredients



Pork And
Bamboo Shoot Curry



Preparation

Cut the rinsed pork into small chunks. Crush the garlic. Put the pan on the stove and put in all the ingredients, mix well and cook for 10 minutes until the juices from the pork run out. When the pork takes on a nice smell, add the pickled bamboo shoots and 2 cups of water, and cook for another 30 minutes. Once the pork and bamboo shoots have mixed well, add 1 cup of water, and continue to cook on a low heat until the pork chunks become very tender. You now have a bowl of delicious traditional Palaung pork and bamboo shoot curry.



3.5.2. Mashed Potato Salad

Ingredients

Potatoes	500 g
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Garlic chive leaves	Small amount (30 g)
Salt	1 tsp
Cooking oil	4 tbsp



Preparation

Clean the potatoes and boil them until cooked and soft. Wash the fresh garlic chive leaves and put them in a tray. When the potatoes are cooked, remove them from the hot water and let cool. Peel the skin and cut into cubes. Heat the oil and put turmeric powder to give an aromatic smell to the oil. Put the oil on to the potatoes, add salt and mix and mash them well. After mixing them all thoroughly, you can enjoy a delicious mashed potato salad with fresh garlic chive leaves.



3.5.3. Stir-fried Corn and Garlic Chive Bud Tips

Ingredients

Corn	4 ears
Garlic chive bud tip	1 bundle (150 g)
Cooking oil	2 tbsp
Garlic	3 cloves
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Salt	1 tsp
Water	½ cup

Stir-fried Corn and
Garlic Chive Bud Tips



Preparation

Slice the corn kernels from the cobs in thin layers and mash them. Wash the fresh garlic chive shoots and cut them into small pieces of about 2 inches. Fry the crushed garlic in oil with turmeric powder until it is fragrant and a golden-brown colour. Put the mashed corn into oil, stir well, and add a small amount of water while stirring for about five minutes to soften the corn. When the corn is cooked, put the cut garlic chive shoots on the corn and mix well for two minutes on the stove. You can then enjoy a fresh and delicious Palaung traditional fried corn, aromatic with garlic chive shoots.

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The Palaung People and Their Vegetables

The Palaung people eat lots of vegetables, and their meals involve at least one or two vegetable recipes. They have backyard vegetable gardens and grow diverse herbal and spice plants together with other crops.

Daw Khin Sein, a woman picking vegetables in her backyard, told the authors: “To prepare a delicious dish for my family, the corn kernels are sliced from the cobs in thin layers and fried with garlic chive flower tips. This is one of my family’s favourite dishes. This recipe is not only simple, fresh, fragrant and delicious, but also matched with the weather conditions. It is also good for health because less oil is used. Many of these traditional dishes have been handed down from my grandparents, parents, and relatives from our generation to my children.”

”

3.5.4. Chayote Shoots Salad

Ingredients

Chayote shoot tips	2 bundles (400 g)
Tomatoes	4
Roasted chili flakes	2 tsp
Roasted peanuts	4 tbsp
Oil (uncooked)	2 tbsp
Salt	1 ½ tsp

Preparation

Wash and rinse the chayote shoots and cut along half the length of each shoot (about 6 to 8 inches long) for easy handling while they are boiling. Make sure to take only the soft parts of the shoots. Put water in the pot and let boil. When the water starts boiling, dip the chayote shoots, add half a teaspoon of salt, and wait for three minutes. Put cool water in a bowl, ready to cool down the boiled shoots. The boiled leaves should become soft but the colour has to be bright green. Remove the shoots before the colour turns.

Immerse in the cold water for one minute and rinse off. Cut the shoots into one-inch-long strips and set aside. Cut the tomato into thin slices. Grind the roasted peanut into a coarse powder. Mix the shoots, tomato, groundnut powder, roasted chili flakes, oil and salt in a bowl. Mix softly, and the delicious salad is then ready to serve. This salad is most aromatic when served with uncooked groundnut oil.

Chayote Shoots Salad



3.5.5. Mustard Soup (Mon Nyinn Saw)

Ingredients

Green mustard leaves	2 bundles (500 g)
Salt	1 tsp
Coriander	1 bundle (50 g)
Toddy sugar	2 pieces (medium size)
Cooking oil	2 tbsp
Water	3 litres

Preparation

Wash and rinse the green mustard leaves and coriander leaves. Cut mustard leaves into large pieces, about 3 inches in size. Also cut the coriander leaves into 3-inch-long strips. Crush the coriander roots properly. Boil the water on the stove first. When the water starts boiling, put in the mustard leaves, coriander leaves and roots, toddy sugar, salt and oil. Cook on a slow heat for approximately two hours. Once half the water has cooked off, soft and tasty Mong Nyinn Saw is ready to serve.



