GENERAL

all under heaven recipes from the 35 cuisines of china

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All Under Heaven Recipes from the 35 Cuisines of China

When you think of Chinese food, images of steaming dim sum, sizzling hot pot, and fragrant Peking duck often come to mind. Yet the culinary landscape of China stretches far beyond these iconic dishes. With 35 officially recognized regional cuisines—each a tapestry of local history, geography, and culture—there is an almost endless variety of flavors waiting to be explored. In this guide, we take you on a journey across the breadth of China's culinary heritage, offering a curated collection of "all under heaven" recipes that showcase the diversity and depth of the 35 cuisines. Whether you're a seasoned home cook or a curious foodie, these recipes will help you bring authentic Chinese flavors into your kitchen.

Understanding China's 35 Cuisines: A Brief Overview

What Does "All Under Heaven" Mean?

The phrase "all under heaven" (Yì)Nç,†ž) is a poetic way to refer to the entire world. In the context of Chinese cuisine, it evokes the idea that every corner of the country has its own culinary identity, yet all share a common thread of cultural heritage. Each of the 35 regional cuisines—often grouped into the eight major culinary traditions—reflects distinct ingredients, techniques, and philosophies that have evolved over centuries.

Why 35 Cuisines? A Historical Snapshot

The concept of 35 regional cuisines emerged during the late Qing dynasty, when scholars began systematizing China's culinary diversity. The number 35 does not simply count provinces; it considers sub regions, historical kingdoms, and even city state culinary styles. The list includes the famous eight major traditions—Shandong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Fujian, Hunan, Guangdong, Sichuan—plus 27 additional styles that capture the nuances of local tastes and resources.

Exploring the 35 Cuisines: Highlights and Signature Dishes

1. Shandong (œ•ƒÜ, L F> '•

Shandong cuisine is known for its emphasis on fresh, high quality ingredients and a delicate balance of flavors. It pioneered techniques like braising, roasting, and deep frying that are now staples across China.

- Dezhou Braised Chicken (_·]ÞbRž!) – a tender, soy marinated chicken with a glossy glaze.
- Sweet and Sour Carp (|Ö'‹œ¤œ|) – bright, tangy, and slightly sweet.
- Shandong Scallion Pancake („ql¹™|) – flaky, aromatic, and perfect for breakfast.

2. Jiangsu (‚ÏƒÜ, S ¶> '•

Jiangsu cuisine is celebrated for its refined techniques, subtle seasoning, and emphasis on texture. Its dishes often showcase the natural sweetness of local produce.

- Sweet and Sour Mandarin Fish (|Ö'‹œÜœ|) – a classic dish with a crisp exterior.
- Red Braised Pork Belly (~¢pç€‰) – succulent pork in a rich, caramelized sauce.
- Yangzhou Fried Rice (bl]Þp'™m) – a fragrant, colorful medley.

3. Zhejiang (mYƒÜ, Zhècài)

Zhejiang cuisine focuses on freshness and natural flavors, often featuring seafood and freshwater fish from the region's abundant rivers and lakes.

- West Lake Fish in Vinegar Gravy (‰•nV'‹œ|) – silky fish with a tangy, sweet sauce.
- Dongpo Pork (N Wa€‰) – pork belly cooked to melt in your mouth perfection.
- Longjing Shrimp (Ÿ™N•†~NÁ) – shrimp sautéed with Longjing tea.

4. Anhui (_½ƒÜ, Hu ¶> '•

Characterized by its use of wild herbs and rustic cooking methods, Anhui cuisine offers earthy, smoky flavors that reflect its mountainous terrain.

- Stewed Bamboo Shoots (zù{ p–) – tender bamboo shoots in a savory broth.
- Stir Fried Salted Duck (vÐq ž-) – crispy skin with a rich, aromatic filling.
- Huangshan Chicken (žÄ\qž!) – free range chicken simmered with herbs.

