

CAO BANG PROVINCE - VIETNAM



*Cao Bang*

SEASONAL PRODUCTS









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SEASONAL PRODUCTS





LÊ CHÍ THANH

# Introduction

## CAO BANG – THE HOMELAND OF MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS

*Rolling mountains with silvering fog  
Winding rivers with grassy banks  
In the poetic melody  
Paradise created nowhere else  
As forever masterpiece*

*Chu Đức Hòa*

Cao Bang is a mountainous province, bordering on the Northeast of Vietnam, with the natural area of 6,724.72 km<sup>2</sup>. Cao Bang has one city and 12 districts namely: Bao Lac, Thong Nong, Ha Quang, Tra Linh, Trung Khanh, Nguyen Binh, Hoa An, Quang Uyen, Thach An, Ha Lang, Bao Lam and Phuc Hoa.

Cao Bang has a temperate climate and 4 seasons in a year: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The average temperature in summer is 25°C - 28°C, and 16°C - 17°C in winter. In some high mountains areas such as Trung Khanh, Nguyen Binh, there is the chance of frost and snow during the winter.

Cao Bang has quite diverse terrain, divided by rivers, streams, rolling hills and deep valleys... The complexity of the terrain creates many unique ecological sub-regions which are favorable for many crops.





Cao Bang's soil is mainly thick feralit and weathered brown soil from mountains with high PH-limestone. Such topographical conditions and hydro-climatic conditions have created a rich and diverse vegetation cover of tropical and temperate plants and flowers. Taking advantage of such natural conditions, people of Cao Bang ethnic groups have exploited and promoted the potential of soil, terrain, climate, and hydrology to produce many unique and diverse products during the four seasons attracting visitors from all over the world, especially on the occasion of Tet and spring festivals.

In agro-forestry production, a long history of cultivation left Cao Bang's land with many famous and delicious rice varieties such as: Ong sticky rice in Trung Khanh, Pi Pat sticky rice Hoa An and Fragrant sticky rice in Xuan Truong - Bao Lac ...

Taking advantage of soil conditions and subregional climate, ethnic minorities have developed key crops such as bananas, oranges, tangerines, chestnuts, anise, dragon fruit, ginger, mulberry, tea... and industrial trees like, bamboo, , precious timber, as well that there are many medicinal plants in the local forests ...

Coming to Cao Bang in the summer and autumn, visitors can enjoy sweet and cool yellow, green or brown pears in Thach An, Trung Khanh and Bao Lac districts. Trung Khanh district is known for sweet, nutty and delicious chestnuts while sweet and sour tangerines can be enjoyed in Tra Linh district.; and Thach is the home of fragrant aromatic winter melon

Moreover, there are a lot of livestock products such as: Black pigs fed with corn, wine grain, sweet potato and grass raised by the Mong and Dao ethnic minority groups in Cao Bang; Mong beef is mainly produced in Ha Quang, Bao Lac and Bao Lam districts.

Cao Bang is also famous for many specialties such as: arrowroot vermicelli (glass noodle), Khao cake, roasted pork, roasted duck, sausage, dried beef, smoked meat, ant's eggs sticky rice, canarium fruit sticky rice, corn wine, black jelly and white jelly.

The diversity of specialties in both types and appearance represents the rich potentials, strengths and cultural identity of Cao Bang. Under the limited scope of this photobook "Cao Bang products around 4 seasons", 17 precious agricultural products of Cao Bang are selected and being introduced here to both domestic and foreign visitors: Arrowroot vermicelli, Doong Pan tea, Sausage, Mong cow, Aromatic winter melon, Mac Pup jelly, Black jelly, Red peanuts, Fallopiae multiflorae, Chestnut, Yellow pear, Black canarium, Pi pat sticky rice, Xuan Truong sticky rice, Bao Lam violet glutinous rice, Ong sticky rice (phjǎng sticky rice) and Tangerine.

These are all outstanding, typical and unique products that are available in the market with high economic value and the quintessence of the cultural values.

Through this photobook, we would like to introduce and popularize the potentials, strengths, specialties and unique products of Cao Bang, the homeland of Revolution for Vietnam;

Moreover, the book will enable agricultural production facilities and individuals to access the market and connect with partners, promoting the consumption of the products and enhancing the local socio-economic development.

The book is also a useful brochure if you arrive in Cao Bang – the charming land of rich culture.

Sincerely thanks!







# Cao Bang

SEASONAL PRODUCTS

## Summer

Aromatic winter melon  
Macpup Jelly  
Black Jelly  
Red peanut



## Spring

Vemicelli  
Doongpan Tea  
Sausage  
H'Mong cow



## Autumn

Red Fallopia (Vietnamese Multiflorous Knotweed)  
Trung Khanh Chestnut  
Yellow pear  
Black Canary



## Winter

Pi Pat sticky rice  
Khou Pang sticky rice  
Red sticky rice  
Mandarin







# Spring

## SPECIAL PRODUCTS OF CAO BANG

LÊ CHÍ THANH

As the cycle of a year, spring comes with so many beautiful scenery and miracle changes in the environment. In the east, the sun is flushed brightly, radiating golden rays of sunlight through the forest canopy to the ground, the rocks warm up the temperature, the birds are singing excitedly to make a symphony of the spring; That is the magical view of a beautiful morning in early spring, the sunlight looks like the silk threads spinning around the mountains.

Everywhere is full of plum blossoms, white pear blossoms, pink peach blossoms and colorful wild flowers. The breeding season of all species is coming. Spring is not only a poetic landscape of charming mountains and rivers in Cao Bang but also the time for Tet and cultural festivals. The spring coming with Lunar New Year always makes our hearts flutter.



Annually, on Long Tong (going to the field) Festival celebrated on the second day of the second lunar month, people of Nguyen Binh ethnic groups begin to grow red edible arrowroot on their fields. By the end of the year, in November or December, people start harvesting the tubers. Each root yields about 6-7kg of tubers on average. The tubers are gathered in the yard for processing. Thanks to the sub-climatic weather and the soil, the red edible arrowroot grown in Thanh Cong and Phan Thanh is perfect to product unique soft, crispy, delicious and tasty arrowroot vermicelli that cannot be found anywhere else. The processing and production are totally clean to ensure pure arrowroot vermicelli is made. Nguyen Binh arrowroot vermicelli in particular and Cao Bang arrowroot vermicelli in general is soft but firm, not crushed after cooked, especially the taste and texture remains unchanged when it is cooked again. Once visitors enjoy a bowl of Nguyen Binh arrowroot vermicelli cooked with local chicken and mushrooms, it will be an unforgettable experience to them. "Good wine needs no bush", "widespread fame, good reputation", the processors and producers of arrowroot vermicelli in Phan Thanh, Phia Den - Thanh Cong have attracted visitors from everywhere. The consumption market is then increasingly expanded.







Photo: Phạm Khoa



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa



Spring is also the time to harvest and enjoy Doong Pan tea, a speciality of Quang Uyen district. After a period of “cowering” to endure the winter cold, the tea trees wake up with green sprouts. Those green buds are processed immediately, called spring tea, which is extremely delicious. Doong Pan tea trees actually grow naturally in yellow, reddish-brown Feralit land alternating between low hills and limestone mountains under mild and cool climate all year round. When discovering the tasty flavor of these tea trees, people bring them from the forest to their home gardens and upland fields. Up to now, this kind of tea has been produced and processed by traditional manual methods. The tea is totally clean without chemicals.

Doong Pan tea is delicious, sweet acrid tasting, with green rice aroma and greenish, honey-yellow water. When enjoying the tea, everyone is surprised by the charming, pure, long-lasting flavour which refreshes and wakens the mind pleasing four criteria: Elegance, Beauty, Taste, and Sprit. Therefore, Doong Pan tea is very popular with local people and appeals to visitors from all over the world.

When spring approaches, it is also the time for beautiful cow competitions and bull fighting in Bao Lac, Bao Lam, Thong Nong and Ha Quang districts in January and February. Big and strong cows take part in the contests. Among those, Mong Cow (known as Muscle Cow) in Bao Lac, Bao Lam is the most outstanding and dominant. Mong Cow is perfect for high mountainous terrain, resistant to erratic weather conditions. This type of bull is tall and strong. Especially, the males have large and muscular body. The average weight of an adult male is 400-500 kg. Some even have a record weight of over 600kg, similar to imported and crossbred cows. Mong Beef is clean and high quality food with high protein and micronutrients that are beneficial to human health. Fresh meat is processed into many delicious, nutritious, attractive dishes and dried for sales in the market, which is favored by customers. Thanks to cow breeding, farmers in Bao Lac, Bao Lam districts and other areas in the province have escaped from poverty and improved their wellbeing in their homeland.



Photo: Trung Nguyễn



Photo: Trung Nguyễn





# Arrowroot vermicelli

HỒNG CÚ



Arrowroot vermicelli-making villages have existed in Cao Bang since ancient time. Though they are not well-known all over Vietnam for their products, such villages in Quang Uyen, Hoa An and Nguyen Binh have preserved and maintained the production until now, so today with improved socio-economic conditions and transportation, the genuine Arrowroot vermicelli is increasingly popular and becoming a famous specialty of Cao Bang, the homeland of clear water and white rice.

The most famous Arrowroot vermicelli villages in Cao Bang are An Lai in Nguyen Hue commune - Hoa An district, Phja Den in Phan Thanh, Thanh Cong, Quang Thanh communes - Nguyen Binh district and Mo Thiec in Tinh Tuc town. Planted at 600 to 1,300 m high mountains above sea level, the arrowroot trees here drink cold dew drops, bath in golden sunshine as sweet as the honey of the highland and absorb the crystals of the four seasons to produce sweet, aromatic and starchy tubers which are the raw materials to make delicious, soft and crispy Arrowroot vermicelli.

