

Summer Time

“ Summer Time is the Right Time for...”

Article by **Shane Burkle** and The XIANEASE team

If you've never been out for BBQ before, here are a few things you need to know:

- the beef and mutton 串 (chuàn; skewer) are rather small, you can safely assume each person can eat 10-15 of them, so order accordingly

- chicken wings usually come with 2 or 3 wings on one skewer

- Sausage usually comes with 4-5 pieces on one skewer

- bread is sold by the single piece (饼子, bǐngzi)

- Payment is as easy as counting the skewers, and bottles on your table and doing a little math

Even if you can't speak or read Chinese, it's no problem, you can use our handy guide to assist you in your BBQ adventure. So take a break from the fast-food and get out and enjoy one of Xi'an's favorite past-times!

烧烤 (shāokǎo)	--	barbecue
牛肉串 (niúròu chuàn)	0.4 - 0.8 元	beef on a stick
羊肉串 (yáng ròu chuàn)	0.4 - 0.8 元	mutton on a stick
鸡翅 (jīchì)	3 - 7 元	chicken wings on a stick
香肠 (xiāngcháng)	2 - 5 元	sausages on a stick
骨肉相连 (gǔròu xiānglián)	0.6 - 2 元	chicken and cartilage on a stick
牛肚 (niúdǔ)	0.4 - 0.8 元	beef tripe (stomach)
油饼 (yóu bǐng)	2 - 4 元	seasoned and oiled bread
茄子 (qiézi)	2 - 4 元	seasoned and oiled eggplant
啤酒 (Pījiǔ)	--	beer
汉斯干啤 (Hàn sī gān pí)	5 元	Hans dry beer
9° (Jiǔ dù)	5 元	9° beer
汉斯果啤 (Hàn sī guǒ pí)	5 元	Pineapple flavored beer
冰峰 (Bīngfēng)	1 - 1.5 元	Ice Peak orange soda

The weather is finally getting nice and you know what that means, time for BBQ! Barbecuing is a favorite American past-time and fortunately for us, the people in Xi'an love it too! Barbecuing in Xi'an is just a bit different than what you might be used to, but after reading this article you'll be eating 烤肉 (Kǎo ròu) in no time!

The first thing you need to know about BBQ in Xi'an is where to find it. This is the easy part because it's practically everywhere! During the spring, summer, and even into fall you'll be able to find people sitting at short tables along the sidewalk or in the street, in every alley and around every corner.

Your waiter or waitress will be happy to keep your table filled

with your choice of barbecued beef, mutton, and chicken wings. Most places have some kind of bread or vegetables available as well, and of course they all serve beer.

At the end of your meal you'll have a large pile of skewers and a collection of beer bottles on your table as a trophy of sorts to your BBQ conquest.

It was a difficult job but we sacrificed ourselves to bring you our top picks for BBQ, this is not a definitive list by any means but it's a good start and represents a balance of location, price, and variety. Anyone who's been in Xi'an more than a few days has their own favorites, so let us know and we'll put it in the next issue.

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The outdoor BBQ shops are typically only open in the evening, beginning around 5 P.M. and closing in the early morning hours. Outdoor BBQs are especially popular on the weekend nights and have a loud, busy and boisterous atmosphere. It's a great eating destination before heading out to the bars or clubs, or a great Saturday night after spending the day in the Xi'an heat.

So you filled up on (Kǎo ròu) and beer, the next morning (or afternoon) you wake up look in

the mirror and ponder at the not getting any slimmer midsection. "But I thought Chinese food was healthy" you utter as the snap on your pants pops open (ahhh that feels both good and bad at the same time), hmmm the Xi'an washing machines must shrink clothes.

After a while the realization hits home and the BBQ nights catch up with you and you want to do something about it. This isn't to say you have to give up BBQ, because let's face it that's not going to happen. What does need to happen is more needs to be coming out then going in (now that's just gross) and the best way to get that done is through a little sweat and exercise. Since Shane and the xianease team gorged themselves on BBQ we thought it was only right to try our hand at a bit of exercise (and we do mean a bit).

