



Yan Can Cook

October 8, 1990

Mrs. Tami Takahashi  
Takahashi Trading Company  
200 Rhode Island Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mrs. Takahashi,

Thank you for loaning us the beautiful art pieces for the Yan Can Cook Show. The stage set was so gorgeous, I was honored and in awe to have it behind me as I worked. It is the generosity and kindness like yours that helps to make the show such a success.

I think that this will be the best Yan Can Cook Show yet. The new recipes, guest chefs, and on-location shots make it a truly unique national television cooking show. I know your valued clients will be excited to see your contributions to the set. Luckily they won't have to wait long; the new shows will begin to air February 1991.

Thank you again for all your generous support. I will be sure that you get copies of my new book when it is available.

Sincerely,

Martin Yan



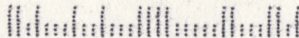
**Yan Can Cook**

Mrs. Tami Takahashi  
Takahashi Trading Company  
200 Rhode Island Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103



RECEIVED  
OCT 10 1990  
Ans'd.....

Yan Can Cook 1064 G Shell Boulevard Foster City, CA 94404 415/341-5133 FAX 415/341-5191



國  
食  
為  
本

# Yan Can Cook



ON NATIONAL PUBLIC TELEVISION  
STATIONS



## MARTIN YAN PORTFOLIO

### EDUCATION:

- \* Certified Master Chef - Ontario Restaurant Association 1984
- \* Master's Degree, Food Science - University of California, Davis 1975
- \* Diploma - Overseas Institute of Cookery, Hong Kong 1967
- \* Apprenticeship - Chinese Restaurants in China, Hong Kong and U.S.

### PROFESSIONAL AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- \* Host of National Public Television's YAN CAN COOK SHOW 1983 -present
- \* Lecturer, Professional Culinary Colleges and California Culinary Academy 1986 -present
- \* Founder and chef-instructor Yan Can International Cooking School, San Francisco 1985
- \* TV Host, 570 Chinese Cooking Shows, U.S./Canada 1978 -present
- \* Consultant to Major Food Companies 1980 -present
- \* Manager and Head Chef, Lee's Garden Restaurant, Alberta 1977
- \* Director & chef-instructor, Gourmet Cooking Institute, Alberta 1977 - 1980
- \* Product Manager, Amoy Canning Corporation, Hong Kong 1976 - 1977
- \* Chef, Black Pagoda Restaurant, California 1970 - 1972
- \* Assistant Chef, Sun Wong Kee Restaurant, Hong Kong 1966 - 1969

### PUBLICATIONS AND COLUMNS:

- \* Martin Yan, THE CHINESE CHEF (Yan Can & Company/Doubleday) 1985
- \* THE JOY OF WOKKING (Doubleday) 1982
- \* THE YAN CAN COOK BOOK (Doubleday) 1981
- \* Contributing Editor, THE NEW WOK TALK (Chinese Cooking Newsletter) 1984 -present
- \* Contributing Editor, ORIENTAL GOURMET (National Newsletter, Canada) 1984 -present
- \* Feature Writer and Consultant, FOOD MAGAZINE, Hong Kong 1977 - 1983

### MEMBERSHIPS:

- \* Pacific Coast Chef's Association 1985 -present
- \* American Institute of Food and Wine 1985 -present
- \* San Francisco Professional Food Society 1983 -present
- \* Association of Chinese Cooking Teachers, San Francisco 1983 -present
- \* Professional Member, International Assoc. of Food Professionals 1973 -present
- \* Institute of Food Technologists 1973 -present
- \* American Author's Guild 1973 -present
- \* AFTRA/ACTRA Member, U.S./Canada

"Chef Yan has become a much-acclaimed authority on Chinese cuisine throughout America..."

Hans Roth, The Culinarian

Martin Yan, 35-year-old chef, communicator, and craftsman has been immersed in the world of Chinese cooking all his life.

Born in Guangzhou, China, Yan grew from young Hong Kong restaurant apprentice to graduate of the Overseas Institute of Cookery, also in Hong Kong. He went on to earn his B.S. & M.S. degrees in food science from the University of California, Davis, teaching cooking all the while. His move to Canada in the mid-seventies resulted in more extensive restaurant training and certification as Master Chinese Chef by the Ontario Chinese Restaurant Association.

Currently, Yan is directing his efforts toward his successful PBS television show, **YAN CAN COOK**, his teaching in professional cooking schools, and consulting to several major international food companies. He has also established a highly regarded cooking school in the San Francisco Bay Area.

While he is well-known to the public as the host of **YAN CAN COOK** and has gained national recognition among novice cooks, Yan is also deeply involved in professional teaching programs. He is a lecturer and chef instructor for the Chinese Chef Training Programs in Canada and San Francisco; the University of California Extension; the University of San Francisco, and has recently joined the teaching staff of the California Culinary Academy.

With over 570 half-hour cooking shows to his credit, countless demonstrations and classes plus three cookbooks published by Doubleday (combined sales of over one-half million), he has influenced and taught millions of cooks at all levels, sharing his enthusiasm along with his expertise.

Martin Yan captures the spirit of his native cuisine and conveys it with intelligence and gusto. He is one of the few Chinese chefs in America with such diverse accomplishments, all aimed at furthering the understanding and pure enjoyment of one of the world's great cuisines.

# YAN CAN COOK

PSSST! DID YOU HEAR WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT MARTIN YAN???

"He's a Chinese 'Galloping Gourmet'. TV Chef Martin Yan takes the mystery out of inscrutable eats..."

TV Guide, Canada

"Yan may come across like the original kamikaze cook, always quipping and mugging...but he's deadly serious about cooking..."

Winnipeg Free Press

"Martin Yan is the man who has brought Chinese haute cuisine to the public."

The Pennsylvania Beacon

"...In front of a crowd he lets loose--cracking jokes, chopping a mile a minute with his cleaver while keeping up a steady patter of puns."

Honolulu Advertiser

"He is a talented well-trained cook, a gifted teacher, and wonderfully entertaining television personality."

WOK TALK

"He doesn't talk down to his audience, but neither does he assume his readers/viewers know the basics of Chinese cooking. His style is to present a new adventure he and the audience can enjoy together."

The Davis Enterprise, Davis, CA

"This man who wears aprons saying 'Do Wok a Do', this man who chops green peppers while beating out rhythms on his wooden chopping block, this man who tells his viewers how to prepare stir-fried frog legs while lamenting the passing of his pet frog...yes, this man has done much, much more for Chinese food in Canada than bilingual take-out containers ever have."

The Toronto Sunday Sun

"Martin Yan is a man with a mission. Armed with a wok and a cleaver...he carries the word of good eating to the hungry of North America."

The Hamilton Spectator

Contact- Wendy Ho  
 (415) 553-2238  
 KQED 500 Eighth Street  
 San Francisco, Ca. 94103

# TV GUIDE

March 22-28 50¢

## THE BATTLE OVER PAY-TV

PAGE 5

## THE ANGER OF GARY FRANK

PAGE 24

CAST OF FAMILY



publisher, bookstore distribution or reviews; and it sold out faster than an egg-roll cools. He's taped 260 television shows so far (syndicated in eight Canadian cities); and when he gave cooking demonstrations at suburban shopping centres last winter, he was mobbed by adulatory admirers who carried signs that read "Yan Can Fan Club," and stood for hours waiting for an autograph. What the heck, indeed!

Martin Yan is turning into a culinary cult hero. But he still insists that he's "absolutely a serious cook," not a comic; and that his series is only a low-budget cooking show filmed in Calgary on a set that makes Bruno Gerussi's *Celebrity Cooks* look like the Ewing ranch. That doesn't matter as long as Yan chops a water chestnut with Kung Fu expertise and mutters "Perfectly too hot!" and "Amazingly interesting" while "boiling a pot of boiling water."

What finally matters, though, is that somehow, for reasons that baffle Martin himself, his show attracts an audience with an age spread that would send a marketing pollster reeling, plus an ethnic mix that runs from the purest Anglos to just-off-the-boat Chinese, and everyone in between.

"I don't understand," Martin says. After being mobbed in Kitchener, London and Hamilton, he could see something was happening, but he wasn't sure what it was. "I have been trying to figure out

why people like the show. And to tell you the truth, I don't know. I do it because I enjoy it."

Certainly, nothing in his past prepared Martin Yan to become an underground mania. He left China in 1963, at the age of 14. He had an uncle in Hong Kong, went to high school there, and worked in a number of restaurants, starting out as a busboy and dishwasher. He immigrated to Canada in 1969, settling in Edmonton, but then moved to California, where he took his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Food Science at the University of California at Davis. He cooked his way through college, teaching off-campus classes to pay for his tuition.

After six years, he returned to Calgary, worked in several restaurants and opened "the first and only cooking school in Alberta." One day, he was called by a local TV station (CFAC) to fill a 12-minute spot on a talk show. They wanted him the next day since the regular chef was sick and couldn't make it. Yan agreed, thinking it could be useful exposure for his school. The general

manager of the station saw Yan in action and asked him to do a half-hour on his own. "And I said, 'Well, what the heck?' I came back, did another dish and made a few lousy jokes. He liked it and asked me if I wanted to do a regular show. I thought, why not? I figure they want me to do about 13 shows. He said, 'How about 130?' I said, 'Gee, I'm not ready. I don't have a team. I'm on my own.' But I figure I have nothing to lose." Taping five TV shows a day was a chore, but he finished the whole sequence of 130 in less than a month.

In 1978, it was seen on only three stations: CFAC in Calgary, CJOC in Lethbridge and CHCH in Hamilton; but the mail from viewers was phenomenal—over 10,000 letters in a year. Over the next 12 months, the show was sold to five more stations. Meanwhile, Martin

travelled constantly, doing department-store demonstrations and appearing at cooking schools. And he was working on his book. He was moving so fast that it took the Calgary station several months to locate him and invite him back for another series.

Currently, he's wokking up new ideas for his next series of tapings with recently acquired cooking partner Dorothy Louie, a Chinese-Portuguese woman of exotic good looks and a quiet brilliance for original recipes and decorative garnishes. "I just hope I can do a better job," says Yan. "I feel honored and overwhelmed by the response. I feel that I owe them something, and they deserve a better show. What I'm saying is that they deserve me working harder. And I just love to try my best." (END)



## HE'S A CHINESE GALLOPING GOURMET

TV chef Martin Yan takes the mystery out of inscrutable eats

BY GERALD LEVITCH

What the heck? How long will it take Martin Yan to peel that potato? "I'm killing time," he says into the camera. The wily Chinese chef and daily host of *Yan Can Cook* smiles ingenuously. He admits that it will only take seconds to fry the Chinese potato-pancake toast in his wok. Then he grabs a potato smasher. A what? "No, masher," he corrects himself. "This is the first time I use it," he explains. What the heck?

With his fractured English, toothy grin and a manner that flashes from Graham Kerr to Soupy Sales, with querulous asides that sound more like Charlie

Chan's No. 1 son than Confucius, 30-year-old Martin Yan stir-fries an audience that believes him when he says, "This is a very unique dish. You won't find it anywhere, and you won't find it again." That same audience laughs aloud when Martin grumbles about competing against "Sesame Seed Street." The Cantonese-born, Hong Kong-trained, California-educated, Calgary-based professional chef and cooking teacher is also the author of "The Joy of Wokking." Martin financed the first printing of 5000 copies out of his own pocket, without benefit of a commercial

# San Francisco Chronicle

The Largest Daily Circulation in Northern California

121st Year No. 30

★★★★★

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1985

777-1111

## FOOD

# COOKING WITH MARTIN YAN

*He heads TV's  
slam-dunk  
school of  
Chinese cuisine*

BY BRUCE COST  
Special to The Chronicle

**Y**ou don't have to be a lover of Chinese food to enjoy Martin Yan when he comes on KQED-TV Saturday mornings at 11 to teach Chinese cooking. With a disarming smile, one-liners that don't always work and off-the-cuff exchanges with a studio audience, Yan spends a half hour demolishing any mystique attached to this cuisine.

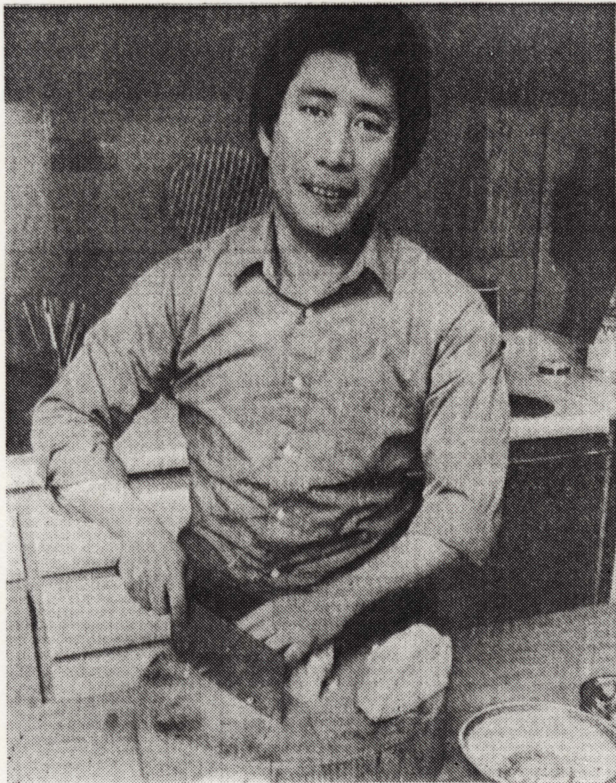
He wants you to know that the two dishes he's preparing are nothing to fret about, and he certainly doesn't expect anyone to attempt his occasional flourishes with a cleaver. For example, faster than the eye can see (and for no reason other than playfulness), Yan slides his knife under the meat he has just cut and, with a flick of the wrist, slam-dunks it into a mixing bowl.

