

# Sampan Newspaper



## The Only Bilingual Chinese-English Newspaper in New England

Edward Sokoloff 'Boston's Chinatown Restaurant Montage 2018' on display at China Trade Center

[2019/04/05](#)

Chinese restaurants have been a vital part of Boston's Chinatown since its earliest days. From the 1870s through the 1930s, Chinese restaurants in Chinatown primarily catered towards Chinese workers who congregated in the neighborhood on their free Sundays to socialize. Chinese restaurants outside of Chinatown catered towards non-Chinese by offering exotic but palatable Chinese-American dishes such as chop suey, chow mein, and egg foo young, accompanied by all-American fare like roast beef and bread with butter.

This division between authentic Chinese food for Chinese customers and Americanized fare for American customers started to break down in the 1930s, when Chinese restaurateurs began opening restaurants in Chinatown that served a primarily non-Chinese clientele. Adventurous theater-goers from the nearby Theater District and Jewish garment manufacturers who worked near Chinatown were among the first groups of non-Chinese to regularly patronize Chinatown's restaurants. Restaurants like Ruby Foo's Den became landmarks in

Boston's culinary landscape, and by the 1950s, Chinatown was home to establishments such as Bob Lee's Lantern House, the Cathay House, and the Good Earth.

In the 1960s, Chinatown saw a surge of population growth due to the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Newly arrived immigrants came from a variety of Chinese regions and brought their specific cuisines to Chinatown. Today, Chinatown's restaurants offer a diverse range of Chinese food, as well as cuisine from other Asian countries. Chinatown's many restaurants continue to draw diners of all ethnicities to visit the neighborhood.

*Ed Sokoloff began creating collages of Boston's restaurants in the early 2000s, turning his hobby for photography into a way to celebrate Boston's heritage through art. In addition to making a montage of Boston's Chinatown restaurants, Sokoloff's montages include restaurants from Greater Boston, the North End, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket. Additionally, non-restaurant montages include American flags, musical instruments, Charles River boathouses, Massachusetts's performing art theaters, Boston-area Catholic churches, and iconic American companies and products.*