

Culinary 441

Chapter 441: The Onion Blast Mutton That Amazed Geng Lishan! Shen Baobao's Cooking Diary!

Geng Lele giggled, "Aren't you two going to become sworn brothers? So, it's perfectly normal for me to accept a gift from my god-grandpa, right?"

Geng Lishan was speechless. The reasoning is sound, but she can't just go accepting someone's computer like that, can she?

He then asked, "How much is this computer?"

"It's around sixty to seventy thousand; the top configuration on the market. Grandpa, it's not that I'm taking something from Brother Xu. It's because he won a three-month exclusive advertising deal with your calligraphy piece. You're noble and don't accept money, but Brother Xu also believes in keeping clear accounts, even with sworn brothers, right? If I don't accept this gift, Brother Xu will feel awkward about your calligraphy. Then, if the advertising doesn't perform well, won't Lin Ji's business ultimately suffer?"

Geng Lele was very clear about the intricacies involved, which is why she hadn't refused when Lin Xu brought the computer over.

After hearing his granddaughter's explanation, Geng Lishan finally understood Lin Xu's painstaking thoughtfulness.

He let out a long sigh and said, "Young Master Lin truly is a gentleman of ancient times!"

「In the kitchen of the West Fourth Ring Villa.」

Shen Jiayue was processing the just-soaked chicken wings under Aunt Liu's guidance.

"Just make a few cuts across; the pattern isn't important... Yueyue, how about I do it for you? Xu isn't here right now anyway, so no one will know."

"No, no, I want to cook it myself!"

Ever since I made those various fruit custards, I feel like my inner good wife and wise mother genes have awakened. Yes, since I'm engaged to Xu Bao now, I must become a qualified wife. I want Xu Bao to come home to steaming hot meals!

Therefore, she decided to learn how to make her favorite cola chicken wings from Aunt Liu.

Once I learn this, Xu Bao will be able to taste my cooking every day!

After all the chicken wings were scored, Aunt Liu said, "Just roughly chop up some Scallion and Ginger. Then, heat up the oil in the pot and fry the chicken wings a bit. When both sides turn golden, add the Scallion and Ginger, and salt. Finally, pour in a bottle of cola. The method is pretty simple."

Hmm... that does sound super easy, Shen Baobao thought.

She clumsily chopped some Scallion and Ginger, then set up a frying pan. She heated the pan first, poured in some cooking oil, swirled it around, and then discarded the excess oil.

Xu Bao always explains the pan-coating step, and I've learned it too! Hehe, I'm truly an intelligent and beautiful chef!

She added fresh oil, placed the chicken wings in the pan, and began to fry them slowly.

Once one side was done, she flipped them under Aunt Liu's guidance and started frying the other side.

After both sides were nicely browned, she added the Scallion and Ginger and sprinkled in a small spoonful of salt.

Just then, the general housekeeper called for Aunt Liu from the kitchen doorway, asking about the cleaning situation in the basement. Aunt Liu turned to Shen Baobao and said, "Just grab a bottle of cola from the fridge and pour it in. I'll be back to teach you how to thicken the sauce."

"Okay, Aunt Liu!"

Shen Baobao opened the kitchen refrigerator, ready to grab a bottle of cola.

Which flavor should I pick?

She glanced at the drinks in the fridge and was immediately drawn to the blue, plum-flavored cola.

Wow, this romantic blue looks so sophisticated! The cola chicken wings made with it will surely be as romantic as my love with Xu Bao. Yes, you're the one!

Shen Baobao happily returned to the stove with the bottle of blue plum-flavored cola, twisted off the cap, and GLUG GLUG GLUG, poured all the cola from the bottle into the pan.

She then covered the pan, set the flame to medium, and started to stew.

Haha, now's the time for Chef Yueyue to show off her skills! After it's done, I absolutely have to take a picture and send it to Yan Bao to let her witness this chef's prowess. Mmm-hmm, I'll show her she can't compare to my figure, and her cooking skills are even worse!

Soon, a sweet fragrance wafted from the pan.

Shen Baobao sniffed. That's the smell!

She really wanted to lift the lid and check, but she was afraid the aroma might escape, making the chicken wings less delicious.

This is my first time cooking, so it has to be absolutely perfect!

Just as she was thinking this, Lin Xu walked into the kitchen with his car keys, asking, "What are you doing here? What's that stewing in the pan?"

"A surprise I've prepared for you!"

A surprise? Lin Xu thought.

He walked over to the stove, reached out, and lifted the pot lid.

Seeing the greenish-blue chicken wings inside, looking as if they had been steeped in deadly poison, he turned to his Baobao and said, "This surprise is very well prepared. Next time, don't bother."

"Why, Xu Bao?"

"If the police saw this, they might think you're trying to murder your dear husband."

Shen Baobao initially thought her Xu Bao was joking, but when she saw the chicken wings in the pan, she was instantly shocked by their color, exclaiming, "AAAAH! How did my specially prepared romantic blue turn out like this?"

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The chicken wings in the pot, a highly toxic version with a poison effect rated at least 300+, terrified Shen Baobao. She had never imagined the ocean-like blue color could turn so ghastly.

"Even if it's blue, don't you think it's also very strange?"

Lin Xu used a slotted spoon to scoop the chicken wings out of the pot, then carried the pot and poured the remaining greenish cola into the sink drain.

He then rinsed the pot with clear water, refilled it with a bowl of water, and poured in half a ladle of Dark Soy Sauce, half a ladle of white sugar, and a small spoonful of salt.

After bringing it to a boil on the stove, he poured the chicken wings from the slotted spoon back into the pot.

Soon, the color of the Dark Soy Sauce suppressed the deadly greenish hue, and the chicken wings regained their rosy appearance.

"Sorry, Xu Bao, I didn't expect this to happen."

Shen Baobao pouted. She had originally wanted to make a loving dinner, but in the end, she still troubled Xu Bao to fix it. But luckily Xu Bao was here. Otherwise, if I'd suddenly seen that deadly color in the pot, I probably would have screamed in fright, right?

Lin Xu wrapped his arms around the girl's waist, kissed her on the cheek, and said, "Leaving the color aside, the taste is actually quite good."

"But... you can't just leave it aside! Thankfully you came back, otherwise I really wouldn't know how to salvage this."

"From now on, let me handle the cooking. The kitchen fumes are too damaging to the skin. You just focus on being pretty, and I'll take care of the household chores."

No, I can't let this girl continue experimenting with her black magic-esque horror cooking anymore. I have to nip this in the bud!

Shen Baobao looked touched. "Thank you, Xu Bao," she said, "I'll behave from now on!"

Though the chicken wings had returned to their normal color, Lin Xu still vividly remembered their earlier greenish, toxic state. He found it somewhat hard to shake off the image.

To avoid affecting his appetite for dinner, he opened the fridge, took out a leg of lamb, and prepared to cook Scallion Exploded Lamb.

While getting the lamb, he saw some freshly bought chilled chicken legs. He took some out and boiled them on another stove, planning to shred the chicken for a Poached Shredded Chicken dish.

Well, I'll try to avoid eating chicken wings tonight, to spare myself the constant reminder of that bizarre color.

By the time Shen Guofu and Han Shuzhen got off work and returned home, the chicken wings were almost ready.

After reducing the sauce on high heat, Lin Xu grabbed a handful of toasted sesame seeds and sprinkled them into the pot. He then took a plate and neatly arranged the chicken wings on it.

He had originally intended to sprinkle some chopped Scallion on it, but then recalled the color of those chicken wings...

