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**Culture Ingested:
Notes on the Indigenization of Philippine Food**

DOREEN G. FERNANDEZ

In spite of his daily participation in its preparation and consumption, the Filipino is often hard put to say just what Philippine food is. In his home and restaurant menus are found dishes with vernacular names like *laing* and *pinais*, Spanish names like *relleno* and *mechado*, Chinese names like *mami* and *siopao*, and even Chinese food with Spanish names, like *camaron rebozado dorado con jamon*—all companionably coexisting. The reason for the confusion is that Philippine cuisine, as dynamic as any phase of culture that is alive and growing, has changed through history, absorbing influences, indigenizing, adjusting to new technology and tastes, and thus evolving.

Filipino food today as shaped by Philippine history and society consists of a Malay matrix, into which melded and blended influences from China and India (through trade), Spain and America (through colonization), and more recently the rest of the world (through global cultural communication).¹ A special path to the understanding of what Philippine food is can be taken by examining the process of indigenization, which brought in, adapted, and then subsumed foreign influences into the culture.

"Eating," anthropologist Naomichi Ishige has said, "is the act of ingesting the environment."² It is quite certainly also ingesting culture,

1. Cf. D. G. Fernandez, "Food and the Filipino," *Philippine World-View*, Virgilio G. Enriquez, ed. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986), pp. 20-24; and "Why Sinigang?" *The Culinary Culture of the Philippines*, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, ed. (Manila: Bancrom Audiovision Corporation, 1976), pp. 24-29.

2. Naomichi Ishige, "What is Dietary Culture?" *AjiCommunications*, 9 November, March-April 1981, pp. 1-5.

and among the most visible, most discernible and most permanent traces left by foreign cultures on Philippine life is food that is now part of the everyday, and often not recognized as foreign, so thoroughly has it been absorbed into the native lifestyle.

This particular aspect of cultural borrowing and change bears investigation, because the results are not only of immediate and gut-level concern to every Filipino, but the process is one in which not only a few, but the greater majority participated. The process of borrowing went on in innumerable Philippine households through many years. It was a conscious and yet unconscious cultural reaction, in that borrowers knew that they were cooking foreign dishes while making necessary adaptations, but were not aware that they were transforming the dish and making it their own. *Pancit*, for example, from a Chinese noodle dish, is now the signature of many a town or region (Pancit Malabon, Pancit Marilao, Pancit Habhab of Lucban), and of many an individual (*Pancit ni Aling Nena*). That certainly shows that both evolution and creation have been involved.

The process seems to start with a foreign dish in its original form, brought in by foreigners (Chinese traders, Spanish colonizers). It is then taught to a native cook, who naturally adapts it to the tastes he knows and the ingredients he can get (borrowing, adapting). Eventually, he improvises on it, thus creating a new dish that, in time, becomes so entrenched in cuisine and lifestyle that its origins are practically forgotten (indigenization). The process of the indigenization of Philippine food thus starts with a foreign element, and ends with a dish that can truly be called part of Philippine cuisine.

METHODOLOGY

A principal difficulty in this investigation is methodology. The evidence for this research is always consumed, digested, and transformed— and thus no longer available in archives, or for carbon dating. Yet in a way one can say that the evidence is always being manufactured and discovered anew, every day, in every meal in every home. Still, the work of one cook is not hard and fast evidence, is fraught with variables, and at best can indicate only a pattern.

Secondly, to conventional research methods like documenting and comparing variants, recording changes and seeking reasons for them,

one must add critical and analytical tasting—a process difficult to standardize and imprison in formulae. For this preliminary exploration I have used a methodology largely derived from logical analysis, and based on examinations of the dish as it appears in the original culture and the dish as extant in Filipino culture, and then on the culture change or resulting pattern discernible from this.

N A M E S

How then does one recognize these indigenized dishes on the Philippine table? Firstly by the names, since these were usually borrowed along with the dish. *Siopao*, for example, is a Hokkien borrowing, the name of which suggests the cooking process, steaming, since *pao* is steamed bread. *Pancit*, which comes from the Hokkien *pian* + *e* + *sit* is still recognizably Chinese, although it did not originally necessarily mean a noodle dish. Gloria Chan-Yap tells us that it literally means “something that is conveniently cooked,” and indicates the frying process. Since noodles are easy to prepare by frying, the word often, but not necessarily, means noodles. *Pesa* in Hokkien simply means “plain boiled and it is used only in reference to the cooking of fish, the complete term in Hokkien being *peq* + *sa* + *hi*, the last morpheme meaning ‘fish.’” Chan-Yap cites this as an example of semantic “widening,” since in Tagalog, *pesa* in isolation does mean fish, but can mean “boiled” when one says *pesang manok*. However, the point remains: the names indicate the origin.³