There really is nothing like running outside through the park but that's not always an option here in Xi'an so we ventured around to quite a few places and picked our favorites. Like the BBQ locations this isn't a end-all list, only the gyms that we all liked out of the 10 or so we visited, if you have a gym that we overlooked (which is pretty likely considering that we are all allergic to working out) let us know and we'll put it in the next issue.

BBQ and Gyms they are polar opposite yet run in the same vein, both have sweating, both tire you out, and both involve lifting. When it comes right down to it they are two parts of the same puzzle and while it was never our intention to say how folks should live their lives it can't be a bad idea to get out of the house experience the city and get healthy...can it?



1 Location: 南长巷 - Nan Chang Xiang

Known by many as "#1 Chicken Wings" this BBQ place is located a short walk NE of the Bell Tower, or simply across the street and 20m west of the Hantang Inn Youth Hostel. As the name implies, the best food here is definitely the chicken wings. For only 6元 you get 3 of the best wings in Xi'an, that's a pretty good deal. This place can be a little tough to find as it's off the beaten path, but you'll be glad you made the effort once you taste their wings!



2 Location: 天坛西路 - Tian Tan West Rd. (between 长安南路 Chang'an South Rd. and Zhuque Dajie 朱雀大街)

Located on the South side of the Tian Tan West Road across the street (far enough away) from the public restrooms. Claimed by some to have the best wings in Xi'an, but in my experience I'd give them a respectable second place. If you're in the area around XISU or the TV Tower, this BBQ is just a short walk away.



3 Location: 书院门 - Shuyuan Gate Pedestrian Street

A short walk away from the South Gate in a charming and very traditionally designed area of the city, you can enjoy BBQ here without worrying about the noise and craziness of traffic.



4 Location: 东木头市 - Dongmu Toshi

The only large road that intersects South Street on the East side, walk just a few minutes to the East past Wal-Mart and soon you'll find BBQ stands and small tables up and down the road.



5 Location 回民街 - Huiming Jie

The most famous BBQ street in Xi'an that has been written about and photographed for over 20 years. It's an experience just to go there no matter if you have just arrived or have lived in Xi'an for years.

Question or comments about activities around Xi'an contact Patrick at patrick.antony@xianease.com

Mega Fit on South Street 美格菲健身中心



One of the largest chain gyms in Xi'an it has locations around the city. Their South Street location is boasts a great view of the city from the treadmills and a wide variety of equipment and classes available.

地址: 南大街80号外贸国际4F
4F, #80, Wan Mao Guo Ji, South Street.
电话: 029-8727 6688

Well Fit Fitness Club 沃尔菲健身俱乐部



One of the newest chain gyms in Xi'an the Chang an location has everything you would expect in a gym as well as a pool.

地址: 西安市互助路66号
#66, Hu zhu lu, Xi'an
电话: 029-8328 6900

Blue Gym in Gaoxin 蓝积木健身俱乐部



One of the best kept secrets in Xi'an this gym is not only huge but the modern equipment, pool, and sauna top it all off to rival 5 star hotels but at half the price! They only have one location in Xi'an but it's worth the trip to Gaoxin.

地址: 西安市高新三路付18号
18, Gao Xin 3 Road, Xi'an.
电话: 029-8888 8877

Saili Fitness Club 赛力健身俱乐部



A standalone gym up north Saili is HUGE with plenty of open machines, classes, and pool.

地址: 凤城一路中环大厦B座4层
4F, B Building, Zhong huan da sha,
Feng cheng 1 road.
电话: 029-8652 4693

Chaoyue Fitness 超越健身中心



Another chain gym well established in Xi'an Chaoyue has a wide variety of equipment and classes for those looking to lose a few pounds.

