

Unique Food Culture in Thailand

Nimacimu, Wei Su *

Jilin International Studies University, Changchun, Jilin 130117, China

* Corresponding author: Wei Su

Abstract: Food culture refers to a special regional society of food farming, eating habits, eating etiquette. Each place, each country has its own unique food culture, Thai food culture is extensive and profound, not only reflected in the taste, aroma, more is reflected in the entire Thai cultural system. Through the introduction of Thailand's climate, agricultural structure, food hobbies, special food, etc., people have a basic understanding of Thai food culture and food preferences, and popularize Thai table manners. It is very important to respect other cultures.

Keywords: Topography Climate; Agricultural Cultivation; Table Manners Thai Food.

1. Conditions that Affect Thai Diet

1.1. Topography and Climate of Thailand

1) Terrain: Thailand is a country dominated by plains, with flat terrain in most areas. Thailand is high in the northwest and low in the southeast. The northwest is a plateau with rugged terrain. The northwestern mountains of Thailand are an extension of the Shan Plateau, which is located in the northern part of the Indochina Peninsula and is the main plateau in Southeast Asia with a total area of 170,000 square kilometers. The Shan Plateau is partially located in Myanmar, including the Shan and Kayah states of Myanmar.

Part of the Shan Plateau extends into Thailand and Laos, and the land surface is undulating, with an average elevation of 1,500 meters to 2,000 meters. The mountainous areas of northwest Thailand are mainly covered by forests, maintaining the original ecological style, and the natural environment is beautiful, and it is the birthplace of many rivers in Thailand. Central Thailand for the Chao Phraya River plain, the Chao Phraya River plain formed by the Chao Phraya River and its tributaries alluvial, Chao Phraya River is also called Chao Phraya River, originated in northwestern Thailand, from north to south into Bangkok Bay, a total length of 1352 kilometers. The Chao Phraya Plain is flat and fertile, with an average elevation of less than 25 meters above sea level and less than two meters above sea level in the Bangkok area. Under the influence of the tropical climate, the Chao Phraya Plain has become the main agricultural and populated area of Thailand. Rice, sugar cane, rubber and other crops are grown in the Chao Phraya plain. According to statistics, the rice production in the Chao Phraya River plain reaches 80% of the total rice production in Thailand, so it is known as the barn of Thailand.

In the northeast of Thailand is the Korat Plateau, which covers an area of 155,000 square kilometers. Although it is called a plateau, the Khorat Plateau is not very high, only 100 to 300 meters above sea level. Khorat Plateau east to the Mekong River, south to Dandan mountain, the terrain is relatively gentle, mainly planted corn, cassava and other crops. Southern Thailand is located in the narrow Malay Peninsula region, mountainous and hilly, rich in tropical fruits. In general, Thailand's terrain is superior, with vast plains and abundant resources, which can support a large number of people.

2) Climate: Thailand has a tropical monsoon climate with three seasons, hot, rainy and cool. [1] The hot season (from around mid-February to mid-May) and the rainy season (from around late May to mid-October) are the hottest periods in Thailand, especially in April, during Thailand's Songkran Festival, when temperatures can reach as high as 37 ° C. In the hot season, the weather is hot and dry, while in the rainy season, due to the influence of the southwest monsoon, the rainfall is abundant. The cool season (from about November to mid-February) is relatively cool and pleasant, and due to the influence of the Northeast monsoon, the temperature drops in most areas, with an average temperature of 19 ° C to 26 ° C. In addition, Thailand has relatively little precipitation, with an average annual precipitation of 1560 mm from 1952 to 2001.

1.2. Thai People's Dietary Preferences

1.2.1. Agricultural Cultivation in Thailand

Rice is the main crop in Thailand, and many farmers depend on it for their livelihood. In 2021, the three largest agricultural varieties planted in Thailand are rice, natural rubber and sugarcane. The planting area of rice reached 11.244 million hectares, that of natural rubber reached 3.3525 million hectares, and that of sugarcane reached 1.4954 million hectares, accounting for 49.1%, 14.6% and 6.5% of the total cultivated land, respectively. The planting area of cassava and corn reached 1.4662 million and 1.2 million hectares, respectively. Rice industry plays a very important role in Thailand's agriculture and even the entire national economy. Rice is the most important crop in Thailand. It is not only an indispensable staple food for Thai people, but also an important agricultural product for foreign exchange earning. The core policy of Thailand's rice production is to first meet its own needs and export the surplus. There are 4 million households (about 24 million people) engaged in rice production in Thailand, accounting for three-quarters of the total agricultural population, and Thailand is the world's largest rice exporter. The formation of rice, rubber, sugarcane, cassava, corn five major crops, with oil palm fruit, tropical fruits, vegetables, flowers as the supplement of a variety of crops in an all-round development of planting mode. Natural rubber is the second largest crop in Thailand, and 52 of the country's 77 provinces grow rubber, with a national output of about 4.6 million tons and its exports ranking first in the world for many years. Sugar cane is one of the main cash crops in