Adobo is the noun derived from *adobado*, the name of a stewed meat dish in Mexico, from where Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil says our adobo comes.⁴ In Spain, however, adobo is the pickling sauce, made by cooking together olive oil, vinegar, garlic, thyme, laurel, oregano, paprika, and salt. The Filipino has given the name adobo to his particular dish of chicken or pork-and-chicken, and derived from it an adjective to describe other foods using the same or a similar cooking process (*adobong pusit*). The term *adobodo* has moved from the dish

3. Gloria Chan-Yap, “Hokkien Chinese Influence on Tagalog Cookery,” *Philippine Studies* 24 (1976):288-302.

4. Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, “Filipino Food,” *A Question of Identity* (Manila: Vessel Books, 1973), p. 19.

to the process of stewing in a spiced or flavored broth (e.g. "Ang itik sa Angono'y adobado na bago prituhin")⁵ thus using the basic meaning—to cook in a pickling sauce. And indeed the Philippine adobo is adobado—but in vinegar and garlic, laurel and peppercorns, and occasionally soy sauce (a Chinese contribution).

Some borrowings from Spanish are literal and do not undergo semantic shifts like the above: *cocido*, *salpicon*, *croquetas*. Some are only portions of the original name, e.g. *carne mechada* (meat with a lardoon), has become *mechado*; *gallina rellenada* has become *relleno*. (Relleno in Spanish is the forcemeat with which one stuffs the chicken.) Especially interesting cases are dishes like *pescado en agrio-dulce* and *camaron rebozado*, which in spite of their Spanish names, are really Chinese. These are *panciteria* dishes that in the Spanish period were translated into Spanish for printing on a menu. The dishes entered the native kitchen from the *panciteria*, and so retain the Spanish names. Some of these menus survive in small eating places, and although the years have corrupted the spelling in amusing ways, the Spanish words cloak a Chinese dish which most Filipinos recognize as Chinese—but now consider Filipino.

Semantic analysis of the names of food would reveal not only origin and something of the nature of the change, but also further information. For example, in the same study, Dr. Chan-Yap finds the loanwords are fewest in the category of rice products and fowl, and suggests that this may be because both rice and fowl have long been a source of food for Filipinos, who "already had in their possession the culinary words appropriate for describing referents" in these categories. On the other hand, the fact that there are many loanwords for meat (*goto*, *kamto*, *kasim*, *paykot*, *liyempo*) suggests that the Tagalog people learned the habit of eating many meat cuts from the Hokkien speakers, and much of the habit of eating beef from the Spanish (most of the terms for beef are Spanish—*punta y pecho*, *cadera*, *lomo*, *solomillo*).

INGREDIENTS

The ingredients contained in the original dish, and those in the local edition, are also clues to the process of indigenization. Pancit in

5. "Duck cooked the Angono way is stewed in a pickling liquid before frying."

Chinese cuisine, for example, generally has meat and vegetables to flavor the noodles, but Filipino pancit has local meats and vegetables, and a few other things not found in Chinese cooking at all. Pancit Malabon, the signature noodle of a fishing town, has squid and oysters and salted eggs, which individually may conceivably be found in other Chinese dishes including pancit, but not in that combination. Pancit Marilao has crumbled *okoy*; Pancit Palabok has flaked *tinapa* and crumbled *chicharron*, which surely would not be found in a Chinese dish. The *tinapa* is from the native cuisine (smoking being one of the ways of preserving food in the days before refrigeration), and the *chicharron* is from the Spanish, but they are combined in a dish of Chinese origin. A special example of adaptation through ingredients is Pancit Buko, in which flour noodles are replaced by strips of young coconut cut and treated like noodles.

Bringhe would also be an example of a cultural change made through the use of ingredients from the Philippine landscape. *Paella* is generally made in Spain with chicken or rabbit, with rice and seasoning, especially saffron. *Bringhe* does use chicken, but the rice is the sticky *malagkit*, and the sauce is coconut milk, to which is added a bark called *ange* which turns the rice greenish instead of saffron yellow. *Paella* was created from the Spanish country landscape—the rabbit scampering by, the chicken bought from a farmer, the saffron which is the most expensive spice in the world but grows in Spain. Eating *paella*, therefore, is ingesting the Spanish landscape. Eating *bringhe*, however, is ingesting the Philippine landscape—the chicken running around the farm, the coconut from a nearby tree and the *malagkit* used for fiesta cakes. This is a clear example of indigenization through a change of substance, spirit and name.