地址: 金花南路59号立丰国际购物广场9楼
9F, Li Feng Guo Ji, #59, Jin Hua South Road.
电话: 029-8263 0066

Mega Fit on South Street 美格菲健身中心	Fee: <u>3698</u> RMB per year
Well Fit Fitness Club 沃尔菲健身俱乐部	Fee: <u>3160</u> RMB per year
Blue Gym in Gaoxin 蓝积木健身俱乐部	Fee: <u>3298</u> RMB per year
Saili Fitness Club 赛力健身俱乐部	Fee: <u>1580</u> RMB per year
Chaoyue Fitness 超越健身中心	Fee: <u>1399</u> RMB per year

Sweet and Sour Pork (糖醋里脊)

Article by Stephen Robinson

Read this article and more at ciafl.wordpress.com or contact Stephen at stephen.robinson@xianease.com



Sweet and Sour Pork

250-300g – pork tenderloin*
2 tsp. – toasted white sesame seeds (optional)

For the Batter

225g – wheat flour (all-purpose best)
1 tbsp. – cornstarch
1 egg

1/2 tsp. – salt
1/2 cup+ – water

For the Sauce

1 tbsp. – Rice Vinegar
2 tbsp. – white sugar
1/2 tsp. – Salt
2 tsp. – Powdered Red Chilies (Optional)

140g – Tomato Paste
2 tbsp. – brown sugar

1/2 cup – Water

*you can also substitute other white meats such as chicken or fish

If most foreigners in China had to make of a list of their five most favorite Chinese dishes, Sweet and Sour Pork (tangcu liji) would most certainly be on that list. Why? It is most likely because, out of all the dishes that we may encounter here, it is the one that most tastes like Chinese food in Western countries. And for good reason. The sweet and sour taste is a combination that we are both familiar with and enjoy greatly. But it does beg the question, where exactly does Sweet and Sour Pork come from?

tion would also be wrong. There is a tangcu liji in Guangdong, but it tends to include strange things like green pepper and occasionally pineapple. Not exactly what you would find in Xi'an. No, in actuality, Sweet and Sour Pork most likely originates in Dongbei, or Northeastern China, where it shares similarities with guobaorou, a popular Dongbei dish. This would also make sense as Dongbei is the home to some of China's best vinegar.

Well, for those of you thinking I'm about to say Sweet and Sour Pork is not Chinese, you're wrong. However, sweet and sour pork may mean something different depending on what part of China you are from. Because of the sweet taste, many people assume that it is from Guangdong Province, but that assumption

Wherever Sweet and Sour Pork comes from, we are sure happy that it is here. If you want to order Tangu Liji, it is available in most Chinese restaurants with prices ranging from 18 to 32RMB per plate. Or, if you are so inclined, you can follow the recipe below and make your own.

Directions:

1. Cut pork into strips, (preferably 4cmx1cmx1cm), try to cut them as evenly as possible for even cooking.
2. Combine batter ingredients in a large bowl and mix together thoroughly. Set aside
3. Fill your pan or wok with 2-3 inches of oil and heat on high until oil has reached 375F or when a drop of batter sizzles when placed in the oil.
4. Dip the pork into the batter to cover completely then remove and carefully place into the oil. Repeat until the wok is almost full, but do not overcrowd the pan.
5. Fry for 3-4 minutes or until the outside of strips has turned golden brown. (If you decided you wanted thicker strips cook them a bit longer)
6. Remove the strips to a colander lined with paper towels and repeat steps 4 and 5 until all the pork has been cooked. (*bonus*- you can fry the extra batter in the oil as a topping for your dish)
7. Strain the oil into a large metal bowl/pot and return the wok to the heat. Reduce heat to medium.
8. Mix together the ingredients for the sauce in the wok, stirring until completely integrated.
9. Cook on medium heat for several minutes until sauce thickens. Test sauce on the back of a spoon until desired consistency is achieved. Test and adjust salt/vinegar/sugar to your liking.
10. Either toss the pork strips in the sauce and serve immediately or serve separately and mix at the table. Top with toasted sesame seeds. Serve with rice and other dishes.

西安优选商贸有限公司
Xi'an Youxuan Trading CO.,Ltd



Suntory Whisky

地址: 西安市西华门1号凯爱大厦B座4层
Address: B-4F K.L. Tower, 1 Xihuamen Tel: 87201616

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