



Dining for Women

Food for Thought

September 2010

Rehabilitating Victims of Sex Trafficking

**In this Issue of Food for Thought:**

- ♀ Monthly Theme: Rehabilitating Victims of Sex Trafficking
- ♀ Millennium Dev. Goal Focus: Gender Equality/Empower Women
- ♀ Questions for Discussion
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***This human rights abuse is universal, and no one should claim immunity from its reach or from the responsibility to confront it.***

-- Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, "The 10th annual Trafficking in Persons Report."



**What is Sex Trafficking?** According to the US department of Health and Human Services, sex trafficking is **a modern-day form of slavery in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years.** Sex trafficking falls under the UN Millennium Development Goal Number 3.

**United Nations Millennium Development Goal\* Number 3: Promote Gender Equity & Empower Women**

*Various forms of gender-based discrimination increase the risk of women and girls becoming affected by poverty, which in turns puts them at higher risk of becoming targeted by traffickers, who use false promises of jobs and educational opportunities to recruit their victims.*

--United Nations Development Fund for Women, "Trafficking in Women and Girls"

**\*About the Millennium Goals**

End poverty by 2015. This is the historic promise 189 world leaders made at the **United Nations Millennium Summit** in 2000 when they agreed to meet the **8 Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs). The United Nations Millennium Campaign supports and inspires people from around the world to take action in support of the Millennium Development Goals.



### Rehabilitation: “The Most Crucial Step”

**The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT)** has much to say about the rehabilitation of sex trafficking victims: “Rehabilitation is the most crucial step in reintegrating the victim into society. The prevention of re-trafficking would, in large measure, depend on how successful the rehabilitation and reintegration of the victim has been.

“Rehabilitation is a package which includes restoration/repatriation, reintegration and providing sustainable livelihood options. These processes require support from the other stakeholders, namely the government agencies dealing with rehabilitation, corporations, the media, non-governmental, organizations, etc.” To understand fully the complexity of effective rehabilitation programs for victims of sex trafficking, it is important to grasp the horror these victims faced.

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***Sex trafficking is truly the 21st century’s version of slavery. One of the differences from 19th-century slavery is that many of these modern slaves will die of AIDS by their late 20s.***

*--Nicholas Kristof, NYT Columnist, “The Evil Behind the Smiles”*

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***Human Trafficking is the second-largest organized crime in the world.***

***It has become a bigger business than drug trafficking and generates more than \$9.5 billion/yr. --The US State Dept***

***At least 200,000 to 225,000 women and children are trafficked from Southeast Asia annually.***

***60% of the trafficking destinations are major cities of the region 40% are outside the region.***

***In Japan, the prosperous entertainment market has created a huge demand for commercial sexual workers.***

***Such demand is met by trafficking women and their children from the Philippines, Colombia and Thailand.***

***A prostituted child is forced to serve between 100 to 1,500 clients per year, per child.***

***One million children are forced to work in the sex industry every year.***

***Between 100,000 and 300,000 children in America are at risk for sex trafficking each year.***

***As many as 2.8 million children live on the streets, a third of whom are lured into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving home.***

## How it Works<sup>1</sup>

**Luring Victims:** Common patterns for luring victims into situations of sex trafficking include:

- ♀ A promise of a good job in another country
- ♀ A marriage proposal turned into a bondage situation
- ♀ Being sold into the sex trade by parents, husbands, boyfriends
- ♀ Being kidnapped by traffickers

**Traffickers use psychological and well as physical coercion and bondage to secure victims,** including:

- ♀ Threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person.
- ♀ Schemes or patterns intended to cause someone to believe that failure to perform a sex act will result in serious physical harm against any person.
- ♀ The abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process.

Traffickers frequently subject victims to debt-bondage, an illegal practice in which the traffickers tell their victims that they owe money (often relating to the victims' living expenses and transport into the country) and that they must pledge their personal services to repay the debt.

**Operations:** Once secured, traffickers force victims into various forms of commercial sexual exploitation including prostitution, pornography, stripping, live-sex shows, mail-order brides, military prostitution and sex tourism.

**Conditioning Victims:** To maintain their exploitations, sex traffickers use a variety of methods that "condition" their victims into submission. These include:

- ♀ Threats of violence to the victims and the victims' families
- ♀ The threat of shaming their victims by revealing their activities to their family and their families' friends.
- ♀ Physical abuse such as forced drug use, starvation, confinement, beatings, rape, gang rape.