THE COOKING PROCESS

This is probably the anvil on which many a cultural change is fired and set in the Philippine mode. We have already mentioned *adobo*, in which stewing with spices became stewing in vinegar, garlic, pepper and bay leaf—in the process making sure that the dish would keep long without need of refrigeration, and endowing it with that slight sourness which is a favored Philippine flavor.

Here one must mention *gisa*, or sautéing, a technique foreign to

the indigenous cuisine, which is mostly boiled, roasted, or steamed. It may have been learned from Chinese stir-frying in which food cut up in small pieces is moved quickly around in a little oil/lard. But certainly most of it was learned from the Spanish (the word *gisado* indicates that), who sauté in olive oil with perhaps an onion and a garlic clove. The Filipino sautéing, however, is a set and standard process: heat the oil; sauté the garlic till golden brown; add the onions and sauté till soft and transparent; add the sliced tomatoes and sauté till cooked; add *sahog* (usually shrimps and/or pork)—and then finally add whatever else is being cooked, like beans for *ginisang sitaw*. Through the years it has become a standard formula, and many cooks say that the secret of good cooking is in the pace and contents of the *gisado*. One must know exactly when the next item should be added and it is also said of good cooks that their *pag-gigisa* can make leftover food or a lowly vegetable taste good.

What we have here is a particular indigenizing process discovered and set through the years. The Filipino *gisado* has to have garlic, onion, tomato and *sahog* and this preliminary process can Filipinize anything—cauliflower, leftover fish, scrambled eggs, noodles, paella (restauranteur and chef Leny Guerrero says that that is the secret of her paella) and even canned mackerel from Japan (colloquially called *sardinas*). The *sahog* may be optional, but not the garlic, onion and tomato. In Spanish cuisine a *guisado* may have one or two of the above, but not usually all three. Thus the Spanish cooking technique used on a Philippine ingredient produces a dish that cannot be called foreign and is indisputably Filipino. The Filipino *gisado* is indeed an indigenizing process all by itself.

FLAVORING

If the *gisado* tunes the food to Filipino tastes, even more so do the dipping sauces called *sawsawan*, and the standard table sauces like *bagoong* and *patis*. *Bagoong* and *patis* are used not only to salt food, but also to give the food an acceptable Filipino taste. Tales have been told of Filipino travelers and honeymooners traveling with bottles of *patis* into alien cuisines. The reason is that no matter how strange or different the food, the *patis* gives it a hint of Filipino flavor, so that the diner's culture-bound taste buds can relate to it.

What really adjusts the food to the Filipino, however, what fine-tunes its flavor to the individual and his learned food values, what adapts it to the particular regional, individual culture of the diner, are the *sawsawan*. Chinese food provides many different sauces for different dishes, but not quite this galaxy of flavor-adjusters: vinegar and garlic; *kalamansi*; soy sauce, patis and garlic; bagoong, tomatoes and onions; green mango or *kamyas* with tomatoes and onions; chicharron, bagoong and coriander leaf; bagoong Balayan and kalamansi; *sinamak* (vinegar in which chilis, garlic and pepper are marinated); native pearl onions and Ilocano vinegar; *miso* (soy bean cake) sautéed in garlic, onions and tomatoes; sliced fresh tomatoes (for fish); sliced *paho* (tiny, tart mangoes); crushed tamarind etc., and now, of course, ketchup as well.

What does this mean, and why is the Filipino diner allowed to tamper with his food in such individual, extravagant ways? When he does, the chef in the kitchen does not threaten murder or suicide, because it is understood that the diner can take part in the preparation of the dish by using his *sawsawan*. Read this as evidence of the sense of community of the Filipino—the bond between all cooks and their clients, all the backstage crew and the actors on stage, the farmer and his neighbors and relatives who form his support network. It is like plowing a field or moving a house *bayanihan* style; it is like a whole town staging a *komedya*, where even the director is not the absolute dictator since patrons and elders have a say in the production.

