

# SpicyTones - A food blog production

Eva Pennanen

Thesis

Degree programme in Hotel,

Restaurant and Tourism

Management

January 2014

### Abstract



24.02.2014

Degree programme in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

Author or authors	Group or year of	
Eva Pennanen	entry	
	2010	
Title of report	Number of pages and	
SpicyTones - A food blog production		
	pages and appendices	
	61+18	

### Teacher(s) or supervisor(s)

Johanna Rajakangas- Tolsa, Birgitta Nelimarkka

This thesis is written to demonstrate the learning outcome of the author in creating a food blog project, named SpicyTones. The goals of the thesis are to create a successful food blog, to educate the society about Asian food and encourage them to cook at home. The objectives of the thesis are to obtain at least 50 followers, to keep the blog running for at least 3 months and to share out 12 themed recipes onto the blog. In this thesis, figures and tables are used in order to support the findings of the author.

The thesis consists of theoritical background related to blog, blogging and its history, whereas information about Malaysian food and cultures is also studied due to the fact that the author is sharing mainly Malaysian recipes onto her blog. The author explains how the Malaysian food and cultures evolved through centuries that tranforms Malaysia as a cultural melting pot.

In order to find out what are the key elements of a successful blog, the author also completed a study about awarded food blogs based on both International and Finnish scopes. A few key points are analysed and compared between bloggers. A summary is also carried out together with the illustration of a table at the end.

In this thesis, the author speaks about the development process of building the food blog. A thorough explanation is given, an interview is also accomplished during this process. Moreover, the author explains some of the variation and changes occurred during the process together with some supportive reasons. Feedbacks are also shown followingly.

At last, the author talks about her personal involvement with the food-blog production. An evaluation is given next accordingly. A series of screenshots are presented as an attachment in order to reveal the actual work of the thesis.

#### **Keywords**

Blog, blogging, Malaysia, food, culture

# Table of contents

1	Intro	oduction	1	
2	Blog	Blog introduction		
	2.1	What is a blog?	5	
	2.2	History of blogging and its community	6	
	2.3	The basic elements of a blog	8	
3	Mala	aysian food culture and history	. 12	
	3.1	The Malay and the Eurasian	. 12	
	3.2	The Chinese and the Peranakan	. 15	
	3.3	The Indian and the Mamak	. 16	
4	Befo	ore studies: Analysing successful blogs	. 18	
	4.1	International blogs analysis	. 18	
	4.2	Finnish blogs analysis	. 26	
	4.3	Summary	. 30	
5	The	process of a blog production	. 34	
	5.1	Creating a blog from the start	. 35	
	5.2	Interview with Ollikkala	. 45	
	5.3	Variation and changes	. 46	
	5.4	Feedback from small groups	. 49	
6	Proj	ect implementation	. 51	
	6.1	Personal involvement	. 51	
	6.2	Equipments and cost of production	. 53	
7	Eva	luation and conclusion	. 54	
	7.1	Discussion	. 55	
References		. 58		
Attachments		. 62		
	Foo	d blog print screen from Spicy Tones (Pennanen 2014)	. 62	

# 1 Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to research about the process of creating a blog, and to find out what are the key elements of a successful blog in order to create a new blog imitating those great examples. A food blog project named SpicyTones is formed in June 2013 as a result of the thesis research. SpicyTones is a food blog that shares recipes based on Asian home cooking, created by the author of this thesis who is a Malaysian currently living in Finland. The address of the blog is <a href="http://spicytones.com">http://spicytones.com</a>, where readers could refer to as a reflection of the thesis findings.

The main goal of the thesis is to create a successful and popular blog within blogging community reaching international level. The second goal is to educate the society about Asian home cooking, particularly Malaysian food and occasionally other food cultures as well because of the interest in foods the author carries. The vision is to transform the food blogging from part-time to full-time in the future, aiming to earn a stable income that covers the cost of ingredients and supports the blog financially. In records, there are many bloggers out there who have walked the same road and proved that this is a realistic goal. How? By offering space from the blog website for advertising, making cooperation or projects with companies could be those possible paths in getting considerable monetary benefits in the future. But these can only be done when a company sees the potential in a blog. Usually by looking at the numbers of visitors or traffics it generates each day or each month.

In order to achieve these goals, a list of objectives related to the making of the food blog are indicated as below:

- The food blog Spicy Tones is valid for a minimum duration of 3 months from June to August 2013 before it is to be evaluated by the thesis supervisors, latest by 15th September 2013.
- The author posts at least 1 post per week, 12 posts in total within the time period in relation to the thesis project.

- The author aims to attain 50 followers by 15<sup>th</sup> September 2013 when the mentioned 12 posts are released.
- At least 10 out of the targeted 50 followers should be international readers regardless of the countries they are from or located.

It was agreed with the supervisors that the food blog should be valid for a period of at least 3 months. Therefore the student will have sufficient time limit to work with the project, and also to collect enough materials in order to be promoted to the public of interested. It is also decided between the student and the supervisors that the blog has to publish at least 12 posts for the thesis project. With the knowledge of previous marketing studies and work experience, the student's target of 50 followers is believed to be achievable.

This project acts as a learning process for the student in understanding how to communicate with people around the world by using the sense of vision through the World Wide Web. The blog production involves in coming up with a name, setting up a website, creating valuable content, making the blog attractive, promoting it through social media channel as well as in maintaining the blog, together with the backbones of a prestudy and theoretical framework to support the making of the project.

This thesis project offers significant benefits to the society principally for all ages. It is an educational project in providing the knowledge of using limited ingredients to cook authentic Asian cuisine, particularly Malaysian cuisine free of charge. The project would also enhance the interest of readers in cooking as a hobby, encouraging people to cook Malaysian food and get familiar with exotic ingredients. The project would literally bring homogeneous people together who shared the same interest, in a way that it also offers a sense of belongingness as a direction to follow. Moreover, the project is also believed to be beneficial for the readers as a guideline of how to create a blog in general. In additions, the blog would also enrich the knowledge of Malaysian food culture and history, providing great source of information in many aspects shown in this thesis to the readers.

The main obstacles of this project are rather common, which are money and time. Asian cooking requires a series of basic cooking ingredients, let alone those exotics spices that are imported from overseas. Some of the cooking methods also required special skills or equipment, such as knitting a bun and obtaining a bamboo steamer. Therefore substitutes must be found and introduced. Furthermore, certain costs are involved in making the project, such as in upgrading the blog for an easy-to-remember web address.

The structure of the thesis starts with the theory supporting the thesis and production of the blog. Background information about blog or blogging and its history are defined in order to help the author in understanding the main subject of the project. In this chapter, a screenshot is indicated from SpicyTones offering a glance at some of the basic elements from a blog. Later on, the knowledge about Malaysian food and culture is studied and explained. The author speaks about different cultures found in Malaysia from various ethnic groups, and how different food cultures have evolved across centuries. Some of the signature dishes were also discussed as examples under this topic. In the following, an analysis work about successful International and Finnish blogs is presented. For this analysis, a few key points are studied and a summary is shown at the end of the chapter.

The development process of the food-blog project is shown in the following chapter, where figures and tables are applied to support the findings of the thesis. Not only the process in creating a blog is clarified, the interview with the founder of a blogging community named FitFashion.fi is also revealed. Additionally, there have been variation and changes throughout the process of the project, which are discussed in the following together with the feedback section. Next, the author tells about her personal involvement with the project. Topics such as timelines, cost and equipment involved are brought up in this discussion. Finally, an evaluation is given based on the learning from the food-blog project. Some of the recognition and awards given to SpicyTones are mentioned; on top of that a statistic about the blog traffic is also illustrated with a figure. A discussion section is demonstrated at last, where certain topics are talked over

that give readers a deeper insight into development process of the food blog production.

# 2 Blog introduction

In this chapters, an introduction about blog or blogging would be explained. Next, the history of blogging is brought up in order to understand what blogging was meant to be in the first place. In the following, the basic elements of a blog would be presented with brief explanation together with an image taken from the webpage SpicyTones, created by the author.

# 2.1 What is a blog?

To blog or blogging is a form of communication based on the Internet that is rapidly becoming a mainstream. Lenhart (2004) simplified the phenomenon of blogging or weblogging as sweeping the Internet. Whereas Griffith (2013.) defines blog as a regularly or sometimes constantly updated website consisting of posts, which are typically shown in a reverse- chronological order. Specifically speaking, the newest entry is always the first one that reader sees. Blood's (2002.) version of blogging definition is somewhat similar to Griffith's. She pointed out that weblogs are hard to describe but easy to recognize, as they tend to have a common format: a webpage with new entries placed at the top, and are updated frequently. On the other hand, Downes (2004.) introduced John Barger's original definition of a weblog, blog, news page or sometimes called a filter, is a webpage where a weblogger, blogger or pre-surfer 'logs' all the other webpages he or she finds interesting. The newest entry is typically at the top of the page, so that repeat visitors can catch up by simply reading down the page until they reach a link they saw on their last visit.

Moreover, launching a blog is the same as launching a website. Griffith (2013.) stated that there are two ways of making it. The first way is to use a service that hosts the blog for you, and all you do is to log in and make updates, such as Blogger.com and WordPress.com. This is the preferred method especially for those without a budget and it is more casual. Most of those free hosted blog services offer ready templates that make the website looks good, offer hosting with unlimited traffic and allow bloggers to post via Web interface or email. But it usually requires payments whenever an extra feature comes across, such as a domain name support or a video support. The second

way is to buy or rent a Web hosting space and install or use pre-installed software to create a blog, like Movable Type and WordPress.org. The positive side is that the blogger has more control over the website on designs and names, but the negative side is that it requires a huge amount of work in maintenance. There is also a risk in crashing the whole system when downloading a newer version of the software. In comparison, both have its pros and cons but hosted blog service has its limitation. As podcast cannot be done through hosted blog services because audio files are not being supported. Moreover, sometimes blogs are embedded into bigger websites, for example journalist writes blogs and publishes through a newspaper Web editions. Unlike Griffith, Houghton (2012.) includes the third way of blogging that is through hosted micro blog, which would be mentioned in the following topic.

In addition, it also observes that blogging has evolved from three major directions. At first blogging began as a tool to store bookmarks. Second, it transformed into a series of post started by Pasty Drone. And third blogging has been used as a tool to announce new links and events (Downes 2004.).

## 2.2 History of blogging and its community

Today, weblog is often characterized and criticized as only a set of personal comments and observations. However, looking back at the history of web logging reveals that it is not the case. As Blood (2000.) stated in her article that weblogs were originally link-driven sites, which was a mixture in unique proportions of links, commentary and personal thoughts and essays. The very first weblog appeared was Mosaic's What's New Page, which generated from June 1993 to June 1996. The web was updated daily and it directed Web surfers to sites they might enjoy seeing. Blood (2002, 4-5.) explained more in her book that in the beginning, any webpage was an interesting thing to look at, but then the space got crowded when companies started to advertise their products and services onto the Web.

Anyhow the trend brought in more and more people to put up pages about their interest and lives. Most of the early web loggers were editors and web developers who designed and maintained websites for a living. At the same time newspaper and maga-

zines started publishing Web editions. The Web grew so big that finding any source of good reading materials became difficult. Some enthusiasts then decided to put links they collected daily onto a single webpage. It seemed to be the most natural thing to them to put the their records on the Web, because of that a particular type of website was born.

The history of blogging community began in 1997 when John Barger who named a handful of sites of the type as weblogs. Later on Jesse James Garrett, editor of Infosift, began compiling a list of "other sites like his" and sent that list to Cameron Barrett, who published the list on his site named Camworld. Others who maintained similar sites began sending their URLs to him in order to be included on the list. At the beginning of 1999, Jesse's 'page of only weblogs' lists the 23 known to be in existence. Within short time, a community boomed up. During the same time, Peter Merhoiz announced on his site that he was to pronounce it as 'wee-blog', which later on was shortened to 'blog' with the weblog editor referred to as a 'blogger' (Blood 2002, 5-8.).

Furthermore in early 1999, Brigitte Eaton collected a list of every weblog she knew about and then created the Eatonweb Portal. She evaluated all proposals by a simple measurement: that the site consists of dated entries. The blogging community continued to grow steadily until July 1999 when Pitas, the first free build-your-own-weblog tool launched, and suddenly there were hundreds. In August Pyra released Blogger and turned the trend into an explosion. (Blood 2000.) Nowadays not only that there are many online platforms like WordPress, Tumblr, Movable Type, and Svbtle, most of the services are also free of charge, and all of them are designed to allow individuals to publish their own weblogs quickly and easily.

In addition, a report published in February 2004 by the Pew Internet & American Life Project noted that more than 53 million American adults or 44% of adult Internet users have used the Internet to publish their thoughts, respond to others, post pictures, share files and otherwise contribute to the explosion of content available online (Lenhart et al. 2004.). Besides, Griffith (2013.) pointed out that many people nowadays are already familiar with social networks as well as so called 'microblogs' such as Twitter

and Tumblr. As Kaplan & Haenlein (2011.) explained that microblogs allow users to exchange small elements of content such as short sentences, individual images, or video links. Microbloggers post information regarding to status updates, news or personal interest, through the form of emailing, text messaging, video sharing and so on.

## 2.3 The basic elements of a blog

In this chapter, the basic elements of a blog will be demonstrated briefly. A screenshot of SpicyTones webpage is taken to show as an example as Figure 1 in the following. The idea of this approach is to help readers to understand and to get familiar with some of the most used terms in blogging community. A list of terms and short description are shown with pointers next to related areas.

