



# A BITE OF CHINA

本幫之味

Shanghai chefs have long preferred imported produce to local fare. But **Crystal Reid** discovers that the tide may be turning, as discerning foodies are increasingly keen to dig into homegrown ingredients

上海不少大廚向來鍾情進口食材多於當地土產，但**Crystal Reid**則發現，一眾美食家近來對本土食材漸感興趣，似乎正在改變當地的美食潮流

Photos by Algirdas Bakas



**S**haded from the sun by a conical straw hat, Zhang Guiqing wrestles a corn cob from its stalk, peeling back the parched husk and hair-like silk to reveal the tightly packed golden kernels within. Straddling a furrow, and with sweat glistening on her brow, the farmer cranes her head upwards; the plants that surround her are several feet taller than her petite frame. Known as *yu mi* in Chinese, corn is the gem of the 62-year-old's summer harvest. It's sweet, juicy and, most importantly, homegrown.

Not far from where Zhang tends to her crop, visitors duck in and out of steamy polythene-walled growing tunnels, emerging with big grins and baskets laden with mini cucumbers, fragrant figs and deep purple aubergines. Along the criss-cross pathways between growing troughs, little boys hunt for *tian niu*, horned beetles hungry for vegetables. Those they find are gently buried – unharmed but rerouted away from the summer season's bounty of luffa and courgette. This oasis of slowly flowing waterways, greedy goats and thriving plant life is BioFarm, a 20ha, USDA-accredited organic farm close to the shores of the East China Sea in Shanghai's Pudong district. And it's doing more than just making visitors happy. The produce harvested here is ending up in supermarkets and the kitchens of many of the city's restaurants, bucking a deeply entrenched preference for imported food.

Although China is the world's top food producer, foreign produce has long been viewed as the ultimate luxury. China's appetite for imports has been growing steadily along with the country's standard of living, with 2017 seeing a 25% year-on-year increase in food brought in from abroad, amounting to more than US\$58 billion. That makes China the world's biggest food importer, with the European Union as its main supplier. But as the Middle Kingdom becomes more environmentally conscious, the worldwide trend of locally sourced, sustainable eating is beginning to take root in the country's most cosmopolitan cities. It's only natural, then, that Shanghai is at the forefront of this movement.



On the third floor of a mall complex in the downtown Channing area, Anthony Zhao proudly displays his star attraction: heavily marbled meat hanging in a walled-off section of his restaurant. It consists of various cuts of yellow cattle beef, a variety native to China, Vietnam, Myanmar and Taiwan. These particular cows were raised in Dalian, a port city on the Liaodong Peninsula in China's northeastern region, and slaughtered in Jiashan, a county just over an hour southwest of Shanghai. Thanks to these providers, Zhao's celebrated "healthy hot pot" restaurant, Holy Cow, can boast about its fresh, locally farmed, sliced-in-house meat when the majority of competitors use frozen, machine-cut, imported stuff.

"When you freeze and then defrost meat, the liquid inside changes, and it's tough and dry when cooked," says Zhao, who earned his stripes cooking







**Clockwise from far left:** Zhang Guiqing shucking corn; boxes of capsicum; goats roaming BioFarm

順時針最左起：  
張桂清正在撕開粟米；  
一箱箱的新鮮辣椒；  
百歐歡有機生態農場  
自由放養羊隻

**張**桂清（音譯）頭上戴著草織斗笠，用來遮擋陽光，她使勁把一條粟米摘下來，然後剝下粗乾的粟米皮和粟米鬚，露出一排排金黃色的粟米粒。這位農夫跨在犁溝上，抬起頭來，眉毛上的汗水閃閃發亮，四周的農作物比嬌小的她高出幾呎。粟米是這位62歲農人的夏季收成，既香甜又多汁，最重要的賣點，是本地栽種出產。

張桂清的農田不遠處，訪客不斷進出鋪上塑膠布的栽植隧道，出來的時候臉帶滿足的笑容，籃子裡滿是小青瓜、芳香的無花果和深紫色的茄子。種植槽之間的小徑縱橫交錯，一些小男孩正在尋找天牛——這種長角的甲蟲視蔬菜為美食。他們把找到的天牛輕輕埋在泥土下，沒有令昆蟲受到傷害，但就能讓牠們稍為遠離夏季盛產的絲瓜和櫛瓜。這片怡人綠洲流水淙淙，羊隻勤於吃草，亦長滿茂盛的植物——百歐歡有機生態農場佔地20公頃，位於上海浦東區近東海一隅，是一個獲得美國農業部認證的有機農場。除了讓快樂的訪客滿載而歸，其出產的農作物也供應至超級市場和市内多間餐廳。上海一直對進口食材有種根深柢固的偏好，百歐歡正在這種習慣以外開拓一片天。

