

# 地道美食吃出香港情懷

“

哪個小孩不饞嘴？有庶民食家之稱的**梁家權**笑言，他的豐富‘食歷’始於童年，自10歲嚐過人生第一口‘碗仔翅’後，自此沉醉街頭巷尾的地道小食不能自拔，今天談起未能再嚐早已失傳的烱蠶豆，心仍戚戚然。”





**童**年生活並不富庶，梁家權小時候便要跟隨父親學習雕刻，幫補家計，料不到這些生活體驗竟為他開展了美食旅程。“那時候我負責雕刻棺木前面的金屬名片，兼任送貨，將刻好的名片由旺角送至大角咀九龍殯儀館，雖然父親給我零錢坐巴士，但我寧可走路將錢省下來，還有送貨得來的‘貼士’，拿着幾毫子沿途遍尋美食，還記得英京戲院、金冠戲院一帶是小食集中地，我人生第一碗碗仔翅和生菜魚肉就在那裏品嚐。”

### 豐富“食歷”始於童年

年紀漸長，梁家權的飲食路線再不限於送貨途經之處，嚐遍由家中出發方圓三公里內的美食，當中最令他印象深刻的是廟街，猶如劉姥姥遊大觀園。“林林種種的小食如炸大腸、魚蛋豬皮、臭豆腐、蕃薯糖水都可以在廟街找到，煲仔飯已算高檔了，還有些攤檔用一個個大玻璃瓶盛着酸喬頭、酸木瓜，現在幾近絕跡了。”

### 懷念久違的地道小吃

味道是夾雜情感、回憶的感覺，年少時吃過的美食，不管今天已經失傳，又或風味不復當年，曾經嚐過的美味始終深印腦海，就如梁家權至今仍然對焗蠶豆念念不忘。“當年在統一碼頭附近有焗蠶豆的攤檔，那年頭我在華僑晚報上班，常常為了一包焗蠶豆而放棄坐隧道巴士，特意坐渡海小輪過來中環，尤其在冬天捧着一包熱騰騰的焗蠶豆，感覺溫暖而美妙。”

至於風味不復當年的還有炸大腸。“從前的炸大腸可真是由生慢慢炸至熟，今天事事講求效率，通常將食材預先煮熟，縮短炸的時間，而且現在的小食店往往用同一鑊油處理所有油炸食品，結果炸出來的食物都沾有萬年油的味道。”

梁家權感嘆，從前的小食何以令人懷緬，就是專注、堅持“慢工出細貨”的態度，“以前賣臭豆腐就只有臭豆腐，哪像今天的小食店，你說得出都有得買，這就是對質和量各有取捨。”

### 地道小食三寶

香港雖是彈丸之地，但地道小食如百花齊放，即使外國出版的旅遊指南也愛推介香港的街頭小食。美食當前令人眼花撩亂，要梁家權選出“香港地道小食三寶”，他有以下的選擇：

#### ● 咖哩魚蛋

香港人總有在街上吃咖哩魚蛋的經驗吧！梁家權笑說，魚蛋可說是香港的偉大發明，加上濃濃的咖哩汁就是絕配。“魚蛋體積細小，剛好一口一粒，吃得方便。不要期望魚蛋滿滿都是魚肉，令人垂涎的反而是面層的咖哩汁，高下之分在於汁料的調配，魚蛋只是咖哩汁的‘載體’而已。”

#### ● 雞蛋仔

雞蛋仔是香港經典小食之一，一些著名小店門外總排了長長人龍，有多年吃雞蛋仔經驗的梁家權認為，置於爐模的蛋漿一半即可，太多令口感變稠，不夠香脆，好吃的雞蛋仔還要新鮮熱辣，這亦說明何以常常大排長龍的店所造的雞蛋仔特別美味，因流量快且工多藝熟。

傳統的雞蛋仔只有原味，今天隨處可見士多啤梨味、綠茶味、朱古力味的雞蛋仔，梁家權對這些“變種”雞蛋仔有所保留。“這泰半是招徠顧客的手法，有幾多會用真正的士多啤梨醬、綠茶粉來做呢？與其吃不知名的調味劑，倒不如吃回原味的雞蛋仔。”

