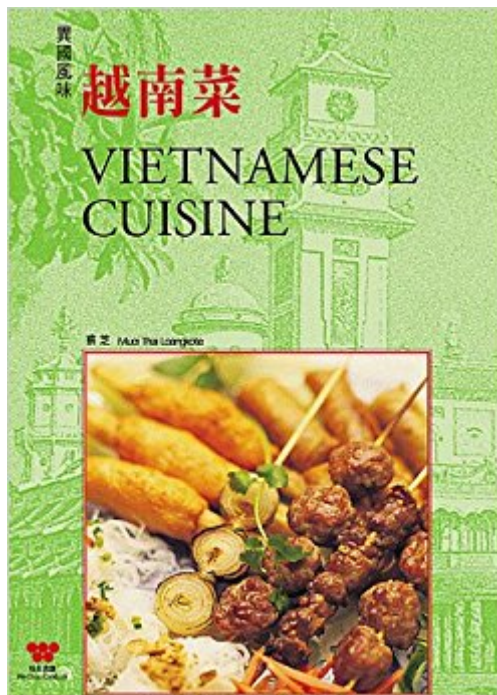


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# Vietnamese Cuisine



## Synopsis

Vietnamese cooking boasts truly unique flavours. Vietnamese cooking is composed of a great variety of main staples. Besides rice and breads, other ingredients include rice paper (banh trang), fresh rice noodles (banh pho), rice boodles (bun), tapioca sticks, and Vietnamese rice noodles. To facilitate the reader's access to and appreciation of Vietnamese cuisine, this cookbook is formatted with photographs to complement text and ingredients. Additionally, this book provides a special section on fragrant accompaniments and an array of sauces that showcase the traditional flavours of Vietnamese cuisine, including Fragrant Spices/Herbs, Sweet/Sour Carrots and Turnips, and several dipping sauces. This cookbook begins with an introductory section on commonly used sauces and ingredients for the reader's convenience when purchasing. With a total of 85 recipes, this book includes colour photographs of dishes and ingredients.

## Book Information

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: Wei Quan/ Tsai Fong Books; Bilingual edition (October 1, 1999)

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## Customer Reviews

VIETNAMESE CUISINE offers many easy to follow popular Vietnamese dishes. All the procedures and steps for cooking are presented in a clear and concise manner, utilizing modern home cooking methods anyone can follow. In addition, the bilingual translation provides for a broad community of interest. This is another addition to Wei-Chuan's international cuisine library upholding the excellent tradition established with our successful and popular "Chinese Cuisine", "Thai Cooking Made Easy", "Japanese Cuisine" and "Mexican Cooking Made Easy". Wei-Chuan Cookbooks have the advantage of: 1. A beautiful, large, full color photo of each finished recipe. Readers always know what the dish should look like. Many additional small step-by-step instructional photos are included.

2. Simple, clear and precise step-by-step instructions that help readers create any dish in their own kitchen. 3. All ingredient measurements are kitchen tested and re-tested. 4. Where appropriate, alternative suggestions for substituting ingredients and cooking techniques are provided. Permits purchase of ingredients in almost any market!

Mrs. Muoi T. Loangkote has been deeply involved in Vietnamese cooking since she was a child in Vietnam and had the good fortune to study under several famous chefs. This education provided her with the knowledge and skills to produce authentic popular dishes found throughout Vietnam. Fortunately, Su-Huei Huang, well known Asian food authority and the author and editor of many popular Wei-Chuan cookbooks, sampled Muoi's seductive cuisine, and was able to convince and guide her in the publication of this book.

Very nice cookbook with lots of mouth watering recipes, and they look authentic from what I've read. I love the fact that the directions are short and precise! Sometimes the directions from other cookbooks take a whole page or more, and that can be very daunting! I have several Chinese cookbooks from this series, and they're all good ones!

Good Ca Nuong Recipe. Nice picture and instructions. Overall a good book to start cooking vietnamese food. I tried the recipe for ca nuong, but the fish doesn't come out crispy like the restaurants.

A great book of reference for beginners.

The Wei-Chuan Publishing Company (apparently connected with the Taiwanese Wei-Chuan Cooking School), has produced a good number of Cookbooks, mostly dealing with Chinese cookery but also covering other Asian cuisines as well. I own over a dozen of these now and I like all of them. More importantly, I like all of these books for the same reasons and, accordingly, I have decided to do a general review that applies to each of them and then provide a few individualized comments where appropriate. Basically, the Wei-Chuan publications are authored/edited by several different persons but the format is largely the same. Each book is divided into logical sections (Meats, Vegetables, Appetizers, etc.) and nearly every recipe is accompanied by a good photograph of the result with some recipes having additional pictures of the preparation as well. This feature alone makes these books well worth the purchase. Another feature of this culinary series is

that the books are written in China and, at least as far as the books on Chinese cuisine is concerned, the reader need have no issues with 'authenticity'. I personally also like the fact that all of the books are written in Chinese characters and then translated into English. This has an added bonus of occasionally providing some unintentional amusement due to a particularly 'unfortunate' translation but I specially like it as I am teaching myself Mandarin and these books are excellent learning tools. I often take one on the plane with me when I travel (along with dictionaries) and can spend hours happily translating passages. It is amazing how often the actual translation of a recipe title bears little resemblance to the English title provided. Finally, I have to say that the recipes in all of these books are interesting and the ones that I have tried to reproduce have worked out well. Mainly though, I just like reading through these books for inspiration and enjoyment. The money I have spent has been repaid many times over. The Wei-Chuan books I currently own are as follows:

