

Food in Mongolia

by [Young Mongols](#)

What's Mongolian food like? These Young Mongols are **venturing** beyond traditional mutton and flour to bring new and fresh food to Ulaanbaatar. Featuring interviews with Enkhzaya of **Rosewood Restaurant** and **The Butchery** and Enkhbaatar Dorj of **AYC**, Mongolia's first juice bar.



What do you think Mongolian is like?

For starters, the Mongolian barbecue you may have heard of is actually Taiwanese and has no connection to Mongolia. Maybe you've heard that Mongolians drink fermented mares milk. They sure do! It's called 'airag'. Traditional Mongolian food contains 2 **staple** ingredients: mutton and flour. Produce is harder to come by because of the country's harsh climate and remoteness.

And if you know someone who's been to Mongolia, perhaps you haven't heard the best things about its **cuisine**. These young Mongols are working to change that.

The restaurant **scene** in Mongolia is ever-changing. It changes very quickly and it changes a few times in a year. And what I mean by that is Mongolians are really not against change, they're for change. And they **embrace** it, at least in our industry.

So, if somebody's doing something different, you'll see everybody else doing the same thing in the next six months, which isn't a terrible thing. Now, you would think that it is copying somebody but that's how an industry **evolves**. Somebody brings in a new technique, new idea, a new plating, a new design, and then others copy.

I believe that your **ingredients** have to be amazing for you to make amazing food, on a **consistent** basis. Try to face a **vendor** and see how they're raising their animals and growing their food and what kind of transport system our food goes through it before it gets to us.

I think when we first got here in 2011, and started **Rosewoods (Restaurant)**, you could only get it at the markets and it was all mostly Chinese vegetables that were coming in the trains and they were not good quality at all.

And so we've really made a push to get new products into Mongolia and we work with our vendors. And I'm happy to say over the last five years, we have pushed the vendors enough now that you can find, you can go into markets and you can get fresh mint and basil, and Brussels-sprouts, and you might not be aware they are actually a regular item at the markets and people are starting to use them.

They weren't available here, so what we ended up **figuring out** was we had to control the **supply** and so ended up doing is we started to contact vendors and farmers that we could trust, that would work with us to create a new level in the meat supply industry. And so we opened **The Butchery**.

It was mostly meant to be a supply our restaurant with fresh meat but has evolved into something more than that. We have a regular guest base that come in and in shop for their home and household. And we have some restaurants they're interested in getting meat from us now.

What we're trying to do is **traceable**. We want to be able to tell you where the animal came from what it ate and how we cared for it and how we **slaughtered** it and it in a **humane** way. And we know how it was done.

Mongolia can't export most of its meat because it doesn't meet any **standards**. And at least with **The Butchery**, we're not making a huge **dent** but we hope that people see what we're doing and a **light bulb goes off** and there's other businesses that try to do it on a larger **scale**. Even if we don't do it, that's fine, but as long as somebody can take an example and say "oh wow they're doing something different and this is really needed and people want it" and they see the **demand** and the end the need I think it will **drive** our industry further.

And for those of us more into vegetables than meat, Ulaanbaatar's newly opened **AYC Juice Bar** has partnered with local **greenhouses** to bring Mongolians produce and nutrients through freshly squeezed juice.

AYC Juice Bar is producing cold pressed vegetable & fruit juice and our juice bar is the first in Mongolia. We work with the local greenhouses which are really **sophisticated operations**. Mongolia is not fruit growing country, so we import all the fruit from Europe through Russia. We strongly believe that our business is important to Mongolians. Our products are full of **nutrients** and valuable minerals and vitamins in the long run regular use of our products can prevent many diseases so it's really important. I think our stories are becoming more popular because we do the right thing.

[reading level 9.5]

Links

[The Butchery](#) by Rosewood Restaurant
[AYC Juice Bar](#)

New Words

venturing: (v) to go forward in spite of risks

staple: (n) a food that is considered very important and used often

cuisine: a style of cooking

scene: a particular activity or way of life and the people who are part of it

embrace: very accepting an idea, a proposal, a set of beliefs

evolves: to develop, change, or improve by steps

ingredients: parts added to something, like in cooking

consistent: having a regular style or pattern; not changing

vendor: person whose business is selling something

figuring out: (phrasal verb) to think about somebody/something until you understand them/it

supply: an amount of something available for use

traceable: to follow the history of

slaughtered: the killing of animals for their meat

humane: showing kindness towards animals by making sure that they do not suffer

standards: a measured level of quality that people think is acceptable

dent: (slang) to make a very small change in something very large

light bulb goes off: (idiom) suddenly understand something or have a great idea

scale: the size or extent of something

demand: the desire for goods or services

drive: to influence something or cause it to make progress

greenhouses: a building used to grow plants all year long

sophisticated: complicated in the way that it works

operations: a set of activities that make up the running of a business

nutrients: something in food that helps people, animals, and plants live and grow

Reference: kids.wordsmith.net, [Oxford Learner's Dictionaries](#)

Translations

English	Mongolian	Russian	Kazakh	Thai
venturing	эрэлхийлэх	углубляясь	кәсіпкерлік	
staple	гол нэрийн	штапель	қапсырмалар	แก่น
cuisine	хоол	кухня	тағамдар	อาหาร
scene	дүр зураг	место действия	сахна	ฉาก
embrace	тэврэлт	охватывать	қамту	โอบกอด
evolves	үржинэ	эволюционирует	дамып келеді	วิวัฒนาการ
ingredients	найрлага	ингредиенты	ингредиенттер	ส่วนผสม
consistent	тогтвортой байна	последовательный	дәйекті	คงเส้นคงวา
vendor	борлуулагч	продавец	сатушы	ผู้ขาย
figuring out	мэдэх	выяснение	анықтау	การหา
supply	нийлүүлэлт	поставка	жеткізу	จัดหา
traceable	ул мөр болно	прослеживаемый	байкалады	ติดตามได้
slaughtered	нядлах	забивают	сойылды	ฆ่า
humane	хүмүүнлэг	человечный	адамгершілік	มีมนุษยธรรม
standards	стандартууд	стандарты	стандарттар	มาตรฐาน
dent	хонхорхой	вмятина	тіс	บุ๋ม
light bulb goes off	гэрлийн чийдэнг унтраадаг	лампочка выключается	шамы өшөді	หลอดไฟดับลง
scale	масштаб	масштаб	ауқымы	ขนาด
demand	эрэлт хэрэгцээ	спрос	сұраныс	ความต้องการ
drive	хөтөч	водить машину	диск жетегі	ขับรถ
greenhouses	хүлэмжүүд	теплицы	жылыжай	เรือนกระจก
sophisticated	боловсронгуй	утонченный	күрделі	ซับซ้อน
operations	үйл ажиллагаа	операции	операциялар	การดำเนินงาน
nutrients	шим тэжээл	питательные вещества	қоректік заттар	สารอาหาร

Source: Google Translate <https://translate.google.com>

Discussion Questions

1. What was the video-story about?
2. What two businesses were mainly talked about?
3. Why did Rosewood Restaurant open The Butchery?
4. What does she mean when she says the "light bulb goes off"?
5. What are the healthiest places to eat in your neighborhood or town?
6. Do you think Mongolians think more about eating healthier?
7. Where do you buy your meat? Do you know where it came from?
8. Have you ever had a 'vegetable' juice? Do you know where you can get some?
9. Do you think "Food in Mongolia" is a good title? If no, what should it be?

