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## MAGAZINE

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- FUCHSIA DUNLOP

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flavored soups.



NEXT



☰ TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Savoring  
Shandong Flavors

## A TASTE OF BEIJING

### CULINARY DELIGHTS

A centuries-old capital and crossroads, Beijing weaves together culinary threads from throughout the country, but indigenous traditions reflect the wheat-growing climate and the heritage of northern China. These must-try dishes will have you relishing the flavors of classic Beijing cuisine.

BY ANNE LISE KELLY

**EVEN IN BEIJING** you'll find **hand pulled noodles** from China's border with Kazakhstan. "They have a lovely, supple, bouncy texture, and it's an amazing spectacle to watch a ball of dough get stretched into fine, even noodles before your eyes" says Fuchsia Dunlop, author of *Shark's Fin and Sichuan Pepper: A Sweet-Sour Memoir of Eating in China*.

**Hot pot** is a communal eating experience in which diners cook a variety of meats and vegetables in a pot of simmering broth. "You find in it typical local flavors like mutton, sweet potato noodles, cabbage, and mushrooms. It's very much a regional dish: You won't get something like this in southern China" says Dunlop.

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"**Peking duck** dates back to imperial times" says Pat Tanumi-hardja, author of *The Asian Grandmothers Cookbook*. "A whole duck is glazed with malt sugar syrup and roasted until the crisp veil of skin gleams like mahogany. At the table, a server carves rectangles of duck skin. You spread a little sauce on a pancake, place a piece of skin on it, and top it with green onions or cucumbers."

"**Dumplings** are one of the most delicious everyday foods of northern China" says Dunlop. Finely chopped meat and vegetables are seasoned and wrapped in a thin circle of dough, then usually boiled or panfried. Symbols of prosperity, dumplings are traditional at family gatherings celebrating the Lunar New Year.

**Imperial cuisine** is "largely based on Shandong cooking, while also incorporating influences from other parts of China, particularly the southern Yangtze region. It relies on luxurious ingredients including wild game, camel's hump, rich stocks, and delicate sweetmeats." says Dunlop. 

## SAVORING SHANDONG FLAVORS

With its elegant decor, which features rich, dark colors accented with vibrant persimmon, and a refined atmosphere that recalls the imperial era, Zijin Mansion restaurant at the new [Waldorf Astoria Beijing](#) honors the heritage of the surrounding 700-year-old neighborhood.

The menu features regional dishes with a Cantonese touch, says Pieter Ham, director of food and beverage. "From congee [savory rice porridge] to glazed cold white walnuts, our focus is on the very local and healthy." It's the ideal setting to experience unique Shandong specialties, such as sea cucumber, which are executed with a modern touch and presented on custom-made china.

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