- Chinese Cuisine - Very good introductory section. Recipes range from simple everyday dishes to exotic banquet style delicacies.
- Chinese Dim Sum: Wei-Chuan Cultural and Educational Foundation - Great 'step-by-step' pictures for many recipes. Bit too much emphasis on sweet rather than savoury for my personal taste.
- Chinese Snacks - More of the same as in the Dim Sum book. No 'step-by-step' pictures but I actually like this book better.
- Chinese Appetizers and Garnishes - I haven't attempted much from this book but I am thankful for the great 'step-by-step' pictures provided.
- Favorite Home Dishes Chinese Cooking - As the name suggests, most of the recipes are simple and, thus, easy to prepare.
- Chinese Cuisine Beijing Style - Lots of Imperial Banquet dishes and many exotic foreign influenced meals that have been 'Chinesified'.
- Chinese Cuisine: Cantonese Style - 75 Cantonese recipes. Good recipes with nice pictures but a sparse introduction.
- Chinese Cuisine Shanghai Style - Typically good Wei-Chuan quality but probably my least favorite of the 'regional' Chinese cookbooks.
- Chinese Cuisine-Taiwanese Style - Excellent Book. Some truly unique recipes I have never seen elsewhere. I love to browse this volume.
- Chinese Cuisine: Szechuan Style - I love Szechuan food especially but I would still treat this book as a favorite anyway.
- Indian Cuisine - A nice book but be aware that the recipes Indian dishes for the Chinese palate, not Indian.
- Vietnamese Cuisine - Great recipes.
- Japanese Cuisine - Nearly as good as many books I have that are written by Japanese chefs.
- Korean Cuisine - My favorite of the Wei-Chuan non-Chinese cookbooks so far.
- Singaporean, Malaysian & Indonesian Cuisine - My least favorite Wei-Chuan book so far. Somewhat interesting but I don't look at it much.

Finally, I have a new Wei-Chuan book on order and will continue to buy from time to time. I will review separately as I read these new books.

I grew up in a multi-ethnic house, eating authentic Vietnamese food at least 5 days a week. I was very excited to find an illustrated cookbook that listed the dishes I wanted to cook, particularly since my mom and my favorite Vietnamese restaurant are both several hours away. I have to say, I was heartily disappointed with this cookbook. The recipes are close to what I know they SHOULD be, but something in them seems slightly off. I have a feeling that something was lost in the translation. This might be a good cookbook for those who already know what they're doing in the kitchen and just need inspiration, but it's definitely not for a new cook or someone new to Vietnamese cuisine. Your best bet with this book would be to look at the pictures and be creative. If you follow the recipes, you're likely to find disappointment.

The book is bilingual with instructions in both Chinese and English. Each section is graced with photos of the dishes. The book is flawed for its lack of details such as, time for preparation; and of procedures (either written or pictorial. Phrases such as, "Cook chicken until 80% done" - are not overly instructive. I would not recommend this book unless one is already familiar with cooking processes, Asian in particular. It does not give thorough background in either the history of the country nor dishes. This book also fails to teach a person on how to cook. There is an introduction of ingredients that does have photos but other than that you are on your own. IT is a simple repository of \*very\* modified recipes. The recipes are not quite right. An example is the "vietnamese pancake" or Ban Xeo which only uses wheat flour (try rice flour and potato starch) or the fact that the frequent sauces used section is missing caramel (an essential ingredient used in various stewed and stir fry dishes. Oh yes, the dipping sauce recipe is WAY off. You are much better off getting another Vietnamese cookbook to start you off such as, "Best of Vietnames and Thai Cooking" - Mai Pham which is an easy introduction to dishes and ingredients though somewhat westernized (not excessively). The Lonely Planet food guide to Viet Nam is better than this book - and that is not a cookbook but a guide to Vietnamese food. For the more hardcore go get Corinne Trang's "vietnamese cooking". If you are a collector and obsessed about having a complete collection then get this book but ONLY on a big discount. Not recommended for beginners and for advanced users it will be disappointing except as a possible cross reference for dishes.

I bought the Vietnamese Cuisine cookbook after reading the very favorable review in the LA Times. The review statement "The recipes so simple that anyone could make a Vietnamese meal without prior experience" is absolutely correct. The meal and procedure pictures were very helpful in preserving the authenticity of the dishes and I greatly appreciated the information on

ingredient substitution to retain the Vietnamese flavors and tastes. As a person with not much patience, I appreciated the concise and cogent instructions. Interestingly, I found the plastic cover made it easy to clean the book when I'm done with my typical "messy" cooking. Highly recommended.

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