

EAT
WITH
YOUR
HANDS



ZAKARY
PELACCIO

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FISH

Before I move toward piscine reality, let's talk about the ideal fish meal. You're in a market. The market is beside the water. All around you are piles of fish, many of which you've never seen before. All have firm, bright gills and clear eyes. They smell just slightly of the sea, the glistening skin suggesting the iridescent flesh below.

You sit down at a table. Just feet away, fish cook over a charcoal grill. A little bowl containing something bright and spicy—lime juice, fish sauce, chilies—is at the ready. Your eating implement—a fork, chopsticks—quickly yields to your hands, and you pick and suck and lick until only bones remain. In my version of heaven, those bones are whisked away to the deep fryer and return crunchy, completely edible, and entirely irresistible.

Unless you live in a hut in the Malaysian seaside town of Kota Kinabalu, your fish reality will probably be pretty damn different from my fantasy. But you'll be fine as long as you take the time to learn which fish are caught sustainably (visit www.montereybayaquarium.org for an up-to-date-list), and if you frequent a good fish market to learn what's in season and what's impeccably fresh. Then follow the commandment that Neptune spoketh unto Zakary: find that which is fresh, and around it build thy meal. Never force a fish into a recipe. If it's not calling out to you with its beauty, leave it be.

My first gastronomic reaction upon finding a perfect fish is lime juice, salt, and chili. Nothing beyond that is necessary. Anything else is just gravy. But I like gravy, so sometimes my mind wanders toward sambal belacan—a pungent mixture of fresh chilies and toasted dried shrimp—or an herbal broth packed with clams or a funky sauce made from crab roe. I love it when whatever sauciness that blesses the fish has notes of the sea itself—fermented shrimp paste, mussels, fish broths, anything that reinforces the flavor. Something porky is mighty fine too. Oh, and as usual, eat with your hands.

FISH HEAD CURRY

**GRILLED SARDINES WITH CELERY ROOT PUREE
AND LEAF-AND-POACHED RAISINS**

SARDINE TEA SANDWICHES

FISH COOKED IN COCONUT MILK WITH FIRE CHILI

STEAMED LOUP DE MER

**SEA TROUT WITH MUSSELS, SAUSAGE, AND
FERMENTED TOFU**

**TUNA BELLY WITH AN APPROXIMATION OF A
CLASSIC SAUCE DU GLÉ**

**ROASTED TURBOT WITH GARLIC PARSLEY PASTE,
SWEET PEPPER PUREE, AND CLAMS**

LOBSTER WONTON MEE

Wonton Mee is the bread and butter of the Chinese-Malaysian Hawker stalls that line the streets of cities like Kuala Lumpur and other towns like Penang and Malacca. It’s a heartstring-tugging soup of silky noodles and tender little dumplings. This recipe is a high-end twist on the basic version: a lobster stock, charged with a hit of chili oil, swimming with lobster-filled wontons.

SERVES 4

Sea salt	butter
½ pound wonton noodles, vermicelli, or Hong Kong noodles	3 cups Lobster Stock (page 000)
6½ tablespoons neutral oil, such as grapeseed or canola	24 uncooked Lobster Wontons (preceding recipe)
Two 1- to 1½-pound lobsters, parcooked and meat removed from shells (page 000)	2 garlic cloves, minced
8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted	4 cups loosely packed fresh pea leaves, watercress, Chinese water spinach, or baby bok choy leaves
FOR GARNISH:	
2 teaspoons Chili Oil (page 000) or reserved XO sauce oil (page 000)	½ cup thinly sliced scallion
	4 fresh Thai bird chilies, thinly sliced

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil and salt it until it tastes like the ocean. Have an ice bath ready. Blanch the noodles in the boiling water until al dente, about 4 minutes. Drain the noodles, reserving the water, and transfer them to the ice bath. Return the cooking water to the pot (you’ll use it to cook the wontons), adding more water if necessary.
2. Drain the noodles, lay them out on a paper-towel-lined tray and pat them dry. Transfer them to a bowl and toss them with 1½ teaspoons of the oil to keep them from sticking together, then set them aside.
3. Split the lobster tails lengthwise. Heat the butter and 1 cup water together in a large heavy sauté pan over very low heat, whisking constantly as the butter melts to emulsify. When the butter has fully melted, add the halved lobster tails and gently poach until just cooked through, about 5 minutes. Transfer the tails to a cutting board and slice them lengthwise and then across so you have six pieces.
4. Add the claws to the pan and gently poach in the liquid until just cooked through, about 4 minutes. Return the sliced tail pieces to the pan and remove it from the heat. Set it aside.
5. Bring the consommé or stock to a strong simmer. Meanwhile, bring the pot of noodle-cooking water back to a tame boil. Drop the wontons into the boiling water and cook until they float to the surface, about 5 minutes, then continue to

TAKE NOTE

A lot happens at the stove toward the end of the prep. If you’ve got a friend in the kitchen, divide the cooking duties and cook in concert. If you alone are responsible for dinner, read the recipe well and have all your ingredients and pots ready. And work on finding some friends who like to help in the kitchen.

