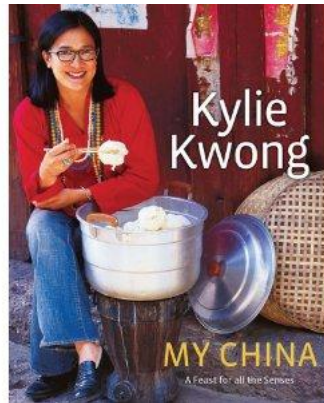


Book review



My China – A Feast for all the Senses

by

Kylie Kwong

published by Penguin group (Australia) 2007, ISBN 9781920989354

Kylie is a fourth-generation Australian-Chinese who does not speak Cantonese or Mandarin and is the owner of the Billy Kwong Restaurant in Sydney, Australia. This is her fourth book and she has produced her own TV series. ***My China*** continues Kylie's exploration of the culinary delights of the land of her ancestors, while taking a deeply personal journey into the history, culture and peoples of China and Tibet.

This is a large book of 483 pages with many excellent photographs by Simon Griffiths. There are 59 pages on Tibet – excellent reading and photos which would be of great benefit to anyone considering visiting Tibet, or to bring back memories for those who have already visited Tibet. “Now, I must admit that you wouldn't really go to Tibet for gastronomic inspiration. The climate here is so harsh that the Tibetan diet is largely limited to what you can make from barley and yak meat: tsampa, soups, momos, and a few other variations on the same theme. In this context, it's also perhaps not so strange that Tibetans, unlike other Buddhists, eat meat – if they didn't, they'd starve.” For tourists, and locals who can afford it, there are Indian and Szechuan (heaps of chili) based meals available at restaurants and hotels.

The whole book is not just about recipes and cooking – there is a wealth of interesting notes and comments on local culture and beliefs as well. Kylie is an enthusiastic and compulsive cook who explains techniques and offers helpful hints and strategies.

Reviewed by Ian Howat.