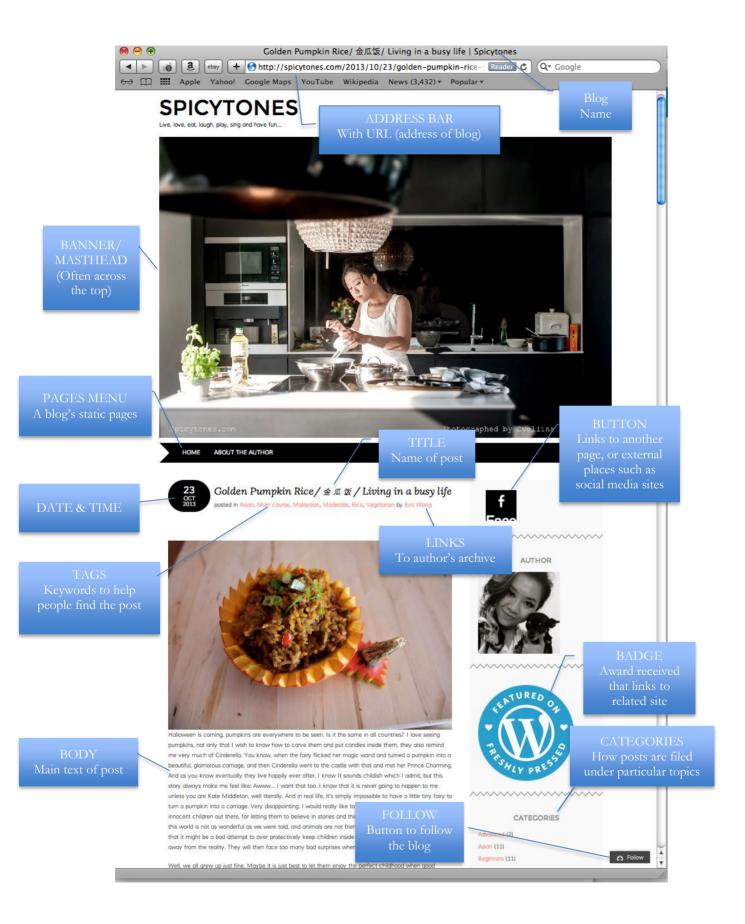


Figure 1. The basic elements of a blog referring to SpicyTones (Houghton 2012, 9; Pennanen 2013)

As indicated in Figure 1, the basic elements of a blog will be explained from clockwise direction in the following texts. Begins from the top, the address bar with URL shows the address of the blog, where readers can search the blog with keywords or the direct link of a certain blog post with any Internet browsers. Next is the name of the blog. In this case, WordPress.com's platform shows the name of the blog at the top of the browser, right after the title or name of the post. A title is basically the name of a post. In this example, the title of this post is Golden Pumpkin Rice / 金瓜饭 / Living in a busy life. Moreover, a button is a tool that links to another page, or external places such as social media sites. In this example, there is a Facebook button. Many bloggers like to include other buttons such as LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and etc. A link or links in general direct readers to another page. In this example, the link named Eva Wong that is highlighted in red colour will direct readers to the author's archive.

There is a badge shown at the bottom right side of the post. Usually it is an award or recognition received, or a sign of membership of organizations. In this case, it means that the author has received a type of recognition from WordPress.com that named Featured on Freshly Pressed. In the following shows the categories of the blog. Categories are where the posts filed under particular general topics, such as Starters, Main Courses, Desserts and so on. There is a follow button shown at the bottom right corner, which eases readers to follow the blog by just one click on the button.

To the left starting from the bottom, it shows the body of the main text of post. According to the pre-study completed by the author, a food blog post usually includes a personal story write-up before a recipe is shown. Furthermore, tags are those keywords that help readers to find the blog post. Tags are different than categories. They are usually more detailed and narrowing down the search, such as gluten free, vegan, rice, Halloween and so on. In this blog, the author decided to indicate the date and time of the blog post, which is shown together with the title of the post. The pages menu shows the static pages of the blog. In this case, there are only two pages: Home and About the Author. Other pages could be created in order to ease readers to search for related topics, such as Travel, Ingredients and so on. Pages often make the blog more organized, tidy and clearer. At last, a banner or masthead that is often placed across the

top of the blog is a way of getting the attention of readers. Usually bloggers prefer to put out an eye-catching photograph, but some also use this space to put out advertisement for commercial purposes.

These basic elements are normally seen in many types of blogs. Some may be different than these but the basic ideas remain the same. More details about blog analysis will be explained in Chapter 4 as before studies.

# 3 Malaysian food culture and history

Malaysia is known as a multicultural country, a land filled with varieties and contrast hence the creation of its richness in cultures. For centuries, traders from the Middle East, India, China, Japan, Philippines and even Europe travelled by sea and came to the shore of Malaysia. The history of Malaysia shows the diversity of the people who settled here, where the lives of the multi-races just began. They brought in their own culture and tradition especially the important aspects of their cuisines. Culinary practices had slowly changed in times based on the respect to each other's cultural and religious sensitivity (Leong et al. 2010, 164.). By coincidence, intercultural culinary practices were obvious. For examples, the adoption of Malay and Indian spices in Chinese food and the creation of halal version of Chinese food that is edible to all races. The cuisine of Malaysia in these times tells the story of the country's colorful background, and the heritage of which all Malaysians share today.

It all due back to what happened in Malacca, a city founded by a Sumatran prince named Parameswara during the 14th century. Influenced by the Arab traders, Parameswara converted from Hindu to Muslim (Melaka State Government 2013.). Islam thus became the religion of the Malays in the Peninsula, which is now known as West Malaysia. The Malays in Malaysia who are under the guardian of Islamic law must only consume food that is halal, meaning lawful or permissible. Therefore pork is not allowed in the Malay's cuisine. Besides, any meat the Malays consumed must come from the specific halal distributors. The Malays often cook their meats with Rempah, which is a blend of mixed spices grounded by mortar and pestle. The core ingredients of making a Rempah include chilies, shallots and garlic, which can be found in most of the Malay cuisines.

#### 3.1 The Malay and the Eurasian

The core diet of an early Malays community has been rice and fish. As stated by historian Dr. Timothy, 'Tens or hundreds of thousand of rice has been brought in to the

Malacca Kingdom to trade every year from Java.'(Barnard 2010.). Combine with fish, it made up a basic Malay's diet. It is said that during the old days, many were uneducated to hold jobs as teachers or professors. In order to survive, fishing has become the casual daily work for the Nelayan, which is fishermen in Malay, to trade for fresh products and bring food to the family (Baki 2005.). Most of the fishes come from the west side channel of Malaysia called the straits of Malacca, which is an important Malaysian crossroad. Straits of Malacca link the banks of China to India and the East makes it very suitable as a commercial center.

The popularity of fish continues among the 28 million Malaysians today. Studies show that the fish consumption of Malaysia has a dramatic increase over the decades that each Malaysian consumed 54 kilograms of fish every year. And it is estimated that each Malaysian to consume 55 kilograms of fish by year 2020 (Teh 2012, 1-2.). Dr. Timothy (Barnard 2010.) also mentioned that the Malaysians eat away 2 million tons of fish each year. The love of fish can be found in one of the Malaysian remarkable cuisine, Nasi Lemak, a dish that exists since 15th century comprises with coconut fragrant rice, fried anchovies, boiled egg, Sambal chili paste, roasted peanuts, and slices of cucumber over a piece of banana leaf. Many Malaysians start their day by having this 600 years old Malaysian breakfast as a habit despite the differences of their race. Nasi Lemak consists elements of carbohydrate, protein and vegetable. It has been passed down through ages. Although there have been a lot of different varieties, the basic dish remains unchanged for centuries.

Another signature local dishes from the Malay community is Beef Rendang, which is the only all time favorite dish in every Malay's home. Beef Rendang is one of the featured dishes served during festivals and celebrations, especially at the end of the Muslim fasting and during Hari Raya, the New Year celebration of Malay community in Malaysia. Rendang is originated from West Sumatra, Indonesia where the Minangkabau ethnic group has created this ancient recipe (Sutiawan 2012.). Unexpectedly, Rendang may be considered as a fusion dish, in the way that the influence of Indian can be found in the Rendang recipe. The uses of cumin, fennel, cinnamon, and coriander

found in Rendang recipe, which are some of the most essential elements in Indian curry.

Fusion is not 20th century; fusion took placed from 13th to 14th centuries already in Malaysia.' said Selvarajah (2010.), a Malaysian food writer and celebrity chef for 30 years. The combination of cultural influences started when the Portuguese made Malacca its colony and settlement in 1511. In the days before refrigeration when foods were preserved in salt, spices were very appreciable. For the next 130 years, Malacca became one of the key points formation with Goa in India together with Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, leading Portugal to have control over the Asiatic trade routes (MalaysianFood 2013.). That was when most of the spices were exchanged across the borders. The Dutch took over Malacca in 1641 and then later on by the British during 18th century. Centuries of intermarriages between Portuguese, Dutch merchants and local women gave birth to a European-Asian mixed race named Eurasian, and that was when fusion food first created.

Eurasian is also called Cristang, a minority ethnic group in Malaysia who are the descendants of the Portuguese, Dutch, Malay and Indian (Marbeck 2008.). As one can imagine, a mixture of spices from different cultures is adopted to the Eurasian cuisine, sharing recipes that is a cultural blend of the East and West. The Portuguese relied on fishing to gain a living, therefore the love of seafood is as a result found in the Eurasian cuisines. Besides seafood, the Eurasian also like to use cinnamon, cloves, fennel, nutmeg, pepper, breadcrumbs and chilies as main ingredients in cooking. The European traders often use tomatoes, peanuts and pineapples in their cuisine as well, which were believingly to be introduced by them. For no doubt, the Eurasians' love of spices also influenced by the Portuguese, which they use a lot of tamarind, Belacan, dried fermented shrimp paste, coconut, garlic, onions, lemongrass and candlenuts to give strong taste in their cuisine (Giselle 2009.). Devil curry, a curry dish with generous amount of chilies added is for instance one of the signature spicy dishes from the Eurasian community.

#### 3.2 The Chinese and the Peranakan

Alongside the straits of Malacca up to the north of Malaysia is where Penang located, a land of Chinese culture and people who are the majority. Over the times Chinese traders have come here to settle down. They brought their own tradition and cultures, including their cuisine, which lead Penang into a street food paradise. Penang is well known by its street foods inspired by the Chinese for instances Char Kuey Teow, which is a stir-fried flat rice noodle dish; Penang Assam Laksa, which is a sour, fish based soup; and Hae Mee, which is a prawn noodle soup. Selvarajah (2010.) explained that Char Kuey Teow is a dish fried with high heat and high turnover, which is a direct reflection of the hard-working Chinese businessmen who came to settle here.

The history of Chinese people in Malaysia is due to hundreds years ago, when they came from China to this peninsula for seeking opportunities. But the number has gone up since the arrival of a British-eastern Indian company in 1786. When the British established Penang, based on the agreement of Sultan of Kedah, one of the main goals was to have a free trade, since then Penang became the major trade and commercial center in Malaysia, which attracted even more Chinese who came as traders, coolies and labors. It is argued that Chinese has come to Malacca before Penang. It is generally accepted by the historians that about 100000 people have lived in Malacca during the 15th century, which would have made it the largest city in the world. (Barnard 2010.)

Most of the Chinese people in Malaysia came from the South of China. Back then, according to Wu and Tan (2001, 127.), the majority of the Chinese people were Hokkien (34,66%), Hakka (23,47%), Cantonese (18,27%), Teochiu (11,31%) and some minorities like Foochow (4,93%), Hainanese (3,65%) people and etc. They brought in some of those popular dishes like stir-fry Cantonese flat noodles in egg gravy, Hokkien noodles in dark soy sauce and Hainanese chicken rice that even the Malays find them irresistible. Nowadays these dishes can be found in halal restaurants served for the Muslim community. Moreover, Cantonese influenced bizarre foods like shark fin and bird's nest soup are considered to be very precious, as they are highly valued among the Chinese community in Malaysia. Another world-wide-known Cantonese delicacy,

Dim Sum is usually consumed with friends and family during lunch hours and Sunday brunch in Malaysia.

Similar to the background of Eurasian, overtimes intermarriages between the Chinese and local Malay people gave birth to a unique and hybrid culture in Malaysia, which is the Peranakan. The Peranakan is also commonly known as the Baba and Nyonya people; they are found mainly in Malacca, Penang and Singapore. The Peranakan way of living is a blend of Chinese and Malay cultures together with occasionally Western influences (Culinary Asia Malaysia Cuisine and Food 2010.). One of the main influences of the Peranakan is in the Malaysian cuisine. Peranakan cuisine is inherited from Chinese favorite herbs, mushrooms, dried food, bean paste and others, combining together with Malay's ingredients such as candlenut, Laksa leaves, Belacan and fermented shrimp paste. It is also mixed with Indian, Middle Eastern spices and Javanese vegetables, such as Buah Keluak, fern plant and Ulam (Chong 2011, 10.). It is commonly known that there are two types of Peranakan cuisines, which categorized into Penang and Malacca style. Penang style of Peranakan cuisine has a sweeter taste with added coconut milk and coriander; whereas Malacca style of Peranakan cuisine is more spicy and sour with dried prawn sauce often added into its foods.

#### 3.3 The Indian and the Mamak

The use of spices in Malaysian cuisine is derived from the arrival of Indians after they came to Malaysia through land or via Straits of Malacca. Indians have already been in Malacca for centuries, but the number increased during the colonial era when British took control over the economy (Barnard 2010.). During those times, Indians were brought in to work for rubber plantation or for the English civil services in Singapore, Malacca and Penang. They brought in their spices and most importantly their flavors, which most of them have turned into the local cuisines. For example, the use of banana leaves has traveled across the Indian Ocean. Banana leave is an important feature of the South-Indian meal, which the Indians use it as a plate (Selvarajah 2010.). It is now

widely used in other Malaysian dishes such as Nyonya cake, Nasi Lemak, Ketupat, grill fish, Otak-otak, fish head curry and so on.

Local Indian hawkers have created unique versions of local dishes, which are not found in India. From the Indian community, fish head curry is being a featured Malaysian dish comes from the exotic fusion of Indian and Chinese influences. Like most of the other cultures, Indians do not eat fish head. It is the Chinese who has suffered from the wars that the harsh life taught them how to appreciate every parts of food source they have gotten on their hands. Nowadays the head of fish is usually saved and served to the most respected person at the dining table, particularly the eldest or the person who has the highest status position among the group. It is due to the fact that Chinese people consider the flesh from the fish head to be the most delicious and tender. To win the Chinese's appetite, the Indian figured out to cook Indian curry with fish head served on banana leaf, and they succeeded. Hence the fish head curry became one of the dishes representing Malaysian cuisine. It is widely accepted by the locals as well as the Chinese tourists who visit in Malaysia.

One cannot come to Malaysia without eating at a Mamak stall at the street. Mamak is a Muslim converted Indian who is also called Tamil Muslim. Unlike the typical Hindu Indians whose meals are exclusive of beef, the Mamaks prepared their food with beef but no pork. Mamak foods can be found everywhere in Malaysia, from the street corners next to the roads to five stars hotel in Kuala Lumpur. From a Mamak stall, one can order famous dishes like Roti Canai, a localized version of Paratha; Mee Goreng, a stir-fry dish combined with Chinese yellow noodle, tofu, and chilies; Teh Tarik, a hand-pulled foamy tea; and Rojak, an Indian fruit salad with local fermented shrimp sauce. Moreover, Nasi Kandar, which is an economical meal similar to Indonesian Nasi Padang, is a combination of Malay and Indian cuisine served by the Mamaks, hence very Malaysia (Travellers Worldwide 2013.). Again, it is another evidence of Malaysia being a cultural melting pot. Economical rice is a term referred to Malaysian Chinese food that served like a buffet styles right off the streets (Wiens 2012.). The term economy in this case means that the meal is supposed to be on low budget, which makes it a typical dish for working class people especially for lunch.

