

I chose the topic of my mother and her Shanghai cuisine because it is both a very personal topic and one that I believe others will be interested in. So many people in America eat Chinese food and consider it to be cheap or low quality when genuine Chinese cooking is anything but. I believe showing my mother cooking and her explaining the emotions and feelings of her food will lead others to have a newfound appreciation for my culture's food. Furthermore, Shanghai is an exceptional area in China, often considered itself to be a sort of "red headed stepchild" in the grand scheme of Chinese cuisine. Much of Shanghai's food is influenced by other cultures due to its history as a port town.

I want viewers to understand more in depth the importance of food and memory. Moreover, I want viewers to have a sense of the importance of food for someone like my mother, who grew up in a time and place where food was extremely scarce and literally rationed off. My mother explains how even the simplest looking dishes, which those in poverty used to eat, can now be viewed as a health food. I want viewers to understand that while perhaps my mother did not eat the highest quality foods, she still looks upon them with fondness.

The footage was collected using my laptop's camera in order to add more stability to the footage. I had my mother speak in Chinese because that is the language she is most accustomed to and I felt that would enable her to express herself better. The video was edited using Adobe Premiere as the software enables more advanced video options. The original footage itself was rearranged using the splicing feature, to provide a cohesive narrative. The opening is actually taken from the middle of my original footage, as it is where my mom delves more deeply into the lack of food she experienced as a child. I believed this would make a great introduction as it immediately sets the tone and creates a emotional connection between the viewer and my mother. Footage of Shanghai's harbor, taken from a very early interaction between America and Shanghai, is used to give a sense of ancientness, of the time my mother lived in. I used the title card feature to place a title over this clip. Following that, a sequence of modern day shots of Shanghai is introduced, displaying a wide variety of foods offered in Shanghai so viewers can get a sense of the wide berth of Shanghainese cuisine. Over this, I began playing traditional Shanghainese music so that there would be background noise as well as place setting for what the viewers would experience. Subtitles for my mother's speech was made using the caption option in Adobe Premiere. The specific time had to be found and the captions manually adjusted to encompass the length of my mother talking. Audio gaining was used to adjust the volume levels of each track layer so that no clips would seem jarring against the other. Background gains were lowered while speaking volume and ambient sounds were increased. During moments without speech, background audio gain was increased. Additionally, the ends of each audio and video segment were faded out by applying the video/audio transition effects. The length of this effect was often lengthened or shortened so that viewers would have a smooth transition from one scene to the next.

An ideal target audience would really be anyone who enjoys food, as I believe eating food is a very universal experience and more people should understand how connected they are to what they have eaten throughout their lives, even if they do not realize those connections themselves. I believe those who have immigrated from another country will also find more ways to connect to this video, as they will also understand the difficulty of losing easy access to so many of the foods they have been accustomed to eating throughout their lives. Moreover, Chinese audiences will find this documentary enjoyable because they will get to see some genuine Chinese cooking and they will also get to hear the experiences of someone who spent their childhood during a particularly interesting (if not harrowing) point of Chinese history.