


Foreword

For more than a decade, I've had the good fortune to call Robert Danhi both a friend and a professional colleague. Like so many others in our profession, I am privileged by his bountiful energy and inspired by his deep passion for the culinary industry. From the very beginning I've recognized that Robert and I share a strong conviction that as educators of the culinary profession, we must connect cultures with cuisines. For my Yan Can Cook show, I travel throughout Asia so that I can give the dishes on my show their proper cultural, historical, and social context. From the conversations that I have had with Robert over the years, I know that he sees his books in the same way.

It was quite some time ago when Robert first engaged me in a conversation about pursuing Southeast Asian cooking. I have always been impressed by his wealth of knowledge on this subject. So much so, in fact, that I have relied on Robert as an authority on this subject for years. Given the rising popularity of Southeast Asian cooking in the U.S., it was not at all uncommon for many American culinary professionals to familiarize themselves with Asian culinary techniques. What struck me as different about Robert's approach was his total dedication. Instead of treating it as a short-term project to further his knowledge, he was planning an all-out effort, devoting all his might and that trademarked Robert Danhi passion, into this venture.

The rest, as they say, is history. And to borrow another cliché, the pudding of proof is in this book, etched among these three hundred-plus beautifully written and illustrated pages. For my show, I have traveled extensively throughout Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Reading this book has given me an uncanny sense of déjà-vu. True to its title, *Southeast Asian Flavors* brings out the true flavors, culinary as well as cultural, of this fascinating part of the world. As I marveled at the insightful photos and commentaries, I felt that I was on a return visit.

Some time ago someone coined the term "culinarian." I don't know if that's a real title, but it seems to fit Robert perfectly. He is a dedicated professional on all things culinary, especially when it comes to education. *Southeast Asian Flavors* is his latest triumph. It is a gift to every fan of Southeast Asian cuisine.



Martin Yan

