

**mànmàn chī**

(eat slowly)

## An authentic and affordable food adventure in Flushing, Queens.

I crossed 41st street heading south on Main, and all of a sudden I was hit with the wonderful and familiar smells of msg, brothy noodle soups, and a Chinese peppercorn called Ma. I stopped dead in my tracks and to the right, down some dingy stairs, I discovered Golden Mall.

Women stuffing pork into fluffy white doughy balls to steam, men furiously pulling noodles with their hands, the sizzling sound of pan-fried vegetables and the thump of dough sounded in my ears. Golden Mall is the most similar to China food court I have ever seen. I was the only non 100% Chinese person in the place (which is always a good sign when seeking out authentic Chinese food). People were drinking Fanta and *Shui Bi* (Sprite) out of cans with straws and slurping their noodles (not rude in Chinese culture).

# 1

41-28 Main Street, just South of 41<sup>st</sup> st.

## **Lanzhou Handmade Noodles (#27)**

Cold noodle: one long, thin noodle symbolizing one's life. Cucumbers, cilantro, chili oil, peanut oil.

Delicious. \$3.50

Try any of their noodle soups. The noodles are soft, the broth has been simmering all day, and the vegetables are fresh.

#38 (*across from Lanzhou*)

This stall may seem intimidating to non-Chinese, but trust me- everything is DELICIOUS. Some of the most authentic foods I experienced on this eating adventure I had right here at stall #38. Each item in the silver containers costs \$1.

Wood Ear! 木耳 *mù ěr* (moo ar)

An edible fungus. Sounds disgusting, I know, but please try it. It has an interesting texture- crunchy and rubbery. Vinegar, thinly sliced carrots and cilantro make this a nice contrast to (in my opinion) all foods. And it's good for you! It has been used to treat coughs and heart palpitations, it stimulates the immune system, it helps lower blood cholesterol levels, and it is said to have anti tumor properties. It's also said that this "wood ear" improves skin!

Cucumber! 黄瓜 *huángguā* (hoo-ang goo-a)

My absolute favorite thing to eat. Vinegar, garlic, *málà*; literally "numbing and spicy" Sichuan Peppercorn, chili

oil, cilantro, scallions. This cucumber is a great experience- crunchy, tasty, fresh. If you feel a little numbness in your mouth, it's the ma- don't worry, it'll go away soon.

Thinly Sliced Potato! 土豆絲 *tǔdòusī* (too doh se)  
This one is pretty straightforward- it's potato, cut into thin slices, with some salt and oil and soy and vinegar. Garnished with cilantro, like everything else.

Bean Curd! 豆腐 *dòu fǔ* (dow foo)  
Tofu. With scallions and spices and peppers and oil and garlic. This specific tofu has been preserved, with the skin still on it. A low intensity taste; firm texture, cold.

Chives pancake! 韭菜餅 *jiǔcài bǐng* (jew-tsai bing) \$1.50  
This is delicious. I have only had it in Shanghai before this- served as a street food in small neighborhoods. Chives, egg, and vermicelli noodles inside a thin dough. They have a round beef version sitting next to it on the counter, also amazing.

## **Xi'an Famous Foods**

Xi'an is the capital of Shaanxi province, and the food is Muslim influenced. Lots of lamb, heavy spices, and densely flavored.

The noodles are what I would recommend here, rather than the lamb sandwich that everyone talks about (which is actually not as authentic tasting to me as people keep saying). The noodles are hand made with wheat flour. They are thick, heavy, and chewy. Hands down the best noodles I had on this food journey because of the texture.

I would recommend any of the dishes here, depending on your personal taste. They have tons of choices, and they are all really really good! They use lots of root vegetables like potato and carrots for a warm, grounded taste. I spoke with a person who was eating there, he is originally from Xi'an, and he says he eats there quite often because the food is “authentic, delicious, and inexpensive.”

## 2

I discovered a second Golden Shopping Mall, pretty much right next to the first one. It says something like, "Oriental Food Court" outside, and there are a few food stalls inside the mall. I went to a place near a sign that said "Malaysian Food" and ordered 拉麵 (*lā miàn*) which means "pulled noodles." The dish that I got was a combination of noodles, peanut butter, sesame oil, and soy sauce. If you eat there, 在这里吃 (*zài zhèlǐ chī*) it is served with a delicious and salty chicken broth, and both dishes are garnished with scallions. \$2

### 3

#### **朱记贴铜** (*zhū jì tiē tóng*)

41<sup>st</sup> Ave., take a right off of Main Street walking away from the subway.

On 41st Avenue, next to a big parking lot there is a small food stall. **朱记贴铜** (*zhū jì tiē tóng*) is what the red awning says, although I don't really know what it means. It is a popular spot for breakfast, and their best selling item is their pork dumpling. I talked to a person eating there, and he said he loves it there because it is authentic, cheap, and good on the go when he is in a hurry.

**猪肉饺子** (*zhūròu jiǎozi*) This pork dumpling is made differently than a traditional dumpling. It is round, with a thick dough, crunchy on the outside with sesame seeds, bready, soupy, and meaty.

**馒头** (*mántou*) Steamed bread, warm and airy.



油条 (*yóutiáo*) Aka: Chinese doughnut or fried bread. It is a stick of dough, deep-fried, with confectioners sugar. Yum.

麻团 (*mátuán*) Glutinous rice balls filled with black sesame paste. They are sweet, chewy, and delicious.

I would recommend trying everything on their menu, as it was packed with Chinese people and everyone seemed to love what they were eating.

## 4

### **Xinjiang Traditional Barbecue**

On the corner of 41<sup>st</sup> Ave, near the intersection of Kissena St.

This is the first time I have ever seen lamb skewers on the street in America, and I am so happy to have discovered this food truck. Lamb, chicken, and beef, all tender and juicy, served on a stick- barbecued right in front of you. They are \$1 each, and he will ask you if you want them to be spicy, and I recommend you take him up on that because the spice that is used is an interesting blend of peppery powder.

**Fried Dumpling Jie Jie Sheng**

On Union St., take a right off of Roosevelt Ave, walking away from the subway.

The name of this place is very confusing, but the food is so good and inexpensive that I stopped thinking about it. Their 猪肉菜餃子 (*zhūròu cài jiǎozi*) which translates to "pork vegetable dumpling" is amazing. You get 10 for \$2.50, and they can be boiled or fried. The hand made dough is thick and chewy, and they are very tasty.

## 6

The inspiration for this project comes from the food stall just after 40<sup>th</sup> Rd., walking away from the subway.

北京烤鴨 (*Běijīng kǎoyā*) Beijing Duck. For only \$1, the most amazing snack ever. Roasted duck, cucumber, spring onion, and hoisin sauce inside a small *mántou*.

## 7

Steamed pork bun. Under the train tracks next to the Peking Duck place, you will find really straightforward 叉燒包 (*cha siu bao*). \$1.25

## 8

At the grocery store on the corner of 41<sup>st</sup> and Main St., there are fruits outside. Here I found the best price for Long'An 龙眼. This is a small fruit, translated literally means “dragon eyes.” It contains tons of vitamins, is said to be good for the spleen, insomnia, and stomach aches. You must peel the outside, and there is a seed in the middle.

