

THE CULINARY BACKGROUND OF MALAY HERITAGE FOOD IN MALAYSIA : THE INFLUENCE IN FOOD RECIPES

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ABSTRACT

Heritage food is one of the valuable assets that need to be preserved and passed down from generation to generation. In addition to being inherited, this food can also be commercialized and popularized to the tourists. Therefore, the knowledge of how heritage food is formed in terms of history, recipes, methods, tips and others need to be understood and practiced so that this heritage becomes immortal. One of the main foods in Malaysia is Malay food which is famous for its variety of choices in terms of color, taste, and texture. Basically, the food canvas of Malay heritage in Malaysia is influenced by various cultures including Arab, Indian, Chinese, Siamese, Javanese, Bugis, Minangkabau, and others. The influence of this culture can be seen in terms of cooking equipment, cooking methods, and the choice of ingredients such as herbs and spices. Moreover, the surrounding natural resources are used by the local people to develop various recipes. This natural resource is then planted around the dwelling for culinary purposes and it becomes a part of the landscape. Therefore, this paper will discuss the background of Malay heritage food that focuses on the formation of Malay heritage food recipes. This study uses a qualitative research method by referring to several literature references that are selected and related to the purpose of the study. The reported findings are expected to contribute to the study of Malay heritage food culture in Malaysia.

Key words: *surrounding nature, Malay landscape, Malay heritage food, cultural influence.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

The majority of the population in Malaysia consists of Malay descendants, and the rest are Chinese, Indian, Baba and Nyonya, and several ethnic tribes in Sabah and Sarawak. The Malays in Malaysia are Muslim and speak the Malay language and practice Malay culture and tradition. This can be seen from the way of eating that is practiced until now. Although the heritage and traditions of the Malays in Malaysia are heavily influenced by various cultures such as Arab, Indian, Chinese, Siamese, Javanese, Bugis, Minangkabau, and others, the food culture of the Malays in Malaysia still has its own uniqueness and special features. Every state in Malaysia has its own Malay cuisine that

has many similarities and differences. This makes Malaysia a rich country with a variety of food options starting from snacks, main meals, side dishes and even sweets. The wealth of flora and fauna can also distinguish Malay food in Malaysia compared to similar countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and Brunei. This makes Malaysia a unique country for tourists and for experiencing the diversity of Malaysian Malay heritage food.

B. METHOD

The research method chosen for this paper uses qualitative research to collect data. The data is collected through library references including various reference sources such as books, magazines, journal articles, newspapers and documents related to the title. The search for information is also followed up through the findings of past studies to complete this score. By using various sources, the initial information can be supported with other data. The information used is suitable for the purpose of the study only.

Background of Malay Cuisine in Malaysia

Rice is the staple food of the Malay neighborhood in Malaysia. It is usually served with a variety of side dishes (Raji, Karim, Ishak, & Arshad, 2017). For some Malays, rice is also eaten with dipping sauces such as sambal belacan, sambal tempoyak, sambal kelapa, budu, or cencalok to add flavor to the meal. The side dishes served are not only famous for their variety of flavors, but also for their level of spiciness and the usage of spices and herbs. The spices and herbs that are used in the dish have an important role in giving a unique taste to the cuisine. Commonly used spices and herbs can be categorized into dry ingredients and wet ingredients. The use of coconut milk is also very synonymous as one of the main ingredients in Malay cuisine. In addition, in traditional Malay cuisine, protein sources such as fish are usually mixed with turmeric powder and salt and fried. This is in line with Ainuddin (2013) who stated that the characteristics of Malay cuisine are a lot of use of spices and herbs, coconut milk, the taste of food is mostly spicy, the meat is cooked in thick goulash and the fish is fried using turmeric powder.

Until today, the Malay neighborhood still produces and is still fond of village cuisine that uses traditional recipes. Today's Malay recipes are believed to be prepared using ingredients that can be easily found in the living area. About 40 to 50 years ago, the average Malay neighborhood lived in villages and lived as farmers (Din & Yusoh, 2019). This statement is also supported by a study by Yoshino (2010) which stated that most of the Malay neighborhood in Malaysia came from villages before migrating to the city to seek occupation.

