

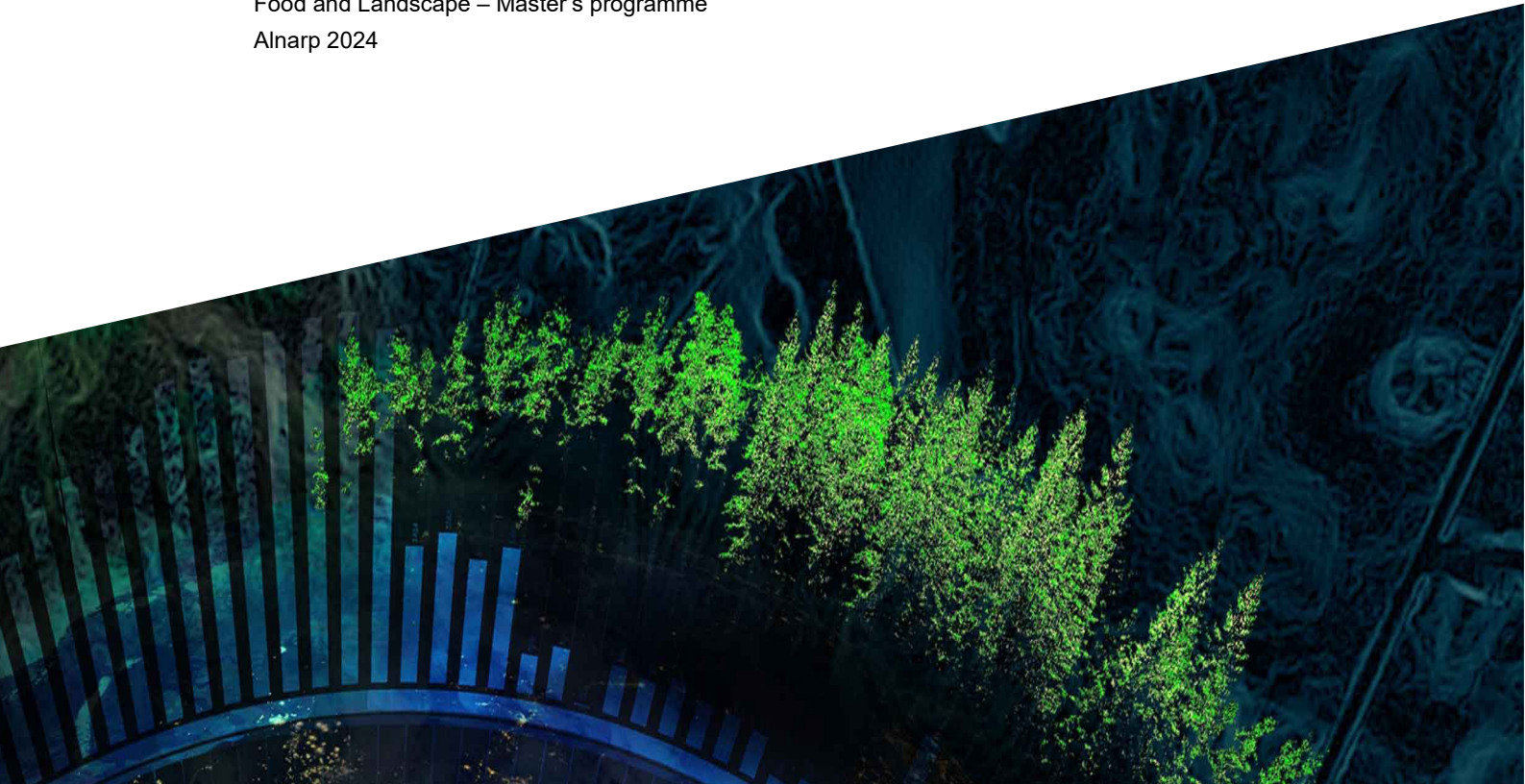


# **An analysis of the current status of Chinese food culture in contemporary Sweden and the causes of the challenges it faces - Based on quantitative and qualitative research**

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Independent project in food studies • 30 credits  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU  
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Food and Landscape – Master's programme  
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## Abstract

*According to relevant records, in 1786, the first Chinese from Guangdong, China, set foot on Swedish land with the ships of the Swedish East India Company, and in 1959, the first Chinese restaurant opened in Sweden and officially welcomed customers in Gothenburg. People, as carriers of their original culture, travel together with them, while restaurants, as the main carriers of ethnic cuisine culture, provide them with a soil for rooting and development overseas. Therefore, the story between Chinese cuisine and its culture and Sweden may have already begun. So, what is the current situation of Chinese cuisine and its culture in Sweden? What are the challenges? What are the reasons that have led to such a situation and challenges? Through interviews with six Swedish Chinese restaurant operators and a questionnaire survey targeting the local Chinese community, the following content can be summarized and analyzed: Chinese cuisine and culture exist in different forms in different occasions and conditions in Sweden today, and have adapted to local social conditions and cultural traditions to some extent in certain aspects. The dietary behavior, habits, preferences, and other aspects of the Chinese community living in Sweden are still significantly influenced by traditional Chinese cuisine related cultural content in their daily lives. At the individual level, corresponding adjustments need to be made to the traditional Chinese cooking process to suit the local situation in Sweden. Chinese restaurants generally offer traditional Chinese cuisine as well as adjusted versions to cater to different tastes and increase profits. The challenges that exist are often conflicts between certain ingredients and processing methods of traditional Chinese cuisine and the local dietary habits and culture. The sense of non identification arising from certain dishes may lead to some people's rejection and misunderstanding of the overall culture of Chinese cuisine. In addition, the restrictions on the variety of vegetables and seasonings in the local market have also to some extent limited the development of Chinese cuisine in the area. Analyzing the reasons, the survival and development of Chinese cuisine and its culture in Sweden are influenced by various and complex factors. At the individual level, it may be due to personal living habits, potential rejection of foreign cultures, and inevitable cross-cultural communication barriers. At the macro level, political factors, policy factors, changes in the number of Chinese immigrants and residents in Sweden, and the composition of the catering market may also become influencing factors for the survival status and challenges faced by Chinese food culture in Sweden.*

*Key words: Food culture, cross-cultural communication, cultural integration, cultural transfer*

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## 1. Introduction

Firstly, what is culture? The term culture is applied to various aspects of modern society and is also concretely reflected in multiple fields, starting from the basic education provided by the region or country in which the child was naive during childhood, to the social environment in which they live as adults, culture is everywhere. But it seems that the definition of "culture" is not as easy as we frequently use it. In fact, there may be some deviations in the origin and definition of the term culture in different regions and environments. Taking English and Chinese as examples, the term "culture" in the English context comes from the Latin word "cultura". The initial meaning was the act of cultivating, nurturing, and cultivating plants, while the modern term "culture" is based on a term used by the ancient Roman speaker Cicero in his "Tusculane Disputations". He wrote about the cultivation of the soul or "cultura animi" in the book (Cicero, 1812) using agricultural metaphors to describe the development of the philosophical soul, which is understood in teleology as the highest ideal of human development. Samuel Pfindor transformed this metaphor into the term "culture" used in modern times, but he no longer believed that philosophy was the natural perfection of humanity. On the contrary, he believes that culture is "helping humanity break free from barbarism and become fully human through skillful means." (Velkley, 2002)

In Chinese, the term "culture" (文化) is a combination of the characters "wen" (文) and "hua" (化). "Wen" in ancient China means all phenomena or forms, while "hua" can be understood as change. In the term "culture" (文化), it is particularly reflected in the changes caused by "people". The earliest combination of use is cited from an ancient book in the Chinese civilization called 'I-Ching' or 'The book of Changes' (《易经》). The specific time of writing the I-Ching is unknown, and the author is unknown. In the Han Dynasty (202BC—220AD), it was revered as one of the "Five Classics", and the main idea reflected in the book is that it believes that all things in this earth are in an endless development, and the law of development follows the basic principle of "nature", that is, it is not influenced by any other external force. This law reveals the characteristics of the entire universe, encompassing the attributes of all things of this earth. So the book has long been used for predicting future events. The term "culture"(文化) is quoted from the line in this book: “刚柔交错，天文也；文明以止，人文也。观乎天文，以察时变，观乎人文，以化成天下。” (Li, 2012) Its explanation is that the interaction of forces from both end sides, such as rigidity and flexibility, positive and negative, male and female forms this complex and colorful world. The existence of human populations gave birth to "civilization", and the existence

and development of civilization rely on the world composed of the interaction of forces from both end sides mentioned above. Civilization itself is also constantly changing over time due to the continuous reproduction of human populations. This can be summarized as all tangible or intangible phenomena that arise from human activities and behaviors and exist in this world, known as culture.

The image shows the Chinese characters '文化' (Culture) written in a bold, black, traditional calligraphic style. The characters are centered and occupy a significant portion of the page.

*Figure 1: Chinese calligraphy: Culture. ( Source: <http://chinatownconnection.com/>)*

It can be seen that the basic definition of culture in China and the West has been different since ancient times, but there are also some similarities between the two. Firstly, both define "culture" as a unique attribute that exists due to the existence of human populations; Secondly, whether the initial actions related to "cultivation and planting" in the West were referred to as culture, or the later definition of "skillful means to free humanity from barbarism and become a complete human" was referred to as culture, or the ancient Chinese concept of "all tangible or intangible changes that exist in the world due to human civilization" was referred to as culture, it can be found that people all define culture as a concept arising from the "progress" or "change" of populations. In terms of time units, from ancient times to the present, it has followed a law of change from nothing to something, from less to more, and from simple to complex. And food, as one of the basic living conditions for humans and almost all other complex organisms, naturally becomes more detailed and complex with the development of human populations, following the characteristics described above.

Since the birth of the human population, in this long historical period, whether it is the Qin and Han Dynasties, the Middle Ages, or the present 21st century. Whether it's the West or the East, also whether in the past or in the future, with the human population and civilization, what happens every day, and even every moment on this planet, is the behavior of eating and drinking. Dietary behavior is an orderly and irreplaceable behavior of animals in order to absorb energy, supplement and preserve physical energy, maintain their vital signs, and ensure all their daily physiological activities. In other words, the behavior of "eating" and "drinking" accompanies people on this planet for as long as they exist. Therefore, although the initial starting point of the so-called "food culture" in the history of human civilization is no longer known, and it can be said that it is impossible to know, it can be confirmed that because food always accompanies humans, it

seems that understanding its initial origin is meaningless - once people start to put food into their mouths and chew it, it has already emerged unconsciously. However, due to the regional and diverse nature of culture, there is still a trace to trace the origin of each unique culinary culture. By understanding the relevant origins of this culinary culture, one is actually browsing and flipping through a chronicle of this culture in this unique region and natural landscape, which also involves a rich encyclopedia - the connection between food is too rich! The geographical and climatic conditions of a region affect which crops can be sown and grown on a large scale here; People's history and traditions influence the selection of raw materials, cooking methods, and taste preferences of food; Different religious beliefs also shape diverse culinary cultures. Some religions and beliefs dictate the dietary choices, structures, and preparation methods of believers, as well as special food preparations related to specific festivals or rituals, as described by Olwig: the body and blood of the sacrificial lamb have become symbolic food consumption in the Eucharist of Christ (2018). Under macro social background conditions, social and economic factors are also influencing food culture from different perspectives and to varying degrees; People's social status, economic status, career choices, and lifestyle can all affect their personal food choices and consumption habits; Urbanization, globalization and other modernization processes are also driving changes in the content and composition of modern food culture. Globalization is regarded as one of the fundamental processes that promote social change in today's world (Jussaume, 2001). Food to a certain extent reflects various aspects of people's lives, and in turn, various aspects are constructing and shaping a variety of culinary cultures. In summary, people, food, culture, and landscape continue to influence each other, and these factors complement each other, becoming one of the colorful compositions in the human cultural scape.

As an important branch of human culture, food culture contains some unique characteristics, which make it recognizable and easy to distinguish. Firstly, food culture has a wide diversity. For example, in some scenarios, the discussion of food culture is not limited to the part about "edible food" in that culture. The broad definition of food culture also includes some content related to the process of eating, such as table manners, the selection of tableware and utensils during dining, etc., which are also included in the scope of food culture. And as mentioned above, its diversity is also reflected in the differentiation of time and space, where people from different eras, regions, and ethnic groups have their unique culinary cultures. And often their culinary culture largely reflects the climate and geographical environment of the region, as well as the history and traditions of the ethnic group. This leads to another key attribute of food culture - inheritance. The transmission and handover of culinary culture rely on the

attribute of "transmission from generation to generation", often carried out through family life and social education. For example, a dish that you often enjoy at home and the same dish from a restaurant outside, there is a high probability that after tasting it, you can easily distinguish which dish is made by your family and which one comes from a restaurant outside. The reason is that it contains some unique and identifiable characteristics that can only be recognized by relevant personnel, such as taste characteristics, raw material characteristics, cooking techniques, and so on. The sense of ritual plays an indispensable role in the culinary culture of some regions or ethnic groups, such as food specially prepared for certain special festivals, food choices for wedding celebrations, birthday gatherings, and funeral ceremonies, all of which indicate that drinking and eating activities are often associated with special social scenes and are often related to rituals or celebrations, reflecting certain special social relationships and playing a role in expressing people's inner emotions. Therefore, some foods have derived unique symbolic meanings in some cultures. For example, in China, fish is an essential dish on every household's dining table during the Spring Festival. The reason is that the pronunciation of "fish" (鱼) in Chinese is consistent with "surplus" (余), pronounced as 'yu'.and there is a Chinese idiom called "年年有余", which explains that there is surplus wealth or food every year. Due to the homophonic pronunciation of "fish" and "surplus", it is incorporated into the idiom "年年有余", then it becomes to "年年有鱼", explained as having fish to eat every year. Therefore, Chinese people prepare a fish dish on their own dining table during each Chinese New Year holiday, expressing the hope that there will be surplus wealth and food left in the family in the new year. This is a representative food symbol in Chinese culinary culture. And other cultures also have their unique food symbolic meanings. For example, in Hungary, people try to avoid eating chicken and fish during the New Year period, because there is a tradition that chicken feet will scrape away good luck during the New Year, while fish will swim away with luck (Bánfalvi, 2018). The different meanings of dietary symbols rely on collective behavior patterns, which naturally lead to social interaction. Therefore, the unique sociality in dietary culture has emerged. In fact, diet has become one of the most common social patterns in today's society. Whether it is between families, couples, friends, or business dealings, almost any form of social interaction will involve dietary behavior. People establish and enhance their relationships by having meals together and sharing food, making their relationships closer and stronger. Finally, food culture will exchange, collide, or merge with other types of food culture as people travel and migrate. With the development of technology and the continuous advancement of modernization, globalization is gradually deepening. The fast, efficient, and convenient modern transportation methods have made long-distance travel or immigration

increasingly common. Both travel and immigration directly promote the local food industry in the destination, and also provide opportunities for different regional food cultures to take root in different places and gradually develop. Over time, different styles and types of food cultures have been exchanged and integrated, giving birth to new culinary styles or habits. Parallely speaking, there may also be some culinary cultures that, due to cultural identity and cultural confidence, even if they are far away from their homeland and migrate to other places, still adhere to the original flavor of their culture or try to ignore external influences, maintain some localized elements, and survive and develop in a relatively unfamiliar place.