5. Fujian (•ýƒÜ, M æ> '•

Fujian cuisine is renowned for its soups and delicate seasoning. It emphasizes the harmony of sweet, sour, salty, and umami.

- Fish Ball Soup (œ|N8ld) – clear broth with delicate fish balls.
- Red Cooked Pork (~¢pç€‰) – similar to Jiangsu but with a slightly sweeter sauce.
- Fujian Fish Head (•ýœ|Y4) – head fish braised in a fragrant sauce.

6. Hunan (nXƒÜ, Xi æ> '•

Known for its bold, spicy flavors, Hunan cuisine uses generous amounts of chili, garlic, and peppercorns. It's hearty, fiery, and unforgettable.

- Spicy Fish Head (RAi œ|Y4) – fish head topped with crushed chili.
- Stir Fried Spicy Pork (SãTs†~) – pork sautéed with a fiery sauce.
- Steamed Egg Tofu („¸†Ë•¹) – silky tofu with a subtle heat.

7. Guangdong (|¤ƒÜ, Yuècài)

Perhaps the most internationally recognized style, Guangdong cuisine is famed for its dim sum, seafood, and balanced flavors that avoid excessive heat.

- Char Si (SÉpç) – honey glazed barbecued pork.
- Steamed Fish (n „¸œ|) – whole fish steamed with ginger and scallions.
- Dim Sum Variety (p¹_Ã) – a selection of dumplings, buns, and rolls.

8. Sichuan (]ÝƒÜ, Chu æ> '•

Sichuan cuisine is synonymous with numbing spice, thanks to the use of Sichuan peppercorns. It also embraces bold, complex flavor profiles.

- Mapo Tofu (ž»ZFŒF•P) – tofu in a spicy, numbing sauce.
- Kung Pao Chicken ([«OÝž!N) – chicken stir fried with peanuts and chili.
- Hot Pot (pk•) – communal, spicy broth with a variety of ingredients.

Beyond these eight major traditions, the remaining 27 cuisines—such as Shanxi, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Xinjiang—offer equally compelling dishes. Each brings a unique blend of local ingredients and cooking philosophies, ensuring that "all under heaven" truly captures the full spectrum of Chinese culinary artistry.

All Under Heaven Recipes: A Curated Selection

Below is a hand picked list of recipes that represent the diversity of China's 35 cuisines. Each recipe includes a brief overview, key ingredients, and a concise cooking guide. These dishes are approachable for home cooks yet authentic enough to impress even the most discerning palates.

- Shandong Braised Chicken – Shandong
- Jiangsu Sweet and Sour Mandarin Fish – Jiangsu
- Zhejiang West Lake Fish in Vinegar Gravy – Zhejiang
- Anhui Stewed Bamboo Shoots – Anhui
- Fujian Fish Ball Soup – Fujian
- Hunan Spicy Fish Head – Hunan
- Guangdong Char Si – Guangdong
- Sichuan Mapo Tofu – Sichuan
- Yunnan Mushroom Hot Pot – Yunnan
- Xinjiang Lamb Kebabs – Xinjiang

Recipe 1: Shandong Braised Chicken (Dezhou Ba Ji)

Ingredients:

- Whole chicken (1.5–2 /kg)
- Shaoxing wine (50 /ml)
- Light soy sauce (60 /ml)
- Dark soy sauce (30 /ml)
- Hoisin sauce (20 /ml)
- Ginger (2 /cm, sliced)
- Scallions (3, cut into 5 /cm lengths)
- Star anise (2)
- Cloves (3)
- Salt (to taste)
- Water (enough to cover the chicken)

Method:

1. Rinse the chicken and pat dry.
2. In a large pot, combine all seasonings, water, and the chicken. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 45 /minutes, turning the chicken occasionally.
4. Remove the chicken, let it rest, then slice into serving portions.
5. Serve with the braising liquid poured over the pieces.

Recipe 2: Jiangsu Sweet and Sour Mandarin Fish

Ingredients:

Baca Juga (Artikel Terkait)

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