*An Estimated 600,000 to 820,000 men, women, and children [are] trafficked across international borders each year.*

*Approximately 80% are women and girls and up to 50% are minors.*

*The data indicate that the majority of transnational victims are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation.*

## The Rehabilitation Process

**For victims, leaving a sex trafficking operation is simply the beginning of recovery.** Numerous physical and psychological problems accompany their freedom, and without proper rehabilitation, women will never completely escape the traumas of trafficking.

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<sup>1</sup> From the US Department of Health and Human Services *Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet*.

## **Women and girls often enter rehabilitation programs with the following physical and/or psychological issues:<sup>2</sup>**

- ♀ Common physical injuries include broken bones, concussions, burns, and vaginal and anal tears.
- ♀ Severe trauma may cause traumatic brain injury (TBI), in which one suffers from memory loss, dizziness, headaches and numbness.
- ♀ Due to the nature of sex trafficking, often victims have sexually transmitted diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS, gonorrhea, syphilis, UTIs, pubic lice) and may have suffered miscarriages, menstrual problems, forced or coerced abortions or are sterile.
- ♀ Some develop drug and alcohol addictions.

## **Psychological harms include mind/body separation/disassociated ego states, shame, grief fear, distrust, hatred of men, self-hatred, suicide and suicidal thoughts.**

- ♀ **Victims are at risk for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** – acute anxiety, depression, insomnia, physical hyper-alertness, self-loathing that is long lasting and resistant to change (complex-PTSD).
- ♀ **Women may also suffer from traumatic bonding** – a form of coercive control in which the perpetrator instills in the victim fear as well as gratitude for being allowed to live.

## **Comprehensive Programs: To address the aforementioned issues rehabilitation programs often focus on the following areas:<sup>3</sup>**

- ♀ Health: personal hygiene, nutrition, sex education, aftercare from the effects of drugs and alcohol, HIV and other STDs.
- ♀ Education: functional literacy and numeracy (e.g. dealing with money, time, etc), vocational training and income-generating programs.
- ♀ Political: access to legal counseling, advocacy, rights.
- ♀ Environmental: physical protection and access to basic needs; emotional safety.
- ♀ Psychological Services: including creative therapy, group work and counseling.
- ♀ Social Skills: protection and 'keep safe' understanding; new ways of relating peers and authority figures.

**Counselors:** Rehabilitation programs often include counselors who assist victims with mental health issues. These counselors undergo adequate training before working with trafficking victims. Their purpose is to facilitate stabilization of the victim to prevent further harm and enable maximum recovery. Services should not have a negative affect or physically or psychologically harm the victim.

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<sup>2</sup>From the US Department of Health and Human Services *Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet*.

<sup>3</sup>From the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, EPCAT's *Combating the Trafficking in Children For Sexual Purposes*

**Shelters:** Shelters are a common first step for sex trafficking victims. The purpose of a shelter is to secure, rehabilitate and reintegrates the victim. Ideally, the shelter will rehabilitate and reintegrate victims into their family or community. The shelter will arrange the involvement of a parent or relative in the victim's rehabilitation process whenever possible.<sup>4</sup>

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## Discussion Questions

1. **What are your thoughts about the controversial relationship between prostitution, sex trafficking, and the sexual exploitation of women?** One side argues criminalizing prostitution encourages human trafficking and violence, and that women have the right to make up their own minds about working as sex workers; the other side maintains legalized prostitution exacerbates human trafficking by increasing demand for commercial sex, and providing a place for criminals to exploit victims.
2. **Some international organizations working to quell sex trafficking are exploring how to reduce the demand for "sexual services," and shift the focus from "source" countries, such as Cambodia and Thailand, to "destination" countries, such as Japan and Australia, where men consume sexual services of trafficked women. How can the demands that the lucrative business of trafficking in wealthy, developed countries be changed or managed?**
3. **In 1999 Sweden enacted an unprecedented law criminalizing the sex trade. This innovative sex purchase law, known as "the Swedish Model," recognizes prostituted women as sexually exploited victims and therefore does not prosecute them, in contrast to the United States, which places law enforcement's focus on penalizing prostituted women. (The ratio of arrests in the United States with women selling sex represented 70 percent of those imprisoned in 2008, while pimps and male buyers of sex made up only 30 percent.) How do these two different approaches to prostitution laws reflect different cultural beliefs about the equality of women?**
4. **Many international human trafficking experts maintain that educating children about gender equality and human dignity beginning in kindergarten would ultimately**



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<sup>4</sup> From the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking *Successfully Tested Livelihood programs in South Asia*.

decrease the demand that drives human sex trafficking. Do you agree? How would such lessons to children be accepted in your own community?