Mustard Soup
Mon Nyin Saw

3.5.6. Tomato Spicy Curry

This spicy tomato curry is best with a sour-tasting local tomato variety and a local chili (Kala Aw Thee), which has a very spicy and pungent taste. It is one of the most famous side dishes to accompany rice across Myanmar.

Ingredients

Tomatoes (local variety)	420 g
Intense fresh chilies (Kala Aw Thee)	10
Sichuan pepper (Thae Thu Thee)	2 tbsp
Garlic	6 cloves
Onion	2 bulbs
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Cooking oil	2 tbsp
Salt	1 tsp

Preparation

Wash the tomatoes and cut into small pieces. Grind onions, garlic and Sichuan pepper. Cook the oil in a thick pan, add the ground items and turmeric powder, and stir well for 5 minutes. Once you have the fragrant smell of the mixture, add the tomatoes and stir until they become soft. Add some water and the crushed chili. Wait for 2 minutes and the spicy tomato curry is ready to eat with rice and with the assorted fresh and boiled vegetables.



Tomato Spicy Curry

3.6. Traditional Taung Yoe Dishes

The Taung Yoe people are also called Toru. They are Tibet-Myanmar tribes and live mostly in the middle of Shan State and Pindaya. Their clothing is very similar to that of the Shan people. The Taung Yoe people offer traditional foods in traditional Natan festivals in September. They grow diverse crops and raise buffalos, cows, horses and chickens. They cook foods with fresh vegetables from home gardening.

3.6.1. White Tofu Tomato Curry

This curry is well known across Myanmar and is especially preferred by vegetarians as a source of protein. It is best served with local tomatoes that have a sour taste.

Ingredients

White tofu curd	4 big pieces (1400 g)
Onion	4 bulbs
Garlic	16 cloves
Tomatoes	8
Red chilies	4 (big)
Light soy sauce	2 tbsp
Coriander leaves	1 small bundle (70 g)
Cooking oil	6 tbsp
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp



Preparation

Cut the white tofu into medium-sized cubes. Grind the garlic, onions and chili together. Slice all the tomatoes. Place the pan on the hot stove, add oil and wait for the oil to heat up. Fry the white tofu cubes until they turn a golden-brown colour, remove from oil and rinse the oil off. After frying all the tofu cubes, put the pan on the stove with the remaining oil. Add ground garlic, onion, chili paste and turmeric powder, and stir well for five minutes. When the mixture takes on a fragrant smell, add the tomatoes and stir well until they become a puree. Put all the fried tofu cubes in the tomato puree, and add soy sauce and salt as necessary. Add a little bit of water as necessary and cook for five more minutes, so that the fried tofu curds become tastier and softer. Garnish with coriander leaves on top. The tofu curry is ready to serve hot.



Putting fried tofu to the tomato puree



White Tofu Tomato Curry

3.6.2. Fish and Peanut Curry

Ingredients

Fish (Pangus) (Ngatan)	820 g
Fresh peanuts	3 tbsp
Tomatoes	3
Onion	3
Garlic	6 cloves
Ginger	1 inch piece
Red chilies	3
Coriander	50 g
Fish sauce	2 tbsp
Oil	2 tbsp
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp

Preparation

Wash and rinse the fish and then cut it into medium-sized chunks. Add with salt and turmeric powder and set aside for 15 minutes. Grind the peanuts into a powder. Chop the tomatoes into small pieces. Grind the red chili, ginger, onion and garlic together. Put oil into the cooking pan on medium heat. Put the ground items into the oil and stir well. When the onion and garlic become aromatic, add the chopped tomatoes and stir well. When the tomatoes become soft, add the fish and fish sauce and cook for three minutes. Then add the ground peanut with a small amount of water. Cover the pan. When the peanut is cooked and becomes fragrant, garnish with coriander leaves and remove the pan from the fire.

