



Ms Wee Eng Hwa, daughter of the late president Wee Kim Wee and his wife, with the third edition of memoir-cum-cookbook *Cooking For The President: Reflections & Recipes Of Mrs Wee Kim Wee*. Most of the recipes and their variations are the late Mrs Wee's spin on Peranakan dishes prepared for Mr Wee. PHOTO: SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

Book of Nonya recipes from late Mrs Wee Kim Wee gets a revamp

Ang Qing

Craving Peranakan cuisine like on-deh on-deh and pong tauhu but unable to find suitable ingredients?

Alternative ingredients are suggested in the new edition of a book that shows readers how to recreate

Nonya fare served to the late Singapore president Wee Kim Wee.

Cooking For The President: Reflections & Recipes Of Mrs Wee Kim Wee, a memoir-cum-cookbook by the couple's daughter, Ms Wee Eng Hwa, was officially launched on Monday.

Said Ms Wee, 80, who financed the printing: "This is a compilation of the accumulated culinary experience of four generations of great Nonya cuisine, which my family is delighted to share as a legacy for Singaporeans.

"Beyond the well-loved recipes, it is also a tribute to my parents, two extraordinary people who are worthy of great honour."

The book, which is in its third edition after Ms Wee first had it published in 2010, has a new chapter on alternative ingredients for those who are unable to source the original ones.

It features 227 recipes and their variations.

Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to the Wee Kim Wee Heritage Fund, which will be used for Singapore Management University (SMU) scholarships for needy students, and programmes of the Wee Kim Wee Centre, which seeks to promote a deeper understanding of the impact of cultural diversity on the business environment.

Most of the recipes and their variations are the late Mrs Wee's spin on Peranakan dishes prepared for Mr Wee, who died in 2005 at age 89. They were married for 69 years.

During Mr Wee's time as Singapore's president from 1985 to 1993, he was known to often invite Singaporeans to the Istana to enjoy

the First Lady's famed Peranakan dishes. This drew praises from guests including the late Mr S R Nathan – Singapore's president from 1999 to 2011 – who described the complex flavours and colours of her dishes as "more than inviting", according to SMU.

Mrs Wee, who began picking up culinary skills from her grandmother when she was 10, would also personally prepare food for dinner parties and receptions hosted by Mr Wee during his diplomatic career.

Included in the book are recipes for desserts such as ang ku kueh and savoury dishes such as sambal timun, or spicy pork cucumber salad, as well as her grandmother's luak chai, or pickled Chinese mustard leaves.

The book also offers insights into the personal life journeys of the couple, who married in 1936 after a year of meeting each other.

Following her husband's death, Mrs Wee kept herself busy with cooking and her recipes were compiled by her daughter in the book, which has sold 8,000 copies across two editions. Mrs Wee died in 2018 at age 102.

The third edition has 3,000 copies and can be purchased from The SMU Shop for \$118.

The proceeds from the book will also be used for the upkeep of the Wee Kim Wee Room, which showcases Mr Wee's personal artefacts. Located at the SMU Administration Building in Bras Basah, the room will be open to the public from 2023.

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