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## Voices

### Srey Sokkhy, Cambodia

**Srey, a member of Somaly Mam's Voices for Change Team in Cambodia, tells about her outreach work at the shelters that help new survivors become self-confident and empowered young women:**

*My name Srey Sokkhy, 26 years old, I was born in Sandan District, Kampong Thom Province. Today, I live in Phnom Penh city and I do happy that I had been to be a Voices for Change team. Our VFC team, is work to change some things bad to be a good things and we want to show and*

*share about victim's feeling to all the peoples who living around the world to understand. Especially, you must be to know that victims, they don't want to do that.*

*I am one of survivor but right now I am to be a member of VFC team, so I always go to meet and motivated to all the victims at the centers to be strong and try to learn all the best skills that center provided us. It is very important for our future so we must be strong and try for the future.*



**Srey Sokkhy, far right, going to English class**

*I do happy when I met with victims and listen all their problems that they told us and I can help, explain that I know and understand about your feeling because I am a victim too. When I went to meet with them, I always told them about my story. I saw them change their living and thinking to learning hard and they feeling warm after I talk and share my story.*

## Long Pross

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/04/opinion/04kristof.html>

Nicholas Kristof featured the remarkable Long Pross in his column last January. Long Pross was kidnapped and sold to a brothel in Phnom Penh. She was only 13, and had not started menstruating. A virgin, she was sold for a large sum to the brothel owner.

**“I was beaten every day, sometimes two or three times a day,” she said.**

After a second painful abortion, she begged her “owner” to recuperate.

**“I was begging, hanging on to her feet, and asking for rest. She got mad.”**

Her owner gouged out Long Pross’s right eye with a piece of metal.

She was rescued by the Somaly Mam Foundation in Cambodia.



Photo by Nicholas Kristof

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## Meeting Resources

### Videos

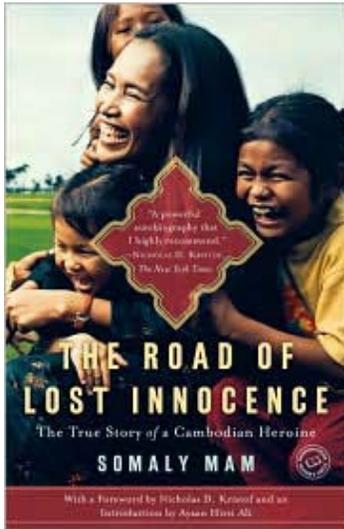
- ♀ Choose from several media interviews and stories including **Anderson Cooper’s report on Sexual Slavery in Cambodia** at <http://www.somaly.org/video/>
- ♀ **An interview with Somaly Mam, the organization’s founder:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEx75iqUAho>.
- ♀ **Film, “Holly” on DVD:** “Harsh, yet poetic, this feature forms part of the ‘K-11’ Project, dedicated to raising awareness of the epidemic of child trafficking and the sex slavery trade through several film projects.” <http://www.somaly.org/store/>
- ♀ **Watch more videos about Somaly Mam:** <http://www.somaly.org/video/somaly.php>.

### Articles

- ♀ Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author Nicholas Kristof writes about Somaly Mam: <http://kristof.blogs.nytimes.com/tag/somaly-mam/>
- ♀ **Time** article in which Somaly Mam is named one of the 100 most influential people of the year (2009)  
[http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1894410\\_1894289\\_1894268,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1894410_1894289_1894268,00.html)

### Books

Nonfiction: *The Road of Lost Innocence: The True Story of a Cambodian Heroine* by Somaly Mam, Nicholas D. Kristof (Foreword by), Ayaan Hirsi Ali (Introduction).