Fish And Peanut
Curry





“

Curry as a Family Tradition among the Taung Yoe

Fish and peanut curry is a famous dish among the Taung Yoe people. Ma Hnin Nwe from Pindaya in southern Shan State explained how she learned how to cook it and other Taung Yoe dishes: “I learned to cook this curry from my grandmother as my parents used to work all day on the farm. Grandma was very patient and she kept me watching her activities while she was cooking and telling me about the ingredients. In this way, I become quite familiar with her dishes when I was very young. This curry is my favourite one since my childhood, and now I am cooking for my grandma and my parents in return. I love cooking all types of food and love the challenge of preparing a new dish and making it taste great and look attractive.”

”

3.6.3. Potato Rice

Potato rice is one of the most popular breakfast meals and is also eaten as a lunch meal or afternoon snack at teatime.

Ingredients

Local Shan rice	3 cups
Potatoes	1600 g
Tomatoes	5
Garlic	15 heads
Coriander	1 bundle (70 g)
Spring onion	1 bundle (70 g)
Garlic chive roots	Small amount
Cooking oil	4 tbsp
Salt	2 tsp
Turmeric powder	½ tsp
Fried chili flakes	3 tsp (optional)

Preparation

Cook the Shan rice first without rinsing it with water. Once cooked, let the rice cool. Boil the tomatoes, remove the skin and mash them until smooth. Add salt and a small amount of water to get a smooth tomato puree. Cut potatoes into halves and boil with a small amount of salt, until soft. Remove skin and mash potatoes properly. Crush the garlic and fry in the oil by adding a pinch of turmeric powder until the garlic becomes a golden-brown colour. Remove the pan from the stove, separate the fried garlic in a small cup and set the fragrant oil aside to cool down. Wash and rinse all the vegetables. When everything is ready, put the rice, mashed potatoes, tomato puree, salt and fragrant oil together in a large tray. Knead the mixture until it is sticky and has a nice taste. Make it into medium-sized balls, suitable to serve one per person. Prepare the meal by taking a rice ball and garnishing it with fried garlic on top. Place the assorted vegetables to accompany the rice ball. If preferred, add fried chili flakes together with the potato rice or just enjoy the taste without chili.



Potato Rice



Potato Rice

3.6.4. Carrot Leaf Salad

Ingredients

Fresh carrot leaf tips	1 big bundle (500 g)
Roasted groundnut	5 tbsp
Garlic	5 cloves
Onion	3 bulbs
Lemons	2 (medium size)
Coriander	1 bundle (70 g)
Salt	1 tsp
Chili flake	2 tbsp
Oil	3 tbsp



Boiling carrot leaves



Mixing boiled & cut carrot leaves with other ingredients



Carrot Leaves
Salad

Preparation

Wash and rinse the carrot leaf tips. Boil the water in a pot. Put the carrot leaves in the boiling water, add $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of salt and wait for 3 minutes. The leaves will soon become soft. Remove the leaves from the boiling water and leave them aside to cool. Cut these into shorter length strips, about 2 to 3 inches. Slice all the onions and crush the garlic. Grind the groundnut into a coarse powder. Put oil into a frying pan and place on stove. When the oil becomes hot, first add the crushed garlic and stir for 3 minutes until it turns golden brown. Remove the pan from the stove and add the chili flakes to the hot garlic oil. The chili flakes will be cooked with the heat of the oil.

Put into a bowl the boiled carrot leaf tips, sliced onions, ground groundnut, salt and the chili flakes oil with garlic. Squeeze lemon juice evenly on mixture. Mix them all thoroughly. Taste and add salt as needed. Taung-Yoe style carrot leaf tips salad is ready to serve.





Carrot Leaves
Salad

3.6.5. Bean Soup with Turkey Berries

Ingredients

Beans (cow pea/black-eyed bean)	2 cups
Garlic	5 cloves
Turkey berries	5 cups
Ginger	1 inch piece
Crispy eggplants	5
Soybean cake	3 slices
Salt	1 tsp
Glutamate	½ tsp
Basil	20 leaves
Pumpkin shoots	5 long shoots (350 g)

Preparation

Boil the beans until they are soft. Allow them to cool down and slightly mash the beans. Crush the ginger and garlic. Crush the turkey berries slightly. Cut each of the crispy eggplants into four pieces. Roast the soybean cake slices on an open fire until bubbles appear on the surface and they turn a dark brown color and take on a fragrant smell. Allow to cool down and grind the roasted soybean cake slices into powder. Wash and cut the pumpkin shoots into a suitable size. Boil 5 cups of water. When the water starts boiling, add all the ingredients except the pumpkin leaves and let the soup boil for 10 more minutes. Taste it and add salt as required. When the soup is thick enough and tasty, add the pumpkin shoots, leave for one to two minutes and take the pot off the stove. The taste of the soup is unique, with a slightly bitter taste from the turkey berries, while also aromatic from the soybean cake and basil. It is served with the fresh leaves and crispy eggplants.