In the spring, when the drizzle covers the mountains as a white veil, people buried the arrowroot tubers on the fine brown soil. Thanks to the moisture, young sprouts quickly awake on the ground, opening their eyes and curiously looking around. Then, the summer comes with the sweet yellow sunshine watering the leaves shivering in the cool breeze. When the autumn approaches, red and yellow flowers show off their beauty on the top of mountains, signaling the coming harvest. In the late fall, when the last red flower of arrow root trees falls down and the arrow root leaves turn yellow, the Arrowroot





Photo: Linh Dinh



Photo: Linh Dinh



Photo: Trung Nguyên



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa





vermicelli season begins. Arrowroot vermicelli production requires the sophistication and carefulness in each stage especially the selection of materials. To produce delicious Arrowroot vermicelli, producers must choose big, regular and mature tubers. The roots are removed from the tubers, washed and crushed or grinded, and then the residues are filtered to get the starch. The filtering is made several times until it reaches the required whiteness. The filtering of grit and impurities from the starch is a very important stage. The quality of Arrowroot vermicelli depends on the secret ratio of water for boiling and the quantity of powder. The starch is poured into 90 - 93% boiling water and 7-10% of cold water, stirred until done, viscid, then put into molds to make Arrowroot vermicelli and dry on bamboo frames. Arrowroot vermicelli production depends a lot on the weather condition, so people must take advantage of the autumn sunshine to dry the Arrowroot vermicelli as the drying is very difficult in winter when the sun rarely shines. In mountainous areas, the winter often comes with drizzle, so the production must be done urgently on sunny days as the Arrowroot vermicelli will be damaged if it is not dry enough.

Cao Bang Arrowroot vermicelli does not include any detergent additives so it has the original brown color. Arrowroot vermicelli is soft, sweet and durable like genuine people in mountainous areas who work hard all year round no matter the sun or the rain to make delicious products for life. Arrowroot vermicelli does not look eye-catching with the dark brown color at first glance but the eaters will quickly enjoy the taste, flavour and the soft, crispy and firm texture. Cao Bang's genuine Arrowroot vermicelli will never get crushed after boiled for a long time. For example, to make chicken stuffed with Arrowroot vermicelli dish, the Arrowroot vermicelli can be cooked with chicken as long as possible. While the chicken is softened, the Arrowroot vermicelli remains firm and crispy. Cao Bang Arrowroot vermicelli looks like a highland girl without makeup and accessories but charming with natural beauty, full energy and the real value. Arrowroot vermicelli soup is always a part of the traditional food tray of Vietnamese people on Tet holiday. For Cao Bang people, a bowl of Arrowroot vermicelli cooked with chicken, wood ears or fragrant mushroom is not simply a dish. Eaters experience the flavour of their native land, bringing families closely together on the year-end meals or reunion meals.

At present, Arrowroot vermicelli making is not only a hunger eradication and poverty alleviation crop for upland people, but also a cultural messenger to introduce Cao Bang to visitors from all over the world.





# TEA *Doong Pan* PHAN HUẾ



Cao Bang is the land of long-term culture, bestowed with God’s masterpiece and natural products which include Doong Pan tea in Doc Lap commune, Quang Uyen district.

Doong Pan tea grows up naturally and called as “forest tea” by the local Nung people. According to the local elderly, the tea trees are brought from forest to semi-mountainous land of Doong Pan, surrounded by rivers, streams and green, all year round, primary forests and rooted on ancient alluvial soil under the cool climate, so they grow fast and posses delicious taste, hardly requiring human care. The tea is harvested twice a year. The spring crop starts from March to June; the winter crop starts from September to the end of the year. The newly planted tree will bud after 2 years.

The tea must be harvested early in the misty morning to the noon so the dew drops on the tea buds are not dried by sunlight and the buds are not sprung up into leaves. People rarely collect tea on rainy days because it will reduce the quality. The collection is mainly done by women because it requires carefulness so the young buds are not hurt.

After collecting, people leave the tea buds for half an hour till they wither and then start stirring. Tea stirring is usually done by men in the family. This is the most strenuous stage and decides the quality of tea. The tea is stir-fried on a cast-iron pan in batches until the tea leaves dry and the buds turn from green to light black. Then, the tea is ready for sieving, eliminating unqualified parts that are crushed or not curved. The next stage decides the tea aroma. It must be done manually by hand to feel the desired temperature for the required tea flavour. This





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As an ancient tea variety,  
precious genes are preserved.  
The processing is all done by  
traditional methods to keep  
the unique flavor and excellent  
quality.

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Photo: Trung Nguyen

stage requires the maker to be sensitive, delicate, skillful and focused. Doong Pan tea always retains its inherent characteristics because it is cultivated by local practices without pesticides, chemical fertilizers and preservatives. The tea is totally clean. The tea is also famous for the caring process, the hard work, diligence and the skillfulness of people in harvesting and processing.

Doong Pan tea is delicious and pleases everyone. The tea is rated satisfying four criteria: Elegance, Beauty, Taste and Spirit. The tea water is greenish and honey - yellow (Elegance); the leaves are curved like hook and regular, black when looked straight, green when looked cross (Beauty); It has a sweet, slightly acrid taste with the long-lasting green rice aroma (Taste); It is unique, refresh and waken the mind of tea drinkers (Spirit). **As an ancient tea variety, precious genes are preserved. The processing is all done by traditional methods to keep the unique flavor and excellent quality** while the price is quite reasonable, ranging from 400,000 to 600,000 VND/kg. For Tet holiday, buyers have to book in advance. The price of dried tea sometimes reaches millions dong/ kg.

Drinking tea is an elegant hobby, important to the spiritual life of people. Enjoying tea has become a cultural and historical practice of ethnic groups in Doong Pan land. People drink tea to greet a new day “The dawn come, the tea made”, or to start a story when reuniting. Drinking tea is an essential need to express gratitude and intimacy, encourage one another to forget the sorrow and concern in life. When the spring comes with patchy drizzle, the green sprouts of Doong Pan tea pop up strongly and energetically. Gathering around the teapot to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the spring, the cozy atmosphere and the family reunion with the aroma and flavour of Doong Pan tea will be an unforgettable memory for everyone.







Especially, visiting Doong Pan, people can enjoy tea right in the homeland of tea. At the tea table, people easily become close and understand each other. The joy is multiplied and the hardship during the long distance is relieved; then the spirit is refreshed to continue the on-going journey or return to your homeland. Visitors of Doong Pan always buy the tea as a gift for their relatives and family. Dooong Pan tea is worthy a valuable product of Cao Bang. It is important to expand the farming area, invest in production to increase the output and invest in branding to increase the competitiveness in the market.





# Summer

HỒNG CÚ

THE SUMMER SUN SHINES IMMENSELY ON THE LUSH RICE FIELDS. THE BREEZE DRIFTS THROUGH THE FIELD, BLOWING THE FRAGRANCE OF THE MATURE RICE, AND ALLURING EVERYONE. THE SUMMER WIND IN MOUNTAINOUS AREA IS NOT AS HOT AND DRY AS THE WIND FROM LAOS TO CENTRAL VIETNAM BUT COOL AND MILD. A BREEZE IS ENOUGH TO FEEL COOL IN A HOT SUNNY SUMMER DAY.







*Tasty and crunchy black jelly can be preserved in the refrigerator for a week. The jelly can be cut into pieces for direct eating or cut into cubes to mix with soybean milk or other delicious dishes.*

The naughty children are swimming noisily in the flooded stream at the summer noon until the lips turn pale and ten fingers wrinkle. Nowadays, perhaps only rural children can enjoy a meaningful summer, grazing cattle, gathering fire wood till soaked in sweat, spending the whole day wandering in the sun-burning meadows to pick the black ripe “sim’ fruits or “mua” fruits that look like a bunch of flowers then eating those till the tongues turn black. In summer, there are several kinds of forest fruits. Raspberries are sweet and sour. Sim fruits are ripe. Yellow guavas are fragrant. Red figs are cool. All kinds of edible fruits make a wonderful day in the forest.

After the rain, the sun is shining golden lights on the banks of Quay Son and Bac Vong rivers that are covered with lush green rice paddy. The two rivers run through fragrant rice fields and reflect the bamboo branches tilting down like a young girl combing her hair. The river quietly rotates the wheel, flowing water to the fields and villages. Here and there, the sound of ducks lurking in the fields mixed with the sound of running water like a symphony of the nature keeps ringing in the heart.

In western districts, Gam river is flowing swiftly in flood season. As the name “Gâm” implies, it sounds like the roar of a beast in a wild forest that evokes both a wild and mysterious feeling. Not gentle like Que Son and Bac Vong, Gam river flows along the ridge and is flanked by cliffs. The river bed has countless alleyways with caves in the mountain making the river more mysterious.





Gam river flows torrentially through many caves in flood season. It is a shelter for fish and shrimps especially several rare fishes such as: green fringing fish, semilabeo notabilis, catfish, striped snake-head fish... In summer, the flood rises with the fish and shrimp as a gift to humans. The fish in Gam river is well-known for its firm and delicious meat as they must swim upstream. Among many fish connoisseurs, very few have chance to enjoy the sour fish in fermented cold rice. Gam river fish marinated in fermented cold rice can be kept for a year with shiny red meat. The eaters will keep its taste in mind forever.

In the garden, clausena are in season, the green fruits gradually turn yellow. It is an aromatic and indispensable spice in many made-in-Cao Bang dishes. Duck meat braised with clausena, pork leg stewed with clausena, pork ribs cooked with clausena, chili and bamboo pickled with clausena... In summer, ripe and juicy clausena are harvested, dried and salted for use all year round.

Summer is also the harvest season of peanut in Ha Quang, Thong Nong, Thach An, Quang Uyen, Tra Linh and Trung Khanh. Cao Bang red peanuts are small and have low yield but they have distinctive aroma and sweetness that the consumers can not find in other kinds of peanut. Peanut is an indispensable food in the culinary culture of Tay and Nung people here. Peanuts are used to make pie of "gai cake", "rom cake", "Khao cake", sticky rice and candy... It is quite difficult to describe in words the fragrant, crunchy, and sweet taste of peanut that follows people forever. Peanut candy has become a famous specialty of Quang Uyen district, a precious gift packed with the love of Cao Bang people to the guests.