In the 20th century, human science and technology experienced explosive development, which greatly changed the world's pattern and human way of life. The rapid iteration of modern transportation has made long-distance, short-term, and efficient commuting no longer a dream. Air, sea, and land transportation routes have become unprecedentedly busy. In addition, modern communication technology is highly developed, the rapid popularity of mobile phones, and the widespread use of visual devices have made communication between people absolutely smooth. In particular, the popularity of computers and the birth of the Internet have brought human life into a new era, breaking through the limitations of the previous life function space. Paperless office, electronic commerce, networking life, communication and interaction are everywhere in front of people to display a "virtual world". One core of these significant changes is the narrowing of time and space distances between people, compressing the vast Earth into a small 'global village' where people can visit, gather, socialize, and communicate anytime and anywhere, just like villagers in a small village. In this case, it seems that the acceleration button has been pressed for the spread of culture in different places, and people are no longer the main carrier of cultural circulation. The Internet, as a new carrier in the new era, enables different cultures to be widely spread in the form of data streams. Under this premise, the theory of cross-cultural communication emerged. Cross-cultural communication is a scientific field whose object of interest is the interaction between individuals and groups from different cultures, and which examines the influence of culture on who people are, how they act, feel, think and, evidently, speak and listen (DODD, 1991). Language barriers are often considered a difficult obstacle to overcome in cross-cultural communication (VILA, 2005), but in cross-cultural communication of food culture, the above theory does not seem to be fully applicable. The communication of food related content in different cultural backgrounds is not only a negotiation between different languages, but also a dialogue between different histories experienced in different time and space. When we narrow down our perspective - humans have a primitive impulse to put unfamiliar objects into

their mouths since childhood, and the process of chewing and tasting food that has never been tasted is a novelty mixed with a slightly tense experience. Therefore, cross-cultural communication about food has its own unique characteristics, and compared to other forms of communication, it is more like a 'silent' communication. But it is happening constantly in today's era.

## **2. Background**

According to the latest archaeological research, the origin of Chinese civilization can be traced back to 8000 years ago, (Sun,2021) and about 5000 years ago, China began to enter a civilized society, which has continued to this day. In this long history, with the development of Chinese civilization, many Chinese symbols have emerged. Among them, Chinese culinary culture has become one of the most representative traditional Chinese cultures to this day due to its long history and wide range of dissemination and widespread audience. At the same time, with the increasing frequency of international travel and migration among Chinese people, Chinese cuisine culture has also followed in the footsteps of Chinese people and landed, taken root, and sprouted in various parts of the world. And with the expansion of the local Chinese community and the increasing acceptance of the local people, it has developed into one of the most representative forms of Chinese culture overseas.

### **2.1 A brief introduction to ancient Chinese culinary culture**

The origin history of Chinese culinary culture cannot be traced back, but according to archaeological evidence and relevant historical records, Chinese culinary culture can be summarized into the following periods: the Zhou and Qin dynasties (approximately 1100 BC -207 BC) were the formative period of Chinese culinary culture, with grains and vegetables as the main staple food; The Han Dynasty (202-220 BC) was a period of rich Chinese culinary culture, with the introduction of pomegranate, sesame, grapes and other products from outside. During this period (approximately 141 BC), Liu An, the king of Huainan also invented tofu; The Tang and Song dynasties (618-1279) were a peak period in the history of Chinese culinary culture, which was reflected in the excessive emphasis on finished food products, especially for the food supplied to the royal family. Ancient poetry once depicted a scene where over 70 types of "craft dishes" were mainly used for visual viewing at banquets, resembling fairy like singers and dancers made from vegetarian dishes and steamed noodles; In the Song Dynasty, there were chefs who prepared over 20 cold dishes, each shaped like a scenery. Putting them together formed the landscape of a scenic garden villa that appeared to be the residence of the famous Tang Dynasty poet Wang Wei in his later years. From this, it can be seen that at that time, there was an extreme standard for food,

especially for food supplied to people like high-ranking officials and dignitaries; The Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), due to its relatively short existence, did not have rich records of its culinary culture compared to other dynasties, nor was it as exquisite as the Tang and Song dynasties. However, due to the fact that the Yuan Dynasty was a period of rule by the nomadic Mongolian ethnic group, the dietary characteristics of this period had distinct nomadic characteristics, namely a preference for meat products, especially known for lamb and horse meat. The "hot pot lamb" (涮羊肉) that has been passed down to this day is said to be the lamb that the founding emperor of the Yuan Dynasty, Kublai Khan, missed his hometown very much when he went south. However, due to not having enough time to cook the lamb in the usual way during the war, he ordered the chef to cut it into thin slices and boil it in boiling water. After finishing it, he quickly engaged in battle. Due to its delicious taste and convenient production, Kublai Khan was deeply impressed, and other military personnel also praised it, so it has been passed down to nowadays. The culinary culture of the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1912) continued and to some extent developed the delicacy of food in the Tang and Song dynasties, while also placing demands on the elegance and health of food. During the Ming dynasty, the exchange and trade between the Ming Empire and the international community became unprecedentedly frequent. As a result, the resources at that time were extremely abundant. Under the abundant conditions of resources, people not only paid attention to the delicacy of food, but also realized the impact and importance of daily consumption on physical health. Especially in the Jiangsu and Zhejiang regions in southeastern China, the light taste of food and the cooking methods that strive to maintain its original flavor during the cooking process have continued to this day, and have become a unique feature. A regional Chinese culinary culture with distinct regional characteristics. (Chinese cuisine culture)

## **2.2 Contemporary Chinese Food Culture**

To this day, the complex and refined culinary culture that has been accumulated over thousands of years is reflected in every aspect of Chinese daily life, and has distinct characteristics from different perspectives. At the landscape level, Chinese cuisine is divided into eight major cuisines based on different regional characteristics and its highly recognizable taste characteristics(Li, 2012). It is worth noting that studies have shown that geographical proximity is the key factor determining the similarity of Chinese regional cuisine, rather than climate proximity (Zhu,Y, 2013). However, in fact, China has a vast land area that includes almost all types of ecological types and geographical terrain, and the climate types vary from west to east and from south to north. The crops suitable for cultivation and growth also vary among different regions. And it is a country

with a multi-ethnic population, huge population resources, diverse cultural types. Therefore, if differentiated in detail, the style and cuisine of Chinese dish are far more than eight, and can be refined into hundreds according to different provinces or even different regions within the same province. The earliest literature of the eight major cuisines defined today originated from Wang Shaoquan's article "China's Eight Major Cuisines" published by the People's Daily, the organ newspaper of the Central Committee of the CPC, on June 20, 1980, although then due to economic interests, cultural disdain chains between different regions (people's psychological construction, cognitive expression and cultural communication of a certain (category) object in a hierarchical sequence at the cognitive and communication levels, are generally constructed and presented by discourse . Here, it refers to the disdain or contempt for the traditional food in non affiliated regions due to the differences in economic levels and cultural differences between regions) and other factors that make the debate on Chinese cuisine endless. However, the eight cuisines that are widely recognized by the society and have formed their own system due to long-term development are now recognized as the eight major cuisines, namely: Lu cuisine (鲁菜), Chuan cuisine (川菜), Yue cuisine (粤菜), Su cuisine (苏菜), Min cuisine (闽菜), Zhe cuisine (浙菜), Hui cuisine (徽菜) and Xiang cuisine (湘菜). Their names are composed of two Chinese characters. The unified structure of its Chinese naming is: the abbreviation of the region as the first character, and the second character as a single "cuisine" (Chinese character '菜'). Taking "Lu cuisine" as an example, Shandong Province (山东省) is abbreviated as "Lu" (鲁), so dishes originating from this region are uniformly classified as Lu cuisine. From this, people can easily distinguish where different dishes come from by the names of the dishes. Not only that, but the different and distinctive flavors of different dishes also stimulate the taste buds of diners, satisfying the hypothalamus and reminding people in their mouths about, "Where does this dish come from!". These all confirm the inseparable relationship between food and landscape from different perspectives. As Matthew Potteiger wrote, "Food and landscape are mutually constituted." (2013:261)





Figure 2: Chinese cuisine flavor distribution map. (Source: MIT Technology Review)

In terms of production techniques and dissemination, Chinese folk cuisine is classified as home cooked dishes, rural dishes, and some dishes that cannot be cooked at the home level due to limitations in raw materials, cooking techniques, and conditions and can only be enjoyed at restaurants that provide such dishes specifically.

### 2.3 Home cooked dishes (Home Cooking)

Its literal meaning is the dishes that are often cooked and eaten at home. In terms of social identity at the "homely" level, the taste of home cooked dishes is suitable for the taste needs of the vast majority of Chinese people. In other words, the taste orientation of most home-made dishes tends to be moderate. In terms of seasoning, the use of more common and simple seasonings is also selected. The cooking techniques and methods are relatively simple and easy to learn, and the required process is relatively simple. It is a kind of dish that can easily master its cooking techniques. Moreover, as dining occasions often occur between family members and friends, for the sake of the health of close friends, home cooked dishes pay more attention to nutritional combinations, usually including vegetables, meat, eggs, beans and other raw materials, striving for a balanced nutrition. The raw materials required for cooking are also relatively easy to obtain, with low costs, suitable for the economic conditions of ordinary families, and can

be affordable in daily life. And it has a strong "family atmosphere" characteristic, which refers to the fact that the same dish is cooked by different families, and there may be differences in appearance, taste, and some raw material choices. The reason for this situation is due to the traditions, taste preferences, or historical events within different families. Home cooked dishes from different families often represent the exclusive secrets and beautiful memories of this family for generations, which have high emotional value. In terms of regional characteristics, home cooked dishes encompass all regional flavors in Chinese cuisine. Conversely, different regions also have strong regional characteristics in their selection and cooking of home cooked dishes. Nowadays, dishes represented by scrambled eggs with tomatoes (番茄炒蛋), Braised pork belly in brown sauce (红烧肉), and fried potato shreds (炒土豆丝) have become the representatives of Chinese home cooked dishes, which are widely known in China, and gradually spread abroad due to the migration of more and more Chinese people.



Figure 3: scrambled eggs with tomatoes (Source: [www.ecook.cn](http://www.ecook.cn))

## 2.4 Rural dishes

Rural cuisine, as the name suggests, is a type of cuisine that is often cooked and consumed in rural households. The raw materials required for cooking are often locally sourced, such as livestock raised at home, vegetables grown, or locally produced ingredients sold in village markets. Compared to food raw materials in urban areas, these ingredients often do not go through industrial assembly line production and processing. For meat, it is mostly slaughtered and processed locally on the same day or the next day, and automated methods are less used in the processing, mostly handled by local farmers themselves. Vegetables and fruits are harvested from local agricultural orchards. Compared to food that is processed on a large scale and then supplied to urban areas, the ingredients of rural vegetables are more primitive and fresh. In terms of cooking techniques, the

cooking style of rural cuisine is generally more rough compared to home cooked dishes. The "roughness" here is reflected in the way the ingredients are processed, as well as in the personality of rural people. Taking the Northeast region of China as an example, a common cooking method for a rural dish in Northeast China is to wash all the prepared ingredients and perform necessary pretreatment, then throw them together with the seasoning into a large pot unique to rural areas, cover the pot with a lid, start steaming, and wait for a period of time before starting to eat. It is called a "Dazahui"(大杂烩) . In the cooking process of this dish, there is no longer a so-called cooking technique, but rather a relatively simple and rough process of cooking the ingredients before consumption. This cooking habit is related to its living environment. Compared to cities, rural areas are more primitive and natural, and people in rural areas generally participate in physical labor in farmland. The pace of life in rural areas is generally slower than that in cities. Under the influence of various factors, people in rural areas have a relatively simple and direct personality, which directly affects their way of life, which can be reflected in cooking. In addition, there is another significant feature in the selection of ingredients for rural cuisine - seasonality. Due to the habit of people in rural areas to choose local ingredients, the harvest of some vegetables or wild vegetables is influenced by seasons and weather conditions. Different seasons and weather conditions can directly affect the yield and quality of these vegetables and wild vegetables. Therefore, there is also a common saying in rural China called "靠天吃饭" (relying on the weather to eat).



Figure 4:Dipping pickles. (source: [www.xiachufang.com](http://www.xiachufang.com))

## 2.5 Other special types of dishes

Due to the difficulty of cooking and the limitations of cooking conditions, some Chinese folk dishes are usually not made within the family, but their popularity and consumption level are not low. For people who want to enjoy this type of dish, the common practice is to go to restaurants that specialize in providing such dishes, or purchase semi-finished products of such dishes that are relatively

mature in technology and have already achieved large-scale marketization, and then follow the instructions on the product label for simple post-processing and consumption. Beijing's "Hanging Oven Roast Duck" can be a classic example of this type of dish. Simply put, the cooking of this type of roast duck requires a special hanging oven, and the fuel selection in the oven is limited to fruit trees such as jujube or pear wood, because these fruit trees burn smokeless, have a strong base fire, and have a long burning time; In the treatment of ducks, in addition to necessary processes such as slaughter and hair removal, authentic roasted ducks also need to undergo special treatments such as hot water soaking, surface pickling and massage, and bulging into their bodies until they expand. During roasting, continuous rolling of the roasted duck is required, and special techniques are used to adjust its position in the hanging furnace to ensure even heating of the duck. In summary, The cooking techniques and conditions required for cooking this type of dish are not suitable for most Chinese households, as they require culinary personnel to master. However, due to the fact that this type of food is often inherited from history, rich in inheritance, and the taste and price also meet the needs of ordinary people, this type of dish belongs to a well-known and extensive consumer group in Chinese folk culture, in addition to home and rural dishes.