Bean Soup with Turkey Berries

3.6.6. Spicy Soybean Curry with Boiled Vegetables

Soybean cake and tomato curry paste is one of the most well-known side dishes across the country. It is usually spicy with a lot of whole small green chilies. It goes well with boiled assorted vegetables.

Ingredients

Soybean cake	6 thick slices
Cooking oil	4 tbsp
Tomatoes	6 (medium size)
Fresh chilies	12
Red dried chilies	4
Salt	1 tsp
Glutamate	¼ tsp
Coriander	10 small plants
Turmeric powder	¼ tsp
Water	¼ cup

Preparation

Roast the soybean cakes until bubbles appear on the surface and they turn dark brown with a fragrant smell. Let them cool and crush them into small pieces. Cut the tomatoes into small pieces. Grind the dried chili, onion and garlic together.



Put oil in the cooking pan and heat. When the oil is hot, add the ground mixture with turmeric powder and stir well. Wait for five minutes until it turns a dark red color and smells good. Then add the cut tomatoes and stir well. Cover the lid and wait for five minutes on a low heat until the tomatoes become a puree. Add the whole green chilis, salt and soybean cake. Mix well and add a quarter cup of water and cover the lid for another three minutes. When the curry is well cooked and thick, garnish with coriandar leaves and take the pan from the stove. The spicy curry is ready to serve. It is delicious eaten with assorted boiled vegetables.



Spicy Soybean Curry
with Boiled Vegetables

IV

Snacks and Desserts



4.1. Fried Rice Cups (San Lone Si Kyaw)

Fried rice cups are a famous snack of the Shan region. Visitors to Shan State usually take the dish back home as a souvenir or as a gift for others. Because of its dried form, it is handy to carry during travel.

Ingredients

Sticky rice	2 cups
Water	2-3 cups (as appropriate)
Salt	½ tsp
Black sesame seeds	1 tsp
Cooking oil	0.3 litre (as appropriate)
Toddy sugar	420 g (optional)