Forget it, I'd better skip that step. Lest seeing the green Scallion automatically brings to mind the toxic color.

"Yo, tonight's dishes are quite a feast!"

Shen Guofu's smile became uncontrollably radiant when he saw the freshly prepared chicken wings on the plate, chicken legs boiling in a pot, and his son-in-law cutting lamb.

Happy Old Shen was back online!

Lin Xu said, "Today at the TV station, I recorded a segment on this Scallion Exploded Lamb dish. Thinking our family hadn't tried my version, I decided to make it. As for the chicken legs, I'm going to make Poached Shredded Chicken later."

Hearing about new dishes, Shen Guofu became even happier.

Having a son-in-law living at home is wonderful! Not only do I have a partner for playing billiards, but the quality of dinner has also improved significantly. Finally, we're spared those accursed fat-reducing meals!

After the Scallion Exploded Lamb was ready, Lin Xu shredded the cooled, boiled chicken legs. He then briefly cooked the shredded chicken in a Red Oil and bean paste soup, similar to how boiled meat dishes are prepared, and placed it in a bowl.

Finally, he sprinkled chopped hot peppers on top, and a SIZZLE escaped as he poured hot oil over it.

Time to eat!

"Xiao Xu, when is the show you recorded airing?"

At the dinner table, Han Shuzhen asked Lin Xu. She then picked up a chicken wing from the plate, took a bite, and found it perfectly savory-sweet, with a rich sauce that was incredibly satisfying with rice.

But strangely, their daughter and son-in-law seemed to have no interest in this dish at all; neither of them even tried a bite.

"Friday afternoon at six o'clock," Lin Xu replied, then reached past the chicken wings with his chopsticks and started eating a slice of lamb.

Han Shuzhen asked with some surprise, "Why aren't you two eating the chicken wings? Are they specifically prepared for us?"

Shen Baobao said while eating the Poached Shredded Chicken, "The calories are too high, I don't dare eat them, afraid of getting fat... Mom, please eat more, otherwise it'll be a waste."

Too bad Yan Bao isn't here. Otherwise, I could have coaxed her to eat the chicken wings. After she ate, I could have shown her what they originally looked like... Ha! She definitely would have cried her eyes out.

Chen Yan, who was planning to move her company to the Huixuan Building, didn't know that by not coming to her uncle's house to freeload a meal today, she had actually dodged a bullet.

「The next morning」

Lin Xu drove Dundun to the middle section of Yingchun Street.

As they got out of the car, Dou Wenjing, Shu Yun, Wei Qian, and others were waiting at the storefront.

The interior decoration had officially passed inspection, and today was the handover day for the refurbishment. If no improvements were needed, the grand opening of Lin Ji's Food was officially on countdown.

"Dundun, come let me hold you."

Dressed in professional attire, Shu Yun saw Dundun and immediately picked up the little guy, holding him tight in her arms.

Dundun happily rubbed his head against the beautiful store manager's neck, prompting Shu Yun to hold him even tighter.

Dou Wenjing approached and said, "These past two days, we've invited several trainers who specialize in hotel training to train the new staff. Boss, do you want to take a look later?"

Lin Xu shook his head. "Let's skip that. I'm not quite comfortable with that kind of scene; it always feels like a brainwashing session."

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Dou Wenjing couldn't help but laugh, "Who talks about their own company like that?"

While they were chatting, Zheng Xiaoguang emerged with a group from the Supervisor company. "Mr. Lin, we've just double-checked everything. Here is the engineering acceptance report. Please have a look. If you have any questions, we can answer them on-site."

A representative from the Supervisor company handed over a report.

Lin Xu took it and flipped through it, completely unable to understand its contents. He then handed it to Dou Wenjing beside him and looked up at the newly decorated Lin Ji's Food.

He didn't know exactly how much his father-in-law had spent on the shop, but millions had already been invested in the decoration alone. He wondered when they would break even.

The shop's entrance was beautifully decorated, combining traditional and modern styles. Complemented by Geng Lishan's inscription, it exuded both elegance and the vibrant, welcoming atmosphere essential to the catering industry.

He walked into the shop.

The main entrance led to a large lobby and an oversized service counter. Spacious dining areas with rows of neatly arranged solid wood tables and chairs flanked both sides.

A small, cozy cat house was also installed on the service counter for Dundun to sleep in. Its roof was even fashioned from corrugated cardboard. When he couldn't sleep, the little fellow could enjoy the sensation of lounging on his rooftop.

Upon entering, Dundun leaped from Shu Yun's arms onto the service counter. The cat circled its new little house, even scraping its claws on the corrugated cardboard roof, looking utterly delighted.

Right, starting today, this cat has a proper home too!

Lin Xu toured the first floor. He noted the huge aquarium, a special refrigerated display for an array of cold dishes, and a dedicated section for braised items, all designed to make it easy for customers to select their cold dishes and braised items.

During the renovation, everyone had agreed that placing the braised items section in the second-floor kitchen was unsuitable. Therefore, it was moved to the first floor. This made it more appealing to walk-in customers and also convenient for those ordering takeout.

Lin Xu said to Xu Xinhua, who had accompanied him, "Master Xu, this afternoon, please bring over the broth we froze last month. Warm it up, reconstitute the flavors, and then begin the braising. Prepare a good variety, and you can also do some roasted meats."

"Alright!" Xu Xinhua readily agreed.

He thought back to when he was unceremoniously kicked out. It was only after much pleading and humbling himself that he finally managed to secure a kitchen helper job at Lin Ji. Back then, his main responsibility was preparing dishes like Tiger Skin Chicken Feet all day long. Now, at last, he felt like he'd seen the clouds part to reveal the moon; he finally had a chance to showcase his true skills. Moreover, this was an opportunity to truly shine. The braising department was now independent, and as its head, he could even recruit assistants to help with the braised dishes and roasted meats. For Xu Xinhua, this was more thrilling than any pay raise.

Nearby, Wei Qian gazed at the spacious and bright dining areas flanking the service counter and muttered to himself, "With so many dining seats, it shouldn't be crowded anymore, right?"

He recalled the old Lin Ji's Food, where getting a meal meant enduring a long queue. He was full of anticipation for the new restaurant, especially since the number of seats had multiplied severalfold. If all these seats were filled, imagine how many customers that would be!

"It's hard to say," Zhuang Yizhou chimed in. "Considering its current popularity, many people are eager to come and 'check in' at the restaurant." As a part-time streamer, Zhuang Yizhou was very attuned to online trends. After signing his contract, he changed his streamer profile to "Chef at Lin Ji's Food," and his follower count immediately jumped by over ten thousand. The online popularity of Lin Ji was undeniable.

Everyone had been waiting eagerly for a whole month; business on opening day was bound to be explosive. On social media, under topics related to Lin Ji's Food, many people even said they would take a day off work just to be there and 'check in' on opening day. They hadn't eaten those delicious hand-pulled noodles for a month and were practically dreaming about them.

"This afternoon, let's have the staff come in to familiarize themselves with their responsibilities," Lin Xu instructed Dou Wenjing and Shu Yun methodically. "Every server must be able to operate the small dumbwaiter for food proficiently and be able to describe the taste and characteristics of each dish..."

The two nodded repeatedly, assuring him they would quickly get the staff acquainted with all the restaurant's facilities.

"After we open, the walk-in customers on the first floor will likely want a quick bowl of noodles before heading back to work, so service upstairs must be fast. Master Ji, if you're short-handed, let me know. We can also poach skilled individuals from other restaurants."