*Figure 5: Hanging roasted duck (source: [www.sohu.com](http://www.sohu.com))*

### **3. Research objectives**

With more and more Chinese people moving overseas nowadays, Chinese food culture is also undergoing international travel and migration, and to some extent, integrating and exchanging with local societies and cultures of other countries. As a result, some overseas Chinese cuisine has become local to some extent, while others, due to different and diverse reasons, maintain their original traditional

flavor and characteristics, and take root in other countries, developing and spreading, becoming foreign food culture that coexists parallel with local food culture. In this context, conducting research on the survival and development of Chinese cuisine overseas has become valuable and of practical significance. Generally speaking, on the one hand, exploring the survival and development of Chinese flavor overseas can serve as a clear case of culinary culture migration, providing reference and experience for potential or ongoing cross regional migration and integration of culinary culture in the future. On the other hand, at the macro cultural level, this study can also to some extent explore and discover stories about the exchange, integration, or collision between different cultures, as well as their practical impacts. Provide case studies for the field of cross-cultural communication theory, in order to promote research on cross-cultural communication in the fields of food and landscape, and provide some factual basis for it.

As described by De Schut et al. (2018), due to imperfect markets and persistent inequalities, we cannot directly view food as a single commodity, but rather as a bridge connecting humans with various parties. Here, the attribute of food culture connects people with society, nature, history, and multiple aspects across time and space, and occupies an important place in interdisciplinary research. Sweden, as a country with good development and prospects in the fields of economy, education, technology, etc., has continuously attracted Chinese communities to study, work, and settle here in recent years. Therefore, Chinese cuisine culture has developed in Sweden along with people's migration. So, what is the current situation of Chinese cuisine culture in today's Swedish society? What challenges is it currently facing? What are the reasons that have led to the existence and challenges of Chinese cuisine culture in Sweden? The above questions will serve as the research questions for this study and will be able to be further investigated. In order to understand how Chinese culture is integrated into Swedish society and explore the reasons behind it. In order to involve Chinese food culture in Sweden's sustainable food future plan: an idealized utopian, a better way for living through a holistic re-integration of life, landscape, and food. (Beck, 2018)

#### **4. Methodology**

This survey study selected several Chinese restaurants located in the Scandinavian region of southern Sweden through communication with the Chinese community in southern Sweden, searching for Chinese cuisine as a keyword on Google Maps, and invited their relevant leaders to participate in interviews for case studies. The selection of restaurants follows the following conditions: they are serving Chinese cuisine (the main food they serve is considered to be in the category of Chinese cuisine, Asian cuisine, fusion cuisine, and other cuisines do not meet the selection criteria), operated by Chinese, and have a considerable reputation among the local

Chinese community. In addition, when selecting restaurants on Google Maps, restaurant evaluations and ratings are included in the selection criteria, with a maximum score of 5 points. The selected restaurants have a rating of 4 or above (satisfactory), to ensure that the restaurants selected for the survey have a stable customer base and a good reputation. In addition, an online questionnaire survey will be conducted on the Chinese community living in Sweden, which is related to dietary habits and cultural content, in order to understand the dietary choices, dietary structures, dietary preferences, and other aspects of Chinese people living in Sweden in their real lives. Based on this, possible associations and influences between their personal dietary styles and culture will be explored. This will explore how Chinese cuisine and its culture have emerged and survived in contemporary Swedish society, as well as the potential development prospects at the level of personal daily diet and Chinese style restaurants, which are two common manifestations and appearances of food. The information and data obtained will be analyzed to explore the current situation of Chinese cuisine culture - Swedish society and culture in cross-cultural exchange and integration achievements and potential challenges, and finally make a summary.

The reason why the interview target is Chinese restaurant operators rather than customers, and the questionnaire is also distributed to the Chinese community, is to ensure that the information source target is people who have lived or lived in Sweden, but also have an understanding of traditional Chinese food culture. The reason why I use Chinese for both the interview and the questionnaire survey is that Chinese can serve as a cultural agent in this situation. People who can communicate fluently in Chinese will inevitably have a better understanding of Chinese culture compared to those who cannot communicate in Chinese. Therefore, the information source population can be summarized as people living in Sweden who are proficient in using Chinese (Mandarin) due to the above reasons. Compared to participants in online surveys, the interviewees are more controllable. Therefore, based on this, the interviewees chose Chinese restaurant operators who have a deeper understanding of Chinese food culture.

The research method used in this study is a hybrid research method that combines quantitative and qualitative research. There are two specific methods for information and data collection, namely semi-structured interviews and online questionnaire surveys.

The interviewees of semi-structured interviews are operators or co operators of local Chinese restaurants in Sweden, and the interview methods include face-to-face interviews and online interviews. The language used in the interview is Chinese. All relevant content presented in the paper is directly translated into English. The setting of interview questions is related to the restaurant overview, service types, past experiences of the restaurant and its operators, and the

interviewee's own dietary structure and habits. The question type setting is relatively open, and the interviewee has a high degree of freedom in the topic. During the interview process, after obtaining the interviewee's consent and authorization, professional recording equipment is used to record information throughout the interview process. Then, the text transcription function carried by the device's system is used to transcribe voice information into text information. After that, a second manual verification is carried out to ensure the accuracy of information transcription by the automatic transcription service function. The main analytical methods used in the analysis process are a combination of statistical analysis, thematic analysis, and content analysis. Extract and analyze the same or similar content that appears frequently, as well as the different answers obtained from the questions asked. During the analysis process, subjective perspectives will be avoided to analyze and summarize information, striving for the authenticity of the original expression and ensuring its credibility. In the relevant content of the paper, there will be no real names of the interviewees in the real world or the real names of the restaurants operated by the interviewees, and they will be labeled as "Interviewee A (B)." C···)”, Restaurant A (B) C...) is used as a substitute for anonymization. Ensure that the information collected during the interview process will only be used for the purpose of this study and not for any other improper purposes. Clearly inform respondents of the scope and purpose of data usage, and avoid using the data for other unauthorized purposes, such as commercial use or analysis unrelated to research. If the content mentioned by the relevant interviewees in the interview is used, the source text will be sent to the relevant interviewees in bilingual Chinese and English after the completion of the relevant part of the content. After obtaining their inspection and confirmation, it will be formally presented in the text. Show respect for their participation and thank the respondents for their participation and contributions. Due to the limited number of respondents and the relatively limited information and data obtained, the analysis process and results presentation will be included in the scope of descriptive statistics, rather than broader inferential statistics. There may be unavoidable limitations in the problem design and interview process, and the analysis results will be presented in an objective description form in the text.

The participants of the questionnaire survey are the Chinese groups who are living in Sweden and have lived in Sweden. The questionnaire contains 17 questions. The design idea of the questionnaire survey is to summarize the contents related to food, Chinese food culture and Swedish local diet and society involved in the daily life of the Chinese groups living in Sweden, and to plan the contents of food related behaviors, and to design questions based on the obtained content framework. The types of questions are all single choice (the 17th question in the questionnaire is based on the single choice, and there is no restriction on the degree of freedom of filling in the blank, and whether to answer the blank

depends on the wishes of the participants). The answer time is unlimited. However, according to the final statistics, the average completion time of the questionnaire was 4 minutes and 58 seconds. The questions related to personal privacy involved in the questionnaire are only age, and the rest are related to life in Sweden and food and food culture research. And will ensure that the data and information collected in the questionnaire will only be used for this study, avoid using the data for other unauthorized purposes, such as commercial purposes or analysis unrelated to the study, and ensure that it will not be used for other improper purposes. The design platform of the questionnaire is 'Tencent questionnaire', a related product of Tencent Holdings Co., Ltd., one of the largest Internet company in mainland China. The questionnaire is distributed online. The distribution carrier is 'Wechat' (the commonly used real-time communication social media software among Chinese groups in the world, also belonging to Tencent Holdings' business products). The questionnaire is sent to five Swedish local mutual aid groups and learning exchange groups, which are mainly composed of Chinese living in Sweden, in order to get positive responses. The total number of people in the five groups is more than 1800 (the number of people is only the arithmetic sum of the number of people shown in the five groups, which is different the group may contain duplicate persons), after one week of distributing the questionnaire, according to the statistical results included in the online service, the access permission to the questionnaire was stopped after confirming that there was no trend in the number of participants in the survey, and the collected data was analyzed and statistically analyzed. As of the end of the questionnaire distribution service, a total of 65 responses have been received, of which 65 are valid.

## **5. Result**

### **5.1 Results from semi-structured interviews.**

#### **5.1.1 When did the restaurant start operating?**

According to feedback from six interviewed Chinese restaurant operators, the longest running restaurant among the six was restaurant F, which opened in 2010, followed by restaurant D, which opened in 2015, restaurant A, which opened in 2017, restaurant B and restaurant C, which opened in 2021, and the latest restaurant E, which opened in 2022.

#### **5.1.2 Why choose to enter the catering industry in Sweden?**

The main reason for choosing to operate a catering business in Sweden is that restaurant operators are unable to find suitable or desirable jobs in Sweden due to various factors. In order to make a living in Sweden, they invest in opening restaurants to create employment opportunities for themselves and their families.



Among the six restaurants, five operators stated that they had never had any experience in the catering industry before, while the operator of Restaurant A was the only one with a background in the culinary industry. After living and working as a chef in Sweden for a period of time, they decided to open their own restaurant. The potential reasons for the other five operators operating restaurants include four believing that the entrepreneurial and operational barriers in the catering industry are relatively low compared to other types of projects, as well as one restaurant B, which was established to promote Chinese culinary culture overseas. In fact, the operator of restaurant B do not believe that they operate a restaurant, but rather prefer to describe themselves as a Chinese fast food nosherly. Due to their unique nature compared to other surveyed restaurants, they only serve lunch, ready to eat and go, with a weekly menu and no support for ordering.

### **5.1.3 What type of food (cultural type) is offered and why?**

At the beginning of its operation, Restaurant A did not offer traditional Chinese cuisine, but rather an "adjusted version" of Chinese cuisine that was more inclined towards the taste of local Swedes. As its operator had worked as a full-time chef in other regions of Sweden for nearly 10 years, based on his observation and experience, he believes that the older group of local Swedes prefer dishes with flavors that are mainly sweet, sour, and salty, which is also one of the main consumer groups of the restaurant. So on the basis of traditional Chinese cuisine, he made significant changes in the three flavors mentioned above. In the subsequent business process, he added a traditional Chinese menu to meet the preferences and needs of different groups of people. The name of Restaurant B is Smaka på Kina (Tasting China), and as such, one of the main purposes for the restaurant operator to open this restaurant is to allow locals to taste traditional Chinese cuisine and promote Chinese culinary culture in Sweden. Therefore, the restaurant operator stated that the type of cuisine they serve has always been traditional Chinese cuisine. No adjustments will be made that lean towards Western or Swedish flavors.

*"If it's westernized, is it still called 'Tasting China'?"*

*The operator of Restaurant B said*

Restaurant C also offers traditional Chinese cuisine, more precisely, the types of food it offers are more inclined towards snacks in Chinese cuisine. At the beginning of its opening, it only provided one kind of food, called Liangpi (a traditional Chinese food originating from Shaanxi, China, which is said to have originated from the Qin Shihuang period and has a history of 2000 years. In the contemporary era, it is a popular snack in northern and western China. Its raw materials are high gluten flour, yeast powder, water, and other condiments. Meat

products such as chicken and beef can be added to it, or it can be eaten as a pure vegetarian dish). Later, Wonton, dumplings, and other foods are gradually added to the menu to enrich choices. The current operator of restaurant D is reported to be the fourth operator of this restaurant, and the menu provided includes both traditional Chinese and Western Chinese cuisine. Restaurant E also offers food that leans towards traditional Chinese flavor, but has made changes in raw materials and preparation processes due to differences in culture and habits. The types of food it offers are not many, similar to Restaurant C. Restaurant F initially offered Asian cuisine restaurants with a preference for Vietnamese and Thai flavors. Later, it was changed to traditional Chinese cuisine and focused on the positioning of home cooked dishes in traditional Chinese cuisine. But it also retains some Vietnamese, Thai, and some other Asian flavors from the original menu.