#### ● 碗仔翅／車仔麵

梁家權對碗仔翅自有一份情意結，如上文所述他人生第一次嚐到的街頭小吃就是碗仔翅。他回憶道：“人生第一碗碗仔翅不是垂手可得，每次經過看見別人在吃也垂涎三尺，為了一嚐它的滋味，我得徒步送貨以省下零錢，整個過程既要付出，也充滿期待。可惜的是，因太貪心而放了太多紅醋，我的第一碗碗仔翅就這樣被我糟蹋了。從前的碗仔翅

都是粉絲，現在的材料變得講究，除了用仿真翅，還加入雞絲、冬菇絲等，味道豐富得多。”

與今天相對精緻的車仔麵比較，梁家權更鍾情於從前車仔麵那種粗糙感。“今天的車仔麵菜式數之不盡，價錢比雲吞麵或碟頭飯高，過去車仔麵都是下價食品，菜式來來去去都是魚蛋、豬皮、蘿蔔，然後就是牛腩的頭頭尾尾，麵身也是比較粗，師傅通常將麵餅在熱水滾一滾便上‘雞公碗’，基本上未完全熟透，初吃會感到麵身有點硬，但一邊食麵身也漸漸浸軟，吃完便剛剛好。”

### 發掘美食從心出發

要梁家權推介香港地道美食首選地，竟然不是街知巷聞的旺角、銅鑼灣，他毫不猶疑回答：“大角咀埃華街一帶。”毫不起眼的埃華街原來是平民美食的臥虎藏龍之地，他數如家珍：“每次來到埃華街都可大快朵頤，有



油渣麵、煲仔粥、竹笙碗仔翅，還有正宗上海人主理的生煎包和窩貼等。”

幾乎吃遍香港的梁家權，發掘美食往往隨心出發，他的“搵食”潛能就如天賦一般。“從小我就愛吃，懂得比較食物的優劣，廚師是否用心烹調也吃得出，現時我撰寫兩個飲食專欄，故無論是工作或生活需要，也推動我無時無刻訪尋美食。”

吃也可返璞歸真，平凡如一口米飯，只要用心感受亦可嚐到箇中妙處。“幸運的是香港物質充裕，我們不只是為充饑而吃，倒要享受吃的過程，吃得‘粗枝大葉’最浪費。簡單如一碗白飯，用上乘白米煮出來傳來陣陣飯香，吃一口更嚐到甜味，這就是食物可貴之處。”

## 梁家權我手寫我口 論盡香港美食

本為資深新聞人的梁家權，多年來埋首政治、時事。他在一次偶然機會下開始寫飲食文章，將平民美食和個人回憶結合起來，第一篇文章題為“尋找失落的菠蘿油”，後來更成為其首本著作的名稱，其後相繼出版《沒有粉絲的碗仔翅》、《食蛋撻的路線圖》、《麥芽糖的竊纏往事》、《苦路救星陳皮梅》及《天橋底的牛丸》等著作，皆延續梁家權對香港地道美食的鍾情。



這些年來，梁家權吃盡、寫盡香港地道美食，他講飲講食的文章、著作大受歡迎，只因他在吃和寫之間自有一套獨特的風格和標準。“味道是因人而異，我覺得是人間極品，你或覺得不甚了了，因此單單描述食物何其鮮味、口感何其好，讀者難以取得共鳴，尤如隔岸觀火。”



味道不但來自食物本身，還摻合許多情感、環境因素，相同食物，在不同環境或與不同朋友一起，便產生不同的味道感覺。因此，梁家權絕少直接形容味道，更多著墨於吃的心情和過程，“我喜歡描述吃之前的期待和吃之後的心情，透過文字與讀者溝通互動，繼而產生共鳴。”

梁家權直言，寫地道美食最好用地道語言，這是他的堅持。“我寫的都是地道食物，產生最大共鳴的多是香港人吧！我故意將廣東話融入書面語，字裏行間就像與讀者閒談，文章也生動活潑得多。”