中國雖然是糧食生產大國，但是外地進口的食材，向來視為極致的奢侈品。隨著中國國民生活水平提升，對進口貨的需求也越來越高，以2017年為例，外地進口食品按年增長25%，總金額超過580億美元，中國因此成為全球最大食品進口國，以歐盟為主要供應地。不過，中國近年也開始關注環保議題，迎接本土永續飲食的全球趨勢，並在國際化大城市落地生根。上海自然成為了這股運動的先驅地。

**在**上海長寧區一間商場的三樓，趙榮華自豪地展示其餐廳的星級食材。餐廳其中一部分以牆壁隔開，掛著油花豐富的牛肉，全部取自黃牛的不同部位。黃牛是中國、越南、緬甸和台灣的原生品種，而該餐廳採用的牛隻，均來自中國東北遼寧省的港口城市大連，並在上海西南面約一小時車程的嘉善縣進行屠宰。多得這些供應商的貢獻，趙榮華的著名養生火鍋店「牛牛火鍋」才得以為客人提供本土飼養的新鮮手切牛肉，而市面上的其他競爭者，大多數採用進口冷藏機切牛肉。

「肉類經過雪藏和解凍後，內部的肉汁結構會改變，煮熟後肉質又老又乾。」趙榮華說。他曾效力上海最高級的一些酒店和餐廳，包括波特曼麗思卡爾頓酒店和豫園萬麗酒店，在廚壇享負盛名。「我認為牛肉必須以最新鮮的狀態入鍋，進口貨完全達不到這個要求。」

當地肉類食材的優點，現已備受賞識。無論是工作服滿是塵土的中年漢、帶著四眼少年前來的母親，還是手機不離手的年輕紋身男，都圍坐在牛牛火鍋的餐桌電爐前，忙著把鮮肉和蔬菜涮進特色牛骨湯裡，面前一片煙霧瀰漫。這種火鍋清湯源自廣東潮州，以當地香料和蔬菜熬煮四個小時，跟油膩濃重的四川火鍋截

**“These people are helping build the foundation for the next wave of food sustainability and product-conscious consumers in China”**

**他們為中國的永續飲食新潮流  
打好基礎，培養具備產品意識的  
新一代消費者**







**“For me, the beef has to be very fresh, and that’s impossible if it’s imported”**

我認為牛肉必須以最新鮮的狀態入舖，進口貨完全達不到這個要求





in some of the city's most prestigious kitchens, including the Ritz-Carlton and Renaissance hotels. "For me, the beef has to be very fresh, and that's impossible if it's imported."

The difference made by using locally farmed meat has not gone unappreciated. Everyone from middle-aged men in dusty overalls, to mothers with bespectacled tweens, to tattooed young men glued to their phones crowd around Holy Cow's sunken table-top hotplates, dipping meat and veggies through billowing clouds of steam into the restaurant's signature beef spine soup. The clear consommé, a speciality of China's southeastern city of Chaozhou, is cooked for four hours with nothing but local herbs and veggies, making it vastly different from the heavily spiced and oily offerings of Sichuan, the southwestern Chinese province most synonymous with hot pot. "It's just a clean broth with fresh beef and fresh vegetables," explains Zhao as he mixes up a dipping sauce of fermented bean paste, chilli, garlic, vinegar and sesame seeds. "To me, hot pot should always be about quality ingredients."