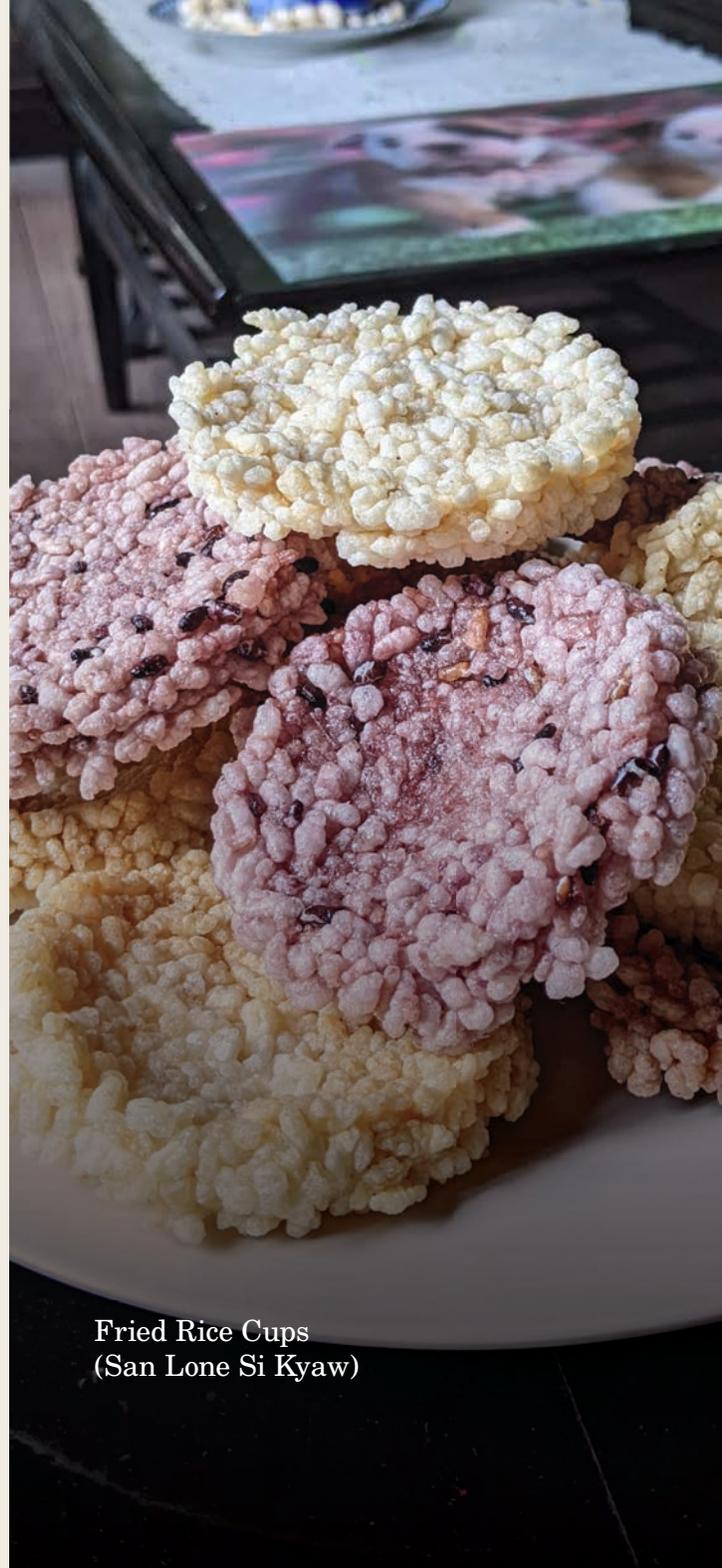
Preparation

First, cook the sticky rice. Adjust the amount of water based on the type of sticky rice chosen. When the water boils and the rice become a little soft, turn it upside down to make sure that the rice is evenly cooked in the pot. Once the rice is properly cooked, leave it to cool for a while. Add salt and black sesame seeds, and gently mix them, being careful not to mash and deform the sticky rice. After mixing well, spread it evenly on a tray in a thin layer about half an inch thick. After spreading, shape it with a circle mould and place the round pieces in a tray.

The tray must then be kept under the sun to dry the pieces properly. Cover with a thin seive cloth to protect from dust and insects. It will take two to three days to fully dry depending on the temperature. Flip it upside down three to four times to dry evenly under the sun. The rice cups are dried enough when they become very hard and make a loud sound loud when they are knocked. The cups can be stored away or fried at this stage.

To fry, add oil to a large frying pan and begin frying when the oil is hot enough. If the oil temperature is low at frying, the cups will become hard instead of becoming crispy, so be particularly careful about the oil temperature. Turn and fry in hot oil for about 30 seconds. The white rice cups can be removed from the oil when they turn light brown and take on a crispy appearance. Rinse the oil and you can enjoy the crispy fried rice cups.

Some people put toddy sugar syrup on the fried rice cups. To do this, make toddy sugar syrup by boiling toddy sugar pieces in a small amount of water for five minutes. When the toddy sugar syrup becomes thick enough, it is ready to be put on the rice cups. Take the syrup with a suitable spoon and pour on the rice cups in a circular movement. The syrup will dry within one minute. The crispy cups are ready to serve sweet.



Fried Rice Cups
(San Lone Si Kyaw)

4.2. Fried Pork Rinds (Wet Khauk Kyaw)

Fried pork rinds are usually an accompaniment for morning foods and are often eaten together with Shan noodles, Tofu Nway, fish-rice and potato rice. They are also a good addition to hot soups. Young people typically eat fried pork rinds as a snack food.

Ingredients

Pork rinds	500 g
Salt	1 tsp
Vinegar	2 tbsp
Glutamate	½ tsp
Oil	0.3 litre



Fried Pork Rinds (Wet Khauk Kyaw)

Preparation

First scrape off the dirt and hairs from the surface of the pork rind with a knife. Wash and rinse. Boil the water and add salt. Boil the pork rinds for 30 minutes until they become soft. Check the tenderness by using a fork. Remove from water and leave them to cool. Cut the boiled rinds into smaller pieces based on your preference. Add glutamate, salt, vinegar and mix well. Marinate for 30 minutes. Put the pork rinds in a thick pan without adding oil, put on stove on low heat and slowly stir with a wooden spatula. The oil from the rinds will come out slowly and the rinds will become a little harder. Then remove the rinds from the pan and leave to cool down for 30 minutes. Add oil to the pan and pre-heat it on the stove with medium heat and fry the rinds again. After a few minutes, the rinds will become crispy. Remove rinds and let them cool down. Delicious crispy rinds are now ready to serve or can be stored for several days.