# Savoring Taste of Hong Kong through Street Snacks

“

Every child loves snacks. **Leung Ka-kuen**, who is well known as the ‘commoner gastronome’, is no exception - his affection for snacks began in childhood. After taking his very first sip of mock shark’s fin soup at the age of ten, Leung was obsessed with street snacks. Though having tasted countless delicacies in different corners of the city, he still feels regrettable when talking about boiled broad beans, a lost street food. ”





**B**orn in an ordinary family, Leung served apprenticeship with his father to help the family make ends meet. He would never have imagined this was what brought him to the journey with delicious foods. “Then I had to carve metal nametags for coffins and deliver them from Mong Kok to the Kowloon Funeral Parlour in Tai Kok Tsui. While my father would give me change for bus, I usually saved the money and went on foot. Sometimes I got tips for my delivery too. With several tens dollars in my hand, I would search for something good to eat along my way home. I still remember the hotspot for street snacks near the Ying King Theatre and the Golden Crown Theatre, as this is where I tasted my first-ever bowls of mock shark’s fin soup and fish paste with lettuce in soup.”

### Tasting History Began from Childhood

As he grew, Leung went beyond his delivery destinations to look for foods. He sampled all the street foods farther from his home area. What impressed him most was Temple Street, which he described as a showplace of local street snacks. “You can see whatever you wanna see there: deep fried intestines, fish balls and pig’s skin, stinky tofu, sweet potato in soup. Claypot rice was considered a high-class cuisine back then. There were also stalls selling pickled shallots and pickled papaya

stored in big glass bottles. They scarcely exist now.”

### In Memory of Lost Local Snacks

Delicacies we tasted in childhood can be unforgettable, though they may already be nowhere to be found or their tastes may be scarcely comparable to the past. To Leung, boiled broad beans remain close to his heart. “There was a stall selling boiled broad beans near the United Pier when I was working for the Wah Kiu Man Po (“Wah Kiu” evening post). At that time, I often went to Central by ferry instead of cross-tunnel bus, so that I could buy a pack of boiled broad beans at the pier. It was warm in winter times with a pack of steamy hot beans in my hands.”

Deep fried intestines is an example of delicacy that no long tastes as good as they have been. “The intestines were slowly fried from their raw state in the past. But now, they are already cooked before frying to save time. And snack shops usually use the same pot of oil to deep-fry all their snacks, filling the foods with a stale smell of reused oil.”

Leung explained, with a sigh, why snacks of the past are so unforgettable - old food stalls were very specialized and they believed that “patient work makes fine goods”. “A stinky tofu stall, for example, would only offer stinky tofu, unlike today’s stalls that sell anything you can name.

What makes this difference is a stall's choice between quality and quantity."

### Top Three Local Snacks

A wide spectrum of local snacks can be found in the tiny city of Hong Kong. And our street snacks are often featured in foreign tourist guides. Among the dazzling range of snacks, Leung counts the following among the "Hong Kong's top three local snacks":

- **Curried fish balls**

Every Hongkie should have the experience of eating curried fish balls on the street. In Leung's eye, fish balls is a great invention of Hong Kong and it forms a perfect match with intensely flavored curry sauce. "Bite-sized fish balls are very convenient to eat," he added, "but whether a fish ball is full of fish meat is no big deal, as it is just a 'carrier'. Whether a fish ball is tasty or not depends on the curry sauce."

- **Egg puffs**

You can see long queues outside some famous stalls selling egg puffs, a local snack classic. Experiences tell Leung that the best puffs are made of egg batter half filling an iron skillet. Too much batter would make the puffs glutinous and not crispy. Egg puffs are best served fresh and hot. This explains why puffs selling at stalls with long queues are often delicious, because their puffs are made to order.

Egg puffs served with flavors such as strawberry, green tea and chocolate are in vogue now. Not very fond of these new breeds, Leung remarked, "These are nothing but gimmicks. How many of them are really made of real strawberry jam or green tea powder? I would rather stick with the plain flavor than taking these unknown additives."