#### **5.1.4 Any inconvenience or difficulty encountered while preparing dishes?**

The operator of Restaurant A stated that there may be many inconveniences in obtaining ingredients for certain traditional Chinese dishes; The operator of Restaurant B pointed out that in the first half of the year, they prepared over 300 dishes and launched them on a weekly basis. However, after a period of time, the menu of these 300 dishes was reduced to only 70-80 dishes. The reason was that most local Swedes could not accept the ingredients of certain dishes, and certain dietary elements presented in the dishes due to cultural and dietary differences in ingredient processing made it difficult for local Swedes to accept; Similarly, it indicates difficulties in obtaining ingredients and seasonings for certain traditional dishes. The operator of Restaurant C stated that during the customer ordering process, it is necessary to pay extra attention to the special dietary preferences or needs of certain groups of people to ensure that there are no physical or psychological discomfort caused by certain ingredients during and after the customer enjoys the food. For example, in certain dishes containing chili peppers, it is important to inquire about the amount of chili peppers the customer needs, and some customers do not consume coriander. Therefore, when customers order, it is important to emphasize whether coriander is included in the dish and whether it needs to be removed. Also, vegans and vegetarians have different needs for egg or dairy products, and additional attention and confirmation are needed; The participating operators of Restaurant D stated that there are relatively few types of vegetables and seasonings in the local area; The operator of Restaurant E stated that in terms of ingredient selection, the selected ingredients can be purchased all year round, and there will also be food cooked with seasonal ingredients. In this case, advertisements will be released in advance to inform customers, so they did not encounter any difficulties in obtaining the ingredients. However, in the process of food preparation, due to the different needs of different customers, they

need additional inquiry and attention. For example, in the preparation process of Noodles in soup, in the past, Noodles in soup was made by providing customers with clear soup noodles first, and then there was a seasoning area in the restaurant. Customers can choose the type and amount of seasoning according to their own needs. However, because some diners are not familiar with this process or do not know that such a process exists, such diners tend to ignore this process and therefore reflect that the noodles have no taste. When the operator changed the plan to add seasoning to the noodles in an appropriate proportion before supplying them to the diners, some diners said they had mixed the seasoning in this way Noodles are obviously "Not fresh", which can be summarized as "difficult to adjust"; The operator of Restaurant F hopes to have more vegetable varieties to choose from in the future, but also mentioned that compared to the situation 10 years ago, the number of locally available vegetable varieties in Sweden has significantly increased (she has studied abroad in Sweden); She also mentioned that based on her observations, local Swedes seem to have a preference for sweet and salty flavors, but have a poor tolerance for spiciness. Therefore, during the ordering process, it is necessary to remind them of the taste of the dishes they order and whether other special flavor treatments are needed. And in terms of the positioning of certain foods, Chinese and Swedes have different positioning, so it is necessary to remind local Swedish customers or non Chinese customers who order, and inform them that there may be differences in the way certain ingredients are consumed and the positioning of the food in the dishes they order. For example, in China, potatoes themselves are rarely seen as staple foods (staple foods made from potato starch are common), and are often cooked as raw materials in dishes, and then paired with rice, noodles, and other staple foods. In Sweden, potatoes are often positioned as staple foods, and are rarely seen as dishes. Therefore, when some unfamiliar customers order dishes that contain potatoes as raw materials, it will additionally remind that potatoes are not presented in the form of staple food in this dish, And it needs to be consumed together with other staple foods to obtain the better or best taste experience.

#### **5.1.5 Is there a situation where two menus are used?**

Restaurant A has always had it, with one menu featuring traditional Chinese cuisine and the other menu featuring an adjusted version of Chinese cuisine tailored to Western tastes. Its service method is to present two menus at the same time for non Chinese customers to choose from, while in Chinese customers, only traditional Chinese menus are usually provided when ordering, unless they have a need to taste an adjusted version of Chinese food, and another menu will be provided. But this rarely happens.

***“Chinese people choose to dine in Chinese restaurants abroad just to taste authentic Chinese food, isn't it?”***

*The operator of Restaurant A said*

Restaurants B, C, D, and E only offer one menu, but the participating operator of Restaurant D mentioned that if Chinese customers or experienced Chinese food enthusiasts come to visit and want to order Chinese dishes that are not on the menu, these customers can ask the chef to cook them, provided that the chef can cook the dish and the restaurant has the necessary ingredients to meet such needs. The operator of Restaurant F said they have also prepared two menus, one traditional Chinese menu and one Asian flavor menu that leans more towards Vietnamese and Thai flavors. The operator mentioned that the main audience of the latter is older locals, and because the so-called Chinese cuisine they have encountered in their past experiences is actually other Asian flavors popular at that time, such as Vietnam and Thailand, it may have created an inherent impression among this group of people that this type of flavor is the taste of Chinese cuisine, and they are accustomed to enjoying this type of cuisine over time instead of traditional Chinese cuisine.

***"Especially for some of our regular clients who come to eat this dish on a fixed day every week, perhaps their understanding of Chinese cuisine throughout their lives is this dish, and it's difficult for them to change."***

***"The reason is that some Swedes' initial impression of Chinese food was like that, and it was difficult to change it."***

*The operator of Restaurant F said*

She also mentioned that as a business owner, she doesn't really care about the what type of flavor of the dishes on the menu. She only cares about whether this dish can attract more customer traffic and create more revenue for the restaurant.

***"We are preparing two menus, hoping that your preferred flavor can satisfy you at our restaurant."***

***"As a business owner, I don't care about what kind of cuisine it is, I only care about whether this dish can attract customers to me."***

*The operator of Restaurant F said*

#### **5.1.6 How did you deal with or make corresponding adjustments to memorable difficulties or troubles encountered during the operation period?**

The operator of Restaurant A stated that during the early stages of the restaurant's opening, they encountered some difficulties in obtaining and processing business

licenses and related documents due to a lack of understanding of the policies for operating restaurants in Sweden. They also encountered some language and cultural barriers, but over time, they were able to gradually improve their understanding of these situations. They also encountered customers who ate overbearing meals and evaded orders, but all of these were summarized as lack of relevant experience. The longer the operation time, the more experience they had, and the more they would solve such problems. He also mentioned that in terms of alcoholic beverages, the Swedish authorities have extremely strict controls, which is in contrast to China's control in this area. Since opening a restaurant, it will take some time to adapt. The operator of Restaurant B stated that there is not much trouble and difficulty, but one thing that impresses them is the different culinary cultures, lifestyles, and philosophies of the East and West. For example, most Swedes do not eat fat, but fat is an essential ingredient in many traditional Chinese dishes, as the aroma of the oil it contains during cooking can enhance the overall olfactory and sensory experience of the dish. In addition, he was also impressed by the strict food safety controls in Sweden. The operator of Restaurant C believes that they have not yet experienced the so-called unforgettable difficulties, but when they first started operating the restaurant, they were new to the industry and were not familiar with the entire process. It took them a long time to coordinate and learn. Now they have gradually become proficient and have gained recognition from customers, feeling relieved and increasing confidence. The participating operator of Restaurant D stated that they have encountered racial discrimination and unethical demands for exemption during their operation. And they have encountered some disputes among customers who do not accept the taste of restaurant D's dishes or believe that their dishes have a deviation from their ideal state of taste. The operator of Restaurant E stated that the troubles they encountered were mostly related to the problems that the previous owner of the store had with the transfer of the property. The operator of Restaurant F believes that they are impressed by the business environment in Sweden, which is different from China. For example, compared to China, operating a restaurant in Sweden requires stricter requirements and higher standards. The sales of alcoholic beverages can serve as a specific example. When ordering from local customers in Sweden, it is important to be very cautious and provide timely reminders. For example, when a customer orders a dish with bones, the service staff will inform them that the dish contains bones, as well as some dishes cooked as common ingredients in China. However, for ingredients that are not common or difficult for Swedes to accept in Sweden, the service staff need to remind or inform them during the ordering process, such as bullfrogs, pig intestines, pig tripe, etc.

### **5.1.7 Have you had any experience operating or working in the catering industry in China or elsewhere? How do you feel different from operating in Sweden?**

The operator of Restaurant A stated that they used to run a restaurant in China and their family used to do restaurant business. He stated that he chose to learn advanced cooking skills after graduating from junior high school and plans to become a full-time chef in the future. The difference between China and Sweden in this industry is also the reason why he chose to work as a chef in Sweden. As a chef, 16 years ago, the average salary and benefits of Swedish chefs were much higher than those of chefs working in China. With the passage of time and a certain accumulation of experience and economy, it was decided to independently open a restaurant. The operators of restaurants B, C, D, E, and F have all stated that they have no prior experience in the catering industry and that working in the catering industry in Sweden is their first time in life.

### **5.1.8 Are there any relatively popular dishes?**

The operator of Restaurant A stated that the word "Sichuan" in the restaurant name represents the main type of food provided by the restaurant, which is a type of Sichuan cuisine among the eight major Chinese cuisines. Among them, Maoxuewang (Maoxuewang is a characteristic famous dish of Sichuan cuisine and one of the pioneers of Chongqing Jianghu cuisine. It has been included in the "Chongqing Cuisine Cooking Standard System" of the National Standards Committee of China. Maoxuewang is mainly made from duck blood, and the cooking technique is mainly to cook dishes, with a spicy taste. It originated in Chongqing and is popular in the southwest region. It is a famous traditional dish.) and spicy pig feet are particularly popular. The operator of Restaurant B stated that their feeling is not much different, but there are slightly more customers coming to dine on Wednesdays because an additional dish is served every Wednesday. The operator of restaurant C said that all the dishes on the menu are very popular at present (Liangpi, Wonton, vegetarian dumplings). The participating operator of Restaurant D said that Kung Pao chicken was very popular in his restaurant because it was sour, sweet and spicy. It also found that many foreigners are now fond of eating stewed noodles (a traditional Chinese noodle dish originating from Henan Province, China, belonging to Henan cuisine. This dish is usually handmade wide noodles, supplemented by a soup base made from pig bones, beef bones, or sheep bones for several hours, and added with various side dishes such as coriander and scallions, making it one of the three major snacks in Henan), because it feels that a large number of foreigners are becoming more familiar with Chinese cuisine and hope to eat healthily. At the same time, they observe that the oil used for cooking noodles is less than that used for stir frying, and even noodles can be cooked without oil. Therefore, stewed noodles are one of the three major snacks in this restaurant. Becoming

increasingly popular. The operator of restaurant E stated that due to the limited number of dishes on the menu, all dishes are highly popular, similar to restaurant C. The operator of Restaurant F stated that some dishes belonging to the Sichuan cuisine category are very popular in the restaurant, such as boiled fish, boiled beef, etc. These types of dishes will first have an impact on visual and olfactory effects. As the cooking process of these dishes can be briefly described as first boiling the ingredients with a soup base, then adding a large amount of spicy seeds and hot oil. When the hot oil comes into contact with the soup, it will make a sizzling sound and produce a boiling effect, and the contact of spicy seeds with hot oil and hot soup will quickly evaporate the spicy flavor factor contained in it into the surrounding environment. So at the time of serving, customers can experience visual and olfactory impact before they have tasted the dish. Obtain a novel feeling that may not have been experienced before. The operator of the restaurant also said that he would recommend Kung Pao chicken to customers, because this Chinese dish is very famous overseas. Some people may not have eaten it, but they will know that there is such a dish. Therefore, for those who have not tasted this dish but have heard of it, it is undoubtedly a very worthwhile choice to consider.

#### **5.1.9 What are the main customer groups who come to the restaurant for consumption?**

The operator of Restaurant A stated that due to its location not being a big town or tourist destination, there is not much foot traffic. The main promotional method of the restaurant still relies on word-of-mouth from past diners, with a focus on local residents. Most members of Chinese and foreign families come to restaurants for meals, as well as Chinese people who come here to visit relatives and friends. The customer base for Chinese international students is not very large, considering factors such as the relatively far location of the restaurant from the university city and certain economic restrictions for international students. The operator of Restaurant B stated that due to its location in an office building and close to the university, it is mainly composed of local office workers and university students. The operator of Restaurant C also stated that the main customers will be people who work nearby, followed by teachers and students from nearby universities. The operator of Restaurant D also stated that its main customer group is people working nearby and teachers and students from nearby universities. Due to the restaurant's location in the center of the university city and the fact that the city can also be recognized as a tourist city, there will be a certain number of tourists who come here for business trips and sightseeing to dine during specific seasons. The operator of Restaurant E stated that the main customer groups are students and office workers, and the Chinese customer group is not as large as other non-Chinese customer groups. The operator of Restaurant F stated that for locals, the majority of customers are still under the age of 50. It is speculated that due to the

fact that older people may have a weaker ability to accept new things compared to younger people, they may not be able to fully accept the emerging traditional Chinese cuisine. Compared to international students, there are more office workers, and the reasons they believe are similar to those mentioned by the operator of Restaurant A, as the restaurant is located far from the university city and students have relatively poorer economic conditions. In summary, the main customer group is still mainly Swedish office workers, as well as local and nearby Chinese community groups.

#### **5.1.10 What are your daily dietary choices and combinations?**

The operator of Restaurant A said that he cooks most of the time himself, but he also goes out to eat. If he goes out to eat, he will definitely choose a Western restaurant because he cooks Chinese food. To experience different cultures, one can also learn about the advantages of other restaurants and other cuisines. He himself doesn't pay much attention to nutritional matching. In his leisure time, he pays attention to balanced matching, but when he is busy, he just needs to eat enough. The operator of Restaurant B stated that they generally do not consider Western cuisine in their daily dietary choices due to their relatively conservative mindset.

*"Unfortunately, I am relatively conservative because I may be deeply 'poisoned' by Chinese culture and rarely touch Western cuisine."*

*The operator of Restaurant B said*

And he believes that while diet itself is important, how to digest, absorb, break down, and improve the food you consume is even more important.

The operator of Restaurant C stated that their daily dietary choices are mainly Chinese, but they also enjoy Western cuisine. However, due to the limited leisure time in their daily lives and the fact that they operate a restaurant that serves Chinese cuisine, they usually choose what is available in the restaurant and what they eat. When she cooks at home, she can cook both Chinese and Western food and enjoys it very much. Therefore, in summary, the main reason for her daily diet to focus on Chinese food is related to running this restaurant. She also mentioned that her husband pays special attention to dietary health, so her daily cooking in the family pays attention to preserving the original flavor of the food, and the main cooking method is steaming, without adding too much oil, salt, sugar and other raw materials to maximize the preservation of the taste of the food itself, which is also related to the dietary culture of her hometown. The participating operators of Restaurant D stated that their daily dining style is mainly Chinese, but it is relatively simple and emphasizes convenience. Her personal daily dietary habit is to eat enough, and she also said that the chefs and owners of the restaurant usually just eat enough and don't pay too much attention to nutrition and health



planning. She said this is related to her daily schedule, and she doesn't have much time to match her 's own dietary intake. In addition, she herself said that she doesn't seem to value dietary intake very much and thinks she's still young, so she's okay with this condition. The operator of Restaurant E stated that when she works at the restaurant, she's diet is still mainly Chinese, because the restaurant serves Chinese food and the opening time is relatively busy, so she does not have time to prepare additional food. She's daily meal frequency is basically two meals for breakfast and lunch, and she pays great attention to nutrition during breakfast. In summary, it indicates that if she's busy, she do not have time to put effort into she' s diet, but when she have free time, she will still pay attention to her nutritional balance and needs. The operator of restaurant F stated that they may eat Western fast food such as hamburgers and pizza once a week, with Chinese cuisine being the main focus at other times. In terms of dietary habits, when they are particularly busy before, they may feel that it doesn't matter if they are full. However, over time, for example, when they are relatively idle, they will think of eating nutritious meals. Moreover, due to their own restaurant operation, they often match their daily diet based on their own menu. Occasionally, they will try to develop new dishes according to their personal taste, invite family and friends to try them together, and after gaining widespread recognition, add them to the menu for promotion.