然不同。「清澈的湯頭以新鮮牛肉和蔬菜製作。」趙榮華一邊說，一邊調和火鍋沾醬，材料有豆醬、辣椒、蒜頭、醋和芝麻。「對我來說，火鍋的精髓在於優質食材。」

上海的著名餐廳，不論是火鍋店還是高尚食府，都漸漸熱衷於本土食材。Rachel Gouk是餐飲業公關和品牌推廣專家，也是熱門網誌《Nomfluence》的創始人，她表示，上海對國產食材的取向，一直緩慢而穩定地發展。她以米芝蓮星級素食館福和慧為例，餐廳位於長寧區，供應高級嚐味餐饗，主廚盧懌明運用大量中式蔬菜入饌，尤其是產自雲南的肥厚菇菌。這條大膽創新的方程式取得驕人成績，讓福和慧穩守「亞洲50最佳餐廳」寶座。

Gouk說：「現在有不少農場、主廚和供應商都崇尚上乘的

auded restaurants throughout the city – from hot pot to haute cuisine – are warming up to local ingredients. Public relations and branding specialist for the food-and-beverage industry, and founder of the popular *Nomfluence* blog, Rachel Gouk says she's seen a slow but steady movement towards domestic produce. As an example, she cites chef Tony Lu of Fu He Hui, the Michelin-starred, tasting-menu-only vegetarian restaurant in the city's Changning district. Lu makes extensive use of Chinese vegetables, particularly meaty mushrooms from the country's southern Yunnan province. It's a bold formula, but a successful one, earning Fu He Hui a consistent spot on the Asia's 50 Best Restaurants list.

"There's now a good number of farms, chefs and suppliers who are really focusing on providing good local products with sustainability in mind," Gouk says. "These people are helping build the foundation for the next wave of food sustainability and product-conscious consumers in China." The Shanghai-based Malaysian does all her shopping at local markets and happily extols the virtues of Chinese pork,

本地食材，以永續飲食為原則。他們為中國的永續飲食新潮流打好基礎，培養具備產品意識的新一代消費者。」來自馬來西亞的Gouk現時旅居上海，經常到當地市場買菜，也盛讚中國豬肉、牛肉和蔬菜的品質。「我家附近那個市場很棒。」她說得眉開眼笑。「購買本地農產品促進行業發展，減少不必要的浪費，而且食材也比較新鮮。產品質上乘，種類繁多，有些東西我以前從未見過。」

滿堂餐廳酒吧位於舊法租界邊陲，採用一系列本土食材入饌，就連不少中國人也感到新鮮好奇。該餐廳以北京春餅為主打美食，薄薄的香烙麵餅，配搭多種搜羅自中國各地的食材餡料，有京醬肉絲，還有炒芹菜燻豆腐等。

其琳瑯滿目的特色雞尾酒，更

**Clockwise from top:** Holy Cow's meat being prepared; Anthony Zhao believes the beef has to be fresh; healthy hot pot

**順時針最頂起：**

牛牛火鍋員工正在預備牛肉食材；趙榮華認為牛肉要新鮮才好吃；圍坐品嚐美味的養生火鍋

上海必嚐時令佳餚

## SEASONAL DISHES TO TRY IN SHANGHAI

As summer turns to autumn, locals fill their bellies with these tasty seasonal ingredients and dishes

隨著夏去秋來，不少上海人都喜愛品嚐下列以時令食材烹製的美饌



### Hairy crab

Shanghai's waters are home to their own type of hairy crab, also known as Chinese mitten crab. When perfectly steamed, the brown crab, which has furry mitten-like claws, is juicy, tender and fragrant. **Try: Wang Bao He, 603 Fuzhou Lu**

### 大閘蟹

上海一帶的水域培育出當地特有的大閘蟹品種——上海毛蟹。這種大閘蟹呈棕色，蟹螯上有密集的絨毛。以適當火候蒸熟後，即可品嚐到汁多嫩滑且香氣撲鼻的蟹肉。推薦：福州路603號——王寶和酒家



### Leeks

In the old days, locals stockpiled leeks outside during cooler months. A classic dish is *jicai chao niangao*, sticky rice cake stir-fried with leeks and pork. In autumn, it's sometimes served with hairy crab. **Try: Wang Jia Sha, 805 Nanjing Xi Lu**

### 薺菜

上海人昔日會於較涼爽的月份，在家門外堆起大量薺菜。薺菜炒年糕是經典滬菜之一，主要材料包括：以糯米粉製成的水磨年糕、薺菜和豬肉。在秋季期間，有時也有機會嚐到以薺菜搭配大閘蟹的菜式。推薦：南京西路805號——王家沙點心店



### Goose

The perfect cold-weather treat in Shanghai. The most common way to eat it is simply roasted. Cantonese-style, which results in moist fatty flesh under an irresistible crispy skin. **Try: Madam Goose, 4/F The Skymall, 5001 Dushi Lu**

### 鵝

鵝是寒冷天氣裡的上海美食，當中以廣東燒鵝最為常見，集皮脆肉嫩多汁的優點，令人難以抗拒。推薦：都市路5001號仲盛世界商城4樓——鵝夫人



beef and vegetables. “My local market is great,” she beams. “By sourcing locally, you’re empowering the industry, reducing a lot of unnecessary waste. And the produce is fresher, too. There’s so much quality and diversity – I see things I’ve never come across before.”