- **Mock shark's fin soup / Cart noodles**

Leung has a special feeling towards mock shark's fin soup, which, as mentioned above, was his first encounter of street snacks. He reminisced, "My very first bowl of mock shark's fin soup was not something easy to get. I desired to try it out every time when I passed



### Write about Local Delicacies in Local Language

As a veteran journalist, Leung had devoted years of attention to politics and current affairs. Somewhat by chance he wrote an article featuring a combination of ordinary food with personal recollection. The title of this first piece of Leung was "In Search of the Long Lost Pineapple Bun with Butter", which later became the name of his first book. His other books about his affection for Hong Kong street delicacies include *Mock Shark's Fin Soup without Chinese Vermicelli*, *Egg Tarts En Route*, *The Clinging Recollection of Malt Syrup*, *Sugared Plums - Savior to Bitterness*, and *Beef Balls under the Flyover*.

Over the years, Leung's articles have always been big hits, thanks to his very own style and standards on eating and writing. "Taste is a very personal thing. Something wonderful to me may be just so-so to you. This is why readers may not be interested if you simply give a great deal of hype on the taste and texture of a food."

Taste comes not only from the food itself but also from emotions and environments. The same food tastes differently if you eat in another place or with another friend. With this in mind, Leung seldom describes flavors directly but tends to stress the feelings and process of eating. "I like to pen more on my expectations before and feelings after eating, hoping that I could interact and resonate with my readers through my words."

Leung insisted on using the local dialects in his writings. "I write about local foods, so my readers should mostly be Hong Kong people, right? I intentionally fuse spoken Cantonese into written Chinese to make my articles more lively, so that it feels like I am chatting with my readers."

by seeing people enjoying it. I had to deliver goods on foot so that I could save up for it. It was indeed a no pain, no gain process. But it was a pity that I added too much red vinegar. By doing this, I ruined my first, long-expected mock shark's fin soup." He continued, "In the past, the soup mainly contained Chinese vermicelli, but now it comes with selected ingredients: besides replica shark's fin, there are also shredded chicken, shredded mushrooms, etc., which enrich the taste of the soup."

When it comes to cart noodles, Leung prefers the plain style in the old times to the modern fine style. "Today there are many, many noodle toppings, and cart noodles are more pricey than wonton soup noodles or plated rice combos. In the old days, however, cart noodles were made with sub-prime foods. The toppings were mainly fish balls, pig's skin, radish, and some bits and pieces of beef briskets; also, the noodles are coarse. The cook would

only briefly cook the noodles and then serve them in a 'rooster bowl'. As the noodles were indeed not cooked thoroughly, you would find them a little hard to chew on at first. But as you continued, the noodles would become softer and the texture would be just right."

### **Enjoy Foods with Heart**

When being asked where is the best place to sample local street foods, Leung did not give common answers like "Mong Kok" and "Causeway Bay". Instead, he recommended, without hesitation, Ivy Street in Tai Kok Tsui. Though inconspicuous, Ivy Street is indeed a food paradise for commoners. "You can always feast yourself with lovely delicacies around Ivy Street. Noodles with pork rinds, claypot congees, mock shark's fin soup with bamboo fungus... You can even find authentic pan fried pork buns and pot stickers made by Shanghainese cooks."

Leung, who has almost been to every corner of the territory in search of great

street snacks, is a natural-born food radar. "I have been gluttonous since I was a child. I can tell good from bad, and I can tell whether a cook has made good efforts from his food. I write two newspaper columns about foods now. So, looking for delicacies is both my job and my life."

Even foods as simple as rice can be impressive, if you pay good attention to it. "We are lucky that Hong Kong is a well-off city; our eating is not just to satisfy hunger but to take delight in the taste. So it is a waste if we eat cursorily. If we can appreciate foods, we can find that a bowl of rice, though simple, can give out amazing fragrance and a sweet taste when it is made with superior grains." 🍚