- cook for 30 seconds. Remove the wontons with a slotted spoon and divide them among four bowls.
6. While the wontons are cooking, heat the remaining 3 tablespoons oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Scatter the pea leaves into the pan and toss just until they wilt. Season with salt to taste. Transfer the wilted leaves to a bowl and set it aside in a warm place.
 7. Wipe the pan clean with a paper towel and return it to the stovetop. Add the remaining 3 tablespoons oil and turn the heat to medium-high. Add the noodles, shake the pan, and cook, undisturbed, until they start to crackle and the undersides have become crisp and golden (but not brown), 2 to 3 minutes. Lightly season the noodles with salt and transfer them to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain. Use kitchen scissors to cut the noodles into four even portions and arrange on the edge of large serving plates. Top each portion of noodles with the wilted pea leaves.
 8. Pour the simmering consommé or stock into the bowls with the wontons in them. The broth should fully submerge the wontons. Drizzle each bowl with chili oil and top with sliced scallions. Sit that bowl next to the noodles on each plate.
 9. Put half a lobster tail’s worth of slices and a claw on each noodle mound. Sprinkle the lobster with salt and top with the chilies. Eat the noodles by themselves or moisten them with the consommé—after all, it’s your party.

LISTEN
Mandrill, *Solid*—yes, yes, it is.

DRINK
Fabio Lini’s Metodo Classico Bianco, a white, sparkling pinot nero from Italy.



LOBSTER WONTON MEE, p. 48

BRAISED LAMB SHOULDER WITH CAVATELLI

There I was, at Zuberoa in Spain, crying in the dining room. No one had passed away; no girlfriend had broken up with me. In fact, Jori was sitting beside me, teary-eyed herself but still doing her best to comfort me. We had just finished the most perfect lamb shoulder, a dizzying contrast of melting fat, ropes of tender flesh, and the thin crackle of dark roasted tendon. That was the sad part—that we had *finished*. And I was sad, too, because of what I knew I would do next. Instead of staying and eating the restaurant out of lamb and probably passing out on the floor, I politely paid my bill, thanked the proprietor, and went to my hotel for a rest. I am a sheep.

This dish is my really odd ode to that one—mouth-fillingly fatty chunks of lamb shoulder on a heap of what amounts to macaroni and cheese. Some Pickled Ramps (page 000) go well with this.

SERVES 6 TO 8

FOR BRAISING THE LAMB:

- 5 tablespoons olive oil (the best you can afford)

1 bone-in shoulder (5 to 7 pounds) from a young lamb

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup Armagnac, brandy, or whiskey

2 heads of garlic, halved crosswise

2 medium onions, roughly chopped
- 2 celery stalks, roughly chopped

One 2 inches fresh ginger, peeled and minced

5 fresh Thai bird chilies, bruised in a mortar

2 cups dry white wine

4 cups Chicken Stock (page 000)

8 fresh thyme sprigs

2 fresh rosemary sprigs

FOR THE PASTA:

- 1 pound cavatelli pasta, preferably fresh

1 cup heavy cream

½ pound soft sheep’s milk cheese,
- such as Tomme du Berger, cut into pieces

Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

TO FINISH THE DISH:

- ½ pound hard sheep’s milk cheese,

such as Ossau-Iraty Vieille

BRAISE THE LAMB:

1. Preheat the oven to 250°F.

2. Grab your biggest, heaviest Dutch oven, casserole, or roasting pan with a lid, add 3 tablespoon of the olive oil, and heat it over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking. If you’re using a roasting pan, it should straddle two burners.

3. Season the lamb shoulder generously with salt and pepper. Add the lamb shoulder to the pot and brown it well on all sides, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer the lamb to a plate.