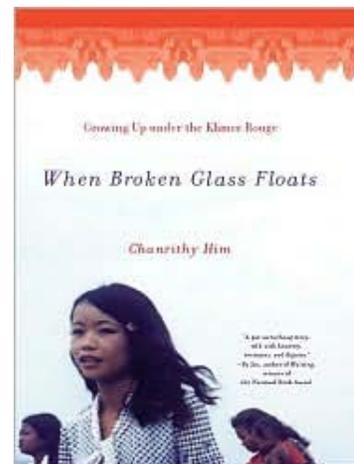


The horror and violence perpetrated on young girls to feed the sex trade industry in southeast Asia is personalized in this graphic story. Of "mixed race," Khmer and Phnong, Mam is living on her own in the forest in northern Cambodia around 1980 when a 55-year-old stranger claims he will take her to her missing family. "Grandfather" beats and abuses the nine-year-old Mam and sells her virginity to a Chinese merchant to cover a gambling debt. She is subsequently sold into a brothel in Phnom Penh, and the daily suffering and humiliation she endures is almost impossible to imagine or absorb. She recounts recalcitrant girls being tortured and killed, and police collusion and government involvement in the sex trade; she manages to break the cycle only when she discovers the advantages of foreign clients and eventually marries a Frenchman. She comes back to Cambodia from France, now

unafraid, and with her husband, Pierre; sets up a charity, AFESIP, "action for women in distressing circumstances"; and fearlessly devotes herself to helping prostitutes and exploited children....This moving, disturbing tale is not one of redemption but a cry for justice and support for women's plight everywhere. From *Publishers Weekly* (Sept) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

*When Broken Glass Floats: Growing up under the Khmer Rouge* by Chanrithy Him

"Born in Cambodia in 1965, Him lived from the age of three with the fear of war overflowing from neighboring Vietnam and suffered through the U.S.'s bombing of her native land. However, thanks to her loving and open-minded family, her outlook remained positive--until 1975, when the Khmer Rouge seized control and turned her world upside down. Armed with a nearly photographic memory, Him forcefully expresses the utter horror of life under the revolutionary regime. Evacuated from Phnom Penh and shunted from villages to labor camps, her close-knit family of 12 was decimated: both parents were murdered, and five of her siblings starved or died from treatable illnesses. Meanwhile, the culture of local communities was destroyed and replaced with the simple desire to survive famine... Him finds herself surprised when she encounters remnants of humanity in people, for she has learned to live by mistrusting, by relying on her own wits and strength. When the Khmer Rouge were overthrown, Him moved to a refugee camp in Thailand. Today she works with the Khmer Adolescent Project in Oregon." From *Publishers Weekly*, (Apr.) Copyright 2000 Cahners Business Information.



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**Fair Trade Shopping**



Trafficking survivors often create beautiful works of art as part of recovery therapy. The Somaly Mam Foundation carries a few items in their online store including these **beautiful scarves**. <http://www.somaly.org/store/>

Silk roses made by trafficking survivors - decorate your table! [http://www.whiteaisle.com/silk\\_flowers.htm](http://www.whiteaisle.com/silk_flowers.htm)

**Small, beautiful silk flower**  
Somaly Mam's organization in gorgeous cotton and silk Peter you heard about it here!



**pins** made by participants in Laos, as well as absolutely scarves from Laos. Please tell

<http://www.gotlaos.com/dokchsifl.html>

Table runners, placemats, napkins, and the traditional Cambodian cotton scarf, the Krama. Non-profit organization which employs former sex trade workers. Scroll down for these items.

<http://www.hands-of-hope.org/products.htm>

*Please tell Dianne where you heard about them.*

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## Recipes

**Sharing food:** Western tradition has courses - soups, salads, appetizers, entrees and desert. In contrast, **Cambodians serve all their food served at once, in the center of the table, for all to share.**

**Heat on the side:** While Cambodians enjoy much of their food spicy, they often do not prepare it that way. Rather, they prefer to have a small side of fish sauce and a few slices of fresh 'bird' chiles.

**Watch your chopsticks:** Leaving a pair of chopsticks sitting vertically in a rice bowl looks very much like the incense sticks that are burned for the dead. This is a powerful sign and is **not** appreciated anywhere in Asia.