Hearing Lin Xu's instructions, Ji Minghui nodded and replied, "I've already recruited several experienced noodle makers. Our restaurant built its reputation on hand-pulled noodles; we absolutely dare not be careless in this regard."

As a professional chef, he was keenly aware of how crucial a restaurant's foundation was. Moreover, Ji Minghui, with his background in pastry, subtly aimed to distinguish his department from those of the chefs specializing in hot dishes. So, when he took over the noodle department, he immediately began recruiting. He even planned to establish hand-pulled noodles as the definitive signature dish of Lin Ji. That way, no matter how exquisite other dishes might be, customers' indelible first impression of Lin Ji would be its delicious hand-pulled noodles. For everyone in the noodle department, this would undoubtedly be a very impressive highlight on their resumes.

After inspecting the first floor, everyone then visited the second and third floors.

The spacious kitchens pleased every chef. Furthermore, a small cold storage unit adjacent to the kitchen alleviated Lin Xu's concerns about ingredient storage. Additionally, the kitchen was equipped with an oversized multifunctional steam cabinet, professional-grade ovens, and various other pieces of specialized equipment.

Even the water supply was differentiated. Filtered tap water was used for washing, while Nongfu Spring bottled water was used for broths, soups, and braising liquids. Dou Wenjing had even discussed the supply arrangement with Nongfu Spring's regional manager.

"Using spring water for boiling noodles and making soup definitely enhances the flavor," Dou Wenjing mused, "but won't the cost be too high?"

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Wei Qian was very satisfied with the company's generous spending. The more generous the management, the more the chefs in the back kitchen could showcase their skills. However, the deliberate purchase of water made him worry about exceeding the budget.

Dou Wenjing said, "I specifically asked the boss and consulted Chef Xie from Fishing Platform, as well as Chef Guo, Chef Qiu, and others. Most of the water used in cooking is actually for cleaning and cooling the stoves. The actual amount of water used for cooking isn't that large, at most a few tons per day. This doesn't account for a high percentage of the total cost."

Once the brine was prepared, they only needed to add a small basinful each day to replenish it. For making soup, two bowls of water at a time were sufficient. As for cooking noodles, a large pot of water was boiled from start to finish for each meal service. The main water consumption in the restaurant, aside from that, was for the Sour Plum Soup. This only used about half a ton of water per day. However, when this soup was sold widely, it could bring in nearly twenty thousand yuan in cash daily.

Considering the price Dou Wenjing negotiated, the water only cost a few hundred yuan. But this few hundred yuan worth of water, when made into Sour Plum Soup, could be sold for nearly twenty thousand yuan in cash.

Calculated this way, the cost of using mountain spring water was indeed not high.

Besides the kitchen, the second floor also featured a sizable booth area and a section for walk-in customers. If customers found the first floor too noisy, they could come to the second floor's dining area. When there were customers with large table bookings, screens could even be put up to create semi-private booths, convenient for guests to discuss matters.

After inspecting the second floor, everyone ascended to the third floor via the solid wood-trimmed staircase.

The third floor housed sixteen private rooms of various sizes. The largest room featured a large round table that could seat thirty people, while even the smallest could accommodate ten. Outside the private rooms, there were sofas and chairs, ensuring that hosts and guests had a place to sit and relax before their meal. Additionally, there was a small service counter specifically responsible for tasks such as delivering dishes, serving tea, and pouring wine for the guests in the private rooms.

After the tour, Lin Xu was very satisfied. He had thought the design drawings were already excellent, but the completed result was even more perfect. Of course, this was also because enough money had been spent. He hadn't cut costs at any stage. He even asked Dou Wenjing to use money to expedite the process; otherwise, the restaurant's renovation wouldn't have been completed so quickly.

After the renovation company finished, they specifically hired a cleaning service to tidy up. This saved the staff from having to do a major clean-up on their first day.

"You've put a lot of thought into this, Wenjing."

During the renovation, Lin Xu had been a hands-off manager. He was busy working at Fishing Platform, getting engaged, and even took his fiancée on a trip back to his hometown. Since he was hands-off, Dou Wenjing, as the general manager, had to shoulder more responsibilities.

Hearing her boss's praise now, Dou Wenjing, dressed in a light gray business suit, felt a warmth in her heart. "This is what I should do."

What employees fear most is putting in painstaking effort only to have the boss react with a dismissive "Is that all?" Hearing Lin Xu's praise now filled Dou Wenjing with even more motivation.

Lin Xu whispered to her, "Once the restaurant is up and running smoothly, I hope to sit down with you, Wenjing, and discuss your compensation again."

A good professional manager could save the boss a lot of trouble, so he needed to find a way to retain her. Moreover, his impulsive investment in Ziqiang Shengjian had, thanks to this capable manager, turned into a hen that laid golden eggs. Both ethically and logically, her compensation deserved an increase.

Dou Wenjing's face lit up with surprise, and she whispered in response, "Then I'll eagerly await Mr. Lin's invitation... Oh, by the way, next month I plan to spin off Ziqiang Shengjian from the company's main operations and register it as a new company. This will make management more efficient."

The location for the second Ziqiang Shengjian branch had already been decided. It was right next to the recreational park, near a middle school with high foot traffic, making it suitable for the shengjian business.

Lin Xu didn't have strong opinions on this. "You can decide what's best, Wenjing. Just don't overwork yourself... When will our cars arrive?"

"This weekend. We'll pick up both cars together."

"Alright, we'll go get the new cars this weekend."

After visiting the new restaurant, Lin Xu left Dundun with Shu Yun and drove himself to Fishing Platform for work. He still hadn't completed his twenty-day assignment at Fishing Platform, so he needed to hurry. The system's method for determining his attendance was very simple: he just had to be there for a few minutes. After that, he was free to do as he pleased, without any delay to his other activities.

Upon arriving at Fishing Platform, Lin Xu noticed that his senior brother, Xie Baomin, seemed different. There was a more frequent smile on his face than before. Occasionally, he would even grin somewhat foolishly. And after finishing a task, he would habitually rub his lower back, looking as if he were lacking strength.

What was going on? He kept rubbing his lower back, looking utterly drained. Did he feel his two 'little characters' weren't 'leveled up' enough, so he was planning to 'level up' an even 'tinier character'?

"When is the new restaurant planning to open?" Xie Baomin asked curiously, seeing his junior brother arrive.

"We start trial operations next week. As for the grand opening, it might be next weekend."

Lin Xu initially didn't want to hold a grand opening ceremony. However, his parents-in-law, his own parents, and even Geng Lishan and Liu Zhengyu, all strongly expressed their disapproval of that idea. They insisted that he hold an opening ceremony no matter what. This would officially announce to their peers that Lin Ji had entered Yanjing's culinary scene. Anyone who wanted to compete could then bring it on.

But Lin Xu suspected these people were only egging him on to hold a ceremony so they could come, give a gift, and enjoy a free meal.

"What's the plan for today, Senior Brother?"

If there's nothing important, I'll head back. Old Mrs. Shen was planning to make 'noodle fish' at home for lunch, and he wanted to try it.

It seemed he wouldn't be able to have that meal after all.

Xie Baomin said, "Remember last time we talked about trading our master's Qingshui Furong for Guo Weidong's roast suckling pig? He's been quite insistent lately, so I've arranged it for today. Later, we'll go to Building Number Ten to do the exchange and cook it. We can also grab a meal there; I've been craving the Claypot Rice from Building Ten for a while now."

Roast suckling pig? Lin Xu was immediately interested. The new restaurant's roasting oven hadn't even been inaugurated yet. If he could learn to make roast suckling pig, he could go back and test the roasting oven's performance.

