

Culinary 79

Chapter 79: This Client Deserves to Make Big Money! Triggering the Generalization Reward Again!

Lin Xu hadn't taken on group meal business before, so he was unsure how to proceed. But as the old saying goes: When in doubt about domestic issues, consult Baidu; for foreign matters, ask your master.

Therefore, as soon as Ou Hua had left, he called Elder Gao, who was leisurely strolling through the park's matchmaking corner.

"This mainly depends on the other party's budget. Key factors include how many tables they want, how many people per table, their requirements for hot and cold dishes, and whether they need desserts and soups..."

These few sentences opened up Lin Xu's thinking. He remembered that in his hometown, before weddings or other celebrations, people would hire village chefs who specialized in large-pot cooking to cater 'flowing banquets.' These chefs would provide a detailed menu based on the host's budget and requests, typically offering options like sixteen dishes and two soups, or eighteen dishes and four soups. The more generous your budget, the more luxurious the meal; the lesser your budget, the more modest. The quantity and lavishness depended entirely on one's budget.

So, I just need to think of myself as one of those village chefs... Lin Xu gradually grasped the essentials of handling group meals.

At that moment, Ou Hua had just stepped out and hadn't gone far. Lin Xu went outside and asked him, "Boss Ou, what's your budget? About how many tables? I can help you create a menu."

"Our warehouse staff eat at tables of eight, so prepare for eight tables. As for the budget, fifty to sixty, or even seventy to eighty, per person is fine. The staff love the dishes you make. They always eagerly volunteer to make deliveries here, as it means they can also get a meal."

Is the budget this flexible?

Lin Xu asked again, "Are there any specific requirements for the dishes? For example, do you need soups or desserts?"

Ou Hua was in a hurry to make deliveries elsewhere, so he quickly told Lin Xu, "You decide. We'll eat whatever you arrange."

Tsk, what a client. No wonder he's so successful.

After sending off Ou Hua, Lin Xu began to ponder the dishes needed for the group meal. The system required a minimum of eight dishes. But the dishes currently served in his restaurant were only Tiger Skin Chicken Feet, Ginger Lotus Root, Pork Ribs Steamed with Fermented Black Beans, Phoenix Claws with Fermented Black Beans, and Fried Crispy Pork which, even with Alcoholic Peanuts added, totaled only six.

What to do? He couldn't just use a noodle topping as a dish, could he?

Lin Xu thought about it and decided to add the Ginger Marinated Century Eggs he had made before. At least that would make the selection of cold dishes look a bit more presentable. As for hot dishes, he could add Sweet and Sour Pork, Boiled Pork Slices, or egg yolk baked pumpkin. If Ou Hua and his team liked fish, he could replace the Boiled Pork Slices with Boiled Fish.

Lin Xu sighed as he pondered. The restaurant's options were still too limited; he couldn't even put together a standard meal of four cold and four hot dishes, totaling the required eight. He'd still need to work hard on the tasks given by the system.

He wrote these dishes down on a piece of paper. When Elder Gao arrived later, he would consult with him. If no adjustments were needed, he would send the menu to Ou Hua.

After finishing this task, Lin Xu called Boss Hu at the meat stall to deliver fifteen kilograms of pork loin to the restaurant. Earlier that morning, when buying meat, he had already purchased about three kilograms, intending to make some Sweet and Sour Pork for regular customers as a soft launch for this new dish. But now with Niu Chuan, this capable new helper, the kitchen's efficiency had immediately increased. So he planned to increase the quantity to avoid complaints from customers who arrived late.

Sweet and Sour Pork, like Crispy Meat, could be prepared ahead of time. First, fry the pork loin until it's 70-80% cooked. When customers arrive, re-fry it in the wok, and then pour the pre-prepared sweet and sour sauce over it—this step was so simple that even a novice could handle it.

Before long, Boss Hu arrived on his electric scooter, delivering the fifteen kilograms of pork loin.

"This is all top-quality pork loin, absolutely first-rate... Boss Lin, what new dish are you introducing?"

"Sweet and Sour Pork!"

"Wow! I'll have my wife come get a takeout order at noon. I love sweet and sour dishes, and yours are bound to be even more delicious."

