

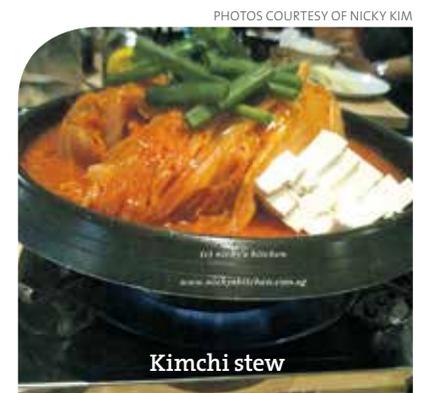
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Nappa Cabbage kimchi

Korean Food: Varieties of Kimchi



There are at least nine different types kimchi made from Nappa cabbage. There are seven different types of kimchi made with radish and fourteen different types of kimchi made with a variety of other vegetables.



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Kimchi stew



PHOTO COURTESY OF NICKY KIM

BY NICKY KIM
FOR THE EPOCH TIMES

Nappa cabbages were soft and watery and was missing the crunchiness.

For those who have never heard of or tasted kimchi, it's Korea's national food. We will eat it at breakfast, lunch and dinner. Back in the old days, we used to place kimchi in clay pots and bury them underground in winter to slow the fermentation process. Now in modern times, every Korean house will have a dedicated kimchi refrigerator with special temperature control. My parents even have one in Sydney.



Radish kimchi (Kkak du gi)



BBQ pork belly with kimchi

I have a love-hate relationship with Kimchi (pronounced gim-chi). When I was growing up, my family barely touched it as my dad was never a big fan of vegetables. So I never got to see much of it and never liked eating it.

That all changed when I moved to Singapore. Eating Chinese food somehow made me miss kimchi. Perhaps the taste and smell made me homesick. I started to regret not paying more attention on the occasions my mum made it for us.

Eventually I learnt how to make it but using the cabbage available in Singapore didn't produce the same quality kimchi as in Korea. The



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Nappa cabbage

Radish

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It's an annual family event to prepare kimchi for every Korean household just before the winter

starts. Some families use up to 300 cabbages, but our family only made a small amount and used perhaps ten cabbages in total. It was a little embarrassing when my teacher did a survey at school back in Korea because we were the family with the least amount of kimchi.

As kimchi ferments over time, it becomes too sour and it's not really edible as a side dish. However, it can still be used for cooking in many different ways. Kimchi fried rice, kimchi pancakes, kimchi soup, kimchi noodles, and the list goes on. My favourite is barbecuing with meat. Combining barbecued meat and kimchi brings a unique flavour.

I have been making kimchi with organic Nappa cabbage in Bangkok, and after many attempts it's finally starting to taste just like what I used to eat in Korea. My latest experiment is green papaya kimchi (som tam kimchi) to capitalise on the abundance of this common vegetable in Thailand. I hope you can visit me at the Bangkok farmers' market soon. Come and taste my kimchi!



green papaya kimchi (som tam kimchi)

Nicky Kim had been teaching Korean cooking in Singapore for four years before relocating to Bangkok at the end of 2012. She still travels to Singapore on a regular basis, teaching Korean cooking at private classes, corporate events and at the Korean Tourism Organisation (KTO) in Singapore every month. Please contact KTO (+65 6533 0441) to register for classes. She blogs at www.nickyskitchen.com.sg

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Cucumber kimchi



Cabbage Kimchi



Lotus root kimchi