*Photo by ireallylikefood.com*

**Toothpicks welcome:** While digging out those stubborn morsels from between your teeth, it is polite to use one hand to perform the extraction and the other hand to cover your mouth so others can't see you do it.<sup>i</sup>

**Cambodian (Khmer) Cuisine**

**Provided by Carolyn Mayers**

Cambodian cuisine is similar to Thai and Vietnamese. It is generally less spicy than Thai, and the previous Food for Thought issues covering Thailand and Vietnam will be helpful additions to the recipes given below. As always, I welcome your questions and comments. Just e-mail me at [crmayers@mac.com](mailto:crmayers@mac.com).

<http://www.diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/love146-2009%20food%20for%20thought.pdf>

<http://www.diningforwomen.org/sites/default/files/documents/children-of-vietnam-fft.pdf>

For much more detail on Cambodian ingredients, cuisine and even more recipes, including desserts, go to the following sites:

<http://www.recipes4us.co.uk/Cooking%20by%20Country/Cambodia%20Recipes%20Culinary%20History%20and%20Information.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambodian\\_cuisine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambodian_cuisine)

## **Cambodian Recipes**

### **Easy Amok Trei (Easy Spicy Curried Fish)**

Adapted from [http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Amok\\_Fish](http://recipes.wikia.com/wiki/Amok_Fish) and <http://www.recipes4us.co.uk/Cooking%20by%20Country/Cambodia%20Speciality%20Dish%20Amok.htm>

Amok is a very popular Cambodian dish. The traditional (and most popular) recipe uses fish. However, it would be fine to use chicken, lobster, crab – use your imagination. The other main ingredients are coconut milk and turmeric, which are essential to the dish. The traditional method of cooking the fish in a banana leaf packet looked pretty complicated, so it has been simplified here and adapted for serving over rice, or rice noodles if you like. Among our favorites of all the Cambodian dishes we tried this time around, it is creamy and delicious.

Serves 4 – 6

1 lb. firm white fish, such as halibut (or cooked chicken or cooked lobster meat)

1-14 oz. can coconut milk (I use light)

½ t turmeric

¼ t paprika

2T fresh ginger, peeled and minced

2 large cloves garlic, minced

1T fish sauce

2t Thai Kitchen or other brand Red Curry Paste (available at most supermarkets)

2t sugar

¼ t salt

2T vegetable oil  
1 small onion, halved and thinly sliced  
1t flour

Cut fish into 1-inch pieces. In medium saucepan, whisk together coconut milk, turmeric, paprika, ginger, garlic, curry paste, sugar and salt. Heat over medium heat until it just begins to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring frequently, about 15 minutes or until slightly thickened. Keep warm. Heat oil in medium skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring, for 5 – 6 minutes. Stir in flour and cook 1 more minute. Place fish in pan with onions and pour coconut milk mixture over all. Increase heat to high just long enough to get it bubbling, and reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, anywhere from 5 to 12 minutes, depending on the thickness of your fish pieces. Cook until fish is opaque. If you are adding cooked chicken or lobster, as opposed to raw fish, it should only take 4 - 5 minutes to heat through. Serve hot over hot jasmine rice, or over warm rice noodles. If it is a hot day, you can even let it cool down and serve it in lettuce leaf “cups” if you like.

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### **Sach Ko Char S’det Kur (Spicy Beef with Green Beans)**

Adapted from recipe at <http://www.khmerkromrecipes.com/>

This one is an easy and delicious combination of beef, green beans, fresh basil and chili peppers. Serve over hot rice.  
Serves 6

¾ lb. green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths  
3 large cloves garlic, minced  
1T fish sauce  
a good grind of black pepper  
2t fresh lime juice  
¾ lb beef sirloin or strip steak, thinly sliced  
3T vegetable oil  
1 large onion, sliced  
2T soy sauce  
1 scant T sugar  
1 jalapeno or other hot pepper, preferably red, seeded and minced  
Bunch (about a cup, loosely packed) fresh basil leaves, coarsely chopped

Bring a few cups of water to boil in a medium-large saucepan. Add green beans and cook 3 minutes or until just barely tender. Drain, place in ice water for a couple of minutes to stop the cooking, and drain again. Set aside. In a medium bowl, mix together the garlic, fish sauce, black pepper and lime juice. Add beef slices, stir to coat beef well, and allow to sit at room temperature for 15 – 30 minutes. Heat oil in a large skillet or wok over medium heat. Add onion and cook about 5 minutes. Turn heat to medium-high. Add beef and any remaining marinade

and cook, stirring constantly, for about 1 minute. Add beans and cook, stirring, for another minute or two. Add the soy sauce, sugar and hot chili pepper and stir well. Add basil, stir and serve hot, over rice.