On those days, vegetable sources were mostly grown in the backyard and also collected in the forest. Among the vegetable sources that can be grown in the home area and collected in the forest are such as nail shoots, petai, pegaga, selum leaves, cashew shoots, yams, and comb fungus.

The Malay neighborhood also raises chickens and ducks as a source of food and catches fish from rivers and streams. This simple lifestyle makes the Malay neighborhood more creative in developing various recipes so that food sources can last a long time. For example, seasonal sources of river fish are dried and pickled or better known as '*ikan kering*' and '*ikan pekasam*'. Other sources of protein such as beef and chicken meat are cooked until dry to be made into long-lasting filets or smoked. In addition, sweets such as halwa, dodol, and dry gelatin are also examples of processed foods so that they can be stored longer.

The Usage of Space around the Malay House

The layout of the traditional Malay neighborhood's landscape space and house is indeed unique and is influenced by the environment and the way of life from the Malay neighborhood itself (Harun & Ibrahim, 2011). According to Ahmad, Bakar and Ibrahim (2006), each layout of landscape space in traditional Malay neighborhood homes has its own function. Referring to Hussain, Mohd Yunos, Ismail, Mohd Ariffin and Ismail (2020), the landscape layout of the traditional Malay neighborhood house can be categorized into three main components which are the front room, the side room, and the back room. Each landscape space is decorated and planted with various types of plants according to their function and use of the host. Among the main functions are for the purpose of food sources, ingredients for cooking, medicines, fences, and shade (Ismail & Ariffin, 2015). However, in the old belief of the traditional Malay neighborhood, the back room is the room closest to the household (wife to the host) because it functions as a multi-purpose space for women either for the purpose of resting, cooking, or carrying out social activities such as gathering, weaving and so on (Nasir & Teh, 1994). This statement is supported by Sahabuddin (2016), the back room of the traditional Malay neighborhood is a room close to the kitchen, and is more focused on its use for the kitchen function.

The back room is usually planted with plants that will be used for cooking purposes, such as lemongrass, pandan, turmeric, kesum, curry, basil, and yams in addition to being embroidered with plants that are elements of orchard plants such as fruit trees (Ahmad, Bakar, & Ibrahim, 2006). In addition to that, the culinary art and cuisine of the traditional Malay neighborhood uses a lot of herbs and spices in their cooking, whether for side dishes or cakes (Kassim, 2018). Therefore, the backyard of the traditional Malay neighborhood is important for the household because many are found with multi-purpose plants for daily use (Hussein, Mohamed, & Mohd Shariff, 2008). In the cosmology of the traditional Malay neighborhood, they greatly utilize the functions of the environment as tools, cooking ingredients and medicinal resources (Baharum, 2019). Therefore, every type of plant that has a variety of functions and uses will be planted around

the back of the house so that it is more easily available and used especially for cooking (Ahmad, Bakar, & Ibrahim, 2006; Hussain, Mohd Yunos, Ismail, Mohd Ariffin, & Ismail, 2020). Therefore, it has become a culture of the Malay neighborhood to plant multi-purpose plants in the back room to facilitate access to cooking ingredients (Isin & Mamat, 1990). Picture 1 shows a picture of the back room of a traditional Malay neighborhood. The layout of the landscape and home space of the traditional Malay neighborhood shows harmony with the environment that is the relationship between nature and humans.



Picture 1 : Depicting the backyard's atmosphere of a traditional Malay neighborhood
Source : Singgora (2018))

4.0 Basic Materials

The usage of the landscape around the houses of the Malay neighborhood is clearly utilized for the preservation of food and cooking resources. Therefore, the diet of the Malay neighborhood mostly revolves around the usage of ingredients based on agricultural products (Deraman, 1994). Besides plant sources, there are also sources of daily cooking ingredients that are harvested from the wild plants found around the house (Omar & Omar, 2018). The usage of a variety of ingredients can give bursts of sensory dimensions to the dishes produced such as bitter, sweet, spicy, pungent, salty, and fat. Aroma on dishes is also one of the important aspects of Malay cooking. The aroma of cooking can be produced from the use of ingredients with a strong fragrant

aroma such as pandan, coconut, banana leaves, herbs, and spices. In general, Malay cooking ingredients are categorized into two parts which are main ingredients and side ingredients.