**P**eking Inn, a dragon-adorned restaurant and bar on the edge of the French Concession, serves indigenous ingredients that even many Chinese urbanites have never before experienced. The menu is dominated by Beijing-style *chunbing*, crispy crêpes elevated by a wide array of China-sourced toppings, including shredded pork with sweet bean sauce and sautéed celery with smoked tofu.

But it’s the signature cocktail list that really wows patrons. Whimsically-named offerings highlight obscure Chinese spirits, reimagined through the ingredients and customs of the communities they hail from. There’s the Hong Kong King Kong, whose Hong-Kong Baijiu spirit base is infused with black and white pepper in a nod to the East-meets-West identity of its namesake city. There’s the Desert Storm, made with yeasty *qingke-jiu* (highland barley wine) from China’s arid northwestern region and garnished with a slice of dehydrated pineapple and popping candy “sand”. The Suzhou Impression is an off-the-wall concoction of Suzhou Bridge sweet osmanthus liqueur from the city just west of Shanghai and a chilled green bean cake, traditionally eaten by locals as an after-dinner treat.

The man behind this unique drink list is Chris Xi, an adventurous mixologist who’s had a hand in some of Shanghai’s most beloved cocktail bars. “I’ve travelled all over the country and done a lot of research and experiments with Chinese spirits,” says Xi, a picture of sophisticated cool with his jaw-length hair, goatee and well-worn brogues. “A lot of people are doing baijiu cocktails now, because it’s started to become known in the West, but I wanted to reflect a wider range of Chinese culture and ingredients. And just have some fun.”



**Above:** Blogger Rachel Gouk

**上圖:**  
飲食網誌寫手 Rachel Gouk

令客人擊節讚賞。華麗夢幻的名字背後，點出了中國烈酒的特色，靈感汲取自不同地區的食材與習俗，並注入新意。「香港金剛」以香港白酒為基調，融入黑白胡椒風味，向匯萃東西文化的香港致敬。另一款名為「沙漠風暴」，以大西北地區的青稞酒調製，上面有一片菠蘿乾，加了爆炸糖模仿沙粒。「蘇州印象」配搭創新，以甜美的蘇州橋桂花酒為主調（蘇州與上海相鄰），配合傳統飯後甜點綠豆糕品嚐。

創意調酒師Chris Xi是一系列獨特雞尾酒背後的靈魂人物，其足跡遍及上海最受歡迎的酒吧。「我遊歷大江南北，對中國烈酒進行過大量研究和實驗。」他的頭髮長至下頷，下巴蓄著山羊鬍子，腳踏拷花皮鞋，一派品味高尚的氣質。「中國白酒在西方漸漸為人熟悉，所以現在很多人都用它來調製雞尾酒，不過我希望從中反映出豐富的中國文化和食材，創作過程也十分有趣。」

**芝**加哥人Ari Jadwin在中國經營食材生意，態度一絲不苟。他與四川省成都市附近過百家農場合作，當中大部分屬於小型業務。當地素以西藏高原的純淨天然水源見稱，其公司Aqua Select出品的三文魚、鱒

魚和鱒魚，皆採用永續非基因改造飼料來餵飼，而且經過嚴謹測量，證明不含激素、寄生蟲、重金屬和抗生素，讓餐廳主廚和消費者安心選購。正因如此，Jadwin的魚類食材價格往往比歐洲進口貨還要高。