4.3. Mont Si Kyaw

Mont Si Kyaw has been eaten as a dessert for a very long time in Shan State and in Myanmar. In some regions, Mont Si Kyaw is specially served at religious ceremonies. It is round and some people make it in a large lunch-plate size, while others make it in a smaller size.

Ingredients

Sticky rice flour	400 g
Rice flour	50 g
Toddy sugar	160 g
Crushed groundnut	2 tbsp
Ground sesame seeds	2 tbsp
Hot water	0.5 litre
Salt	½ tsp
Oil	0.5 litre
Coconut	1 (optional)



Dip and fry Mont Si Kyaw in hot oil



Rinse off oil from Mont Si Kyaw

Preparation

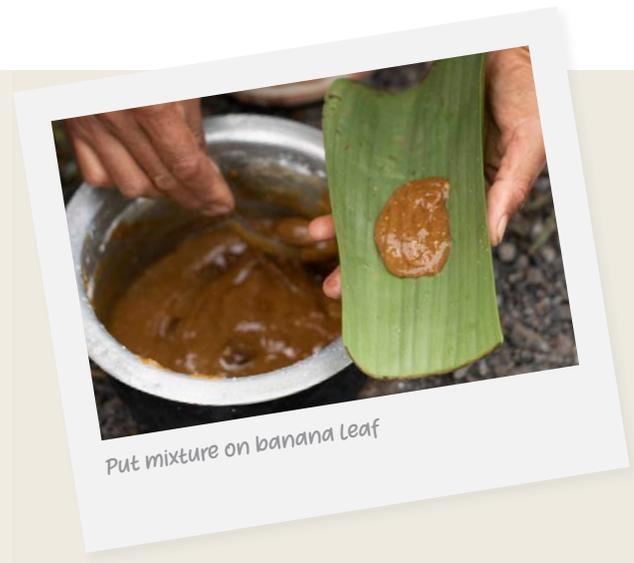
Mix the sticky rice flour, rice flour, crushed groundnut and sesame seeds with salt and mix them all. Soak the toddy sugar in hot water for a while and boil them until it melts properly and forms a thin syrup. Filter the syrup through a fine sieve to remove particles and let it cool. Slowly pour the syrup into the mixture, while stirring with a spoon until properly mixed. With this ratio, the final snack will be soft in texture and by adding a little more water, the final snack will become crispier. Put oil into a pan and heat it. Use a metal cooking spoon for frying. Take a spoonful of the mixture and dip slowly into the hot oil and fry it. Remove the spoon slowly and the soft flat snack will remain in the oil. Turn it over about twice in 3 minutes. Then, the fried Mont Si Kyaw can be removed from the oil. If you fry it for longer, it will become harder in texture. Rinse off the oil. The snack is best eaten warm. If you prefer, grated coconuts can be added as a garnish on the snack.

4.4. Mont Phat Htoke (Pa Laung Style)

Mont Phat Htoke is a famous dessert that people of all ages enjoy. There are differences in how it is prepared but here we present the traditional Pa Laung-style snack.

Ingredients

Sticky rice flour	250 g
Banana leaves	15 small pieces (for packing)
Toddy sugar syrup (thick)	4 cooking spoons
Water	1 cup
Roasted groundnut	70 g
Roasted sesame	70 g
Oil	1 tsp



Preparation

Cut the banana leaves to a suitable size for the stuffing. In order to facilitate the wrapping, the banana leaves should be boiled in hot water or roasted on the fire for a while, making them soft but still firm in texture. Put the sticky rice flour in a large bowl and slowly pour the toddy sugar syrup and stir well. Add the ground groundnut and sesame seeds into the mixture and mix well until the mixture becomes sticky. Wipe the banana leaves with a few drops of oil, so that the mixture does not stick to the banana leaves and is easy to remove when eating. Put an appropriate amount of mixture on the piece of banana leaf, and wrap firmly. Place the wrapped packs on the steaming tray. Boil the water and steam the packs on top for 30 minutes. The steamed Mont Phat Htoke are then ready to serve warm.