Unfortunately, he didn't have a Dish Study Card on him right now.

He wondered how much of the skill he'd be able to pick up.

No matter. First, I need to see how roast suckling pig is actually made!

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"Junior Brother, do you know any good places in Beijing for couples to hang out?"

On the way to Building Number Ten, Xie Baomin suddenly posed this question, which surprised Lin Xu somewhat.

A place suitable for couples?

It seems Senior Brother has something going on.

Curious, Lin Xu asked, "Senior Brother, are you planning to take Sister-in-law out?"

Right, I should first find out who he's going with. If it's with Sister-in-law, I'll ask Shen Baobao, or my own sister-in-law Chen Yan, or others for recommendations, so Senior Brother can have a truly romantic time.

If it's with someone else, then when I see Sister-in-law, I'll make sure to prepare a table full of green dishes.

Whether she'll appreciate my painstaking efforts will depend on her understanding.

"Your sister-in-law's summer vacation is ending soon, and school's about to start. She said she wanted me to take her out while the kids are boarding at school... We're an old married couple, and she's still into this stuff. It's so annoying!"

Tsk, tsk, tsk. He says it's annoying, but he's grinning from ear to ear.

Lin Xu recalled when his senior brother first came to help at the shop, the look of utter helplessness on his face when he talked about his wife and children. Now, look at that blissful expression.

Has he figured out the key to a harmonious life?

Pulling out his phone, Lin Xu @mentioned everyone in Lin Ji's Food high-end VIP client group and sent a message:

"My senior brother is planning to spend a day with Sister-in-law in Beijing. Does anyone have any good recommendations?"

Almost immediately after he sent it, Shen Baobao chimed in with a ridiculous suggestion:

"They could go climb Badaling!"

Lin Xu was speechless. The couple is looking for a place to have fun, not to torture themselves. Besides, they're both Yanjing natives; they probably have no interest in Badaling, right?

With that kind of effort, they might as well just drive to Zhangjiakou for a road trip.

His sister-in-law, Chen Yan, was more reliable. "It's hot now. They could find a well-reviewed board game cafe and play a script murder game suitable for couples. Or they could go to Universal Film City, ride some rollercoasters, and relive some childhood joy."

Brother Qiang also offered an idea, "An aquarium would be good too; it's cool inside. Or they could go horseback riding at a horse farm in the suburbs. Both are a lot of fun."

Then, Yue Liyue, Geng Lele, and others all shared their opinions.

Lin Xu couldn't help but sigh. Indeed, single people really do know more about these things.

He relayed everyone's suggestions to his senior brother.

Xie Baomin listened, thought for a moment, and said, "Let's go to the aquarium first. When we got married, I told your sister-in-law I'd take her to the seaside to see dolphins, but we never managed to see any on our trips. This time, I'll fulfill her wish at the aquarium."

Seeing the sheer happiness on his senior brother's face, Lin Xu felt that he should also take Shen Baobao out for some fun.

Yeah, I can't always be thinking about making money; I need to go out and relax too.

「Upon arriving at Building Number Ten.」

Guo Weidong was already waiting.

"Master Lin, when will the new shop open? Let me know, and I'll inform Xinghai to attend the opening ceremony."

"The date hasn't been set yet. I'll let you know once it's decided."

After greeting Lin Xu, Guo Weidong glared at Xie Baomin irritably. "You scoundrel! Stealing tea leaves from me wasn't enough, you even gave them to someone else! I was stunned when Qiu Zhenhua showed up with the tea. How can someone as shameless as you exist in this world?"

He was furious.

But Xie Baomin just grinned cheekily. "Look at you, getting all worked up. Didn't you end up keeping half of that tea anyway? Stop your whining and hurry up with the roast suckling pig. I'm starving."

Guo Weidong was speechless. Damn you, always showing up starving! Do you think this is some kind of soup kitchen?

He led the two into the kitchen, where the chefs were busy preparing ingredients for lunch.

In a room at the far end of the kitchen, two hanging ovens were neatly placed.

In Cantonese cuisine, hanging ovens were frequently used for dishes like roast suckling pig, deep-well roasted goose, or other siu mei.

Lin Xu made a mental note to ask Xu Xinhua later if he needed one. A multifunctional hanging oven like this could be placed in the braising room on the first floor.

It would make preparing siu mei much more convenient for him.

"To make roast suckling pig, you first need to prepare suckling pig salt, suckling pig sauce, and Crispy Skin Water. Master Lin, you've made roasted whole lamb before, right? How about I give instructions while you do the work?"

What a great opportunity!

He knew Guo Weidong intended to offer him some guidance.

He quickly tied on an apron and washed his hands thoroughly. "Then I'll have to thank Chef Guo for his guidance."

Guo Weidong smiled and said, "With your talent, making roast suckling pig shouldn't be difficult for you, even without my guidance."

This remark gave Lin Xu pause.

This is the downside of having established such a reputation.

Everyone now knows I have a great talent for cooking.

I'll have to be much more careful with my words and actions around outsiders from now on.

Otherwise, one simple, common-sense mistake could shatter this image.

"Let's start with the suckling pig salt," Guo Weidong began. "It's a powdered seasoning, not limited to roast suckling pig. Most meats that require pre-marination can be seasoned with it."

It's that versatile?

I absolutely have to learn this properly!

"The ingredients for suckling pig salt include 750 grams of salt, 500 grams of Flavoring, 25 grams of Thirteen Spices, 150 grams of Sand Ginger Powder, 50 grams of Star Anise Powder, and 50 grams of Five-Spice Powder. These powders primarily remove any gamey taste and enhance aroma. They also provide a base flavor for the suckling pig meat, making it even more delicious."

As he spoke, Guo Weidong took the seasonings from the nearby rack one by one, tossing a small basin to Lin Xu for mixing the powders.

"Chef Guo, what is 'Flavoring'?"

Xie Baomin, standing nearby, chimed in, "It's monosodium glutamate ground into powder. MSG is a very common flavor enhancer in restaurants, but young people these days are really against it. So, when you're filming your videos, don't mention it, or you'll have people arguing with you."

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Lin Xu immediately rejoiced. It seemed his senior brother had been watching a lot of cooking videos online lately. He picked up the kitchen scale to measure the seasonings and poured them into a small basin. After weighing everything, he began to mix the dry ingredients. "So many ingredients, is it for one suckling pig?"

Guo Weidong shook his head. "One suckling pig only needs about three hundred grams; these ingredients are for five pigs."

Wow! No wonder it's 750 grams of salt; it's not just for one pig.

After mixing the dry ingredients evenly, Lin Xu started on the sauce under Guo Weidong's guidance. "oyster sauce, 250 grams; seafood sauce, 500 grams; hoisin sauce, 500 grams; Sesame Sauce, 125 grams; Peanut Butter, 250 grams; minced garlic, 200 grams; Aged Tangerine Peel paste, 100 grams... This is the amount for ten suckling pigs."

Upon hearing "Aged Tangerine Peel paste," Xie Baomin, who was waiting to eat, couldn't help but praise, "It looks like Weidong is really bringing out his top techniques this time, not holding anything back."

Aged Tangerine Peel is known as the secret weapon of master chefs in Cantonese cuisine. Many dishes require it to enhance the flavor, yet many Cantonese chefs don't mention this step at all when teaching how to cook the dishes. As the executive chef of Fishing Platform, Xie Baomin was very clear about this. Therefore, upon hearing about the 100 grams of Aged Tangerine Peel paste, he immediately gave a thumbs-up, marveling at Guo Weidong's generous teaching approach.

