

the s l o w press



PHOTO: NANA TAN

VOL. 2 / MAY 2020 / A TOAST TRIBE PUBLICATION

HELLO,
WE MEET AGAIN.

Dear you -

Greetings our precious reader, thank you for gracing our presence once again. It's volume two and the second month we're into this 'let's make a magazine during quarantine because why not' thing. I'm beyond grateful for all the support after last volume's drop and I'm happy that you guys enjoyed this piece of reading material.

With all this tremendous support, The Slow Press has thus expanded and found itself in the hands of an amazing team. Now, I would like to introduce to you these friends who have embarked on this journey with me, to bring new perspectives and insights from The Slow Press and to all of you.

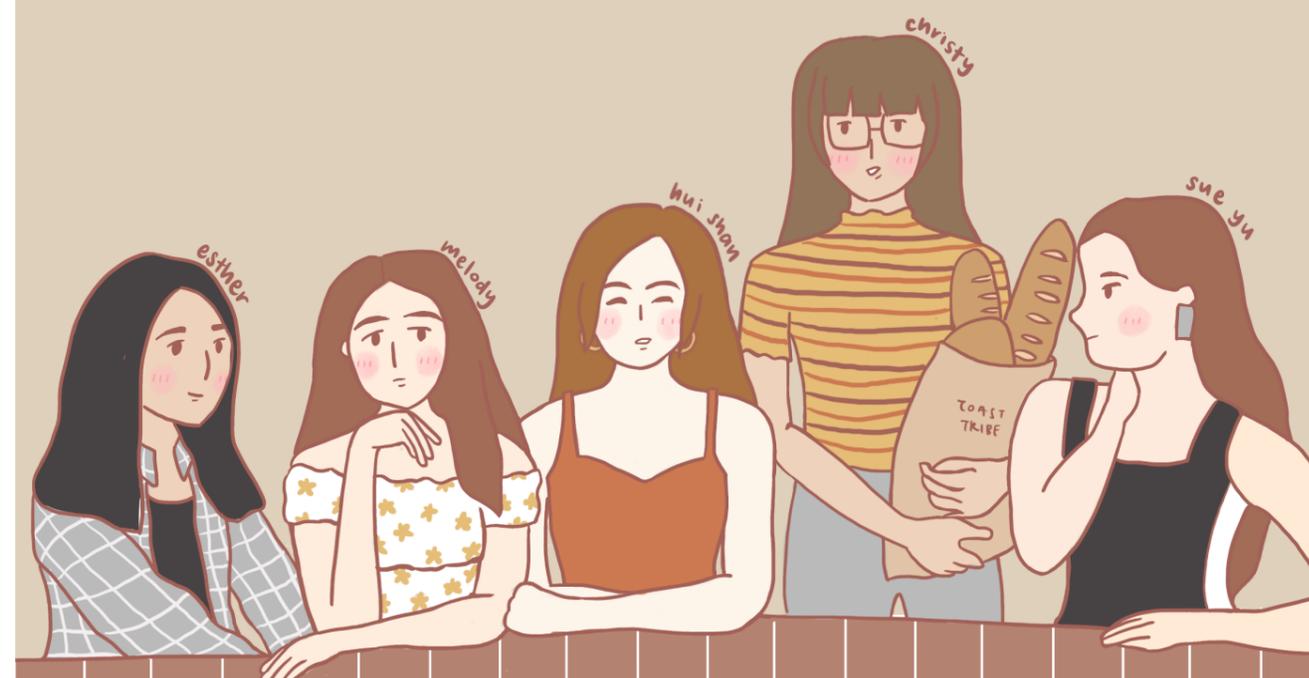
Here's a shoutout to Esther, Hui Shan, Melody and Sueyu, who have joined hands in making this volume something that we're proud to send into your inboxes. We're super excited for you guys to unpack something different in The Slow Press and I'm super thankful for this girl gang as well.

Stay healthy and strong in the meantime.

-CHRISTY
TOAST QUEEN/JUICE JUNKIE

editorial

team



illustrated by Melody

THE FRESHEST JUICE

Things about food you might have missed out on while busy consuming food.

BY THE SLOW PRESS TEAM

SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

NO PEARLS? NO PROBLEM...UNTIL

The world has plunged into a flour crisis. Never have bags of flour been snagged off the shelves so quickly. You start to question your sanity and the world's sanity.

Then bubble tea shops had to shut their doors and... you thought they would open 2 weeks later but... everyone is in a mad scramble for tapioca flour. You start making pearls at home. What happens when tapioca flour runs out? Will Singaporeans EVER get tired of starting the weirdest trends EVER?



PANCAKE CEREAL??? WHAT ON EARTH...

It isn't pancake flavoured cereal, if that's what you're thinking. Someone should flag this illegal and call it sponge cakes soaked in milk.

Pancake cereal went viral on Tik-Tok, despite its tedious preparation process and the horrors of making perfect oblong shapes just for the gram. You do not want to imagine how you're going to flip each circle at the same time without messing the adjacent one up.



Photo credits: @chockywoky

RECIPE
here
by @chockywoky

THE STRANGERS THAT FEED US

The Two Sides of Singapore, As Seen By A Food Delivery Rider by Ricemedia

This time of the year calls for a strange occurrence. We open our doors not to welcome our relatives or friends into our house for another night of hotpot, but to say "Yes", "Thank you" and a occasional "Stay Safe" to a stranger at our doors. The middleman between your food and your mouth has never had such an importance, till now when delivery is the norm.