# 4 Before studies: Analysing successful blogs

It is decided to do a study before starting the food blog. The idea is to learn and understand how other bloggers have done their jobs in order to become successful in blogging communities. For these before-studies, some of those best food blogs awarded by various organisers were picked. 4 international blogs and 2 Finnish blogs were chosen for the analysing process. The student analysed more international blogs than the Finnish blogs because the target is to get international audiences, but at the same time it is important to learn about the Finnish market, since the student's current base is in Finland. The student also wanted to find out and compare whether there is a difference in style between international and domestic blogs.

In the following, 4 international blogs analysis will be presented first. Later on, 2 Finnish blogs analysis will be explained. At last, a summary is drawn to conclude the findings of these studies.

## 4.1 International blogs analysis

The first chosen international blog is Not Without Salt by blogger Ashley Rodriguez, whose blog was awarded as the Best Cooking Blog of The Saveur 4th Annual Best Food Blog Award 2013. A screenshot is taken from Not Without Salt shown as Figure 2 below in order to help reader in understanding the analysis in the following.

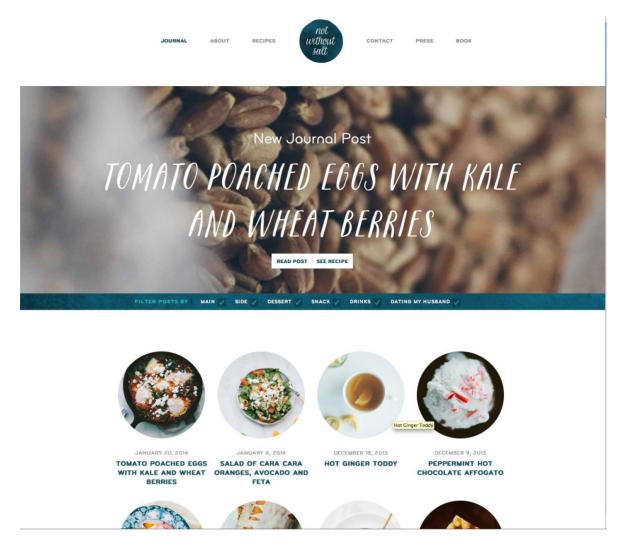


Figure 2. Screenshot taken from awarded blog Not Without Salt (Rodriguez 2014)

Rodriguez's blog has a white background, looks clean and simple. The blogger includes a lot of well-edited photographs in her blog posts. One notable recent change in Rodriguez's website is that her blog became more photographs-oriented than before. In other words, the first thing that readers see is a page full of food photographs as widgets. The readers can decide which food they are interested in and click on that photograph widget, and then it will link to the recipe regarding the food item. The website looks very unique, fresh and funny, compared to how it used to look as a traditional food blog, that mostly includes texts, photographs and sometimes advertisements on the main page. However, the new format of the website still needs some improvements as some of the photos seemed blurry once expended.

In Rodriguez's blog post, she usually inserts a photograph of raw ingredient or the final result at the top of each post, and her post would end with a capture of the event she attended, if it is not a final photograph of the food. Her texts always start with a short personal story write up or an incident that occurred to her recently. In between, Rodriguez likes to insert many well-edited photographs accompanying her texts. These photographs are artistic and professionally taken, most of them are taken of ingredients, step by step processes, people who were around the table and etc. It is clearly shown that the blogger has devoted herself into her own blog. It can be seen from the personal stories she wrote about her everyday life with her children and family. For example, she even wrote about her marriage problems and the conversation she and her husband shared.

In analysing her posts, Rodriguez always puts down the links if she has referred to someone else's recipe. One thing she does differently than others is that she shares a great amount of links to the blogs she followed. Besides, it is also easy for the readers to look for the subscription button to her blog. One can also follow her blog through other social media channels as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. She has also allowed advertisements on her blog site. It is understood that the success of her blog comes from her truthfulness about her personal life and the attractiveness of her well-made photography taken of her food.

The second chosen international blog is Manger by Mimi Thorisson, whose blog was awarded as the Best Regional Cuisine of The Saveur 4th Annual Best Food Blog 2013. A screenshot is taken from Manger shown as Figure 3 below in order to help reader in understanding the analysis in the following.





The shape of thing

Last week I had a vision. I closed my eyes and all I could see were serving plates in Italian restaurants, stacked with lamb chops and veal escalops. Some of them had steamed fish with slices of lemon, others had mountains of pasta. At least one of them was held by a slick waiter in a white dinner jacket but mostly they were carried by plump women with multicolored aprons and smiles on their well-fed faces. One of the women had yellow plastic flowers in her hair. I know her well, she's the lady from Cumpa Cosino restaurant in Ravello where



Figure 3. Screenshot taken from awarded blog Manger (Thorisson 2014)

Thorisson usually shares very long posts; with a few recipes involved in each post together with very personal stories write up. Her blog looks very attractive from all the photographs taken by her husband, who is a professional photographer. Unlike others, Thorisson likes to include photographs that are not directly relevant to the recipes she shared. Instead of writing only for the recipes, she usually tells about what has happened on that particular day from the beginning to the end. And she put all the photographs about the things around her: a tree, a laughing crowd, a narrow road or her dogs. Another interesting point is that she habitually includes her self-portraits into her blog posts, which is rather uncommon in blogging community. It makes her blog looks

more like a celebrity site about lifestyle rather than a traditional food blog, which actually makes it unique and fascinating. Her blog also has a white background that looks simple and clean.

Thorisson's blog is about her stories. Her photographs are very artistic and inviting that each of them tells her stories and feelings behind it, even though they are not exactly relevant to the recipes. Another thing she does differently than others is that her post's title refers to an event instead of the name of the recipe she shared. But she puts all the recipes with their names under a separate page titled as Recipe. Thorisson also maintains her blog through Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr, Google+ and emails. But she does not allow advertisements on her blog.

The third chosen international blog is 101 Cookbooks by Heidi Swanson, a San Francisco based photographer, cookbook author and designer, whose blog has won countless awards. The most recent nomination is the Best of the Food Blogs by Delish.com in 2013. A screenshot is taken from 101 Cookbooks shown as Figure 4 below in order to help reader in understanding the analysis in the following.

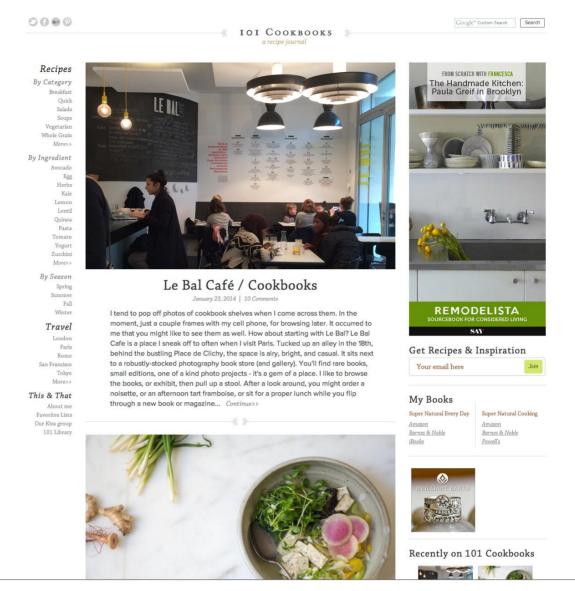


Figure 4. Screenshot taken from awarded blog 101 Cookbooks (Swanson 2014)

Swanson's has started her blog since 2003; hence it is well known and remains popular until now. Swanson's blog is visually clean, simple with a white background. One noted point is that Swanson only shares simple recipes, with a few ingredients and thorough description underneath. Swanson's photographs are very natural and less edited. They seemed rather homemade which actually make the recipes look acceptable and give an impression as if they are easy to make. Similar to Mimi Thorisson from Manger, Swanson also likes to include photographs that are not exactly related to the recipes. But those photographs have a connection to those short stories she tells about her daily life, which she always do in her blog posts.

It can be seen that Swanson allows a couple of advertisements on her blog page, that the blog still remain organised and tidy. Other than sharing recipes, Swanson also shares her traveling experiences on a separate page under the title of Travel, where comprised of photographs from her trips, recommendation of places to eat and drink, shopping places and tourist attractions, some useful links and so on. Swanson also seemed to be very organized which she allows readers to find recipes by a list of categories or a wide range of ingredients she used. Furthermore, Swanson also owns social media accounts for 101 Cookbooks on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and Pinterest. On her page she also shares links that connect to online bookstores where her books can be purchased.

The fourth chosen international blog is Delicious Shots by Najwa Kronfel, a professional chef and a mother of one in New York whose blog just awarded as Top 100 food blogger 2013 organized by Babble.com. A screenshot is taken from Delicious Shots shown as Figure 5 below in order to help reader in understanding the analysis in the following.

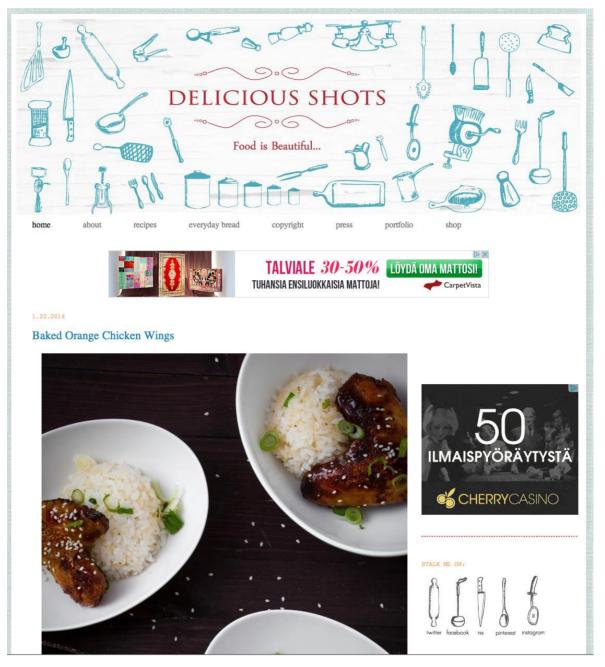


Figure 5. Screenshot taken from awarded blog Delicious Shots (Kronfel 2014)

Kronfel's blog has a simple blue and white theme with a funky twist, which she has added comic graphics as buttons and widgets. Like all other successful bloggers, Kronfel always write a short personal story and insert step-by-step pictures to her blog posts. But it is noticeable that she also likes to take pictures of kitchenware. What separates her blog from others is that she always give-away something for free. Clearly she cooperates with companies and suppliers; there are also quite a lot of advertisements visible on her page.

Another unique selling point from her blog is that recently Kronfel has started to share her recipes via food videos, which makes the blog very fascinating and even more appealing. She also edits her photographs similar to poster-like to make them more interesting. The readers can follow Delicious Shots via Facebook, Twitter, RSS, Pinterest and Instagram. Kronfel also shares pages connect to her portfolio where she keeps all her photography; and to her online shop where readers can buy kitchenware designed by her and her husband. That explained why pictures of her kitchenware could be seen from her blog posts.

## 4.2 Finnish blogs analysis

In the following paragraphs 2 Finnish blogs would be analysed. The first chosen Finnish blog is Kinuskikissa by Sini Visa, whose blog was awarded the Best food blog by Helsingin Uutiset in 2012. A screenshot is taken from Kinuskikissa shown as Figure 6 below in order to help reader in understanding the analysis in the following.

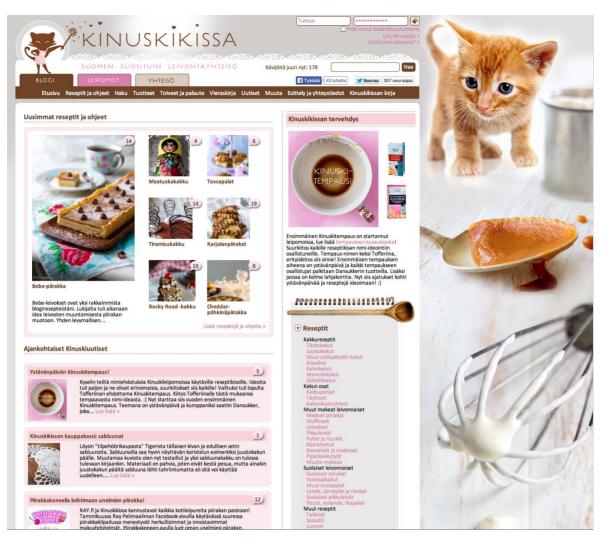


Figure 6. Screenshot taken from awarded blog Kinuskikissa (Visa 2014)

Unlike the international blogs that usually have a white and simple background, Kinuskikissa has a colourful pink and brown theme, with graphic and pictures featuring cat. Kinuskikissa looks quite crowded and has a great amount of information, which shows a striking contrast compared with the artistry of previously mentioned international blogs. The differences between international and Finnish blogs are spotted right away. Next to notice is that there are more texts than pictures in Visa's blog. It seemed like that Visa does not share much about her personal life. Even when she tells, it would be no more than a few sentences, hence the way she expresses herself as a blogger is rather conservative. Visa has a routine to tell a short paragraph about the food she makes before each post. Her posts are quite straightforward without showing much of her personal emotion or lifestyle. There are seldom photographs of other people in her posts, only occasionally her own pictures or of her families in those posts

that are relevant. In each post, there are usually small size pictures of step-by-step process; sometimes she puts only one final product. Her photographs are well taken without putting too much effort in editing that makes them look natural and homey.

What makes Kinuskikissa different than other blogs is that Visa is engaged in many projects on top of her blogging. On her blog, she is also writing feedback on new product testing; products taste comparison and reviews on existing products. Visa has also organised her posts under a wide selection of menus. She organized her posts by themes, seasons, recipes, instructions; she also shared links to her communities, forum, news, articles, and information about her books, events and many more. Visa also organises competitions and lottery programs for readers to win freebies. She also cooperates with companies and has her products sold in groceries stores. Moreover, Visa allows massive usage of advertisements on her blog page. Unlike other international bloggers who typically pay a lot of attention on the appearances in social media, Kinuskikissa has only channels via Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and emails.

The second chosen Finnish blog is Kauhaa ja Rakkautta by Eeva Kolu, whose blog came the Second position in Best food blog in by Helsingin Uutiset 2012. A screenshot is taken from Kauhaa ja Rakkautta shown as Figure 7 below in order to help reader in understanding the analysis in the following.