Thailand, with an annual output of more than 100 million tons, ranking among the top in the world. [2]

2. Table Manners

2.1. Basic Etiquette

When you are invited to dinner on any occasion, whether it is a Western or Thai meal, you should follow the same table manners. If you are sitting in a chair, you should sit upright and eat with your own tableware, such as: Plates, bowls, spoons, forks, knives, serving plates, hand towels, water and wine glasses, if it is Thai food, use the communal chopsticks placed in the center of the table to hold the food, and should not use your own utensils to hold the food placed in the center of the table.

Be careful when eating, do not eat too dirty, mouth and gills are dirty, when eating, be sure to close your mouth to chew so as not to make too much noise. [3]

Do not use your hands to touch or handle other people or the food at the center of the table.

When eating with the elders, be sure to wait until the elders come to sit again, and then start eating after the elders eat.

When sitting in a chair, be sure to be upright, do not put your elbows on the table, and sit on the floor with your legs folded, and do not support the ground with your arms.

Use a hand towel. Place a cloth on your knees before you sit down to eat. It can be used to wipe your mouth and keep it clean.

When eating Thai food, you should hold a fork in the left hand and a spoon in the right.

When drinking water or soup, drink it along the edge of the spoon and gently without making too much noise.

When using a knife. Knife is to cut food, no matter on any occasion who use a knife to put food in the mouth is very rude.

The coffee spoon or teaspoon is only used for stirring, after stirring it should be placed on the tray, do not put it in the cup, do not hold it to drink coffee or tea.

3. Thai Food

3.1. Recommend

Thai food is renowned around the world, and whether it's spicy or sweet, it has a large following. Thai cuisine is rich and unique. The selection of ingredients is influenced by neighboring countries, with the greatest influence from China and Malay.

3.1.1. Fried Crab with Curry

Fried crab curry is a popular dish among tourists, and many restaurants in Phuket and Chiang Mai also serve this dish. If you like to eat curry and crab, you must try it.

3.1.2. Green Papaya Salad

Green papaya salad is an appetizer. Taste sour and sweet, can let a person eat a big appetite. The dish is a must-have at stalls and restaurants all over Thailand, where the cooking and taste are more traditional, and in restaurants where most of the dishes have been modified to better suit tourists' tastes.

3.1.3. Tom Yum

Tom yam Gong soup is one of the Thai food, Thai ordinary people often drink this soup, large and small restaurants can also eat. The name of the soup is actually a Thai pronunciation literal translation into Chinese, and it can also be replaced with other seafood or meat. Tom Yin Gong soup looks relatively light, but the taste is spicy, but after getting used to

it, many people will not forget it.

3.1.4. Tom Kha Gai

Delicious and nutritious chicken soup with coconut sauce is a famous Thai dish. Coconut water is a commonly used ingredient in Thailand, using coconut water as a soup base to cook chicken, adding mushrooms, tomatoes and other side dishes, plus southern ginger, citronella, coriander, morning pepper, fish sauce, green lemon juice. After a sip, the sweet and rich taste is unforgettable. However, some people are not used to sweet soup, you can choose according to your own situation.

3.1.5. Curry Noodles

Curry mee, you can almost find it in Thai restaurants. Curry mee is relatively light in taste compared to other Thai cuisines. Two kinds of noodles are added to the coconut milk and curry, and the side dishes can also be added by choice

3.1.6. Pad Thai

Pad Thai is a must-eat dish in Thailand, and it can be found all over the streets for 30-40 baht a plate. Fried noodles with eggs, leeks, bean sprouts, peanuts, shrimp and other side dishes together, fresh and delicious. Thai fried pho has various types such as pork pho, shrimp pho, egg bun pho, etc. The powder has wide powder, subdivision, and vermiculose. The taste can be light, hot and sour, soy bean curd, etc. The seasoning can be added according to your own preferences.

3.1.7. Pig Trotter Rice

Pig's feet rice is a particularly famous staple food, pig's feet are stewed in spices for more than 10 hours, tender Q bullet, but also add kale, sauerkraut, eggs, coriander, and then drizzled with fragrant marinade. Pig's foot rice is more common in the market and is not easy to eat in the average Thai restaurant.