4.1 Main Ingredients

The main ingredient in Malay cuisine is synonymous with rice (Musa, 2019). Rice is derived from the padi (paddy) plant and is harvested into beras (rice). Besides rice, glutinous rice is also one of the basic ingredients in Malay cuisine (Muhammad, Zahari, Ramly, & Ahmad, 2013). Other rice products such as rice flour, glutinous rice flour, and emping are used to make a variety of sweet and spicy sweets. In accordance with the recognition of rice as the staple food of Malaysians, Rosniyana, Khairunizah Hazila, Hashifah, and Shariffah Norin (2011) supported that statement by blaming it on the Malays. Not only is rice synonymous with the Malay neighborhood in Malaysia, but it has also been reported by Munawarah and Sabri (2016) that rice is also the staple food of the Malay neighborhood in Bengkalis, Sumatra, Indonesia.

Besides rice as the main food ingredient in Malay neighborhood meals, there are also other sources that are used as the main ingredient in cooking such as sweet potatoes, yams, and cassava. Cassava is considered a nostalgic food and also the main substitute for rice in the daily diet of the Malay neighborhood when it was difficult to get rice supplies during the Second World War (Musa, 2019; Nur, 2018). Therefore, it is very clear that starch-based ingredients are the main component in a plate of food for the Malay neighborhood.

4.1.1 Scented Ingredients

Malay cuisine is famous for its aromatic dishes that can arouse the appetite. This is due to the use of aromatic ingredients that are widely used in daily cooking. Pandan is one of the strong aromatic ingredients synonymous in Malay cuisine. It is a type of leafy plant that has a sweet aroma and is often used to produce traditional sweets. The sweet aroma of pandan can evoke the deliciousness of sweet fat in a dish. However, the use of pandan is not for the sweet foods only, but also used in other dishes such as flavoring the nasi lemak, yellow glutinous rice, and gelatin (Karim & Halim, 2014). The use of pandan in Malay food is not only as a cooking ingredient, but also as a food packaging material and natural dye.

Alongside pandan, the coconut tree is also synonymous with the civilization and cuisine of the Malay neighborhood. A coconut tree can provide various benefits to every part such as the tree, fruit and leaves. Coconuts for example, almost the whole part of the fruit can be used from the coir, shell, filling, to the water. Coconut coir has long been used by the Malay neighborhood as fuel for cooking due to its ability to withstand heat for a long time before turning into dust

(Osman, 1996). Coconut shells can be used as additional ingredients in coffee processing. As for the young coconut shell, it is used as food due to its soft texture. The coconut filling is the most important and special part. Coconut filling is usually grated and squeezed for the coconut milk. Fatty coconut milk has become the authentic flavor profile of Malay cuisine. Coconut filling is also widely used in grated form and used as an ingredient in serunding, kerabu, and also as a decoration for some Malay sweets (Kamaruzaman, Karim, Ishak, & Arshad, 2020). Coconut leaves are widely used to wrap food or become the cover for cooking food. The ketupat menu is one of the traditional foods of the Malay neighborhood, wrapped using young coconut leaves that are still soft and easy to weave. The aroma of coconut leaves also gives a unique characteristic to ketupat.

Apart from using coconut leaves as wrappers for Malay food, banana leaves are also used as wrappers in the Malay neighborhood. Bananas are among the trees that are easy to grow in tropical climates like in Malaysia and they are very synonymous with the landscape of Malay houses (Taha, 1999; Zakaria, 2019). Like coconut trees, the use of banana trees in the lives of the Malay neighborhood also contributes to various benefits (Zakaria, 2019). Bananas that have already been harvested, taste fatty and sweet and have a nice aroma, are often used as an ingredient in tambul dishes, such as banana cekodok, fried bananas, chips, and peknga (Taha, 1999). Young bananas can also be used as a vegetable in stewed dishes or made into kerabu. Banana leaves have long been used as food wrappers in Malay cuisine. The use of banana leaves as a wrapping material or food pad can be seen when cooking, serving, or storing the food (Zakaria, 2019). The aroma of banana leaves is synonymous with the food profile of the Malay neighborhood. Banana leaves are widely used in the packaging of Malay food such as nasi lemak, grilled glutinous rice, kuih koci, and kuih lopes and young banana leaves are used to wrap ringgi due to the fragrant aroma of banana leaves and their ability to prevent the food from spoiling quickly in storage (Osman, 1996).