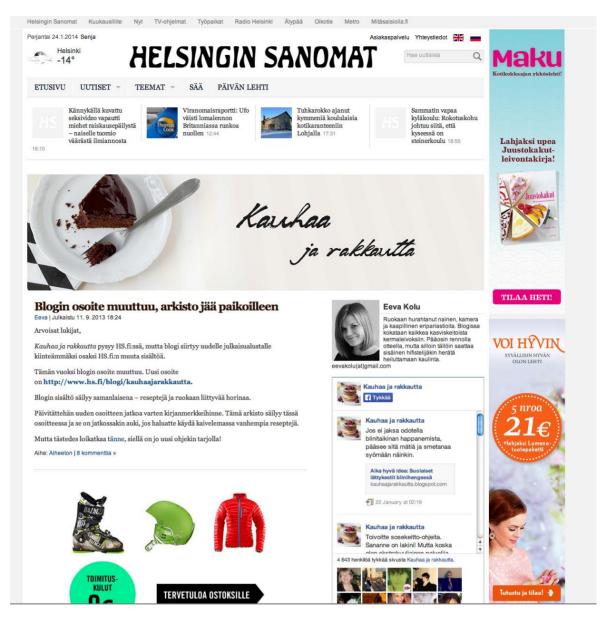


Figure 7. Screenshot taken from awarded blog Kauhaa ja Rakkautta (Kolu 2014)

Kolu's blog has a white background, but the blog is based under a newspaper named Helsingin Sanomat domain. It is confusing to readers to figure out whether it is a blog or a newspaper official page, as the news takes over the top and the bottom of the blog page itself. Unlike all the blogs mentioned before, Kolu does not share personal stories or lifestyle in her posts. She normally says something short about the recipe including the background information of the food, tips in making it, the expected taste and etc., and then she shares the recipes in the following. Impressively, her photographs are very similar to those of international bloggers, which are very artistic and professionally taken. She usually includes one final picture of her food in each of her blog post.

The biggest advantage of Kolu's blog is that the blog has a certain amount of exposure to publicity, since it is added to the directory of a bigger website. Helsingin Sanomat is being a well-known newspapers organization in Finland, to have a blog shown in its website, the guarantee is that it will generate a certain amount of traffic and readers. However, as understood from Rebecca (Blood, 2002, 78-80), one should not be bother to even pay to have own website listed in a Web directory, as it will never ever be worth it. She explained further in her book that from her experience, fewer than a dozen hits from any portal was generated since she began her blog, Rebecca's Pocket for three and a half years of time. However, if anyone were writing a blog during free time like most others do, having a blog listed under a bigger web directory would ease the effort and time in marketing and promoting the blog.

To name the plus side of Eeva Kolu's blog, first comes the homey feeling it gives. In other words, the elements of life can be seen from her pictures. For examples, her vintage picks on kitchenware, her love of flowers, her wooden table at the white kitchen corner and etc. These elements give a feeling of similarity and familiarity, as if she were a closed friend. In addition, there is a different approach she did on her page, which she filed a separated archive to tell only about her stories. There are only 15 different posts where she shared her moments about some special events, like a day in a Vietnamese cooking course, eating at home alone and etc. On the other hand, the down side of Eeva Kolu's blog is that there are way too many advertisements on her blog. It is because the blog is embedded into a well-known electronic newspapers official site, most of the links and keywords around the blog direct readers to the newspapers site. It is distracting and confusing for the readers, it may also discourage readers to follow the blog continuingly. Since the blog is embedded to Helsingin Sanomat's webpage, Kolu's blog offers social media channel to Facebook only.

### 4.3 Summary

Figure 8 is created as shown below in order to demonstrate a clear summary for this analysis of successful blogs as shown in the following:

Kauhaa ja Rakkautta Manger Kinuskikissa Not Without Salt Name of Blogs **Delicious Shots** 101 Cookbooks Background, Cleanliness Simpliness Tidiness, \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\* \*\*\* \* \* Advertisement \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\* \* **Pictures** Editing Effort in \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\* \* \* \* \* People, Events Photography Step by Step, Ingredients, End Result, & Others Range of \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \* Personal Share of Stories \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\* \*\* \* \* Refferences & Links of Others Use of \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \* \* \* \* Media Social \*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* \*\*\* \* \* \*\*\* portfolio and knowledge design, share of Finnish cultures of food videos, own gallery eat and drinks, shopping places, photographs, travel tips, places to Shared only simple recipes, homey Share of long post, very personal exposure of publicity, homey giveaways, own communities engagement, product testing, free expertise in bakery, projects Corporations between companies, kitchenware, free giveaways, share tourist attractions several recipes in one post, self stories, elements of life in Medoc, photography oriented webpage Embedded to bigger website, Share of very personal stories, Promotion of own brand portraits Differentiation

Figure 8. Summary of Before Studies: Successful Blogs Analysis (Pennanen 2013)

To clarify Figure 8, the one with less "\*" means it is less relevant to the topics, and the one with more "\*" is more relevant to the topics.

As a review, there is a clear difference between International blogs and Finnish blogs in comparison. It seemed to be clear that International blogs are more personalized, whereas Finnish blogs are more commercial oriented. In comparison, all chosen awarded International blogs pay great intention in making their websites tidy, simple and clean; additionally all of them prefer white background. They also put strong efforts in taking and editing high quality pictures. Most of them have moderate amount or very few advertisements. Besides, sharing a wide range of photos with the readers seemed to be important as well. Photos of end result, step by step, people, events, kitchenware and even unrelated item such as a tree can be seen in their website, as long as these photos are artistic. Moreover, sharing personal stories is also a must in food blogging. As it can very well be the unique selling point of the blog, what stories you tell make you different than others. These international bloggers are very active in social media, as it is clear that they shared many channels with their audiences to help them to find or follow the blog. In this analysis, the use of references and share of links of others do not seem to be an important key point in maintaining a blog.

In contrast, these Finnish awarded blogs pay less attention in making the background tidy, simple and clean. Their pictures are more natural looking and less edited. Unlike the International bloggers, these Finnish bloggers do not tell much about their personal stories; they also post very few, sometimes only the end result pictures. Social media do not seemed to be as important as well, and Facebook seemed to be a common channel. Unexpectedly, both Finnish bloggers do a lot of advertisement on their website. In fact, the two Finnish blogs have the most advertisement among all the blogs in this study. Therefore it can be said that in comparison Finnish blogs are more commercialize than the others.

In addition, all of these blogs have clear instructions in writing the recipes. Both metric and U.S. systems of measurements are being used, and the serving size is always clearly stated. There is only one aspect that all these bloggers have in common, that they put

extraordinary effort in taking and editing their pictures to become artistic and attractive to the audiences.

# 5 The process of a blog production

To start the food blog project, the first thing I did was to find myself a suitable blog-hosting platform. I preferred WordPress, convinced by Russell (2013.) that it is the best options out there. WordPress is a free hosting service that offers two options. The first is wordpress.com domain that includes limited customization. And the second one is the wordpress.org version that allows users to host WordPress on their own servers with much more control over editing, hack code and plugins. As a beginner, I picked WordPress.com as it is recommended to new beginner to start a blog, as the platform offers ready-made layout, themes, designs and plugins to ease users in building up a new website.

To come up with a blog name that is easy to remember and meaningful was not easy. It was difficult because most of the good names are already taken. Eventually I came up with a name SpicyTones, as Spicy represents Malaysian food, whereas Tones represents my personal interest in music. I also upgraded my original domain name from spicytones.wordpress.com to spicytones.com with an additional fee of \$18. The reason is because the address of the blog would be easier to remember and spread the words among people.

The idea of the blog is to share Malaysian recipes by using scarce resources available in Finland. As a writer I have the advantage of having the passion and learning experiences in cooking while living in Finland without the presence of my family. In the beginning, it was planned together with my supervisor that my goal is to complete 12 different themes of Malaysian recipes for this project. Since Malaysia is said to be a cultural melting pot, I decided to make dishes for every ethnic group cultures. Only the well-known recipes that represent Malaysia are taken into account. More than 12 dishes are listed down for me as options when making a dish. Table 1 is created as shown below to demonstrate the example dishes planned for this project.

Table 1. Themes and dishes planned for the food-blog project SpicyTones (Pennanen 2013)

THEMES	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2	EXAMPLE 3		
Malay	Nasi Lemak	Rendang Beef	Satay Chicken		
Chinese	Hainanese Chicken Rice	Wanton Noodle	Char Kuey Teow		
Nyonya	Tamarin Prawn	Assam Fish	Asam Laksa		
Eurasian	Devil Curry	Fishermen Soup			
Indian	Roti Canai	Fish Head Curry	Tea Tarik		
Vegetarian	Tofu	Hainanese Leicha	Vegan Meat/Seitan		
Street Food	Grilled Chicken Wings	Steamed Bun/ Baozi	Glutinous Chicken		
			Rice		

The aim of this project is to publish at least one post per week from June 2013 to August 2013, in order to achieve creating a total of 12 blog posts. During the process of making the project, some notable changes have been made which will be explained in detail in Chapter 5.2 Challenges.

# 5.1 Creating a blog from the start

Making a blog post is time consuming. From thinking of a recipe and story behind it, to editing pictures and writing the post; the process takes at least five days in a week in relation with publishing a post. Before the blog was created, the ultimate goal was to publish at least one, or even two posts per week. Then it was realised that even keeping the schedule of making one post per week was difficult, in a way that I needed to spend some times to work on the blog every single day. Every step takes time and effort. In the following I will explain each step of what I have learned for making a successful blog post.



Figure 9. The process of making a successful blog post (Pennanen 2013)

Next, I will explain the process of making a successful blog post in the following texts. As seen as Figure 9 above, there are 7 steps for making a blog post.

# Step 1: New Ideas

As decided in the beginning, my goal was to publish at least one post per week, therefore it is important to start thinking about what to cook and publish next. It would be the most ideal to plan for a recipe a couple of weeks beforehand. But when the time is limited, a recipe can be created from a source of ingredients I have available on my hand at the time being. I always start to think of a recipe right after I have prepared for a ready-to-post recipe, so that I would have enough time to work on the next recipe.

What inspired me the most in thinking of a recipe idea is by going through my food storage or fridge to check which ingredients I already got. This is to keep the minimum in food waste and also more economical. For example, if I have a pack of tofu in the fridge, and a bag of dried shiitake in my dry storage, I would pair these items together, and then start thinking about what kind of spices would suit these ingredients. It happened quite often that ideas would come in my head already. These come from a lot of

reading, previous cooking and work experiences. If I could not think of any ideas to make a dish out of a certain type of ingredient, I would start reading cookbooks again, browsing the Internet, and looking up for ideas to understand the background information of the ingredient to get inspired.

For creating a blog post, I usually challenge myself with new recipe or to make old recipe more unique and interesting, such as changing some ingredients, replacing substitutes, or adding other spices in order to make the recipe my own version. It is very important not to copy someone else's recipe. Even though it is common for food bloggers to share or reblog someone else's recipe with reference attached. It is actually a recommended approach. If you want your blog to be known, visited and loved by others, you need to link it to the mass of the Internet (Houghton 2012, 112). Getting inspiration from others is a great way to generate own ideas. In addition, by linking others to your blog will also help generating traffic that comes from the original site to your blog.

# Step 2: Personal story

An interview was carried out with Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) which detail information is explained in Chapter 5.2. After the interview, I have understood that it is crucial to share my story to the audience in my blog, which the story has to be personal and relevant. As understood from Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.), the audience cares more about the writer than the recipe itself. I was also stuck by the realisation through my own behaviour while reading others' posts. That is whenever a blog post caught my attention; I immediately looked up for the information about the writer and wanted to know more about her/him. The blog usually becomes very personal when a story about the author is told, like a childhood story and etc. In times, it makes readers feel like as if they know the writer in physical world. From my experience, making up stories for recipes is the most challenging step in creating a post. Sometimes I was forced to eliminate a recipe because I could not find a good story for it. Therefore to think of a story before making a dish is rather important therefore it should be placed in the beginning of the food blogging process.

Through experiences I have figured out a way to help myself in generating ideas for stories by drawing a keywords map. Let's take an example of generating ideas for Nasi Lemak, a Malaysian national dish. To do that, firstly I write down all the keywords that come to my head in relation to Nasi Lemak. In this case, keywords such as experience, sambal, people, banana leaf, memory and fish came to my mind. Secondly I think of my experiences and story related to these keywords. Eventually I would end up with a good source of keywords that I could find several incidents to tell in my post as stories.

Below as Figure 10 shows how the map of keywords is about. As it can be seen from Figure 10, there are a lot of ideas generated under the terms experience, people and memory. Hence with these terms and keywords I could follow up and write the stories accordingly. At the end there would be enough information for me to link these stories together and post with the recipe as a whole, which eases me in achieving my goal in making the blog post personal.

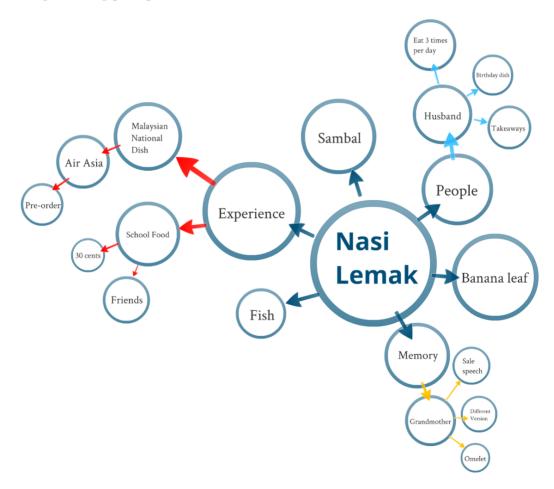


Figure 10. Keywords map to generate ideas for story building (Pennanen 2013)

Making up a good story for the post is the most important part in differentiating your-selves than others and drawing attentions from the audiences. There are half a million weblogs out there. As Rebecca (Blood, 2002, 70) said, your blog will be compelling only to the extent that it reflects your unique way of looking at the world. Your very own perspective is the point; therefore it is the only reason to read a weblog at all. People should not be afraid to speak up their own mind in blogging. Most people out there are afraid to say what they really think. But once it begins, the result will be refreshing and even liberating. Yet bloggers should take advantage of the fact that they have such a space and really take the time to say what they mean.

# Step 3: Ingredients

It happens quite often that some ingredients are missing when making a dish, especially when it comes to cooking Asian foods in foreign land. Here are three options: to go get the ingredient right away, to replace it with something else or not to make the dish at all. To me the easiest and most creative way in solving this problem is to find substitution for a dish. To replace a particular ingredient with something else, I need to think whether the taste, texture and density of the substitute fit the recipe. For instances, to replace vinegar to tamarind, firm tofu to meat product and fish sauce to soy sauce.

I always name other ingredients in my blog post as suggestion if I knew that those ingredients would suit the recipe just fine. It would be helpful to the readers and encourage them to try the recipe more easily than not to mention at all. As taking the advice from my supervisor, I used to make one mistake by mixing US system of measurement such as cup in my recipe that confuses my audiences especially Finns. Having completed the research of my before study, I have learned to use a clearer approach that is Metric measurement like decilitre, millilitre and so on. But I kept using teaspoon and tablespoon in my recipe because it is very easy for people to get from almost anywhere anytime, rather than to get a scale for 15 or 30gram of soy sauce for instance. The

same approach is also used by most of the successful blogs studied in my research for this project.

