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Speech by Adam Graycar, Chief Executive Officer, Office of Tertiary Education, Adelaide at the graduation of students of the Asian Commercial Cookery Certificate, Regency College of TAFE, 17 June 1992

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Adam Graycar

No. 1/92

**ORGANISATION:** REGENCY COLLEGE OF TAFE

**DATE:** 17 JUNE 1992

**PLACE:** REGENCY COLLEGE OF TAFE

**TOPIC:** GRADUATION OF STUDENTS OF ASIAN  
COMMERCIAL COOKERY CERTIFICATE

**REGENCY COLLEGE**

**17 JUNE 1992**

- Donk photograph
- JTD
- Grand Canyon

Some things take a long time to achieve results, - especially the business I'm in where the development of policy takes almost forever, and its implementation takes even longer. Our big tasks in the office today were related to planning our workforce for the year 2001.

Those of you graduating tonight are able to offer what a boring old bureaucrat like we can't offer - instant gratification - well, reasonably instant gratification. With style and panache, with nutrition and fulfilment, and with splendour and elegance, you can gratify wonderfully. We all know that food preparation and cooking take time - but compared to the Grand Canyon the time scale for creating something splendid is a little bit shorter.

Success, of course, doesn't come overnight. Cuisine evolves over a long period as skilled cooks experiment with flavour, texture, composition and environment. What you have learnt has taken a long time to develop, and with your skill, I'm sure you will add, with a bit of trial and experiment here and there, to our special cuisine.

Your success is attributable also to this wonderful College, the highly regarded and widely acclaimed Hotel School, and most importantly the knowledgeable, skilful and diligent teachers you have had, led and inspired by Mary Battersby.

The instant gratification - or reasonably instant, but certainly gratification, is more than just the satisfaction of hunger. Restaurants aren't places in which people simply satisfy their hunger. People go to restaurants because they want to experience hospitality, feel good, share a social experience and sometimes even enter a make believe world - often with a touch of sophistication.

It takes a lot of things coming together well to make a good evening, but it takes just one slip up - whether it be lousy food, poor presentation, unprofessional staff, a smoker at the next table, to spoil the experience.

When we stop and think about it people spend a lot of time eating, a lot of time thinking about eating, and a lot of time discussing what they eat, don't eat, would like to eat, what they ate yesterday and what they'd eat next time they go to town, or to Melbourne, or Penang or Paris.

When people travel what they eat is one of the highlights - sampling local cuisine - or watching the throngs of Americans lined up outside MacDonalds or Kentucky Fried

the local industry & course advisory committee

40 Dec 1  
- plus for my feed collection

support by Jimmy Chion  
- chicken smothered in mushroom sauce  
please... she said... don't tell me how you killed it - just bring it

Chicken on the Champs Elysees or in central Jakarta - too timid to try the local food.

It is not until you are away that you realise how tremendously diverse Australian food is - the diversity and blending of cultures is reflected wonderfully in our food.

- Paris - quality of produce - exquisite sauces - tart and calvados but after a week of French feasting we figured there was something missing - we missed our regular tastes of chilli, lemon grass, coriander, five spice - so off we went to a Vietnamese restaurant - not once, but twice - In Paris already!!
- Amsterdam Indonesian and Chinese
- London - Indian Chinese.

Who would want to eat Dutch or British food. The Asian was always good - but nowhere did it blend like it does here.

The influence of Asian spices and techniques certainly livens and enhances what people expect and enjoy. A bit of chilli and coriander, can do wonders for "traditional Australian" meals. The influence of Asia is notable and significant, but comes from a structured and disciplined base. The success of Asian cooking comes with careful planning, quick, vigilant cooking and imaginative presentation. Most Asian is very tasty food, and cooks try to strike a balance between sweet, sour, hot,

bitter and salty. The cook is meant to enjoy the meal, too. Put everything on the table at once and get everyone to help themselves.

Chinese food is ubiquitous - I can't think of anywhere I've been where there hasn't been excellent Chinese food - Warsaw / West Wyalong. — ~~1947~~

What is it that attracted so many people to a way of eating so different from their own? Chinese cooking has a tradition that goes back thousands of years. Since it originated in a vast country of extreme poverty combined with great wealth, and one which has widely different agricultural regions, it is by necessity extremely flexible. If you don't have one ingredient, you simply use another. You can be economical in your use of materials, so that a dish can be made cheaply from local vegetables and soy products. But with the addition of such expensive ingredients as steak, shark's fin and birds' nest, the same recipe becomes an exotic dish suitable for a banquet.

The Chinese have evolved a way of eating that is extraordinarily wholesome and nutritious. Carefully followed, a Chinese menu provides a balanced meal at low cost, with few calories and little cholesterol. The only change the modern nutritionist might make would be to substitute brown rice for white; but that is something no one has ever been able to do in China, where the people feel the same

attachment to white rice as Westerners do to white bread.

I like to think that the Chinese way of eating is an expression of the best aspect of Chinese culture: the peacefulness and harmony of community life. By sitting about a round table and sharing our daily food with others, taking only as much as one needs, and seeing that no one goes hungry, one learns from one's earliest days how to get along with others.

You are making a contribution to everybody's enjoyment and to our all getting along with each other (UNSW - 4 dishes for 6).

It is my great pleasure to be here with you today to share this experience with you and to share the fruits of your success. It has been a very great deal of hard work and persistence on your part - 800 hours - five days per week from 1 - 10pm every day for 20 weeks. That's persistence. And that persistence has, I'm sure been shared by those nearest and dearest to you. While a graduation day marks the success of those who have been through the mill, we must never underestimate the efforts and support of those family members who have also been through the grind.

I'm sure that you have learnt well - not only the techniques, but the ability to achieve a wonderful mix of tastes and experiences - based on a variety of cultures. I admire you and congratulate you. It is the skill and flexibility that you have acquired in the course

that will stand you in good stead wherever you go - there seems to be hardly anywhere where Asian food is not enjoyed and appreciated (don't go to Warsaw). However I hope we continue to get a good taste of your work here in Adelaide. Once again, congratulations to all involved and good luck.