



Wok Wisely: Chinese Vegetarian Cooking: A Monastery's Approach to Food and Spiritual Well Being

Dharma Realm Cookbook Team

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A Buddhist monastery has taken the “you are what you eat” adage one step further by suggesting that inner peace starts with what you put in your mouth.

Looking for a recipe for Wishing-You-Well Soybean Sprouts with Licorice-Flavored Water? You should be. In Buddhism, food is known as medicine, according to the thought-provoking *Wok Wisely: Chinese Vegetarian Cooking, A Monastery's Approach to Food and Spiritual Well-Being*. The Dharma Realm Cookbook Team of Taiwan's inspiring collection of fifty-six recipes not only showcases the best in healthy Chinese vegetarian cooking, but the dishes within it can also nourish the mind, body, and spirit as well as positively impact the world at large.

Animals have a place at the table, the authors hold, not *on* the table, agreeing with novelist Alice Walker, who once said, “To eat a creature who is raised to be eaten, and who never has the chance to be a real being, is unhealthy. You're eating a bitter life.” They also caution that the Buddha believed pungent plants adversely affect consciousness, so you won't find garlic, onion, or leeks in any of their meals.

Each recipe, whether side dish, main dish, noodle, or soup, is broken down into an ingredients list, directions, variations, tips, and cautions (where applicable). Each recipe is clearly outlined and blissfully simple, requiring only a handful of ingredients.

There are dishes to expand your experience with Asian cooking, like Bitter Melon with Preserved Turnip Tops, and there are also variations on well-known classics such as Hot and Sour Chinese Soup and Wild String Beans with Toasted Black Sesame Seeds.

A series of essays sprinkled among the recipes reinforces the collection's emphasis on mindful eating, covering topics like safe household cleaners, and the difference between killing animals and killing plants. The recipes are also preceded by a chapter on vegetarian health issues and excerpts on eating appropriate to the season, raising vegetarian children, and foods like broths and sprouts that you can prepare in advance.

Wok Wisely is not your average cookbook; it's a wellness guide for supporting health and protecting life.

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