"When we make Qingshui Furong later, I hope you won't hold back either."

"Don't worry, I definitely won't. With our relationship, I'd scam anyone but you."

Xie Baomin would have been better off not saying that. As soon as he did, Guo Weidong immediately turned to Lin Xu and said, "Master Lin, why don't you make the Qingshui Furong later? I don't really trust your senior brother."

"Okay, Chef Guo."

Lin Xu took the cleaver and chopped the garlic while listening to the two middle-aged men bicker. After chopping the garlic, he took the Aged Tangerine Peel. Just as he started cutting, Guo Weidong reminded him, "Aged Tangerine Peel is useful, but it shouldn't be overused. You must use this aged New Hui

Chenpi with plenty of years on it. If you just randomly peel a couple of oranges and use the peel, it will backfire."

Lin Xu asked, "How old is considered good?"

"Anything over ten years is fine. Aged Tangerine Peel of this age virtually melts when heated, leaving no residue at all, so you don't have to worry about biting into it."

After cutting the Aged Tangerine Peel, Lin Xu put all the ingredients into the basin and mixed them evenly with a small spoon. Next up was the Crispy Skin Water. This was also one of the most important ingredients for roasting suckling pigs, as its quality directly affected the final appearance of the dish.

"Dark Zhejiang vinegar, 200 grams; White Vinegar, 1,000 grams; Liquor, 200 grams; Rose Wine, 200 grams; Maltose, 100 grams; one lemon; baking soda, 30 grams."

When roasting a whole lamb, Crispy Skin Water is also used, but for that, Dark Zhejiang vinegar alone is sufficient; it is the absolute centerpiece of Crispy Skin Water. To Lin Xu's surprise, in the preparation for roast suckling pig, Dark Zhejiang vinegar became merely one of the ingredients.

Lin Xu asked curiously, wanting to know the reason.

Xie Baomin explained, "Roasting a whole lamb involves peeling, so the coloration is slow, which is why more Dark Zhejiang vinegar is needed. But suckling pig is roasted with the skin, coloring quickly. If there's too much Dark Zhejiang vinegar, the color of the roasted pig will be too dark, so we use White Vinegar to balance it."

Guo Weidong added, "Not only should the amount of Dark Zhejiang vinegar be limited, but the quantity of Maltose also can't be too much; otherwise, the Pork Skin will blacken, and the presentation will be poor."

This was all advice born out of experience! Lin Xu took mental notes.

He planned to get a few small suckling pigs when he got back and try roasting them with fruitwood charcoal in the yard of the West Fourth Ring Villa to see if he could replicate the method. If it worked out, he would be able to improve their meals again tonight.

Hmm, after the new store opened, he wouldn't be able to live in the villa anymore. So, he had to take advantage of these less busy days to improve life for his family as much as possible. Otherwise, his father-in-law, who was dieting with his diet-addicted mother-in-law, might turn from the happy Old Shen into the depressed Old Shen because of the diet meals.

Once the Crispy Skin Water was ready, all the seasonings needed for roasting the suckling pig were prepared. Guo Weidong brought out a cleanly slaughtered suckling pig from the cold storage and placed it on a tray on the workbench, then said to Lin Xu, "Since you know how to roast a whole lamb, you can do the modification cuts for the suckling pig too."

Lin Xu didn't refuse; he wanted to see the differences between the modification cuts for a suckling pig and those for a whole roasted lamb.

"First, split the pig's head from the chin and dig out the brains. This prevents them from leaking everywhere during roasting, which would ruin the suckling pig's presentation."

Upon hearing this, Lin Xu immediately placed the pig on the tray with its belly facing up. Grabbing the cleaver, he chopped open the suckling pig's chin along the incision in the abdominal cavity. He possessed the Technique for butchering a whole pig, so he was precise with his cuts, careful not to damage the skin—after all, a suckling pig was mostly about its crispy skin.

After cracking open the skull, he carefully scooped out the brain with a spoon. The brain of a suckling pig is very tender. With an Egg, sprinkled with chopped green onions and steamed, it becomes extremely delicious simply drizzled with Light Soy Sauce. Unfortunately, he couldn't attend to that now.

Lin Xu grabbed the cleaver and chopped down along the suckling pig's cervical vertebrae, all the way to the coccyx. Just like with roasting a whole lamb, the suckling pig's spine needed to be severed from end to end. This served not only to cut the nerves and prevent twitching during roasting but, more importantly, it allowed the meat to cook quickly and enabled the suckling pig to be arranged in a more appealing posture.

Hmm, unlike a whole lamb that lies flat on the roasting rack, a suckling pig needed its skin to be fully stretched and puffed up, ideally into a plump, cylindrical shape.

Chapter 447: Sounds good? If it sounds good, it tastes good! Authentic crispy-skin suckling pig recipe!

It was a shape very difficult to achieve if the spine wasn't severed.

Once Lin Xu had cut through the spine, Guo Weidong picked up the butchered section, examined it, and gave Lin Xu a thumbs-up. "Master Lin, your Knife Skills are truly impeccable! You chopped it perfectly without damaging the Pork Skin at all."

Cooking is a skill where mastering one aspect opens the door to many others. With the Technique of roasting whole lamb as a foundation, coupled with his mastery of the Basic Cooking Techniques for whole pig butchery, Lin Xu performed this step both quickly and skillfully.

"Next, separate the pig's legs and remove the shoulder bones," Guo Weidong instructed. The shoulder bones would hinder the suckling pig's shaping, so they had to be removed. A few ribs near the neck also needed to be taken out to facilitate roasting.

Following Guo Weidong's guidance, Lin Xu carefully teased the meat away from the leg bones and then scored the ribs one by one, making them easier to roast and marinate.

Then, he methodically scored the thicker parts of the meat. This not only allowed the suckling pig to marinate more thoroughly but also helped excess fat and moisture escape during roasting, making the pork tastier.

After completing this, he evenly sprinkled a layer of suckling pig salt inside the pig's abdominal cavity. After sprinkling, he massaged it thoroughly by hand to ensure the salt penetrated deeply into the meat. Next, he added suckling pig sauce and spread it evenly, allowing the sauce to completely seal the dry ingredients within the meat, resulting in a more flavorful marinade. He applied it both inside and out, then placed the pig on a tray to begin marinating.

"Chef Guo, how long should this marinate for?" Lin Xu asked.

"Half an hour is enough. Once it's thoroughly marinated, I'll teach you how to skewer it and scald the skin—essential steps in preparing roasted suckling pig," Weidong replied. After speaking, Guo Weidong went to inspect other areas of the kitchen.

Unlike the sparsely visited Building 2, Building 10 had many dining reservations every day. Thus, Guo Weidong couldn't afford to be as hands-off as Xie Baomin; he had to inspect everywhere to prevent any culinary mishaps.

It seems Chef Guo really wants to teach me, Lin Xu thought as he watched Weidong's retreating figure. He then glanced at Xie Baomin, who was engrossed in his phone. Wasn't it Senior Brother who proposed the exchange? Why does he seem completely indifferent now? Is it because he feels he already knows everything, or is he too caught up in a rekindled romance with his wife to care about learning?

Lin Xu didn't dare ask. He just gave his Senior Brother a few disdainful glances and then went to the cold storage to fetch another suckling pig for more practice with the cuts. With ready ingredients and an expert available for questions at any time, this was an excellent learning opportunity, one not to be missed even without a Cooking Learning Card.

「Half an hour passed in the blink of an eye.」

When Guo Weidong returned and saw that Lin Xu had marinated another pig, he couldn't help but nod and say, "With such high talent and willingness to work hard, how could he not succeed?"

