

Street Food Asia

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Whether eating fiery som tum on a bustling Bangkok street, slurping pho in Vietnam perched on a red plastic stool, inhaling the galangal, lemongrass and coconut-infused air of Jakarta, or being seduced by heady wafts of succulent satay as it grills in Kuala Lumpur, there's nothing more alluring than street food. I love, love, love it, in all its permutations. When I travel, my top priority is hitting the pavement in search of interesting things to eat, making sure I do this at a slow pace and with my ears, eyes and nose on constant red alert. Down alleys and around every bend in the road, there's a tucked-away kitchen or mobile cart dispensing hot, smoky, freshly cooked deliciousness and I don't want to miss a single edible thing. Discovering local street food is the best way I know to understand a place and instantly feel connected to it. It's my ultimate buzz and the fact that it comes complete with flames, steam, smoke, smells, sounds, colour, heat, energy, good vibes and a ton of flavour, only makes it better. Now I want to take you with me on an adventure to some of my favourite Asian nooks and crannies; places where fantastic street food still reigns supreme. All over South-East Asia, the street food repertoire is vast. Getting to know every dish and its regional spin-offs would take a lifetime and that's part of the allure; there's so much to know and I'm constantly making new discoveries. The adventure isn't just about uncovering the technicalities of a particular dish though as there are also, invariably, fascinating backstories and compelling snippets of family and food history involved. And then there are the dedicated cooks. I love watching street cooks work; I love hearing their stories, I love seeing the skill, care and passion they put into every dish they make. Cooks tend to be generous people and nowhere more so than on the street; I gain so much in knowledge and in my humanity every time I get out among authentic street food action. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2.5 billion people globally eat street food every day. Street food evolved around necessity; people had tiny living spaces so home kitchens weren't an option and, in some countries, this still holds true for many. Mobile food hawking is a way to get nutritious, affordable, varied, ready-cooked food to the urban masses while supporting local economies; food vendors tend to purchase from the nearest market, stocked with local produce, according to what is in season. Less tangible benefits of street food culture include the preservation of traditional cooking styles and the fostering of community. Yes, street cooking is evolving, particularly in more developed places. But most often, street food dishes are cooked according to strict tradition, often passed down through generations of family stall-owners. Street food brings people together, as folk crowd onto their neighbourhood streets to share meals and conversation at their favourite stall. Some vendors operate in the same spot for decades, giving a sense of continuation that can span several generations. And while Asian cities modernise at a rampant pace, with glimmering malls replacing gritty old laneways and younger generations becoming wealthier and more sophisticated by the nanosecond, street eating isn't going anywhere yet. It continues to cut across age, gender, religion, economic status

and every other demography you'd care to mention. It's at the core of the very fabric of cities like Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Saigon, making visits to these places just one giant excuse to eat amazingly good food, outdoors. In this book, I want to take you with me as I delve into the street food scenes that thrive across some of my all-time favourite Asian cities. You'll find full recipes, as well as stories about some of the amazing dishes I came across on my travels, and where you can find them when you visit. Even if you can't be there in person, you can still create the smells, sounds, energy and flavours at home, in your very own kitchen, by cooking these recipes. I hope also that when you read about the vendors and street food cooks that have become special to me, and from whom I have learned so much, you'll be inspired to seek them out when you do find yourself in Bangkok or Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur or Saigon. Eating their food, in situ, is the best kind of culinary travel experience you could possibly have.