When the summer approaches, we can find a kind of vine rooting and embracing on the limestones, absorbing nutrients to produce and nurture green fruits filled with tiny yellow seeds inside, which are the materials to make a kind of "miracle" jelly. Trung Khanh Mac Pup jelly is shiny and yellow like the autumn sunshine. It is a wonderful, soft, elastic and cool refreshment in summer that can be found nowhere else. Mac Pup fruits only grow and cling on cliffs. Mac Pup fruits are very rare and precious as it is very difficult to pick them and make jelly from them. It is not easy to make a glass of white jelly that is both soft and elastic. If so many seeds are put in, the jelly will be hard and sour. If so few seeds are put in, it cannot be solidified into jelly. Although the right proportion is ensured, it is impossible to make the jelly if the crushing process is not done quickly. Mac Pup jelly is also very picky about water.

Some people from other places brought Mac Pup seeds home to make the jelly but it was unsuccessful due to the water. It is said that Mac Pup jelly can be made from limestone water in Trung Khanh only. Mac Pup white jelly like a picky girl, but if you can please her, she will please you back.



*Mac Pup jelly is shiny and yellow like the autumn sunshine. It is a wonderful, soft, elastic and cool refreshment in summer that can be found nowhere else.*







In the summer, if you want to enjoy white jelly, let's visit Trung Khanh; if you want to eat black jelly, let's come to Thach An. Black jelly is the final product of the dried black jelly trees, sold everywhere in Cao Bang, following people on cars and buses to other provinces as presents. Tasty and crunchy black jelly can be preserved in the refrigerator for a week. The jelly can be cut into pieces for direct eating or cut into cubes to mix with soybean milk or other delicious dishes. In addition to black jelly, Thach An district has very delicious winter melons that are called as "Fragrant winter melon" by local people. The winter melons here are big, rather short, covered with silver-white bloom when ripe. They taste cool and sweet. In addition, they have a unique aroma when cooked which is like the scent of green rice, mixed with the scent of pandan leaves while the scent of winter melon is retained. Boiled winter melon, winter melon rolls with meat, stir-fried winter melon, especially winter melon jam are all very delicious. Thach An winter melon is one of the few types of winter melon that can be used to make jam. The winter melon are sliced, soaked in lime, alum and coated with sugar to make white, clear, fragrant, and sweet jam.

In the summer, there are several traditional festivals of mountainous people. The "praying for fortune" festival, also known as, "Khoan Vai" is on the 6th month of lunar calendar. Tay and Nung people believe that "Khoan Vai" is an occasion to visit the rice field and report to the ancestors that they have a good crop. Every year, people eat duck meat and make rice noodles together to offer the ancestors and the village's Land God. This is also the time to relax after a hard crop. After lunch, adults pack duck or chicken meat for children to take to the field. Some families pack the entire chicken or duck; some pack a half; others pack a chicken or duck leg depending on their condition. That is called "Tai cay tac" custom of Tay and Nung children in Cao Bang. This custom is originated in a community that agricultural production is the key activity and cattle traction is indispensable in the farming work. It is said that the "buffalo is the head of farming work". The "praying for fortune" day is also called as "Khoan Vai" (buffalo spirit) Tet when farmers compensate for their buffaloes, cows and children who graze and take care of the buffaloes and cows after the plowing finishes. The "Tai cay tac" custom of Tay and Nung people in Eastern Cao Bang is probably the way that the adults show their concern for their children who work hard all year round to feed



buffaloes so they are ready to help in farming work like plowing during the crop. It is not only for the adults to express their thankfulness but also an expression of love to children. It is completely a nice and humane community custom.

More than one month after the "Praying for fortune" festival, the Ghost Festival comes. It is the second most important event after Tet holiday. On the festival, Cao Bang people make duck meat, Arrowroot vermicelli, gai cakes to offer their ancestors and homeless souls. On this day, married daughters will visit their parents with their husbands. The brother-in-law should not forget to prepare a pair of fat ducks to present his parents-in-law and burn incense to thank the ancestors and the parents-in-law for giving birth and nurture his gentle wife. This is called "pay tai" custom, which is similar to "di seu" custom of Kinh people. Cao Bang people celebrate the Ghost Festival as long as the Lunar New Year for three days from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the 7<sup>th</sup> months of lunar calendar.

The summer in Cao Bang is the season of unique traditional festivals imbued with humanity and cultural identity. It is also the season of special and delicious products.





# Cao Bang's

PHƯƠNG OANH

## RED PEANUT

Peanuts are easy to grow, relevant with the climate and soil conditions in Cao Bang. Cao Bang red peanut has existed for a long time maintained and developed so far, mainly in Ha Quang, Tra Linh, Thong Nong and Quang Uyen districts. Red peanuts possess many good characteristics such as medium growing time, dark red seeds, high kernel/ fruit ratio, firm, beautiful bright color, delicious seed quality, suitable for consumers' tastes.

Peanuts have a lot of values for life. In addition to a variety of dishes, peanuts are also useful for health, spleen, laxative, removing phlegm, air conditioning, reducing swollen, Hemostasis, diuretic, increasing lactation, cooling throat, reducing cholesterol, anti-aging, prevention of cardiovascular diseases. Red peanuts are also used to make pie of Khao cakes, gai cakes, rice rolls and Khau Sli, a traditional cake that has a long term tradition and is popular in Phu Ngoc commune, Ha Quang district. Khau Sli is made by traditional recipe from locally available materials such as glutinous rice, peanuts, molasses through many stages, such as: drying, pounding, drying, sieving, stirring... the cake has a unique aromatic, delicious and nutritious flavor. "Khau Sli" means "Sticky rice cakes with peanuts". This used to be made in the holidays, New Year, or important occasions. Nowadays, Khau Sli has become a famous specialty, widely consumed







Photo: Linh Dinh



Photo: Linh Dinh



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa



in the local area and favored by tourists from all over the world. It is an indispensable gift for every visitors of Ha Quang district.

Cao Bằng red peanut is also famous for its completely hand-made peanut candy without preservatives in Quang Uyen district. To make peanut candy, people must choose regular and plump peanut. The best one must be red peanuts which are nuttier than white peanuts. Each batch of peanut candy usually requires from 3-4 kg of peanut stirred for 1 hour. The peanuts must be stirred continuously on medium heat so they are not burned. After the stirring ends, the peanuts are kept warm to ensure the crispy texture and then peeled off. Cooking sugar is the most important stage to make delicious peanut candy. The sugar is boiled till melted and then filtered by cloth to remove sediment. After that, it is cooked until the sugar has the required color and crunchy, elastic texture. The surgar is cooking for 45 to 60 minutes. When it is done, the pan is put off, peanuts are poured evenly into the pan. Peanut mixing is done for 30 minutes. The next process is rolling and cutting into pieces. Whenever Tet comes, every family make peanut candy to offer their guests. Quang Uyen peanut candy is a rural gift with a special flavor of “home-grown” specialties that is crispy, fragrant, easy-to-eat and favoured by many people.

Cao Bang red peanut has become one of the local “specialties”, with strengths and competitive potential in the market, enabling farmers to improve their living standards and create high economic efficiency. It is a key short-term commodity-oriented industrial crop with great potentials, promoting local strengths and socio-economic development.







# Aromatic winter

MELON

PHAN HUẾ



AROMATIC WINTER MELON, CALLED AS PHAC MOONG IN TAY LANGUAGE (COVERED BY ASH-COLORED BLOOM), IS A LOCAL VARIETY, EASY TO CARE WITH LESS PESTS, AND IS A SPECIALTY OF LE LAI COMMUNE, THACH AN DISTRICT.

Aromatic winter melon seeds are sown in February. In early summer, when the weather gets warmer, the green frames of aromatic winter melon wind on the hillside and the mountainside with yellow flowers dotted in the green forests. The best time to see aromatic winter melons is in April and May when the flowers are in full bloom. The seeds are sowed and then seedlings are planted. After 70 to 80 days, young fruits can be harvested. The growing time may last for 120 days, the average yield is from 15 to 30 tons/ ha. The entire body, leaves, flowers and fruits are all fragrant, so a light and refreshing scent can be felt when standing under winter melon frames. Aromatic winter melon is shorter than normal winter melon, with





Photo: Linh Dinh



thick and hard skin. Each fruit has the average weight of 1.5 - 4kg, average length of 20 - 30 cm, diameter of 10 - 20 cm, with light green flesh, fragrant scent, soft but crunchy texture and sweet flavour that appeal to eaters. From planting to harvest, the winter melon grow naturally without any chemicals to ensure safety and the trust of customers. This helps to expand the market for the development of local clean foods.

Aromatic winter melon can be harvested when the skin turns dark green or covered with white bloom. Local people usually harvest winter melon in the morning, keep the stalk, wrap carefully with papers for transportation. The winter melon here has a gentle flavor, making it an undeniable attraction for visitors of Thach An district, Cao Bang province. The common winter melon is dark green while the fragrant winter melon is light green with unique texture and aroma. Aromatic winter melon can be used to make delicious dishes such as salad, stuffed, rolled, winter melon smoothie and winter melon jam. Le Lai winter melon jam is always better than those made elsewhere, especially the industrially produced winter melon jam because it has a natural aroma without any additives.

With the gentle sweet and cool flavour, fragrant winter melon is not only a dish but a traditional medicine for cooling off, dissolving phlegm, cooling the intestines and quenching thirst, diuretic, detoxifying and slimming. It is commonly used to treat respiratory diseases, edema due to kidney disease, liver disease, pregnancy edema... In addition, fragrant winter melon is considered as the medicine for reducing heat, curing many diseases such as asthma, pertussis, poisoning, enhancing skin beauty and slimming.

Aromatic winter melon is considered as a soulmate by local people because it has existed for many generations. Both the seniors and children or all the residents of the village are important factors to maintain the fragrant winter melon as a unique community culture and the local culinary style.



Photo: Trung Nguyễn







Photo: Lê Hải Hòa



BLACK JELLY IS A POPULAR DISH ORIGINATING FROM THACH AN DISTRICT - A FAMOUS LAND WITH “LUON” SONGS AND UPLAND FIELDS OF BLACK JELLY TREES.

