

## **Famous Malaysian Tradition: Dorset Sutton**

The Malaysian Chinese New Year Loh Hei Yee Sang celebration is a famous tradition for Malaysian Chinese...created by a Cantonese immigrant, Loke Ching Fatt, from China for his humble eatery in southern Malaya. It was so popular it quickly spread right across the Chinese population in Malaya...intentionally ritualistic, ensuring that the flavours and colours are observed for the auspicious new year. Chinese restaurants all over Malaysia pride themselves in serving Yee Sang so they can share prosperity with their customers.

But why is it so special.... because everyone can partake in tossing (yee sang) the salad to share good fortune and prosperity (loh hei) together. The dish is assembled on a plate for the Prosperity Toss. The higher you toss the ingredients with your chopsticks the better...and the more likely you are to share even more prosperity.

Yee Sang is a unique type of salad using 12 special ingredients and combined with raw fish (usually salmon) ...to create a highly tasty, spicy flavour, uniquely Malaysian. Each ingredient has a name in Cantonese, symbolic of an element of prosperity or good fortune. The special ingredients include fish (abundance), carrots (auspicious for good luck approaching), cucumbers and spring onions (for freshness), pomelo (for good luck), peppers and 5 spices (colours of life), sesame seeds (seeds of growth), peanuts (prosperity for business), plum sauce (for sweetness in life), oil (for smoothness in all ventures in life), pillow shaped crackers (for resembling gold nuggets). Mixing all these auspicious ingredients together...then tossing them higher and higher with friends and family promotes unison, shared prosperity, and happiness among a nation with so many different ethnicities.

So, it's easy to see and sense how the Cantonese symbolise so much in their cultural tradition. And with this one dish Yee Sang Lo Hei captures all the essential symbolism of prosperity...and makes the tradition so special.

It's famous all over Malaysia...and many Malaysian Chinese outside Malaysia will prepare this dish to celebrate the new Chinese Year with family and friends.

All because Loke Ching Fatt wanted to create a way to share prosperity during wartime Malaya to help the country recover and enjoy the fruits of prosperity...by tossing the Yee Sang salad higher and higher. A tradition which started over 80 years ago now enjoyed by Malaysians of all ethnicities has become famous...as a way to share prosperity and good fortune with all who share in this glorious celebration.

Gong Xi Fa Cai....