3.1.8. Mango Sticky Rice

Mango sticky rice is a dessert snack. Put mango slices into the plate, the sour taste of mango is wrapped by the sweet taste of glutinous rice, and the simple combination can actually produce a wonderful "chemical reaction" in the mouth.

3.1.9. Fried Rice with Pineapple

Pineapple fried rice is a very distinctive Thai food. Pineapple shell as a rice container, interesting; Pineapple pulp and rice, seasonal vegetables, meat mixed stir-fry, fragrance and greasy. Pineapple fried rice is usually topped with minced meat and cashews, which adds a crisp texture and nutritional value. You can eat pineapple fried rice in any Thai restaurant.

3.1.10. Hot pot Buffet

Thai buffet hot pot "Mugata", which exists in almost all cities in Thailand, is famous for the "thousand people hot pot" in Chiang Mai. The most popular dish is the big head shrimp, which is usually eaten up immediately. This self-service hot pot is generally located outdoors, with dozens of tables and hundreds of tables, some will have live, and some are equipped with large screens. The price is very cheap, 149-229 baht/person (30-40 yuan per person), and the price will be different in different places.

3.1.11. Banana Pancake

The recipe is similar to Chinese jianbing, in that a thin layer of batter is spread on a round flat pan, eggs and sliced bananas are placed in the center of the batter, then the batter is folded into squares and drizzled with chocolate sauce, condensed milk, etc., which sounds like Chinese jianbing.

3.1.12. Fried Insects

Although fried insects are very nutritious, most people are afraid to try them, and my advice is not to.

3.1.13. Thai Sour Meat

It's like a pork vermicelli stew with sauerkraut, and you can make it at home.

3.1.14. Fried Pandan Leaves with Egg

Pandan leaves and eggs sounds delicious. Weave the pandan leaves into a boat shape, pour in the egg juice and ingredients, then add crab meat, mushrooms, etc., over a charcoal fire until roughly set, turn the whole thing over a straight fire. Cut into small pieces into the mouth, crisp inside soft, very chewy, the delicious eggs through the fragrance of leaves, the outer layer of seasoning powder sweet and spicy, very appetizing. 10 baht per serving.

3.1.15. Coconut Ice Cream

Coconut ice cream is a popular dessert in Thai markets and on the roadside. Cut the fresh coconut in half, pour out the coconut water, scrape off the coconut meat, put in the ice cream balls, add peanuts, corn, red beans and other ingredients, and finally put a small flag. The freshness of coconut combined with the richness of ice cream, coupled with the refreshing coconut water donated by the store, is the most summer taste. This delicious coconut ice cream is only 20-30 baht, you can have a few more if you like.

3.1.16. Fruit Smoothie

In Thailand, there is an endless supply of fresh fruit every year, so fruit smoothies have become a popular national drink. For 20 to 30 baht, you can buy a cup from street carts and small shops. Mango, durian, pineapple, bananas and other dozens of fruits, as you choose, can be single, can also be mixed, and ice together to break, the real natural no addition, cool and thirst.

3.1.17. Thai Milk Tea

Many people don't know that Thai milk tea is orange instead of green. Add black tea with condensed milk and rock

sugar, and throw in a few ice cubes, you will have a refreshing and sweet Thai milk tea. Thai milk tea is a cool drink in street stalls, but also a delicate afternoon tea in coffee shops, you can also buy instant Thai milk tea powder at the supermarket to take home anytime to brew.

3.1.18. Thai Yellow Curry Chicken

It must be said that the Thai people combine curry with local spices to create a lot of delicious. Yellow curry, which has a soft texture and can be paired with a variety of ingredients, is a favorite of many. Among them, the more famous and delicious is Thai yellow curry chicken.

3.1.19. Thai Style Pork Toss

Most people may not have heard of this dish, but you can find pork in any restaurant in Thailand. This delicious and tasty dish is not only a favorite of locals, but also a comfort for tourists on the road.

4. Conclusion

Diet is an important part of culture. Diet is not only to meet physiological needs, but also carries rich cultural connotations. Different regions, nations and countries have unique food cultures and traditions, which reflect people's mode of production, way of life, historical background and values.

References

- [1] Chen Si. Injected vitality to the southeast Asia farm machinery market [N]. China's agricultural mechanization review, 2024-06-13 (008) DOI: 10.28115 / n.c. Nki NCNJH. 2024.000299.
- [2] Lin Kaiyun. Based on the China - asean free trade area of China and agricultural trade empirical research [D]. Shanghai university of finance and economics 2021. DOI: 10.27296 /, dc nki. Gshcu. 2021.000455.
- [3] GUO Tong. Case Analysis of Cross-Cultural Conflict among volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand during the 2018-2019 academic year [D]. Guangxi University, 2019.