# Black Jelly

PHAN HUẾ



**B**lack jelly is a popular dish originating from Thach An district - a famous land with “luon” songs and upland fields of black jelly trees. In Thach An district, black jelly trees have been cultivated since the 1970s on the area of 200 ha. The current area of black jelly production is 350 ha, mainly in Trong Con, Duc Thong, Canh Tan, Minh Khai and Quang Trong communes.

Black jelly is an herbaceous plant, about 40-60 cm tall, 4-sided body, much branched, radiating on the ground like mint. Black jelly is planted in the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> months of the lunar calendar. Thanks to the favourable climate and soil, black jelly trees grow very well without any pesticide and fertilizers on both low land and up land. It can be harvested after 4-5 months. Black jelly stems must be cut to the root. The stems and leaves are harvested, spreaded evenly and dried in the light sunshine, then piled up for 1-2 days. It is dried again for 2-3 days and then stored for long term use. The dry black jelly trees are stored in the kitchen without anti-mold or anti-moisture chemicals.

To make black jelly, the dried black jelly stems and leaves are washed and cooked until they are soft. After it is cool, water is poured into a clean cloth bag, squeezing and filtering to remove the residue, then stirring with the flour and sugar, boiling, stirring until the jelly starts to solidify and pouring





“To make black jelly, the dried black jelly stems and leaves are washed and cooked until they are soft. After it is cool, water is poured into a clean cloth bag, squeezing and filtering to remove the residue, then stirring with the flour and sugar, boiling, stirring until the jelly starts to solidify and pouring into containers, letting it cool to eat.”



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

into containers, letting it cool to eat. It takes 4-5 hours to complete a batch of delicious jelly. The final products must be elastic, crunchy with the aroma of the leaves, shiny black as mirror and have cool sweet flavour. The jelly can be eaten directly or mixed with tea, tao pho, or soymilk ... Black jelly is not only a common beverage but also a medicine with 50% of polyphenol content, tannin and pectin. These substances significantly increase the expansion of blood vessels, fight against oxidation and reduce cholesterol in the blood. In addition, black jelly leaves with gentle sweetness can be used for cooling the liver, reducing heat, laxative, treating colds, supporting blood pressure stability and anti-aging.

Once tasting Thach An handmade black jelly, the eater will never forget its unique aroma, coolness and elasticity as those are the crystallization of the farmers' effort, love and the long-term dedication to the trees. The farmers make jelly by their hearts as traditional craftsmanship from generation to generation.



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa





“ Mac Pup is a hardwood climbing plant usually clinging to such plants as: Bombax ceiba, fig trees..., surviving and developing on the top of limestone mountains. ”



# Mac Pup Jelly

SPECIAL PRODUCTS OF CAO BANG

LÊ CHÍ THANH

The remote border area of Trung Khanh has been famous for its magnificent Ban Gioc waterfall, green Quay Son river flowing at the foot of the mountains all year round, creating a charming and peaceful scenery that appeals to people. Besides the beautiful nature, the land also has many famous produce such as chestnut, soya sauce ... and crystal Mac Pup jelly. In summer days, a glass of Mac Pup jelly with the sweet and cool drops will immediately relieve the severity of the hot weather, refresh the body and mind.

Mac Pup is a hardwood climbing plant usually clinging to such plants as: Bombax ceiba, fig trees..., surviving and developing on the top of limestone mountains. Mac Pup trees produce fruits after 2-3 years. At the end of spring, it blooms, bears fruits during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> months of lunar calendar. In the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> months of lunar calendar, the fruits are collected. At that time, the fruits are mature, round like a chicken egg in light green, hanging and dangling on the branches. People put the fruits in cloth bags or sacks to take home. The fruits are cut into four parts and then peeled off to get the seeds, dried under the light sunshine and stored carefully.

To get a glass of cool, sweet and delicious jelly, the processing must be done carefully. First, water is boiled, cooled down and poured into a pot by the formula: 2.5 to 2.7 kg of water for 1.66 gram of dried seeds that are put in a cloth bag and gently rubbed for 15 minutes until the white scum covers the surface of the water. It takes jelly water 1-2 hours to solidify completely. With the above formula, 2.5kg to 3kg of superior quality jelly products will be made for each pot. High quality jelly must be as clear as crystal with high adhesion, solid, firm and elastic texture and little water in the pot. To prepare a glass of jelly, it requires a small knife with a 20 cm long stainless steel blade and handle, and some clean, thick glasses placed near the pot. Brown sugar is boiled until it reaches the required sweetness to mix with the jelly. Then, the jelly is sliced right in the pot and put in two-thirds of the glass. Use the knife to strike jelly horizontally and vertically into small pieces.



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa

Mac Pup trees are distributed all over Cao Bang province. However, it is found the most in Trung Khanh district and only people here can make such tasty white jelly.







Finally, sugar is added. In the thick and transparent glass, sparkling crystal jelly cubes blend with the light brown sugar water in sweet and elegant scent, making it quite mouthwatering. According to local people, Mac Pup's jelly is good for cooling down, diuretic, and treating colic. People usually use the bark of Mac Pup trees, Khi Cay tubers, Rom phloem and Xom Ban roots to heal the postpartum for women.

Coming to Ban Gioc waterfall and Nguom Ngao cave in a summer day to relax and enjoy the wonderful natural scenery, drink a glass of white jelly and listen to the sweet, lyrical folk songs of Then - Tinh, Sli, Luon, Da performed by Tay and Nung ladies and gentle men, the visitor will find it hard to say good bye.

Mac Pup trees are distributed all over Cao Bang province. However, it is found the most in Trung Khanh district and only people here can make such tasty white jelly. By researching the natural conditions, climate, topography and weather, the variety can be replicated and develop all over the province. It is the job of the agronomists with the concern and participation of Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). When Mac Pup trees are cultivated and cared by people, surely the productivity and quality will be better. As a result, farmers can improve their lives and get rich by Mac Pup tree right in their homeland. Mac Pup jelly will become a branded product that attracts more tourists to the beautiful landscape of Cao Bang.





# Autumn

HỒNG CÚ

THE LATE AUTUMN COMES WITH BREEZE AND ROMANTIC YELLOW WEAVING THROUGH THE SPACE. THE YELLOW AUTUMN SUDDENLY COMES ON THE KITCHEN ATTIC OR THE PORCH OF HOUSES WHERE THE CORNS HANG UPSIDE DOWN LIKE FLOWERS AND THE ORNAMENTS. PRETTY SMALL FIELDS AT THE FOOT OF MISTY MOUNTAINS ARE COVERED WITH THE YELLOW COAT OF THE AUTUMN. IN AUTUMN, THE RICE PADDIES ARE FULL OF GRAINS AND “GOLDEN” STRAWS WAITING ON THE FIELD TO COME HOME WITH FARMERS TO FEED THE CATTLE.







Photo: Lê Hải Hòa

The sleeping thorny chestnut shells are also awakened by the autumn. The autumn in Cao Bang is as beautiful as several places in Vietnam because there is always a muse hidden in its eternal vitality.

As an appointment with the fall, when the sun covers everything with yellow, the paddies also put on them a shining yellow coat. The rice fields in Cao Bang are not successively terraced on the hillsides like in the Northwest, but scattered between mountains like soft silk stripes crossing the valley of rocky mountains.

In autumn, the green paddies turn yellow signaling a new season of green rice. The green rice is wrapped in green banana leaves as the heart of people. Green rice can be found in other places all year round, but in Cao Bang, it is only available in autumn due to limited farming conditions and become a valuable seasonal food. Green rice is meticulously steamed, pounded, sieved, and sucked by the big and calloused hands of happy and gentle women in blue traditional customs. The green rice is made into a long, cone cake like a horn of a cow as a gift for children with a lovely name: “Cooc mo” (ox horn). Perhaps, only Cao Bang children can enjoy such special cakes. Cao Bang green rice is delicious because it is made from premium sticky rice like Fragrant sticky rice in Bao Lac, Pi Pat sticky rice in Hoa An and the City, Ong sticky rice (Kha Phjang) in Trung Khanh. The production and harvesting of such sticky rice must be done meticulously and carefully. Sticky rice is cultivated on fertile land. Each spike is picked, tied in bunches and dried over the cooking fire in the kitchen and then the grains are splitted. The full round white grains remain plump after cooked. The aroma can be smelt from ten meters distance...What a delicious food!

The chestnut garden also starts to turn yellow. The sharp green thorns is turning brown every day and slowly reveal round brown seeds inside. Under the scent of the autumn sunshine, the chestnut trees are whispering with the breeze about the pregnancy of the round chestnuts. Chestnuts always come with green rice in autumn. Kha Phang, Pi Pat and Fragrant green rice are the most delicious when eaten with chestnut. During the chilly nights of autumn in border areas, there is nothing more interesting than sitting around the pot of green rice to feel the white smoke and smell the scent of new green rice, steaming, pounding and enjoying the hottest green rice together.



Photo: Bùi Tuấn Hùng



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

On the gentle hillsides, the plump and black canarium fruits begin to ripen and ready to come home with the farmers to the dining table as a specialty of Cao Bang. Autumn is the season of black canarium fruits that are made into several dishes: meat stir-fried with canarium fruits, canarium sticky rice ... While the adults use the canarium to make food, children are interested in the white kernel inside canarium seeds. They use knives to cut the seed and fingernails to get the kernel. Processing black canarium fruits is very easy, just soak them in hot water until they are soft, cut in half and stuff a little salt in each half of the fruits then they are ready for making delicious dishes. For year-round use, they can be stored in the fridge freezer.

The autumn sunshine makes the pears turn yellow like a shy girl. Cao Bang pears are sweet, crunchy, firm and not starchy and tasteless like Chinese yellow pears. Thach An and Bao Lac are famous for big, round and juicy pears. Each fruit weighs around one kilogram. It is also rated as the best fruit in Vietnam. The price of specialty yellow pears is very high compared to the income of people, so very few people can enjoy it. The trees are becoming old and degenerating gradually since they have lived for long ages. Fortunately, in recent years, pears have been upgraded in some areas of Thach An and Bao Lac districts. However, the output is so limited, mainly for sale to other areas. Hopefully, pears will be planted everywhere in Cao Bang in the future, so that all people can enjoy such delicious specialty fruit.