His show, "Yan Can Cook," made on a shoestring for a local station in Canada and bought by PBS for airing this past year, has been popular enough for KQED to produce a 13-week Martin Yan series scheduled for PBS stations this fall. To Yan's relief, this will mean never again having to tape five or six shows a day over a few short weeks without rehearsal.

Yan knows that some culinary critics dismiss "Yan Can Cook" as "not serious," and his antics as "clownish," yet his appeal may well be that he provides relief from the often sanctimonious approach to food these days. His enormously successful books, "The Joy of Wokking" and "The Yan Can Cookbook," have endorsements on the back, not from Craig Claiborne and Alice Waters, but from Genghis Khan and Confucius.

"No matter how well you prepare food, if people aren't entertained, they won't watch you," says Yan. "People want to identify with you; if everything comes out perfect, they'll be intimidated."

Filmmaker Wayne Wang ("Chan Is Missing"), who routinely watches "Yan Can Cook," says, "Martin is good, and he's very smart. He plays perfectly to a Caucasian audience's comic image of a Chinese chef, and he knows it. At the same time he's able to laugh at himself and have a good time."



**'No matter how well you prepare food, if people aren't entertained, they won't watch you'**

Yan, 35, got his big break just as it often happens in the movies. Seven years ago in Canada, he was trying to launch a cooking school in Alberta when he got a call from the hostess of a local TV show. "She wanted me to fill in for a guest chef who was scheduled to appear," Yan recalls. "When I asked when I'd be on, she said, 'Tomorrow morning.'"

Yan remembers that experience as disastrous. "I was scared to death in front of those three cameras. The food I chopped was flying all over the place. I dropped things and spent live air time picking them back up. Finally I stopped with this mess in front of me, turned to the woman and asked which camera she wanted me to look at. The studio staff must have liked the way I did this; they all broke out laughing. The station manager called me a few days later and asked if I wanted to do a half hour on my own."

Yan claims his second show was just as calamity-filled, but the positive audience response prodded the station manager to wonder if Yan might like to be on every day. "I was given two weeks to prepare and six weeks to tape 130 shows, and they gave me one dishwasher to help," he says.

**W**hen the series finally aired, he was in Davis where he had gone to school, teaching cooking classes for UC extension. He was sure that, given the rushed shooting schedule and his lack of experience, his Canadian cooking shows wouldn't be worth watching. But, he recalls, "People loved them; the station got so much mail they couldn't handle it all. The manager called me in California and trying not to let on exactly how the show was going said, 'Ah, Martin, your program is pretty successful; you want to do another 130?'"

Yan has an M.S. in Food Science that he applies developing products for such companies as Dynasty Foods and Planters, which is how he spends most of his time. Out of his apartment/offices in Foster City he also administers Yan Can & Company with his wife Susan, whom he met at UC-Davis. "My cooking classes were popular with all Sue's roommates, but she never took one," claims Yan.

Yan Can & Company currently is constructing a 1000-foot test kitchen and cooking school in a building close by. The school should be open in early May, about the time Yan is

scheduled to lead a 17-day cooking tour of China and Hong Kong.

Yan, who was born in Guangzhou, China, recalls developing a discriminating palate around age 2. "My father owned a restaurant and my parents worked hard to keep it going. They couldn't afford a babysitter so I just crawled around under the tables sampling scraps of food."

At 13, after promising the Chinese government he'd come back, Yan walked out of China carrying his possessions in a little bamboo suitcase. His father had died years before and Yan left with his mother's blessing.

"It was a tough time," he says. "Food was rationed, and I got a

round trip visa to visit a distant uncle in Hong Kong who owned a restaurant. I ended up working and living there; I slept on a board between two booths for four years." In the meantime, Yan struck a deal with a Hong Kong cooking school that allowed him to attend classes in exchange for work.

After high school he followed a classmate to Canada; from there he went to Davis, and then made the trip back to Canada that led to his current success.

When one says to this affable TV chef that his achievements have been remarkable, he tells you straight-faced, "When you are assigned to be successful, you will be successful."

## New Year Recipes

**F**ollowing are several recipes from Martin Yan for Chinese New Year.

Ball-shaped foods like the "puffs" in this recipe represent unity. With the addition of "lettuce" and "hair-like seaweed," the Chinese words for which sound respectively like the words for "wealth" and "prosperity," this delicious New Year's dish is the equivalent of offering the best of wishes.

### SHRIMP PUFFS WITH LETTUCE

1 pound shrimp  
2 ounces hair-like seaweed, par-boiled, chopped\*  
1 egg white  
½ ounce pork fat, coarsely chopped  
1 scallion, chopped  
2 teaspoons cornstarch  
1 tablespoon peanut or vegetable oil  
2 slices ginger, finely shredded  
½ head iceberg lettuce, broken in large pieces  
1 cup chicken broth  
2 teaspoons wine  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
½ teaspoon salt  
Dash white pepper

\*Hair-like seaweed is available in Chinese markets; it looks like black hair.

Combine shrimp, seaweed, egg white, pork fat, scallion and cornstarch in a food processor or blender and process to a smooth paste. With wet hands, form the mixture into approximately 24 small balls (puffs) and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat a wok or skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and then the ginger and stir for 15 seconds. Add the lettuce and the broth. Cover and cook 1 minute. Add the remaining seasonings, put the shrimp puffs on top of the lettuce, cover again and cook over medium heat for 5 to 6 minutes. Serve.

### RED-COOKED CARP

2 small whole carp (about 1½ pounds each)  
4 tablespoons peanut or vegetable oil  
6 slices ginger, shredded  
3 scallions, cut in 2-inch lengths  
1 cup chicken broth  
3 tablespoons dry sherry  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
2 teaspoons hot chili sauce with black beans  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1½ teaspoons cornstarch mixed with 1 tablespoon water  
Fresh coriander sprigs for garnish

Rinse and dry the fish with a paper towel. Heat a wok or heavy skillet over high heat. Add the oil, ginger and scallions and saute briefly until fragrant. Add the fish and brown for 2 minutes on each side. Add the broth, sherry, soy sauce, sesame oil, chili sauce and salt. When the liquid comes to a boil, cover, turn the heat to medium and cook for 12 minutes, or until done. Remove the carp, leaving the sauce, and arrange them side by side on a serving platter. Heat the sauce to boiling; give the cornstarch mixture a quick stir and add it to the sauce. Cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens and pour it over the fish. Garnish with fresh coriander and serve.

# Chicago Tribune

Thursday, August 23, 1984

FOOD GUIDE

## 'Yan Can Cook' stars an exciting eager cleaver

By Barbara Sullivan

**CHINESE COOKING**, says Martin Yan, is a highly sensual experience.

"It is so sensuous, you are using your hands, your fingers, you are touching everything," he says. "You are hearing the oil when it gets hot, you are watching the food changing, you are smelling the aroma as the food cooks. You have total contact with the food, you are using all your senses.

"It is so much more exciting than putting a pot roast in the oven and setting the timer."

A touch of philosophy, a dose of humor and a wealth of information about Chinese cuisine are Yan's ingredients for his cooking show, "Yan Can Cook," on WTTW-Ch. 11 at 3 p.m. Saturdays, and his cookbook, "The Joy of Wokking."

"I can cook without a smile, but why should I? I'm a serious cook, but cooking is so much fun," he admits during a recent visit here.

**HE ESPECIALLY** is having fun planning a meal billed as perhaps the most expensive Chinese dinner for eight ever prepared in the United States.

For \$1,800, a Sonoma County [Calif.] couple and six guests will enjoy a 5½-hour feast prepared in October by Yan in their home. There will be succulent lobster and jellyfish salad, velvet chicken with white fungus, fresh abalone with shiitaki mushrooms, fuzzy melon and broccoli with crab sauce, mermaid's fantasy [crispy fish filet with jumbo prawns], sparkling ginger melon and much, much more.

The meal was auctioned recently by the San Francisco Public Broadcasting System station as part of the station's annual fund-raising event. Bidding for the multicourse meal started around \$600, Yan says, and ended with the winning \$1,800.

"For eight people you can have a scrumptious [Chinese] dinner for \$200 or \$300; so I will make this truly a priceless meal. We will serve many wines; wine slows you down on the eating. I don't want them to gobble it up. It will be an exotic meal, an exquisite meal; it will be something they will never be able to get anywhere else. It will be a total experience."

**ONE OF THE** joys of Chinese cooking, Yan says, is being able to "wing it." Measuring spoons are not part of his regularly used kitchen equipment. Instead, his fingers do the measuring—a scoop here, a pinch there, depending on individual taste.

"Once you learn the basics," he says, "you should just be able to open your refrigerator and prepare a meal with whatever you've got. Chinese cooking is imaginative; it is creative. It is not formula. Taste



Martin Yan may be a star cook on TV, but he can't please his mother.

is very individual. You fix things the way you like them. You communicate with the food."

Yan also communicates with his cleaver. At a recent TV taping of the Phil Donahue show [no air date has yet been set], Yan had the audience gasping as he wielded the cleaver through vegetables and chickens at a speed almost faster than the eye could follow. A chicken was boned, the chicken breast sliced into paper-thin slices, and mushrooms, onions and celery diced, all in the space of a few quick winks or gasps of breath.

"Now you do it," he instructed a highly dubious Donahue, who proceeded slowly to slice a mushroom with the greatest of caution.

**WHAT YAN WANTS** to do, he says, is excite people about Chinese cooking: "I want to inspire people to go home tonight and do it. Not tomorrow night, not next week, but now. I want to get people really excited about this kind of cooking."

But even Yan, with his humor, speed and skill in the art of Chinese cooking, can't please everyone. "My mother, I cannot please my mother," he says in that frustrated tone reserved for mothers that cuts across all cultures.

"She lives in Canton [China], and the last time I went to see her, I cooked her a dish. She told me it was overcooked, that it was all wrong. She just doesn't believe that I can cook, and for a long time, I was afraid to tell her that I was cooking for my living."

Maybe his mother should try some of the following recipes, which are among those that will be used in the \$1,800 dinner:

### Celestial seafood salad

Six servings

Preparation time: 20 minutes

- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 2 tablespoons each: sugar, soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- Dash white pepper
- 1 teaspoon chili oil, optional
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch, dissolved in 1 teaspoon water
- 4 ounces cooked scallops, sliced
- 2 ounces cooked crabmeat, shredded
- 2 ounces cooked shrimp, peeled, deveined
- 1 small head iceberg lettuce, shredded
- 1 cup bean sprouts, blanched
- 4 mushrooms or fresh shiitake, sliced
- 2 tablespoons shredded Szechwan pickles, optional
- ½ cup honeydew melon slices
- 4 sprigs coriander [cilantro]

1. For dressing, mix rice vinegar, oil, sugar, soy sauce, sesame oil, garlic, white pepper, chili oil and dissolved cornstarch in saucepan; heat to boil. Cook until smooth and thickened. Remove from heat.
2. Mix remaining ingredients together in large salad bowl. Pour dressing over; toss lightly. Serve warm or cold, garnished with coriander.

### Lettuce cup of surprises

12 to 14 appetizers

Preparation time: 40 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

- ¾ pound boneless skinless chicken breast or lean beef,

- ground or minced
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons each: wine, cornstarch
- 4 dried Chinese black mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 small carrot, cut into ¼-inch cubes
- 1 small zucchini, cut into ¼-inch cubes
- 1 can [8 ounces] water chestnuts, drained, cut into ¼-inch cubes
- 2 green onions, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon salt or to taste
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon chili oil or paste
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch dissolved in 2 teaspoons water
- ¼ cup roasted peanuts
- ¼ cup hoisin sauce
- 12 to 14 iceberg lettuce leaves

1. Mix chicken [or beef] with soy sauce, wine and 2 teaspoons cornstarch in small bowl; let stand for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, soak mushrooms in hot water to cover until softened. Drain and dice.
2. Heat wok or large skillet over high heat until hot. Add oil; heat until hot. Stir-fry chicken [or beef] for 1½ to 2 minutes. Remove and drain well.

3. Add carrot and zucchini to wok; stir-fry 30 seconds. Stir in water chestnuts, mushrooms, green onions, salt, broth, sesame oil and chili oil. Cover and cook 1 minute.

4. Return chicken [or beef] to wok. Stir in dissolved cornstarch mixture. Cook and stir until thickened, about 30 seconds. Stir in peanuts and mix well.

5. To serve, spread ½ teaspoon hoisin sauce on each lettuce leaf. Top with 1½ to 2 tablespoons meat mixture. Wrap up in lettuce leaf and eat out-of-hand.

### Sparkling melon balls

Four servings

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

- 1¼ cups water
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 large slices gingerroot
- 1 cup each: cubed watermelon and honeydew, chilled
- 2 tablespoons shredded Chinese pickled ginger
- 2 cups each: ice cold ginger ale, champagne

1. Heat water, sugar and gingerroot in medium saucepan to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer 12 to 15 minutes, until syrup slightly reduces and thickens. Remove and discard ginger slices. Chill.

2. Divide melon cubes and pickled ginger into each of 4 sherbet glasses. And 1 tablespoon of the cooled syrup to each glass. Fill each with about ¼ cup each of ginger ale and champagne.



# THE CULINARIAN

Official Publication of the CHEFS ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC COAST

## MARTIN YAN, VIDEO CHEF EXTRAORDINAIRE



### CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

HANS K. ROTH, C.E.C.  
Executive Chef  
H.K. Roth Enterprises

Ever since Julia Child made cooking shows on television respectable, an army of chefs, would-be chefs and hobby cooks have climbed on the bandwagon and galloped, sliced, kneaded and carved their way across the magic screen. Some have done very well, others have produced many agonizing minutes of culinary terror. Personally we are not terribly fond of video cooking lessons. Granted, there is always something to be learned, no matter what the circumstances.