The use of spice by the Malay neighborhood is widely found in the writings of scholars and old Malay manuscripts (Musa, 2019). Spices identified in Malay cuisine are such as "white cumin, anise, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, black pepper, white pepper, turmeric, mustard seeds, fenugreek" (Musa, 2019, p. 8). Malay food generally has a spicy and flavorful characteristics (Nor, et al., 2012) including the cakes (Kamaruzaman, Karim, Ishak, & Arshad, 2020), although usually cakes "are sweet" (Haroon, Safii, Aminudin, & Khalid, 2013, p. 19).

4.1.2 Lauk-pauk (Side dishes)

The main component of Malay cuisine is rice which is starchy. Starchy ingredients have a sweet taste, and they are always served with some kind of side dish as a complement (Hamzah,

Karim, Othman, & Hamzah, 2013). These side dishes consist of protein-based ingredients that can be obtained from livestock products, such as cattle, buffalo and chicken (Nordin, 1964), and also seafood products such as fish, squid, shrimp and other seafood (Andaya & Leonard, 1982). All side dishes that are synonymous in Malay cuisine are from animal sources. Thus, the issue of halal and cleanliness is very important in the preparation of side dishes. Halal means something that is allowed, gives good, does not harm. According to Mustaffa (2019), halal food is the edible material that is considered high quality and safe to eat. This is a demand for all Muslim Malay communities in Malaysia (Aziz & Pawi, 2016; Kamaruddin & Kamaruddin, 2009). Examples of animals that can be used as side dishes for the Malay neighborhood are such as cattle, buffalo, chicken, goat, fish, shrimp and squid. For animals such as cows, buffaloes, chickens, and goats, the process of slaughtering these animals must follow Islamic law as outlined by Islam (Aziz & Pawi, 2016; Mustaffa, 2019). Animals that can be eaten but not slaughtered according to Islamic law are haram and forbidden to be eaten by Muslims (Aziz & Pawi, 2016; Omar & Omar, 2018).

Side dishes of the Malay neighborhood have diversity in the preparation and form of the dish. It can be served dry, wet like smoked, also served with gravy like goulash (Saludin, 2019), and 'cooked with chili fat' (Nor, et al., 2012, p. 82). Among the side dishes made from livestock meat that are synonymous with the Malay neighborhood are such as goulash, rendang, curry, asam pedas and masak lemak (Musa, 2019; Nor, et al., 2012). The dishes are rich in the use of warm and fatty ingredients (Muhammad, Zahari, Shariff, & Abdullah, 2016).

4.1.3 Vegetables

Vegetables are also included in one of the components in Malay cuisine and meals. Vegetables can be obtained from various sources such as owned crops, cascading plants around the house, and also those that are purchased at fresh markets or grocery stores. The variety of vegetables that are counted as the ingredients in Malay cuisine includes the leaves, fruits, roots, and tree trunks. There are also types of vegetables that are called side dishes that are usually enjoyed raw, steamed, or blanched before serving (Jalaluddin, 2019; Nor, et al., 2012). Usually, these dishes consist of 'shoots, leaves, stems, roots, seeds, fruits, tubers or plant flowers' which are in the range of sweet and bitter taste (Jalaluddin, 2019, p. 59). For the Malay neighborhood, bitter vegetables are believed to be good for health (Jalaluddin, 2019).