Photo: HELVETAS Vietnam

The autumn in Cao Bang is as beautiful as several places in this S-shaped land stripe of Vietnam because there is always a muse hidden in its eternal vitality.





Photo: Bùi Tuấn Hùng

During the autumn nights in Cao Bang when the chilly mist spreads through the air, it is only warm enough to sleep with an indigo-dyed brocade blanket covered to the chest. The winter approaches earlier in Cao Bang than in other low land areas so the nights are quite cold here in autumn. Sleeping in a quiet autumn night, listening to the whisper of the breeze all over the space, the crackling sound of the thorny chestnut and hearing the very soft “popping” sound of the round nuts, we can’t wait to enjoy the autumn.







# Pi Pat

## STICKY RICE

HOÀNG THỊ BÌNH

CAO BANG HAS ABUNDANT FERTILE LANDS, SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS LIKE NATURAL FENCES WHICH CREATE DIVERSE SUB-TROPICAL CLIMATE... IN THE RICH LOWLAND FIELDS OF HOA AN AND THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, PI PAT STICKY RICE IS CULTIVATED AS ONE OF THE UNIQUE, DELICIOUS AND SPECIAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

The local people are proud that Pi Pat is always the first choice when talking about sticky rice as it is the most delicious variety. It is named “Pi Pat” (“duck fat” in Tay language) because it is fragrant and looks greasy though it is not cooked with any fat. As a long-term rice variety, it takes the farmers more than 5 months from sowing to harvesting. During the 5 months, the rice absorbs the most quintessential things of heaven and earth to produce such fragrant and delicious grains. The ripe grain looks beautiful in orange husk. The dehusked Pi Pat sticky rice is big, long and uniform with special aroma.











Photo: Linh Dinh

Pi Pat is a high-nutrient, fragrant and delicious rice variety with high protein. By the end of the 9th month and beginning of the 10th month of the lunar calendar, Pi Pat sticky rice reaches the harvest season. The local farmers have their own way of harvesting, they use an instrument called “steel rake” to cut the spikes one by one. The spikes are tied in a bunch of 7 - 10 kg. Those are hung up in the kitchen or on the porch to dry for long-term use. Farmers use their feet for removing the husks.. Pi Pat sticky rice harvested by traditional methods is always more delicious when cooked or popped.

Pi Pat sticky rice is fragrant and more valuable than other types of rice, so it is often used to make cakes: Che Lam cake, Khao cake, Chung cake on Chinese New Year, colorful sticky rice dish on Grave-visiting festival, “banh gio” (triangle steamed cakes dipped in sugar liquid) on Mid-year Festival (the 5th of the fifth lunar month), Gai cake on the Ghost Festival, “Banh troi” (sticky rice balls bathed in sugar liquid) on the occasion of the Winter Solstice ... to respectfully worship the ancestors.

Seeing the preeminent characteristics of Pi Pat sticky rice, and in order to exploit the local potential and strengths, restructure crops to create commodity products which increases the farmers’ incomes, during 2011 - 2014, the Center for Scientific and Technological Application - Department of Science and Technology has successfully implemented the project: Researching on conservation and restoration of Pi Pat sticky rice variety. So far, Pi Pat sticky rice area has been expanded to several neighboring areas such as De Tham, Ngoc Xuan (Cao Bang City) and some communes of Hoa An district on over 50 hectares of land, contributing to the increased income of farmer.

Coming to Cao Bang, visitors should enjoy Pi Pat sticky rice - a precious gift from the nature.





# VIOLET GLUTINOUS *Rice* PHAN HUẾ



**S**an Chi, Tay, Nung ethnic minority people in Thai Son commune and Yen Tho commune, Bao Lam district grow a unique kind of sticky rice, which is normally called by the local people as “San Pan” (gifted by the God.) Nobody remembers how long it has been cultivated, they just know that for generations, the children have grown up healthy thanks to this kind of rice.

In the harvest season, the paddy fields in Bao Lam look like an artwork created by the work-roughened and hardworking hands of the farmers. The fields are surrounded and sheltered by tall and massive mountains, making a vivid and stunning picture. It is difficult to distinguish Sien Pan rice from other on the field because they are almost the same in the height, the seed size and even the color. People must observe closely to recognize the light black color on the top of the yellow spikes. Moreover, the harvesting must be done quite carefully and skillfully as the spikes must be cut one by one and then tied in bunches to hang over the cooking fire in the kitchen. The current area of the rice in the district is about 5 ha, the average yield is from 20 to 35 quintals / ha.



Photo: Bùi Tuấn Hùng

The dehusked Sien Pan rice is black, which makes it special. For the standard violet glutinous rice, the inside must be black violet too. This makes Bao Lam’s violet glutinous rice different from those in other areas.







Photo: Linh Dinh



Photo: Linh Dinh

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Sien Pan rice is so fragrant and tasty that the neighbours can smell when it is cooked and wish to enjoy. For the genuine farmers here, the rice is not only for food but also the crystallization of heaven and earth, the “pearl of heaven”. On holidays, New Year or other important occasions, even when the guests come home, it is usually used to make sticky rice dish, cakes or wine.

Sien Pan rice is not only a common food but also a medicine for treatment. Sien Pan is also called as “Tac To” rice (self-healing). It is believed to be an indispensable remedy for fractures. Local people often use “Tac To” rice mixed with other forest herbs to heal the fracture. Sien Pan rice is also included in many remedies by the local ethnic minorities. In traditional medicine, violet glutinous rice is good for blood, heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure. Violet glutinous rice is used to make nutritious and healthy dishes.



# Chestnuts

TRUNG KHANH

HỒNG CỤ

ONCE ENJOYING CHESTNUTS, THE EATERS WILL THINK ABOUT TRUNG KHANH WHERE IMMENSE CHESTNUT HILLS NESTLE AT THE FOOT OF MOUNTAINS AND THE CHESTNUT TREES HIDE ON THE HILLSIDES WITH MANY OTHER PLANTS OF THE BORDER LAND.



Photo: Bùi Tuấn Hùng



Photo: Trung Nguyễn



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

Summer, the green trees stand as the shady shelters for the sleeping buffalo shepherd children. In winter, the leaves turn brown and then fall down, leaving the thin branches standing alone under the cold breezes, which seem to be lifeless but those are quickly awakened by the spring with several young buds and put on a new, gorgeous green shirt. In autumn, the trees offer people sweet and tasty nuts which are well-known as chestnut.

Chestnut tree is tall with broad foliage. The mature tree is as tall as a longan or litchi tree. Chestnuts are covered by a thorny shell. Normally, each fruit includes two to four seeds, mainly three. When the autumn approaches, the thorn fruits open and reveal plump brown seeds that fall down around the tree. Trung Khanh people rarely pick the fruits on the tree but waiting for perfect time to collect the ripe and sweet nuts. Chestnuts are only available between the eighth and the ninth months of the lunar calendar. On mid-Autumn Festival, chestnuts are always a part of the food tray for children together with moon cakes and other fruits.

Chestnut which has the scientific name *Castanea sativa* is in the fagaceae family and was brought to Vietnam by the French more than hundred years ago. They were piloted in many places but those grown in Trung Khanh have the best quality and yield. Trung Khanh is surrounded by limestone mountains under cool climate all year round, so it is perfect for the development and growth of chestnut. Moreover, several large rivers and streams provide sediment and water for the trees. Trung Khanh chestnuts, even the uncooked, are aromatic and sweet after peeled. Therefore, it has become a speciality and brand of Trung Khanh land.

Chestnuts can be enjoyed in many dishes such as chestnut pork ribs; pork leg with peanuts; chicken with chestnut; pork belly with chestnuts; chestnut icecream; chestnut rice, chestnut tea ... Chestnut powder is also mixed with rice flour to make the best Khao cake. It is even used to make wine. Chestnuts can be roasted, boiled, dried, stirred or eaten raw but roasted chestnuts are the most delicious. If chestnuts are eaten raw, the young nuts should be perfect as they are soft, sweet and have milk taste. Nowadays, people usually dry or roast chestnuts, but dried nuts are usually hard and rough, so the most common way favoured by most of people is boiling.







Photo: Trung Nguyễn

Chestnuts are not weighted but counted for pricing. The measurement unit is usually hundred. The price per hundred depends on the size of the chestnuts. They are so precious that people do not want to put them on scale but carefully counting each by hand. That shows how people appreciate and cherish such valuable speciality. Chestnut season only comes once a year when the sun shines over yellow paddy fields, the wind blows on the field, rushes through the chestnut garden and lets the shiny brown nuts fall down on the ground saying good bye to the thorny shells. That is when the autumn is around to present the precious gift from the nature to Trung Khanh people.

In 2013, Trung Khanh Chestnuts were defined and had protected geographical indications, certified by the Department of Intellectual Property under the Ministry of Science and Technology. This is a practical action that enhances the brand of this rare specialty of the province.







# Yellow pear

THE SPECIALTY OF CAO BANG  
MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS

TRIỆU THỊ KIỀU DUNG



In spring, when going along the hillsides in some districts of Cao Bang, we will easily come across beautiful and lively pictures of the spring. The green pear hills are under the blue sky with the white clusters of pear flowers gently swaying under the wind. All seem to be waking up to keep pace with the spring, making Cao Bang mountains and forests glow with stunning beauty.

Pear is a speciality of Cao Bang mountain and forest. The pear season comes with the Ghost Festival - the second important event after Tet holiday of Tay and Nung ethnic minorities. Tay and Nung people in Cao Bang province have "Pay Tai" costumes on Tet and the Ghost Festival. The married women visit their parents with their husbands and children on the 2nd of the first month of the Lunar calendar and the Ghost Festival to show the gratitude to their parents. They present parents with a pair of fat ducks, a dozen of gai cakes and fruits including yellow pears.