4. Over medium-high heat, deglaze the pot with the Armagnac, scraping up any brown bits with a wooden spoon. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil and cook the garlic, onions, celery, ginger, and chilies, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Pour in the white wine, raise the heat, and boil for 2 minutes to cook off the alcohol. Pour in the chicken stock and add the herbs. Return the lamb to the pot and bring the liquid to a simmer over medium high heat.

5. Cover the pot and braise the lamb in the oven until the meat is really tender, about 5 hours, but start checking after about 3½ hours and every 30 minutes thereafter.

6. Remove the pot from the oven and let the lamb rest in the pot for about 20 minutes. Start a pot to boil water for pasta. Transfer the lamb to a platter, then strain the braising liquid through a fine-mesh sieve, discarding any solids, into a pan. Simmer the braising liquid, skimming the top often, until it has reduced by half. Taste and tweak the seasoning until it tastes really good.

MAKE THE PASTA:

1. Cook the cavatelli in well-salted boiling water for 1 minute less than the package instructs.

2. While the pasta cooks, bring the cream to a boil in a large pot, then reduce the heat to simmer it. Gradually add the soft cheese, whisking constantly, until all the cheese has been added and the sauce is smooth.

3. Drain the pasta, add it to the cheese sauce, and toss to coat. Taste and add a little salt, pepper, even lemon juice or zest or chili—sliced chilies—if you’d like. The sauce should adhere well to the pasta, like a mac ’n’ cheese. If it looks too loose, increase the heat and cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce reduces and starts to cling.

4. Cut the lamb shoulder into hefty chunks and add them to the saucepan with the reserved, strained braising liquid to warm them through on medium heat for 10 minutes.

5. Divide the cheesy, creamy pasta among four bowls. Top each with chunks of lamb and spoon on some of the reduced braising liquid. Grate the hard cheese over each plate and serve.

LISTEN
Roxy Music, “2HB”—actually, keep rolling Roxy as long as you can.

DRINK
Georges Descombes Régnié—biodynamic and really just dynamite with cheese, chili, and lamb.



BRAISED LAMB SHOULDER WITH CAVATELLI, p. 140

WHOLE SMOKED PIG (THE GUY)

A whole animal means a party. An animal of this size means a serious party involving serious excess. Divest yourself of inhibition. Have a real good time. Toward that end, serve the pig with some Salty Oil-Cured Chilies (page 000), Pineapple Curry (page 000), Chili Sauce No. 1 (page 000), or, hell, anything you want. I can’t think of one condiment from the condiment chapter (pages 000–000) that would suck with this. Some boiled and grilled fingerling potatoes and maybe some corn too if it’s a summer party.

As with most of my cooking, nothing is precisely the same each time I make it, but the marinade here is almost always what I use when I smoke up those fatties. Almost as important as the list of ingredients and description of the method, however, is the list of stuff you need to get through this twenty-four-hour cooking adventure, besides your barbecue and your pig. Here are the bare necessities:

2 cases beer on ice—cans, not bottles	Foldable tarp tent in case of rain
A couple joints	4 high-quality, portable, foldable chairs
2 bottles Pappy Van Winkle bourbon	About 40 pieces hardwood (pecan, cherry, post oak, apple, etc.)
Plastic cups	3 friends who like to stay up all night and, on a serious note, understand the importance of maintaining a consistent temperature in a smoker and, on another serious note, are funny as fuck
an 8-ball	
1 carton smokes	
iPod and portable iPod docking station, fully charged	
2 head lamps	
Batteries, for everything	

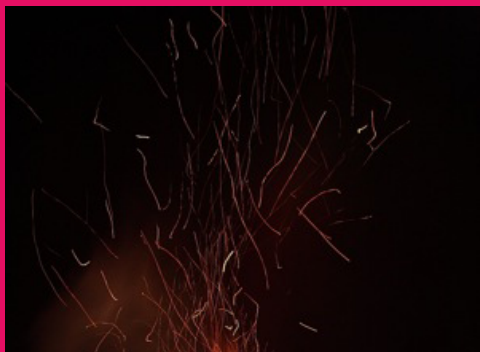
SERVES ABOUT 100 OF YOUR CLOSEST FRIENDS

6 bunches of fresh cilantro with roots, leaves reserved and stems and roots chopped	6 tablespoons whole white peppercorns
4 hands of fresh ginger, 3 cups peeled and chopped	Zest of 7 limes
6 heads of garlic, cloves separated, peeled, and chopped	12 fresh kaffir lime leaves, stems and center veins discarded and leaves chopped
10 shallots, chopped	1 whole pig (at least 200 pounds), gutted and singed, scalded, or shaved
2 cups fish sauce	2 cups kosher salt
Ten 14-ounce cans coconut milk, preferably Aroy-D brand, shaken	
1½ cups dried red chilies, such as cayenne	