A few years ago the mold of repetitious and sometimes even embarrassing cooking performances on television was dramatically broken when a young Chinese chef suddenly appeared on the horizon. Martin Yan's first cooking series had premiered!

Produced in Canada and subsequently aired in the United States, the program was enthusiastically received by American audiences. Hailed by TV-Guide as the "Chinese Galloping Gourmet", Martin has become a much acclaimed authority on Chinese cuisine throughout all of North America. Born in Kwangchow, the southern

region of China known as Canton, Yan became a serious student of Chinese cooking, when he started his first apprenticeship at the age of 13 in a Hong Kong restaurant.

Subsequently he graduated from the Overseas Institute of Cookery before relocating in California and earning his M.S. degree in Food Science from the University of California at Davis.

In 1976 Martin returned to the Far East to work for a major Chinese food manufacturer and to study cooking with renowned chefs throughout Asia.

Upon returning to North America as a restaurant consultant and cooking instructor in the late 1970s, Yan became the celebrity he is today.

He has racked up over 600 television appearances with guest slots on such shows as the Phil Donahue Show and several of the popular morning news shows in addition to his first cooking show titled "Yan Can Cook". His personal appearances in cooking schools and department stores across the United States and Canada draw audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

In addition to writing various cooking features and columns, Martin Yan is the author of three cookbooks, "The Joy of Wokking", "The Yan Can Cook Book" and his latest collection of recipes, "Martin Yan, the Chinese Chef".

Yan operates a food consulting firm, Yan Can & Company, in Foster City, California and has worked with leading food producers in research and development. Yan's latest venture, the Menu Cooking School, also located in Foster City just opened its doors and turned out to be an immediate success.

We had the opportunity to work with Martin Yan on a project and also attended a number of taping sessions for his show. As a television performer Martin employs a unique style. He has mastered the technique of demonstrating the various steps and processes of Chinese cooking as nobody else we have ever observed. He approaches his tasks with a great sense of humor. Never does he display the pomposity so prevalent with many video chefs. He is very humble and displays a rare quality lacking in many performers of any persuasion, to be able to laugh at himself. Some critics accuse him of being too cute at times, but the fact that his technique has brought about a better understanding of Oriental food and that he was able to dispel the myths and mysteries still present in many quarters, clearly proves that cooking programs on television don't have to be dull to be educational and effective. Martin's recipes appeal to American audiences because of their nutritional value, simple and natural cooking

processes and easy to prepare formats. Yan is a master in the use of the Chinese cleaver, a circumstance of which he makes effective use on camera, much to the pleasure of the live audience in the studio.

KQED/Golden Gate Productions has just completed the production of a new "Yan Can Cook" series that will premiere nationwide on public television in October. In this new thirteen-part series Martin Yan takes his audience of food enthusiasts on a taste tempting tour exploring traditional regional styles of Chinese cooking from Szechuan and Cantonese to newer, Chinese-inspired "Nouvelle" dishes. One program is devoted in its entirety to vegetarian menus.

Away from the cameras Martin is a very serious and dedicated professional, a fact his clients as well as his associates appreciate very much indeed. He is not only a pleasure to watch in action, but to work with him is a unique and rewarding experience.

\* \* \* \*



# & RESTAURANTS & INSTITUTIONS

## RECONNAISSANCE

PEOPLE, PLACES & PROMOS

### Martin Yan: Hamming it up with a wok



■Martin Yan: A teacher who thinks cooking should be an entertainment.

Martin Yan's cooking career began from the ground up—literally. According to the effervescent television teacher, author, lecturer, restaurant owner and consultant, he started on the consumer side of the business by eating the food that fell on the floor of his

mother and father's family-style restaurant in Canton, China.

Things are much improved these days, as Yan is on the verge of becoming one of America's best-known cooking personalities. He is an Oriental galloping gourmet whose syndicated televi-

sion show, "Yan Can Cook," is shown on 150 stations and reaches more than 40 million Chinese cooking enthusiasts.

The show's name is a key to its popularity and to Yan's personality. His own natural spice, a mix of self-effacing modesty and off-the-wall humor, is the element that has endeared him to students who range from upscale audiences trying to keep up with food fashion to countrymen just off the plane from Hong Kong. The name comes from Yan's often-used closing line: "What the heck, if Yan can, so can you!"

There's a lot of Horatio Alger in the Yan story. At 12, he moves to Hong Kong where he literally lives in his uncle's restaurant and meets a kindly professor who discounts his tuition so Yan can earn his first of two cooking degrees. He moves to Canada, where, it seems, everyone is waiting for an intelligent, witty Chinese cooking teacher, and he's a national hit, with his own "Yan Can Fan Club." Finally, he lands in California (he now lives in San Francisco) and ends up on television.

Presently, Yan is working on his third book, *Wokking Your Way To Health*, and enjoying the irony of his present popularity. "Everyone is talking about New World Cuisine, or California Cuisine, as if they were some new invention. The Chinese have been cooking food that is economical, healthy and sophisticated for thousands of years. Maybe Americans are just waking up to this fact."

# THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

Wednesday, April 24, 1985

## Yan can: Chinese chef shares joys of wokking

By Constance Daniell  
of The Journal Staff

FANS WHO HAVE SEEN his nationally televised "Yan Can Cook Show" know him as a genial host, chef extraordinaire, master of the witty one-liner and personification of razzle-dazzle technique.

Martin Yan's visit to Milwaukee last week to do a series of Chinese demonstration classes at Gimbel's Downtown and branch stores did nothing to dispel that image.

His audiences were treated to examples of his considerable creative skills in adapting recipes to the ingredients at hand. And they were drawn into an engaging empathy with Yan as he peppered his demonstrations with such phrases as "Not bad, huh?" or "How you like this one?" with each comment accompanied by a broad, disarming grin.

### Humor's a teaching tool

But if they were entertained, they were also taught, for Yan displayed an enviable talent for transmitting knowledge along with his love of cooking.

In an interview between demonstrations, it became apparent that the TV persona of the 36-year-old chef is just one aspect of an articulate and highly principled human being who has set a wide range of goals for his life.

"I am really not a very humorous person," Yan protested at the outset. "But I am always very aware that aside from information, people like to watch TV because they enjoy a show. And unless they are having a good time, they can always turn the dial to something else, so I try to make it entertaining."

"But I am also aware that while they are having a good time, they can also learn."

He added that he enjoys teaching because he finds the rapport that builds up between himself and the class stimulating. For that reason, he always has a live audience for his television classes.

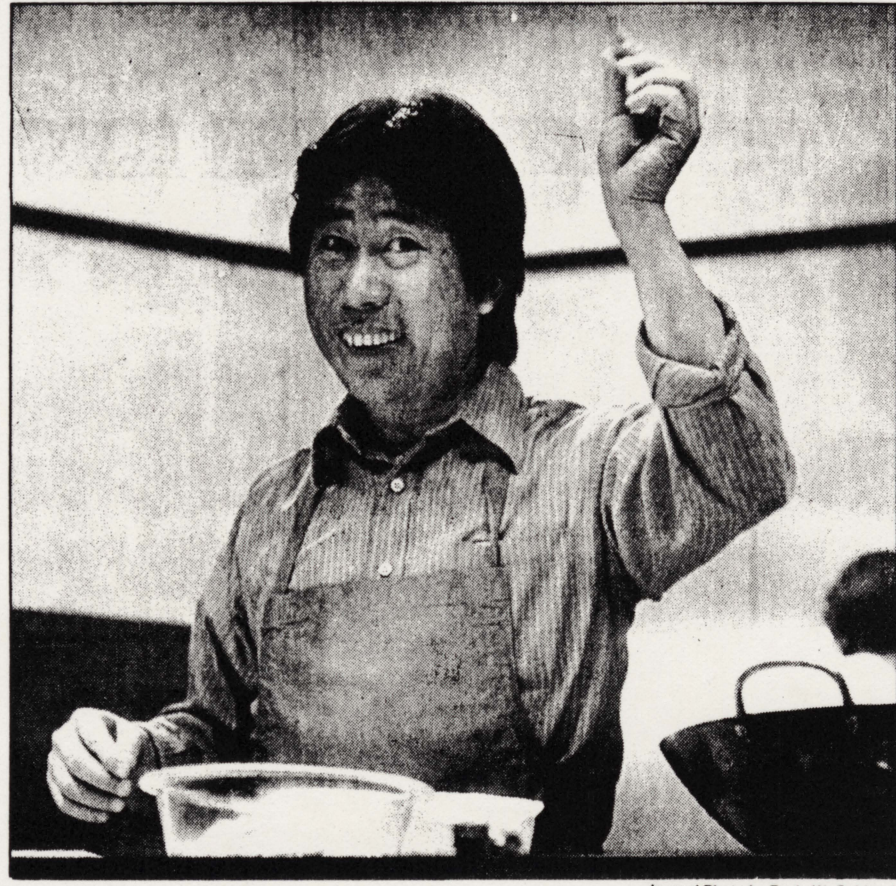
"When I am doing things in front of people, I always have a good time," he said. "For me, cooking is very personal. It's a personal expression of your creativity. You find whatever is available. You put dishes together by using different ingredients and seasonings."

"I want to make people think it's fun to do this," Yan said. "A lot of people don't try it because they think it's so complicated, so mysterious. I try to take the mystery out of Oriental cooking. It's just as easy as everyday cooking."

"At the same time I also enjoy doing it myself. When you see people in class smiling and having a good time, a kind of energy and feedback comes back to you. It's not just a job."

### Fewer appearances now

As much as he enjoys the experience, Yan explained that, because of time limitations, he makes personal appearances now only to do major promotions and fund raising for charitable causes. His visit here was part of a promotion publicizing a new PBS-TV cooking series that he will conduct. It is scheduled to debut in October.



— Journal Photo by Erwin W. Gebhard

Martin Yan grinned as he made a point while teaching a cooking class at Gimbel's

His basic activity, he said, is his business as a food and restaurant consultant.

Yan lives and headquarters his business in a small town near San Francisco.

"We have two or three home economists working for us, doing recipe development and creating and developing products for food companies," he explained.

"When a restaurant needs to train chefs, we offer those services, too. I am involved in a lot of things through the business."

Yan's cooking background includes formal education as well as practical cooking experience. When he was a small child in the Canton region of mainland China, his parents owned a small, family-style restaurant.

"A lot of people worry about red meat — beef — in their diet," he said. "In Chinese cooking, you can use it in a lot of dishes because you use so little — maybe just six to eight ounces for four people."

"Most Chinese people don't worry about diet. Their everyday approach to cooking is diet-conscious without even thinking about it."

Then, when he was 13 years old, he started working as an apprentice in a restaurant in Hong Kong.

"Many poor Chinese families send their kids to restaurants to work. It's the best way to insure that their kids will never starve. They can also bring food home if there is something left over," he said. "It makes me feel old to realize I have been cooking for 23 years."

Yan came to California in 1969 and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in food science and technology at the University of California at Davis.

Then it was back to Hong Kong, where he worked for one of the largest manufacturers of Chinese food in the world.

"While there, I studied Chinese sauces, seasonings and spices. I thought it would be a good specialty for me. I stayed over a year and worked on product development and quality control," Yan recalled.

### Creativity recognized

Yan pointed out that another appealing aspect of Chinese cooking is the creativity it affords.

"The Chinese pay a lot of attention to contrasts of color, texture and flavor," he noted. "Then there are different methods of preparation. You can take one basic dish and steam it, stir-fry or deep-fry it."

"In Chinese cooking, you can take six ingredients and four seasonings and create 60 dishes. When you cook a pork roast or beef roast, how creative can you be? You season it and put it in the oven."

After returning to this country, he decided to join a friend in a Canadian restaurant venture in Calgary, Alberta. While there, he was asked to make a guest appearance on a local cooking show. That led to a show of his own, and, eventually, to the PBS series in the United States.

"You hear the American saying about being in the right place at the right time," Yan remarked, smiling. "It's true. That first guest spot led to everything I'm doing today."

### Recognition of good nutrition

Much of the acceptance of his show in particular and Chinese cooking in general stems from increased awareness of good nutrition. Yan believes.

"I think Chinese food offers a very well-balanced diet because of the number of ingredients used," he said. "You don't normally just have a pipe of meat. Or a salad. You have several dishes that comprise meat and vegetables put together. Each contributes something to good nutrition."

"Chinese cooking is fun. You open the refrigerator and take out whatever's available and fix it however you want. There's no structure to it, and that's why I think it will continue to be popular — because of its total concept of nutrition and creativity."

### Down-to-earth recipe writing

Yan has written two cookbooks. The first, "The Joy of Wokking," was published in 1979. The second, "The Yan Can Cook Book," came out in 1981. Both were published by Doubleday and both have gone into several reprintings.

"Normally my writing isn't very polished," Yan said. "I develop the recipes, then I work to refine them. Many cooks can be very creative, but they forget they may be writing for

“  
I try to take the mystery out of Oriental cooking. It's just as easy as everyday cooking.”

—Martin Yan,  
Chinese celebrity chef

sombody who has never cooked this dish before.

"I think people like the recipes because most are written very simply so everybody can follow them. My approach tends to be very down-to-earth so nobody feels intimidated."

### Expanded horizons

So what mountains are left for this ambitious young man to climb? Yan smiled and answered readily.

"I feel I have much to accomplish that I have not accomplished yet. I hope to establish a cooking school that will become one of the best for Oriental cooking in the country. And I hope to continue to write articles for magazines and newspapers."