In the warm atmosphere full of love, respect and happiness, the entire family gathers around the table to enjoy special food of the local mountains and forests. After the meal, the dessert with yellow pears not only enhances the deliciousness of the food but also maintains the sweet relationship of the family. So, the daughter with her husband and children will find it hard to say good-bye and look forward to "Pay Tai" next year. Is it the taste of yellow pear that has and will always lead people back to their roots and family and know how to make life full of love and morality.







So, the yellow pear from a foreign country that was “naturalized” in Vietnam, “settled” for a long time in the high mountains of the North Vietnam, found the fertile land of Cao Bang, and domesticated, screened naturally over time and through scientific and technological advances, has become a preminent and special fruit tree with high economic value. If promoted for strong investment and development, Cao Bang yellow pear will become a prestigious brand, with the opportunity to expand the domestic market and access the international market. Thus, yellow pear can become one of the effective contributors to hunger eradication and poverty alleviation, improving the quality of material and spiritual life of ethnic minorities. Moreover, it will help to promote the image of Vietnam in general and ethnic minorities of Cao Bang in particular to the world during the period of integration and development.





Photo: Lê Hải Hòa



# Fragrant sticky rice

LUẬN THỊ DIỆP

**W**ith an average height of about 800 m above sea level, Xuan Truong commune, Bao Lac district has a cool and mild climate all year round. The commune is gifted by the nature with Dong Mu fields and abundant water sources flowing through the field around the year. In addition to the famous fruit trees, such as: pear, plum, and aromatic garlic... Xuan Truong has “Khau nua hom” (Fragrant sticky rice), a kind of sticky rice with big, round and fragrant seeds. The rice is so fragrant that the neighbours can smell when it is cooked. The cooked Fragrant sticky rice remains soft and chewy after 2-3 days.

All the farmers in Xuan Truong grow Fragrant sticky rice. They are always proud of the rice, considering it as a precious gift from the God and preserving it for the next generations. Fragrant sticky rice is transplanted in autumn. It is taller than other varieties with less falling rate. The sticky rice has light yellow husk, big and round grains. The dehusked ones have a special aroma and round grains. The cooked Fragrant sticky rice is not mushy but the grains remain whole and firm with chewy texture and fragrant flavour.

In Xuan Truong commune, Fragrant sticky rice is transplanted in the autumn and flowers in the ninth month of the lunar calendar when it is cool and slightly chilly, an ideal condition to create the unique aroma of the rice. The local people normally harvest sticky rice spikes one by one and hang those above the cooking fire in the kitchen until they are dry enough. Then, the grains are dehusked. By this way, the cooked rice will be firm, chewy and more fragrant than those harvested by machine and dried instantly. In 2014, Xuan Truong sticky rice was restored so the yield increased from 35 quintals / ha to 42-43 quintals / ha. Fragrant sticky accounts for 20 ha in 188 ha of paddy area in the commune, yielding more than 80 tons / crop.



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa

*The sticky rice has light yellow husk, big and round grains. The dehusked ones have a special aroma and round grains. The cooked Fragrant sticky rice is not mushy but the grains remain whole and firm with chewy texture and fragrant flavour.*







Photo: Trung Nguyễn

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The local people normally harvest sticky rice spikes one by one and hang those above the cooking fire in the kitchen until they are dry enough. Then, the grains are dehusked. By this way, the cooked rice will be firm, chewy and more fragrant than those harvested by machine and dried instantly.

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Fragrant sticky is always the first choice when local people cook traditional dishes with strong flavors. Bao Lac district is famous for a very special kind of cake for Tet holiday, which is “black chung cake”. Once people enjoy “black chung cake”, they will find it hard to forget the aroma of sticky rice, the sweet and fatty taste of highland pork, the nutty flavour of green beans and the special aroma of forest trees. To make the cake black, the local people use the stalks of the round - seed sesame tree (called as “Nga hooc” in the local language) to strip the cover and burn them into charcoal which is grated into flour. Then, they mix the flour with sticky rice and stir until the rice blended with charcoal powder and turn black. To make “black chung cake”, Fragrant sticky rice (Khaunua hom) must be used. The rice grains are washed, drained and mixed with Nga hooc or May Pia charcoal flour in the ratio of 3 kg of rice per 2 bowls of charcoal flour, stirring until the rice turn black. After the rice turns black, it is kneaded so that the ash doesn't cling to the grain. The pie of “black chung cake” is mixed with minced ginger, some pepper, leave-leaven wine and fat meat (of highland black pig) so when it is boiled, the fat will melt, infuse into the pie and rice, creating the delicious greasy taste of the cake.

Arriving in Bao Lac, visitors should enjoy a piece of “black chung cake” to feel the special taste, the aroma of fragrant sticky rice blended with the sweet, fatty taste of highland pork, the strange taste of forest trees in harmony with the grass, field and nature of the upland area. Those flavors create the unique culinary culture of Bao Lac people.



Photo: Linh Đinh



Photo: Chung Vũ



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa







Photo: Lê Hải Hòa



Photo: Trung Nguyên

# Ong sticky rice

(KHAU NUA PHJANG)

BẾ LƯU BĂNG



Photo: Trung Nguyên



Photo: Linh Dinh

**K**hau nua phjang is a famous sticky rice variety of Trung Khanh district in particular and Cao Bang province in general. This is a long-standing local rice variety, preserved by farmers thanks to its superior characteristics compared to other rice varieties, especially the relevance with the local natural conditions.

The ripe Khau nua phjang (meaning Ong sticky rice in Tay language) has fruitful spike with plump and yellow grains that look like a herd of honey bees curving the spikes and swinging under the sunshine and the wind of the autumn. The cooked sticky rice has shiny and chewy grains. It is often used as a gift for guests by the local people.

Khau nua Phjang is mainly grown in Trung Khanh district. At present, Ong sticky rice accounts for 200 ha over 400 ha of sticky rice area in the district, concentrating mainly along Quay Son river. It is tall and easy to fall down with poor fertilizer-resistance. The seeding starts from the beginning of April. The growing period takes 150 - 160 days. Pesticides are not used. The yield is from 40 - 42 quintals / ha. People harvest the ripe rice by manual tools called "steel" to cut the spikes one by one, tie them into small bunches and hang over the cooking fire in the kitchen to dry. By this method, the sticky rice will retain its delicious taste and can be stored for long-term use.

On Tet holiday or when the guests come, the local people often use Ong sticky rice to make delicious dishes such as: chestnut green rice, sticky rice, bamboo cooked rice, chung cake, khao cake and che lam cake...







# Chestnut green rice

BẾ LƯU BĂNG

**T**he green rice is made from sticky rice, usually from young grains that are full of milk. The rice spikes are cut one by one. The grains are plucked and sieved to remove the straw, washed, boiled and then stir-fried on a cast iron pan over cooking fire. When the stir-fried rice is cool, it is brayed in batch. If husks are detected, the rice will be sieved and then brayed again. It is normally brayed 7 times. To create the unique flavor of green rice, it is mixed with chestnuts. Chestnuts are boiled and then roasted until the natural aroma is smelled. After the shells are removed, chestnuts are pounded into flour to mix with the green rice to make a nutty and delicious dish. Once the visitors enjoy, they will never forget the unique flavor of chestnut mixed with green rice that can be found in Cao Bang only.

# Sticky rice dish

FIVE-COLOR

BẾ LƯU BĂNG



**T**he dish is made from the best sticky rice in Cao Bang such as Ong sticky rice. The colors (red, black, blue, white, yellow) are made from leaves and flowers. The local people often use the natural color of the forest and garden leaves and flowers to dye rice. The leaves and flowers are washed, crushed, and boiled for a long time to produce the natural colors. Sticky rice grains are washed and soaked in colored water for 10 - 12 hours. The grains are drained and then steamed for 30-40 minutes. The cooked Ong sticky rice is chewy with special aroma of the rice, “Bjooc phon” flowers, “sau sau” leaves, “cham che” leaves and pandan leave... The dish looks beautiful with unique flavors of the mountains.





Photo: Linh Đinh



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

IN THE AUTUMN, WHEN THE SUMMER'S SCORCHING SUN IS FADING  
AND THE BREEZY WINDS ARE SWAYING THE BIG AND TALL TREE,  
A KIND OF GREEN FRUIT GRADUALLY TURNS PURPLE AND THEN  
BLACK-PURPLE LIKE THE COLOR OF A YOUNG LADY'S EYES.  
THAT IS BLACK CANARIUM IN THE HARVEST SEASON.

# Black canarium

HỒNG CƯ

**B**lack canarium is a specialty of Cao Bang used as a delicious and precious food. Since ancient times, Black canarium has been an indispensable dish and inextricably linked with the culinary culture of the local people. Black canarium stir-fried with meat, Black canarium sticky rice, Black canarium stir-fried with salt are all delicious dishes favored by many people.

Black canarium grows in almost areas in Cao Bang province. It grows in forest with other trees. Black canarium is a tall perennial timber. The mature tree is 25 - 30m tall and has 40 - 90cm diameter. Its fruit has oval shape, the size the same as a woman's thumb, yellow or dark purple flesh. The best canarium has sticky, thick, sweet and chewy flesh. The harvest season is in the eighth and the ninth month of the lunar calendar.

It takes a normal canarium tree 7 to 8 years to bear fruits. Moreover, the harvesting is really a hard work. Only strong man can climb up 20, 30 meters high to pick every fruit or beat the branches by pole so the fruits fall down on the ground. Besides, black canarium does not have high yield. Only female trees can produce fruits. Perhaps, that is why it has a high price. The processed black canarium is sold at 150,000 - 180,000 dong/kg, more expensive than pork.

Black canarium is washed and soaked in hot water for 15 to 20 minutes until the flesh is tender. Then, the fruit is cut in half. Each half is filled with a little salt or soup powder and flattened. It will be more delicious and chewy if dried under the sun, especially the gentle sunshine of the autumn. The dried canarium can be stored in the fridge freezer all year round for long-term use. Canarium processing is easy but requires carefulness. If the water is too hot, the fruit will turn hard and there is no way to soften it.