1. Use a mortar and pestle to pound (see page 000) cilantro stems and roots, ginger, garlic, and shallots, to a paste, pounding each ingredient thoroughly before adding the next. Then add the fish sauce to create a thin paste. You’ll probably need to work in batches. Transfer to a large bowl and stir in the coconut milk.
2. Grind the dried chilies and peppercorns together in a spice grinder. Add the lime zest and kaffir leaf pieces, and grind them all together until the mixture is fine and slightly moist. Stir the spice mixture into the coconut milk mixture.
3. Rub the pig down and up (put him in a giant garbage bag or large plastic bin), inside and out with the kosher salt. Then rub the coconut mixture all over the salted pig, inside and out.
4. Put the pig, belly up, in a large heavy-duty trash bag and pour any remaining marinade inside the cavity. Squeeze out as much air as possible from the bag and tie it. Let sit for 2 to 3 days in a large refrigerator.
5. Get a large smoker up to 200°F. Remove the pig from the bag, saving as much of the marinade as possible. Put the pig in the smoker, belly up, and pour the marinade into the belly cavity. While it’s cooking, focus on stoking your fire, maintaining the temperature, and drinking. The piggy is ready when the internal temperature of the thickest part of the shoulder is at 170°F. Any pig over 140 pounds or so will take the full 24 hours. If you’re working with 50-pounders, though, it’ll take closer to 12 hours.
6. Remove the pig from the smoker and transfer it to a large table covered with a plastic tablecloth or tarp. Let it rest for about 20 minutes, but pork-mad people will undoubtedly start ripping into the fatty flesh before you can get it to the table. I know because I’m one of them.

LISTEN
Take all the music suggested throughout the book, put it into one play list, and you’re set!

DRINK
I think we covered that in the “necessities” list above.







PORK AND COCKLES

I would love to be eating this right now, sitting at the window in a small storefront restaurant near the water, looking out on a gray, windy fall day. The roasty, toasty pork slices wrap me in warmth like a blanket straight out of the dryer. The tender, sweet, briny cockles are like a high-five from the nearby ocean. The finishing touch is jamón Ibérico. “Why Ibérico?” a friend asked. The appropriate response was and is “Why not?”

SERVES 4

- | | |
|--|---|
| ¼ cup plus, 1 tablespoon rendered leaf lard (see page 000) or neutral oil, such as grapeseed or canola | sliced 1 inch thick |
| 8 fresh Thai bird chilies, slit | Sea salt |
| 6 garlic cloves, crushed and peeled | ¼ cup Master Stock (page 000), or Chicken Stock (page 000) with a pinch of MSG |
| 3 inches fresh ginger, peeled and sliced | 2 pounds cockles, rinsed |
| 6 scallions, sliced | 1 tablespoon Chinese fermented black beans, rinsed well and soaked in cold water for 1 hour |
| ¼ cup dry white wine | 12 thin slices jamón Ibérico |
| 2 pounds Full-Fat Pork Shoulder (preceding recipe), cooled and | 1 lemon |

1. Heat 3 tablespoons of the lard in a large pot with a lid over high heat. Add the chilies, garlic, ginger, and scallions and cook, stirring, until softened, about 2 minutes. Add the wine, bring to a boil, and let bubble for about 2 minutes to cook off the alcohol. Take the pan off the heat.
2. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons lard in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Lay the slices of pork shoulder in the pan, working in batches if necessary, and cook for a few minutes on the first side. When you can no longer stand the suspense, peak underneath. If it’s not roasty brown, keep cooking until it is. Then flip the pieces, reduce the heat a tad, and cook the pieces until they are heated through and have developed a lovely color, another 5 minutes. Transfer the pork to a plate and give the slices a little sprinkling of salt.
3. Pour off the fat from the pork pan, then pour in the stock and bring the liquid to a simmer, scraping up the goodness with a wooden spoon. Return the large pot with the wine and aromatics to high heat, pour in the stock, then add the cockles and the black beans. Cover and cook, shaking from time to time and resisting the urge to peek until at least 90 seconds have passed. When the cockles pop open (discard any that don’t open after 3 minutes), pull the pan from the heat. Spoon the cockles and their bathing partners into four serving bowls. Top with the pork slices and jamón Ibérico. Give the bowl a squeeze of lemon and dig in.