捕魚至上桌的時間，由一般的兩星期大幅縮短至平均16小時，無論是直接消費者以至超級市場也深感興趣。Jadwin表示，上海的頂級大廚，越來越喜歡採用其公司的小批量四川三文魚。現在多間五星級酒店自助餐採用的是歐洲海鮮，而Jadwin供應的更新鮮食材，則預留給高級單點菜單之用。他說：「許多主廚都知道，新鮮程度與品質是互相掛勾的。我們所有魚類的屠宰和運送程序，都在24小時內完成，部分原因是中國物流業效率超高。你在歐洲完全無法做到，即使是英國也不可能。由蘇格蘭運貨到倫敦，至少也要花上兩天！」

不過，食客毋須光顧高級酒店大灑金錢，也可嚐到新鮮農作物的美味。以百歐歡有機農場為例，他們除了為一些餐廳供應時令蔬菜、微菜苗和可食用花朵之餘，也會讓遊人親身了解其日常運作。農場為訪客安排採農作物活動、教育工作坊，也設有可愛動物園和有機調味品店，讓美



**Left to right:**  
Mixologist Chris Xi at  
work; Desert Storm

左至右：  
調酒師Chris Xi正在調製  
尾酒；「沙漠風暴」雞尾酒



Working with more than 100 mostly small-scale farms just outside Chengdu, Sichuan province, where crystal-clear waters tumble untouched from the Tibetan plateau, Chicagoan Ari Jadwin is altogether more serious about his China-reared foodstuff. His AquaSelect salmon, trout and sturgeon are given sustainably sourced non-GM feed and put through rigorous testing to prove they're free of hormones, parasites, heavy metals and antibiotics, essential for winning over both chefs and consumers. As a result, Jadwin's fish usually come with a higher price tag than those imported from Europe.

But with an average farm-to-plate time of 16 hours, compared to two weeks, the fish appeal to everyone from direct consumers to supermarkets, and he says Shanghai's top chefs are increasingly keen to showcase his small-batch Sichuan salmon. A number of five-star hotels use European seafood for their buffets, reserving Jadwin's fresher fish for their exalted à la carte menus. "Chefs know that freshness and quality are connected," he says. "All our fish is killed and delivered in 24 hours, which is part of the miracle of Chinese logistics. You could never do that in Europe or even the UK. It takes at least two days just to get from Scotland to London!"

But you don't need to splurge on a high-end hotel meal to try fresh-off-the-farm flavours. For example, while BioFarm

supplies many of the same restaurants with seasonal veggies, microgreens and edible flowers, they also invite visitors to come and get up-close tastes of their operations. The farm offers pick-your-own-food experiences, educational workshops, a petting zoo and a store stocked with organic condiments and sauces, making it a great day out for foodies and eco-conscious shoppers. Encouraging eaters to learn where food comes from is part of BioFarm's mission. Founder Sherrie Tien is a dedicated vegetarian, and members of the 70-strong, green-fingered team often emphasise their deep love of the natural world.

"We want people to come here, pick the vegetables and connect with the environment," says Alice Chen, who has been working at BioFarm since it opened as a small plot for Tien's personal consumption 15 years ago. "We don't have anything flashy or an amusement park, but children come here, collect bugs, play by the water, and they love it. They don't want to go home."

Here, it's easy to see - and taste - why local agriculture could become Shanghai's next big trend. With an ever-growing community of producers, chefs and eaters getting enthused about the benefits of organic, sustainable, indigenous food, it seems inevitable that the larger restaurant industry will soon be inspired too. For tomorrow's foodies, the future looks fresh.

食愛好者和環保消費者享受美好的一天。百歐歡的創立宗旨之一，就是鼓勵人們學習食物之源。創辦人田月皎是一位素食人士，而農場的70人團隊除了熱愛種植，也經常流露他們對大自然的深厚真情。

「我們希望人們多來參觀和摘菜，與大自然環境建立連繫。」Alice Chen說。她於15年前百歐歡開幕時就已經在此工作，當時這裡是田月皎的私人小農莊。

「我們沒有華麗的設施或主題公園，但是小孩子都喜歡到這裡來，收集小昆蟲和在水邊玩耍，玩得樂而忘返呢。」

由此可見，本土農業很有機會成為上海的未來大潮流，也讓人品嚐到豐盛成果。不少耕養者、主廚和食客均對有機永續本土食材的優點讚嘆不已，組成的社群愈見壯大。在往後的日子裡，大型餐飲業自然會跟隨他們的步伐。對於未來的美食家來說，食物的發展可謂生機盎然。



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