



The Food of Sichuan

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Whether you are an armchair explorer or an adventurous cook ready for a turn at the wok, Fuchsia Dunlop will expertly guide you through the culinary landscape of Sichuan and entice you into the kitchen in this updated version of her book *Land of Plenty*. The vibrant photographs spotlight the food and provide visual cues for the cook, like showing green garlic cut into long, thin "horse ear" slices and "reddened oil" for Twice-Cooked Pork. Most of the recipes deliver *ma la* (a numbing, hot sensation) through the use of dried chiles and Sichuan peppers. Mapo Tofu is my standard order at a Chinese restaurant (it's a linchpin dish that reflects a chef's ability to coax flavors and heat from chiles into plain tofu). Fuchsia's version calls for ground chiles in addition to chile bean paste, giving the dish a richness and vibrant red hue that I'd previously never been able to achieve at home. When the original version of this cookbook was published 18 years ago, acquiring specialty ingredients was daunting. Thankfully, they can now be easily procured at local Asian markets or online. *MQ*