As much as we complain that our delivery fees ranging from \$4 and above could buy us our next meal, they worry about how they can't pay for their next meal if they don't accept the order.

"This is a totally different world. I'm being sent around by an algorithm. I struggle, I sweat, sometimes it rains heavily and I still have to cycle to the top of Mount Sophia, which is like a 15-minute HIIT challenge."

Read more [here](#)

MARKETS WILL NOT BE LEFT BEHIND



1) [Tekka Market](#)

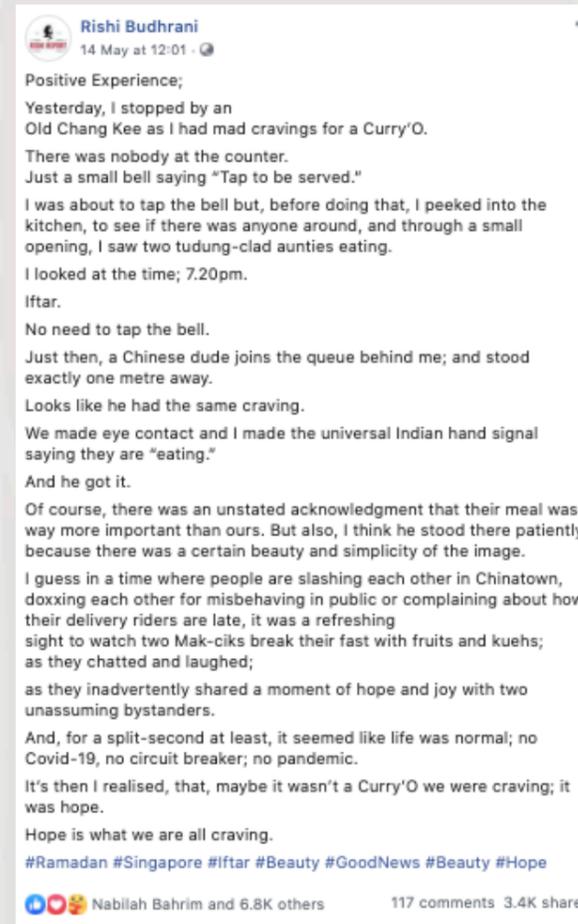
Using Facebook livestreams with the help of IMDA, Tekka Market has launched an on-line marketplace such that stall owners can remain in business. Who knew "pm me your order" could apply to a wet market stall?

2) [Hawkers United - Dabao 2020](#)

A public group for hawkers to take their businesses online without having to rely on external delivery partners

3) [Foodleh?](#)

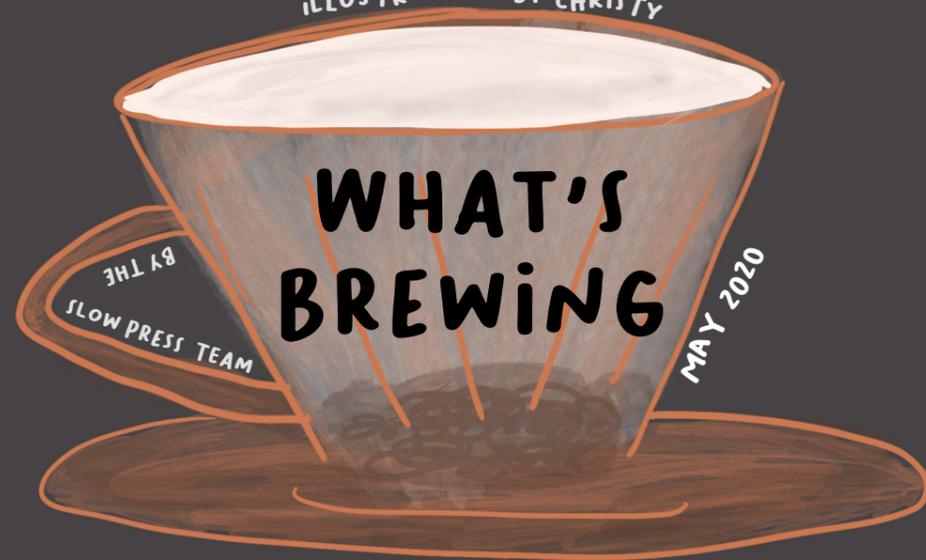
Listings of F&B outlets for you to order directly from them, inside of delivery platforms



We don't need textbooks and years of Social Studies to teach us about racial harmony and respect. Society can teach us that too.

#SGUNITED

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRISTY



FOOD IS ENOUGH FOR THEM

Slow Press is all about channeling our love for food to tell stories, create things, and spread good vibrations everywhere. We're sharing some avenues here for you to give back, if you're able to.

1. The Food Bank (Feed the City (Takeaway edition))

The Food Bank started a new initiative, Feed The City (Takeaway Edition) in light of the Covid-19 outbreak. Their aim is to provide vulnerable communities with meals as well as helping out F&B businesses who have been severely hit. Check it out [here](#).

2. Free Food For All Limited

Free Food For All is currently holding five campaigns in light of Covid-19. In light of Ramadhan, they also have a campaign that encourages community spirit. Check it out [here](#).
their website: <https://www.freefood.org.sg/>

3. Willing Hearts

Willing Heart is a charity that runs a soup kitchen that prepares, cooks and distributes food to vulnerable communities such as low-income families and the elderly. Check it out [here](#).

4. Food From The Heart

Fight hunger with Food From The Heart and contribute funds to buy groceries for their beneficiaries as they tide through Covid-19. Check it out [here](#).