The *sawsawan* is itself an indigenizing process. The Filipino conquers the foreign taste and culture with an army of *sawsawan*; he insists on participation and involvement; he accepts nothing passively, but takes active part in the creation of his food. The *sawsawan* is not dish-specific, not assigned to particular recipes, although there are some traditional partners. This is indeed an arsenal with which to meet and subdue the foreign invader, and render him acceptable to the native culture. It indicates an ethos completely different from that prevailing in France, where the chef is the master creator of and sole authority for the dish. For the diner to tamper with it is discourtesy and insult. In the Philippine experience the diner cooperates and participates, and the creation is communal. The *sawsawan* thus transforms not only the taste but the relationship behind the experience.

SOCIAL POSITION

Still another element that must be examined in the process of indigenization is the social position given the dish in the cross-cultural transfer. In China, for example, *siomai* and *siopao* are food of everyday, eaten at breakfast, or at tea-time, and not generally at festivals or for main meals. Where do we find them in the Philippine menu? At merienda, in homes, schools, the streets; not usually at principal or festive meals.

In general, one might say that these foods, as well as most of Chinese cuisine, entered Philippine culture at "ground-level," at the level of everyday food, and found their final place there, among the *kakanin* of the native culture. Since the ingredients and the nature of the dish were found compatible with the budget of that level, and with the other accompaniments (e.g., tea, coffee and ginger brew) the social level in which indigenization ensconced it in Philippine cuisine was equivalent to that which it held in China. The porridge (with chicken, fish or pork) of Chinese breakfasts and late-night suppers is now the *arroz caldo* (note the change of name and language) and *goto* of Philippine meriendas. The everyday noodles of China are also ordinary in the Philippines—*mami*, *lomi*, *pancit bihon*—although they can be given special ingredients in order to become fiesta food just as there are special noodle dishes in China.

The Spanish foods absorbed into the culture, however, have been given high social position located on the level of special, or festive food. *Cocido*, for example, is in Spain a simple dish in which a meat (beef or lamb) and a piece each of blood sausage, salt pork and ham—items found hanging in almost every Spanish kitchen—are cooked with chick peas and a bit of cabbage. It is ordinary food, a pot thrown together, a day-to-day one-dish meal that is not special. In the Philippines, however, since the ham and the sausages are rare in the native kitchen and, being imported, are expensive, the dish has ascended the social ladder to become special food for Christmas and family reunions. When set against the background of the indigenous fish-and-vegetable cuisine, this is indeed a rare and expensive dish. Moreover, coming from the alien, dominant culture, it acquires a cachet of "class" and a position in the cuisine of the elite. It would, quite simply, be beyond the ordinary man's budget.

Paella has had an even more noticeable change in social position. Originally a dish cooked in the fields of Spain, the *paellera* set on stones over a wood fire, the ingredients whatever could be conveniently found in the field, it is in the Philippines one of the prime fiesta foods. Because it is Spanish and special, it is usually enriched with pork, chicken, crab, clams, prawns and Spanish sausage (rare then, expensive now). The wine added to it by Spaniards is table wine, or cheap wine of the district, which is drunk like water. Adding wine to it in the Philippines is adding something rarefied and expensive, and so the social transformation of *paella* has much to say about the original (colonizer) and the receiving (colonized) cultures as well as about colonization and the process of culture change.

We note at this point that the Chinese food now found in homes, snack shops, school cafeterias, cheap restaurants and the streets, came in from traders and not from conquerors. The food of the conquerors, both because of the source and sheer cost, can now be found on fiesta buffets, on the dining tables of the elite, and in expensive restaurants, where it is billed as Spanish and not Filipino food.⁶

THE NATIVE CUISINE

Having examined the names, ingredients, cooking methods, means for flavor adjustment, and social position of foreign food borrowed, adapted and indigenized by the Filipino it is time to take a look at the indigenous cuisine. This was the standard for indigenization—taking the process to mean that by which the foreign food is Filipinized, made compatible with the native cuisine.

If the foreign-influenced food in the culture has Chinese, Spanish, Mexican, and, in Mindanao, Arab and Indian roots, it would follow that the indigenous cuisine would be all the rest. This would be the sour-stewed (*sinigang*, *paksiw*), steamed (*pinasingaw*, *halabos*), roasted (*inihaw*) and boiled (*nilaga*)—the terminology, we note is in the vernacular—dishes we still have in the present. The ingredients for these are culled from the landscape: fish and shellfish from the seas, rivers, brooks, streams, flooded rice fields; the flesh of domesticated

6. The Nielson Tower, a restaurant, calls this "antebellum Philippine cuisine."

animals like pig and chicken, and that of undomesticated animals like deer, wild boar, wild cat, iguana, fruit bat; other edible creatures like mole cricket, June beetles, and locusts; and of course the leaves, bulbs, tendrils, seeds and fruits of the ever-green Philippine landscape.

