

FEBRUARY 2021



# Friends of Sanon

Changing Lives, Building a Future for Myanmar Youth



## Gong Xi Fa Cai or Gong Hey Fat Choy, Happy new year!

Welcome to Sanon's February newsletter, we hope our news finds you and your loved ones well and safe.

It's Chinese new year this month. But why may you ask are we celebrating it in Myanmar when their new year is in April? Myanmar has a great affiliation with China and loves Chinese New year and joins in with their celebrations. The Chinese new year, also known as spring festival, is the most important traditional festival for local Myanmar- Chinese people. It is also a time of important celebration for families, where they gather together all members for reunion dinners.

Did you know Mandalay is known as the Chinese city? Yes 50% of the

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population in Mandalay are of Chinese origin and most of the city was built with Chinese investment after the second world war. A continuing influx of Chinese immigrants, mostly from the Han Chinese from Yunnan, since the late 20th century, has reshaped the city's ethnic makeup and increased commerce with China.

## Htamanè Feast

We would also like to bring to your attention a Burmese festival of 'Hta-ma-ne' in honour of the traditional harvesting period –a light food preparation of glutinous rice, cooked & crushed in oil, with addition of other ingredients such as ground-nut, sesame seeds, ginger & coconut slices. Htamanè feast is either celebrated communally or done just in the private circle of family & friends. The nature of the feast is such that, in whatever way the feast is celebrated, it means a big gathering because many hands are needed. In a communal feast people come around with contributions of glutinous rice and other ingredients. It is an option though; one can just give his service, if not anything else.

### How to Make Htamanè

First, wash and soak white and purple glutinous rice in water for about 2 hours. Meanwhile make a fireplace by placing bricks in a triangle on a cleared spot of ground. The firewood is lit under the bricks and the large iron bowl is placed on top. And then pour groundnut oil into the bowl and heat. The great coconut shavings are fried in the oil with care taken not to overcook it. When the coconut is fried, remove from the bowl and the oil is drained from it. Then, the peanuts and sliced ginger are fried & the oil is drained from it. All fried ingredients are placed on a plate and set aside. The soaked glutinous rice is placed into the iron bowl with the ground nut oil.



At this point, at least two strong young men step forward with their paddles and begin kneading, crushing and stirring the Htamanè with great vigor encouraged by the shouts and cheers of onlookers. Salt is sprinkled over the rice during this process. After 30 minutes, the fried coconut shavings, roasted peanuts and ginger are added to the mix. However, the small amount of the fried ingredients is kept to the side to be sprinkled over the Htamanè before eating. When the glutinous rice has been thoroughly mixed and cooked, the giant bowl is removed from the fire. The big lump of Htamanè is placed on a wood or metal tray covered with banana leaves that have been rubbed with edible oil to cool. Then, the delicacy is offered to Buddha and donated to monasteries. We usually also send Htamanè around the neighbourhood, to family and friends as a festival gift. Htamanè is served on the banana leaves and enjoyed by all.

Htamanè is usually made at monasteries & specialized shops to accommodate the quantity & space required. A small portion is taken first as an offering to the Buddha as per custom and then it is usually sent around in the neighbourhood, to family & friends as a festival gift. The taste of Htamanè is Sweet.

Now to our favourite topic - food. Who doesn't love Chinese food? With so much to choose from, Sanon Training Restaurant has its own unique take on some of the favourite Chinese specialties. Our chefs have devised a number of dishes based on Chinese cuisine which they in turn teach to our students undertaking food preparation. Lim, our restaurant manager has selected a dish for February.

## CARMELIZED PORK WITH FIRED GINGER AND SZECHUAN PEPPER

This is one of our popular Chinese dishes at Sanon.

### RECIPE

150g Pork meat, sliced into 1cm pieces  
2g Corn Flour (for dusting)  
15g Ginger, thinly sliced  
5g Garlic, finely chopped  
5g Dried Chillies, cut into 1cm pieces  
20g Spring Onions, cut into 5cm pieces  
1g Szechwen Pepper  
15ml Dark Soya Sauce  
5g Sugar  
30ml Chinese Cooking Wine  
Salt to taste  
30ml Sunflower Oil (for frying)  
5ml Dark Soya Sauce



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Mekong Showcase!**

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We hope you have enjoyed our February newsletter, let us know what you think on any of our social media sites and share with anyone you think may enjoy reading it too.



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