5. Project Providence

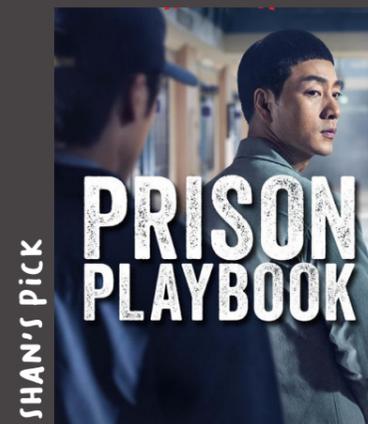
Project Providence is working with government agencies and various NGOs such as Migrant Workers' Centre to provide food (amongst other things) for guest workers. Check it out [here](#).

6. The Project Hills

A ground-up initiative to provide assistance by conducting outreach and delivering essential household items and supplies to assist residents of rental housing estates and focus on the underprivileged and the elderly. They have also started the Hilly Food Ration Programme which aims to help needy families they have identified in specific areas of Singapore. [@theprojecthills](#) on Instagram



The Editorial team's current picks from Netflix. Watch them all and you'll never get bored.



SHAN'S PICK

Baseball superstar Kim Je-hyeok learns to navigate his new life after landing himself behind bars unexpectedly. Sounds a little cliché BUT this series has a little bit of everything - friendship, romance, brotherhood, family, comedy, crime, melodrama. With plenty of comedy gold and heartwarming moments alongside gripping plot points, this series will make you laugh and cry at the same time. Thank me later!



SUE'S PICK

Social Media. Hot People. Catfishes. This is a competition-based reality show where players do not meet in real life but through the social media app. I went in thinking it was yet another trashy show (no hate, I love my trashy shows) but was surprised by pleasantly wholesome content.



MEL'S PICK

Celebrated designers compete to celebrate design. It's like if Project Runway and The Great British Bake Off had a baby. You would think that a reality show would stage a lot of drama to raise viewership, but this competition is so wholesome and there is so much mutual respect amongst the designers. Also, Tan France and Alexa Chung make such a cute pair of hosts!



STHER'S PICK

Esty, a Hasidic Jew, flees her Yiddish community in New York, in search of a less suffocating future for herself and the baby she is pregnant with. A (wo)manhunt ensues where her husband Yanky and his cousin Moishe are hot on her heels. I am a sucker for elaborate sets and stories behind closed doors and sealed lips, and this was an unexpected treasure for me.



TEA'S PICK

Girl meets boy, but it doesn't just go down that road. A simple, cute story might be all we've forgotten about. Who even writes love letters anymore? The Half of It revives this very medium of love language which some may call archaic, in such a digitised world today. A piece about repressed longing that may never be fulfilled, and the emptiness of onlooking from afar.

I still remember our first trip to town after we arrived in Leeds. It was one week before Chinese New Year, just this year in January. It was a freezing 2 degrees celcius, and we've just discovered the existence of a Chinese supermarket in the city centre, with the name 'Sing Kee Oriental Supermarket'. Keyword 'oriental'. That was a comforting sight to us. As I stepped inside, the thick, musty, 'mamashop' smell flooded my senses. For the first time, that smell was such a delight.

We ran our eyes down the aisles, swiftly scanning for our favourite sauces. "Eh, look! It's Gochujang!" said Melody, eyes brimming with joy when she realised she didn't have to lug the tub all the way from Singapore. "Help me find my Kewpie Roasted Sesame Sauce," called Glen, from another corner. As much as all these sachets, bottles, powders, made us feel like we were back home, the holy grail of them all had to be the 'Yuan Yang' steamboat pot that we spotted on the top shelf. Ashley eagerly snatched it from the shelf (she probably couldn't reach it, I think the store manager helped) and we got it reserved. Hours later, we returned back and carried bags of groceries and our £52 pot back to our house.

HOME, I MISSED YOU.

BY CHASTY CHUA

Little did we know, the third time we boiled our Hai Di Lao soupbases in the pot was the last time before we had to put it back into its box. We sadly bade goodbye to our hotpot pot as we had to return home because of the exchange recall. In the short 2 months we had, the 6 of us wreaked havoc in the kitchen, stuffed the fridge to its fullest capacity, and detached the smoke detector so it would stop ringing altogether. We learnt to cook, though we called our moms to ask them for recipes, and we watched cooking tutorials on Youtube for the first time in our lives. Long gone were the days we went scouring for chilli padi, Indomie and dumpling skins. But we missed home the most at mealtimes.

In this feature, we pass the baton to three of our friends who had gone to different parts of Europe for semestral exchange before the pandemic. For them, living away from family meant cooking for themselves and it was unfamiliar - among other adjustments like language, culture and weather. On those cold nights when all they were craving was a taste of home, these were the comforting dishes they mastered during the 1-2 months abroad.



Opening a fridge is an action that we repeat constantly throughout our lives. When we're hungry, when we're sad, when we're angry...you could sketch a life out by observing the ebbs and flows of a family fridge.

175-200g of dried shrimp
-1/8 block of belacan
1/2 red onion
125g of chilli padi (adjustable)

1. Wash and drain dried shrimp
2. Dice onion and chilli padi, removing stem
3. Blend separately into thick pastes
 - a. Red onion and belacan
 - b. Chilli padi
 - c. Dried shrimp

(You may use pestle and mortar instead)

4. Heat 1/4 cup of oil to wok, medium heat
5. Stir-fry belacan and onion paste (3-4 mins), then add chilli padi paste (fry for 3-4 mins)
6. Add dried prawn paste and stir fry until fragrant and of desired taste. Set aside to cool.

