

Macanese Gastronomy

Macanese Gastronomy is a fusion cuisine, based on Portuguese cuisine, and a blend of ingredients, spices and cooking methods from China, Africa, India, Japan, Malaysia and South Asian countries. Although it is under the great influence of Chinese and Portuguese cuisines, Macanese Gastronomy presents its own uniqueness.

Macanese cuisine was born after the settlement of the Portuguese in Macao in the mid-16th century, followed by people of different ethnicities from Africa, India, Japan, Malaysia and South Asian countries.

Minchi (Stir-fried Minced Meat)

Minchi is a typical dish of Macanese cuisine. Easy to prepare, the dish consists of minced meat (beef or pork or combined) seasoned with light and dark *sutate* (soy sauces), salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce. The meat must be well sautéed over moderate to high fire so that it becomes loose and without meat lumps. *Minchi* is accompanied by deep-fried small cubed potatoes and served with white rice, topped with a fried egg as an option.

Serving *Minchi* with a fried egg is associated with the religious belief of the Macanese. The egg, with the yellow yolk in the center of the egg white, represents the color of the Holy See.

In addition to pork and beef, *Minchi* can also be prepared with fish fillets, preferably *nairo*/sea bass and grouper, chicken and other types of poultry, and seasoned with other condiments, spices and ingredients, namely *balichão* (shrimp paste), turmeric, bitter melon and preserved vegetables.

Porco Balichão Tamarindo (Pork Stew)

It is a pork stew with a sauce prepared with *balichão* and dried tamarind water.

Balichão is a sauce made from shrimp paste, marinated with Chinese wine or brandy, spices such as cloves, cassia and black peppercorns, bay leaves, lemon and salt. To produce a good *balichão*, it is necessary to let it rest for at least two to three months in order to allow enough time for fermentation.

Balichão is usually served with *arroz carregado* which is a rice ball prepared with lard and chopped chives. After cooking the rice with the ingredients, it is pressed and then cut into squares.

Tacho (Assorted Meat Stew)

Tacho, also known as *Chau-chau Pele*, is an assorted meat stew similar to the Portuguese dish *Cozido à Portuguesa*. *Tacho* is made with beef, pork and chicken, pork ear, dehydrated pork skin, Chinese ham, Chinese sausages and preserved duck.

Tacho is heavy with a strong taste, usually served in winter, especially during the Christmas season.

Porco Bafassá (Braised and Roasted Pork)

The term *Bafassá* is a word in *Patuá*. *Bafá* means to braise and *Assá* to roast. It is a traditional Macanese dish prepared with pork, preferably with flank, leg ham or pork butt. However, pork loin is recommended if meat with less fat is preferred.

The meat is first seasoned with turmeric and salt and marinated in garlic sauce. While being halfway stewed in a closed pan, it is taken out for roasting until completely cooked. The dish is accompanied by potatoes cooked in the meat juice and white rice.

Bolo Menino (Almond and Coconut Cake)

This is a very typical and popular cake of the Macanese confectionery. With a fluffy and spongy texture, it is a flourless cake made with almonds, Chinese olive seeds or pine nuts, grated coconut, grated cookies or soybean powder and eggs.

This cake is usually served on special occasions such as birthdays, baptisms, Christmas and Easter.

Macanese Association
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