



Age: 51

Marital Status: Single

Qualifications: B. Commerce, B. Science Food Nutrition, Graduate Kushi Institute Europe

Occupation: Vegan Chef, Restaurateur, Holistic Nutritionist, Zen Meditation Teacher

Hobbies: Pottery and Chinese calligraphy

June Ka Lim wears many hats in the health-related field – vegan chef, holistic nutritionist and Zen meditation teacher. She is among the rare breed of chefs who specializes in vegan cooking. June trained as a vegan chef at the Institute of Awakening, Seattle, US and Natural Gourmet Cookery School, New York as well as completed a food and beverage training course in Kobe, Japan. And this chef is extraordinary in that she knows what to cook and how to cook to propagate the health value of various foods. She has topped her credentials by learning and teaching the principles of Macrobiotic Diet, which has a wide following in US, Europe, Japan and many other countries.

June became a vegan about 12 years ago. "I was not feeling well, with gastric problems, indigestion and constipation," she recalls. So she studied and researched on ways to heal herself. "I felt light and good," she notes after removing meat from her diet and her health problems soon disappeared. That made her decide to be a full time vegan. June explains that vegans do not eat meat and dairy products. She also does not subscribe to the mock meats made from gluten, common in Chinese vegetarian dishes.

June teaches macrobiotic cooking once a month in Petaling Jaya. She tried to restrict her class to 20

participants. But due to good response, she had to expand to a class of 50. "It shows that many people are health conscious and want to know how food affects health," she enthuses. Her cooking classes are unique in that she incorporates face reading and physical Do-in exercises so that participants know their basic body constitution and how to improve their wellbeing. June imparts her knowledge on the energy and nutrient value of foods and how to cook and present them.

Between Tuesday and Sunday, June is busy at her restaurant, Woods Eco-cuisine, located in Damansara Utama. Started 10 years ago, the restaurant was a pioneer in serving vegan cum organic cuisine. After graduating from the Kushi Institute, June changed the menu and cooking style in the restaurant following macrobiotic principles and presentation in 1996.

June's interest in organic food started when she became an importer and wholesaler of organic products in 1988. She remembers there were only 2 organic farms and 2 organic shops. Now, she reckons there are at least 30 organic farms and 80 organic shops. Despite the developments, June thinks that Malaysia is still in the 'infant' stage compared to the West which has a 50-60 year lead. "It is growing at 20% a year in the US," she claims and therefore sees potential in Malaysia as well.

June plays her part in helping the organic food movement as a director of Organic Alliance since 2000. It is a non-profit organization of 20 organic retailers and processors who are working with the Ministry of Agriculture to come out with formal standards and certifications for various stages from farming, processing, packaging to retailing.

Besides food, June is a firm believer that the holistic approach to health also incorporates physical exercise and mental health. She advocates exercises such as swimming, qi gong, dia ji, yoga and brisk walking. June practices Zen meditation to reduce stress and is a meditation teacher for beginners at Dharma Drum Mountain Malaysia, a Malaysian chapter of the international Zen Buddhism group. According to her, meditation helps to make creative and happy cooks. "It is difficult to cook when your muscles are tense. You need to reduce stress, calm your nervous system and have clarity of mind" she explains.

Do-in Exercises

Do-in exercises are recommended for everyone.

The exercises are actually self massage and designed to work on the body's energy meridians to improve, maintain and develop overall well-being and health. They help open up any blockages that you may be experiencing in your body so that you feel more invigorated and energized.