*For crispier HBH, fry it longer.

For chewier, clumpier HBH, reduce duration

Rolling:

using beaten egg or cornstarch slurry, follow the procedure [here](#)

TIPS:

- *make sure the rolls are not too close together, as they will stick together
- *limit the amount of beaten egg on the rolls to prevent them from sticking to plates

HBH can be used for:

- 1) Ibumie brand Mi Goreng instant noodles
- 2) Sambal Kangkong
- 3) fried HBH rolls (CNY!)

My mother taught me this recipe when I was 13. She said to me that this is a fast, simple and delicious dish to cook especially in the future when I have 2 crying kids to tend to and a 20 minute window to cook dinner and unload the dryer. Little did I know that instead of cooking this dish for my 2 non-existent children, I would be cooking this dish for 20 hungry Europeans wanting to try some Asian cuisine.

In Switzerland when I was on exchange, my flatmates and I would take turns every week to cook a meal from our own culture or country to let others experience new tastes. When it came to my turn, I immediately decided to make this recipe because it's the only one that I could remember and frankly, it's the only one that I could afford for 21 people. Everyone loved it and I am convinced that the next Masterchef Asia winner will go by the name Stacey Gan.

Whenever I open my fridge, from boyhood to now, there's always been a plastic box of hae bee hiam in the exact same spot. New fridges, new countries, new homes - it's always been there for me regardless. I can proudly tell you that the last bit is 100% true because I brought a plastic container of hae bee hiam to Spain when I went there for my exchange. I think my proudest cooking moment was when I made fried hae bee hiam rolls (because I missed Chinese New Year in Singapore, being overseas) for my friends. A picky Italian dude (this guy was a stereotype of a picky Italian dude...) tried it, nodded, and said "this tastes like the sea". Thank you, Picky Italian Eater Man.

This dish is my 'signature' dish - narrowly beating the 3-4 other things I can cook! I learnt it while on exchange with my friends in Amsterdam, and it quickly became a staple of our dinners. Even though they moan at times about how often I cook the same thing, it had also become a delicious comfort meal that represents our friendship and fun memories from exchange. :-)

Serves 4:
300g pasta of your choice (my fav is rigatoni!)
3tbsp unsalted butter
3 large garlic cloves, minced
1/2 onion, diced
300ml tomato passata*
250ml milk
30g parmesan/pecorino, grated
1 chicken stock cube, crumbled

*Passata is a super fine, smooth sauce. compared to tomato paste. You can use tomato purée in place, but monitor the consistency of your final sauce!

1. Chop onions, garlic, stock cube and toppings
2. Cook pasta in a pot based on box directions, stopping 2 minutes early. Remember to salt your water!
3. Once the pasta starts cooking, melt your butter into a large skillet over medium heat.
4. Add garlic and onion, cook until onions are translucent (roughly 2 min).
5. Add passata into the skillet, then milk, cheese and stock cube. Adjust your passata and milk ratio by observing the pinkness of the sauce - it's up to you!
6. Let sauce simmer on medium heat, stirring to incorporate all the ingredients and seasoning to taste.
7. Once the pasta is ready, toss evenly with sauce in skillet. Add ~100ml of pasta water to thicken the sauce. Lower the heat as well.
8. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
9. Serve with basil and cheese to garnish

Optional toppings:

Bacon (chopped) / Mushrooms (sliced) / Cherry tomatoes (halved) / Spinach
-Add them into pan at step 5 & remember to season with salt and pepper when they are nearly done.
-Cooking the toppings separately gives them a nice char and texture that would be lost if cooked in the tomato cream :-)



Serves 4:
Romaine lettuce (1 big one or 4 small ones)
400-450g Minced meat (I usually mix 100g beef and 250g pork bc my broke ass can't afford 450g of beef)
1 white onion sliced
A few cloves of chopped garlic
(Optional) 1 carrot, finely cubed
1 bottle of teriyaki sauce (thin, not thick)
pepper, sugar/honey

To make teriyaki from scratch:

1. Heat water, soy sauce, mirin, dark brown sugar, honey, minced garlic over a small flame
2. Add cornstarch mixed in water to the mixture
3. Heat until it is bubbling and has thickened (stir generously in order not to burn it!)

1. Wash and prepare Romaine lettuce cups in bowl by tearing apart its leaves
2. Fry sliced onions, cubed carrots and chopped garlic in a pan with oil till they soften
3. Add minced meat and let it cook all the way
4. Add Teriyaki sauce (honestly idk the exact quantity of sauce I just taste along the way and add more till I can taste the flavour lol, but usually I use up maybe 3/4 a bottle)
5. Add pepper
6. If too salty, add a bit of sugar/honey
7. Let the sauce reduce down in the pan till it's not so watery, add corn starch mixed with some water if you feel like it
8. Serve in a lettuce and bite down for that crrrruunch and juice ooze!

TERIYAKI LETTUCE CUPS

A woman with long dark hair, wearing white pajamas with a colorful pattern of cartoon faces and polka dots, is sitting on an orange surface. She is holding a wooden tray with several golden-brown, sesame-seeded buns. Some of the buns have a small sausage or hot dog sticking out of the top. She has her right hand raised to her forehead, looking down at the tray with a slight smile. The background is a solid orange color.