LISTEN
Bob Dylan, “Baby, Let Me Follow You Down.” With Dylan, the earlier the better.

DRINK
Dogfish Head 60 minute IPA—clean and hoppy, it bounces off the briny saltiness.



BEEF RENDANG

Rendang is a big spicy braise, one of those traditional Malaysian dishes for which there are as many recipes as there are the small villages called *kampungs*. The one constant across all the rendag variations is that the chicken, lamb, beef, goat, or whatever is simmered in a work with coconut milk until the liquid has either cooked off or been absorbed by the protein and the pan is dry. This method helps preserve proteins and is especially useful if you don’t have any means of refrigeration. Since I assume that you do, I’ve altered the traditional recipe, using a Western method of braising while maintaining the fantastic Malaysian flavor profile, to produce something I love even more than the original.

SERVES ABOUT 10 PEOPLE

TO MARINATE THE BEEF:

- 1 dried red chili, such as cayenne, soaked in warm water for 20 minutes

2 fresh Thai bird chilies, stemmed, seeded, and sliced

2 inches fresh galangal, peeled and sliced

2½ inches fresh young ginger, peeled and sliced
- 3 inches fresh turmeric, sliced

5 lemongrass stalks, woody outer layers and bottom 1½ inches removed, tender inner stalk thinly sliced

15 pounds bone-in short ribs, cut 1½ inches long across the bone by your butcher

FOR THE SHALLOT PASTE:

- 8 shallots, roughly chopped

4 heads of garlic, cloves separated, peeled, and roughly chopped

4½ ounces rounds palm sugar
- (3 rounds gula jawa), roughly chopped, or ¼ cup plus 2⅓ tablespoons brown sugar

FOR THE BRAISE:

- ¼ cup kosher salt

5 cups well-stirred coconut milk (from three 14-ounce cans),
- preferably Aroy-D brand

6 slices assam gelugor, rinsed very well under warm water

TO FINISH THE DISH:

- 1 cup Kerisik (page 000)

½ cup Gula Jawa Syrup (page 000)

10 fresh kaffir lime leaves, stems and center veins discarded
- and leaves very thinly sliced lengthwise

3 limes, cut into wedges

Coconut Rice (page 000)

MARINATE THE BEEF:

Drain the dried chili, reserving the soaking water. In a food processor, pulse the chilies, galangal, young ginger, turmeric, and lemongrass to make a puree; use some of the chili soaking water if necessary to get the blender going. The puree

should be as smooth as you can possibly get it, but don’t stress out if there are some chunky bits. Put the short ribs in a container and rub them thoroughly with the puree (wear gloves, because the turmeric will stain your hands). Let the ribs marinate in the fridge for 48 hours.

MAKE THE SHALLOT PASTE:

Puree the shallots, garlic, and palm sugar in a food processor until it’s as smooth as possible.

BRAISE THE SHORT RIBS:

Preheat the oven to 225°F. Cut pieces of parchment paper to fit inside two deep roasting pans. Toss the marinated short ribs (don’t wash off that marinade—that’s tasty paste!) with the kosher salt and put them in a single layer in the two roasting pans. Divide the coconut milk, shallot paste, and assam gelugor slices evenly between the roasting pans. Toss the ribs to incorporate all the ingredients. Cover the pans with parchment and cover with a tight-fitting lid or foil. Braise the ribs in the oven until they’re fork-tender, 5 to 6 hours.

SERVE THE RENDANG:

1. Sprinkle the kerisik over the ribs. It will absorb some of the fat and adhere to the meat, thus increasing the splendiferous flavor.

2. Spoon the ribs into a large serving bowl or platter. Top with the braising liquid, oil and all. (If you’re planning to reserve some ribs for another day, keep some of the liquid too.) Drizzle the gula jawa syrup over the meat and sprinkle the kaffir lime leaves on top. Serve the ribs with bowl of lime wedges and a large bowl of steamed coconut rice.

LISTEN

Some borderline-cheesy seventies groove, like **Herbie Mann’s *Push Push***, **Grover Washington’s *Mister Magic***, or if you want to go contemporary, stuff from **Shawn Lee** or **Luke Vibert**. Silly music that you almost forget is there until you realize you’ve been bobbing your head for the last hour.