After bidding farewell to the portly meat vendor, Lin Xu soaked the delivered pork loin in a large iron basin and used a sharp knife to remove the sinew from each piece. Pork loin, found along the pig's spine, is exceptionally tender. It can be prepared in numerous ways, nearly all of which aim to highlight its natural tenderness. Sweet and Sour Pork is no exception. The loin is cut into strips, coated with batter, and deep-fried. This method cooks the meat quickly in the intense heat of the oil, sealing in moisture, as the meat itself doesn't directly contact the hot oil. As a result, the fried loin is crispy on the outside, while the meat strips inside remain tender, juicy, and exceptionally flavorful.

After removing the sinew, Lin Xu was about to cut the meat into strips when Niu Chuan came over with a cleaver. "I've finished cutting the pork belly for the Fried Crispy Pork, Boss. Go ahead and marinate it. How should I cut these loins? Into strips or slices?"

This is the advantage of having a skilled worker; they can start working immediately and efficiently.

"Cut them into strips; these are for the Sweet and Sour Pork. Make them about ten centimeters long and eight millimeters square. After cutting, soak them in clean water to draw out some of the blood."

"Got it!"

As Niu Chuan was about to cut, Lin Xu added another instruction, "Don't cut all the loin. Save one kilogram for Boiled Pork Slices for our lunch."

Although he had mastered the techniques for boiled dishes, Lin Xu still needed to prepare a specific dish from that category before he could use a Perfect Level Dish Upgrade Card on it. The card could only upgrade a single dish, not an entire culinary category.

As for why he chose Boiled Pork Slices, Lin Xu had thought it through carefully. He had considered several common boiled dishes. Mao Xue Wang didn't sell at a high price. Boiled Fish was too complicated to prepare. Fresh beef for dishes like Boiled Beef Slices was expensive. Only Boiled Pork Slices, made with pork loin, offered a good balance in all aspects.

Moreover, Boiled Pork Slices could be prepared in advance. After cutting the meat, he would marinate it, prepare the Red Oil Soup, and stir-fry the base vegetables in advance. Then, during actual cooking, he would only need to boil the pork slices and flash-fry some chopped chilies, greatly increasing efficiency.

However, today they would start with Sweet and Sour Pork and introduce Boiled Pork Slices in a couple of days. This way, he could continuously offer new experiences to customers, encouraging them to make dining at Lin Ji's Food a habit.

Indeed, even the most delicious food can become tiresome if eaten too often. The key is to constantly introduce new items to keep customers coming back.

Lin Xu finished marinating all the pork belly for the Fried Crispy Pork and, together with Niu Chuan, finished cutting the remaining pork loin. Then, he began preparing the Sweet and Sour Pork. First, he rinsed the pork loin strips twice. Then he placed the meat in a large colander and pressed it firmly to extract as much excess water as possible. Only by removing the water could the marinade penetrate properly, and it would also prevent the batter from detaching during frying. He put the dried loin strips in a bowl and sequentially added Scallion segments, ginger slices, Light Soy Sauce, Cooking Wine, and pepper powder. After mixing everything thoroughly, he covered the bowl with plastic wrap and set it aside to marinate.

At nine in the morning, Elder Gao arrived at the shop, walking with his characteristic leisurely sway. Seeing the marinated loin strips in the bowl, he curiously asked, "Are you preparing to make dry-fried loin or sweet and sour loin?"

"Sweet and Sour Pork."

After answering, Lin Xu curiously asked, "Master, aside from adding the sweet and sour sauce at the end, are there any other differences in the preparation method for dry-fried loin versus sweet and sour loin?"

Elder Gao didn't answer directly. Instead, he glanced at the preparation of other dishes and then asked Lin Xu a question, "What differences do you think there are between the preparation of sweet and sour loin and Crispy Meat?"

This question... Lin Xu mentally compared the Perfect Level methods for the two dishes and noticed there was indeed a difference. "The batter is different. The batter for sweet and sour loin requires Baking Powder, while the batter for Crispy Meat doesn't..."

I wanted to know the differences between dry-fried loin and sweet and sour loin; why did Master mention Crispy Meat? Could it be that the preparation for Crispy Meat is the same as for dry-fried loin?

Just as he thought this, the system's notification tone sounded in his mind: "Host has received guidance from a State Banquet Master, triggering the Hidden Task: 'Generalization.' You have acquired the Perfect Level fried dish—Dry-Fried Loin. Congratulations, Host!"