BEDSHEETS, BUNS, AND BANANAS

WORDS BY CHRISTY CHUA
PHOTOS BY NANA TAN

Tell me about that beautiful crackle on your loaf of bread. Or that ooze of chocolate from your first chocolate chunk cookie you've ever baked.

The pandemic does strange things to us - never has the world seen this many up and coming Martha Stewarts and Betty Crockers. (I swear the both of them may even consider a career change, if not for their age.) While we're busy googling 'Banana Bread recipe' for the first time in our lives or converting from Fahrenheit to Degrees Celcius, Nana spends her time whitewashing newspapers, broken egg shells and baked banana skins - yes, that's how she takes photos of her Banana Bread.

Nana may have felt trapped at home during the circuit breaker period, but her creativity definitely didn't feel the same way. She combined her two favourite things - baking and photography - and created photo series after photo series of bakes, with a special backstory behind each of them.

Being intrigued by the sophistication of her photo sets, I hung out with Nana to learn more about how she turned the mundane everyday into these masterpieces.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND IN BAKING, WHEN DID YOU START BAKING AND WHAT GOT YOU INTO IT?

When I was younger, I used to make kueh with my aunt. That was when I was in kindergarten. So I grew up in Malaysia, and that was my favourite pastime. When I started baking quite seriously, I baked something every week or every fortnight. That was when I was Sec 4, I believe. When social media started getting big and there were baking accounts here and there, I wanted to create one too. I started baking a lot of pastries, cupcakes, muffins, and cookies.

DID YOU CREATE A BAKING ACCOUNT THEN?

Yeah, it's actually the same account as Sodiumsquare, but it was named Sodiumbakery. So I archived every post that I posted then and changed it to a photo account, because in JC, I was more into photog and I had less time to bake.

“I used to play with my uncle’s compact camera when I was young. My aunt was quite creative, so she dressed me up to do photoshoots. That’s how I started photography.”

HOW WERE YOU INSPIRED TO START THIS FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY SERIES DURING CIRCUIT BREAKER?

Actually it was my friend, Stella (@kafkatell), because she’s doing food styling as her internship. Now that she has more time, she started doing a set on Dalgona coffee. I saw it and I asked her if she needed her help with editing. And she was like, “why don’t you create your own set? I’m sure you can do it too.” So the next day, I baked an orange chiffon cake and I went to her internship company’s account,

[@Alineacollective](#), and saw that they used similar ingredients and cloth. And for Stella,

WHAT WAS THE THOUGHT PROCESS BEHIND YOUR FIRST SET?

Okay, I have mahjong paper, then I saw a newly opened pack of blue bedsheets. I was like, oh my god, blue and orange go really well together! Oh, let me just bake the orange and then I’ll have orange slices right? Then I dug through my cupboard, and I found a mesh. I was like, oh my god, this totally fits in! And when I saw my dried flowers, I knew I had a set right there. I used the simplest white plate I could find, and I took aside a cup of egg white and sprinkled orange zest onto it.

For the rest of the sets, while I’m baking, I will envision what it turns out to be, then I’ll start panicking, like what can I get around the house to build a set? If not, I’ll think about it after that.

Orange Chiffon Cake



Baked Orange Slices



Whipped egg whites



Dried flowers



NANA'S FAVOURITE SET



Banana Bread
white paint, eggshells, newspapers, baked banana skins, chopping board

"It just happened that this phrase was so suitable for this whole pandemic situation. I was like, this is meant to be!"

Nana makes use of natural lighting a lot, though sometimes, she also uses an additional lightstick to brighten up the kitchen where she takes her photos.

Her sets take about 20 minutes to prepare if she has an idea in mind. Photography wise, 30 minutes or less are sufficient.

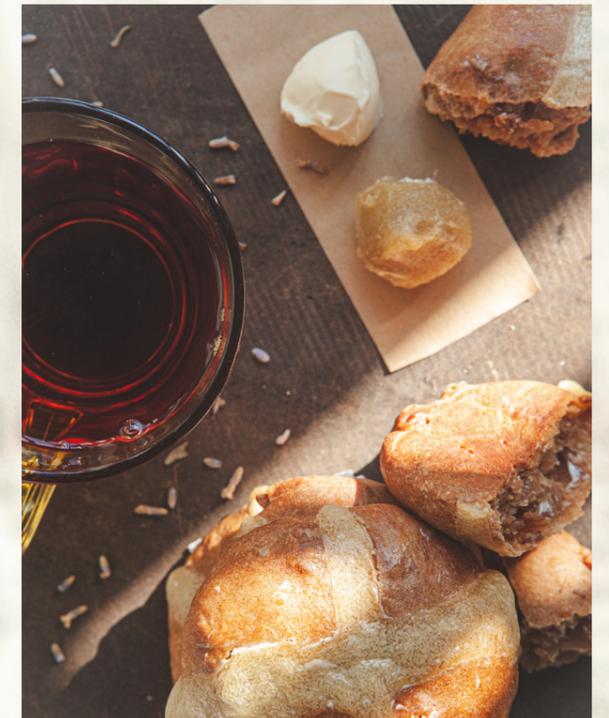
"I thought it was quite fun and we get to eat afterwards, so I started creating sets for everything I baked."