"One day I will have a restaurant, and I hope I will have a good time without getting stuck in the kitchen," he continued. "There is so much to do in Chinese cooking — still many places where Chinese cooking is very new to many people. I hope to reach more people."

Yan paused for breath, then grinned and added:

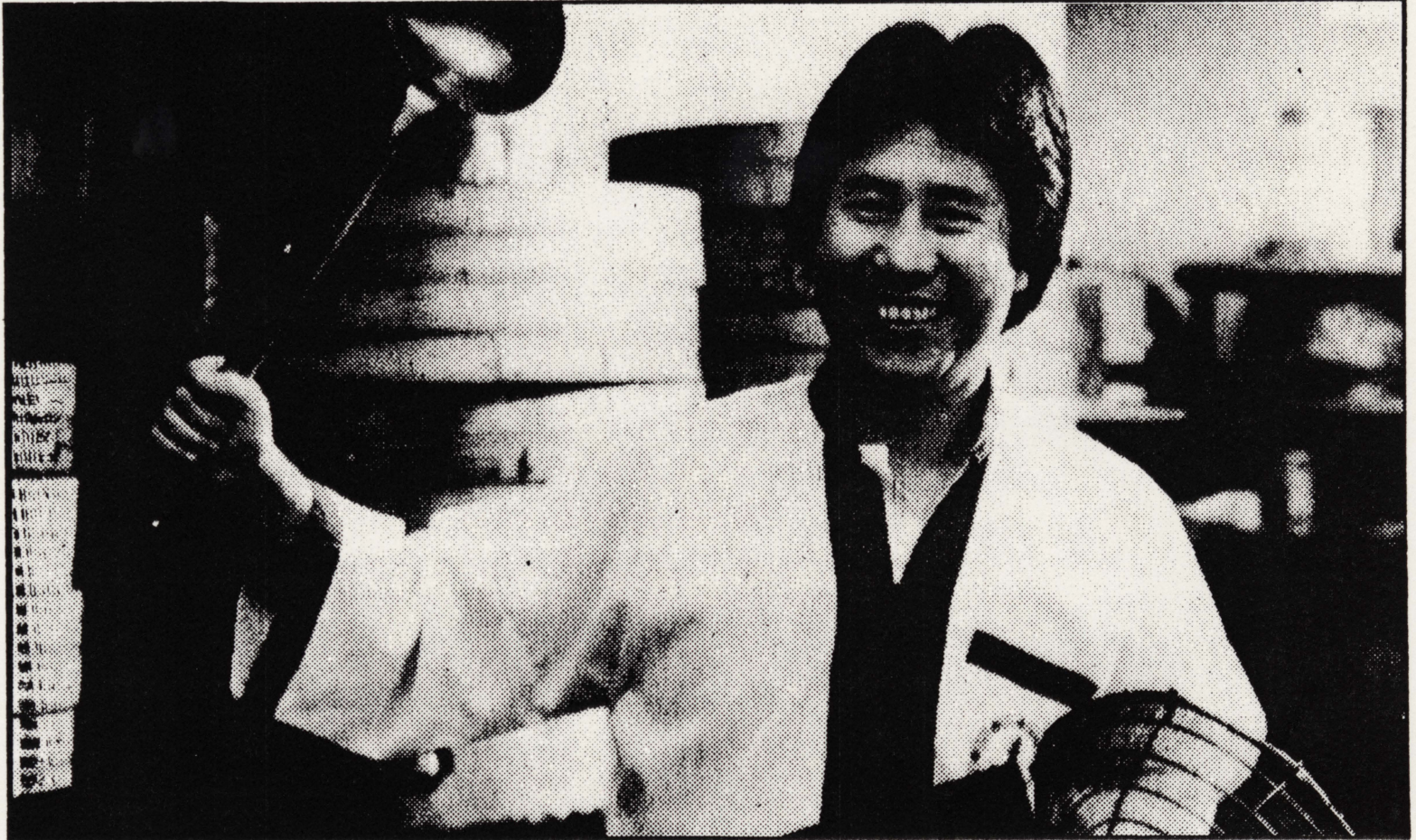
"I have not become financially independent. I am doing quite well, but I haven't been able to drive a Rolls Royce yet."

# Los Angeles Times

Circulation: 1,064,392 Daily / 1,331,666 Sunday

Thursday, January 31, 1985

Copyright 1985, Los Angeles Times/Daily 25¢



Chef Martin Yan, "Yan Can Cook" TV show host, shares recipe for shrimp-broccoli with crab sauce.

## SHRIMP: Imports Give the Consumer a Wider Selection

Cookbook author Martin Yan, a Chinese cooking teacher on a PBS television series, favors steaming or poaching shrimp, particularly fresh ones, to bring out the natural flavor. "Quickly boil them in the shell so they don't lose those juices, then peel and dip in a condiment," Yan says. "Shrimp that have been stripped of the shell by the packer and frozen 'in the nude' are totally inappropriate to Chinese cooking—lacking almost any taste and texture. If your market shells them upon thawing, that is one thing, but never buy shrimp that are shelled and then frozen." The best way to eat shrimp, Yan says, is in its raw state, but the shrimp should be very fresh and should come from a reliable source.

"I never liked it before, but Chinese do copy the Japanese or other race and vice versa," he says. "For instance, isn't Benihana's cooking more American? Now they've copied it in Japan." Indeed, there is a continuous exchange of food eating habits. "Even the Chinese have adapted to eating the American broccoli, which is not grown in Chinese countries," he continues. Yan gave us his recipe for butterflied prawns stuffed with broccoli and served with a crab sauce. He said he once tasted the delicious dish in Hong Kong at an elegant banquet and then developed it here.

### MARTIN YAN'S CRYSTAL PRAWNS WITH CRAB SAUCE

*12 jumbo shrimp or prawns*  
*2 teaspoons Sherry*  
*1 teaspoon sesame oil*  
*Salt*  
*Dash white pepper*  
*4 teaspoons cornstarch*  
*1 pound broccoli*  
*2 teaspoons oil*  
*1/2 teaspoon finely chopped ginger root*  
*1 teaspoon finely chopped green onion*  
*4 ounces cooked crab meat, shredded*  
*3/4 cup chicken broth*  
*1 tablespoon water*  
*1 egg white, lightly beaten*

Shell shrimp, leaving tails intact. Butterfly, cutting lightly along back without separating halves. Remove veins. Make about 1-inch slit in center of each shrimp. Combine shrimp with Sherry, sesame oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt, white pepper and 2 teaspoons cornstarch. Allow to marinate 1 hour.

Cut broccoli into florets. Trim stems and cut diagonally into thin slices. Holding each shrimp by tail, push tail through center slit, then insert broccoli floret. Repeat with remaining shrimp.

Arrange shrimp and broccoli in heat-proof pie dish. Heap broccoli stems in center. Place on rack in steamer and steam over high heat 5 to 10 minutes. While steaming, heat wok or saucepan over medium-high heat until hot. Add oil, then saute ginger and green onion. Stir in crab meat, broth, salt to taste and remaining 2 teaspoons cornstarch mixed with water. Cook just until slightly thickened. Remove wok from heat. Slowly drizzle and stir in beaten egg white. Pour over steamed prawns and serve immediately. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

## Yan Can

### TV chef's humorous approach helps advance Chinese cuisine

By Rachel Bagby  
Mercury News Staff Writer

SAN FRANCISCO

**G**OTTA hot flash for you — all Szechwan food is not spicy or hot," Martin Yan says in a voice reminiscent of a curbside newspaper hustler.

The studio audience, gathered at KQED to watch a taping of the nationally broadcast television show "Yan Can Cook," is visibly surprised.

But Yan insists he speaks the truth, and Yan should know. He has been a Chinese chef for 33 of his 46 years — though this particular truth he is a bit

coy about revealing.

"In North America it is illegal to ask a woman her age. In China, it's illegal to ask a man's age," he quips.

It's hard to tell if it's Yan's wisecracking style or culinary skill that makes him so popular. His half-hour show is packed with one-liners; even so, he's clearly serious about answering questions from the studio audience and gives lots of tips about Chinese cooking. It's a winning combination — 175 public television stations across the country broadcast "Yan Can Cook," including KQED (Ch. 9), which broadcasts his show



Karen T. Borchers — Mercury News

Martin Yan cleaves niche

Continued on Page 5D

## Yan talks and woks way to television cookery fame

at 11 a.m. Saturdays. Yan no doubt has benefited from the recent increase in interest in Chinese cooking, which is largely attributable to its healthfulness and emphasis on "sparingly cooked foods, less salt and less cholesterol," says Chinese cooking expert Barbara Tropp, author of "The Modern Art of Chinese Cooking" (Morrow).

And in November, Yan will add yet another title to the ever-growing list of books on Chinese cooking, with "Martin Yan The Chinese Chef" to be published by Doubleday — a collection of the recipes presented in the TV series taped in San Francisco last week.

KQED quickly sold out 1,300 studio audience tickets that were available for the 13 taping sessions, drawing the young, the old, men, women, all ethnic groups and several aspiring kitchen comedians. About 50,000 Bay Area residents watch his weekly broadcasts, say KQED station officials.

Not bad for someone who spent five years sleeping in a Hong Kong restaurant as part of his apprenticeship, which started when Yan was 13.

Yan says he really had no choice about becoming a cook. His uncle had a restaurant in Hong Kong, and Yan was sent there from his native Kwangchow to help out. Because of the scarcity of living space in Hong Kong, it's a common practice for apprentices to sleep in the restaurants where they work, Yan says.

"It's not like Americans, who go to cooking schools, sometimes because they want to change careers. In China, families send their kids to work in a restaurant when they're very young, when they're about 12 or 14," Yan says. "Poor families do it because they can't afford to feed their kids. A restaurant always has a lot of food."

### Earns master's from UC-Davis

Yan made the best of his fate, however, and subsequently graduated from the Overseas Institute of Cookery in Hong Kong. He then traveled to California in 1969 and earned a master's degree in food science from the University of California at Davis.

"I came to this country because there are too many chefs in China and not enough TVs," Yan says.

Still, he went back to Hong Kong to study with some of those chefs, then returned to America to work as a restaurant consultant and cooking instructor. Yan has been teaching Chinese cooking for about 15 years and recently opened the Menu Cooking School in Foster City, the town he has called home for the past 2½ years. In fact, one of Yan's earlier students was responsible for his first guest appearance on television.

"One of my students was a talk-show host on TV in Alberta (Canada). She had me on as a guest; that was 1978."

Seven years later, Yan has more than 600 television appearances to his credit, including a guest slot on the Phil "Donahue" show. Dubbed "The Chinese Galloping Gourmet" by TV Guide, Yan's first cooking show, produced in Canada, was titled "Yan Can." He changed it to "Yan Can Cook" when viewers called in asking "Yan can what?"

Golden Gate Productions, an arm of KQED, began distributing the show in the United States in January 1984. The segments taped in San Francisco last week, the first to be recorded in this country, will be aired in late October.

Each show features recipes for an entire meal and draws from from a distinct region or theme of Chinese cooking, Szechwan, Canton, Peking, Shanghai, dim sum, Chinese pasta, vegetarian and nouvelle cuisine have been some of the topics.

### What's so hot about Szechwan?

Today the menu is Szechwan: Szechwan omelet soup, smoke tea duck and fruit and snow mushrooms.

"Szechwan is really a combination of hot, sour, sweet and salty flavors," he explains. "Other styles of Chinese food have one distinctive flavor. But Szechwan blends them all together, and when it's done really well, you don't have to worry about it being too hot."

Yan claims the basic ingredients for all of his meals can be found in most supermarkets. The more exotic ingredients, such as snow mushrooms, which look like lacy, white sea sponges, are common items in Chinese markets.

"I try to demystify the idea that Chinese cooking is very complicated, give people basic recipes, basic skills that they can use at home, like a hobby," Yan says, adding that most essential ingredient in Chinese cookery is fun. "Cooking is fun, everybody should have fun. If you don't enjoy doing it, it really is a drag."

"Nobody, but nobody can accuse him of not enjoying himself. Before the recording session, Yan warms up the audience by teaching them the proper way to summon a waiter in a Chinese restaurant.

"You don't ask for a waiter. That's rude," Yan says. "You ask for your amigo, your friend. You say this, repeat after me, 'Lo yao gay' (pronounced lo yo quy). It means, 'Yo, buddy.'"

As the tech crew makes last-minute camera adjustments, Yan drums out a rhythm with his cleaver on

the cutting board. The audience giggles and claps like children at a circus, with Yan egging them on. "You gotta be a member of the Chinese musicians' union to do this," he says.

Yan somehow manages to squeeze practical tips in between the barrage of quips. For instance, He suggests using lean meat in his recipe for Szechwan omelet soup because "fat meat has too much cholesterol. Cholesterol takes up too much room in the body, so there's no room for food."

### Let electric wok work in concert

Other examples: Yan says that an electric wok is a good supplement to a range-top wok because its temperature control features are good for recipes that call for braising, deep frying, and steaming. "And with a long, gigantic extension cord, you can wok all over the place — in your back yard, in your neighbor's back yard..."

To prepare green onions for smoke tea duck, Yan smashes them with the side of his cleaver then minces them in an engaging rhythm.

Smoke tea duck is actually steamed in a wok or steamer. If using a wok, one can fashion a steam-rack out of four chopsticks; two vertical, two horizontal, like the pattern one draws for tick-tack-toe.

One doesn't even have to use duck. Yan says any bird will do, "wild game hen, wild duck, chicken, little quail, anything with two wings and two legs."

For dessert, fruit and snow mushrooms covered with a thick, syrupy glaze. "Keep your eye on the thick sugar sauce," Yan warns. "If you think it's burning, it already has."