Saigon. Crazy-hecktic and developing at an astounding pace, it's got an energy and dynamism you can almost smell. I totally love it. Maybe I'm biased though, as the city is now my second home. It's also where my family came from before they moved to Australia all those years ago, so the place is virtually in my DNA. Naturally I'm addicted to the street food, and I practically trip over it every day because this town is one heaving smorgasbord of outdoor dining options, wherever you venture or look. Seafood, fresh herbs, prodigious varieties of vegetables, sweetish, light flavours, and simple cooking styles are the hallmarks of Saigon's food, though being Vietnam's biggest city, there's plenty of regional fare from other corners of the country on offer too. Throw in some French influence (you haven't lived until you've had Vietnamese drip coffee with condensed milk, or a crunchy-fluffy baguette filled with local charcuterie) and an uber-vibrant Chinatown and you've got an incredibly rich street food repertoire. The locals all have their favourite food haunts and one of mine is Cô Giang Street in District 1. I like to come here early, when it's still a little calm, and breakfast on bún thịt nướng, which consists of honey-marinated grilled pork, springy rice noodles, herbs, pickled vegetables, spring rolls and peanuts. This dish, typical of Saigon cuisine, contains every texture imaginable – crunchy, slippery, chewy, snappy, slurpy. During the day, as I poke around streets and back alleys across Saigon's 24 districts, I can't stop grazing on tasty little snacks. Like bán họt: crisp, soft-centred ‘pancakes’ made in special pans using a turmeric-scented batter. You eat them with fresh herbs, wrapped in lettuce leaves and dipped in nuoc cham, or sweetened fish sauce. Then there are Saigon's myriad soups, which are perfect for this hot climate. Súp cua óc heo, or crab soup with pork brain, is light and fragrant and way more delicious than it might sound. Bún măm is a porky-seafoody noodle soup dish based on pungent, fermented anchovy stock that's really typical of this part of Vietnam, and another favourite dish. And, of course, there's phở. When people ask where I get the best phở (and they always do), I take them down an alleyway in District 1, through clouds of spice-infused steam, where the family at Phở Ngoc have been making this iconic dish for 40 years. Coming here is like being fed by your grandmother; the atmosphere is warm and the phở is indescribably good. As night settles, the pace on the street intensifies, with scooters, cyclists and taxis zeroing in on favourite evening eats. I like to hang out in non-touristy District 4, where my uncle lives. The fragrance of lemongrass, lime, black pepper and garlic oil hangs in the air and there's cooking – and eating – activity right on the pavements. Uncle Four has shown me all his special haunts and now, if you come with me, I'll share them with you too.

CHARGILLED PORK SKEWERS WITH VERMICELLI NOODLE SALAD BÚN THỊT NƯỚNG Cô Giang Street in Saigon's District 1 is hands-down one of my favourite food streets. As you walk down it, you can see and smell clouds of rich aroma percolating in the air. Where it crosses with Đề Thám Street is my go-to place for this noodle dish, one of the few Vietnamese noodle dishes to be eaten without a broth but, instead, with the popular Vietnamese dipping sauce nuoc cham, and lots of it too – enough to immerse the vermicelli and the fresh herbs. The pork skewers, which are traditionally made up on lemongrass stems, are chargilled over charcoal, and the aromas of the

lemongrass and the herbs are bewitching. SERVES 4

2 tablespoons sugar

4 tablespoons fish sauce

1 tablespoon honey

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

6 spring onions (scallions), white parts thinly sliced, plus a few green ends, sliced, to garnish

2 garlic cloves, finely diced

500 g (1 lb 2 oz) pork neck, thinly cut across the grain into 3 mm (1/8 in) thick slices

2 tablespoons vegetable oil **VERMICELLI NOODLE SALAD**

250 g (9 oz) rice vermicelli noodles, cooked according to packet instructions

5 mint leaves, roughly sliced

5 perilla leaves (see [glossary](#)), roughly sliced

5 Vietnamese mint leaves, roughly sliced

1 Lebanese (short) cucumber, halved lengthways and sliced

2 handfuls bean sprouts

125 ml (4 fl oz) Nuoc Cham

4 tablespoons Spring Onion Oil

4 tablespoons Fried Red Asian Shallots

4 tablespoons crushed roasted peanuts In a large mixing bowl, combine the sugar, fish sauce, honey and pepper. Mix until the sugar has dissolved. Pound the white parts of the spring onions to a paste using a mortar and pestle, then add to the bowl with the garlic and pork. Toss to coat the pork well, then pour over the vegetable oil. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 2 hours, or overnight for an even tastier result. When you're nearly ready to cook, soak 12 bamboo skewers in water for 20 minutes to prevent scorching. Once marinated, thread the pork onto the skewers, discarding the remaining marinade. Heat a chargrill pan or barbecue chargrill to medium-high. Chargrill the pork skewers, for 1-2 minutes on each side, or until the meat is cooked through and nicely browned. Divide the noodles between four serving bowls. Top with the herbs, cucumber and bean sprouts, then sit the pork skewers on top. Drizzle over the nuoc cham and spring onion oil. Sprinkle with the fried shallots, crushed peanuts and green spring onion slices.

