VISUAL

风物 FAR & WIDE 图志

Editor's Note: *Using a blend of words and visuals, this series explores unique communities and reveals the heart of China through food, architecture, craftsmanship, landscapes and traditions.*

BEHIND THE **LANZHOU BEEF NOODLES**

HAND-PULLED PERFECTION



01 KNEADING DOUGH

***Penghui* water (alkaline):** Unique to Lanzhou Noodles, it improves elasticity and color.



Mix salt to flour, stir evenly. Gradually add room temperature water, mixing until a shaggy dough forms (water-to-flour ratio 50%-55%).

02 INITIAL KNEADING



Form a dough and rest 15-20 minutes. Knead for 10-15 minutes, adding alkaline water. Rest for 30 minutes.

03 ROLL INTO STRIPS



Roll each portion into 30-40 cm strips, applying even pressure for uniform thickness, shaping noodles.

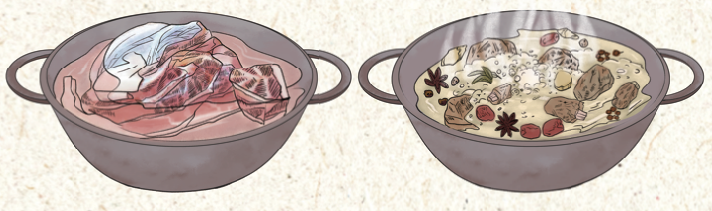
LOCATION

Lanzhou is located in the northwest region of China and serves as the capital of Gansu province.



MAKE LANZHOU BEEF NOODLE SOUP

Selecting bones and meat, blanching to remove impurities, simmering with seasonings for 2-3 hours, skimming off fat and debris, and finally adjusting seasoning.



DIFFERENT SIZE OF NOODLES

Thin noodles with a diameter of around **1.5** millimeters.

Hair-thin noodles The thinnest type of Lanzhou beef noodle, similar in thickness to a strand of hair, about **1** millimeter in diameter.

Thin pillar noodles roughly **2.5** millimeters in diameter.

Wide noodles: The widest noodle, generally around **20** millimeters or more in width.

Medium-wide noodles A balanced width and thickness, usually **8 to 10** millimeters wide.

Thin-wide noodles are wide and thin, typically **10 to 12** millimeters in width.

Chive-leaf noodles are as wide as a chive leaf, usually **6 to 7** millimeters wide.

Medium pillar noodles with a diameter of about **3** millimeters.

Lanzhou's treasured noodles fusion of tradition, modernity

By MA JINGNA in Lanzhou
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Lanzhou beef noodles, originating from the capital of Gansu province in Northwest China, are not simply a gastronomic delight with a rich historical and cultural legacy, but are also a dish that has garnered widespread acclaim for a distinctive taste and impeccable artistry. Evolving from a humble bowl of noodles over a century ago to becoming the quintessential symbol of Lanzhou today, the narrative around Lanzhou beef noodles epitomizes a fusion of tradition, innovation and meticulous craftsmanship.

A storied legacy

Revered as being "China's first noodles", the history of Lanzhou beef noodles can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907). The traditional preparation is intricate, involving meticulous ingredient selection, dough kneading, noodle pulling and soup simmering. The noodles, painstakingly hand-pulled to achieve a delicate and elastic texture, are complemented by a robustly flavored beef broth, culminating in a wholesome culinary experience. In 1915, Chef Ma Baozi popularized the dish on the streets of Lanzhou, swiftly captivating diners with his exceptional noodle-pulling prowess and delectable broth.

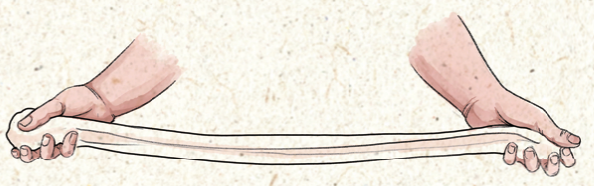
In the 1980s, Lanzhou beef noodles garnered global recognition as China embraced international engagement, assuming the role of a cultural conduit. In 2021, the exemplary artistry of the dish secured its inclusion on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

Harmonizing tradition

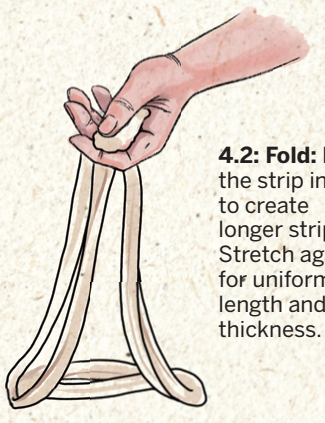
Lanzhou beef noodles have constantly evolved, harmonizing tradition with innovation. With evolving consumer demand and market dynamics, the industry has proactively pursued new avenues for expansion. Through franchising, partnerships and joint ventures, Lanzhou beef noodles have proliferated across various domestic and international locales, serving as a cultural emissary for the city.