The cooking methods probably evolved from the freshness, proximity, and availability of the ingredients. Native wisdom shows that the best way to treat these is to cook them very little, or not to cook them at all (*kinilaw*). The cuisine did not evolve sauces, because there was no need to disguise flavors going bad or slightly off (one function of sauces and spices in Europe). Sour cooking, smoking and pickling evolved because there was need to preserve without refrigeration.

This native cuisine is also subject to the flavoring provided by sauces like patis and bagoong, and the sawsawan, because this is where the communal creation of food started, in the agricultural lifestyle of the tribal communities of the pre-Hispanic Filipino. In this cuisine are expressed the flavors of the native tongue and taste. It is to this standard that the foreign foods are compared, and to which they are adjusted in budget, taste and economic level. This is the cuisine of the Filipino heartland, the one the native longs for when he is away, the one he finds comforting, being part of his ethos.

This is a cuisine linked and allied to that of the rest of Southeast Asia. With the rest of Asia it shares rice as a staple food—rice treated not only as cereal, but as background for all other tastes and thus determinant of other tastes—rice as ritual food, rice not just as extender but as staff of life, with a taste and aroma that are highly valued. With the rest it also shares the extensive and varied uses of coconut—water, flesh, milk, heart-of-palm. There is an easily perceptible similarity between sinigang and all the sour broths of the region, like the Thai *tomyam* soup. And there is a common use of fermented sauces, like patis and bagoong (*nam pla* in Bangkok, *nuoc mam* in Vietnam, *trassi* in Indonesia).

This native cuisine is, amazingly, hardly changed in nature or spirit, even after colonization and other foreign influences. Sinigang is still soured with tamarind pods, or with tamarind leaves, tomatoes, guavas, *batuan* green mangoes, *kamyas*, *alibangbang* leaves—the souring ingredients from the Philippine landscape. It is still as flexible, friendly to any kind of fish, meat or vegetable, adjustable to any kind of budget or circumstance. Housewives still consider it poverty of the

imagination to sour with kalamansi. What has become available to sinigang, however, is new technology. Sour broth from tamarind can now be had in an instant, "add-water-only" package, which is considered adequate for emergencies and for Filipinos in the US, but which housewives here scorn to use because the fresh ingredients are available.

Paksiw and *inihaw* are still cooked in the same way even though the need for coal fires and preservation in vinegar is no longer present in houses with gas and electric stoves and refrigerators. When the Filipino entertains family or intimate friends, or when he wants to eat in a relaxed manner—with his hands—he returns to this native cuisine and tries to have it in as pristine a form as possible. Fish is caught in fish ponds and roasted on the spot; restaurants are opened on the bayshore and feature lake fish; milkfish is stuffed with onions and tomatoes and roasted over coals in the yard, with the cook fanning the fire.

The native cuisine proved strong and resistant to "fraternization" with the foreign invaders. The original dishes have retained their ingredients, cooking methods and spirit. Foreign dishes have been Filipinized, but Philippine dishes have not been Sinicized or Hispanized. The cultural interaction has been one of borrowing whole dishes, then adapting and indigenizing them, rather than borrowing elements to impose on native dishes. The result is a cuisine enriched rather than bastardized, its integrity kept, its dynamism that of judicious response to change.

Could this perhaps serve as an analogue with which to understand indigenization in language, in theatre, and in other areas of Philippine culture? Surely the pattern cannot be the same in all areas. Perhaps in others the borrowed elements may have overwhelmed the native forces. But it is important to realize that in this most popular of popular cultures, created by the mass in their daily activity, in an act of unconscious transformation and creation, this is what happened.

The native culture stood firm and "kept the faith," borrowing only technology (freezers, pressure cookers, instant flavorings) when necessary but not changing in essence. Foreign culture was tried, examined, adjusted and then used as the base for creation within the Philippine lifestyle. The fact that borrowed Spanish culture came to have a high place in social estimation and regard is eloquent about

colonization, and the attitudes it engenders in the colonial.

It also suggests that the colonial attitude may not have come about only because of conquest, but because of such a pragmatic dimension as cost, budget, economics. (Chinese food is definitely within reach; the ingredients of Spanish food are not.) What the colonizer can afford, only the native elite can, and so the latter become colonized not only by the idea of prestige and class, but through their wealth.

