



Welcome to Shop with the Chef Series 2007!

Featuring Cookbook Author, Andrea Nguyen



Andrea Nguyen is a food writer and cooking teacher based in Santa Cruz, California. She founded the Viet World Kitchen website (www.vietworldkitchen.com), one of the most complete resources on the Internet devoted to the food and culture of Vietnam, her native country. A consulting editor and frequent contributor to *Saveur* magazine, Andrea has also written for the Los Angeles Times and the San Jose Mercury News. She recently led a tour of Orange County's Little Saigon for Epicurious TV, which airs on the Travel Channel.

Andrea's debut cookbook, *Into the Vietnamese Kitchen: Treasured Foodways, Modern Flavors* (Ten Speed Press, 2006), is the first comprehensive full-color cookbook devoted to Vietnamese food in the English language. In March 2007, her landmark publication was nominated for a James Beard Foundation award and two International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP) awards. An article by Andrea is featured in the August/September 2007 issue of *Saveur* magazine. Her article, "Taking

Root" is about a community of Hmong immigrants, exiled from the mountains of Southeast Asia to California, who preserves its agricultural and culinary legacies by raising some of the Central Valley's finest produce.

Spicy Cabbage and Chicken Salad

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, about 1/2 pound total
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 small or 1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
 About 3/4 cup distilled white vinegar
 1 small head green cabbage, about 1 pound, quartered through the stem end, cored, and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-wide ribbons
 1 carrot, peeled and finely shredded
 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh Vietnamese coriander (rau r m) or cilantro leaves

Dressing

1 or 2 Thai or serrano chiles, chopped
 1 clove garlic, chopped
 1/2 teaspoon sugar
 1 pinch salt
 3 tablespoons fish sauce
 6 tablespoons unseasoned Japanese rice vinegar

(1) Fill a small saucepan half full with water, add the salt, and bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Drop in the chicken breasts. When the water starts bubbling at the edges of the pan, remove the pan from the heat and cover tightly. Let stand for 20 minutes. The chicken should be firm yet still yield a bit to the touch. Remove the chicken from the pan and reserve the light stock for another use or discard. When cool enough to handle, shred with your fingers into thin pieces, pulling the meat along its natural grain. Put the chicken in a large bowl and add the cabbage, carrot, and herbs.

(2) Meanwhile, put the onion in a small bowl and add the white vinegar just to cover. Set aside for 15 minutes; the vinegar will reduce the harshness of the onion. Drain well and add to the bowl with the vegetables and chicken.

(3) Using a mortar and pestle, mash the chile, garlic, sugar, and salt together into a fragrant orange-red paste. This releases and combines the oils from the chile and garlic. Scrape the paste into a bowl and add the fish sauce and rice vinegar, stirring to dissolve the sugar and salt and to combine well.

(4) Just before serving, pour the dressing over the salad and toss to mix well. The salad will wilt slightly. Taste and adjust the flavors to your liking, balancing the sour, sweet, salty, and spicy. Transfer to a serving plate, leaving any unabsorbed dressing behind, and serve.

Serves 4 to 6.

Source: Into the Vietnamese Kitchen: Treasured Foodways, Modern Flavors (Ten Speed Press, 2006) by Andrea Nguyen

Avocado Shake

1 ripe medium avocado (6–8 ounces)
 1 cup ice (8 ice cubes)
 1/3 cup sweetened condensed milk
 1/4 to 1/2 cup whole milk

(1) Scoop the avocado flesh into a blender. Add the remaining ingredients, starting out with the least amount of milk and puree until completely smooth. Taste and add additional milk, depending on the avocado type and if a thinner consistency is desired.

The shake tastes better (the avocado becomes more pronounced) if it sits for a bit, maybe 10-15 minutes in the fridge. I've had it sit for as long as 2 1/2 hours.

Source: Vietworldkitchen.com by Andrea Nguyen

Coming Next Month: October 13 Shop with the Chef will feature Chef Damani Thomas of Oswald fame. See our website for more details—www.montereybayfarmers.org.