The Lanzhou bureau of commerce has formulated a strategic blueprint for developing the industry around Lanzhou beef noodles, emphasizing diversification and global outreach. This blueprint centers on establishing industry clusters via the creation of the Lanzhou Beef Noodles Industrial Park to attract enterprises and foster high-quality advancements. Furthermore, work is underway to elevate brand exposure and increase participation in national exhibitions to augment brand recognition and market penetration.

04 STRETCHING NOODLES



4.1: Initial Stretching: Hold both ends evenly and gently stretch the noodle strip. Ensure even pulling to avoid breaking.



4.2: Fold: Fold the strip in half to create longer strips. Stretch again for uniform length and thickness.



4.3: Repeat Folding and Stretching: Repeat folding and stretching 3-4 times to make thinner, longer noodles. Maintain uniform thickness.

4.4: Adjust Length and Thickness: Stretch carefully for thinner noodles without breaking.

4.5: Handle Finished Noodles: Rest noodles briefly to relax them. Sprinkle with dry flour to prevent sticking.

4.6: Cooking the Noodles: Cooking noodles in boiling water, usually 1-2 minutes depending on their thinness.

PREPARATION TECHNIQUES AND FEATURES

Lanzhou beef noodles are famous for their "five colors", which include "one clear, two white, three red, four green, and five yellow"



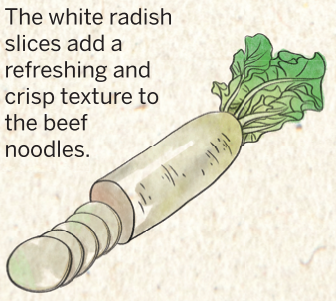
Five Yellow: Noodles
The handmade noodles are yellow and shiny, offering a chewy and firm texture.

One Clear: Clear Soup
The beef broth must be clear, fresh, and not greasy. It is simmered for several hours until the broth has a transparent, shimmering appearance.

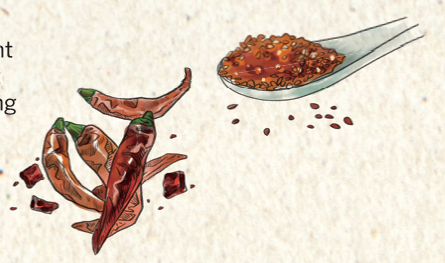
Four Green: Cilantro and Scallions
The green cilantro and scallions not only add a splash of color but also enrich the flavor profile with their fresh, aromatic notes.



Two White: Radish Slices
The white radish slices add a refreshing and crisp texture to the beef noodles.

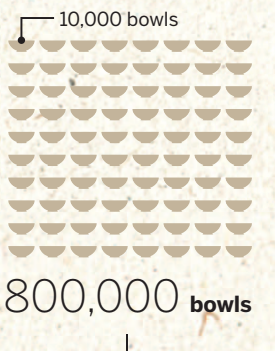


Three Red: Red Chili Oil
The chili oil is bright red, adding vibrant color and enhancing the flavor of the dish.



Online
See more by scanning the code.

AVERAGE DAILY SALE IN 2024

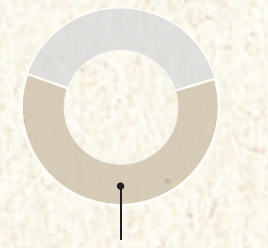


ESTIMATED AVERAGE DAILY SALE IN 2025

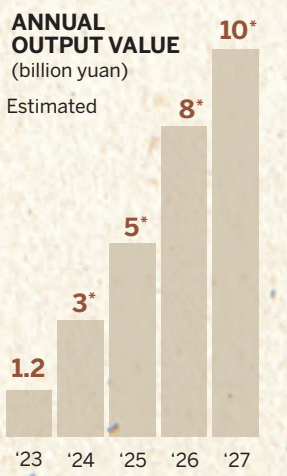


SKILLS TRAINING

5,000 skilled noodle chefs are trained each year, with a cumulative total of over 70,000 people trained.



ANNUAL OUTPUT VALUE (billion yuan)



Source: Lanzhou bureau of commerce

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