## **5.2 The results of the online questionnaire survey**

### **5.2.1 The majority of Chinese participating in the survey are young people.**

Among the 65 valid responses received, from an age distribution perspective, young people aged 18 to 30 accounted for the highest proportion, reaching 69.2%, for a total of 45 people. This age group is a major component of the Swedish Chinese community, and their dietary habits and cultural tendencies may have a significant impact on the entire population. In contrast, the proportion of middle-aged people aged 31 to 45 is relatively small, accounting for 26.2%, totaling 17 people. The proportion of middle-aged and elderly people aged 46 to 60 is even lower, accounting for 4.6%, totaling 3 people. No population aged 60 or above participated in the response to this questionnaire survey.

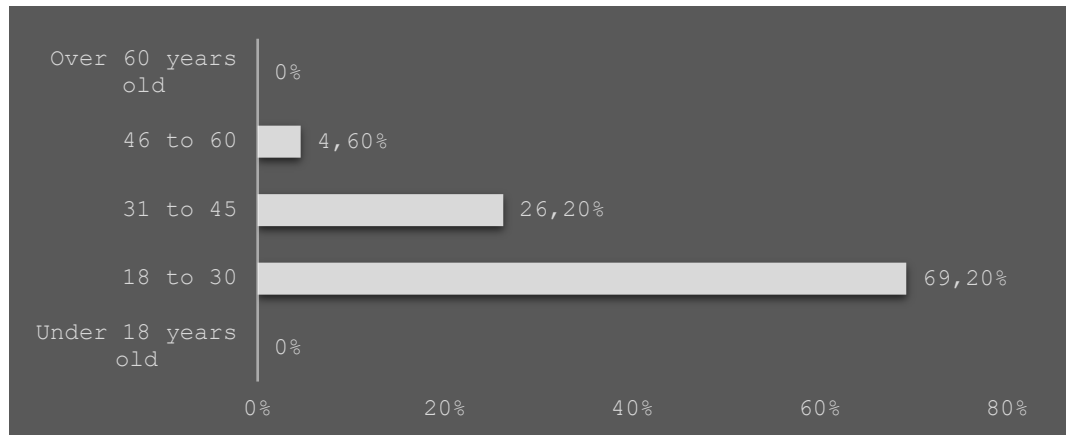


Table 1: Age distribution of questionnaire participants

### 5.2.2 Most of the people who participated in the survey were short-term residents.

Among the 65 valid responses, 75.4% of Chinese people lived in Sweden for 3 years or less, with a total of 49 people. Among them, 13 Chinese people lived for 4 to 10 years, accounting for 20.0%, while only 3 Chinese people lived for more than 10 years, accounting for 4.6%.

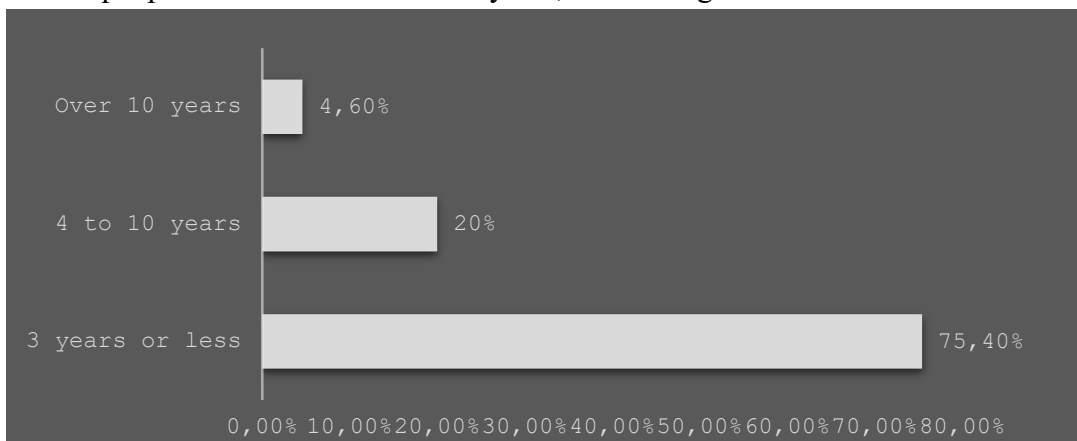


Table 2 :How long did the questionnaire participants live in Sweden

### 5.2.3 The participants in the survey often have three meals per day.

Among the 65 Chinese surveyed in Sweden, 39 people (60%) reported eating three times a day, followed by two times, accounting for 27.7%, while irregular dining accounted for 10.8%, with only one person eating once a day.

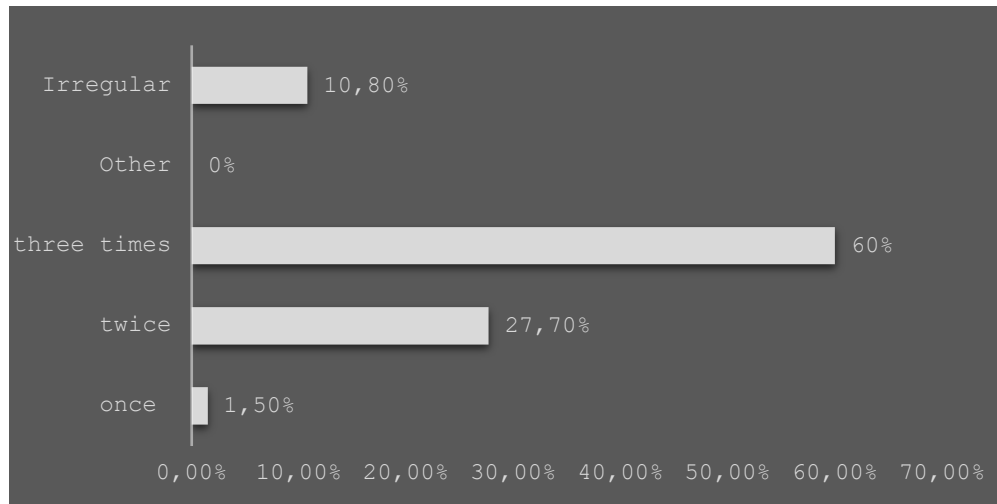


Table 3 :Daily dietary frequency of questionnaire participants

#### 5.2.4 The Chinese population living in Sweden who participated in the survey tend to prefer Chinese cuisine or no fixed dietary preferences.

Out of 65 respondents, 41 (63.1%) indicated that their daily dietary preference is Chinese cuisine, while the remaining 24 (36.9%) indicated no fixed dietary preferences. The selection rate of Western cuisine and other dietary types is 0%, further emphasizing the popularity of Chinese cuisine among Chinese residents in Sweden. This indicates that if the participants in this survey have specific dietary style preferences, then their dietary preference must be Chinese cuisine.

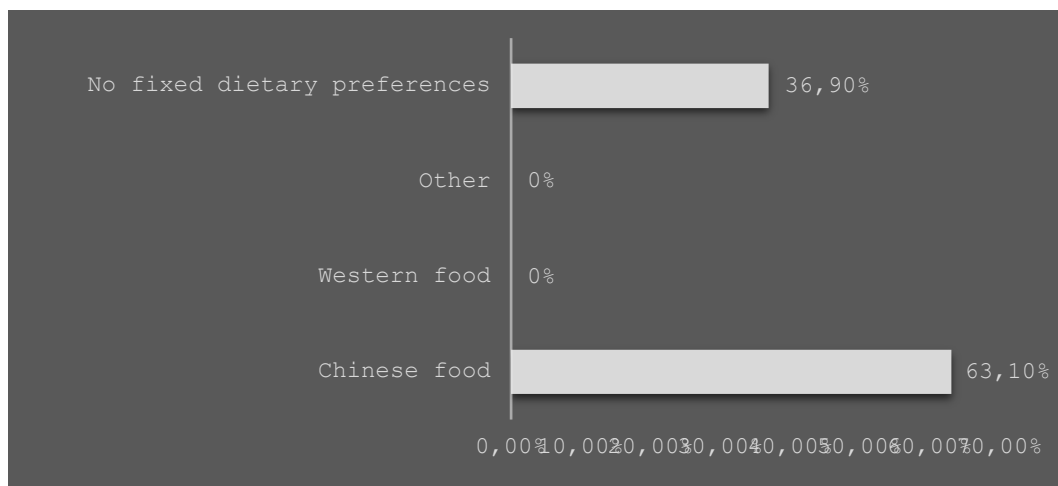


Table 4 :Questionnaire participants' cultural flavor preferences in daily diet

### 5.2.5 The Chinese community living in Sweden who participated in this survey tend to prefer home cooking in their dietary scenarios.

Out of 65 valid questionnaires, 81.5% of respondents stated that their daily diet is cooking at home, which is significantly higher than dining out (13.8%) and other methods (4.6%). The selection rate for takeout delivery is 0%.

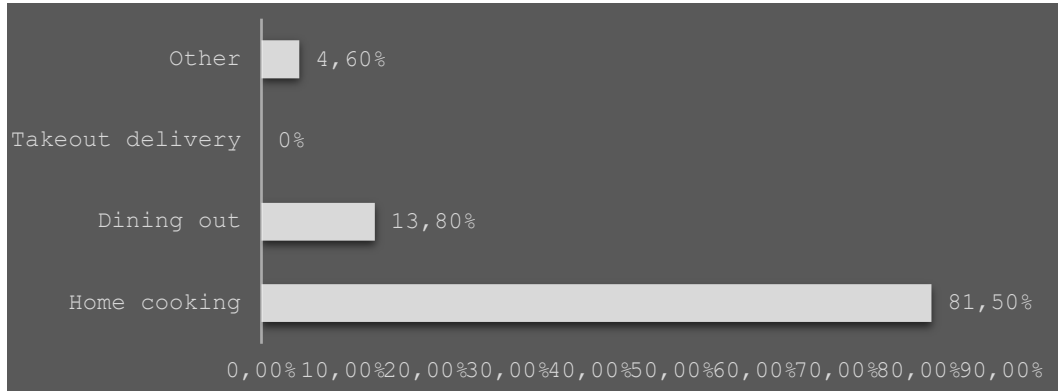


Table 5 :Questionnaire participants' preferences for daily diet acquisition scenarios during their life in Sweden

### 5.2.6 Taste is the primary factor affecting the food choices of the Swedish Chinese population participating in this survey.

In the question of factors affecting food choices in daily diet, according to 65 valid responses collected, 27 people ranked taste as the first factor, far higher than other factors. Even considering other rankings, the comprehensive ranking of dish flavors ranks first, this illustrates the importance of food taste in food selection for the Chinese community residing in Sweden who participated in this survey. The other influencing factors, in descending order of degree of influence, are price, food type (style), nutritional value, type of raw materials, and food appearance.

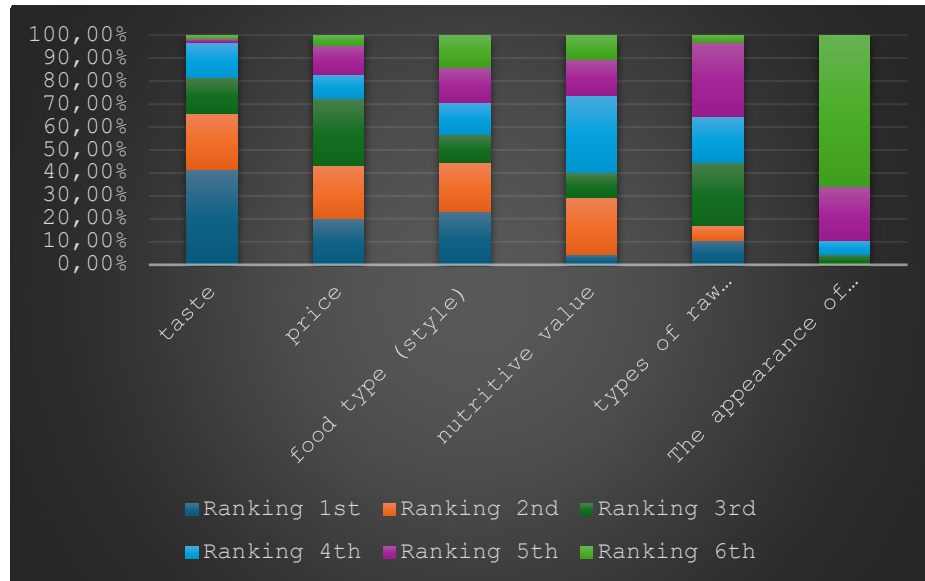


Table 6 :Ranking of factors influencing food choices among questionnaire participants

### 5.2.7 The dietary styles, habits, and preferences of Chinese participants in this survey in Sweden are significantly influenced by their own family's dietary styles and traditions.

The survey results show that 47.7% (31) of the respondents believe that family diet style and tradition have a "greater impact" on their daily diet during their stay in Sweden, and 27.7% (18) believe that they have a "direct impact", accounting for a total of 75.4%. This indicates that the dietary style, habits, and preferences of the majority of the respondents who participated in this survey are influenced by their own family dietary traditions while living in Sweden. 23.1% (15) of the participants said that the impact was not significant, and only 1.5% (1) said that the family had "no impact" on their eating habits.