# Step 4: Cooking process

It is not only making the right food, it is crucial to cook at the right time in order to catch the natural sunlight. The best time to cook is during daytime before the sun goes down. The natural sunlight is the best lighting in photographing. It gives a neutral tone to the photos; hence it does not need too much editing with the photograph, which will be explained in the following step. Besides, some dishes also require many hours to cook, like Nasi Lemak and stock. Therefore it is important to cook the dish early, or do the preparation a day before to be able to catch the sunlight when taking step-by step pictures. Also, one must always be prepared for failures. I have failed making Roti Canai three times in attempts and it took days and weeks in finding the right recipe.

Surely, basic cooking skill and knowledge of food safety and hygiene are required for this process. So that the food recipes planned are safe to cook and hygienic. Thankfully I have already attended and completed the food safety and hygiene course during my first year studies in HAAGA-HELIA, which gave me a thorough understanding from the aspects of handling food. From storing and cooking temperature, food contamination, hazard analysis, to calculations, measurements and mise en place, all these information should be thought through before the cooking process starts. I always take pen and paper to write down exactly what I have put or done while making a dish, therefore the recipe would be as accurate as possible.

# Step 5: Photography

Photography is one of the most crucial parts in food blogging. It is because great photos attract more attention. It also makes readers believe that the dish tastes good and encourage them to try. Photos also make the webpage looks better, more colourful and lively. They also act as a summary of the post, as some readers only browse through the photos instead of the whole texts in a blog. In blogging community, photos can be

seen as a style or taste, a reveal of personality. As from all the things seen in the photos are related to the writers; it can be a picture of their family, dogs, habits, rooms and etc.

I started to take photography very seriously after my study about successful food bloggers. At first I have only taken food pictures with a smartphone, which was considered good quality. After I have realised that all the studied food bloggers have amazing photos in their website, I knew that I must do the same in order to be successful, which was also recommended by Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.), more information is given in the following chapter. As mentioned in Chapter 4, it turned out that the only common aspect that both International and Finnish bloggers share is that they are making every effort in taking and editing outstanding photographs for their blogs. Therefore, I started to learn how to use a proper camera to take pictures, for this project I used Canon 500D that my family owns. I spent a decent amount of time in taking countless pictures for practicing and it was worth the learning. As the pictures look much better and more attractive to the readers than those that were taken by a smartphone.

I have also met with a professional Finnish photographer, Eveliina Mustonen who generously helped to take photographs for my food blog project. Mustonen also gave advice about the importance of picture temperature. For example, when the photo is taken without natural light, the picture tends to look yellowish and amateurish. Therefore in editing, the temperature of the picture must be adjusted to be more bluish and professional, which can be easily done with most of the photo editing applications, for instance iPhoto is used for this project. Here is one example of how a photo that is taken without natural light appears before and after temperature adjustment and editing.



Figure 11a. Raw photo before temperature adjustment and editing (Pennanen 2013)



Figure 11b. Edited photo after temperature adjustment and editing (Pennanen 2013)

Before the temperature adjustment, the photo shown as Figure 11a looks yellowish like the way Mustonen said before. After the adjustment, the photo looks closer to reality and more professional looking, shown as Figure 11b. Some other adjustments were applied to this photo as well in order to make it look as professional as possible. For the same photo, the colour has been tinted to be more purplish to remove the greenish hint of the photo. Cropping and retouching some areas also removed the unpleasant looking dirt and water drops in the photo. Moreover, adjusting the highlight has also brought out the focus of the image. And now the photo looks more attractive and professional compared to the raw photo. Usually all photos can be easily changed for better looking, by only adjusting the temperature, contrast, exposure, saturation, definition, shadow and so on. Of course, better camera, light and lenses take much better quality photos of all time. But there is no right or wrong in photo editing, it is just a reflection of personality and preference.

# Step 6: Posting and updating

As learned from the before study, I always include a personal story write up in the blog post before introducing the recipe. To make a story sound fascinating and combining with other stories is challenging. Therefore each time after I write something, I read it through again and make changes if needed. First to remember is to save the material, as the most problematic issue is to lose everything you have wrote. Next is to ask others to read the post for you before publishing it. Sometimes mistakes are more noticeable to others than you. A blog post full of grammar and spelling mistakes are not appealing, it can also be difficult to read.

While posting a blog, one thing to keep in mind is to create the right keywords for tags. The right kind of keywords and tags help others to find the blog easier from search engine. For example, if the blog is about Finnish Salmon Soup, keywords such as soup, fish, salmon recipe, Finland or Nordic food can be used for tags. Categorising the post is also crucial. I always categorise the recipe under the most used terms such as Asian, European or Main Course, so that it is clear and easy for the readers to find related recipes. In addition, I have learned that it is necessary to keep an eye on and updating the blog from time to time. It is because most of the time, readers found the blog post from search engine, regardless of when the blog post is made. Therefore it is

best if the information in the post is up to date, so that the recipe and guidance are accurate and convincing to the readers.

# Step 7: Marketing

A blog can be promoted in the blog hosting service itself and by social media channels. For example, SpicyTones has generated most of its visitors from the hosting service Wordpress.com itself. It is because each published post can be found by keywords and tags in the hosting service or in search engines such as Yahoo! and Google. Besides, once a reader subscribes to your blog, every post you made especially the newest one will appear on the main page of the reader's subscription page. For those that subscribed through emails, an automatic email will be sent by the blog hosting service directly to the readers notifying them that a new post they followed is made.

On the other hand, social media is another good way in marketing your blog, as it is also inclusive by most of the successful bloggers. For SpicyTones, I have created an official Facebook and Twitter account for its marketing. At the time being, SpicyTones has received over 100 followers through Facebook itself. In addition, I have taken other channels such as Instagram, Flickr or Pinterest into consideration as some of the best bloggers have also used these channels for marketing their blog.

As understood from Rebecca (Blood, 2002), it is not recommended to pay for any marketing in advertising your own blog, especially the one that is written as a hobby. It is because from her expertise and experiences, it would never generate the amount of visitors you want. And even if it does, these visitors brought by quick hits tend to leave very quickly. Getting the stable visitors and followers takes times and needs patience. Another issue is that it also requires more time and energy to maintain several social media channels on top of the blog, which is actually the main subject and most important.

## 5.2 Interview with Ollikkala

On 15 July 2013, an interview was carried out with Mikko Ollikkala, founder of a blog community named FitFashion.fi, a sport and lifestyle blogging community in Finland. After reviewing my first three blog posts, Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) gave advice to take pictures with a professional camera instead of smartphone, as it is important that the pictures in the website look as good as possible. Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) thought that telling personal story is a very good gesture, that I must continue doing the same in the future. He also suggested adding lifestyle elements into the blog. In other words, sharing elements of life with the audience, for example sharing travel experience, having times with friends and etc. It is completely fine to share all you have to say with the readers, as long as it is somehow food related. For example, I could make a post telling that I have been rehearsing with the band for gig performance, but here is what I eat. And then share the recipe or give idea and suggestion on how to make the food.

It is also emphasized that the stories are the most important in writing a blog. It is not about the recipe nor how much salt and pepper you put into the food; it is about how you tell your stories. The readers want to know about the writer and about his or her life. The more you share, the more interesting you become. Furthermore, tips for building the audiences was also given. It is suggested joining other blog communities such as blogirinki.fi or indiedays.com that help bloggers to expand the exposure of their blogs, hence to get more readers and followers. In Finland, it is more usual that companies advertise on blog community rather than on a single blog page. Therefore by joining a blog community, there is higher chance in getting money from commercial advertisement. (Ollikkala, M. 15 Jul 2013.)

On top of that, Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) also recommended communicating with other bloggers. Specifically, to visit other blogs and give constructive comment to the bloggers, and then put down your signature link that lead them back to your own blog. It is actually the original idea of a blog in the first place and how the history of blogging has started. As explained in the theoretical part in Chapter 2.2, blogging was all about commentary and personal opinions. And therefore making conversations is important among bloggers, which was suggested by Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) also in order to make

yourselves more memorable. According to Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.), he has witnessed many bloggers who have succeeded marketing their blogs through the same way. Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) also proposed to add self-made videos into the blog, such as a food video that teaches people how to make some sort of recipes, as a result the blog will look more interesting and fun to look at.

Contrastingly, Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) has a different point of view than expert blogger Rebecca Blood, as she posed that it is not worth paying for advertising your own blog. However, Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) said that in order to raise the attention of International bloggers, advertisements such as Google Ads would be a good way in marketing your own blog. Moreover, Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) added that Finnish blogs are usually more commercialised than international blogs. The same fact was actually found in the before-study analysis made about successful bloggers in Chapter 4. Finally, Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) suggested posting about 1 to 2 posts per week in order to show active participation in blogging community.

# 5.3 Variation and changes

The original idea of SpicyTones was to share only Malaysian recipes, in order to support the advantage of being a Malaysian who knows how to use scarce ingredients to cook exotic food in Finland. The goal was to publish 12 different Malaysian recipes that derived from the variety of Malaysian ethnic groups, which are Malay, Chinese, Indian, Peranakan, Eurasian and etc. However, the focus of the recipes changes after my interview with Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.), whom showed some very good advices and tips of how to get forward with the blog. One of the most important and inspiring was when he said: 'it is not about how much salt and pepper you put. It is all about how you tell your stories.'(Ollikkala, M. 15 Jul 2013.). According to the interview, people in general do not care much about the recipes. It is most important to show the writer's personal life and stories about him or her, which interest readers and capture followers. Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) also advised me to share all interesting stories, for examples trip to Barcelona or moments with my band and so on, as long as it is somehow related to food topic.

In adapting to Ollikkala's (15 Jul 2013.) advices, I find it easier and more relevant to write about my lifestyle with a recipe in my blog posts. The fact is that I am not making Malaysian food everyday. Therefore it is nearly impossible to create relevant, fresh stories to some of the Malaysian dishes that I have never made or even heard of. For instances, the Eurasian signature dishes Devil Curry or Fishermen Soup. I never had connection with the Eurasian people in my society, plus the information about them is scarce as well. In that case, it is difficult for me to make up a story, and yet to make it sound personal.

My solution is that I would write according to what really happens in my everyday life, that the recipes I post would be most relevant to my stories. The stories would be fresh and recent, which actually reflect the elements of my lifestyle and personality directly, as Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) suggested. The seasonal changes also give huge influences on my recipes as well. For example in summer time, a story about strawberry picking and a recipe featuring strawberries would bring more hits than a recipe about winter stew. Or a recipe about pumpkin during Halloween season would be popular as well. It is because whenever the season changes, people would be looking for recipes about related seasonal ingredients. Besides, I believe when the story is fresh, the blog becomes more attractive and it is also easy for the readers to get those ingredients and try those recipes right away.

Therefore with my blog, I have been concentrating in stories telling, sharing the elements of life rather than posting a specific planned recipe, since it is undoubtedly the most essential part in blogging according to my study and interview with Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.). However, I still tried to share recipes that are relevant to my life, as least they are not out of nowhere. I always share my knowledge of Malaysian-Chinese culinary combines with Finnish culture to my audience, as I think it is one of a kind that you can find out here. As understood from Rebecca and Robin (Blood 2002; Houghton 2012) every person has a different point of view. We have our own voice, and that makes us all interesting.

It is also understood that most of the followers from SpicyTones are vegetarians or vegans, as the vegetarian dishes tend to receive more likes than meat dishes. At the same time, some of the readers have requested in the comments box for more recipes for vegetarian food as well. It was also added that they are looking for more tofu dishes as well. In order to satisfy my readers, I have started to try out and create vegetarian dishes by replacing meat with tofu, beans, vegetables and seitan. The more I understand my readers, I more I want to share vegetarian recipes in my blog in order to satisfy their needs. It has been also an obstacle for me to post recipes as planned before, as some of the dishes simply cannot be replaced, such as Hainanese Chicken Rice, Satay Chicken, Fish Head Curry and so on.

Even though the original idea has been changed from sharing only Malaysian dishes to focusing on story telling. However, I tried to stick with the plan as I managed to share out at least one recipe for every theme as decided before, which are Malay, Chinese, Nyonya, Eurasian, Indian, Vegetarian and Street Food. Dishes that have been made and published in SpicyTones are shown as a table below to demonstrate the originated themes.

Table 2. Themes and example recipes that were published in SpicyTones (Pennanen 2013)

THEMES	SHARED OF RECIPE
Malay	Nasi Lemak
Chinese	Steamed Bun/Baozi
Nyonya	Vegetarian Acar
Eurasian	ABC Soup
Indian	Roti Canai
Vegetarian	Soup with Preserved Green Mustard and Tofu
Street Food	Char Kuey Teow

As shown in Table 2 above, I have successfully shared out recipes that are originated from the themes that were planned before, even though they were not the exact dishes that were listed down. Nonetheless, I have made the entire above dishes vegetarian in

order to meet the requirement of my readers. Currently I am still finding ways to make other dishes possible in vegetarian version so that I could share those recipes out in the following future.

# 5.4 Feedback from small groups

Comments and feedbacks on SpicyTones are collected from its readers, followers and interviewer Ollikkala (10 Nov 2013.). So far SpicyTones has generated a total of 188 comments from its own website since the first post published on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2013. Nearly all of the comments are positive, the rest are actually commercial message and spams. Most of the readers commented that the blog looks great, has amazing photography and lively story writing. In the following there are a few comments quoted by the readers of SpicyTones.

"Hi there, what an excellent article. Keep posting such kind of information on your blog. I'm really impressed by your site. You have performed a fantastic job. I'll certainly dig it and personally recommend to my friends. I am confident they will be benefited from this website." (Yeager, A. 4 Sep 2013.)

"Have to tell you that you have a great blog, SpicyTones. Love your photos and recipes...and your philosophy about food!" (Leung, L. 2 Sep 2013)

"Eva truly understands flavors and her passion is infectious! Beautiful photos, thank to her husband and elegant blog design makes hers the first ever Food Blogger to be reblogged on Soulsez. Please feel free to leave comments on her website..."(Joyce, A. 11 Sep 2013.)

"This looks so delicious! And I am so glad I found your blog through a recommendation by WordPress!! I simply love it – the photography is beautiful, absolutely lovely!!! Looking forward to read more from you!!!" (Brenner, S. 27 Nov 2013)

Positively, it is shown in the statistic that some readers have been reblogging and sharing posts from SpicyTones onto their own websites. However, it is understood that complicated recipes are not very much appreciated by the audiences. To clarify, in my post Nasi Lemak, which is a Malaysian national dish that requires a lot of hard work.

One follower from SpicyTones has commented to the post that as a vegetarian, she is never going to make the dish because it seemed so difficult to make. Another reader requested for a cheat-version of the recipe. But there have been also compliments about the dish of being legit and impressive. Therefore I must learn and find ways to make my recipes original and yet easy and simple to make in the future.

