

# Cultural Awareness Monthly Highlight: China



Photo by Sara Sullivan

**Culture:** China is an extremely large country, and culture has been around for almost 5,000 years, and the customs and traditions of its people vary by geography and ethnicity. More than 1 billion people live in China, according to the Asia Society, representing 56 ethnic minority groups. The largest group is the Han Chinese, with about 900 million people. China was culture was rich in Science and Art.

**Arts:** Chinese art traditions are the oldest continuous art traditions in the world. Early forms of art in China are found in the Neolithic Yangshao culture, which dates back to the sixth millennium B.C.E. Jade carvings and cast bronzes are among the earliest treasures of Chinese art.

**Language:** There are many different languages spoken in China, including Mandarin, Yue, Wu, Minbei, Minnan, Xiang, Gan and Hakka. Hello: 你好 Nǐ hǎo and Goodbye: 再見 Zàijiàn

**Music:** Some instruments they use are, the Guzheng, Pipa, and the Erhu. The Erhu is a traditional musical instrument in China. The Erhu is a string instrument violin-like instrument it needs a bow just like a violin but, a Erhu only has two strings. Most of the Chinese music has a Classical melody. You can listen to one here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOUW4IpwFAE>

## Celebrations:

- **Chinese New Year**- Jan. 27 to Feb. 11, 2018 (within 15 days of February 5)
- **Chinese Dragon Festival** - May 30, 2018 (month 5 day 5 of the Chinese lunar calendar)
- **Chinese Lantern Festival** - March 2, 2018 (within 15 days of February 20)
- **Double Seventh Day "Chinese Valentine's Day"**- August 17, 2018 (7th day of the 7th month of China's lunar calendar)



## Fun Facts:

- China has the largest population in the world with over 1.3 billion people (1,343,239,923) as of July 2012.
- China experiences typhoons every year and also suffers from floods, tsunamis, earthquakes and droughts.
- The Great Wall of China is the largest man made structure in the world, stretching an incredible 8,850 kilometres (5,500 miles).
- China is the second largest economy in the world, after the United States of America.



Charlotte and Daisy Liettermann

Gavin Dai  
and his family

## Recipes to Try:

### Kong Pao Chicken

#### Ingredients:

For the chicken:

- 2 boneless chicken breasts
- 3 garlic cloves
- An equivalent amount of ginger
- 5 spring onions, white parts only
- Handful of dried chiles (about 10)
- 2 tbs cooking oil
- 1 tsp whole Sichuan pepper
- 3 oz (75 grams) roasted peanuts

For the marinade:

- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- 2 tsp light soy sauce
- 1 tsp Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry or vermouth)
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp potato starch or cornstarch

For the sauce:

- 1 tbs sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp dark soy sauce
- 1 tsp light soy sauce
- 1 tbs Chinkiang vinegar (or balsamic vinegar)
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1 tbs chicken stock/broth or water

Directions:

Cut chicken as evenly as possible into half-inch strips, then cut strips into small cubes. Place in a small bowl. Add marinade ingredients and 1 tbs water to bowl. Mix well and set aside. Peel and thinly slice garlic and ginger. Chop spring onions into chunks as long as their diameter (to match chicken cubes). Snip chiles in half or into sections, discarding their seeds. In a small bowl, combine the sauce ingredients. Heat a seasoned wok over a high flame. Add oil, chiles and Sichuan pepper and stir-fry briefly until chiles are darkening but not burned. (Remove wok from heat if necessary to prevent overheating). Quickly add chicken and stir-fry over a high flame, stirring constantly. As soon as chicken cubes have separated, add ginger, garlic and spring onions and continue to stir-fry until they are fragrant and meat is just cooked through (test one of the larger pieces to make sure). Give sauce a stir and add to wok, continuing to stir and toss. As soon as the sauce has become thick and shiny, add the peanuts, stir them in and serve.

Tip:

Store-bought roasted peanuts work well here, but if you want to roast your own peanuts, heat oven to 250 degrees. Place raw nuts on an oven tray and roast for 15-20 minutes, until fragrant and very slightly golden. (Keep an eye on them, as they burn easily). Cool nuts on a plate, then rub nuts between your fingertips to loosen their skins. Shake nuts as you blow over them; skins will blow away.