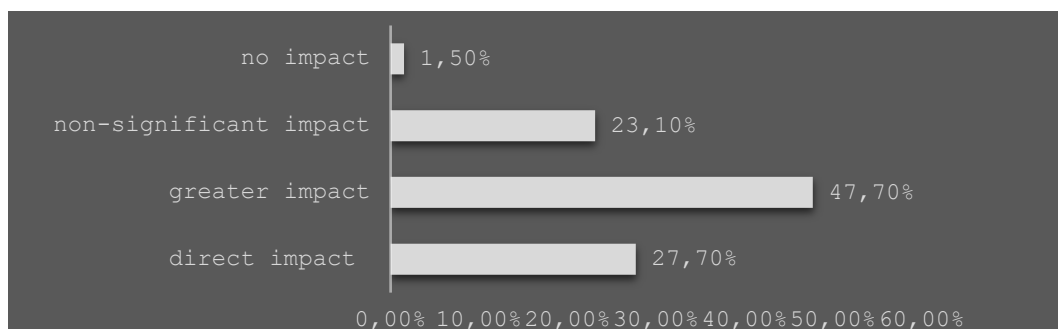


Table 7 :The degree of influence of family on the dietary behavior and habits of questionnaire participants

**5.2.8 Most of the participants in this survey have their dietary styles, preferences, and habits in Sweden influenced by the dietary culture of their hometown and the hometown region they are located in.**

Among the 65 respondents, 41.5% (27) believed that their eating habits were "greatly influenced" by the dietary culture of their hometown, and 27.7% (18) believed that they were "directly affected", accounting for 69.2% (45) in total, far more than the proportion of "little impact" or "no impact", 29.2% (19) and 1.5% (1) respectively. This indicates that most of the participants in this survey have dietary behavior related attributes in Sweden influenced by their own hometown and region.

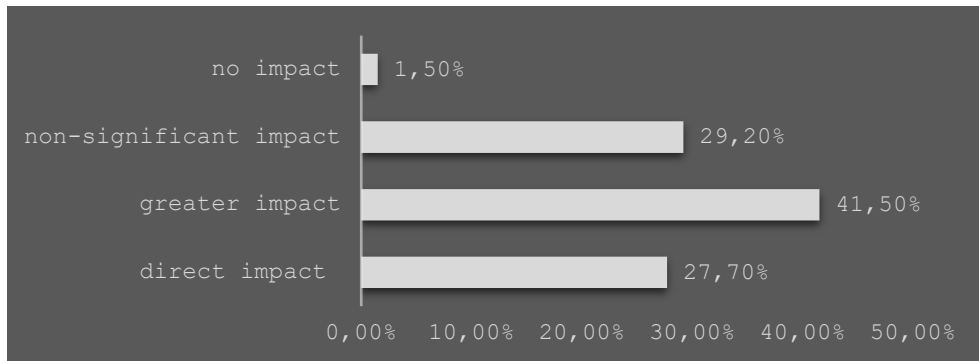


Table 8 :The influence of hometown region on the dietary behavior and habits of questionnaire participants

**5.2.9 Most participants in this survey indicated that during their time living in Sweden, if it coincided with traditional Chinese festivals or celebrations, their dietary behavior related attributes during this period were influenced by the Chinese dietary culture related to the festivals and celebrations.**

Among the 65 respondents, 38.5% (25) said that when they lived in Sweden, their dietary preferences and choices during the celebration of traditional Chinese festivals were directly affected by the relevant Chinese dietary culture; 27.7% (18) said they were greatly affected; Only 4.6% (3) indicated no impact, while 29.2% (19) indicated little impact.

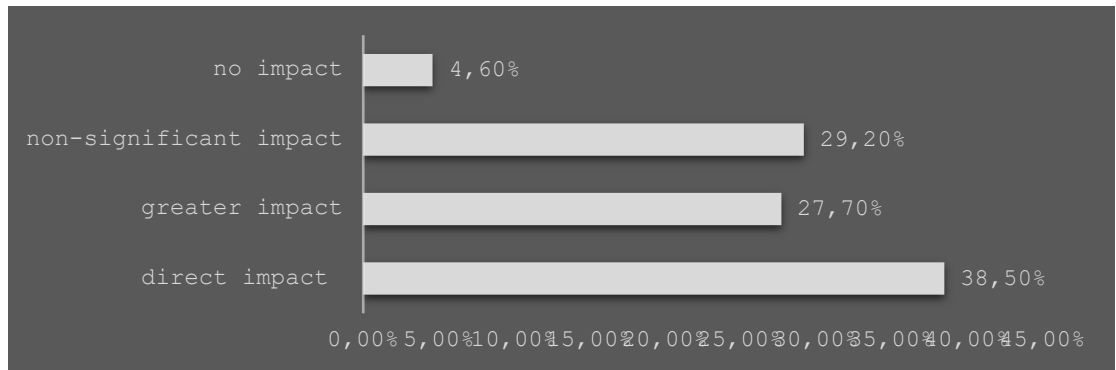


Table 9 :The impact of traditional Chinese festivals and celebrations on the dietary behavior and habits of questionnaire participants

### 5.2.10 Most of the Chinese living in Sweden who participated the survey pay more attention to dietary satisfaction and nutritional balance in their eating habits.

In the survey, 44.6% (29) of the people said that their eating habits were "satisfied with food (type, taste and other factors)", while 36.9% (24) chose "pay attention to nutrition and balance". These two options account for 81.5% in total. In contrast, only 13.8% (9) of the people chose the simple "just eat enough", while 4.6% (3) chose the other. This indicates that the Chinese people living in Sweden who participated in this survey tend to feel satisfied with their daily diet due to the different factors in their food and pay attention to nutritional balance.

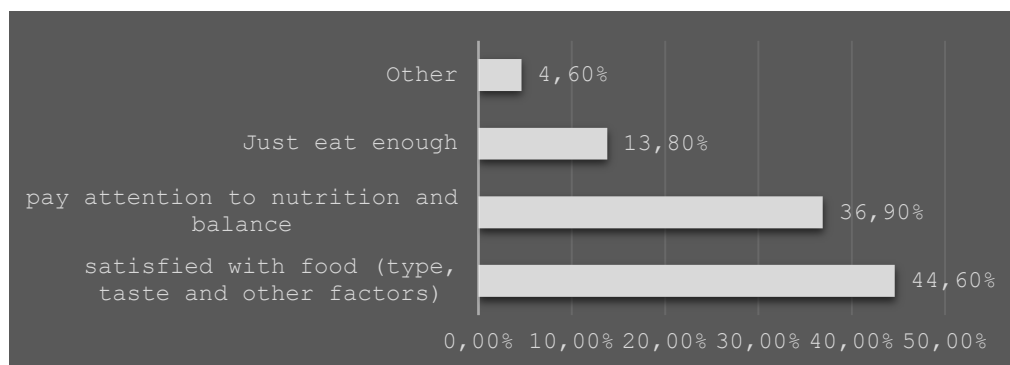


Table 10 :Daily dietary preferences of questionnaire participants

### 5.2.11 The Chinese community in Sweden who participated in the survey preferred to choose restaurants flexibly according to specific events or circumstances when dining out. In addition, the number of Chinese people who preferred to choose Chinese food when dining out in this survey was the second largest.

When dining out, 61.5% (40) of the respondents said that their choices would be affected by different occasions and situations, showing high

flexibility. As a catering option with cultural affinity, 29.2% (19) of respondents preferred Chinese restaurants, much higher than Western restaurants (6.2%, 4 participants) and restaurants with other styles (3.1%, 2 participants).

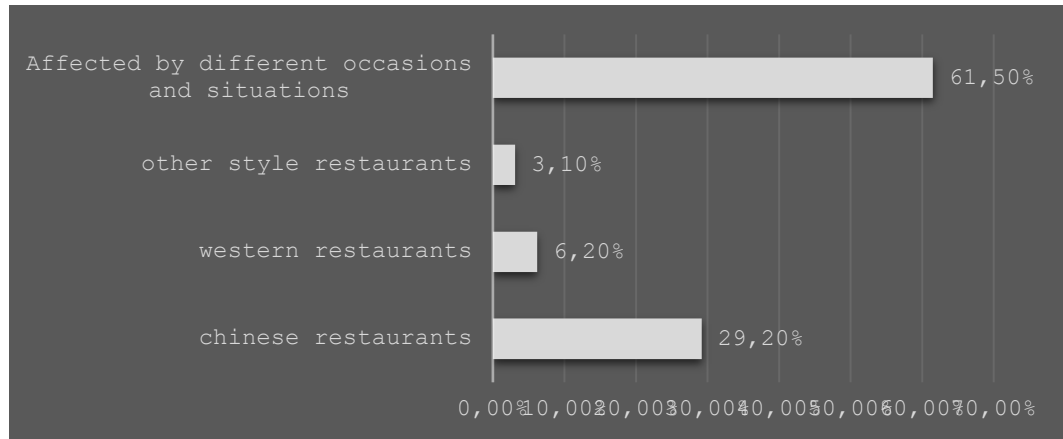


Table 11 :Questionnaire participants' preference for selecting restaurant types when dining out

### 5.2.12 The taste of food is the primary factor in the choice of restaurants for Chinese people living in Sweden who participate in this survey when dining out.

In the ranking of factors influencing the choice of restaurants for dining out, the factor of food taste ranked first with 32 votes, far more than other options, and then the factors influencing the choice of restaurants in turn were: price, reputation and evaluation of restaurants, location convenience of restaurants, service quality, dining environment, type and style of restaurants. This shows that the most Chinese community living in Sweden who participated this survey pay the attention to the taste of food when dining out, and have certain requirements on the price of dishes and the reputation and evaluation of restaurants.



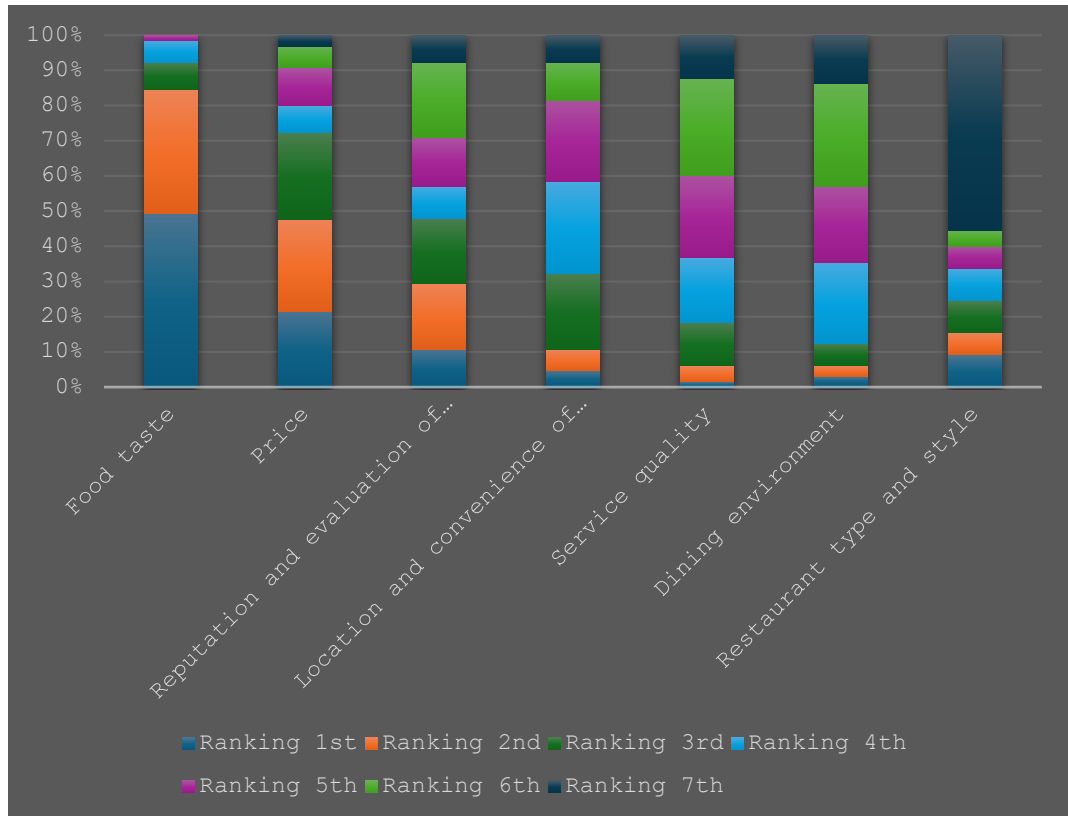


Table 12 :Ranking of factors influencing restaurant choices among questionnaire participants when dining out

### 5.2.13 Most participants believe that the Chinese cuisine offered by Swedish Chinese restaurants differs from traditional Chinese cuisine.

The survey results show that over half of the respondents (55.4%) hold a neutral view, believing that the differences between the food in Swedish Chinese restaurants and traditional Chinese cuisine are average. Meanwhile, a considerable proportion of respondents (20.0%) explicitly stated that they do not agree or strongly disagree (3.1%) with the traditional Chinese cuisine offered by Swedish Chinese restaurants, which is comparable to the proportion of respondents who expressed agreement or strongly agree (21.5%). This indicates that in the eyes of the respondents, the food in Swedish Chinese restaurants has to some extent differentiated from traditional Chinese cuisine.

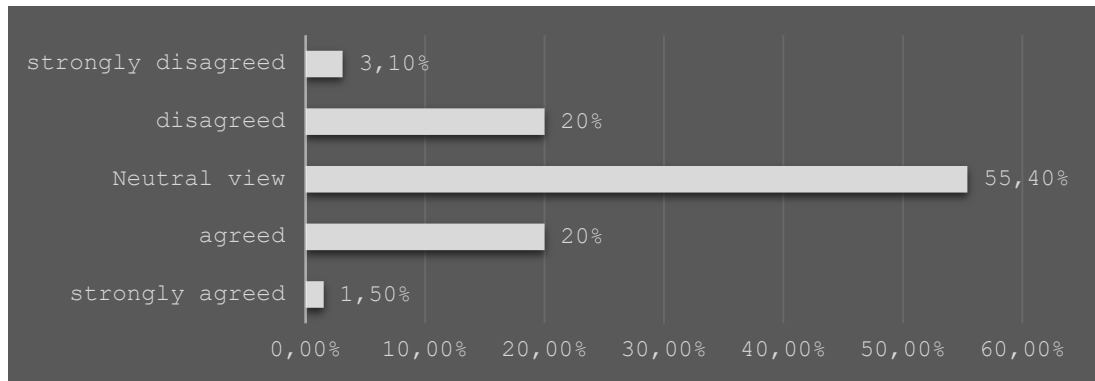


Table 13 Questionnaire participants' opinions on whether the food provided by Swedish Chinese restaurants belongs to traditional Chinese cuisine

#### 5.2.14 Most survey participants believe that the food provided by Swedish Chinese restaurants is more suitable for the local dining environment.