He brought out a long fork and a hook fork. The long fork was for manually rotating the suckling pig during roasting, while the hook fork was for hanging it in the roasting oven.

First, practice with the long fork. Weidong started by inserting the fork at the pig's tail end. He threaded it through the hind legs, then the ribs, and finally to the front leg shanks. Once in place, Weidong slid a long, rectangular piece of wood vertically down the suckling pig's spine. Then, he took two more wooden bars and inserted them behind the front legs and in front of the hind legs. These wooden bars latched onto the steel fork, perfectly supporting the rectangular piece of wood. The bones pressed against the steel fork. The fork, in turn, pressed against the wooden bars, and the bars supported the rectangular piece of wood. This propped up the suckling pig's spine, causing the body, which had been lying flat on the tray, to bulge out robustly.

"That's how you brace it with the long fork. For the short fork, the orientation is reversed because when you hang it, the pig's head must be facing up; otherwise, the rendered fat will ruin the suckling pig's appearance," Weidong explained. Since Building 10 lacked a suitable open-fire stove for the long fork, Guo Weidong dismantled it and switched to the hook fork.

Lin Xu, holding the other marinated suckling pig, first tried the long fork and then the shorter hook fork, getting the hang of the process.

Next came scalding the skin. This step was to make the Pork Skin stretch and puff up, and to wash off any surface marinade residue that could char and spoil its appearance during roasting.

He boiled a pot of water, let it cool to about 70-80 degrees Celsius, and then used a ladle to pour the water over the Pork Skin until it firmed up. After drenching it thoroughly, he wiped the surface dry and hung it in a ventilated area to air for a while. Once the surface was completely dry, he began applying Crispy Skin Water.

"When applying Crispy Skin Water, the Pork Skin must be kept dry; otherwise, the color will be uneven and affect the overall appearance," Guo Weidong instructed.

Lin Xu, emulating Guo Weidong, scalded the pig he had marinated. He then hung it in a well-ventilated place to dry and used a brush to evenly coat the Pork Skin with a layer of Crispy Skin Water. For the roasted suckling pig to look its best, it needed to be brushed three times. After three applications, it was hung in a well-ventilated place to dry completely before it could be placed into the roasting oven.

This automatic oven with adjustable temperatures was quite convenient for roasting suckling pigs. Once the temperature was set, no further attention was needed. The hanging rack inside even featured an automatic rotation function, eliminating the need for manual turning.

However, there was no such appliance in the villa, prompting Lin Xu to ask Guo Weidong curiously, "Chef Guo, if I were to use fruitwood charcoal to roast it in the yard, what would be the procedure?"

"You'd need to keep turning the spit constantly. Also, the suckling pig must be kept at least half a meter away from the charcoal. Definitely don't get too close; suckling pigs are delicate and can char easily."

As they were discussing this, Xie Baomin, having finally finished flirting with his wife, chimed in, "Roasting with charcoal requires patience. For the first ten minutes, there's basically no visible change, but you still need to keep turning it. No slacking off, or the suckling pig won't cook evenly."

Guo Weidong asked, somewhat surprised, "You know how to roast a suckling pig? Then why did you propose an exchange with me earlier?"

Xie Baomin smiled and said, "Of course, I do. This thing isn't difficult at all. It's my Junior Brother who doesn't know how, so I wanted you to teach him."

"Then why didn't you teach him yourself?"

"Well, you were idle anyway, so I thought I'd find something for you to do. The internet says that being idle can lead to problems; I did it for your own good."

Guo Weidong was speechless. Believe it or not, I'll run you through with this steel fork! This is the busiest time at Building 10, and you dog, you're just making more trouble!

"Chef Guo, please calm down. Don't stoop to my Senior Brother's level," Lin Xu said quickly, stepping between them, worried that Guo Weidong might actually grab a steel fork and stab his Senior Brother in the stomach. "Later, I'll make Qingshui Furong for you, from start to finish. I guarantee you'll learn it."

「Forty minutes later.」

The roasting oven opened, releasing a delicious aroma. Using a specially made iron hook, Guo Weidong lifted out the fork holding the suckling pig. A beautifully reddish-gold, shiny, and fragrant roasted suckling pig was ready.

After removing both suckling pigs, they quickly took off the hook forks and the grease-soaked rectangular pieces of wood while they were still hot. The suckling pigs were then arranged on a platter.

Lin Xu couldn't help but exclaim, "This suckling pig is fantastic! Chef Guo, your skills are truly impeccable."

Guo Weidong said proudly, "If you want to maintain the crispiness, you can brush a layer of Sesame Oil on the surface. That way, even when it cools down, the skin will remain crispy."

As he was speaking, Xie Baomin took a cleaver and scraped it across the suckling pig's skin. The CRUNCH! CRACKLE! The crisp sound was incredibly tempting.

"How does it sound, Junior Brother?"

"Sounds good."

"Good sound means good taste!" With that, he chopped the suckling pig in half, placed one half into a takeout box he had apparently prepared earlier, and said to Lin Xu and Guo Weidong, "You guys carry on. I'm going to take some food to my wife."

Lin Xu was speechless. You better watch your lower back, Senior Brother. Don't overexert yourself!

Chapter 448: New Features of the Points Mall! "The Taste of the World" Premieres to Rave Reviews!

"Your Senior Brother really is..."

Guo Weidong shook his head, feeling at a loss for words.

Ever since he'd known Xie Baomin, the guy had loved to snatch things and run. Thankfully, it was a time of peace. If it had been wartime, that damn rascal would definitely have been the first to become a bandit in the mountains.

Lin Xu was somewhat speechless and could only try desperately to make excuses for his Senior Brother:

"My Senior Brother is a rather... rather childlike person."

Guo Weidong nodded.

"Yes, like those bratty kids. The kind that needs to be hung from the rafters and whipped with a belt."

Lin Xu was speechless.

Chef Guo, your way of disciplining children seems a bit off, he thought.

But the image of his Senior Brother being strung up and whipped with a belt... Heh, that actually sounds quite satisfying!

"Let's not talk about your Senior Brother for now. Chef Lin, try this while it's hot. Roasted suckling pig needs to be eaten quickly. If it cools down, both the taste and the texture will suffer greatly."

Guo Weidong picked up a cleaver and, CHOP CHOP CHOP, cut the remaining half of the roasted suckling pig into small pieces.

Roasted suckling pig is all about the crispy skin, so just like with Peking Duck, every piece must include the skin.

After cutting the suckling pig and arranging it on a plate, Guo Weidong brought over some dipping sauces.

"Quick, give it a try. In the Lingnan Region, roasted suckling pig is considered as grand a dish as Fish fin and Cubilose. No matter the scale of the banquet, the moment roasted suckling pig is served, it's definitely the showstopper."

Speaking of Cantonese cuisine, Guo Weidong's face beamed with pride.

Lin Xu had only tasted roasted suckling pig once in his life. That was when his second uncle was doing well and took the whole family to a Cantonese restaurant in the provincial capital. He had long forgotten the taste, only remembering that it was eaten dipped in White Sugar.

Seeing that Guo Weidong had prepared White Sugar among the dipping sauces, he picked up a piece of meat with skin, dipped it into the White Sugar, and popped it into his mouth.

The Pork Skin was slightly hot.

As he ate it, he could distinctly taste its unctuous and rich texture.

He bit into it. CRUNCH! The sound was like a switch flipping in his brain, activating all his pleasure centers. He was completely immersed in the crispy sensation.

The distinctly granular White Sugar not only added complexity to the texture but also imparted a refreshing, almost innocent, sweetness to the flavor.