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

Autumn is the season of black canarium fruits that are made into several dishes: meat stir-fried with canarium fruits, canarium sticky rice ... While the adults use the canarium to make food, children are interested in the white kernel inside canarium seeds.





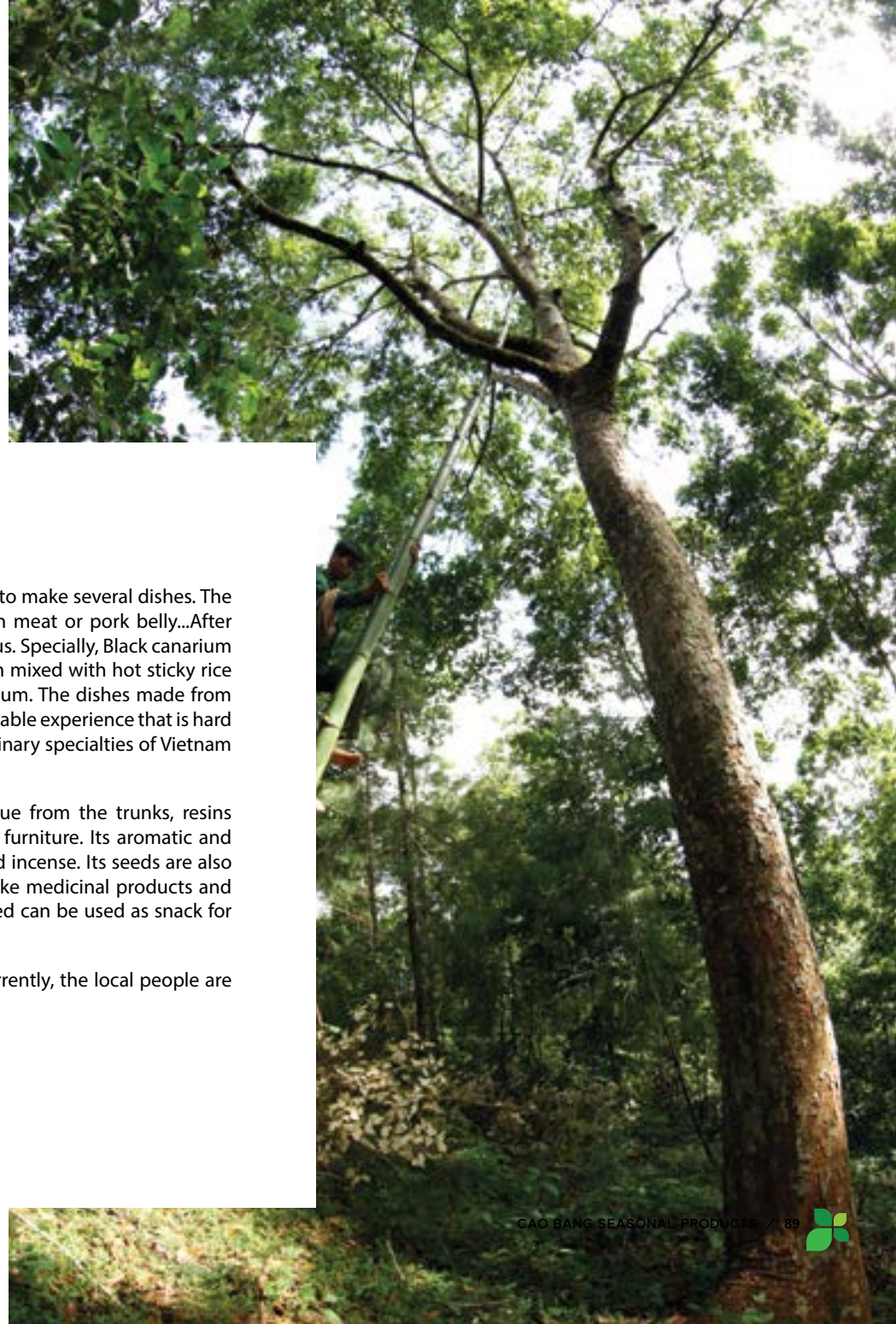


Photo: Lê Hải Hòa

Black canarium is the most delicious among all kinds of canarium. It is used to make several dishes. The most simple dish is black canarium stir-fried with meat, minced pork, lean meat or pork belly...After served, the leftover can be reheated for the next time and even more delicious. Specially, Black canarium can be cooked with sticky rice. The canarium is stirred with grease and then mixed with hot sticky rice until the rice turns purple and has the aroma of both sticky rice and canarium. The dishes made from Black canarium enrich Cao Bang culinary culture, giving visitors an unforgettable experience that is hard to find elsewhere. Black canarium dish is listed as 100 typical dishes and culinary specialties of Vietnam by Vietnam Record Organization.

Black canarium not only produces delicious fruits but also economic value from the trunks, resins and seeds. Its trunk is used as timber to build houses and make common furniture. Its aromatic and combustible resin is used to produce paints, varnishes, soaps, perfumes and incense. Its seeds are also valuable. The large and regular seeds are hunted for very high price to make medicinal products and handicrafts such as bracelets, beads ... The white kernel inside canarium seed can be used as snack for children or steamed with sticky to make a super-delicious dish.

Black canarium generates high economic value for people in Cao Bang. Currently, the local people are growing new trees and expanding the area of black canarium.







# Winter

HỒNG CƯ

CAO BANG IS EXTREMELY COLD IN WINTER. IT IS BITTERLY COLD AND FROZEN TO THE BONE. IN THE PEAK COLD DAYS, SNOW FALLS ON THE TOP OF PHJA OAC MOUNTAIN, THE ICE GLISTENS LIKE CRYSTAL STONES ON BRANCHES OF TREES UNDER THE DENSE FOG.



Photo: Bùi Tuấn Hùng







It is severe but so stunning that in the coldest days of winter, several groups of tourists flock to the top of Phja Oac mountain to watch snow falling in the tropical land and excitedly touch the icy buds on the branches and grasses.

The cold is not just climate, it is a part of the local culture and customs. Under the cold, people need a lot of energy to withstand the weather. So, Cao Bang people prefer to eat animal fat rather than vegetable oil. The fat is used for every dish. People eat fat meat. The soup must be fat. The vegetable must be stir-fried with fat not boiled as the low land areas. The rice rolls must be stuffed with minced pork and eaten with hot savory fat bone soup as soon as it is out of the pot. Pho must be served with dark soup added with duck fat.

Many people wonder why highland people in general and Cao Bang people in particular drink alcohol so much. In addition to social causes, it is rooted from the cold. People drink wine to warm up the body and express the close relationship between friends and relatives. There are many kinds of wine in Cao Bang, such as Banana wine, Sim wine, Thin Pat wine ... and Fallopia multiflora specialty wine. Fallopia multiflora is abundant in Western districts, this is a valuable medicinal plant with many uses for improving health and longevity. Fallopia multiflora in Cao Bang is valuable because it grows naturally in the forest and hunted by the local people rather than planted and nurtured by all kinds of chemical fertilizers, so it has better quality than those in other places.



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Those are enough to represent a winter in Cao Bang so that the tourists can't wait to return, touch the icy flowers on the top of Phja Oac moutain and pick up the last maple leaf in the dreamlike scenery.

”

Mountain people drink wine on every occasion. Funerals, weddings, and any party can't lack wine. People also welcome guests with wine, drink some glasses of wine when meeting on the fair market and around the cooking fire. In Tay villages, the cooking fire is always placed in the middle room so that many people can sit around it. The fire is to cook, heat and dry the sausages hung above. It is a special food made from black pork seasoned and stuffed in the small gut of pigs. Cao Bang sausage must be made from half lean meat and half fat meat. When the sausage is fried, the greasy fat meat is blended with the lean red meat generating a strong aroma and tender, chewy, delicious taste.

Winter is also orange and tangerine season. Tangerines are popular everywhere, but Cao Bang tangerines have their own flavor and have been a well-known specialty. Hoa An district is famous for Ha Tri tangerine while Tra Linh district is famous for Quang Han tangerine which is much more delicious than others. Cao Bang tangerine is small but sweet and gently sour. Its peel has so unique aroma and rich attar that the fingernails will be scented all day if pressing lightly on it. Its aroma has become a perfect spice for many dishes of upland people: pork legs cooked with tangerine peel and beef stewed in wine with tangerine peel. Tangerine is a gift that the nature bestowed on winter, the embodiment of eternal life in the cycle of creation, so that sweet and fragrant fruits and flowers are available all year round.

Those are enough to represent a winter in Cao Bang so that the tourists can't wait to return, touch the icy flowers on the top of Phja Oac moutain and pick up the last maple leaf in the dreamlike scenery. It also reminds the visitors about a harsh but stunning winter in a beautiful land where people are simple, sincere and hospitable. Naturally, the saying “drink to bottom of jar, eat all the fruits on the trees” has imprinted in the mind of both the guests and the hosts.







# Red Fallopia multiflora

(VIETNAMESE MULTIFLOROUS KNOTWEED)

PHAN HUẾ

**R**ed Fallopia multiflora is a valuable medicinal plant with many therapeutic uses to enhance human health. Red Fallopia multiflora can be grown from vine or seed. Its vines are twisted and its leaves are purple-green. Red Fallopia multiflora has staggered leaves, long stems, flat heart-shaped leaves with pointed heads. It flowers in bunches. The roots are round, long and irregular with protrusions and deep wrinkles outside. The cross section has a thin dark brown layer, soft starchy red-pink tissue and wooden cores in the middle.

In the Autumn - Winter crop, when the leaves turn yellow. tubers are harvested and processed into traditional medicine. By the traditional methods of Cao Bang people, the fresh tubers or dry slices of Red Fallopia multiflora are washed, dusted, shredded, cut and soaked in rice water for 3 days and nights. The rice water is changed frequently. After soaking, those are washed, drained, sliced and dried. The slices of Red Fallopia multiflora are steamed with black bean water. The ratio of Red Fallopia multiflora/ black bean is 10/3. When the black bean water is about to drain, the Red Fallopia multiflora slices are put off and dried. The remainder of black bean water can be used to soak the slices. The above process is done 9 times and the black bean water must be changed each time. Finally, the Red Fallopia multiflora slices are dried or desiccated. Those can remain sliced or ground into powder.



