

# What's **Tex**ASIAN

all about ?



By  
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## What Is TexAsian?

TexAsian is Table19's new concept for dining. Although the name combines the words Texas and Asia, don't be fooled. TexAsian isn't about fusion. Instead, TexAsian is all about diverse flavors, experiencing the best of two very broad cuisine groups and enjoying the many tasty flavor profiles each represent.

*“TexAsian isn't about fusing Tex-Mex with Chow Mein.”*

## **TexAsian: The Why**

Before moving to Vermont, I lived in Texas my entire life. In the recent article, "[Five Bites of Texas](#)", I described some of the food my family cooked. I still love the food of my childhood and the diversity of flavors, ingredients, and culinary influences the State has to offer.

My lovely wife and Table19's Executive Chef is Kathryn Evans. Kathryn is also from Texas. As some of you may know, Kathryn traveled, trained, and worked in various parts of Asia throughout her career. During that time, she developed a deep love and respect for the foods prepared in that part of the world.



## **The TexAsian Menu Was Born**

For those of you that dined at Table19's original location, you know that our menu offered dishes of an Asian persuasion. Those Asian-influenced dishes were served along with a variety of other types of food, but not as prominently as our new TexAsian menu plans to feature them.

Since we've covered Texas cuisine recently, this article will focus on the Asian side of TexAsian. This area is Kathryn's specialty and passion. Kathryn has some Asian favorites, including the following cuisine types:

- **Southeast Asia:** Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Burmese, Laotian and Malaysian
- **Northeast Asia:** Chinese and Korean
- **East Asia:** Mongolian and Taiwanese
- **South Asia:** Indian

From a cultural perspective, many of the regions identified share common ingredients like ginger, soy, coconut milk, etc., but the way in which these ingredients are combined can vary widely by region.

For the sake of brevity, we will focus the remainder of this article on one region, exploring the subtle culinary complexities and specific cuisine types of Southeast Asia.



## **Southeast Asian Cuisine**

### **Thailand:**

**Thai cuisine features dishes that achieve a complex blend of flavors through a delicate balancing of ingredients.**



**The Thai people have traditionally utilized foods that offer health benefits and promote health. Thai cuisine has deep roots in ancient medicine and has some of the healthiest foods you can eat. Several Thai dishes, such as Tom Yum Soup, are currently under scientific study for their incredible health benefits. Many of the fresh herbs and spices used in Thai cooking – such as coriander, lemongrass, turmeric and chillies – have immune-boosting and disease-fighting power.**

### **Vietnam:**

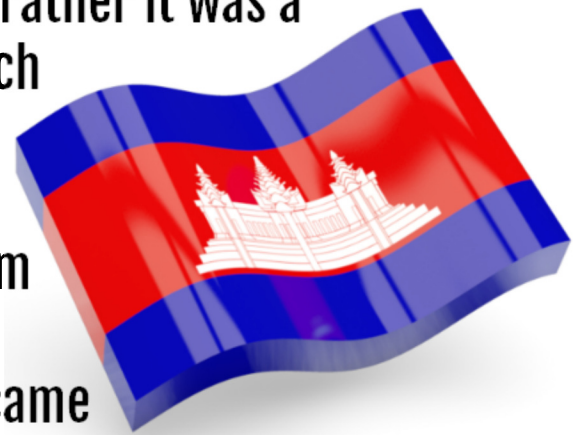
**Unlike the people of Thailand, the Vietnamese approach cuisine from a vastly different preparation perspective: Balanced, fresh and simple – ‘yin and yang’. Vietnamese food has been heavily impacted by French, Laotian, Thai and Mongolian influences due to centuries of invasions, occupations and colonization.**



Unfermented green tea is traditionally served before and after the meal (but not during). Dishes are prepared as freshly as possible to stimulate all five senses through food arrangement: Eyes (beauty), ears (sound), tongue (mouth feel), nose (smell) and taste.

### **Cambodia:**

For years, Cambodia did not exist at all, rather it was a part of Vietnam, Thailand and Laos (which was formerly known as Siam). As a result, Cambodian food (called Khmer) represents a melting pot of cuisines from its neighbors of Thailand and Vietnam. Other influences to Cambodian cuisine came from the French, Chinese, Indians, Portuguese and Spaniards – all of whom have battled with or tried to colonize Cambodia.



Different from its neighbors however, Khmer food never embraced chilis. There are numerous French-inspired dishes: Similar to the Vietnamese Banh Mi (known as num pang pâté), pate is served with French bread and eaten at breakfast, along with very Western chocolate.



## **Myanmar (Burma):**

**Burmese cuisine has been influenced by India, China and Thailand – all of which share borders with the country.**

**The two main flavors in Burmese cuisine are savory and sour. Burmese main dishes will often feature strong and pungent flavors and will be accompanied by a variety of side dishes with more mild flavors.**

**Burmese cuisine is categorized into one of two groups – “heating” or “cooling” foods – based on the food’s effect on the body. Burmese intentionally consume a balance of hot and cold foods throughout the day to maintain dietary balance, as they would say, ‘a yin and yang.**

## **Laos:**

**Writer and publisher Connie Veneracion wrote: “Laos is mountainous and landlocked, and it is, to a fairly large degree, isolated from the rest of the world. These factors have ensured that cooking remain true to its original roots. As a nation with no coastline, Laos managed to avoid the culinary transformations which the spice trade brought to Southeast Asia in the 15th century. As a result, its cuisine**





today is free of the dried spices like cumin, fennel seeds, coriander seeds, cloves and mustard seeds.”

Laos is different from its neighbors and serves sticky rice with their meals as opposed to jasmine rice. Another difference is the type of fish sauce used. Laotians cook with Padaek, a thick, fermented fish sauce with a pungent taste.

## **In Conclusion**

As you now know with certainty, TexAsian isn't about a fusing Tex-Mex with Chow Mein. Instead, TexAsian is all about celebrating the boldness and diversity in the flavors of some of our favorite foods. Our TexAsian menu will allow all to experience and enjoy the best of two very broad cuisine groups in one place – Table19.

For now – Joe

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Visit our [Move Update News Page](#) for more information about Table19's new location.