It was like a budding high school romance: shy, sweet, refreshing, and bright.

The sensation was so wonderful it was simply indescribable.

"Wow, Chef Guo, this roasted suckling pig is fantastic! It's my first time eating something so incredibly enjoyable."

In his career, Lin Xu had eaten his fair share of Perfect Level delicacies.

But today was the first time the crispy Pork Skin and White Sugar had combined to give him such a profound sense of joy.

"Chef Lin, your way of eating it is quite traditional," Guo Weidong said with a laugh. He then picked up a piece of pork, placed it on a small plate, and used a tiny spoon to add some small, black granules on top before handing it over. "Try the way it's popularly eaten at our Number Ten Building nowadays—roasted suckling pig with Caviar."

Caviar? Roasted suckling pig can be eaten with this stuff too?

Lin Xu took the plate, picked up the piece of Pork Skin topped with Caviar, and carefully put it in his mouth.

He bit into it. It was still crispy, but the overall sensation was completely different this time.

The salty, savory Caviar, with its slightly springy and chewy texture, gave the crispy Pork Skin an exotic flavor.

If dipping it in White Sugar was like a pure, innocent first love, then pairing it with Caviar transformed it into an encounter with a passionate, curvaceous, exotic beauty, making one unable to resist taking another bite.

The umami, the saltiness, the crispness of the Pork Skin, combined with the slightly viscous texture as the Caviar burst... My goodness, the rich really know how to eat!

"There are many ways to eat roasted suckling pig. Besides White Sugar and Caviar, you can also dip it in Yellow Mustard Sauce, Sour Plum Sauce, or sweet bean sauce. Chef Lin, you can try them all one by one. There's no rush."

Well, that scoundrel Xie Baomin has already run off, Guo Weidong thought. All hope for learning Qingshui Furong now rests solely on Lin Xu. So, this time, I need to make sure he eats and drinks his fill. That way, when it's time to make Qingshui Furong, he'll demonstrate all the necessary Techniques without holding back.

"Thank you, Chef Guo. You should eat too. I can't eat too much on my own."

After eating some of the crispy suckling Pork Skin, Lin Xu picked up a piece of the pure white meat to try.

He initially thought the meat would be bland and should be eaten with sweet bean sauce. But once he tasted it, he discovered that the marinade flavors were surprisingly robust.

The meat was fragrant, its fibers delicate, and it even had a slightly powdery melt-in-your-mouth texture.

Come to think of it, Lin Xu mused, although suckling pig is similar to the "fragrant pig," a fragrant pig simply doesn't grow large but is actually mature. So, its meat has a clear distinction between fat and lean, with visible muscle striations. A suckling pig, however, is just a piglet, barely more than a month old. The pork is incredibly tender, its muscle fibers haven't even begun to properly develop. That delicate, juicy flesh, coupled with the rich texture, is simply divine.

Just moments ago, when Chef Guo equated roasted suckling pig with Cubilose and Fish fin, Lin Xu had thought it was a bit of an exaggeration. Only after tasting it did he realize it wasn't an exaggeration at all—this dish was truly delicious. The skin was delicious, the meat was delicious, and even the pig's ears, tail, and Pork Trotter had their own unique, delightful flavors. It was amazing!

After finishing the suckling pig, Lin Xu also tried Number Ten Building's famous Claypot Rice.

Delicious Cantonese sausage was steamed with rice and then drizzled with a spoonful of special sauce. The rice grains were perfectly distinct, the sausage was richly aromatic, and the sauce was full of umami. The combination of these three ingredients was unspeakably harmonious and delightful.

Of course, the best part was the layer of crispy, scorched rice at the bottom of the pot.

That fragrant yet crispy texture was simply intoxicating.

Chapter 449: New Features in the Points Mall! "Taste of Humanity" Premieres, Rave Reviews!

Today, after eating roasted suckling pig and Claypot Rice and getting to the crispy rice at the bottom, Lin Xu was actually already full. However, a few bites of that crispy rice made him feel like Tripitaka obtaining the true scriptures, Chen Xiang splitting Mount Hua, and Liu Bei recruiting Kong Ming.

It was satisfying, thrilling, absolutely no regrets...

"Chef Guo, the Claypot Rice here is really delicious. No wonder my senior brother can't stop praising it."

"That cunning fellow, every time he praises someone, he's always up to no good... Chef Lin, have you eaten enough? Would you like to rest for a bit?"

Guo Weidong's words amused Lin Xu.

It seems this head chef really cares about the Qingshui Furong.

He laughed and said, "No need, no need, we can start right away."

Although the Qingshui Furong dish is complicated, it doesn't require much physical strength. In fact, it's perfect for aiding digestion while cooking.

The two went into the kitchen.

The ingredients for Qingshui Furong, such as Clear Soup, Chicken Meatball, and egg whites, were all prepared.

Lin Xu didn't hesitate and started cooking immediately.

Initially dominant in the kitchen, Guo Weidong suddenly became like a primary school student, constantly asking questions while Lin Xu was cooking.

Clearly, he was eager to master this dish.

「Two hours later.」

Seeing the Qingshui Furong made by Guo Weidong bloom piece by piece, Lin Xu inwardly heaved a long sigh of relief.

I've finally completed today's teaching mission! When I joined the Fishing Platform last month, I planned to grind for Skills and experience here. Little did I expect that in less than a month, I'd be teaching the head chef of the Fishing Platform how to cook. Life indeed has its ups and downs...

Just as he was about to reflect on this, a prompt from the system suddenly sounded in his mind:

"Host, for your first time teaching a State Banquet chef, the teaching training module in the points store is activated ahead of schedule. You can now use points to exchange for corresponding teaching training tasks for your staff."

What the...? Tasks can be exchanged with points? This feature is pretty neat, but when will I get my Eye of Discrimination? The system isn't trying to deliberately delay my exchange for the Eye of Discrimination by using this method, is it? Thinking about it, that's quite possible. Initially, the system arranged for the exchange of Dundun, this Divine Artifact for attracting wealth, and even provided a 50% off coupon to motivate me. But then something went wrong. The little guy Dundun chose to be given away for free. That coupon, originally meant for exchanging the Divine Artifact, directly allowed me to obtain the second special item, the Heartless Iron Hand, many days ahead of schedule. And after Dundun was given away for free, he kept helping me extract useful Techniques and dishes from the system, not treating himself as an outsider at all. Tsk, if the system were the protagonist of a behind-the-scenes type novel, this little treasure would have probably driven it insane by now, right?

"Thank you, Chef Lin, for letting me learn this mysterious Qingshui Furong."

Seeing his own Qingshui Furong bloom, Guo Weidong was excited.

Lin Xu laughed and said, "You're too polite, Chef Guo. It's all about exchange, right? I've also learned how to roast suckling pig."

Without the Cooking Learning Card, the roasted suckling pig would at best be of Excellent Level.

After exchanging pleasantries, Lin Xu noticed it was already past two in the afternoon. Curious, he asked, "Chef Guo, do you know where in the city I can buy one of those long skewers? I plan to go home and make a roasted suckling pig for my family to try, and also practice a bit more to reinforce what I learned today."

Upon hearing this, Guo Weidong immediately said, "Why buy? If you don't mind, just take the one we use here in the back kitchen. Take the Lychee wood sticks for supporting the suckling pig as well. They're hard to buy outside."

His words made Lin Xu somewhat embarrassed.

We were supposed to be exchanging skills and learning from each other. If I accept tools, wouldn't that make me the same type of person as my senior brother?