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Red Fallopia multiflora is a valuable medicinal plant with many therapeutic uses to enhance human health.

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As a traditional medicine, Red Fallopia multiflora has bitter and moderate taste. It is a tonic for kidneys, detoxifying, and laxative benefits. In particular, Red Fallopia multiflora is good for blood and mind, so it is able to maintain black beard and hair as its name implies. It can be said that Red Fallopia multiflora is a multifunctional medicine, used in many cases such as: Damaged kidney, damaged blood, dizziness, backache, gray hair, white blood, chronic dysentery syndrome, hemorrhoidal hemorrhage, malaria, tuberculosis, coronary artery disease, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, atherosclerosis... In addition, it is good for kidney, virility, anti-aging, enhancing health and longevity.

Many research recognize Red Fallopia multiflora as an effective treatment for many diseases such as hair loss and early gray hair. It is also used to treat lower back pain, knee weakness, muscle weakness and atherosclerosis. In addition, Red Fallopia multiflora is helpful for anti-aging, strengthening the body's immune system, laxative, and adjusting the sugar level in blood.

Red Fallopia multiflora grows naturally, distributed over the province, mostly in Thong Nong, Hoa An, Trung Khanh, Ha Quang, Tra Linh, Nguyen Binh, Bao Lac and Bao Lam districts. It is a valuable medicinal plant that should be preserved, developed and exploited in a proper and sustainable manner.



Photo: Phong San

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# Sausages

## BLACK PORK

Sausage is a specialty dish of Tay and Nung ethnic minorities in Cao Bang. Cao Bang sausage has a unique flavor blended with the scent of sunshine, the smoke of wood fire, and the delicious taste of pork.

Sausage is made from sliced pork seasoned with salt, sugar and some local herbal spices, and then stuffed into the small intestine of pigs that is processed and cleaned in advance. After drying under the sunshine for 2-3 times, the sausage is hung over the cooking fire for use in a month. The quality of the sausage mainly depends on the quality of pork. Cao Bang ethnic groups normally favor the local pig breeds, especially black pigs that are grazed naturally and mainly eat maize, soybean instead of weight gain food or other drugs. The most popular breed of black pig is Tap Na, originated from Thong Nong district and currently popular in highland districts of the province such as: Thong Nong, Ha Quang, Bao Lac, Bao Lam, Nguyen Binh, Tra Linh, Ha Lang and Thach An. The pig has black fur and skin. Some pigs have white patches on the 4 legs and belly. The meat of black pig is more delicious than other pigs.

Sausage making is simple but requires the carefulness. It will go off easily if done in the wrong way. People usually take the buttocks, shoulders or filet of newly slaughtered black pigs, which is half lean and half fat, then remove the skin, wash in dilute salt water, alcohol, slice and season with spices made from forest trees such as mountain ginger, forest pepper, *Clausena indica*, cinnamon and cardamom. The pig's small intestine is cleaned and squeezed with salt, vinegar and then marinated with white wine. After the meat absorb all spices, it is stuffed into the intestine.





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Photo: Trung Nguyễn

After stuffing, it is tied into chunks and washed in boiling water to clean the grease sticking to the outside. The plump sausages are dried under the sunshine and hung over the cooking fire. The sausages will have stronger taste and honey-like shiny light brown if smoked with bagasse. The warmth and smoke of the fire will dry the sausage and make it firm for long term use without rancidity. Smoked and heated by the cooking fire day by day, the sausages look more and more delicious with the red pink color of lean meat together with the stripe of ivory white fat meat.

The chunks of sausage are washed in hot water and steamed or fried. Then it is sliced and stir-fried on the stove with a little fish sauce, fresh garlic leaves served with white rice or others depending on the taste of the eaters. Sausage has become popular in the culinary culture of the local people and appears more and more in restaurants and supermarkets.

Black pork sausage are produced and sold mostly in Thach An, Bao Lac, Trung Khanh and Cao Bang city. The annual consumption inside and outside the province is up to several dozen tons. Black pork sausages possess the unique flavour of Cao Bang. The eaters can feel the friendliness of the land and people here, with an unforgettable impression in their hearts.





Photo: Trung Nguyễn



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

# SWEET, TANGY Tangerine flavor

TRIỆU THỊ KIỀU DUNG

By the end of November to January, tangerine orchards laden with plump and orange fruits can be seen wherever in Cao Bang. Under favourable climatic and soil conditions, Cao Bang tangerines have been famous for its golden color, the gentle sweet of mountains, and the scent of soil and forest breeze, which the eaters cannot find anywhere else.

Cao Bang tangerine has an eye-catching color, plump fruits, very few seeds, a strong sweet taste with a bit of sourness, and a distinctive flavor among many kinds of tangerines. There are two types of tangerines in Cao Bang: round and flat. The ripe round tangerines have orange color, medium thin skin which is easy to peel, low fiber, sweet taste, tangy flavor, and weight of 80 - 150g. The peeled round tangerine has a hollow hole in the middle. Flat tangerine fruits have concave tops and bottoms, slightly flat shape. The ripe fruits have orange color, easy to peel medium thin skin, low fiber, slightly sour sweetness and average weight of 100-150g.

Tangerines are grown in many areas in the province. Among those, Tra Linh tangerines are the most famous for their sweetness and unique aroma. The fruits are juicy and orange with gentle aroma and sweet flavour. In the memory of some seniors in Quang Han, a traditional mandarin growing area (Tra Linh district), in the past, the tangerine trees were so tall that people must use a ladder to climb up and pick the fruits. They were so fruitful that the dozen loads were harvested. A load of tangerine weights around 50kg, so 4 to 5 quintals of fruits are collected per tree.



Photo: Trung Nguyễn

*Tangerines are grown in many areas in the province. Among those, Tra Linh tangerines are the most famous for their sweetness and unique aroma. The fruits are juicy and orange with gentle aroma and sweet flavour.*





Recently, with the rise of speciality plants, tangerine have generated considerable income for many families. Seeing the high economic value from tangerine and the high consumption, the local people have expanded the area of tangerine. In 2013, Tra Linh district coordinated with the Department of Science and Technology to successfully implement the scientific topic “Application of micrografting technology to restore and develop Tra Linh tangerine variety”. As a result, the tangerine area has increased over the years, making tangerine a key crop of high economic efficiency, effectively exploiting the local natural potential, making an important contribution to poverty reduction.

Recognizing the urgency of branding for tangerine varieties, Tra Linh district have coordinated with the Department of Science and Technology to implement the project “Establishing, managing and developing “Tra Linh tangerine” collective marks for tangerine products of Tra Linh district, Cao Bang province”. On April 19, 2016, the collective trademark registration certificate was issued to Tra Linh Tangerine Association in Quang Han commune, Tra Linh district by the National Office of Intellectual Property.

Currently, the local authority has increased the research and application of scientific and technological advances in developing the production areas, maintaining the quality and reputation of the products, increasing promotion, constantly developing the brand value and economic efficiency of tangerine, so that Tra Linh tangerine will reach the market all over the country.





# Conclusion

LÊ CHÍ THANH

CAO BANG IS A WONDERFUL LAND WITH FULL POTENTIALS, STRENGTHS, NATURAL BEAUTY, UNIQUE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL VALUES, ALONG WITH GENTLE, HOSPITABLE AND HARD-WORKING PEOPLE, WHICH CREATE SEVERAL DISTINCTIVE PRODUCTS IMBUED WITH LOVE OF THE EARTH AND HUMANITY.



The system of famous historical and historical relics is in line with the development of Vietnamese history such as: Pac Bo Special National Monument, Tran Hung Dao Special National Monument, etc. Famous tourism sites: Ban Gioc Waterfall, Nguom Ngao cave, Thang Hen lake, Phja Oac, Phja Den eco-tourism areas ... Cao Bang is gifted with favorable, harmonious and diverse climate and soil condition together with the industrious and creative labor of the ethnic groups to create several well-known distinctive products. Speciality products are created all year round. Each season comes with their own products as the quintessence of heaven and earth and skillful people.

Each of the 17 products mentioned above represent the unique identities of each specific region so those always appeal to friends and visitors. However, in reality, for some products, the quality and supply do not correspond with their values such as Arrowroot vermicelli, chestnut, tea, and sausages ...

As the consumers are increasingly interested in clean, safe, high-quality, nutritious and healthy food, Cao Bang's products have enormous development potentials. The products presented above all respond to the realistic demands of customers with reasonable prices. Therefore, it is important to concern and promote the development of Cao Bang products during the four seasons in the coming time. In the future, more products will be added in this photobook to let people aware of and enjoy the natural flavors of Cao Bang.



Photo: Lê Hải Hòa



Photo: HELVETAS Vietnam







Photo: HELVETAS Vietnam



Photo: Bùi Tuấn Hùng



Each product is presented by the story of its daily life illustrated with the photos taken by professional photographers and those who are in love with Cao Bang. Each picture represents the desire of sincere and industrious farmers to bring Cao Bang products to every corner of Vietnam.

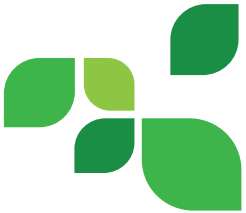
With all the hospitality of Cao Bang people, abundant potentials and cultural values, the photobook “Cao Bang products around four seasons” will be a message to attract domestic and foreign investors to Cao Bang and exploit the local potentials and strengths, leading Cao Bang’s products to other domestic and foreign markets.

We would like to express the sincere gratitude to the writers, owners and photographers for your devotion to Cao Bang, and the local residents for your interesting stories and valuable photos that are essential parts of this photobook.

*As the soul of the Land and People, these 17 and even more local special products mentioned in this book are profiled by Caobang’s passionate authors to present this Fairy and mysterious land of beauty to our Dear visitors in away that drive joined actions to help waking up the province potential toward safe, organic agriculture that linked with Tourism.*







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