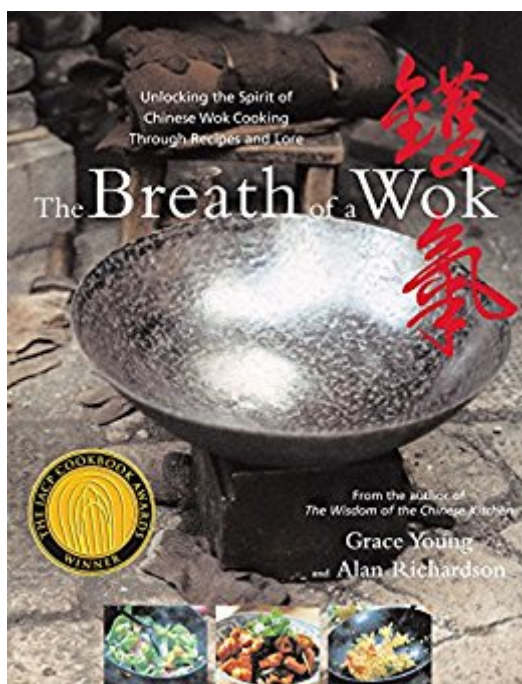


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# The Breath Of A Wok: Unlocking The Spirit Of Chinese Wok Cooking Through



## Synopsis

Award-winning author Grace Young celebrates and demystifies the art of wok cooking for the Western home cook. Young's fascination with wok cooking began in San Francisco's Chinatown, where her father taught her to appreciate wok hay, the elusive and prized taste that food achieves when cooked in a wok. As an adult, her quest to reproduce that extraordinary taste sent her on a journey through America, Hong Kong, and China, where she gathered stories, recipes, and advice from home cooks, professional chefs, and culinary teachers. The result is not just a cookbook but a unique documentation of a way of life: wok cooking is not just about recipes, but about cultivating and cooking with all the senses, and about perpetuating one of the world's oldest culinary traditions. Beginning with the selection, seasoning, and care of a wok, Young elucidates the secrets of wok hay and offers 120 recipes ranging from simple to complex, including favorites like Kung Pao Chicken and Moo Shoo Pork as well as unusual dishes like Tofu with Cilantro Relish and Stir-Fried Garlic Lettuce. Young also offers menu suggestions for family-style meals and Chinese New Year celebrations, plus a comprehensive glossary and resource list. Illustrated with 150 photographs by acclaimed photographer Alan Richardson, *The Breath of a Wok* is an extraordinary culinary adventure.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is packed with information about the wok and how it is used in China. Starting from what kind of wok to buy and how to season it. Then over to stir fried dishes. A good selection. Then braising, deep frying and steaming and other things you can do with the wok. This is a definite buy if you've got a wok or intend to buy one. The author has a second book on wok cooking across the world as well. I decided to go for her first book because it would just focus on one cuisine. Structure of the book: 30% Introduction and naturally we get the life story section including information about the author's aunt. (That this section is compulsory in all books about Asian cooking written by Americans.) Also very useful information about different kinds of woks and how to season them 50%. Stir fry recipes 20%. Other recipes for the wok, e.g. smoking, steaming.

This is a great Chinese cookbook and I highly recommend it but [but it's not perfect](#) | The recipes have been taken from a number of sources and some are a bit Americanized (that is the only reason I didn't give it five stars). I have made many of these recipes and resolve that everyone has been delicious but I substitute authentic ingredients for Americanized ingredients; for example, I use rice wine instead of vodka for a recipe.

This is absolutely without a doubt well worth owning for anyone who takes their wok in the least bit seriously. It is beautiful (the photos are just superb, the quality of the book is magnificent) and it is without a doubt full of interesting information about the wok and the cooking styles related to the implement. If you are going to get a single book for your wok, this should be it.

I and my hubby are beginners at using a wok, and this book was just what we needed. We used it to shop for a wok, season it properly, and shop for ingredients and cook. We did it all with confidence, following the author's advice exactly, and the results were delicious and totally satisfying.

Learning by doing it over gas with real Wok

Triple superb! My wok bible. I have tried for years to become a good 'stir-fryer'. This book gave me

the background on woks, history, techniques, and choices of different types of woks. Plus a complete guide and list of essential ingredients for stir-frying. Not to mention wonderful recipes! Finally I can stir-fry successfully! And all my friends and family agree.A+++++

Review by Chef Bobby Lavon - February 6, 2014[culturalpalates.net](http://culturalpalates.net)  
**The Breathe of the Wok** by Grace Young and Alan Richardson- Published 2004  
I came across this book at the library one day while researching Asian history and exploring for unique and breath-taking recipes. Most of the time I'm submerged for hours before I find the hidden pearls I'm looking for. Every now and then however, it does happen by chance that I'm immediately drawn to an excellent publication; such is what occurred with the breath of the wok  
**A Breakdown of the Breath of the Wok**  
This written work by Grace Young is instructional and spoken in a language that even the amateur cook will appreciate. It promotes 125 well crafted recipes with arousing stories that teach the history of Chinese wok cooking. Some traditions in the book date back 2000 years to the original Cantonese and are still relevant today! The photography is illustrative; we are put right in the middle of the action as masters of the WOK entertain with adroitness. You most certainly will praise the ability of experienced and seasoned veteran Alan Richardson for capturing the details and keeping us entangled in the moments!  
**What You Will Learn when you Read the Breath...**  
There are some obvious facts about the Chinese. They are held together by social and cultural ties; Chinese are festive! They are considered to be in accord with reality and Spirituality. They have superb cooking skills! We know that wok cooking is widely appreciated in the world and held in high esteem because it is healthy and nutritious? Whatever we haven't learned about their impressive form of artistic cooking can be gleaned by reading **The Breath of the wok**.  
**Wok Techniques** used in the book  
Grace Young shows intelligently how just about every cooking method can be performed with the wok. Study her book to become accustomed to wok methodology. We need to have discipline when using the wok; Grace teaches us how to become disciplined. She shows us the orderly logical arraignments that must take place to help us become proficient in these areas:  
**SmokingPan-fryingBraisingBoilingPoachingSteamingDeep-frying**  
**Question** that will be answered when you read **The Breath of the Wok**: How does one get started with wok cooking? How do I select the right equipment to use and is caring for it difficult? Which spices should I use and where can they be purchased? Are cooking methods comparable to what I'm accustomed to or should I expect to purchase all new equipment and pantry items? Is wok cooking vegan, vegetarian and gluten friendly? All of these questions and more are answered with delicacy to assure that readers understand the basics and intricacies of Chinese wok cooking.  
**Recipes, Recipes, and more**

recipes: Careful details are poured into each recipe. A few of my favorites are, Kung Pao Chicken, Lee Wan Ching's sizzling pepper and salt shrimp, Bernadette Chan's Stir-fried Beef, Danny Chan's crab with black bean sauce, Ming Tsai's mandarin fried rice; spicy garlic eggplant. Trust me, there are many more that can be mentioned, but I'm sure you'll get the point once you purchase the book.

This cookbook could also be titled, "Everything you wanted to know about a wok, but were afraid to ask". With astounding accuracy, Chef Grace Young guides you into the world of the Wok, Wok Hey (The Breath Of A Wok), and all of its nuances. Her recipes are exacting guides that leave nothing to chance. Recipes are detailed, so the dish comes out right the first time, if you follow her instructions. Includes excellent seasoning instructions and tips that turn the mysterious "Wok", into your culinary prized possession!

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