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### **Nyuom Peng Pah (Tomato and Chicken Salad)**

Adapted from *The Elephant Walk Cookbook* by Longeteine De Montiero and Nasda Perry, Houghton Mifflin, 1998

This is a lovely, very light and refreshing salad. You can make it with chicken for a main course, or without as a side. I used meat from a cooked chicken, or you can poach a chicken breast as described below. If you make it without the chicken just increase the tomatoes and cucumbers to suit. Serve with the Tuk Trey, or Vegetarian Salad Dressing, the recipe for which follows this one.

Serves 4 – 6 generously

4c water

½ c sake, mirin or other rice wine

1 large boneless, skinless chicken breast, about ¾ lb.

1lb. fresh plum tomatoes, thinly sliced

½ hothouse or English cucumber, or regular cucumber (seeded), thinly sliced

½ c loosely packed fresh basil leaves (Thai basil if you can find it)

½ c loosely packed fresh mint leaves (optional)

½ c Vegetarian Salad Dressing, approximately

1 Jalapeno chili, seeded, minced, or Thai bird's Eye chilis if you can find them – HOT!

½ c roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped, plus a little extra for garnish

To poach the chicken breast, bring water and rice wine to a boil in a medium saucepan, add the chicken breast, return to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for about 10 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked and tender. Remove chicken and set aside to cool. When it is cool, shred it with your fingers. In a large bowl, combine the tomatoes, cucumber, basil and mint, if using. Add the chicken, if you are using it, the dressing, chilis and peanuts. Toss gently and serve immediately, garnished with a few basil/mint leaves and a sprinkling of peanuts.

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### **Tuk Trey (Salad Dressing, vegetarian version)**

Adapted from *The Elephant Walk Cookbook*, et al.

This dressing with no added oil is typical of how Cambodians dress their salads. If you are not a vegetarian, or wish the flavor to be a bit more complex, you may add a teaspoon or more of fish sauce, and a dash of lime juice. Maybe be used on whatever vegetables you have, not just tomatoes.

Make about ¾ cup

5½ T sugar  
scant ½ c water  
½ t salt  
3-4T rice vinegar (available at any supermarket)  
1½ t minced garlic  
2t or more mushroom soy sauce, available at oriental markets, or regular soy sauce  
optional fish sauce/lime juice

Place sugar, water and salt in small saucepan. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until sugar and salt dissolve. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Add vinegar, garlic and soy sauce. Stir and set aside for about ½ hour for flavors to develop. Any leftover dressing may be refrigerated for about 1 week.

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### **Bai Laen K'dom (Fried Rice with Crabmeat)**

Adapted from The Elephant Walk Cookbook, et al

Another winner!! We live in a part of Virginia where local blue crabs are in season, and this was a wonderful new use for it. A new favorite for us! EASY!

Serves 4

3T vegetable oil  
5 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped  
3 large eggs, lightly whisked  
¾ lb. fresh crabmeat  
2t fish sauce  
¼ t salt or more to taste  
3c cooked jasmine rice  
2 scallions, sliced

Heat the oil in a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and eggs, stirring as the eggs start to set so they will be in pieces. Add the crabmeat, fish sauce and salt and stir to mix well. Fold in the rice, breaking apart any big clumps. Stir in the scallions and continue cooking until the rice is heated through, about 3 – 4 minutes. Serves warm. Even makes a great breakfast if you can handle the garlic!

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### **Fragrant Eggplant**

Adapted from recipe at

<http://asiarecipe.com/camveg.html#egg>

This is the silkiest eggplant recipe!! You won't believe the smooth texture of the eggplant pieces and sauce. This was tied for first place among the recipes this month, along with the Amok Trei and the Crab Fried Rice Try it!!