As the show winds down, it's time to learn another word. This one means "delicious": *ho ho sik*. Yan makes the audience say it three times then reminds us, "If Yan can cook, so can you."

Here are his recipes:



Ginger root, greens, onions, sprouts and mushrooms mingle in wok cookery.

### FRUIT AND SNOW MUSHROOMS

- 1 ounce dried snow mushrooms (white fungus)
- 1 can (10 ounces) mandarin orange segments
- 1 can (11 ounces) lychee fruit
- 1 can (8 ounces) chunk pineapple
- 4 cups water

### Syrup:

- ¾ cup each water and sugar
- 1 teaspoon Triple Sec liqueur
- Sweetened whipped cream, optional

Soak snow mushrooms in enough warm water to cover for 1 hour. Cut off and discard hard stems. Set mushrooms aside. Drain all fruit; place in a large serving bowl; set aside.

Place snow mushrooms in a medium-size saucepan and pour in enough water to cover; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes; drain.

Meanwhile, combine ¾ cup water and sugar in a small saucepan; place over medium heat, swirling pan occasionally until sugar is dissolved. Continue to cook until syrup is reduced by one-half, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, then stir in liqueur. Let cool. Add snow mushrooms to fruit. Pour in cooled syrup; toss well. Cover and refrigerate until chilled. Serve in individual bowls; top with whipped cream, if desired. Serves 4.

# St. Louis Post-Dispatch

## Yan Can Cook, And Shows Why Here



**Joe Pollack**

Remember the little engine that could?

Sure you do — the one that puffed along saying, "I think I can, I think I can," and so on and so on.

Well, I had dinner the other night with the head of Yan Can & Company. And when it comes to cooking, Martin Yan can.

He's the host of the television show, Yan Can Cook, and when he visited St. Louis, a group of Chinese restaurateurs arranged a small dinner and included me. For one who enjoys Oriental cooking as much as I do, it was a real treat.

Yan and the restaurateurs were together for more than just a party, though we certainly romped through a wonderful variety of dishes that represented various styles of Chinese cuisine. Yan explained them to me, and discussed them, as we went along.

He's slight, slender and 35, a native of Canton, China, who left home at the age of 13 and has lived in Hong Kong, Canada and the United States. He is a graduate of the University of California at Davis, known best for its enology department, with a degree in food science. He has cooked at hotels and restaurants, and now teaches cooking and consults with various food manufacturers and processors about new uses for old products.

"I really don't consider myself a chef any more," he said. "I don't do it enough."

He looked at a platter of cold appetizers, the cucumbers and other vegetables sliced as neatly by hand as if they had come from a processor.

"I try to practice with my cleaver every day," he said, "but I'm out of practice and I don't think I could make the vegetables look as good as those. I could once, but not today."

We ate with chopsticks, in the Chinese style,

and during the meal I suddenly realized just why so many restaurants are what I have critically described as "one-fork restaurants." The Chinese use one set of chopsticks through the entire meal — I did, too — and it's easy to see why they assume that one fork also is sufficient.

Yan sees a new style of Chinese cooking, almost a *nouvelle cuisine Chinoise*, coming to this country. It will be comparable to the so-called modern American cooking, too, in that it will emphasize fresh products, prepared simply and then, perhaps, garnished with a sauce. And it also will put more work into presentation, or how the dish looks.

I've seen signs in St. Louis, by the way, in a number of Oriental restaurants where garnishes of carved fruits and vegetables are becoming more common. That's primarily for looks rather than for taste, but it's a start.

I found Yan a kindred spirit in that he decried the fact that so many Chinese restaurants in St. Louis seem to have identical menus. I've thought that, and written it on occasion, but Yan had a solution.

He suggested that the restaurateurs add a daily special or two, a dish based on market availability.

"Americans love salmon," he explained, "and it's a lot more common here than in China. All you have to do is take a piece, poach it, or grill it, and serve it with a classic Chinese black bean sauce, or garlic sauce. Simple. Fresh. Delicious."

I support that one 100 percent.

Yan likes all types of Oriental cooking and appreciates the variations from country to country, like the use of shrimp paste and bean thread in Thai and Vietnamese cuisine, the coconut milk

often found in Filipino recipes, and emphasis on fish and the slightly sweeter style of Japanese preparation.

He's loyal to Chinese chefs, of course, but he pointed out that those trained in northern China tend to be more disciplined and, in general, superior to those who train in the southern part of the nation.

Listening to a food scientist like Yan always is a great opportunity to learn things. For example, he pointed out that soy sauce can differ from year to year, just like wine, because weather conditions affect the beans in the same manner that they affect grapes.

Soy sauce is simple stuff, made of the beans, salt, water and a bit of rice flour. But as a microbiologist who has analyzed the beans, he says there are 112 separate tastes that come from the variety and combinations of proteins, amino acids and alcohol.

And there are those who think tofu has no character!

Dessert was fresh fruit, nicely carved into a variety of shapes, and Yan pointed out that Hong Kong leads the world in the per capital consumption of oranges.

"People eat them after almost every meal," he explained, "and when they pay visits, they often take oranges as gifts. The golden color is a good omen and a good luck thought."

And one other area where Hong Kong leads the world: The consumption of cognac also is the highest. It's drunk at every meal, and between meals, and in celebration of the aphorism of Miguel de Cervantes, "I drink upon occasion; sometimes on no occasion."

## FOOD

### Celebrity chefs relive embarrassing moments

# Oops! There goes dinner

By C. Whitney Ward

EVERYONE has had a kitchen disaster and lived to tell the tale. My worst occurred early in my marriage. We had invited friends over for lunch. The menu was simple: a nice green salad, big bowls of rich onion soup, and lots and lots of crusty French bread.

The soup — one of Julia Child's recipes — had been bubbling away on the stove for hours, the delicious smell of melting onions permeating the entire house. Just as the guests arrived I quickly dashed into the kitchen to give the pot one last peek.

OOOPS!

Every drop of broth had boiled away and all that was left were the yucky, almost-burned onions lurking in the bottom of the pot. It looked like low tide at Nantasket Beach.

We went to McDonald's.

Now surely these little kitchen gaffs must happen to even the most elite of culinary luminaries.

Well recently, a gaggle of these marvelous food and wine mavens were in town for a WGBH fund-raiser. We asked them to tell all.

Julia Child, the indefatigable guru of French cooking, started off:

"I just love live television. It can be terribly funny and dramatic, especially when it's unscripted," said Child, discussing her most recent series, "Dinner at Julia's."

And funny and dramatic is exactly how one would describe what happened on one of the episodes.

She was flambéing something or other, and when she doused it with a cup of bourbon and then lit it, the flames rose dramatically.

Unfortunately Child failed to see the bouquet of straw flowers hanging just above the table. So when the flame shot up, it flambéed the flowers as well as the intended food.

So what did this quick-thinking veteran chef do?

"Well, we were live, so I just caught up the flaming flowers and threw them down in front of the camera. Then, a very quick-witted cameraman got a picture of the floor manager screaming. I enjoyed that immensely," chuckled Child.

And there have been a few disasters on the home front as well. The most regrettable, said Child, involved a wonderful turkey soup she made from a whole slew of raw turkey carcasses that someone had given her.

When this rich, lovely soup was done, she removed it from the stove and just as she began straining it out, the bowl tipped and all the turkey broth went into the dishwasher. "I just sat down and cried!" recalled Child.

OOOPS!

It gets worse. Jacques Pepin, of "Everyday Cooking With Jacques Pepin," did a tour a few years ago where he traveled all over the country



DID WE DO THAT? Famous chefs seen on WGBH admit that they, too, have ruined a few meals

doing live cooking demonstrations. On this particular day he was demonstrating the fine art of soufflé. He whipped it up flawlessly and put it in the oven.

Now, the kitchen for this demonstration was set on a stage, and when Pepin finished his stint, someone else took over, so there was no way to check on the progress of the soufflé.

At the appointed moment, he zipped into the kitchen, opened the oven door, and discovered that he had set the oven on self-clean. "You've never seen a soufflé as burned as that," laughed Pepin.

Regardless, said Pepin, he got a standing ovation.

"Being a professional, by definition, means you are able to recover. Cooking is the art of recovery, the art of adjustment or compensation. So after many years in the kitchen it doesn't mean that you cook things perfectly, but that you can always retrieve it at least to the point that it is edible."

OOOPS!

Margaret Romagnoli of "The Romagnolis' Table" agrees, and has her own recovery story to tell. This one took place years ago when she decided to bake husband Franco a traditional panatone on his first Christmas in America.

"In those days the Christmas bread from Italy wasn't imported to this country," explained Margaret, who consulted one of her favorite Italian cookbooks for the recipe.

It said the bread would rise nine times over 24 hours. She faithfully attended the dough through seven of the risings, but then reality intervened. Her two small boys got tired of sharing their mother's attention with a bowl of dough and distracted her. Instead of adding one egg to the next to last rising, she threw in two.

All of a sudden the dough

started rising out of the bowl and cascading down and over the counter. "I told the boys to run and get their father," laughed Romagnoli. "He came back and said: 'What is all this disturbance?' All of this in Italian, mind you."

"I had my arms around my washing machine, which was my counter, holding this froth, this mass, this huge heaving thing that was panatone."

Finally, with the help of her two boys, who kept eating pieces of the sweet dough, she gathered the errant mass and set it to rise one more "miserable" time.

There was a happy ending. "It was a beautiful panatone and Franco really loved it for his Christmas," enthused Romagnoli.

Now what was Franco's biggest guffaw in the kitchen? "My biggest mistake," smiled Franco, "was when I went into the kitchen to help Margaret with her panatone! It was a big mistake!"

But the other one, recalled Franco, took place on one of their shows. They were doing pizza. On an impulse — it wasn't in the script — Franco decided to spin the dough. "I had never, never, never done it in my life," laughed Franco recalling the outcome. "I have no idea what got into me. I just said, here goes."

And it did!

The pizza, said Franco, went flying over the camera. "There I was like a dummy. It was one mistake that no one will let me forget." And, it was that hysterical clip that WGBH used for years for promotional purposes.

OOOPS!

How about a wine disaster? Or near disaster as the case may be.

According to Hugh Johnson of "Wine, A User's Guide," the strangest thing that ever happened to him was when he was entertaining guests from California at his home in England. He

wanted to give them a very fine wine, so he fetched a 1929 bottle of Bordeaux from his cellar. But when he peeled off the lead capsule to check on the cork, he found to his amazement that there was no cork.

"For 10 years this bottle had been lying on its side with nothing but a lead capsule between the wine and the air."

Someone had probably set the bottle up in a dry spot, the cork had dried out and then fallen to the bottom, suggested Johnson.

Surprise, surprise. The wine, insisted Johnson, was still good to drink. "My brain may be affected by the lead poisoning, but it was delicious."

OOOPS!

The most disastrous moment that Marlan Morash, of "The Victory Garden," can ever remember took place one summer on Martha's Vineyard, where she and husband Russ — WGBH producer and Emmy Award winner — had rented a house for the summer. One evening they invited friends over, and because the kitchen and stove were small, they decided to have a barbecue. Just before the guests arrived it started pouring.

So Morash had to change her menu and endeavor to cook an ample, but simple meal in her tiny kitchen. She decided on chicken with 40 cloves of garlic. "It's wonderful and also very simple to make when you're having the company," noted Morash.

At the time, every nook and cranny had filled four large pots with chicken and peppers. It was exactly 4 p.m. and she'd had an hour and a half to make cocktails with her guests. It was serving up dinner.

As she excused herself, went to the kitchen and discovered to her horror that the chicken was absolutely raw.

Fifty-five minutes later, the

chicken was just beginning to simmer. She became frantic and called in a chef friend to help. The two began madly sautéing and brazing the chicken on top of the stove. The guests finally sat down to dinner at midnight.

"By that time they were so full of wine and spirits," laughed Morash, "they were quite literally falling off their chairs."

OOOPS!

Enter Martin Yan, a very funny PBS chef and host of "Yan Can Cook."

All of his shows are live, too, so in the true show biz tradition, if anything goes awry, the show must go on.

And so it did when Yan accidentally sliced his finger with a Chinese chopping knife. "I was joking and laughing and it happened so fast that no one could see," recalled Yan, who quickly worked it into the show's script.

"I just told the audience that it was very easy for people to prepare food with two hands, but I want to show you how to do it with one hand," said Yan, matter of factly. "Hey, you can't stop the tape or say I just cut myself and take off."

So like the trooper he is, Yan proceeded to continue cutting, and chopping and wokking with only one hand. "After I finished," recalled Yan, "I passed out. It was very painful, and I had laughed and joked through the whole show. No one noticed!"

OOOPS!

Well, now, let's see what Jeff Smith, otherwise known as the Frugal Gourmet has to confess. Do frugal people ever make mistakes in the kitchen?

Indeed they do, said Smith, partly because his shows do not have rehearsals, don't have a script, and they never stop tape. "I am very anxious that the show feel as live as possible," explained Smith.

As a result he has had a lot of plates and things fly off the counter and crash to the floor. It never throws him. He just looks up at the camera and sheepishly tells his audience: "Well, that's one dish you're not going to see."

But the dumbest thing, admitted Smith, "bordering on sheer idiocy," he added, was the time he tried to educate his audience as to the proper way of broiling tomato halves.

He garnished them beautifully with oiled breadcrumbs and garlic, and put them under the broiler. Then he went on to another dish.