DALGONA COFFEE

Photography: Stella Seetoh
Art directions: Stella Seetoh
Edits: Nana Tan

Rocks (buns)
tea, kaya & butter on tape,
mahjong paper,
chopping board, tea, apron



BEHIND THE SETS

Peach tarts
cans, laundry net, paintings,
shells from Taiwan



Spilling THE LiHO Tea

You've probably seen the panic. Snaking queues on the last day that drink shops were allowed to open. Many failed attempts at making tapioca pearls from scratch on social media. Maybe you are living this reality. Keeping track of the news while hoping that your favourite drink will return to stores. Looking forward to the days when you don't have to order delivery from a ramen shop just to get your bubble tea.

In the middle of this whole ordeal, LiHO released its own bubble tea kits. But is it *really* worth it?

The kit that I bought was the Milk Tea With Pearls Kit. To me, the taste has no discernable difference from the regular tea sold at a flagship store. It is also great because you get to personalise your own drinks according to your taste. The recipe provided is very easy to follow, and is a tough one for even kitchen beginners to mess up. Breaking down the cost price, the kits are reasonably priced. The Milk Tea With Pearls Kit costs \$48 for 15 large cups. Each individual cup made would cost \$3.20. The Black Tea Oat Latte costs \$85 for 20 large cups. Each individual latte made would cost \$4.25. You don't even have to pay for shipping.

The one issue I had with the kit was the life span of the pearls. All the pearls for 15 cups was packed together. Once opened, the pearls could only keep for 4-5 days. Unless your whole family loves bubble tea or drinking bubble tea is like drinking plain water to you, this is a lot of bubble tea to finish. You could try to freeze your pearls, but the texture is still the best when it is freshly cooked. However, this is just a minor issue which can easily be overlooked. So if you really crave LiHO teas and need that hit before you relapse, by all means go get it.

TISSUE TIPS

Brew your tea a few hours ahead of time to avoid an extremely hot or diluted drink.



Milk Tea

Sugar Syrup

Freeze your cooked pearls to increase its longevity.

Pearls

A brown sugar syrup recipe can be found on the LiHO Instagram page.



By Melody

tik tok

#fyp #foryoupage #cooking #recipe #easyrecipe #foodie
#by #Chin #Hui #Shan

You are sitting on your couch, scrolling TikTok recipe videos and you are about to move your ass to the kitchen to follow a recipe until... you realise you lack the ingredients needed. TikTok recipe videos are bite-sized, fast and fun to watch but a real pain when they require speciality ingredients you have to go out of your way to look for (stay home!). We have collated a list of quick and easy recipes using only ingredients that you probably have at home to whip up some delectable mains and snacks at ease! Note: these recipes are simplified alternatives to traditional detailed recipes and can be customised to suit your tastes.

- 1 Mash the banana!
- 2 Mix the flour, yoghurt and baking soda together. Then add in the mashed banana. Mix till you get a nice, smooth dough.
- 3 Heat a few inches of oil in a small pot or a skillet over medium-high heat. Once the oil is hot, scoop out the dough with an oiled spoon and pop it into the oil. Fry the donuts until golden brown.
- 4 Once done, remove the donuts and drain them on layers of paper towels. Sprinkle icing sugar all over and voila!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- 1 Banana
- 1 cup (128g) of all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup (118.5ml) of yoghurt
- 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda
- Oil

<https://vt.tiktok.com/BqP4Sd/>



WHAT YOU NEED:

- Potato (Quantity depends on your servings!)
- Corn flour
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of white vinegar
- Oil

THINK YOU'RE WASTING TOO MUCH OIL? REUSE THEM!

1. Cool the oil completely.
 2. Strain the oil to sieve out any unwanted matter. You can use any filter as long as it does the job!
 3. Store the oil in a clean container - we like a glass jar.
- *Avoid using the oil more than twice.

<https://vt.tiktok.com/BqUth/>

- 1 Peel and rinse the potatoes before cutting them into thin slices. The thinner they are, the crispier they will be! After cutting them into slices, rinse them.
- 2 Boil water in a pan and add in a teaspoon of salt and vinegar. Add the fries into the boiling water for 3 minutes before taking them out to dry.
- 3 Coat the potato sticks with corn flour. After coating, wrap the potato sticks and refrigerate them for 2 hours.
- 4 Heat a few inches of oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Once the oil is hot, fry the sticks for about 5 minutes or until golden brown. Do not add too many fries at a time as they will clump together!
- 5 Once done, remove the fries and dry them on layers of paper towels. If you want to salt your fries, season them while they are still draining and hot!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- For 2 servings:
- 170 g of pasta
 - 4 cloves of minced garlic
 - 4 (or 56.7g) tablespoons of butter
 - 2 tablespoons of oil
 - 1 cup (236ml) of heavy cream
 - 3/4 cup (75g) of shredded Parmesan cheese

<https://vt.tiktok.com/BqxOvX/>

- 1 In a large pot, heat salted water over high heat until boiling. Cook the pasta for about 8-10 minutes or until al dente. Remember to stir occasionally!
- 2 Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat 2 tbsp of oil over medium-high heat and saute your choice of protein until cooked. Season it with salt and pepper if necessary. Remove your protein and cover to keep it warm.
- 3 In the same large skillet, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add oil and minced garlic and cook for about 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in heavy cream.
- 4 Cook until the cream is heated through before seasoning it with salt and pepper. Add parmesan cheese and whisk it till smooth.
- 5 Add cooked pasta and toss until it is thoroughly coated in sauce. If the sauce is too thick, add some pasta water to thin it out and voila!