4.2 Bahan Sampingan Lain

Bahan sampingan lain is the non-main ingredient that is used in small quantities in a Malay cuisine. The main purpose of side ingredients in Malay cuisine is to process or improve the dish in terms of presentation such as the texture and color. In the gastro culture of the Malay neighborhood, the function of side ingredients is to complement the taste, and to improve the texture and color. Although the side ingredients in Malay cuisine are not used in large quantities, they still help in shaping the profile of a Malay cuisine.

4.2.1 Complementary Flavor

Complementary flavors play a role in balancing the overall flavor in Malay cuisine. Malay food has a variety of flavors with the use of complementary flavors such as sugar, tamarind or tamarind gelugor, salt, and belacan. The use of granulated sugar gives a sweet taste in the cooking of the Malay neighborhood, especially in the production of traditional sweets. Apart from granulated sugar, there are also other sugars used in Malay cuisine such as gula melaka and gula kabung. In general, gula melaka and gula kabung are the same sugar but have different names. The name melaka sugar is recorded in history following the largest and most active sugar industry in the state of Melaka, while kabung sugar is given in conjunction with the local name of a tree called kabung tree. This kabung tree produces sap in its fronds. The sap is taken and cooked to make brown sugar (Ishak, et al., 2013).

Asam jawa and asam gelugor are also often used as flavor complementaries to add sourness to a Malay dish. Usually, tamarind and tamarind gelugor are used interchangeably. According to Rahman, Karim, Ishak, and Arshad (2018), the use of tamarind can increase the spice and aroma of Malay cuisine. In addition to tamarind and tamarind gelugor, belacan is also used as a flavor supplement even though it is not used in large quantities. Belacan can stimulate the appetite for certain dishes in the Malay neighborhood. Perry (2017) and Yoshino (2010) stated that belacan is one of the ingredients that gives a character to a Malay food. Sambal mixed with belacan is an example of a complementary dish that uses belacan as a complementary ingredient in addition to chili, onion, lime juice and salt. In some states in Malaysia, belacan is appointed as one of the mandatory ingredients in Malay cuisine. Som, Nordin, and Ghazali (2020) and the National Heritage Department (2018) also list sambal belacan as a popular intangible heritage food in Malaysia. This shows how important belacan is in Malay cuisine.

4.2.2 Texture Improvement and Food Coloring

Betel nut is one of the elements in the betel nut eating tradition in Malaysia in addition to betel nut, hard fruit, and cloves. Beetroot is also often used in Malay cuisine as an ingredient to improve the texture of cakes such as in the production of Melaka fruit cakes. Kapur sirih can help thicken the glutinous flour mixture that wraps the melaka sugar flakes inside. Besides, betel nut is also used to get a crunchy texture on vegetables, for example in pajeri cooking. The vegetables that have been cut will be soaked for a while in water mixed with lime to maintain the crunchy texture of the vegetables.

In addition to ingredients that improve texture in cooking, a variety of colors is also synonymous in Malay cuisine. Dyes such as red, yellow, and green are widely used in Malay cuisine. For spicy dishes, red and yellow become the basic colors as a result of the use of chili and also turmeric. Besides giving a spicy and flavorful taste, these two ingredients are able to beautify the cooking and increase the appetite. For sweet dishes such as traditional pastries, yellow color can also be obtained from chicken eggs. In addition to chicken eggs, the use of duck eggs is more synonymous with the Malay neighborhood's kitchen. The comparison of duck eggs and chicken eggs can be seen based on the level of yellow color description in traditional sweets. The color green is usually used in sweet foods such as traditional Malay cakes. In addition to increasing the aroma of cooking, pandan also works to increase the color of cooking. There are two types of pandan species used as dyes, which are common pandan and serani pandan. Although botanically pandan serani has nothing in common with common pandan, pandan serani was more used by earlier people to get a bright green color. The function of these two types of pandan is to increase the aroma and give color in some Malay dishes. These two types of pandan have also been used as houseplants since ancient times (Salleh, Rashid, & Sakip, 2016).

5.0 Cooking Methods and Equipment

The types of cooking in the Malay neighborhood results from the variety of methods, techniques, and ways of cooking. Mok (2016) and Musa (2019) listed the common cooking methods amongst the Malay neighborhood such as pais, salai, pindang, bakar, grill and rebus. Musa (2019, p. 9) however concludes that the method of "braising" and "menggulai" are more synonymous with the Malay neighborhood. Therefore, most of the Malay cuisine created by the previous Malay neighborhood commonly uses this method.