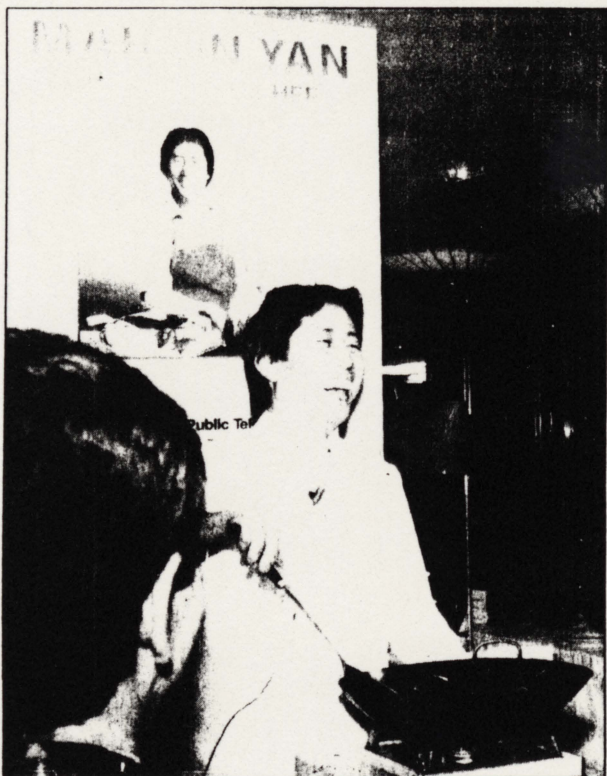
Pretty soon his director came crawling along on the floor with a big sign that said *TO MATRONS*. This confused Smith who clearly remembered having already done the tomatoes. Finally he got the message and looked

The smoke, by that time, was everywhere. He grabbed the charred and flaming mass out of the broiler, looked at the camera, and in typical Frugalogue fashion said: "Now let me show you how to correct this!"

Without skipping a beat, he scraped the burned part off, put on a new topping and slipped them back under the broiler. And "burned tomatoes" smirked Smith.

# The Boston Globe

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1986



Martin Yan, chef and comedian.

Globe photo by Jan Houseworth

## PBS' culinary stars prepare a moveable feast

By Carol Flake  
Special to the Globe

"Every week he saves our gastronomic souls," said David Ives, vice chairman of the WGBH Educational Foundation, introducing former college chaplain Jeff Smith, a.k.a. the Frugal Gourmet. It was Friday night, during a lavish fund-raising dinner at Rarities at the Charles Hotel in Cambridge that featured Smith, Julia Child and six other culinary stars of public television.

The dinner, which had been prepared by Rarities' executive chef Walter Zuromski, was the second of three weekend events sponsored by WGBH's "Insiders" group in order to raise funds to match a National Endowment for the Humanities challenge grant.

"It's almost like Holy Week," said one observer of the series of events that honored the chefs. And given the evangelical zeal with which Julia Child and her successors have approached the art of cooking, the observation seemed particularly apt.

"Julia would be a good evangelical preacher on TV," said Martin Yan, of the show "Yan Can Cook." However, Yan, who was born in China and runs a cooking school and food consulting company in San Francisco, is more comedian than preacher in his delivery. Yan said he was so excited about being included in the series of events that he "went out and bought a three-piece suit at K Mart."

The dinner itself, which included such courses as a squash and sweet potato bisque presented in Jungian dichotomy, divided by a dollop of bourbon cream, seemed a peculiarly WGBH mixture of the casual and the formal. Although tickets cost \$500 apiece, the dinner was not black tie, and the few who had worn tuxes felt a bit out of place. "I look like the headwaiter," said Ed Firestone of Firestone & Parson jewelers. Some guests had arrived at the Charles Hotel in limos, while Russ and Marian Morash, producer and cook, respectively, of "The Victory Garden," had driven their red pickup truck.

The following night, the moveable feast was transported to Filene's downtown store for a "Taste of the Town" gala that drew more than 600.

## TV cooks choose the ultimate meal

By Sheryl Julian  
Globe Staff

CAMBRIDGE - Public television's "Masters of Food and Wine" gathered for lunch at the Charles Hotel in Harvard Square Friday, to begin a weekend of fundraising parties to help WGBH meet a National Endowment for the Humanities challenge grant.

Nibbling chef Walter Zuromski's specialties - smoked red prawns, smoked eel and smoked mussels, chicken with whole cranberries on miniature corn cakes, Vermont ham and New England goat cheese on pumpernickel toasts, cod cheek and corn chowder, grilled Nantucket quail with pickled pear relish, finnan haddie ravioli in the shape of maple leaves - the eight cooks mingled with a hundred guests at the hotel's Regattabar.

Julia Child would begin with two ounces of the finest Beluga caviar with broche toasts and a "nice small glass" of iced Russian vodka, followed by nine imported Marenne oysters (*fines de claire* size three are her preference, providing the most "sea-bottomy" taste).

That would be followed by *fete gras*, pressed duck just like the one she ate at the restaurant near the train station in Rouen. Accompanying the duck would be potatoes Anna, a "beautiful crusty cake of potatoes sprinkled with some pieces of fresh truffle."

"I don't care for sorbets," said



Julia Child, left, and Marian Morash in a spirited conversation with Jacques Pepin at a fund-raiser featuring public television's chefs.

Globe staff photo Wendy Maeda

Child, so she would "break the rhythm with a salad made from asparagus tips, sliced artichoke hearts, and a *fondue* of tomatoes with Bibb lettuce and a light lemon vinaigrette." Following several cheeses, Child would serve the

classic charlotte Malakoff *au chocolat*.

Pepin himself was next to speak. "My menu," he said, "has already been discussed by Julia: caviar, *fete gras*, truffled Anna potatoes, spinach and carrot custard

for dessert."

Pepin went on to tell the story about the mother of the 19th-century French philosopher Brillat-Savarin, who was eating an enormous meal. Before she had finished the many courses, she blurted out, "I think I'm going to die! Quick! Bring the dessert!"

The Frugal Gourmet does not intend to meet his creator on a full stomach, so he would eat a bowl of bean curd with hot bean sauce and pork, a dish he knows from a favorite restaurant in San Francisco. "Then," said the former chaplain, "I would meet my creator, burp, and say 'Thank you, Lord.'"

Martin Yan would exit after the traditional Chinese banquet of a dozen dishes, including bird's nest soup (this sparked a discussion between Jeff Smith, Hugh Johnson and Yan over whether birds are being robbed of their nests), red-cooked bear's paw, Szechwan tea-smoked duck, and pastries in the shape of lotus blossoms. All of this would be accompanied by 110-proof *moutai*, the potent Chinese drink made from barley. "You won't need anything after that," added Yan.

Friday's lunch was followed by a private "Night Before" black tie dinner, also at the Charles, and a Saturday evening gala at Filene's in Boston, which attracted hundreds of public television supporters who were able to watch the masters cooking, this time in person.

# Where CAN YAN cook?

**Right in Menus, his own  
Foster City culinary school**

**A** notable roster of Bay Area cooking professionals is bringing a lively culinary program to a new Foster City cooking school named Menus.

Located in the Charter Square shopping center, the spacious facility can accommodate 35 to 50 in a demonstration/lecture class or 18 for a hands-on workshop.

"Classes are designed to be very diversified, to please those who want to have fun and those who want to be serious," said director Irene Chriss. They range from tea cakes with Stanford Court pastry chef Jim Dodge, dim sum with Rhoda Yee and the art of perfect baking with Flo Braker to spring lamb with Ken Wolfe and the calorie conscious gourmet with Chriss.

The school is owned by Martin Yan, the personable Chinese chef who delights television audiences on KQED. A subsidiary of Yan Can and Co., it is run as a school and a food consulting firm for such clients as Kikkoman, Dole and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Upcoming events include an intensive two-day seminar with Yan and Yee that includes a Chinese New Year parade Saturday and a Sunday cooking extravaganza. Popular workshops on sushi and sashimi are being repeated.

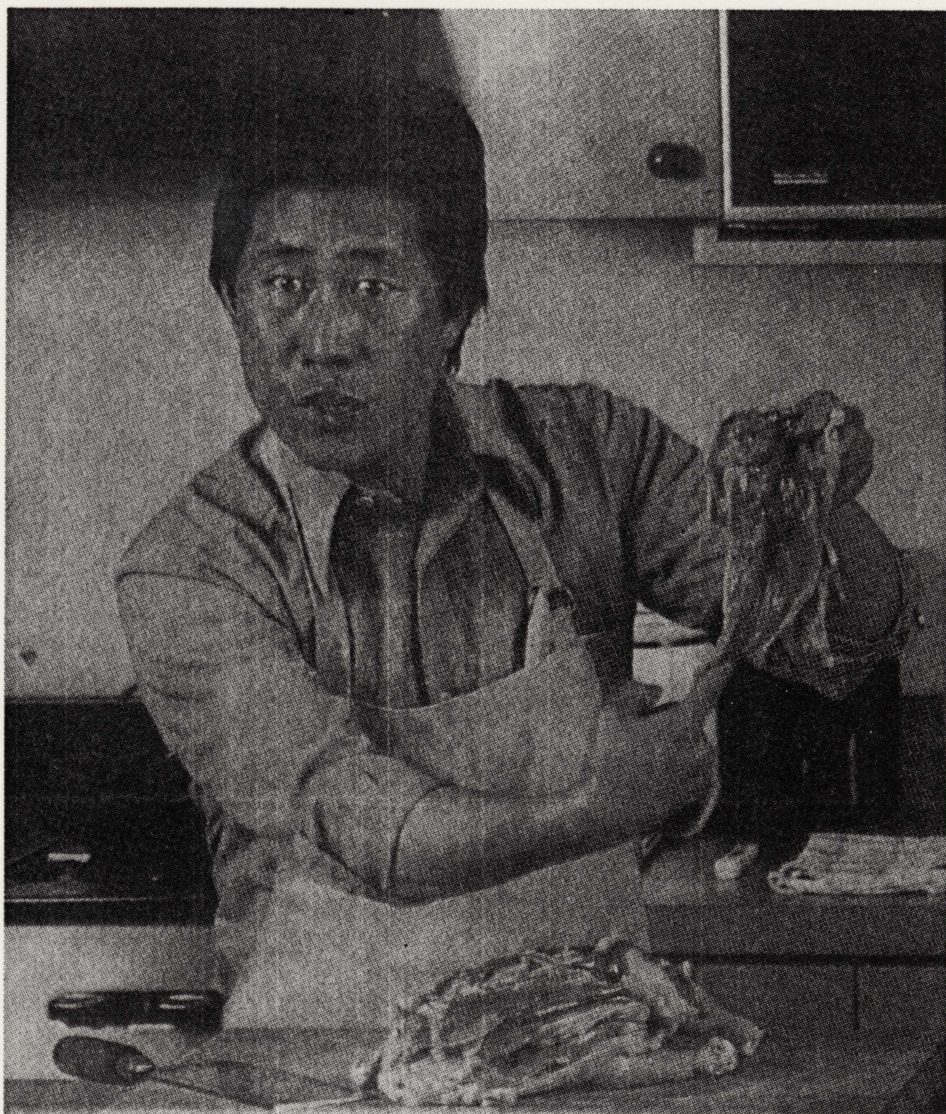
In many of the classes, 15 percent of the fee is tax-deductible as contribution to the March of Dimes.

"The weekend classes are providing an activity and entertainment for couples," said Chriss. "Instead of going out for breakfast or lunch, we'll feed you at Menus and you can learn something besides."

Within a few years Yan has become a much-acclaimed culinary star throughout North America. He has racked up more than 600 television appearances from his two cooking shows and guest appearances. His latest 13-week series is being aired nationally on 1,600 stations throughout the United States and Canada. Spotlighting his lively sense of humor, "Yan Can Cook" appeals to all ages and has a Bay Area viewing audience of 185,000.

Born in Kwangchow, the southern region of China known as Canton, Yan became a serious student of Chinese cooking when he started his first apprenticeship at age 13 in a Hong Kong restaurant. He graduated from the Overseas Institute of Cookery before traveling to California and earning his master's degree in food science from the University of California at Davis. In 1976 he returned to the Far East to work for a major Chinese food manufacturer and to study cooking with renowned chefs in Asia.

Returning to North America as a restaurant consultant and cooking instructor in the late '70s, he fast became the celebrity he is today. Besides writing various cooking features and columns, Yan is the author of three cookbooks. His latest collection of regional recipes appears in a softcover book with 55 color photographs entitled



Martin Yan talks chicken to a couples' cooking class at his Foster City culinary school Menus.

Times Tribune photo by Norbert von der Groeben



**Lou  
Pappas**

"Martin Yan the Chinese Chef" (Doubleday, \$9.95.) It features the specialties he is presenting on the television cooking series.

He will conduct a "Woking through China and Hong Kong Cooking Tour" Mar. 20 to Apr. 5. The program includes attending professional cooking schools, banquets, visits to communes, markets and such sights as The Great Wall, Ming Tomb and Beijing's Summer Palace. Information: (415) 574-7788.

Director Chriss comes from a Russian-Jewish background with a degree from the Cordon Bleu in Paris. After running her own medical management consulting firm in California for 13 years, she changed careers. She tried custom catering in Berkeley, but knew "it was too crazy for me."

Assessing her talents and experience, she realized she wanted to run a cooking school. Having suddenly developed an intolerance of sugars and needing to limit fats in her own diet, she hoped to offer menus for people with health restrictions.

"Realizing all my resources and what was happening to me, I took a personal hard-ship and turned it into something I could share," she said.

She fears many of her classes to solving eating disorders "so students walk away with a sense of not feeling deprived."

Writing by the editor-in-chief of The Times West Valley Edition

but "Martin and I have the same goals of first to have fun and then learn something simultaneously."

Yan and Chriss share a favorite recipe from Menus cooking school.

