

Symbols important in Chinese new year food

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Kennedy Road and Steeles Avenue in Markham.

Bok choy is an important part of the dish, because "choy" sounds like the word for "money", he said.

Steamed mock chicken with seasonal vegetables is another important element of the New Year's Day meal. Chicken — represented by slices of soy bean curd — represents life and good things to come.

Soy derivatives take the place of meat in sweet and sour mock pork balls.

The dish's red sauce symbolizes luck for Chinese new year and the golden colour of the balls represents money. Its sweetness suggests the wish for a sweet and good future, Mr. Ma said.

Assorted vegetables, prepared Law-Han style, honour Buddhist tradition. White and black fungus, straw mushrooms, baby corn, Chinese greens, carrots, water chestnuts, celery, bamboo shoots and sea moss are always the same.

The dish's importance lies in its name, remembering the Law-Han, the

Buddhist disciples, Mrs. Mak said.

Fried lotus root and lotus pod are also important elements. The word for lotus sounds like the word for continued health.

For dessert, a sweet New Year's Day cake extends sweetness to all and represents the wish for a job promotion.

While the cake is the most common and important New Year's Day dessert, black sesame rice balls (which symbolize family togetherness) and small round biscuits with a smile-like crack (which bestow happiness for the year) are also common.

On the seventh day of the new year — which all Chinese celebrate as their birthday — a dish of seven greens symbolizing life is served, said Kathleen Chim, who teaches Chinese cooking at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto and at George Brown College.

The 15th and last day of Chinese new year also calls for a vegetarian meal, she said, noting some traditional Chinese eat meatless meals for all 15 days. But traditions vary from region to region and village to village, she said.

Tibet highlights photography exhibit

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

The beauty of Tibet and the Guizhou province of China, regions rarely seen by outsiders, can be glimpsed this week in Markham.

Selected photos from "Moments of Truth in Nature and Culture — China's Tibet and Guizhou in the eyes of a Canadian photographer," go on

display until Feb. 17 following an 11 a.m. dedication and Lion Dance Sunday at the Markham Civic Centre on Town Centre Boulevard and Hwy. 7.

The exhibit, 16 of 40 photographs shown at Toronto's city hall last year, is the first of four which will be presented this year by the town, the Federation of Chinese Canadians in Markham and its Markham Chinese Cultural Centre, along with the

Chinese consulate in Toronto.

Halifax photographer Tong Yau-Sun captured the "Moments of Truth" pictures on visits to Tibet in 1998, 1999 and 2000, and during a 2001 trip to Guizhou province in southwestern China.

They show both the landscape of these regions and evidence of the unique cultural lives led by Tibetans and the Miao people of Guizhou.

Many Tibetans see Chinese rule — which began with what the cultural centre termed Tibet's "peaceful liberation" in 1951 — as being harmful to their culture. But FCCM's president, Dr. Ken Ng said the Chinese government certainly values the mosaic of cultures that exists today in China.

"They would like to promote the knowledge and history" of Tibetans and of other minority groups, as well as to promote tourism in Tibet and Guizhou, said Dr. Ng, adding Sunday's event will include a brief slide show on this subject.

MANY EVENTS CELEBRATE NEW YEAR

There are many free events scheduled to celebrate the Year of the Horse in York Region.

As always, popular acts include the electrifying lion dance, martial artists and the God of Fortune — also known as the Money God — who distributes coins in traditional lucky red pockets.

- FIRST MARKHAM PLACE** (Hwy. 7 east of Woodbine Avenue, Markham)
 - Feb. 9: Fortune-telling, 2 p.m.
 - Feb. 11: God of Fortune, 8 p.m.
 - Countdown show with God of Fortune, artists and lion dance, 10 p.m.-midnight.
 - Feb. 16: Chinese dance, 2 p.m.
 - Feb. 17: Wu Shu (martial arts) performance 1 p.m., lion dance 1:30 p.m.
- FORTINOS SUPERMALL** (Denison

Street at Kennedy Road, Markham)

Feb. 10, 1:30-4:30 p.m.: lion dance and dragon dance, audience workshops on how to perform lion dance and make red lucky money pockets or windowsill decorations, martial arts performances, free sweets samples.

MARKVILLE SHOPPING CENTRE (McCowan Road at Hwy. 7, Markham)

- Feb. 9: God of Fortune, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

MARKET VILLAGE (Steeles Avenue at Kennedy Road, Markham)

Feb. 11, 9 p.m.-12:30 a.m.: Countdown show with singers and musicians, New Year family game, lucky money pockets, fortune-telling.
Feb. 17: Xing Dance Theatre and New Year presentation, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

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Sat. Feb. 16	10am-2pm	Registration Only
Sat. Feb. 23	1-4pm	Registration Only
Sat. Mar. 9	1-3pm	Registration Only
Mon. Mar. 11	7-9pm	Player Clinic & Registration
Tues. Mar. 12	7-9pm	Parent Clinic & Registration
Wed. Mar. 13	7-9pm	Player Clinic & Registration

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