DRINK

Tecate with a rim of lime and salt. Yeah, it’s Mexican and this dish is Malaysian, but it’s acidic and it’s beer! What are you going to do, drink bourbon? You’ll get too drunk and fuck the dish up.

SALADS AND VEGETABLES

I eat salad with my hands. This has been true for as long as I can remember—it used to exhaust my mother’s patience. I don’t think she had an issue with my manual consumption method per se—she, too, is an enthusiastic eater. Rather, her endless “Zakary-use-your-fork!” protests came from an unarticulated guilt-driven devotion to grooming me for successful sleepovers and dinners at friends’ tables. As if she couldn’t quite bring herself to say, “If you can’t learn to eat with your fork, how will you ever make it in this world?”

My rejoinder, almost thirty years later, is that while I might have been uncouth, at least I ate my greens. Now, as a parent myself, I see greater value in my son’s appreciation of salad than in his use of the salad fork. Oh, and I still eat salad—whether it’s at home or in a rare uptown four-star situation—with my hands, and so does my girlfriend, Jori. It seems I made it through childhood, adolescence, and early manhood, and finally found a kindred spirit who understands that metal and delicate greens have no business hanging out together. Drop the fork and see if your salad experience improves. Feel your food. After all, you pick vegetables with your hands, so why not eat them the same way?

RADISH SALAD WITH BOTTARGA AND POACHED EGG

PUNTARELLE WITH A GOOD BASIC DRESSING

BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH HORSE RADISH CREAM

MY GREEN PAPAYA SALAD

KERABU MANGO (MANGO SALAD)

KERABU TIMUN (CUCUMBER SALAD)

SMOKY EGGPLANT AND CHICKEN SALAD

BOK CHOY WITH CLAMS

ASPARAGUS KERABU (ASPARAGUS SALAD)

KANG KONG BELACAN

NASI ULAM

ARUGULA AND BOILED PEANUT SALAD WITH CHILI VINEGAR



RADISH SALAD WITH BOTTARGA AND POACHED EGG, p. 202



GLOSSARY

ASSAM GELUGOR

This Malaysian fruit which is yellow-orange, mini-looking pumpkin is often mistakenly identified as tamarind skin. A fruit similar to, it is rarely, if ever, eaten fresh. Instead it’s thickly sliced, dried in the sun, and used to provide a uniquely awesome sourness to balance sweet and salty flavors. Look for it at Asian grocery stores. If you must, you can substitute tamarind, which is a bit sweeter, or the fleshy pits of unripe mangoes.

BAO

These pillowy, spongy steamed Chinese buns made from rice flour provide a soft, featherweight bed for meat or vegetables. You’ll typically find bao, filled with sweet, fatty pork, as part of dim sum menus. Look for them at Chinese bakeries.

BELACAN (PRONOUNCED BLAH-CHAN)

Sold in small bricks and used to flavor sambals, this dried and fermented shrimp paste is always toasted before using. Like all fermented products, the flavor and aroma of belacan is impossible to ignore. I love to watch the reactions of the people on the basketball courts across from the downtown Fatty Crab as the fumes of toasting belacan waft gently across Hudson Street.

Toasting Belacan: It’s important to note that toasting belacan creates a powerful, stinktastic odor. At Fatty Crab, we regularly piss off neighbors four doors down when we get to toasting belacan. If you have an exhaust fan or hood, for god’s sake, turn it on!

Put the belacan in a dry pan (you can also do it in a baking sheet under the broiler) and put the pan over medium heat. Once the belacan begins to smoke, in 4 to 5 minutes, use a spoon to crush it and disperse the crumbs across the pan. Open doors and windows, turn on fans, do whatever you can do to get the air flowing and the stink of toasting belacan out of your kitchen. Continue cooking until it’s a darker color and has become dry and crumbles easily, about 3 minutes. Don’t let it burn. Pull the pan from the heat, dump it into a bowl or mortar, and let it cool until it’s easy to handle.

BUDU SAUCE

Also called *nam budo*, this extremely pungent Southeast Asian condiment that looks like cloudy dishwater, smells like fish rotting on a shipwreck, and when used correctly, tastes like heaven, is produced by packing freshwater fish into earthenware pots with rice husk dust and letting it ferment. Then it’s cooked and strained. Look for it in bottles at Asian grocery stores.



GALANGAL FLOWER

TURMERIC

LEMONGRASS

GALANGAL

GINGER

THAI RED CHILIES

DRIED SHRIMP

THAI EGGPLANTS

HOISIN SAUCE

PORK FLOSS

NUTS