In mid November 2013, I went back to Ollikkala (10 Nov 2013.), who was previously interviewed for this project to ask for his feedback from the blog. Ollikkala (10 Nov 2013.) was very impressed by how SpicyTones turned out. As quoted directly from him, if I keep on doing the exact same thing in the future, there is no reason why SpicyTones would not be successful. He said that those photographs shared in the blog looks professional, great stories and has a really good flow in the writing. But, he suggests posting more often than now, reflecting to the fact that I have slowed down the pace with SpicyTones due to my concentration in thesis writing. He said that at least one post per week is very important to maintain your activity level in the blogging community.

# 6 Project implementation

## 6.1 Personal involvement

It was decided in the beginning that the blog would be kept up for at least 3 months for this thesis project, which is from June to August 2013. Table 3 as shown below is made for helping readers to understand the following explanation. The topic of the thesis was created in April 2013, and the process started in May 2013 when part of the theoretical frameworks was gathered and written. Throughout the thesis writing process, meetings with the supervisors were arranged, and the last one was in January 2014. Analysis about successful bloggers took place in June, when SpicyTones was established at the same time. The blog has been run actively from June to August according to the plan, but it continues to run until now. It is because SpicyTones has gotten a decent amount of followers so far and I have also found my passion in keeping up the blog. For now to say, the blog will be maintained and kept for a long run.

Marketing has been done since July 2013, when Facebook account for SpicyTones was created. All the updates and news are being promoted via mainly Facebook account and within the WordPress community itself. Interview with Ollikkala was carried out in July and feedback was collected from him in November 2013. I started my thesis writing already since the beginning of June, but most of the works were done between October and December 2013. As seen in Table 3 below, theoretical frameworks took part again at the end of the writing process. It is because I needed to modify some parts to improve the flow of the thesis. The thesis is aim to be presented in January 2014.

Table 3. Timeline for thesis production (Pennanen 2013)

	Thesis	Blog	Theoretical	Supervisory	Before-	Maintaining			Thesis	Thesis
Time	Idea	Establishment			study	Blog	Marketing	Interview	Writing	Presentation
Apr-13										
May-13										
Jun-13										
Jul-13										
Aug-13										
Sep-13										
Oct-13										
Nov-13										
Dec-13										
Jan-14										

Since I have spent nearly 6 months on working with my blog, it is worth explaining how the workload is organized on a daily basis. A process chart is drawn below as Figure 12 for indicating the tasks to be done from Monday to Sunday during an ordinary week.

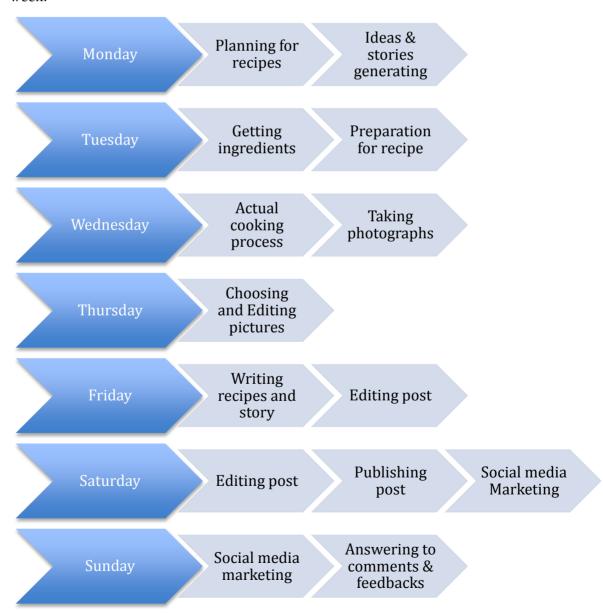


Figure 12. Tasks to be done on a daily basis in maintaining a blog (Pennanen 2013)

As seen above in Figure 12, during an ordinary week I was engaged with the blogging activities on a daily basis. At the same time, I also started to work on a full-time job based on family issue. Therefore the whole thesis writing was delayed due to the fact that I had overload work but limited time. Therefore as mentioned before, it is important to plan ahead on what to do next with the recipes and food production.

# 6.2 Equipments and cost of production

There have been some investments and costs involved in the production of this project. The first to mention is the fee of upgrading the webpage address to a personalize domain, which was \$18 paid to WordPress.com. The original address was spicytones.wordpress.com, and it has been upgraded to spicytones.com. The reason is that the later address is much easier to for people to remember and it looks much more professional. Therefore I think it is worth paying for it. Furthermore, I also needed to purchase some new plates and bowls, especially those white ones to create better presentations for my dishes. It is also part of the professionalism that learned from those successful bloggers I have studied. Besides, I have spent about 300€ in all the food production so far for ingredients only. At this moment, more than 20 dishes have been published in SpicyTones, which is about 15€ spent on each dish. This amount does not include those times when ingredients were used for testing the recipes.

For a food blog production, a professional camera is essential in order to take high quality pictures that are attractive, as understood also from the before-study. The camera that is used for this project, Canon 500D is one of the digital single-lens reflex cameras that capture high quality images. It is a family own camera, otherwise for inclusion of this project it would be around 500€ as an example. In addition, I have negotiated a friendly deal with Eveliina Mustonen, one of the best-known Finnish photographers to take pictures for my blog. According to Eveliina, a whole day shooting including picture editing would cost around 1000€ from her fee of charge. But photographers with lower prices can be easily found in Finland as well. This type of photography is a good investment especially to draw attention and show professionalism. As one of the pictures taken by Eveliina helped me a lot in winning recognition among blogging community, which will be explained in the following chapter.

# 7 Evaluation and conclusion

To conclude, my evaluation about the thesis production is excellent, especially the food blog project itself. I have learned far more than what I was aiming for. On top of that SpicyTones has turned out to be a complete success unexpectedly. The goal in the beginning was to get 50 followers from this project. Currently SpicyTones has more than 500 followers from its website, plus 109 followers subscribed through Facebook, that makes a total of more than 600 followers. To be exact, the amount of followers is 1200% more than the initial goal. Most of the followers are International, far exceeding the targeted amount of 10 International followers.

Besides, formal recognitions were also received by SpicyTones. On 30th August 2013, I was contacted by one of the WordPress.com editors Krista through email. As she informed me that my blog post about Soup with Preserved Green Mustard and Tofu would be featured on Freshly Pressed as WordPress.com editors' pick. According to Krista, the soup recipe and cooking for friends, along with the amazing family stories is a fantastic read. She also emphasied that the soup post is great for the soul, and it is a great post that deserves a wider audience. It is understood that WordPress.com chooses 10 different posts daily among 450,000 blogs around the world to be featured on Freshly Pressed main page (Osman 2011). This Freshly Pressed recognition has brought in SpicyTones no less than 200 new followers. It is undeniably the most valuable recognition for the blog and one of the highest evaluation a blogger could ask for.

On 4th September 2013, SpicyTones was nominated for The Liebster Award by Anna from Fatzfood.com. Later on Rachel Malburg from 'Eat to live, not live to eat' also nominated the same award to SpicyTones on 14th September 2013, which she gave praise for the blog as well. To clarify, The Liebster Award is an award originated from Germany that is given to appreciated bloggers who have less than 200 followers. The original ideas are to increase awareness of small blogs among blogging communities and help bloggers to get forward. Furthermore starting in October 2013, SpicyTones has been placed on the main page of the WordPress.com Themes, described as

'Awesome blogs using Adelle', which has also generated at least 1,452 more views to the blog.

According to the statistic shown in WordPress.com, SpicyTones has been viewed 9,429 times by its viewers from 108 countries by December 2013. Within six months, there has been 2,944 views from United States, 1,090 views from Finland, 614 views from Malaysia, 558 views from United Kingdom and etc. Figure 13 as indicated below shows the locations of all the readers who have visited SpicyTones.com in 2013.

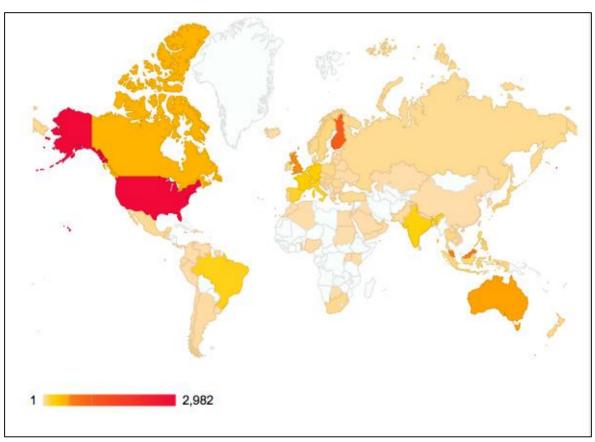


Figure 13. Top views from SpicyTones by country for all days since June 2013 until December 2013 (Pennanen 2013)

# 7.1 Discussion

It has been an interesting journey throughout the whole thesis process. I have learned a lot from it, especially in gaining advanced knowledge about Malaysian food culture and history, as well as the expertise in creating and maintaining a blog. As a Malaysian, I

thought that I knew more than enough about Malaysian food and its history. Only until I did my research that changed my view completely, I realised that there are still a lot for me to learn. For example, I did not know that one of the most used Malaysian spices, Belacan was actually originated from the Portugese fishermen. It was them who found out a way of preserving their food resources, by marinating rotten fish with salt and created a legendary ingredient used in Malaysian cuisine. I also have more understanding about Malaysian history now, and how those ethnic groups came together that gave birth to the very first fusion food in the world.

In this thesis, there were 4 International and 2 Finnish blogs studied for the analysis of successful blogs section. It is undeniable that a total of 6 blogs analysed for this thesis is a sufficient quantity as part of the thesis research. However, the judgement made for International and Finnish blogs could not be reliable for the used of further proffesional studies. It is because the analysed source is only sufficient for the purpose of this thesis, but more quantity is definitely required if it is for a research of its own. The summary discussed in Chapter 4.3 can be used as a reference or guidance for those who are interested in learning about blog or blogging only. Even so, the advice Ollikkala (15 Jul 2013.) gave and his suggestion are highly convincible and could be valued as a proffessional statement within the near future.

There have been some challenges while writing the thesis. As mentioned before, it was extremely difficult to keep the blog updated while writing the thesis at the same time. It takes about 5 to 7 days in order to make a good content and attractive blog post. Therefore I could not help but lost my concentration in completing my thesis for a while. Eventually I had to give my blog a break, which I wrote in my blog post and explained to the readers about the situation. The submittion of the thesis was also delayed due to this matter. Fortunately, I managed to complete most of my thesis during the break from the blog. But, the traffic from the blog immediately went down and the readers have also become less active since there is not much going on with the blog. Yet the maintanance of the blog has already exceeded the 3 months period as mentioned in the beginning of this thesis. Therefore keeping the blog is currently for my personal interest only.

Another challenge occured to me while analysing of successful blogs. Due to the fact that all of the studied blogs are still present, there have been a lot of changes made to the blog while it was still being analysed for this thesis. Most bloggers keep updating their website, making changes in order to keep their blogs fresh and attractive. It was a problem to me especially after I have finished writing about some key points related to a blog, those key points were edited right away by the author and changed to another completely different perspective. Therefore I needed to redo the part again on the same subject in order to keep my statement updated and reliable. In conclusion, it should be taken into account that those blogs analysed in Chapter 4 may vary a lot in the future compare to what was studied and demonstrated in this thesis then.

At last, what reader could expect from SpicyTones in the near future is the inclusion of food videos in the blog showing how foods are done in a more practical way. So that the reader can see and hear some voice and sound of food that would make the blog more personalise and interesting. When SpicyTones generates enough visitors and traffic in the future, it is also possible to take in commercial opportunities, advertisement or sponsorship. In addition, tips about traveling and such may also be added to the blog, since the search for travel info has been increasing in recent years. It has also been taken into consideration that Spicytones would be translated into both Finnish and Chinese languages in the future, in order to generate a massive amount of followers in all possible ways.

# References

Baki, N. 2005. Malay, A Taste of Days Gone By. URL: http://atasteofdaysgoneby.blogspot.fi/p/malay.html. Accessed: 9 Jul 2013.

Barnard, T. 2010. Culinary Asia Malaysia Cuisine & Food a. Tour Malaysia. URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50c5b24arFg. Accessed: 7 Jul 2013.

Blood, R. 2000. Weblogs: A History and Perspective. Rebecca's Pocket. URL: <a href="http://www.rebeccablood.net/essays/weblog\_history.html">http://www.rebeccablood.net/essays/weblog\_history.html</a>. Accessed: 7 Jul 2013.

Blood, R. 2002. The Weblog Handbook. Practical Advice on Creating And Maintaining Your Blog, pp. 1-101.

Brenner, S. 27 Nov 2013. Comments on SpicyTones. URL: http://spicytones.com. Accessed: 25 Jan 2014.

Chong, M. 2011. Penang Nyonya. Truly Nyonya Penang. Bilingual Edition. Seashore Publishing. Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia, pp. 8-10.

Culinary Asia Malaysia Cuisine and Food. 2010. Culinary Asia Malaysia Cuisine & Food c. Tour Malaysia. URL:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50c5b24arFg. Accessed: 14 Aug 2013.

Downes, S. 2004. Educational Blogging. EDUCAUSE Review. Vol. 39. No. 5 (September/October 2004), pp. 14–26. URL:

http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/educational-blogging. Accessed: 21 Oct 2013.

Giselle, S. 2009. Eurasian. A Taste of Days Gone By. URL: <a href="http://atasteofdaysgoneby.blogspot.fi/p/eurasian.html">http://atasteofdaysgoneby.blogspot.fi/p/eurasian.html</a>. Accessed: 14 Aug 2013.

Griffith, E. 2013. A Beginner's Guide to Blogging. Digital Life/ How to. PC Magazine, pp. 122-127.

Joyce, A. 11 Sep 2013. Comments on SpicyTones. URL: http://spicytones.com. Accessed: 25 Jan 2014.

Kaplan, A. & Haenlein, M. 2011. The early bird catches the news: Nine things you should know about micro-blogging. Business Horizons, pp. 54.

Kolu, E. 2014. Kauhaa ja Rakkautta. URL: <a href="http://blogit.hs.fi/kauhaajarakkautta/">http://blogit.hs.fi/kauhaajarakkautta/</a>. Accessed: 24 Jan 2014.

Kronfel, N. 2014. Delicious Shots. URL: <a href="http://deliciousshots.blogspot.fi">http://deliciousshots.blogspot.fi</a>. Accessed: 24 Jan 2014.

Leong, Q. & et al. 2010. Relationships Between Malaysian Food Image. Tourist Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention. World Applied Sciences Journal 10 (Special Issue of Tourism & Hospitality), pp. 164-171. © IDOSI Publications.

Lenhart, A. & et al. 2004. Content Creation Online. Pew Internet & American Life Project. Report.