CHINESE DOUGHNUTS From the name you'll be able to guess that this dish originates in China, where it is typically eaten with congee for breakfast. In Saigon, these doughnuts are eaten either on their own or also with congee, while in the north of the country the locals enjoy theirs with a bowl of steaming pho. Crunchy on the outside, soft and doughy on the inside, they make a great snack. **MAKES 12**

450 g (1 lb) plain (all-purpose) flour

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)

vegetable oil, for deep-frying

sea salt Put the flour in a large bowl. Make a well in the middle and pour 250 ml (9 fl oz/1 cup) water into it, then add the sugar, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda and a pinch of sea salt. Mix all the ingredients together, then knead to form a soft, smooth dough either by hand or in a mixer fitted with a dough hook. Cover the dough with a tea towel (dish towel) and leave to rest in a warm place for about 30 minutes. Cover a baking sheet in a layer of plastic wrap. Turn the rested dough out onto a clean, lightly floured surface and knead for a further 1-2 minutes. Shape the dough into a flat loaf about 60 cm (24 in) long, 10 cm (4 in) wide and 1.5 cm (1/2 in) thick, taking the time to make it truly uniform. Place the dough in the centre of the prepared baking sheet and wrap it up in the plastic wrap, tucking the ends of the plastic under the loaf, and ensuring that the dough is completely covered. Cover with an extra layer of plastic wrap, transfer to the refrigerator and leave to rest for at least 7 hours, or overnight. Once rested, remove the dough from the refrigerator and leave it for 2 hours to reach room temperature, then cut it crossways into 1.5 cm (1/2 in) strips. Divide the strips into pairs, placing one strip on top of

the other. Using the back of your knife or a chopstick, press a line through the centre of each pair of strips without cutting all the way through (this will help shape the doughnuts). Half-fill a wok or large saucepan with vegetable oil and heat to 180°C (350°F), or until a cube of bread dropped into the oil browns in 15 seconds. Lower the dough pieces into the hot oil, in batches if necessary, and fry for 1½ minutes, turning them every 30 seconds, until golden brown and puffy. Remove the doughnuts with tongs or chopsticks and drain on paper towel before serving.

MINI RICE FLOUR POCKETS WITH TIGER PRAWNS & PRAWN FLOSS
Next on my Giang food crawl menu is this fantastic dish a miniature version of the typical Vietnamese savoury pancakes, traditionally eaten with lettuce cups or mustard leaves, fresh herbs and pickled veggies before being dunked in nuoc cham. These little pancakes are often cooked in a special cast-iron griddle pan over a high heat, which leaves the outside texture crispy while keeping the insides creamy and soft. **MAKES 8**

1 tablespoon dried mung beans, soaked in cold water overnight

4 cooked tiger prawns (shrimp), peeled and deveined

vegetable oil, for brushing

1 spring onion (scallion), green part only, thinly sliced

60 ml (2 fl oz) [Spring Onion Oil](#), for drizzling

60 ml (2 fl oz) [Nuoc Cham](#), for drizzling **PRAWN FLOSS**

6 cooked tiger prawns (shrimp), peeled, deveined and finely diced **BATTER**

125 g (4½ oz) rice flour

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

50 ml (2 fl oz) coconut cream

60 g (2½ oz) left-over cooked jasmine rice

sea salt Half-fill a steamer, wok or large saucepan with water and bring to a rapid boil over a high heat. Line a steamer basket or bamboo steamer with baking paper and punch a few small holes in the paper. Drain the mung beans and place them in the steamer, then set over the pan and cover with a lid. Steam for 15 minutes, or until the beans are soft. Set aside. To make the prawn floss, use a mortar and pestle to pound the diced prawns to a smooth paste. Place a small non-stick saucepan over a low heat, add the prawn paste and cook for 20–30 minutes, stirring the mixture regularly and pressing it down onto the bottom of the pan using the back of a fork, until the prawn meat is dry, fibrous and crisp. (The idea is to dry the prawn meat; it should not colour, and you should notice a small amount of steam being released from the prawns.) Remove from the heat and leave to cool to room temperature. For the batter, combine the rice flour, turmeric and a pinch of salt in a bowl and mix well. Add 250 ml (9 fl oz/1 cup) water, the coconut cream and the cooked rice and stir to combine, then blend until smooth with a hand-held blender. Slice the whole prawns in half lengthways, then slice each half into three pieces and set aside. Heat an eight-mould b&nh kh&t pan or a Dutch pancake pan (poffertjes pan) over a medium-high heat and brush the moulds with vegetable oil. Add a tablespoon of batter to each mould, turning the pan in a circular motion to run the batter up the edges of the moulds, then add a pinch each of steamed mung bean and sliced spring onion together with a few prawn pieces to each mould. Place the lid over the pan, reduce the heat slightly and cook for 2–3 minutes, or until the batter is cooked through. Using a teaspoon, remove the pockets from the moulds and transfer to a serving platter. Repeat the cooking process with any leftover batter and prawns. To serve, sprinkle a generous amount of the prawn floss over each pocket and drizzle with spring onion oil and nuoc cham.