- 1 In a large pot, heat salted water over high heat until boiling. Cook the pasta for about 8-10 minutes or until al dente. Remember to stir occasionally!
- 2 Mix equal amounts of soy sauce and oyster sauce in a bowl - any amount is fine as long as they are equal.
- 3 In a large skillet, heat 2 tbsp of oil over medium-high heat and saute your choice of protein until cooked. Season it with salt and pepper if necessary. Remove your protein when done.
- 4 In a large skillet, heat butter over medium heat. Add minced garlic, sauce mixture and some chili flakes. Cook for about 1-2 minutes before adding in your pasta and cook until the liquid has been absorbed by the pasta. Add in some pasta water to thin it out if necessary.
- 5 Lastly, add in your choice of protein but make sure you do not overcook it! Sprinkle with scallions and parmesan cheese if you want.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- For 2 servings:
- 170 g of pasta
- One bulb of minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons of soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons of oyster sauce
- Preferred choice of protein (I'm using shrimp here!)
- Half a stick (4 tablespoons) of Butter
- Chili (optional)

<https://vt.tiktok.com/BqSTdd/>

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ALFREDO AND CARBONARA?

Both of them are rich and creamy so what differs between them? The most distinguishable difference is the ingredients used - Alfredo is essentially made up of heavy cream, minced garlic and butter while Carbonara is prepared from eggs, pecorino romano (a type of cheese!), guanciale and pepper! so if you think Carbonara is easy... Alfredo is easier!

BY ESTHER BOEY

NEW BEGINNINGS

UPCYCLING AN OLD SHIRT



Transform a ready-to-throw shirt from the dark days in your closet into 3 ready-to-use pieces. I made a tote from the body of the shirt, a scrunchie from the sleeve, and a headband from cutting a strip from the bottom of the shirt. Here's how, with no frills. A suggested activity for another afternoon of boredom.

1. TIE A TOTE BAG



Cut off sleeves of shirt

Cut a U-shape to form bag handle

Reverse shirt inside out



From the bottom cut strips of 3 by 1 inch

Tie strips from the front and back of the shirt together



Tie a double knot with the adjacent strip

Reverse back the shirt, and strut it!

Now you can buy more when you save that \$0.20 on plastic bags at NTUC!

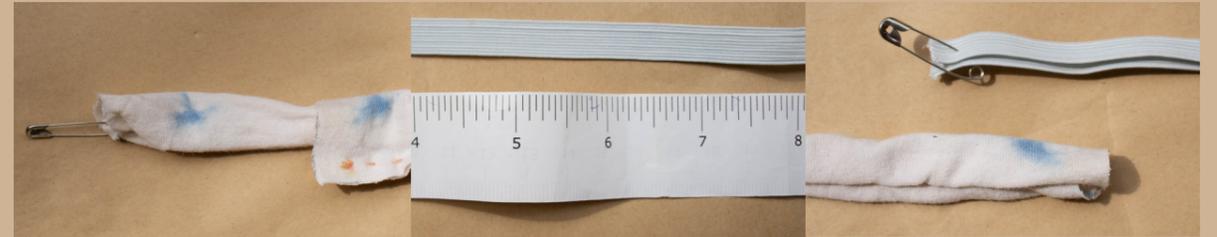
2. SCRUNCH A HAIRTIE



Cut 2.5 by 20 inches from the sleeve

Sew the long sides of the fabric together

Attach a safety pin to one end



Pulling the safety pin through to reverse it

Cut 8 inches of elastic band. I used 2 bands

Safety pin one end of the elastic band



Weave the elastic band through the fabric

Tie a double knot with the elastic band

Sew up the 2 ends of the fabric. Ok the end.

3. SAILOR KNOT HAIRBAND 101



Cut 2 long strips from the bottom of the shirt

Tie a sailor knot following the next 4 pictures



Pull on all 4 ends of the fabric to tighten the knot



Put a hairband on top of the 4 ends

Sew the ends over to complete the hairband.



STATIONS OF SINGAPORE

STORIES ABOUT OUR EVERYDAY MRT STATIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SUEYU

PIONEER MRT
WRITTEN BY H

BOON LAY MRT
WRITTEN BY SUEYU

TRAIN OF THOUGHT
WRITTEN BY
ASHLEY THAM

What Pioneer MRT means to me in the different stages of my life.

2008.
I was 9.

"Aunt, when is Pioneer MRT going to open? Boon Lay is so far from home," I asked my aunt as we began our long 1.2km long trudge back to our home with a handful of grocery bags. 12 years ago, Boon Lay was the terminal station in the west. Everyone who lived beyond Boon Lay anticipated the opening of Pioneer Station which would make travelling easier since it is stationed in the heart of the neighbourhoods.

2010.
I was 11.

"Auntie, two Blue Coral Ice Blend with pearls please!" I shrieked out my usual Sweet Talk order with my then-best friend at Pioneer Station. We would spend most of our time after school hanging out near Pioneer Station as she lived right beside the station. Some days, we would grab a drink from the station and chill at her house. Some days, we felt a little more daring, Pioneer Station became the stepping stone that fuelled our curiosity. We explored stations nearby despite our parents' advice to not wander around. We chose adventures instead of studying for PSLE.

It has now become a fond memory of mine to reminisce about my childhood and all of my friendships.

2014
I was 15.

It had been three years since I left the west. At that point in time, I had a huge crush on a guy. Not just any other guy. It was a guy who lived right beside Pioneer MRT... so hello Pioneer, nice to meet you again. I was head over heels for him and I would sacrifice my Saturday mornings just to travel all the way from the east to the west for him. However, things went south and life happened, there was no happily ever after.