Mont Phat Htoke
(Pa Laung Style)



4.5. Traditional Tea Leaf Salad (Fermented tea leaf salad)

The fermented tea leaves of Shan State are unique among all tea-producing regions across the world. Nearly all families with tea plantations in Shan State make their own fermented tea leaves at home, mainly for home consumption but also sometimes for commercial trade purposes.

Raw fermented tea leaves from Shan State are easily accessible in small or big markets across the entire country, as tea leaf salad is the favourite dish of the Myanmar people, eaten as a snack with hot green tea or eaten with white rice as a dish. There are many recipes to prepare fermented tea leaf salad, but basically there are two simple ways: tea leaves and ingredients served separately, or a mixture of all ingredients served as a colourful salad. Normally, in Shan State homes, fermented tea leaf salad is served as separate ingredients on a plate and offered with hot green tea to visitors.



Ingredients

Fermented tea leaves	50 g
Tomato	1 (medium size)
Garlic	5 cloves
Fresh green chilies	3
Lemon	1
Dried prawn	20 g
Peanut oil	2 tbsp
Salt	1 tsp
Mixed fried beans	50 g
Fried garlic	10 g
Roasted sesame	5 g

Preparation

Rinse fermented tea leaves with clean water twice to reduce the bitter taste. Squeeze water well and put in a bowl. Add peanut oil, salt, and lemon juice into the tea leaves, mix well and set aside. Wash the tomato and lemon and cut into small slices. Peel the garlic cloves and wash green chilies and set aside. Finally, place the prepared ingredients one by one in the compartments in the traditional tea-leaf lacquerware tray. The traditional tea leaf salad is ready to serve with mixed fried beans, fried garlic and roasted sesame seeds. You can mix the ingredients together by yourself by adding items in your mouth. These are so delicious!

4.6. Avocado Dishes

Avocado is the most common fruit in Southern Shan State and is eaten as fresh fruit as a dessert or snack. It is also popular as a cold drink prepared with milk. Avocado salad is eaten as a snack after a meal.

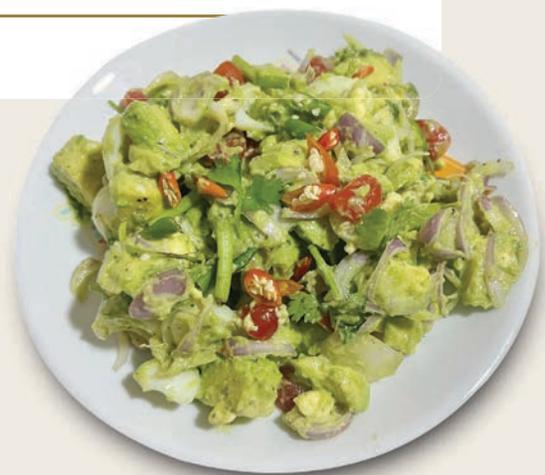
4.6.1. Avocado Salad

Ingredients

Fairly ripe avocados	3 (small)
Onion	1 bulb (medium size)
Tomato	1 (medium size)
Fresh green chilies	2
Lemon	1
Oil	1 tbsp
Salt	½ tsp

Preparation

Peel the fairly ripe avocados and cut into small cubes. Cut the tomato and onion into small cubes. Slice green chilies into small pieces. Mix all ingredients into a bowl, add salt, oil and lime juice and mix well. The delicious sweet, sour and spicy avocado salad is now ready to serve.



4.6.2 Avocado Dessert

Ingredients

Ripe avocado (hard)	1
Sugar	1 tsp
Lemon	1 (small)

Preparation

Remove the skin of the fruit, cut into halves and remove the seed. Make thin slices from the fruit and put on a plate. Cut the lemon and squeeze lemon juice on the avocado slices. Add a little sugar. The avocado is now ready to be served as a dessert.



4.6.3. Avocado Juice

Avocado juice is very famous across the country.

Ingredients

Softly ripened avocado	1 (medium size)
Sterilized milk	300 ml
Sugar	2 tsp
Ice cubes	A few

Preparation

Remove the skin and seed from the avocado, cut and put into a fruit juicer/electric blender. Add milk, sugar and mix well to become smooth juice. Put ice cubes into the glass and pour the avocado juice. It is now ready to be served cold.





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