1 large eggplant, or several smaller eggplants  
3T sugar  
¼ c hot water  
¼ c rice vinegar  
4T soy sauce  
3T vegetable oil  
1t crushed dried red pepper  
3T ginger, minced  
4 scallions, sliced, white and green parts kept in separate bowls  
2t cornstarch

Cut eggplant into small cubes, ½ to 1-inch in size. In a small bowl, place the hot water and sugar and stir until sugar is dissolved. Add rice vinegar and soy sauce and stir to combine. Set aside. Heat oil in large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add dried red pepper, ginger and WHITE part only of scallions and stir for one minute. Add the eggplant pieces and cook, stirring, for about 8 minutes or until eggplant is almost soft. Add the soy sauce mixture and cook another 3 minutes or so, until sauce is reduced about half way. Whisk together the cornstarch and 2T cold water in a small bowl. Add to eggplant mixture, stir well, and cook another minute or two, adding additional water if the sauce seems too thick. Add most of the green part of scallions and stir in well. Serve hot as a vegetable side dish or over rice as a vegetarian entrée. Garnish with remaining sliced scallion greens.

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### **Poat Dot (“Grilled” Corn)**

Adapted from The Elephant Walk Cookbook, et al.

WE LOVE CORN! If you don't want to go to the trouble of making the Thai Corn Fritters from the first link above, (they are SO good!), then try this very simple recipe. Cook the corn any way you like. My favorite way is to microwave it, no more than 4 at a time, in the husk on high for about 4 minutes. Move it around if you don't have a rotating thing in yours, and give it 4 more minutes for a total of 8 minutes. It will be HOT!!! Take it out and let it sit for 5 – 10 minutes. When you peel it all the silks come off SO easily you won't believe it! You could even cook some frozen corn off the cob and mix it with the sauce. YUM. Serves about 4.



4 ears fresh corn  
2T vegetable oil  
1 scallion, thinly sliced  
1T water  
1t Thai or other Asian fish sauce (available at most supermarkets)  
1T sugar  
1/4t salt

Cook the corn your favorite way. Place all remaining ingredients in a small saucepan. Heat over medium-high heat and sauté the scallions until they wilt, stirring well to dissolve the sugar. Reduce heat slightly and cook a bit longer to thicken slightly. Brush sauce over hot corn and enjoy!

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### **Chrouk Chamros (Mixed Vegetable Pickle)**

Adapted from *The Elephant Walk Cookbook*, et al.

Really more like a cross between a salad and a “pickle”, this is versatile side dish that could accommodate just about any vegetables you have on hand. String beans would be a nice addition. Fermented vegetables are common throughout Southeast Asia and are very good for your digestion. **MAKE SURE TO ALLOW TIME FOR THIS TO SIT OVERNIGHT BEFORE SERVING!**  
Serves 6

2 ¼ c water  
3T sugar  
3T rice vinegar  
2t salt  
½ small head of cabbage, cut into approx. 1-inch pieces  
½ lb. cucumbers, unpeeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch cubes  
½ lb. carrots scrubbed and cut on the diagonal into 1/8-inch slices  
4 or more large cloves of garlic, thinly sliced  
2T fresh ginger, peeled and julienned

To make brine, bring water to a boil in a small saucepan. Add the sugar and salt and stir well to dissolve. Remove from heat and stir in the vinegar. Set aside. Mix the vegetables together with the garlic and ginger. Pack tightly into a very large, or a couple of smaller clean mason jars. Pour the brine over the vegetables, mashing them down well so they are covered with the liquid. Place top(s) on the jar(s), not too tightly, and place jars in a warm spot to ferment overnight, or for about 8 hours. The pickles will keep, refrigerated, for up to 2 weeks.

**Khmer cuisine is well suited for a vegetarian diet.** Curries and soups predominate Khmer culture, using ingredients as common as coconut milk and as unique as preserved lemon.

Cambodians use a complex curry paste called kroeung, which is similar to Thai curry paste, but with the addition of a number of exotic dried spices.<sup>ii</sup>

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**Sources:**

beautyfromashes.org  
unicef.org  
humantrafficking.org  
ungift.org  
wikipedia.org  
Somaly Man Foundation

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<sup>i</sup> From Lonely Planet: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/cambodia/travel-tips-and-articles/74933>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.vegetarianrecipesandcooking.com/cambodian-vegetarian-recipes.php>

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