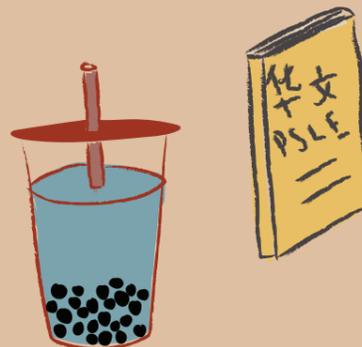
It has now become a place filled with heart-breaking memories that remind me of how my efforts were never reciprocated. After all, why did you choose to let go of someone who would do anything for you?

2018
I was 19.

I have always thought I would no longer pass by Pioneer MRT. That was until... I enrolled into Nanyang Technological University (NTU). My university life had brought new meanings to Pioneer MRT - it has now become a station where my Eastie friends and I would embark on our one hour journey back home. Pioneer MRT was the station I would alight at to return to my hall after my weekly trainings. It was the station where I would spend 15 minutes sitting on platform benches as I collated Ah Lian Bee Hoon orders. It was also the station that became a gateway between Pulau NTU and the rest of Singapore.

Pioneer MRT.

It is now a station that watched me grow up, through the good and the bad, the laughs and the bawls, the highs and the lows.



Our conversations were pointless but somehow familiar. We filled the air and space with laughter and memories from school. Questioning each other's taste, "Wah how is she cute sial!" Demanding to know insider news we never knew before. "They were together?" "Ya bro omg. Everybody knew."

Your eyes shifted as you fiddled with your fingers. You looked up and I could see the hesitation in your being.

"Just. Hypothetically speaking, do you think if the timing was right, something could have..."

You trailed off and fell silent. I raised my brows, waiting for you to finish your sentence even though I knew what you wanted to ask. My mind was scrambling to find the right words to form the right sentence. Instead, reckless words fell out of my mouth instead.

"Hahahaha that period was weird la! You legit had feelings for me meh?"

We walked around Jurong Point in silence. I couldn't muster out an apology. An apology for hurting you in the past, treating your feelings so casually, for keeping you around.

The atmosphere changed. One heavy with the weight of words we never got to say and will never say because we missed the timing. I was thrown off by that question and had to wonder myself. Would anything have happened if the timing was right? Would things be different? I could hear your thoughts too. Wondering if we could have been together instead of me with him.

"I thi- Aiya, it's too late to think about such things."

There's just something about train tracks. It's something to be felt, not easily explained through words. The whole process of taking a train is so universal that its poignancy is lost, forgotten in the rush of late mornings and human traffic. You wait on the platform, just like everyone around you, for that one train. Looking over the tracks, squinting against the sunlight to see if you can catch a glimpse of its speedy self. The moment when it arrives, the platform around you suddenly bustling to life, and your hair gets whipped up in the process. It's here.

My travels in Europe meant that train travel was essential and almost my go-to mode of transportation. Rides were long but tickets were cheap, I would often find myself tucked away in the back snuggled against (if I was lucky) a window. Coffee in hand and discounted Tesco sandwich in the other, I'd just admire the view. My favourite part of travelling would be just that, the travel. The peace of mind that the world is moving around me, I'm just sitting there not doing anything and yet, I know I'm going somewhere too. It might sound like nothing, but I couldn't remember the last time I felt this way.

When I got back to Singapore, and I was looking through old photos (things you do in SHN to pass the time), I found an old picture I took of my feet in the MRT. I was on the way to my JC, an hour's trip every morning. I would find myself at Buona Vista MRT, desperately hoping the green line train would arrive because I'd always, always be late. And it made me realise how I never took the time to enjoy the view when I was here. Maybe it's because our time spent on the MRT isn't as long as train trips in Europe, most MRT rides don't take more than an hour.

We spend more time than we realise trying to get from one place to another. A rough calculation (very rough, my maths is terrible) of my time spent on the train every morning to school, adds up to almost 300 hours.

When COVID-19 so rudely announced her presence and turned our lives upside down, making our filled calendars and carefully laid-out plans all for naught, did I start to think. How many of us were actually living before?

Forget being able to soak in the view, we were busy rushing somewhere to do something, heads down to our screens texting away and arranging appointments. It shouldn't have to take a pandemic that cost thousands of lives to make us realise what's really important to us. And yeah, that's a privileged thing to say. I know it is. It's hard to sit still and enjoy the view when you know everyone else is moving along, for most, you can't do anything but move. I was no different.

Maybe how we spend our time on the MRT is reflective of how we live. Never relaxing, anxious to move on to the next thing. COVID-19 is a quick wakeup call to just how much time these things take up in our lives. We shouldn't only be able to sit back and enjoy the view when we're on a train. Carve out time for yourself intentionally, order your favourite kopi and just take a breather. Now's the best time. Talk to a loved one. The world is still moving around you, scarily so and you shouldn't feel the need to move with it.

There's a misconception that in order to relax, we need to go on a holiday. What's wrong with having a vacation at home? The pandemic is providing clarity on all things important in my life and everything is right here at home.

So for now, I'll just keep bidding my time at home with family. Resting, praying and hoping the world is going to see better days. Till when we can all tap into our oh-so-familiar gantries and see each other on our own platforms, let's learn to make the most of our journeys before we realise it's too late.



Ashley is our guest contributor for Stations of Singapore! We are always looking for people to contribute stories about MRT stations around Singapore. Share your nostalgic mrt stories with us at toasttribe@gmail.com



SPECIAL THANKS TO:
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