

The Women of Alzheimer's Series – Joyce Chen



In 1990 the Boston Globe reporter Jack Thomas wrote a about a son dealing with his famous mother's decent into Alzheimer's. **Stephen Chen's mother sat in her Oriental pajamas as she stared at the TV and was unresponsive to questions about her well-being.**

Joyce Chen had fled Communist China with her husband in 1949. By 1958 she had set up her first restaurant in Cambridge Mass and **introduced America to the flavor of Mandarin cuisine.** She continued to popularize Mandarin cooking by teaching Chinese cooking techniques at the Adult Education Center in Boston and Cambridge. With the success of her restaurant and local notoriety, **she privately printed the first edition of "The Joyce Chen Cookbook"** in 1964. The cookbook had originally rejected by a publisher because it contained color photographs of her dishes. Chen pre-sold 6,000 copies from her restaurant before the print edition was off the press.

Joyce Chen went on to open two more restaurants, have the first Asian televised cooking show with PBS from 1966-1968, and successfully launch a line of specialty foods and cooking utensils (still available today).

Joyce Chen died in 1994 at age 76 with Alzheimer's. She was **posthumously inducted in the prestigious James Beard Foundation Hall of Fame.**

Today, The Joyce Chen Cookbook remains a classic and best seller, and people still rave about her **"Peking ravioli"** (also know as "potstickers").

Sources: JOYCE CHEN, ALZHEIMER'S AND A SON'S LOVE, Boston Globe Sept 13, 1990; Wikipedia – Joyce Chen; New York Times Obituaries August 26, 1994 – Joyce Chen, 76, U.S. Popularizer Of Mandarin Cuisine