He was just about to politely decline when Guo Weidong slapped his own head and said, "Just giving the tools isn't enough. These days, suckling pigs aren't easy to buy as they have to be ordered from a supplier. Let me pack two for you with ice blocks. That'll save you the hassle of driving around looking for them."

Lin Xu was speechless. Not only tools but ingredients too? No wonder Senior Brother keeps running over to Building Ten. So that's the perk!

He coughed twice, "That's too kind of you. Maybe you could tally up how much it costs, and I could just pay."

Guo Weidong immediately glared, "Isn't that like slapping my face? Just take it, as if we at Building Ten can't afford to offer it... Go get your car, and we'll load it up directly."

Lin Xu thanked him and hurriedly went to get his car.

By the time he drove over, Guo Weidong had not only prepared a complete set of long skewers but also a set of hooks suitable for use in a hanging stove, along with four suckling pigs buried in ice blocks, a big bag of high-quality Lychee wood charcoal, a family-sized charcoal stove specially for roasting meat, and a jar of imported Caviar specifically for eating with roast suckling pig.

When Lin Xu got out of the car, Guo Weidong again explained the roasting methods and precautions for making roast suckling pig at home.

"I really appreciate it, Chef Guo."

"You're welcome. In the future, if you're short of anything or need help with Cantonese cuisine, just come to us at Building Ten. We're not afraid of any challenge in that department!"

"Alright, Chef Guo. I'll come to you if there's anything I don't understand in the future."

"It's not about me teaching you. We're just exchanging knowledge!"

The two hurriedly loaded all the items into the trunk. Since suckling pigs, even packed with ice, couldn't be exposed outside for too long, Lin Xu said goodbye to Guo Weidong and drove off.

He had to rush to bring the suckling pigs to the West Fourth Ring Villa.

Chapter 450: New Features in the Points Mall! "Taste of Humanity" Premieres, Rave Reviews!

In front of Building No. 10, watching the white G-Class driving away, Guo Weidong said emotionally, "TSK TSK, look at this young man—so well-mannered and refreshing. He's nothing like that scoundrel Xie Baomin, who grabs anything he likes and runs off with it, just like a bandit king."

The head chef beside him gave a wry smile. "Chef Xie might like to snatch things, but even five of his hauls wouldn't match what you've given away this one time."

「Not long after leaving the Fishing Platform.」

Lin Xu suddenly received a call from Shen Jiayue. "Xu Bao, I was browsing Moments just now and saw Sister-in-law posted a photo of a roasted suckling pig at noon. She even claimed Senior Brother helped her steal it! When will you help me steal one too?"

At the engagement banquet, Lin Xu's senior's wife, Su Peipei, had attended with her two children, so she and the young couple had all added each other as friends.

Hearing Shen Baobao say this, Lin Xu was somewhat surprised. Sister-in-law usually posted about her children or educational articles on her Moments. She never mentioned Senior Brother, but now she even brought up stealing a suckling pig. After nearly twenty years together, are they just starting to spark?

He laughed and said to Shen Baobao, "I've also stolen something, just not a ready-made pig. I stole the recipe... This evening, I'll roast a suckling pig for you in the yard. How does that sound, Baobao?"

"Really?"

A high-pitched shriek of excitement immediately came from the phone. Clearly, she was thrilled by this news.

Lin Xu chuckled and said, "I'll go home and start marinating the suckling pig. When you get off work, we can roast it together in the yard. What do you think?"

"Yes, yes! I'll let Dad know so he can get off work early."

Turning into Yingchun Street, the staff were continuing their training in the new store.

Lin Xu, holding Dundun, greeted Dou Wenjing and Shu Yun, then drove back to the villa.

Later, when roasting the suckling pig, he planned to leave one hind leg unseasoned, so Dundun could also taste the piglet.

「At five in the afternoon.」

Under the shade of the trees in the yard, the charcoal in the grill was burning, emitting a faint fruity smell.

Lin Xu, holding a long fork, positioned it over the grill. Following the roasting method Guo Weidong had taught him, he first dried the skin, then wrapped the limbs, tail, and pig ears in aluminum foil. He roasted the meat inside the belly until it was cooked through before moving on to the back.

As he was roasting, Shen Guofu, just back from work, brought over a plate of sliced steamed buns and arranged them on a mini grill next to the main one.

After arranging the buns, he lit a cigar, sat next to Lin Xu, and watched the suckling pig on the spit, blowing out a puff of smoke. "As a kid, I really loved the smell of sun-dried quilts. I thought it was so fragrant. Later, your mother-in-law told me that was the smell of mites getting scorched by ultraviolet rays..."

He flipped a slice of steamed bun that was too close to the charcoal with a bamboo skewer and continued, "That's when I realized, what I'd always liked wasn't the sunshine, but barbecue."

At that moment, Lin Xu thought his father-in-law looked like a poet with an empty stomach. Yeah, he couldn't come up with such down-to-earth poetry without skipping meals for a few days.

The father and son-in-law chatted sporadically. Meanwhile, Shen Baobao, changed into casual clothes, came over carrying two small dishes.

First, she brushed a thin layer of light oil onto the steamed bun slices with a small brush. Once they were roasted to a golden brown, she sprinkled some spicy barbecue seasoning on them.

A batch of barbecue-flavored grilled steamed bun slices was ready.

She happily took a bite. "WOW, these are crispy and delicious! Dad, did you also eat barbecue like this when you were young?"

"Back then, who could afford to brush them with oil? And we didn't have all these spices. Having some Chili Powder was already great... Girl, take a few slices to your mom. She likes these barbecue-flavored steamed bun slices."

"Mom's not eating," she replied. "She said her throat is a bit uncomfortable."

Hearing this, Lin Xu suggested, "You could roast some toast for Mom to try. Sprinkle some sugar on it when both sides are golden brown; it tastes pretty good too."

"I'll give it a try," Shen Baobao said. "Aunt Liu just made some toast."

"Girl, bring a few more slices. I want to try some too."

"Okay!"

While father and daughter were grilling steamed bun slices and toast, Lin Xu entered the Points Mall.

He found that in addition to the existing sections for Cooking Skills, Dish Skills, Life Skills, and Special Prop Skill, a new section called Teaching Training Task had been added.

After clicking on it, instead of specific redemption items, a list of kitchen staff names appeared.

He casually clicked on Ji Minghui's name, and it displayed the techniques Master Ji possessed: Perfect Level Dough Technique, Superior Rolling Technique, and Excellent Level Filling Adjustment Technique...

All of Master Ji's techniques were related to pastry. None were shown for main dishes, probably because they hadn't reached the Qualified Level.

Seeing the Rolling Technique listed as Superior, Lin Xu casually clicked on it.

A prompt immediately popped up: "Redeem Perfect Level Rolling Technique teaching training task for 700,000 points. Proceed with the redemption?"

Lin Xu: ???????

Just a task, not even a direct upgrade, and it still costs 700,000 points! To think that Dundun only cost 440,000 points after the discount... Has the system switched to using the Vietnamese Dong? Why is inflation getting so severe?

Right now, his points balance was still -600,000. He couldn't redeem it and could only vent his frustration on the grilled steamed bun slices and toast Shen Baobao had prepared.

He had to admit, after grilling, both the steamed bun slices and the toast had a unique texture. Delicious!

「Friday afternoon, almost six o'clock.」

The living room of the Shen Family villa was filled with relatives.

Today was the broadcast day for *Flavors of the World*. Shen Guofu had gathered all their relatives to watch the premiere of his son-in-law's show on the 100-inch Sony TV in the living room.