

## Trends among Young People in Hong Kong (Food)

Miho GODA (China)

In Hong Kong, 95% of residents are ethnically Han. They speak Cantonese. And writing in kanji characters is seen almost everywhere. At the same time, the region's history as a British colony and prosperous hub port of world trade has made Hong Kong a multicultural region. Even now, it is home to many business persons from all over the world and numerous household workers from Southeast Asia. As a result, Hong Kong has a wide variety of religions and cultures. Likewise, its wide variety of food culture is not limited to Chinese cuisine. You can select from an extensive range of delicious dishes. Actually, through getting to know young people in Hong Kong, I have learned that they enjoy various types of dishes every day.

Young people in Hong Kong are always interested in things that are new and unusual. This applies also to their eating habits. Many of them are eager to try hot-topic restaurants and unusual dishes. They often exchange information on popular shops and new menu items. Hong Kong has countless restaurants where you can try ethnic dishes or unusual dishes casually, enabling many young people to easily experience a rich diversity of tastes. Popular ethnic cuisines include Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, and Portuguese styles.



△Popular *cha chaan teng*

Although there is a wide variety of restaurants in Hong Kong, *cha chaan teng* (traditional cafés and small restaurants) remain highly popular. Some *cha chaan teng* are operated as franchises, and others are owner-managed. These stores are found almost everywhere: downtown as well as in business and residential areas. They open early and close late (some in downtown areas stay open around the clock.) In addition, their prices are reasonable, making them attractive to many young customers. The reason for their popularity lies not only in their prices and convenience, but also in the “diversity” and “unusualness” of their menu items, which are unavailable in other types of restaurants. *Cha chaan teng menus* list more than 50 types of dishes in total, including ordinary snacks (Western dishes, such as sandwiches, toast, spaghetti, and pilaf), Chinese dishes (rice porridge, noodles, and rice, vegetable, meat and fish dishes), plus patisserie (egg

tarts, French toast, melon-flavored buns, and rolls). Moreover, each *cha chaan teng* has its own particular menu specialties. Drinks served at *cha chaan teng* also tend to be unique. They offer not only tea and coffee, but also *yuanyang* (a mix of coffee and milk tea), cola with lemon juice, Milo, watercress-flavored honey drink, etc. While many young people began going to *cha chaan teng* in their childhood, they never tire of it. This is due to the menu dishes' "diversity" and "unusualness."

On weekends, many young people in Hong Kong have a barbecue to enjoy something unusual that they cannot experience in their daily life. Numerous barbecue sites in the suburbs draw many young people on weekends. Hong Kong also has a lot of barbecue shops, where you can purchase barbecue foodstuffs and equipment. Also, there are barbecue sections in supermarkets, indicating the vast popularity of this leisure activity. Food trends among young people in Hong Kong are deeply related to their notable fondness for "diversity" and "unusualness."



△ Young people enjoy a B.B.Q. in Hong Kong