



Satay Duck Hearts
by BBQ Dreamz



What's all the fuss about? **FILIPINO CUISINE**

Britain's current dining scene is deliciously - and proudly - multicultural, yet Filipino food hasn't made much of an appearance. Zoë Perrett explains why that's about to change

Imagine a cuisine which is the product of 7,107 islands, that combines ethnic tribal foodways, Spanish colonial style, Indian spices, American accents, and Chinese and Malay influences, whilst also embracing the multicultural city style that this melting pot has yielded.

That, in a rather large nutshell, is Filipino food. Yet - in spite of being named one of 2016's hottest cuisines by global trendspotting agency The Food People - most of us could put what we know about it >>

Storecupboard staples Before you begin your foray into Filipino

Rice Jasmine and sticky varieties
Suka Vinegar from nipa palms, coconut palms and sugar cane
Patis Fish sauce
Soy sauce Lends a deeply savoury saltiness

Bagoong Fermented shrimp paste
Nata de coco Plain, coloured or flavoured coconut gel for desserts
Garlic Adds delicious pungency

Stock up....
ONLINE theasiancookshop.co.uk
ON THE HIGH STREET Earls Court in West London is a main hub of the capital's Filipino community

GET A TASTE...

At a restaurant

JOSEPHINE'S Central London's oldest Filipino restaurant, established in Fitzrovia 20 years ago
josephinesrestaurant.co.uk

ROMULO CAFE A swish Kensington outpost of a family-owned chain
romulocafe.co.uk

At a pop-up

PEPE'S KITCHEN A supperclub serving Mae Magnaye Williams' traditional, regional dishes
pepes-kitchen.co.uk

LUZON UK Filipino fare gets a contemporary spin at Rex De Guzman's pop-up
luzon.co.uk

MAYNILA Pop-up from Roni Bandong and Charl Asuit
maynila.co.uk

THE ADOBROS Brothers Mark and Mike Corbyn's supperclubs share the food they grew up on
theadobros.com

On the street

BBQ DREAMZ The team serves Filipino barbecue at London food markets
 Twitter: @BbqDreamz

on the back of the stamp sending a postcard to Manila.

But, slowly, pop-ups and street food vendors are introducing adventurous gourmets to the delights of lumpia (a Filipino spring roll) and lambanog palm wine; fuelled by a drive to share that joyous spirit of eating that seems to pervade the Filipino way of life.

A fine balance

Filipino dishes typically blend sweet, salty, sour, and sometimes spicy. The 'swavoury' (simultaneously sweet and savoury) trend so prolific in the UK has long been favoured – offal stews are eaten with sweet 'puto' rice cakes; fruits laced with shrimp paste. Rice is the staple starch; first served steamed as an accompaniment, leftovers are fried up with garlic to make breakfast favourite, sinangag.

Fish might fly...

Flying fish are often on the menu, but so are all sorts of other oceanic species; catfish, milkfish, blue marlin, tilapia and more. All might come fried, curried, smoked, dried, soured or stuffed. As you'd expect from an island nation, shellfish is similarly popular.

Psst...

Cyrus Todiwala is a Filipino food champion. Inspired by the late Des Rodriguez Torres, his Philippine belly of pork with shrimp paste and coconut cream recipe is in *Mr Todiwala's Spice Box* (2 June; Mitchell Beazley).



PORK: THE PHILIPPINES' FAVOURITE MEAT?

It's hard not to be greedy when so many delicious porcine preparations are on offer. Try...

- **Binagoongang baboy** Crisp pork belly with shrimp paste
- **Lechon** Crisp skinned spit-roasted suckling pig
- **Sisig** Grilled pork in a sour, spicy marinade



Grilled Pork Cutlet by Luzon

The woman bringing Manila to London

Rowena Romulo believes Britain is ready for her culture's 'unorthodox' cuisine

Seven years ago in Manila, Sandie Romulo Squillantini opened Romulo Café in memory of her grandfather, General Carlos P. Romulo – the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and only Filipino to win a Pulitzer Prize. Now Sandie and her sister, Rowena, have opened Romulo's first British outpost in Kensington. We chatted to Rowena about the rise of the cuisine it serves.

Why Britain and why now?

With foodies rushing to be the first to unearth something new and the current trend for family-style shared-plate dining, the time seems right.

What is the Filipino food culture?

We think about food constantly, considering the next meal before we've finished the last. 'Have you eaten?' ('kumain ka na ba?') is a common greeting. Then there is balut, an embryonic bird eaten from the eggshell. Just like Britain's Marmite, it's a divisive treat!

What must diners at Romulo Café try?

Comfort foods like adobo (twice cooked chicken and pork belly), kare-kare (stew in a peanut-based sauce) or binagoongang boneless

crispy pata (crispy pork leg with aubergine salsa and tomato shrimp sauce) – my grandfather would have ordered these!

Some recipes are legacies of my late beauty queen grandmother, Doña Virginia Llamas Romulo. Our chef, Lorenzo Maderas, has kept their essence intact but added a modern spin. His signature dishes include bangus (smoked milkfish) paté and patotim (slow-cooked duck).

What's 'thank you, that meal was delicious' in Tagalog?

'Maraming salamat, napakasarap!'



BBQ Dreamz image: Edwina Hollick