Leung, L. 2 Sep 2013. Comments on SpicyTones. URL: http://spicytones.com. Accessed: 25 Jan 2014.

MalaysianFood.net. 2013. What is Malaysian Eurasian Food? URL: http://www.malaysianfood.net/Eurasianfood.html. Accessed: 9 Jul 2013.

Melaka State Government. 2013. History of Melaka. URL: http://www.melaka.gov.my/en/tentang-kami/sejarah. Accessed: 9 Jul 2013.

Marbeck, C. Cristang People. Celine Cuisine. URL: <a href="http://www.celines-cuisine.com/Culture.htm">http://www.celines-cuisine.com/Culture.htm</a>. Accessed: 14 Aug 2013.

Osman, H. 2011. How I Made it onto Freshly Pressed 3 Times in 6 Months. URL: <a href="http://www.problogger.net/archives/2011/08/09/how-i-made-it-on-freshly-pressed-3-times-in-6-months">http://www.problogger.net/archives/2011/08/09/how-i-made-it-on-freshly-pressed-3-times-in-6-months</a>. Accessed: 29 Dec 2013.

Pennanen, E. 2013- 2014. SpicyTones. URL: http://spicytones.com. Accessed: 12 Oct 2013.

Rodriguez, A. 2014. Not Without Salt. URL: <a href="http://notwithoutsalt.com">http://notwithoutsalt.com</a>. Accessed: 24 Jan 2014.

Russell, Jon. 2013. The 15 best blogging and publishing platforms on the Internet to-day. Which one is for you? pp. 1-2. The next web. URL: <a href="http://thenextweb.com/apps/2013/08/16/best-blogging-services/2/">http://thenextweb.com/apps/2013/08/16/best-blogging-services/2/</a>. Accessed: 12 Oct 2013.

Selvarajah, C. 2010. Culinary Asia Malaysia Cuisine & Food b. Tour Malaysia. URL: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50c5b24arFg">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50c5b24arFg</a>. Accessed: 7 Jul 2013.

Sutiawan, A. 2012. History of Rendang, Rendang Truly of Indonesia URL: <a href="http://rendang18.blogspot.fi/2012/04/history-of-rendang.html">http://rendang18.blogspot.fi/2012/04/history-of-rendang.html</a>. Accessed: 20 Aug 2013.

Swanson, H. 2014. 101 CookBooks. URL: <a href="http://101cookbooks.com">http://101cookbooks.com</a>. Accessed: 24 Jan 2014.

Teh, E. 2012. Mima's Online Commentary on Maritime Issues. Fisheries in Malaysia: Can resource match demand? pp. 1-2. Maritime Institute of Malaysia.

Thorisson, M. 2014. Manger. URL: <a href="http://mimithorisson.com">http://mimithorisson.com</a>. Accessed: 24 Jan 2014.

Travellers Worldwide. 2013. About food in Malaysia. Indian food. URL: <a href="http://www.travellersworldwide.com/11-malaysia/11-malaysia-food.htm#">http://www.travellersworldwide.com/11-malaysia/11-malaysia-food.htm#</a> . Accessed: 25 August 2013.

Visa, S. 2014. Kinuskikissa. URL: <a href="http://www.kinuskikissa.fi">http://www.kinuskikissa.fi</a>. Accessed: 24 Jan 2014.

Wiens, M. 2012. Malaysian Economy Rice - Street Chinese Food. URL: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPqUfYlldA">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPqUfYlldA</a>. Accessed: 25 Aug 2013.

Wu, D. & Tan, C. 2001. Food and Ethnicity with Reference to the Chinese in Malaysia. Changing Chinese Foodways in Asia, pp. 127. Chinese University Press.

Yeager, A. 4 Sep 2013. Comments on SpicyTones. URL: http://spicytones.com. Accessed: 25 Jan 2014.

# **Attachments**

Food blog print screen from Spicy Tones (Pennanen 2014)

# **SPICYTONES**

Live, love, eat, laugh, play, sing and have fun



HOME ABOUT THE AUTHOR



# Cherry Tomato and Chili Salsa/ Those sweet moments

posted in Beginners, Latin America, Side dish, Snack, Vegetarian by Eva Wong



I have been really busy. Out of myself, have not even cooked a proper meal within a month. But then I went to the store today. These beautiful, colorful fresh cherry tomatoes completely caught my attention. Wow, they looked so nice that I must buy them ASAP and make some sweet tomato salsa. Just one week ago, my husband took me out for a dinner after another long day at work. We went to this newly opened Mexican restaurant downtown Helsinki that has been always popular since it is opened. Couldn't get a table though, but we were lucky to have the window bar seats for the two of us. To start, we had guacamole, ceviche and tomato salsa with some freshly made tortilla chips. I was sipping on my Spicy Tamarin cocktail, memorizing those times that me and my husband had during our honeymoon. It was in Mexico, Cancun. Warm sun, crystal blue Caribbean sea. We had been quite poor when we started, therefore traveling to South America was such a luxurious thing to us. The funny thing is, part of our trip was actually sponsored by our wedding guests. We put out a 'Honeymoon Bank' at our wedding ceremony which really helped us a lot financially. Tomato sals a lovely thing. In Cancun, we had it at breakfast, as snock, starter, with main and even to end a course. Coronas and Sols were cheaper than water, so we had guite a lot of it as well. \*\* He had

So every time when there is a tomato salsa, it makes me feel good. The sweetness, pungency of the onion, saltiness, spiciness with the smell of coriander are simply irresistible. Today it was outstanding, since all the ingredients were so fresh. It made my day.

### Ingredients

500g Fresh cherry tomatoes (any kind), quartered

2 Medium size Red onion, finely chopped

1 Chili, finely chopped

A handful of fresh coriander, roughly chopped

Juice of 1 lime

2 tsp Brown sugar

1 tsp of salt



### AUTHOR





### CATEGORIES

Advanced (2) Asian (11)

Beginners (11)

Dessert (3)

Latin America (1)

Main course (11)

Malaysian (12) Moderate (5)

Noodles (4)

Personal (2)

Pork (2) Rice (2)

Side dish (2)

Snack (2) Soups (5)

Tofu (4) Vegetarian (12)

TAGS

Asian Boby bacon Bakery Baking Boo Breakfast Bun cake carbonara cheese Cherry Chinese Chocolate A handful of fresh coriander, roughly chopped

2 tsp Brown sugar

1 tsp of salt

Dash of black pepper

### Methods:

1) Place all the ingredients in a deep bowl, mix well. Refrigerate for 20 minutes or serve right away

2) Add in more chopped coriander for your own preference. Serve with tortilla chips or as a side dish.

Note: If you don't like spicy food, remove the seeds from the chili before chopping them up.



For a healthier approach, I used rye tortilla chips instead of salted corn tortilla chips, which is available in Finnish supermarket. And it worked perfecto!



my absolute favorite! It's like a bottle of wine that is oak and aged well. Packed with flavors, complicated and has a long lasting taste. The yellow ones are sweeter and unexpectedly, those smallest red ones were lighter in taste. Tell me if I'm wrong, but my palate won't lie. @





I'm having more time now to concentrate on my thesis. I'm also feeling more chilled now, learning how to relax and take things easily. But I bet I will be writing my thesis during my Christmas holiday though.

On the other hand, my sister delivered to a baby boy named Enso, and I'm totally in love with him! Watching him simply makes me happy, and my stress immediately goes away whenever I see him, what a miracle!



### TAGS

Asian Baby bacon Bakery Baking Bao Breakfast Bun cake carbonara cheese

### Cherry Chinese Chocolate

Coconut milk Cream Curd Curry Eggplant Eurasian Finnish Fish Food Decoration Fresh

garlic German Gluten free

Halloween Healthy High-tea Italian Kuala Lumpur Lunch Malaysian

### Penang pork pudding Pumpkin Quick

& easy Rice Rice noodles Seafood SOUP South America Soy Sauce Spaghetti

Chinese medicine Vegan vegetables Vegetarian

### RECENT POSTS

Cherry Tomato and Chili Salsa/ Those

Golden Pumpkin Rice/ 金瓜饭/ Living in a

Fried flat rice noodle

Self-made Marzipan Babies / Organizing a baby shower/ It's a BOY!

fetish & my Chinese friends 酸辣土豆丝

### FOLLOW MY BLOG VIA EMAIL

Enter your email address to follow this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join 1.098 other followers

Follow

# SPICY TONES FACEBOOK PAGE







## RECENT COMMENTS





Delights and Dismays on About the author







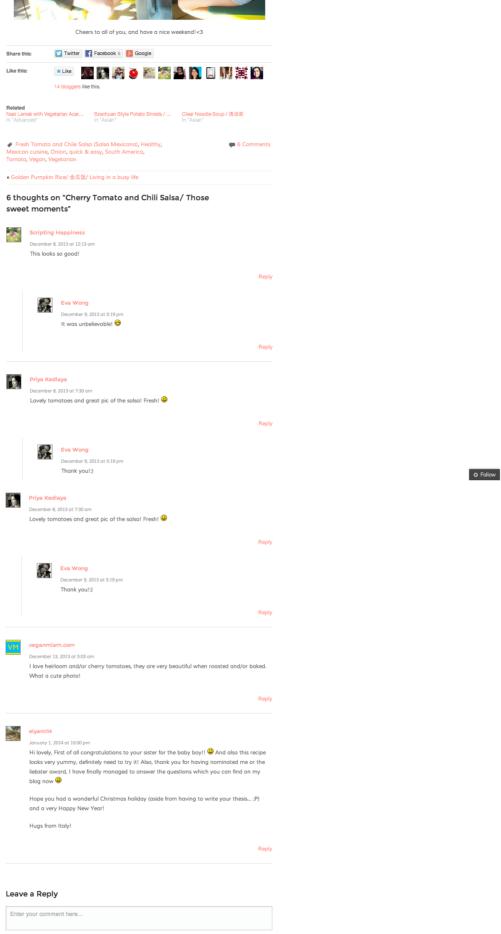
### COMMUNITY



### **ARCHIVES**

December 2013 (1) October 2013 (2) September 2013 (5) August 2013 (5)





Blog at WordPress.com. | The Adelle Then

# Penang Char Kway Teow/ \* \* \* / Fried flat rice noodle

posted in Asian, Main course, Malaysian, Moderate, Noodles, Tofu, Vegetarian by Eva Wong



Char Kway Teow is said to be a dish symbolizes the Chinese people who came to Malaysia in the very beginning from the South of China. It is a street dish tossed with high heat and it generates high turnovers. like the hard-working Chinese people. It is true that these Chinese people are everywhere around the world. You see, every corners I've been, there are always Chinese restaurants somewhere, no matter if they are selling sweet & sour, thai food or sushi. They are all very hard-working business people. They go everywhere around the globe to look for opportunities.

As I said a thousand times before, I love noodles. Char Kway Teow is rice noodles coated with soy souce, garlic and most importantly, packed with a strong, burned 'wok' flavor, Just like a perfect plate of fried rice, you got to have the 'wok' taste in it then you can call it right. You know, those that you might have gotten from the best restaurant in town. To get the 'wok' taste, it's all about the 'woking'. You've got to have your wok steaming hot and stir it real fast. With my home stove, the 'wok' flavor I managed to get was from the slightly bit of burning, and yet it is not the same like the one from the street back home. Unless you have a really big fire and a steady wok pan, you must let it burn a little in order to get there.

Char Kway Teow is a popular dish favored by all ages, always. Back home, you can get one steaming hot portion of Char Kway Teow with 50cent, maximum 1 Euro. The street hawker always ask: 'With or without chill?' With or without eggs? With or without clams?' Anyway it is just as good, so easy! If you have a super good, well heated stove at home, even only the dark soy sauce will do it perfect. It is not difficult to make, and it still tasted so good on the next day from the microwave. What an efficient dish!







### AUTHOR





### CATEGORIES

Advanced (2)
Asian (11)
Beginners (11)

Dessert (3) European (4)

Latin America (1)

Main course (11) Malaysian (12)

Moderate (5)

Noodles (4)

Personal (2) Pork (2)

Rice (2)

Side dish (2)

Snack (2) soups (5)

Tofu (4) Vegetarian (12)

### TAGS

Asian Baby bacon Bakery Baking Bao Breakfast Bun cake carbonara cheese

## Cherry Chinese Chocolate

Coconut milk Cream Curd Curry Eggplant Eurasian Finnish Fish Food Decoration Fresh Tomato and Chile Salsa (Salsa Mexicana) Fruit

# garlic German Gluten free

# Halloween **Healthy** High-tea

Italian Kuala Lumpur Lunch Malaysian Marzipan Mexican cuisine Mushroom noodle Noodle soup Onion parmesan Pasta

Penang pork pudding Pumpkin quick

& easy Rice Rice noodles Seafood SOUP South America Soy Sauce Spaghetti

Chinese medicine Vegan Vegetables
Vegetarian

### RECENT POSTS

Cherry Tomato and Chili Salsa/ Those

Golden Pumpkin Rice/ 金瓜饭/ Living in a busy life

Penang Char Kway Teow/ 素食炒粿条/ Fried flat rice poodle

Self-made Marzipan Babies / Organizing a baby shower/ It's a BOY!

Szechuan Style Potato Shreds / Potato fetish & my Chinese friends 酸辣土豆丝

### FOLLOW MY BLOG VIA EMAIL

Enter your email address to follow this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.





even like to have the clams raw in the noodles, so they are tossed in just before serving. But I don't recommend doing so unless you have a really good stomach and really fresh clams. If I were you, I would make more portions, because it has never been enough!









### RECENT COMMENTS



## COMMUNITY



## ARCHIVES

December 2013 (1) October 2013 (2) September 2013 (5) August 2013 (5) July 2013 (6) June 2013 (1)



(Make 4 servings)

### Ingredients:

250g Dried flat rice noodle, soaked until soft

4 Garlic cloves, minced

50g Bean Sprouts

50g Chinese Cabbage, sliced

1 Firm Tofu, fried and cubed

Spring Onion, chopped

3 Eggs (optional)

4 tbsp Soy sauce

2 tbsp Chili paste (optional)

2 tbsp Dark soy sauce

Pinch of Salt

Dash of white Pepper

Fried Onion

### Methods:

1) Heat up wok pan until it's steaming hot, fry garlic with oil until golden brown. Add in chili paste. (Be carefull)

2) Add in the noodles, soy sauce and dark soy sauce. Stir with high heat until the noodle is well coated and dried.

3) Toss in all the vegetables and tofu. Mix well. Make a well in the middle and break in the eggs. Wait until the eggs are half-way cooked and then stir well with the noodles.

4) Season with salt and pepper. Dish up and enjoy with fried onion.





O Follow



dislike carbohydrates, but this time, he couldn't resist!



e Self-made Marzipan Babies / Organizing a baby Golden Pumpkin Rice/ 金瓜筍/ Living in a busy life > shower / It's a BOY!