### SIZZLING BLACK BEAN CHICKEN

- 2 tablespoons dry sherry
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 whole chicken breasts, skinned, boned and cut into ¾ inch cubes
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger
- 3 shallots, finely chopped
- 1 green onion (including top), finely chopped
- 2 to 3 tablespoons fermented black beans
- 6 dried whole red chili peppers (optional)
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ¼ cup chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cornstarch mixed with 1½ teaspoons water

Combine marinade ingredients in a large bowl. Add chicken; stir to coat. Set aside for 30 minutes.

Place wok or wide frying pan over high heat until hot. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil, swirling to coat sides. Add chicken; stir-fry for about 3 minutes or until opaque. Remove chicken and set aside. Keep warm. Add remaining 2 tablespoons oil to wok. When oil is hot, add garlic, ginger, shallots, and green onion; cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add black beans, whole chili peppers, crushed red peppers, broth, soy sauce and sugar; stir-fry for 30 seconds. Add cornstarch solution and cook, stirring, until mixture boils and thickens. To serve, place chicken on a hot cast iron plate. Then pour hot black bean sauce over chicken. Serve immediately while still sizzling. Makes 4 servings.

## Yan can do it all

### He juggles dual roles of chef, businessman

By Diane Daniel  
Staff writer

There are two Martin Yans. The gregarious celebrity with the toothy smile, flying cleavers and wisecracks turns up at public cooking appearances.

And the shy, serious businessman presides at his namesake test kitchen and cooking school in Foster City.

It's not so much that the 36-year-old star of the popular "Yan Can Cook" television show has a split personality. It's more that his two roles call for different approaches.

"I'm really a very serious guy, even though I'm not in a three-piece suit. I'm trained as an academic person. Basically I'm a food consultant. I develop new products for companies," he said in an interview at his Peninsula office.

Yan contends it was just happenstance that he became a television cooking star.

"There are lots of good teachers, but some are very camera shy. I'm not. I never considered myself to be an expert on Chinese cuisine. All I know is that I really enjoy (teaching cooking), and when I enjoy myself, that personality and energy are projected. I just get carried away," said Yan, of his on-camera persona.

Backstage before a show, he might be jumping rope or jogging in place to stimulate his energy for the camera.

"My approach always is very high energy with lots of information. I want to tell people that cooking can be fun. I don't want to intimidate them."

The chef and teacher is dwarfed in his inner office by shelves of cookbooks on every subject from classical French to nouvelle cuisine. File drawers 4 feet wide are filled with fan letters, and a huge wall calendar charts his public appearances.

"I'm to be in Salinas tonight. I leave for Tulsa at 12:40. Sunday I'm at the Concord Hilton. Monday I'm in St. Louis and Wednesday at the Emporium at Valley Fair (in Santa Clara)," said Yan, of a typical week's commitments.

He thoroughly enjoys the guest appearances, the television shows and the public accolades, but they are not essential to his happiness.

"I could give it up tomorrow if someone said, 'You're not good enough to be on television.'"

He said he would keep happy and busy creating and testing products

for a half dozen international food companies and cookware manufacturers.

Yan was born in Guangzhou, China, and began an apprenticeship at his uncle's Hong Kong restaurant at age 13. After graduating from the Overseas Institute of Cookery, he came to the United States in 1969 to earn a master's degree in food science at the University of California, Davis.

He returned to Hong Kong to work for Amoy Canning Corp., then joined a friend in a restaurant venture in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

While there, he was asked to make a guest appearance on a local talk show, where his sincere manner and unabashed comments caused such a stir that he was invited back again and again until the station signed him to tape 130 cooking shows.

"I figured I'd do the shows, and take the money and run. I'd never made so much money," said Yan.

To date, he's taped 576 shows, making his the longest-running Chinese cooking program on United States television. He and his staff are working on another 23 programs to be filmed in the spring at San Francisco's KQED Public Broadcasting System station.

"It will be more down to earth than the last shows, in which I included classical and banquet dishes. I'm going to do basics, contemporary dishes, fast and easy things, very little deep-frying and more steaming. And I want to make them more economical," said Yan.

He's convinced Chinese food is no fad.

"Chinese cooking will last forever. There are so many cooking techniques, seasonings and ingredients, there's something for everybody. If you don't like one thing, you can have something else. There's mild food, seafood, stir fry."

But that's not to say Yan eats nothing but Chinese dishes.

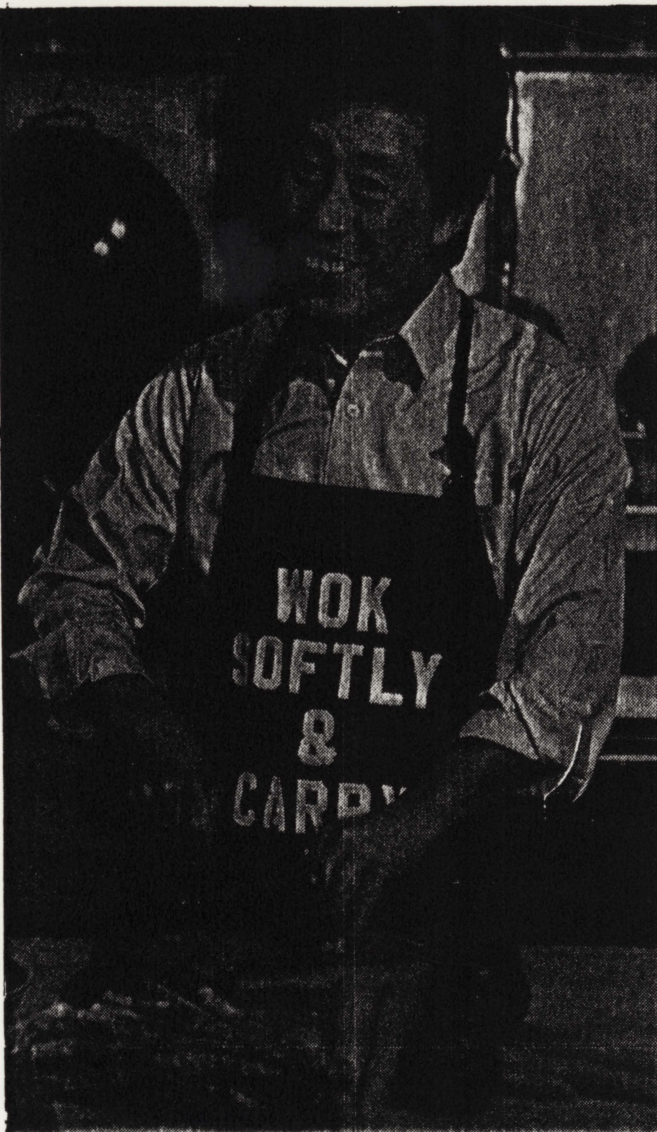
"I think a professional cook shouldn't limit himself to his own type of food," he said.

He and wife Susan eat most of their dinners out, sampling all kinds of cuisines. And, when he is appearing at out-of-area fairs and promotional events, he lives on chili dogs and cheeseburgers.

"I just eat to survive. They don't serve gourmet foods at these things," he explained.

Still the slender cook never worries about his weight.

For me, using my knives is exercise. I'm never overweight even



Jay Solomonson — staff photo

Chef Martin Yan has the longest-running Chinese cooking program on U.S. television.

though I consume more than the average person. When I prepare food, I burn up twice as many calories as I eat," said Yan, demonstrating his energetic chopping technique on a raw carrot.

"I try to practice with my knives every day for five to 10 minutes. I have to keep in practice."

Accidents with his trademark knives are rare, but dramatic.

The most severe was a slice into the middle finger of his left hand during a cooking school demonstration.

"I'd been out of town. I hadn't had any sleep and I just lost my concentration. It was so fast nobody saw it."

"I let my assistant serve the dish and I went in the back. I almost fainted. I didn't come out for 10 minutes," he said.

After class, his wife took him to the emergency room where the surgeon teased Yan can cook. Yan can cut," as he sewed eight stitches.

## 'Yan Can Cook' chef outlines more recipes



Here are more recipes from chef Martin Yan of the "Yan Can Cook" television show.

### Citrus-Spiced Spare ribs

- 1 1/2 lb. pork spare ribs
- Marinade**
- 3 tbsp. each soy sauce and dry sherry
- 1/4 tsp. each Chinese five-spice and salt
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- Vegetable oil for deep frying
- Braising sauce**
- 2 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1/4 tsp. fresh ginger, minced

- 2 shallots, minced
- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/4 cup each frozen tangerine juice concentrate and fresh lemon juice
- 3 tbsp. brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 2 tsp. lemon peel, grated
- 1 tsp. cornstarch, mixed with 2 tsp. water
- Orange wedges for garnish

Trim and discard fat from spare ribs, then cut ribs apart between bones. Combine marinade ingredients in a large bowl. Add spare ribs, stirring to coat all sides. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Trim ribs briefly. Dip ribs in egg, then coat evenly with flour, shaking off excess. Set on a plate and let stand for 10 minutes.

Set wok on a ring stand and add oil to a depth of 1 1/2 to 2 inches. Place over medium-high heat until oil reaches about 350 degrees. Add spare ribs, 4 or 5 pieces at a time, and deep-fry, turning occasionally, for about 8 minutes or until golden brown. Lift out and drain on paper towels. Cook remaining ribs.

Meanwhile, place a wide frying pan over medium-high heat until hot. Add 2 teaspoons oil, swirling to coat sides. Add ginger and shallots, cook, stirring until fragrant. Add remaining braising sauce ingredients and cook, stirring, until sauce boils and thickens slightly. Reduce heat and add ribs to pan. Simmer, uncovered, over medium-low heat, turning ribs occasionally, for about 5 minutes or until ribs are well coated. Serve garnished with orange wedges.

Serves 4 as a main course. Ribs may be cut into 2 inch strips and served as hors d'oeuvres.

### Steamed Honey-Plum Pears

- 4 firm, ripe pears (such as Anjou or Bosc)
- Filling:**
- 2 tbsp. honey
- 1 tbsp. plum sauce
- 1 whole star anise, broken into 4 pieces
- Dash of ground cinnamon**
- Sauce:**
- 2 tbsp. each honey and plum sauce
- 1 tbsp. plum wine
- 1 tsp. chopped pickled ginger
- 1/4 tsp. cornstarch, mixed with 1/2 tsp. water

Peel pears, leaving stems attached. Cut off 1 inch from top of each pear, reserve tops. Carefully core pears.

Combine filling ingredients until well blended. Spoon enough filling into each cavity to fill pears, allowing 1 piece of star anise for each pear. Cover pears with reserved tops and place in a heatproof dish.

Set dish in a steamer or a rack in a wok. Cover and steam over boiling water for about 25 minutes or until pears are tender.

Meanwhile, combine sauce ingredients in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until sauce boils and thickens slightly. Keep warm.

Remove star anise pieces from filling, then place steamed pears in individual serving bowls. Spoon sauce over pears and serve hot. Serves 4.

### Seminar puts chicken on front burner

*This chef can wok miracles*

By Rita Moran  
SFP People editor

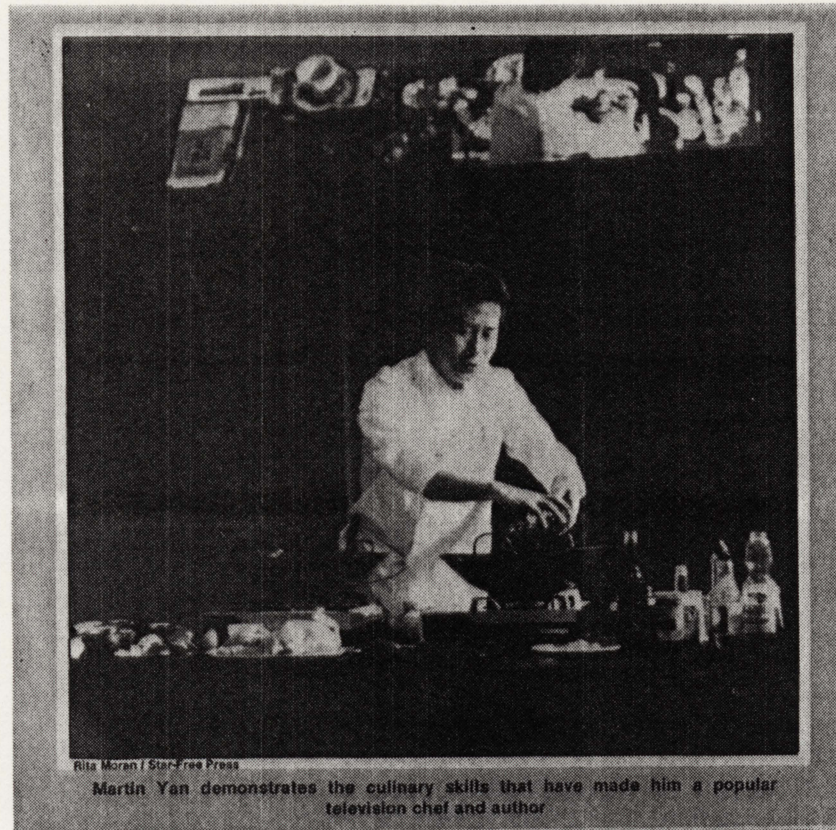
MONTEREY Martin Yan certainly can cook. He demonstrates that admirably on his Public Television series "Yan Can Cook" and he proved just as fascinating in a brief presentation for food editors and writers at a conference sponsored here by the National Broiler Council.

Yan's fast-flying quips and cleaver cut through formalities as he heated up his woks and displayed his culinary wares. The Chinese-born chef, who learned the basics of his craft in the kitchen of his uncle's Hong Kong restaurant, has the expertise to back his flamboyant personality. With humor that could only be described as fortune-cookie funny, the 35-year-old Yan is a puckish pundit.

