

Steve Ogden

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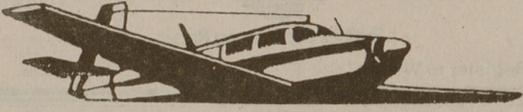
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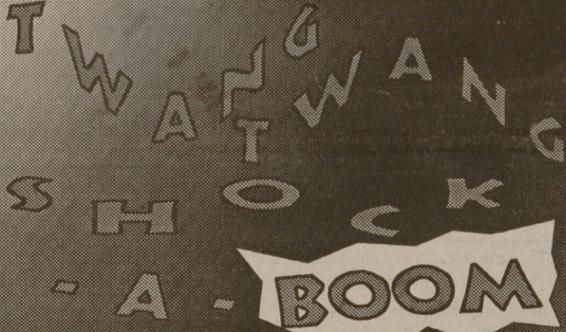


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Culture

Continued from page 3

tive theatrical performances and art exhibitions to preserve and nurture an appreciation of traditional Chinese artistic values.

It also has supported newer methods of expression, such as a modern ballet company, shows of contemporary painting and sculpture and performances of Western music.

International trends in clothing and lifestyles quickly reach Taiwan, which makes many Western-style goods for export.

Domestic television carries many foreign programs and liberalization of import restrictions in the 1980s brought on an invasion of foreign fast food, cosmetics and other items.

Both traditional Chinese exercises and modern Western sports like baseball are popular. Additionally, several national parks have been created in wilderness areas.

Cultural enrichment of the past two decades has been made possible because of the transformation of Taiwan's economy from agricultural to industrial.

Taiwan ranks among the top 12 trading countries in the world and is

the United States' fifth largest trading partner worldwide.

It is the second wealthiest nation in Asia behind Japan and enjoys one of the highest living standards in the Eastern hemisphere. Between the 1950s and 1980s, per capita personal income doubled five times.

Natural resources, however, are not a large part of the Taiwan economy.

More than 50 minerals have been found in Taiwan, but total mineral resources are modest.

In the north, copper, gold, iron, sulfur and pyrite are found in small amounts. Limestone, marble and dolomite are abundant, but their extraction contributes little to the economy.

The continental shelf may contain extensive oil and gas reserves, but the areas have not been extensively explored for drilling.

Taiwan's people are its greatest resource.

The pleasure the Chinese take in the art of hospitality is based on a unique Chinese cultural trait known as *ren-ching-wei*, "the flavor of human feeling."

Peng

Continued from page 3

no variety in most Americans' diets."

Peng says food can be a cultural experience in Taiwan. She says people can get food at almost any time during the day at little stands at small markets.

"You can get almost anything at these night markets," she says. "You can shop for clothes or gifts or almost any food. These little stands are an important part of our culture."

Peng says she hasn't been home for more than three years and is anxious to return. She says she will go back to Taiwan after she receives her Ph.D. in oceanography.

She says most of the Taiwanese students at A&M are graduate students and plan to return to Taiwan after they finish their studies in the United States.

"We all miss Taiwan very much," Peng says. "I plan to go back and work on environmental issues that are of great concern to my country."

Peng says most Taiwanese students come to A&M for a quality education. She says undergraduate work in the United States is more difficult than in Taiwan.

She also says each country's approach to education is different than the other's.

"In Taiwan, only 20,000 students are accepted out of 100,000 applications," Peng says. "It is very hard to get accepted but once you're in, life is much easier than at A&M."

Peng says the biggest problem most Taiwanese students face is speaking English. She says students who come to America to study usually have had six or seven years of formal English. Peng says it normally takes a year to learn how to speak English well.

"We learn grammar and spelling in school but that is a big difference from actually speaking the language," Peng says.

"Especially, when y'all have that Texas accent," she drawled, smiling.

Food

Continued from page 3

long to cook.

Because of the quick cooking process, the ingredients keep their color and fresh appearance.

Some of Chinese cuisine's unique appeal comes from the food itself.

Many ingredients are "exotic." For example, some Chinese dishes are made from sea slugs, tree fungi, entrails and snake meat.

Unusual spices also add a great deal to the taste of Chinese food. Flavors such as soy, oysters and plum sauces supplement other ingredients like fermented black beans and sesame seed.

Another reason Chinese food is popular is because very little food is wasted. Almost every part of an ingredient is used to create a unique meal.

Regional differences also provide variety in Chinese food. More than 1,000 recipes exist, and chefs constantly are coming up with new dishes.

Cantonese cooking is sweeter and more colorful than the meals of other areas. Steamed dumplings stuffed with meat, sweet paste or preserves have made this region's cuisine famous.

Szechuan food is like the food of most tropical countries, hot and peppery. Most dishes are made with small red chilis.

Shanghai food is salty and uses a lot of seafood in preparation of its unique meals.

Peiping food is common throughout northern China and is considered mild. Because the weather is cold, barbecued meats and dishes cooked at the table also are very popular.

Chinese meals are served differently than most meals.

The diners sit around a table which holds the main dish and the settings of a small plate, a porcelain spoon, a small soup bowl, a tiny white wine cup, a small saucer for soy sauce and a pair of chopsticks.

Although chopsticks are difficult to use at first, they are helpful because they extend the person's reach.

The meal starts with appetizers and is supplemented with desserts and soup. Two sweet dishes are served in the middle of the meal. Near the end of the meal, two meat dishes are served with bowls of rice.

Each guest helps himself to as much as he wants, and the dining group usually samples a little food from every dish on the table.

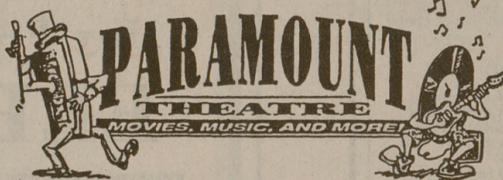
Cantonese food is the most popular restaurant food. Cookbooks, however, also describe how to cook other dishes from other regions in China.

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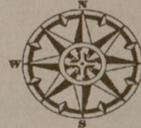
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