The survey results show that more than half of the respondents (58.5%, 38 participants) believe that the food provided by Chinese restaurants in Sweden is suitable for the local food environment in Sweden, which shows that from the perspective of Chinese living in Sweden who participated this survey, Chinese restaurants have done well in adapting to the Swedish food environment and have been recognized by most people. At the same time, 35.4% (23) of people hold a neutral view, and only a few people (3.1%, 2 participants disagree, 1.5%, 1 participant strongly disagree) think that the food in Swedish Chinese restaurants is not suitable for the Swedish food environment.

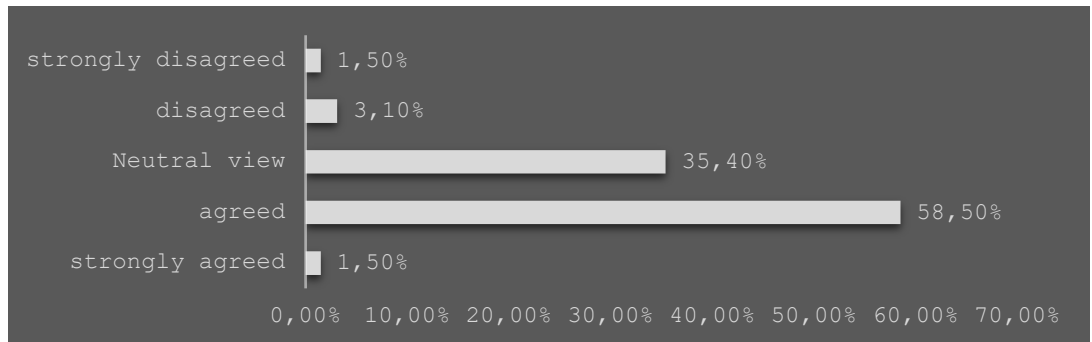


Table 14 :Questionnaire participants' opinions on whether the food provided by Swedish Chinese restaurants is suitable for the local dining environment

#### 5.2.15 Most of the Chinese residents in Sweden who participated in this survey agreed to be able to purchase the necessary ingredients for Chinese cuisine.

Among the 65 respondents, more than half (53.8%, 35 participants) said that they can usually buy all the ingredients and condiments required for making Chinese food, and 4.6% (3) of the participants expressed strong agreement. In total, which is the opinion with the highest proportion. At

the same time, only 15.4% (10) of the people said they did not agree with this point, while no one chose "very disagree". And 26.2% (17) people maintain a neutral perspective on this issue.

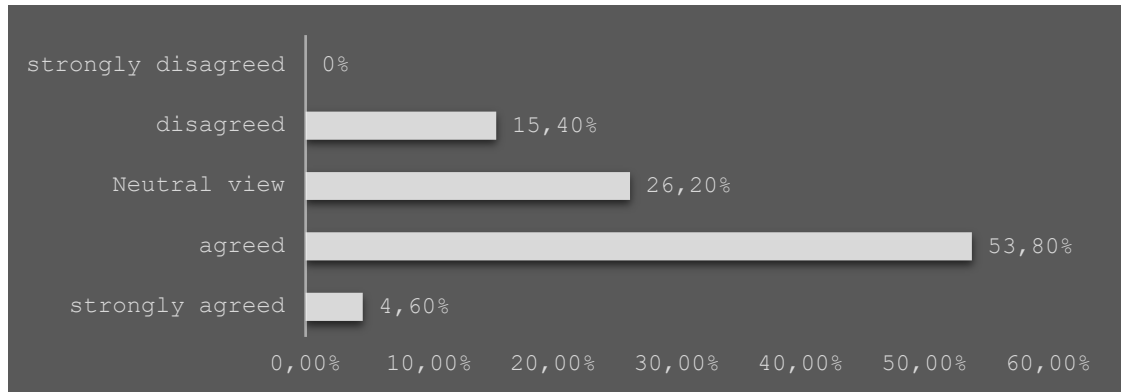


Table 15 :Participants' opinions on whether it is possible to purchase the necessary ingredients for Chinese cuisine in Sweden

### 5.2.16 Most of the Chinese people living in Sweden who participated in this survey said they would change traditional cooking methods when cooking Chinese food at home.

Among the 65 valid respondents, 41.5% (27) said that when they cooked Chinese food in Sweden, they agreed to change the cooking method of traditional Chinese food, and 16.9% (11) agreed very much. These two parts add up to more than half, indicating that the majority of Chinese living in Sweden who participated this survey do have some adjustments compared with traditional Chinese food when they are cooking Chinese food. Neutral views accounted for 24.6% (16), and 16.9% (11) and 0% respectively chose not to agree and strongly disagreed, showing some differences. However, overall, changing traditional Chinese cooking methods in Sweden is the mainstream trend in the daily lives of the participants in this survey.

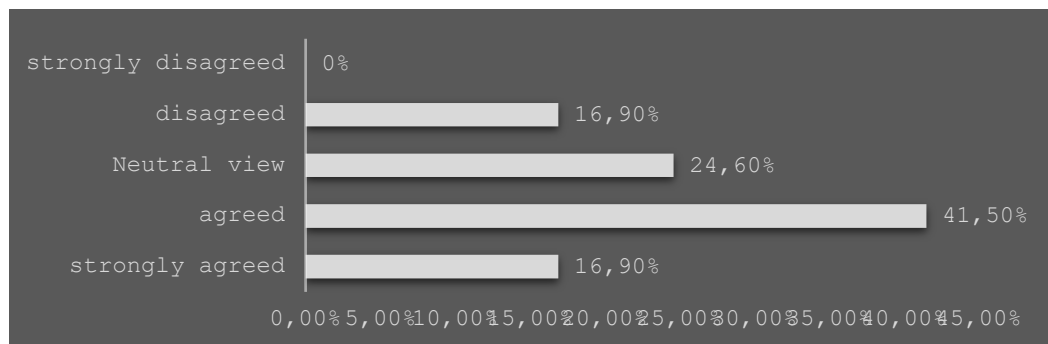


Table 16 :Survey participants' views on whether they have changed traditional Chinese cooking methods in Sweden

### **5.2.17 Most participants in this survey believe that in the future, Swedish Chinese restaurants offering traditional Chinese cuisine will become increasingly popular.**

In 65 valid questionnaires, 64.6% of the respondents (42) believed that Chinese restaurants offering traditional Chinese food would become more and more popular in Sweden in the future. Some of these views are based on a sense of confidence in its own culture and considering regional environmental factors:

***“In terms of taste, the quality far surpasses that of southern, Japanese, and Korean cuisine. The lack of popularization now is entirely due to market and historical factors. If not influenced by politics, in the long run, there will be more. After all, more flavorful foods are also more suitable for cold places.”***

*Opinion of Participant 1*

Some viewpoints are also based on the perspective of the rapid development and deepening globalization in the era of self-media and the internet:

***“With the development of the internet and self-media, people are more eager to experience authentic foreign cuisine and culture.”***

*Opinion of Participant 5*

There are also suspected practitioners from related industries who participated in this survey and gave their opinions from the perspective of market development:

***“Basically, most Chinese restaurants have good occupancy and turnover rates, and there are new people joining when there is a market.”***

*Opinion of Participant 49*

Some viewpoints are based on the increasing cultural output and multicultural integration:

***“There will be a higher interest in Chinese food when the Swedish population looks for new fusion.”***

*Opinion of Participant 62*

However, 35.4% of the respondents (23) disagreed with this view. The reasons given can be summarized as follows: the number of local Chinese in Sweden and the scale of the Chinese community are not large enough, so it is difficult to develop more traditional restaurants:

***“There are not many Chinese people in Sweden, and dishes with strong flavors such as Sichuan cuisine may not be popular.”***

*Opinion of Participant 11*

***“The Chinese population in Sweden is not large and the culinary culture there is diverse, so traditional Chinese cuisine will inevitably become localized there.”***

*Opinion of Participant 31*

***“When the Chinese community is not large enough, improved cuisine that adapts to the taste of foreigners will be more popular.”***

*Opinion of Participant 50*

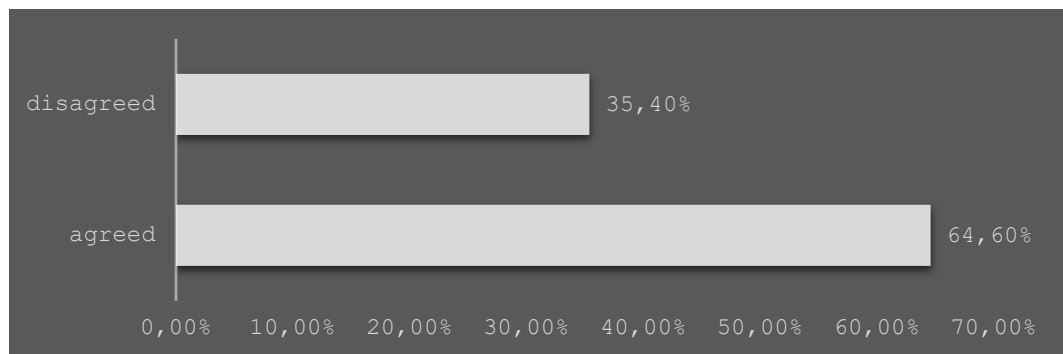
Some people's point of view is that the taste of traditional Chinese food is not suitable for the local taste preferences, and there may be cultural barriers that can affect the popularization and development of traditional Chinese restaurants:

***“There is a significant difference in dietary habits and tastes.”***

*Opinion of Participant 8*

***“The shared eating mode of traditional Chinese food is not consistent with the serving of individual dishes system commonly used in the West.”***

*Opinion of Participant 25*



*Table 17 :The opinions of questionnaire participants on whether authentic Chinese cuisine can become more popular in Sweden in the future*

In summary, the survey results show that the Chinese community living in Sweden who participated in the survey are mainly young people, and most of them are short-term residents. The daily dietary habits of most participants are significantly influenced by Chinese food culture, and they prefer to choose Chinese cuisine and home cooking. Most participants pay attention to taste and nutritional balance in food selection, and tend to flexibly choose restaurants based on specific events or scenarios when dining out. In addition, Chinese restaurants are a secondary choice. And most participants believe that the food provided by Swedish Chinese restaurants differs from traditional Chinese cuisine, but is more suitable for the local dining environment. Most participants can easily purchase the required ingredients when selecting Chinese cuisine, but they may change traditional cooking methods when cooking Chinese cuisine. Most participants believe that Chinese restaurants offering traditional Chinese cuisine will become popular in Sweden. From the perspective of cultural confidence and market development needs, some participants mentioned that the prevalence of self-media and the deepening internationalization

will also promote mutual communication and integration between different cultures, thereby promoting the development of authentic Chinese restaurants in Sweden. There are also relatively few participants who raise opposing views from the perspectives of cultural barriers and the insufficient scale of local Chinese communities.

## **6. Discussion**

If we enlarge and broaden our perspective, we will realize a fact that cannot be ignored, that is, no matter animal derived food or plant derived food, any kind of food cannot be called food if it is separated from the basic framework of the behavior of "diet". In the history of human populations living on this planet, diet has never been absent since the beginning, and it is unlikely to be absent in the future. Because from a physiological point of view, the behavior of diet significantly affects the physiological function of human body, metabolic rate, energy balance and overall health. It is the most direct and effective way for human beings to obtain energy from the outside world. In the field of Social Sciences and Humanities and culture, food also plays different roles in different scenes and interprets different meanings. At the moment when food touches people's lips, teeth and tongue tips, human contact with the outside world and the exchange of information between them have begun in an exquisite way. As Tim Waterman said, the need to introduce food into our body is one of the most basic but complex encounters between us and the world (Tim Waterman, 2018). Food not only gives us energy for daily activities, but also makes the history of human civilization more colorful to varying degrees.

Since ancient times, human migration has never stopped. As the main carrier of culture, the latter naturally travels and migrates between different regions with the former. According to the latest archaeological research, the Chinese civilization has a history of 8000 years. Nowadays, the presence of Chinese and ethnic Chinese is all over the world. Naturally, the Chinese food culture will follow these people around the world to take root, exchange and evolve. According to records, the first known recorded Chinese to arrive in Sweden was Choi afock, who was a translator employed by the Swedish east india company. According to records, the first Chinese restaurant opened in Sweden was kinesiska Muren in Gothenburg in 1959. Although the restaurant was closed in 2016, the above records can prove that the fate and story between Chinese and Chinese culture and Sweden have already begun. So, what is the current situation of Chinese food and culture in Sweden today? According to the survey results targeting Chinese groups living in Sweden, from the perspective of personal daily life, a considerable number of Chinese

people living in Sweden's daily diet structure, preferences, and choices are still significantly affected by the relevant food culture of their native families and home areas, and if their life in Sweden coincides with a Chinese traditional festival, their diet choices and habits during the festival are also deeply affected by the food culture related to the festival, which means some basic and important cultural phenomena.