FISHCAKE BAGUETTE

M&CH&C&C& Giang Market, District 1 VND 15,000

AUD \$1.00

If you look out onto the streets of Saigon in the early morning; or indeed anywhere across Vietnam; you will likely spot a woman in a conical hat, pushing her food cart to its destination. There, she brings out the kilos and kilos of fishcakes that she has prepared the night before and begins to deep-fry them in her large wok, where they slowly puff up and float in the oil

like fluffy clouds. Vietnamese fishcakes are usually chewy and are best served hot, so once cooked, they are sliced up and piled into soft, fresh baguettes with cucumber, chilli, soy sauce and perhaps a drizzle or two of chilli sauce for a little extra kick.

In *Street Food Asia*, join Luke Nguyen on a stroll through the heady, fragrant backstreets of Asia to discover street food at its very best. Pull up a stool for a bowl of pho in his beloved home city of Saigon, or explore a hawker stall in Kuala Lumpur. Soak up the coconut-infused air of Jakarta and immerse yourself in the smoke, heat and unmistakable buzz of a Bangkok night market.

From main streets to back alleys, Luke shares his insider knowledge, venturing out with acclaimed photographer Alan Benson at dawn and late into the night to meet roaming street vendors and stallholders. Vibrant local personalities, colourful photographs and stories about the most unique dishes – *Street Food Asia* brings one of the world’s richest food traditions to life.

About the author: Luke Nguyen is a renowned Vietnamese-Australian chef, best known for his television series *Luke Nguyen’s Vietnam*, *Luke Nguyen’s Greater Mekong* and more recently *Luke Nguyen’s France*. Born in a Thai refugee camp after his parents escaped their homeland in Vietnam, Luke’s family made their way to Australia where Luke was raised in Cabramatta. His parents opened and ran a Vietnamese restaurant called Pho Cay Du and it was this familial passion for food that first ignited Luke’s interest in Vietnamese cooking. After learning the basics from his parents, Luke trained with a number of respected chefs before opening The Red Lantern restaurant. Since then, The Red Lantern has become one of Sydney’s most acclaimed Vietnamese restaurants. Luke has written six cookbooks: *Secrets of the Red Lantern*, *Songs of Sapa*, *Indochine*, *Greater Mekong* and *The Food of Vietnam* and *Luke Nguyen's France*.

Routledge Handbook of Food in Asia - She was asked to curate a list of Cebuano street food and went on a process Jude and Myke Tatung Sarthou, chef and book author, who is also part that sets it apart from other street food in Asia also featured in the series. (PDF) Street Food. Culture, Economy, Health and Governance - Super Fresh. Super Fit. - Mai Chau - Viet inspired Street Food Asia Book - Not a Travel Book, a guide, or even a food book. â€œEating Viá»† Namâ€• is a memoir where the life of the author slowly become indistinguishable Vegetarian fresh spring rolls recipe from Street Food Asia by - six-two Asian Street Food Recipes - Jamie Geller - Welcome to Ramen, purveyors of fine Asian Street Food, National winners of Best Takeaway in Munster. (PDF) Street Food. Culture, Economy, Health and Governance

- Check our schedule to find where your next meal is parked or book a food truck for Hi, friends! thank you for checking our information. we are a Chinese street Food Of Kolkata - In his book Luke Nguyen's Street Food Asia: Saigon, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, you'll find all the must-know snacks, and below, we've KIN Street Food - The Asian Bazaar is held every Wednesday on the outdoor market from 10.30 to 5pm. The Leeds Record and Book Fair usually has around 25 stallholders with
â€œWe are delighted to bring to you this tasty event inspired by street food from Cambodia holidays: 6 street foods you should try - Recipes In Bangkok's Fragrant Street Food, City Planners See a Mess - ... to convert traditional Malaysian food from its low- to middlebrow street food image into This perceived need to elevate Malaysian food is dictated by the â€œglobal scholar Chen Kuan-Hsing critiques in his book Asia As Method (2010), for its AMK Hub Street Food Festival Has SEY Fried Chicken - Radisson Hotels

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