### 13 thoughts on "Penang Char Kway Teow/ 素食炒粿条/ Fried flat rice noodle"



Namrata
October 8, 2013 at 7:56 pm

I love your pictures and your recipes... enticing!

Reply



Eva Wong
October 9, 2013 at 9:59 pm Thanks Namrata!<3



October 8, 2013 at 11:21 pm

I love noodles!!! and all those toppings, yum! It's very similar to a Lao /Thai dish that I love



It is similar but tastes a bit different. At the Thai restaurant I used to work, they always put in fish sauce, black soy sauce, broccoli and beef, and lots of MSG which I don't like to put myself. But if you liked pad see ew, for sure you will like this dish!

Reply



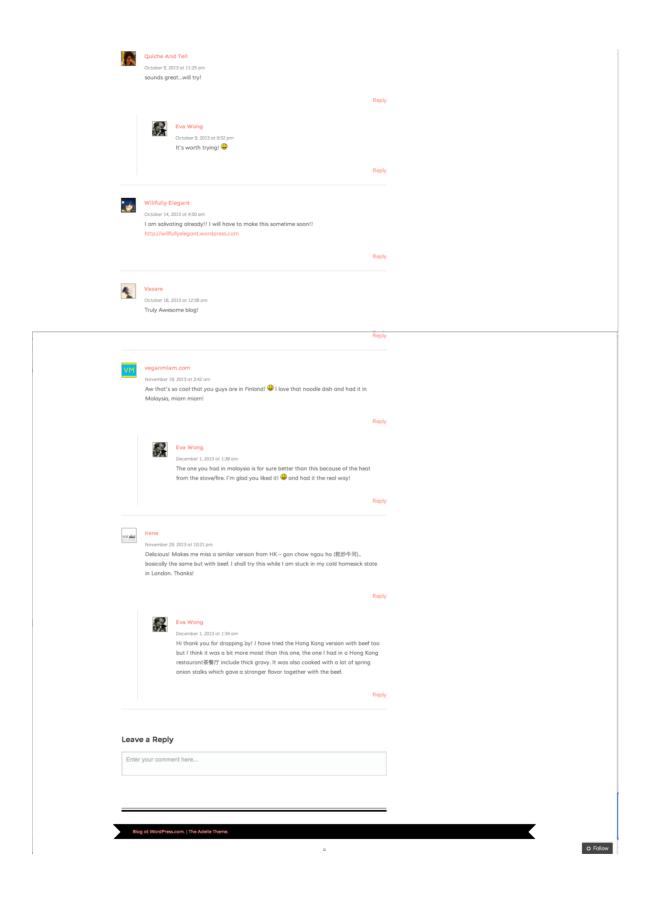
October 9, 2013 at 12:29 am What a lucky man!

Reply



O Follow

○ Follow



# Soup with Preserved Green Mustard and Tofu $_{R}$ $_{\#}$ $_{\#}$ / The love from my mom (Part 2)

posted in Asian, Beginners, Main course, Malaysian, Soups, Tofu, Vegetarian by Eva Wong



There is no complete Chinese dinner without a soun, says me 

As mentioned before, a classic Chinese home dinner is a combination of 3 dishes plus 1 soup. No matter if it is for two, three or four people. This combination is a hidden sign of welcoming the guests, a proper polite gesture from the host. In Malaysia, sometimes it can be more expensive to cook at home than to eat out, especially when a soup is prepared. My mom, the soup master usually puts a whole chicken, a few of dried scallops, dried oysters, dried jujubes, dried goji berries together with some Chinese herbs or root vegetables in a medium size pot and cook for hours. As you can probably imagine how intense the flavor would turn out, no MSG nor salt are needed for her soups. I simply love her chicken soup, a ealing effect for my palate, body, mind and soul, hmmm. When I used to worked as a full-time singer in Malaysia, my work normally ended around midnight. And when I came home hungry, my mom would warm up her soup and bring it to me, she knew that I love soups. She would save me a big plate of my favorite dish, stir-fried bean sprouts from the dinner I usually missed, and something like ginger and wine chicken, the one and only, etc. The moment was so sweet. I miss the times when you can go home to mommy. She would cook for me, wash my clothes, take me shopping and stuffs. You see, growing up is not so fun after all. Too bad life is not perfect. Maybe that's the way it supposed to be, so that you would appreciate things more when you can't have them around muc

Have you realized that chicken seems to be important to us? You see, my grandmother suffered from World War II when the Japanese attacked in Malaysia. She told me that she used to hide in the forest with her parents to avoid the dropping bombs. There was no food in the forest, they were constantly starving. My grandmother and her parents were eating the skins of the tree, leaves, grass and roots from the ground in order to survive. Luckly they did, but they never had a good life even until my mom was born. They were so poor that all the children dropped out from school and had to work. My mom told me that one of their fanciest dinner was the left-over soup from the restaurant in the village, where beef noodle soup was sold as its expertise. My mom and her sisters helped cleaning dirty plates in the restaurant. After work, they would carry home the left-over soup that was supposed to be thrown away, It would be the happiest day in their life! They would eat the soup with some rice in it and it would be a very fulfilling and satisfying med. This story always makes me feel ashamed to throw away food. But I can imagine the soup that have been cooked all day long must had tasted really

Life became easier when everyone has grown up and are able to work for supporting the family. I was raised by my grandparents in their home, since my mom was out working. I remember that in our backyard we used to have our own chicken farm, where my grandfather tought me how to feed Chinese herbs to the chickens to keep them healthy. We we didn't eat chicken that often though. It was only for special days like Chinese New Year, festivals, family reunions, etc. Therefore when we had chicken on our dining table, it symbolized happiness. It was when most of the relatives would be around the house talking, laughing, giggling, screaming, and yelling at each others over that loud TV noise. It made me assume that chicken is a sign of celebration, and it was. Growing up with my family, I have learned that chicken is a very valuable source of food. But then during my teenage years when life was better, chicken was easily affordable and it was often served on our table. It is not such a preclous dish anymore as it used to be. That was when soup became a delightful extra dish when we didn't have it so often. It takes hours to cook, you've got to be patience. Therefore it is very much

Since I have already made one fish dish (with secret sauce, check hers) and one chicken dish for Tuomas and Evelina, I thought that it would be nice to make the soup 'almost' vegetarian to deduct my sin a little, if it ever helps. Long time ago, fresh vegetables and meat were expensive and hard to keep. Therefore in China, poor people could only afford preserved vegetable and tofu for their daily meal, like this dish revealing the childhood story of my grandmother. It is actually a dish originated from Teachew region in China, using key ingredients like slices of ginger, tomatoes, preserved mustard and solted plum. The salty and sour taste makes it a very appetizina dish to serve all vear around.







### AUTHOR





### CATEGORIES

Advanced (2)
Asian (11)
Beginners (11)

Dessert (3)

Latin America (1)

Main course (11) Malaysian (12)

Moderate (5)

Personal (2)

Pork (2)

Rice (2)

Side dish (2)

Soups (5)

Tofu (4)

Vegetarian (1

### TAGS

Asian Boby bacon Bakery Baking Bao Breakfast Bun Cake carbonara cheese

### Cherry Chinese Chocolate

Coconut milk Cream Curd Curry Eggplant Eurasian Finnish Fish Food Decoration Fresh Tomato and Chile Salsa (Salsa Mexicana) Fruit

## garlic German Gluten free

Halloween Healthy High-tea Italian Kuala Lumpur Lunch Malaysian Marzipan Mexican cuisine Mushroom noodle Noodle Soup Onion parmesan Pasta

Penang pork pudding Pumpkin quick

& easy Rice Rice noodles Seafood
Soup South America Soy Sauce Spaghetti
Steamed Strawberry Tomato Traditional

Chinese medicine Vegan Vegetables
Vegetarian

### RECENT POSTS

Cherry Tomato and Chili Salsa/ Those sweet moments

Golden Pumpkin Rice/ 金瓜饭/ Living in a busy life

Penang Char Kway Teow/ 素食炒粿条/ Fried flat rice noodle

Self-made Marzipan Babies / Organizing a baby shower/ It's a BOY!

Szechuan Style Potato Shreds / Potato fetish & my Chinese friends 酸辣土豆丝

### FOLLOW MY BLOG VIA EMAIL

Enter your email address to follow this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join 1,098 other followers



(Make 3 – 4 servings)

### Ingredients:

150 g Preserved green mustard, sliced

5 slices Ginger

### 1,5 I Vegetable stock

1,5 dl Soy protein strips (replacing pork)

1 pack Silken tofu, cubed

2 tomatoes, quartered

1 Spring onion stalk, cut into 3" length

1.5 dl Prawns ( Optional), washed & cleaned

3 Salted plums

1 tbsp Soy sauce

1 tsp Sugar

1 tsp Chicken powder (Optional)

Dash of white pepper

### Methods:

1) In a deep pot, fry ginger slices with oil until fragrant. Add vegetable stock and bring to boil.

2) Add in the preserved green mustard, soy meat, tomatoes, prawns, and salted plum, and cook for 10 minutes with medium heat.

3) Add in tofu and spring onion. Season to taste and served.



This soup is a clear soup that has a rather mild taste, slightly sour and salty but very appetitive. I have omitted the salted plums this time because it ran out in my fridge. I think one can replace it with tamarind (Assam) to get the sour taste.







elyann14 on Cherry Tomato and Chili Salsa/...



Delights and Dismays on About the author







### COMMUNITY









# ARCHIVES

December 2013 (1)

October 2013 (2) September 2013 (5)

August 2013 (5) July 2013 (6) June 2013 (1)





Hmmm, smells good





This is actually a quick and easy soup to make once you have all the ingredients ready, unlike the one my mom would make. But this is a soup you would get from most Chinese restaurants 大炒 in Malaysia to go with your dinner. ③



唔。。。好味道!



57 thoughts on "Soup with Preserved Green Mustard and Tofu 咸菜豆 腐汤 / The love from my mom (Part 2)"



August 29, 2013 at 11:48 pm

Looks delicious!

http://barzibrand.wordpress.com/





Eva Wong

August 30, 2013 at 5:33 am Thank you!:)



### hkshuckleberry

August 30, 2013 at 6:27 pm

Beautiful pictures, delicious looking food. I like your blog 49!



# Eva Wong

August 30, 2013 at 8:04 pm

Thank you! My friend Eveliina helped me to take these pictures. If you like you can check out more of her work from here : http://www.eveliinam

Cheers! 😃

Reply



# goodolewoody

August 30, 2013 at 7:32 pm

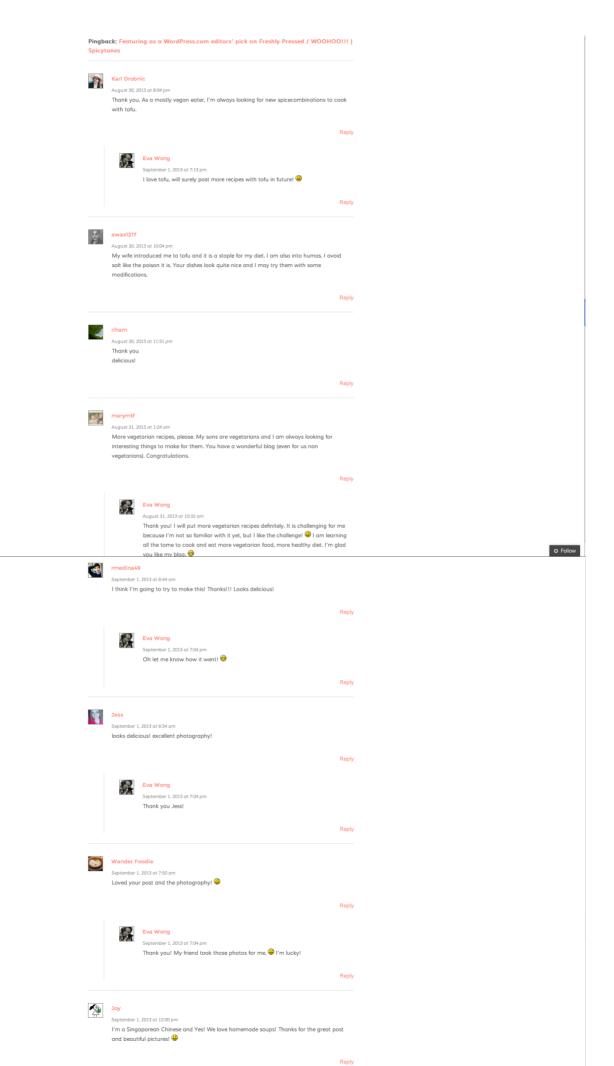
Reblogged this on GoodOleWoody's Blog and Website.

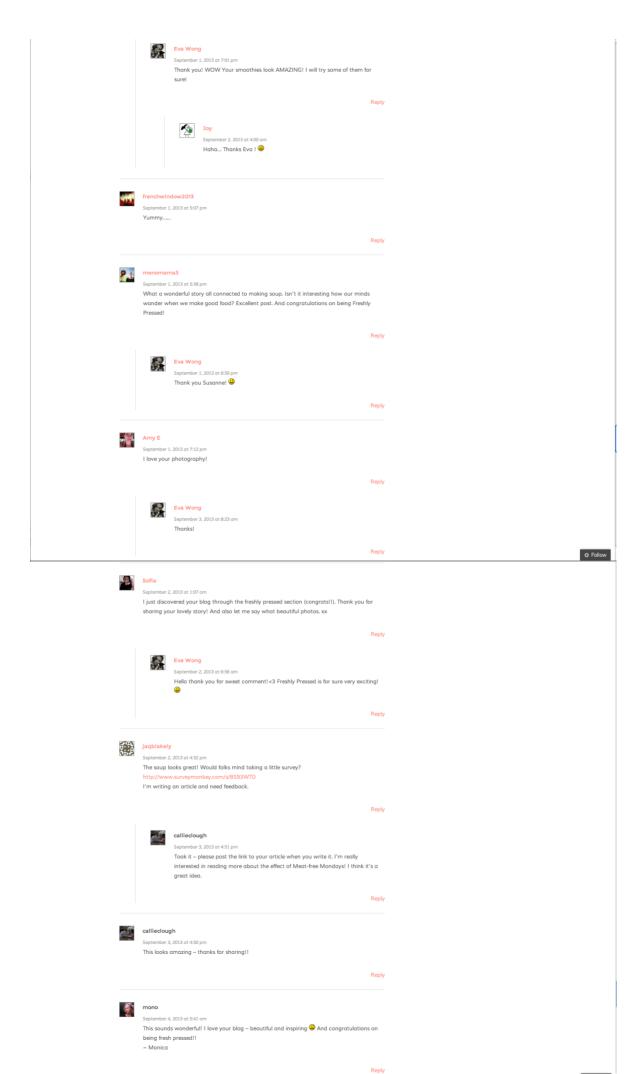


Thanks! <3

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reply





○ Follow