

## A Word From The Translator

Living alone as I do and subsisting on raw carrots and bread at times, whenever I have the urge to have a good home-cooked Myanmar meal I would head off to a well-known eatery called Adipati (Chancellor) on Shwegondine Road, Yangon. Her Shan heritage is seen in her oil-free dishes which many people love so much that before she opened a branch in Yangon, they drove to Hpyoo just to have lunch at her place.

When Nan San San Aye began writing her recipes for local magazines they were a roaring success. When they came out in book form two editions sold out in a matter of weeks.

I was charmed especially by her simple but delightful writing style that gave an insight into the culture, the daily life and society of the Myanmar people.

I could not rest or eat easy until I had translated her book, which I did even before I told her of my intention. It was mostly done on my palm pilot as I traveled: I tapped away in hotel rooms, airports, on boats and planes. This project was a great pleasure as I could almost taste Aye's food as I worked and it eased my homesickness at the same time. I hope the book will give you as much enjoyment as it gives to local readers and myself.

## A Word From The Author

I became interested in cooking when I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> Grade. Whenever my classmates planned a cooking and eating fest I was the leading force. My teacher was my mother. I think almost all mothers who are housewives are good cooks, because they have the *Celana* or goodwill to give their families the most delicious meals they can prepare. I realized this after I grew older and gained years of experience. My mother's love for us as she cooked was an important example in life she set for me.

My parents are Shan nationalities, so the food in our home had Shan influences. When my parents and my elder sister opened a Shan food restaurant I created fusion cuisine with other local dishes so that it would please the palate of our customers. I am glad to say that it was an instant success. When I married, my husband and I opened a restaurant called Adipati (Chancellor) on the highway from Yangon to Mandalay at our hometown Hpyoo. Now we have two other restaurants in Yangon of the same name.

I never thought I would write a cookbook but in 1998 I fell ill and had to rest in bed for a month. I was not allowed to go into the kitchen and I was nearly going crazy with the urge to cook. My husband, a poet, brought a notebook and pen to my bed and said to me, "Cook in this." So I started to jot down all the dishes I longed to prepare and my husband took my scribbles, cleaned them up a bit and sent them off to various magazines. This was the first step in the making of this book. After I recovered I continued to write what have become regular columns.

The message that I would like to give to my readers is that *Celana* or goodwill is the most important ingredient in any cuisine. When one cooks with love and *Celana* and the food is eaten by someone who has a good appetite, then it does not matter how meager the dishes; it will be a great meal. Bon Appetit!