

Celebrate the Year of the Rooster with The Wing!



### KHAO NOM KOK—LAO COCONUT CAKES

This is a favorite dish for Jintana's family. These sweet coconut cakes are a delicious treat that are sold during the Lao New Year at Temple Festivals. The Lao pancake pan and mold is important to create the special shape but you could use a Dutch pancake "poffertjes" pan instead.

2/3 cup	Rice flour
2 tbsp	Sticky rice flour
1/4 cup	Sugar
1 1/2 cups	Coconut cream
2 thinly sliced	Green onions tops (discard the white bottoms)
1/4 cup	Water
1/2 teaspoon	Salt

1. In a bowl, mix the rice flour, sticky rice flour, sugar, coconut cream, green onions, water and salt until smooth.
2. Place the pan on the fire, allowing it to thoroughly heat up. Or heat up the Dutch pancake pan on the stove. The pan needs to be hot enough or else the cakes will stick.
3. Grease each round with vegetable oil.
4. Pour the batter into each round. Some people use a teapot or a plastic water bottle to pour the batter. It makes it much easier!
5. Cook for 4-5 minutes. Check to see if the outsides are browned by gently pulling the sides away from the pan with an oiled spoon or small spatula.
6. Once the outsides are golden brown, gently lift the cake and flip it on top of another. Enjoy!

## Journey with Newspapers in Education and Wing Luke Museum to learn how different Asian and Pacific Islander Americans celebrate the New Year.

One of the most important holidays for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans is the New Year. Learn about the **Pii Mai Lao**, Lao New Year, through the eyes of Jintana Lityoung, a second generation Lao American whose parents came to the U.S. in 1985.

When she was growing up in the Rainier Beach neighborhood of Seattle, Lao New Year was an important time for her. Every year, her family comes back together to prepare for New Year and to honor traditions with the Lao community.

### LAO NEW YEAR TRADITIONS

"**Sa bai dee Pii Mai**" means "Hello, happy New Year" in Lao. You will hear the cheerful greeting exchanged between family members and friends during the three day Lao New Year celebration from April 13 through 16.

Here in Seattle, Jintana's family celebrates **Pii Mai Lao** on the weekend that closest to April 16. The Friday is the symbolic last day of the year and the start of three days filled with prayers, food and fun. After moving the family altar to be showcased in her parents' living room, her mother prepares perfumed water made from flower petals and sweet smelling oils. The fragrant water washes away the bad luck from the last year and starts each family member with a clean slate for the New Year.

On Saturday, her family goes to a Lao Buddhist temple. The day is dedicated to honoring elders and young people, who ceremonially rinse the hands of those older than them with perfumed water.

It is also a time of fun and feasting---where you might even get soaked! There are large water fights at Jintana's temple, where water gun battles are an exciting way to ring in the next year. "It's a big party day. At these festivals there is a ton of food---with family booths that sell trinkets, clothing and street foods," Jintana recalls.

Jintana's favorite dish sold at the temple is Lao Coconut Cakes. The little round pancakes remind her of her grandmother, "It's pretty special to me because my grandmother actually made those in Laos and sold them as well on the street---she passed her recipe on to my mom."



Jintana's family altar decorated and ready for the Lao New Year. Photo Courtesy of Jintana.

Sunday is the symbolic first day to the New Year and begins with Jintana's parents giving food offerings to the Buddhist monks at the temple. After they return, her family sits down for a delicious feast together. Jintana highlights one of her favorites, saying, "One dish that always has to be made during Lao New Year is **Kapoon**. **Kapoon** is a pretty popular Lao dish made with coconut, curry and eaten with vermicelli noodles. I learned from my dad that back when he was in Laos, **kapoon** had to be made completely from scratch. Families all got together to make vermicelli noodles."

"There are not a lot of opportunities to celebrate Lao culture in general; to go to the temples, or be around the larger Lao community here. [New Year] is one time of year that we have to do it, the one time of the year that brings us back," reflects Jintana.

This article is geared for grades K-5. The Teacher's Guide includes extension plans for these articles along with lesson plans.



Four-year-old Jintana in *sinh*, a traditional Lao skirt, carrying an offering bowl for Lao New Year. Photo Courtesy of Jintana

**LUNAR NEW YEAR  
OPENING CELEBRATION**  
Wing Luke Museum  
8th Ave S. and S. King St.  
[wingluke.org/2017newyear](http://wingluke.org/2017newyear)

**Saturday, Jan. 28**  
11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Featuring a Lion Dance (11 a.m.) and family-friendly activities including story-time, stuffed animal petting zoo, face painting, and kids' scavenger hunt with prizes! **Children and students (with ID) are free. The event is sponsored by The Vietnamese-American Bar Association of Washington.**

**SEATTLE CHINATOWN – INTERNATIONAL  
DISTRICT ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL**  
Hing Hay Park  
Maynard Ave S. and S. King St.  
[cidbia.org/events](http://cidbia.org/events)

**Sunday, Jan. 29**  
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Learn more about The Wing's current *New Years All Year Round* Exhibit featuring Hawaiian, Chinese American and Lao American New Year celebrations through an interactive tour for Pre-K through third grade. For more information, including other tour options for all ages, email [tours@wingluke.org](mailto:tours@wingluke.org).