The first is the cultural inheritance of its origin and the blessing of its own identity. Maintaining the eating habits of native families is an important part of cultural identity. Through daily diet, overseas Chinese can maintain and strengthen their sense of identity and belonging to their own culture. The majority of participants in the questionnaire survey confirmed their preference for Chinese cuisine in their daily lives, which coincides with Terragni's viewpoint that most immigrant families adhere to their habitual foods. And maintaining a diet that reflects their original culture may enable them to overcome discomfort or fear of living in unfamiliar environments through cultural identity and belonging (2014), accelerating the process of overseas Chinese adapting to unfamiliar surroundings. And it may enable them to overcome the discomfort or fear of living in a strange environment through cultural identity and sense of belonging, and accelerate the process of overseas Chinese adapting to the strange surrounding environment. In addition, eating habits are one of the important carriers of cultural heritage. Many traditional customs, festivals and family activities are carried out around eating. The way we engage with food, as in rituals and routines, says something more profoundly about the structure of humanity and cultures as such (Jönsson, 2021). Chinese people are used to eating dumplings at the Spring Festival, moon cakes at the Mid-Autumn Festival, and preparing jujubes, peanuts, longan, lotus seeds for the couple at the Chinese wedding ceremony. All these dietary customs and habits show that food plays an important role in different scenes and occasions in China on the basis of reality. In a foreign country, maintaining these habits will also help to pass on the culture to the next generation, especially for Chinese who decide to form a family with foreigners or pure Chinese families who will settle overseas for a long time in the future, this cultural inheritance is particularly necessary. The answer of the operator of Chinese restaurant A can verify this view. He mentioned that one of the main customer groups of the restaurant is Chinese foreign married families. Not only Chinese people who have been living overseas for a long time or have already moved overseas, but also Chinese consumers who travel overseas have shown that they associate traditional Chinese food with dimensions such as "elaboration", "celebration", and "habit", while European food is associated with dimensions such as "convenience" and "novelty". (Wang, 2016)

Maintaining eating habits from the same cultural background also helps to establish and maintain social relations within the Chinese community. Food can create a lasting sense of belonging and reaffirm the connection with 'home' (Abbots, E, 2016). Common eating habits and cultural background will make it easier for them who are strangers to each other to establish contact and support each other. The formation of a new social circle is natural when people first arrive in a foreign country. In a sense, the social circle of people living in strange environments is related to their individual physical and mental health to a certain extent. Familiar food and eating habits can provide psychological comfort and a sense of security, which can help people cope with possible cultural shock and adaptive pressure in the new environment. Social circles that share a unified cultural background and eating habits will strengthen this adaptability, so as to avoid possible mental health problems caused by unfamiliar environments. In addition, the health-related habits in Chinese food culture will also affect the eating habits of overseas Chinese. As one of the results of the questionnaire shows, most participants still follow the habit of eating three meals a day. No one knows when and where the dietary habits and culture of three meals a day originated, but this habit culture seems to have become deeply ingrained on a universal level in China. How many meals should one eat per day? Even if you ask kindergarten children this question, you can still get the standard answer of "three meals a day". That is breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In fact, the operating mode of modern Chinese society is structured at some levels due to the three meals a day dietary pattern. For example, from students to office workers, the schedule of schools and companies is closely related to the eating time of students and office workers. Arriving at school and work after breakfast, lunch break time at noon, and dinner break time are quite standard rest schedules for Chinese schools and companies. Since in modern China, overtime work has become a norm. For students, due to the special education system and a series of complex reasons, there is a common phenomenon of forced self-study and compulsory tutoring outside of normal teaching arrangements from junior high school to university. Due to these reasons, a considerable number of students and office workers are unable to complete their studies and work around 4 or 5 pm compared to the more common rest time in Western countries, but are still given time for dinner. The operating hours of restaurants and canteens are therefore set, and due to the different dietary requirements of different groups of people during different time periods, the types of food provided by some restaurants and canteens also change within a day due to the time of breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In addition, the results of two questions in the questionnaire survey show that the primary factor affecting the food



choice of Chinese people is taste, whether it is preparing food by themselves or going to restaurants. As for food cooking, China's cooking technology has been developing with the food culture over a long period of time, and has accumulated rich seasoning methods and cooking skills. The inheritance of family eating habits and local cuisines makes people have specific expectations for taste since childhood. In addition, China's regional diversity provides good conditions for the creation of a variety of flavor foods. China is a vast country with huge differences in climate, geographical conditions and living habits, forming eight major cuisines and other local cuisines with unique flavors. People in different regions have obvious regional characteristics in their preference for taste. And the rich geographical conditions lead to the diversity of food materials: the food materials in different regions have their own characteristics and rich types, which makes each region have more and unique choices and combinations in diet, so as to produce their own unique flavor.

As for the purchase of ingredients required for cooking Chinese food, the restaurant level and the individual level seem to give different views. Most restaurant operators interviewed believe that in the current Swedish food market, they are still having difficulties in purchasing some ingredients, such as the lack of varieties of vegetables, and the difficulty of "not being able to buy" or "being able to buy but not too authentic" in the purchase of some condiments, resulting in the strange or "not authentic" taste of some dishes provided by restaurants that need relevant condiments. May reduce customer satisfaction. Therefore, some restaurants have to make adjustments and changes based on the traditional cooking methods of dishes due to the restrictions of food materials. To some extent, this process of adjustment and change can be regarded as the adaptive integration of the national culture - Chinese food culture with local social and market conditions in order to survive in different places or foreign countries. The new taste of the dishes triggered by the adjustment may attract some diners who have not tasted the authentic version of the dish as followers of the adjusted version, triggering a new wave of food, or it may develop in the opposite direction. When the adjusted dishes can not meet the needs and psychological expectations of most diners, the reputation of the traditional dishes in the local area is likely to be damaged. Even if the traditional dishes are no longer "authentic" to some extent, the name of the dishes is still its nickname. At the personal level, most participants believe that they can successfully buy the ingredients required for Chinese food, which may reflect another interesting phenomenon, that is, the two scenes of Chinese cuisine in foreign countries - personal kitchen and restaurant kitchen are presented separately. Most Chinese living in Sweden prefer Chinese food and cook Chinese food in their own kitchen. However, due

to the limitations of cooking skills and conditions that may exist, the requirements for some ingredients in Chinese cuisine at the personal kitchen level are less stringent than those required by Chinese restaurant kitchen. So that consumers think they can buy the ingredients needed for Chinese food in most cases. This also exactly matches the cuisine classification mode of modern Chinese society. Even in Sweden, most of the dishes cooked at home are "homely dishes", and when you want to enjoy the dishes of "non homely dishes", visiting Chinese restaurants is often the ideal choice.

In addition, the results of the questionnaire also show that most participants believe that when they cook Chinese food in Sweden, they have changed the traditional cooking process or skills more or less in the cooking process, which is caused by the limitations in the selection of ingredients just mentioned, but this change is also due to the fact that the Swedish family kitchen is different from the Chinese family kitchen in some conditions. There are many cooking techniques for Chinese food, and one of the most commonly used cooking methods is stir frying. The remarkable feature of stir-frying cooking technique is that under high temperature, after the edible oil contacts with the ingredients, the dishes will sizzle in the hot pot and produce a large amount of smoke under rapid stir frying. In some cases, even if the range hood is operated at its maximum power (the power and efficiency of the range hood in Swedish kitchens may be generally lower than that of the range hood in Chinese families due to the fact that there will be no large amount of smoke during the production of local dishes, etc.), it will inevitably emit some oil smoke. As a necessary infrastructure, smoke alarms in Swedish kitchens restrict the process of stir-frying Chinese dishes and similar cooking skills. As the smoke alarm in the Swedish kitchen is usually connected to the local fire department, triggering the smoke alarm will directly lead to the local fire brigade to solve the possible fire hazards. In contrast, China currently has no mandatory national regulatory requirements for the installation of residential smoke alarms, and as just mentioned, Chinese families' cooking methods are mainly high-temperature cooking such as stir frying, oil frying and frying, which tend to produce a large amount of oil smoke. If a smoke alarm is installed in the kitchen, the alarm may be triggered frequently due to excessive oil smoke. Therefore, many Chinese families may consider it impractical to install smoke alarms. The types of cooking utensils have also changed the cooking methods of some traditional Chinese dishes in Swedish family kitchens to a certain extent. Due to different cooking cultures and methods, the pan is a very common cooking utensils in Sweden, while the cooking of Chinese food does not only use the pan. In fact, the frying pan is one of the most commonly used Chinese

cooking utensils, which is suitable for frying, cooking, stewing, and other cooking methods. The bottom of the frying pan is generally round, because it helps to heat the ingredients evenly. In addition, there are steamers (used for steaming fish, steamed buns, steamed dumplings, etc., which usually include a bottom pot and multiple steaming layers. The bottom pot is used to add water, heat the water to boil to produce high-temperature steam, and steam the food under the continuous steaming of high-temperature steam.), casseroles (a common stew pot, but its production materials and processes have a long history and rich regional characteristics. The main raw materials are clay), and pressure cookers (used for fast stewing and shortening the cooking time, such as stewed meat and bone soup), etc. Some of the above kitchenware can not be purchased in Sweden, while some can be purchased will often affect the desire of cooks to buy due to the relatively high price, making them change their own cooking methods, so as to cook Chinese food that can satisfy themselves and other diners under the condition of high-cost performance.

Correspondingly, Chinese restaurants have also made adjustments in cooking methods, food ingredient preparation steps, and other aspects. However, unlike the reasons for the changes made at the individual level, the reasons for restaurants to make corresponding adjustments and changes are not due to cooking conditions or other limitations, but mostly due to adjustments made to meet the needs of local diners. The surveyed group is the Chinese community, whose main audience after cooking food is themselves and possible nearby social groups. Compared to the audience of the food provided by the restaurant - all people who want to come to this restaurant to enjoy food, the number of audiences for the former is obviously much smaller than that of the latter. Therefore, Chinese restaurants make adjustments to the food they provide, the reasons behind it are therefore more representative and can reflect to a considerable extent the food culture and traditions of local residents and even local ethnic groups. Among the six restaurants that participated in the interview, interviewees from four restaurants said that they noticed or were feedbacked by local diners that many local diners were not willing to accept partially boneless dishes (such as certain chicken and fish dishes), as well as dishes containing fatty meat. In some traditional Chinese dishes, bones and fatty meat are deliberately left in the dishes because in Chinese culture, many people enjoy the moment when the meat separates from the bones while enjoying the dish, which seems to bring a sense of satisfaction, and bones and fatty meat are often used to enhance freshness and flavor in Chinese cuisine recipes. And in Swedish cuisine, It seems that fat and bones are always deliberately removed. The operators have

noticed this, so they have made corresponding adjustments in the preparation of dishes with bones and fat. As for whether this adjustment has changed the tradition of the dishes, different perspectives will lead to different opinions.

It is also an interesting phenomenon that many Chinese restaurants in Sweden offer two menus. In fact, the practice of offering two menus is based on maintaining traditional cultural awareness and integrating with the local dining environment as much as possible to meet the needs of diners from other cultural backgrounds and increase revenue. Providing two menus often leads to a common misconception: differentiated treatment. However, according to the interviewed restaurant operators, customers have complete right to know and choose whenever two menus are offered. Restaurant operators do not provide the menu they think is suitable due to different cultural backgrounds of customers, but often offer both menus together or ask customers in advance which menu they need. But this does not mean that differential treatment has never occurred. It is speculated that with the development of the times and the popularization of related catering industries, as well as the increasing acceptance of new things by the general public, differential treatment is no longer necessary. The act of providing two types of menus can be seen as a catalyst in the process of cultural integration - to some extent, preserving the original culture while catering to local culture and increasing commercial revenue. The presentation of Chinese cuisine and culture requires certain social conditions, including stable material life, high cultural identity, and a good social environment. (Lu, 1995) So, what are the reasons why Chinese cuisine culture exists in such a form in today's Swedish society and faces many challenges? This may be due to the continuous expansion of the local Chinese community compared with the past, the growing national strength and international influence of China, and the increasing ability of local people to accept foreign cultures. Especially with the continuous development of the Internet era and the deepening of globalization, the exchange and integration of Chinese food culture and Swedish society and culture will continue. However, in the process of integrating different cultures, cultural barriers and conflicts will inevitably arise, posing challenges to the development of non-native cultures in different places. However, to a certain extent, this has also given rise to new mixed cultures and increased cultural diversity. Therefore, new types of integrated cultures may emerge and be preserved for a long time, enriching new content for different landscape levels such as social landscape, urban landscape, food landscape, etc. in Sweden.

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Figure 3. Scrambled Egg with Tomato. <https://www.ecook.cn/caipu/257572061>

Figure 4. Steps of northeast dipping Pickled vegetables.

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Figure 5. Intangible Cultural Heritage Roast Duck Techniques.

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# Appendices

## Interview

Interview 1: Interview with Restaurant A on March 17, 2024, in Burlöv.  
Interview 2: Interview with Restaurant B on March 18, 2024, at Lund.  
Interview 3: Interview with Restaurant C on March 27, 2024, at Lund.  
Interview 4: Online Interview with Restaurant D on March 30, 2024.  
Interview 5: Online Interview with Restaurant E on April 14, 2024.  
Interview 6: Interview with Restaurant F on April 16, 2024, at Lund.  
Please refer to section 5.1 of the results in Part 5 for interview questions.

## Questionnaire questions

Question 1: What is your current age?  
Question 2: How long have you been living in Sweden?  
Question 3: How many times do you have meals per day?  
Question 4: What is your preference for the type of food (cultural category) in your daily diet?  
Question 5: What are your daily dietary habits and scenarios?  
Question 6: Ranking of factors affecting your food choices in your daily diet (decreasing from top to bottom)  
Question 7: Have your daily dietary style, habits, and preferences during your time living in Sweden been influenced by your own family's dietary style and traditions?  
Question 8: Have your daily dietary style, habits, and preferences during your time living in Sweden been influenced by the food culture and traditions of your hometown?  
Question 9: During your time living in Sweden, did your dietary preferences and choices during traditional Chinese festivals or other celebrations be influenced by relevant Chinese food culture and traditions?  
Question 10: What are your dietary habits that lean towards?  
(Please ignore possible overlapping scenarios and choose the option that best fits your daily dietary habits)  
Question 11: What type of restaurant style do you often choose when dining out?  
Question 12: When choosing a restaurant for dining out, what is the ranking of your preference factors? (Weakening of influencing factors from top to bottom)  
Question 13: In your opinion, on a general level, do the food offered by Swedish Chinese restaurants belong to traditional Chinese cuisine?

Question 14: In your opinion, are the foods offered by Chinese restaurants in Sweden suitable for the local dining environment in Sweden?

Question 15: When you choose ingredients (seasonings) to prepare for Chinese cuisine, can you usually buy all the ingredients (seasonings) you need?

Question 16: After coming to Sweden, when you cook Chinese food at home, have you changed the traditional way of cooking Chinese food to some extent? (Adaptation adjustments made due to differences in cooking conditions, cooking ingredients, etc.)

Question 17: Do you think Chinese restaurants serving traditional Chinese cuisine will become increasingly common in Sweden in the future? What is the reason?



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