Before he began the serious chop-chop for his chosen recipes of the day, Yan performed a bit of clever cleaver work. As chicken was the conference focus, Yan deftly demonstrated the boning of a bird with his cleaver. It looked as simple as pie when he did it, but then he obviously can do anything with his cleaver.

Taking a single boned chicken breast in his hand, he flattened it a bit and swiftly sliced it horizontally between his palm and the cutting board. Holding it up to display its slimness, he drew gasps from the audience. But that was only the first step. He repeated the process until he had see-through-thin slices, a testimony to the steadiness of his hand and the razor-sharp blade of his cleaver.

Then it was down to the serious business of "Wokking neatly and swiftly produced two beautiful, fragrant and, yes, Your Way to Health." Chicken is a popular dish in China, said Yan, because meat in China is "very tough. It's worked to death first." Chickens, on the other hand, don't have such a



Rita Moran / Star-Free Press

Martin Yan demonstrates the culinary skills that have made him a popular television chef and author

strenuous life before heading for the wok.

Heating up two woks to prepare dishes simultaneously — Heavenly Honeydew Chicken and Spicy Szechwan Chicken — Yan described the diverse elements of Chinese cuisine. While flavor is important, equal time is given to color, appearance and aroma, he said.

Working with a wok has an audiovisual effect, he said, as it sizzles as it cooks the bright-hued ingredients. "This is show business here," said the mischievous chef. "A lot of restaurants are not doing this because it is a pain in the neck."

The patter kept up as he tasty dishes, proving that he not only talks a good game but plays it expertly as well.

Yan, based in San Francisco, came to the United States in 1969 and ultimately earned

bachelor's and master's degrees in food sciences and technology from the University of

California at Davis. He worked his way through school teaching and catering and continued along that path. Moving to Canada in the 1970s, he engaged in more extensive restaurant training and was certified as a master Chinese chef by the Ontario Chinese Restaurant Association.

While appearing on a Canadian talk show, Yan was "discovered" as a TV personality and ultimately became the star of his own show, "Yan Can Cook." He has written three cook books: "The Yan Can Cook Book," "The Joy of Wokking," and "Martin Yan the Chinese Chef."

Here are the special recipes Yan prepared for the seminar participants.

#### HEAVENLY HONEYDEW CHICKEN

1/4 lb. boneless chicken, cut into bite-size pieces

Marinade:

1/4 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. wine  
1/4 tsp. sugar  
1 tsp. beaten egg white  
1 tsp. cornstarch  
1 medium-size firm, ripe honeydew  
2 cups shredded lettuce  
1 cup finely shredded or grated carrot  
1 1/2 tbsp. oil  
1 slice ginger, chopped  
2 tsp. lemon juice  
3/4 tsp. sugar  
3 tbsp. water  
1/2 tsp. cornstarch solution

Marinate chicken pieces for 1 hour.

Peel the honeydew and cut it in half lengthwise. Remove

seeds and carve out the center of one half, forming a 1/2-inch-thick bowl. Place this half on a plate decorated with the shredded lettuce and carrot. From the remaining half, cut 1 cup of 3/4-inch cubes.

Heat oil in a wok over high heat. Put in the ginger, and stir-fry for 10 seconds. Add the chicken and stir-fry for a minute and a half to two minutes. Add honeydew cubes and stir for 30 seconds. Add the remaining ingredients, except the cornstarch solution. Mix well, then thicken with cornstarch solution.

To serve, transfer the chicken and honeydew into the prepared honeydew half and serve hot.

Cantaloupe or papaya may be substituted for the honeydew. Carve wedges around the top edge of honeydew for a special garnish.

#### SPICY SZECHWAN CHICKEN

2 cups broccoli flowerets  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 1/2 tbsp. oil  
1 clove garlic, minced  
4 slices ginger, slivered  
3/4 lb. boneless chicken, cut into bite-size pieces  
1/4 tsp. toasted, ground Szechwan pepper (optional)  
2 stalks green onion, cut into 1-inch lengths  
1 tbsp. wine  
1 tbsp. soy sauce  
3/4 tsp. sugar  
3/4 tsp. sesame oil  
2 tsp. hot bean paste or chili sauce  
2-4 tbsp. soup stock  
1/2 tsp. cornstarch solution

Blanch broccoli in boiling water with 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/2 tsp. oil for 2-3 minutes. Remove and set aside.

Heat wok with 2 tbsp. oil, garlic and ginger over high heat for 10-15 seconds. Add chicken, stirring for 2 to 2 1/2 minutes. Add remaining ingredients except broccoli and cornstarch solution, and stir for 1 minute. Thicken with cornstarch solution and place in the center of a platter.

Garnish the chicken with the blanched broccoli and serve immediately.

Traditionally, the Chinese hot bean paste (Dao Ban Jiang) is used in this dish, but regular chili sauce could be substituted.

# DESERT NEWS

Food/Family

DESERT NEWS, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1986



Martin Yan, cookbook author and host of a PBS cooking series, demonstrated a variety of his culinary skills recently in Salt Lake City. "If Yan can, you can, too," he says.

Yan can cook. Yan can cut. And it's for certain that Yan can entertain.

He does the latter so well that he's captured an audience of all ages with his PBS series "Yan Can Cook." In fact, his flair for entertaining — his ability to make people take notice, laugh a little, and get the feeling that, "Yes, I can do this, too!" — almost makes them forget about the breadth of his culinary expertise.

He doesn't seem to mind. His aim, he says, is "to reach the masses — to introduce cooking to as many people as I can, not just to gourmets. And I believe the best way to teach is to have a good time."

That's why he's happy when he can make people laugh as well as teach them how to stir up something wonderful in a wok. His mode of interaction, at least if demonstrations watched in California and more recently at the ZCMI South Towne store are any indication, is a very approachable, one-on-one talk session with his audience.

And he never fails somewhere during the cooking lesson to do a little wordplay on the title of his national television series — something like, "If Yan can, so can you." Then he might follow it up with a little laugh, saying "If Yan can not, you still can."

Evidently his audience feels they can, as demonstrated by the fact that the housewares department at ZCMI was swamped with sales of woks (he used a hard-anodized aluminum wok by Meyer for his demonstrations), Chinese cleavers of his own design, and his cookbooks, "Martin Yan, The Chinese Chef," which he graciously autographed.

One woman walked up to him and told him "I watch you all the time. I love your show on television, especially when you burn your fingers."

And a gentleman in the crowd saluted him with, "You're one of the best cooks on television."

It's true. Martin Yan has been classically trained in a professional cooking school in Hong Kong. He also holds a Master's Degree in Food Science and Nutrition from the University of California at Davis.

But he literally got into the food business on the ground floor.

"As a little kid, I spent a lot of time in my father's small restaurant in Canton, China. Then when he died, my mother opened a grocery store. So even when I was a little kid I knew what Hoisin and plum sauce were."

He also spent years working in restaurants, among them his uncle's restaurant in Hong Kong.

Currently, he spends about three months of the year on personal appearance tours. The rest of the time he's a food consultant to major companies, teaches at the California Culinary Academy and works on putting together further television shows, of which another 26 will be out next summer.

In the meantime, you can enjoy these recipes taken from his cookbook (\$10.95, Doubleday) now available at ZCMI and in other bookstores.

## Twice-Fried Shredded Beef

$\frac{3}{4}$  pound beef sirloin or flank steak  
1 small carrot  
1 green bell pepper  
2 stalks celery  
1 small onion  
Vegetable oil for deep-frying

**Marinade:**  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 tablespoons dry sherry, or, broth  
1 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon cornstarch

**Sauce:**  
2 tablespoons rice vinegar  
1 tablespoon soy sauce  
2 teaspoons sesame oil  
1 teaspoon sugar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon chili oil  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon cornstarch

Trim and discard excess fat from beef. Cut beef across grain into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch matchstick pieces.

Combine marinade ingredients in medium-size bowl. Add beef, stir to coat. Set aside for 30

minutes.

Cut carrot, bell pepper and celery into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch matchstick pieces. Thinly slice onion. Set vegetables aside separately.

Combine sauce ingredients in small bowl and set aside.

To cook, set wok in a ring stand and add oil to a depth of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches. Place over high heat until oil reaches about 375 degrees. Add beef, half at a time, and deep-fry for 1 minute until browned, turning occasionally. Lift out and drain on paper towels; set aside. Cook remaining beef.

Remove all but 2 tablespoons oil from wok. Re-heat oil over high heat until hot. Add carrot and onion, cook, stirring constantly for 1 minute. Add bell pepper and celery, stir-fry for 1 more minute. Stir in sauce and beef. Cook and toss until well mixed. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

(TIPS: There should be just enough sauce to coat ingredients. It is easier to slice beef thinly if it is partially frozen.)

## Citrus-Spiced Spareribs

$1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 pounds pork spareribs  
1 egg, lightly beaten

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup all-purpose flour  
Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

Orange wedges, for garnish

**Marinade:**  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
3 tablespoons dry sherry, or, fresh lime juice

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon Chinese five-spice

$\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt

**Braising Sauce:**  
2 teaspoons vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon minced fresh ginger

2 shallots, minced

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh orange juice

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup frozen tangerine juice concentrate

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh lemon juice

3 tablespoons packed brown sugar

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 teaspoons grated lemon peel

1 teaspoon cornstarch mixed with 2 teaspoons water

Trim and discard excess fat from spareribs, then cut ribs apart between bones. Combine marinade ingredients in large bowl. Add spareribs, stirring to coat all

sides. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Drain ribs briefly. Dip ribs in egg, then coat evenly with flour, shaking off excess. Set on plate and let stand for 10 minutes.

To cook, set wok in a ring stand and add oil to a depth of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches. Place over medium-high heat until oil reaches about 350 degrees. Add spareribs, 4 or 5 pieces at a time, and deep-fry, turning occasionally, for about 8 minutes or until golden brown. Lift out and drain on paper towels. Cook remaining ribs.

Meanwhile, place a wide frying pan over medium-high heat until hot. Add oil, swirling to coat sides. Add ginger and shallots, cook stirring, until fragrant. Add remaining braising sauce ingredients and cook stirring, until sauce boils and thickens slightly. Reduce heat and add ribs to pan. Simmer, uncovered, over medium-low heat, turning ribs occasionally, for about 5 minutes or until ribs are well coated. Garnish with orange wedges and serve hot. Makes 4 servings.

(TIPS: For handy bite-size hors d'oeuvres, ask your butcher to cut across the ribs into 2-inch strips.)

# YAN CAN COOK

BY BARBARA GOLDMAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARRY BRYANT

DESIGN BY ROBERT ROYCE

**AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION, INC.**

*To all who shall see these presents, Greetings:*

*This is to Certify that*

*Martin Jan*

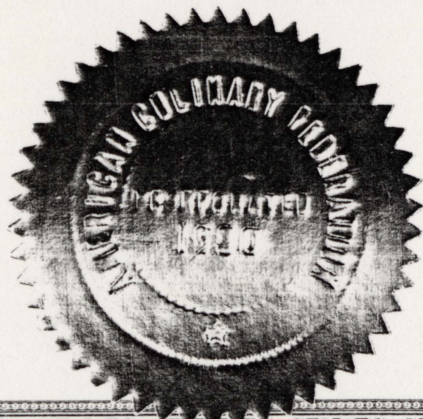
*has been accepted as a Active member*

*of the*

**AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION, INC.**

In witness whereof we have hereto  
set our names and caused the  
seal of the Federation to be  
affixed, this 1<sup>st</sup> day of

January 1986



*Bernard H. Geland*

PRESIDENT

*John C. L. L...*

SECRETARY

ONTARIO CHINESE RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

安省華商餐館同業會



No. 20

CERTIFICATE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

*Martin Yan*

WHO HAS FULFILLED THE REQUIREMENT

OF

THIS ASSOCIATION AND QUALIFIED

AS

*Master Chef in Cantonese Dishes*

IN THE CHINESE FOOD INDUSTRY

DATED IN TORONTO THIS 1ST.

DAY OF *September, 1984*

President

Committee Chairman

證

書

天字第二十號

甄文達經本會審核所備履  
歷皆符合本會中餐業特級  
廚師應備之資格，特發給  
此證書，以資證明。粵菜



會長

林子良

審核組主席

陳以藉

一九八四年九月一日

# Chefs Association of the Pacific Coast

## Membership Certificate



This is to certify that

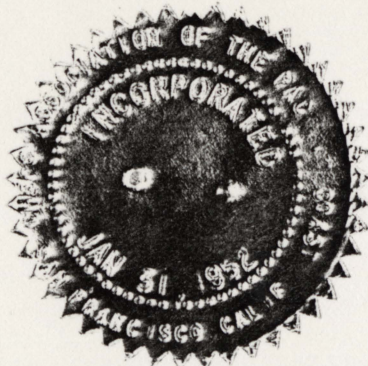
Martin Yan

has successfully met all professional and ethical requirements and is hereby accepted to membership in this association.

Signed this 1<sup>st</sup> day of January 19 86  
San Francisco, Calif

David Palmerone  
President

Dick Newman  
Secretary



# IACP

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COOKING PROFESSIONALS

*Martin Yan*

---

*Institutional Member*

---

*February 1986*

---

*In recognition of your active participation  
and contributions to the cooking community.*

*Francois Dionot*

---

President

*Marcie M. McNeilis*

---

Executive Vice President



# International Association of Cooking Schools

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

Martin M. Yan

has attained the title of

Certified Member

In recognition of outstanding achievement in cooking and teaching,  
and professional commitment to the culinary arts.

Richard S. NED  
President

Constance Chuan  
Standards Committee Chairman

20 March 1982  
Date





**Yan Can  
& Company**

P.O. BOX 4755  
FOSTER CITY, CA 94404  
415/ 341-5133