These very preliminary notes on the indigenization of food suggest directions for further research: on the linguistic factor, the names not only of food, but of cooking implements and processes; and also in the nature of all the culinary sources, and the nature of the change in them through indigenization. The research should also extend to such related subjects as the service of food, the nonnutritional functions of food, and the function of food as a language (what does it say?). Finally, the above findings should be brought to bear on the fact that eating is ingesting culture. What kind of culture, then, did the Filipino ingest, when he adapted such things as paella and pancit, and what effect has it had on the Filipino?

Food, certainly, is not only for eating.

Glossary

Adobo	Pork, or chicken and pork, stewed in vinegar, garlic peppercorns, and bay leaf
Alibangbang	Butterfly-shaped leaves of a small tree, used for souring broth
Ange	A bark used to flavor rice cooked with chicken and coconut milk (<i>bringhe</i>)
Arroz Caldo	Chicken and rice gruel flavored with ginger and native saffron (<i>kasubha</i>)
Bagoong	Salted, fermented tiny shrimp paste, used as an accompanying sauce; if made from fish, it is called <i>bagoong Balayan</i> .
Batuan	A small sour fruit with an acid, juicy edible pulp around a large seed, used for souring broth
Bayanihan	Mutual help, as when neighbors help lift a house and move it to its new location

Bihon	Rice noodles
Bringhe	A dish of sticky rice with chicken and coconut milk
Cadera	Rib roast
Camaron Rebozado	Batter-fried shrimp, sometimes with ham (<i>dorado con jamon</i>)
Chicharron	Pork crackling
Cocido	A stew of Spanish origin, consisting of meats, sausages, salt pork, and vegetables
Croquetas	Croquettes, usually chicken and potato
Goto	Tripe; also rice and tripe gruel
Gisa	To sauté (<i>gisado</i> -sauteed food; <i>pag-guiguisa</i> -sautéing technique)
Halabos	Steamed; usually refers to shrimp or prawns
Inihaw	Roasted on coals
Kakanin	Snacks eaten between meals, usually of rice, sticky rice, or corn
Kalamansi	Small Philippine lime
Kamto	Beef flank
Kamayas	A green, acidic cylindrical fruit used for souring broth or as relish
Kasim	Lean pork
Kinilaw	Raw fish or shrimp, marinated in vinegar and condiments (similar to <i>seviche</i>)
Komedya	Full-length verse play in the vernacular, dealing with the loves and wars of Moorish and Christian royalty
Laing	Taro leaves cooked in coconut milk and chili
Liyempo	Pork belly
Lomi	A dish of broad noodles in broth, with meat, shrimp and vegetables
Lomo	Loin
Malagkit	A sticky rice variety
Mami	Noodles in broth with chicken or beef
Mechado	Braised beef with a lardoon
Merienda	Mid-afternoon snack
Nam Pla	Thai fish sauce, like patis
Nilaga	Boiled; stewed

Nuoc Mam	Vietnamese fish sauce, like patis
Okoy	Crisp cake made from rice flour or grated vegetables
Paella	Spanish rice dish, with meats and/or seafood, vegetables and saffron
Paellera	Round metal dish for cooking paella
Paksiw	Fish cooked in vinegar and ginger
Pancit	A dish of noodles cooked with vegetables, meats and/or seafood
Panciteria	An inexpensive eating place serving pancit and other Chinese dishes
Patis	Clear amber sauce made from fermented fish
Paykot	Meaty beef ribs
Pesa	Fish or chicken stewed with vegetables
Pescado en agrio-dulce	Fish in sweet-sour sauce
Pinais	Shrimps and young coconut steamed in coconut water
Pinasingaw	Steamed, usually referring to fish
Punta y Pecho	Beef brisket
Pusit	Squid
Relleno	Boned, stuffed chicken
Siomai	Meat, shrimp or vegetable dumplings
Siopao	Stuffed steamed bread
Salpicon	Sautéed tenderloin tips
Solomillo	Tenderloin
Sahog	Pork and shrimp, used to flavor a sautéed dish
Sawsawan	Dipping sauce
Sitaw	Stringbeans
Tomyam	Thai sour soup, usually with shrimp or chicken and lemon grass
Trassi	Indonesian salty shrimp paste, like <i>bagoong</i>
Tinapa	Smoked fish