Despite stir-frying, there are also other methods of preparing food or cooking ingredients practiced by the Malay neighborhood such as pickling, drying, and fermenting. The pickling

method is done by using acidic substances, such as vinegar or salt. There is also a pickling method using sugar, or better known as halwa. This method of pickling is intended to extend the shelf life of an ingredient (Haruminori, Angelia, & Purwaningtyas, 2017) and it can also increase the palatability of a food. Examples of cooking ingredients that are usually pickled by the Malay neighborhood are salted eggs, tapai plut, tapai ubi, tempoyak, and young papaya halwa. The method of drying food is often practiced on seafood such as fish, shrimp, and squid. Dew (1891) once reported that dried fish and dried shrimp have been Malay traditional food since long ago. This method is done by drying the food in the sunlight for several days until the material is dry.

Cooking equipment for the Malay neighborhood has changed a lot when compared from the ancient times to now. Earlier technology was apparently limited to tools such as grinding stones, stone mortars, wooden pestles, and clay pots. The use of manual machines such as grinding stones and stone mortars are often used traditionally to prepare ingredients before they are ready to be cooked. Othman and Ramli (2010) stated that grinding stones and mortars are used to produce flour from glutinous rice to make kuih dangai. Usually, the traditional method is a method that needs to use more energy and takes quite a long time compared to the modern method (Ahmad, 2019; Sharif, Nor, Zahari, & Jeinie, 2017) however, the softness and fat taste of kuih dangai is more noticeable if glutinous rice flour is used. traditionally prepared.

6.0 Malay Heritage Food in the Lands of Malaysia

Malay heritage food in Malaysia which was inherited since immemorial time from previous people is a treasure that is very valuable for the current generation. The variety of heritage foods that can be enjoyed to this day is the result of heritage passed down from one generation to the next. Until today, various Malay heritage foods such as leman, ketupat, rendang, nasi minyak, nasi lemak, nasi hujan panas, laksa, mi rebus, and soto can still be enjoyed. In addition, Malay heritage desserts such as buah melaka, lompat tikam, dodol, wajik, and sago gula melaka can still be found to this day.

The influence of the neighboring countries in Malay cuisine can be seen from the use of spices, the usage of herbs, adapted cooking methods, and the way of serving. Nevertheless, the culinary preparations produced by previous people by using existing ingredients around the house, forest, river and sea have made Malay food in Malaysia have its own differences and special features.

Like in the state of Malacca for example, the popular Malay heritage cuisine is spicy asam pedas. Basic ingredients such as onion, ginger, ground chili, tamarind, turmeric powder, belacan, kesum leaves, kantan flowers, water and salt are used to produce spicy tamarind sauce while the

main ingredients for this dish can be various types of sea fish, tetel meat or chicken . Asam pedas is also popular in the state of Johor but it is different in terms of cooking method and taste compared to asam pedas in Malacca. There is a study that states that spicy sour cuisine can also be found in Indonesia, especially in the Padang area of Sumatra, which is known as 'asam padeh' (Jais, 2016). In addition, the same study also stated that the use of dried chilies in Malay cuisine began in Melaka in the 15th century brought by Arab traders. Dried chili originally did not exist in the Malay islands and the source of the spicy flavor in Malay cuisine comes from black pepper, ginger and nutmeg.

Negeri Sembilan is a state in Malaysia that is famous for its Malay heritage cuisine based on cooking lemak chili rice. This daily cuisine is synonymous with a high level of spiciness where rice chili, coconut milk and belacan are the main ingredients. Masak lemak chili rice is believed to have been brought in by the Minangkabau people from West Sumatra Indonesia who migrated to Malaysia (Din & Yusoh, 2019). In Negeri Sembilan this food is varied by using smoked meat, smoked catfish, and smoked duck as raw materials. In addition, vegetables such as nail sprouts and various types of mushrooms are also used as the main ingredients for cooking lemak chili rice. Today, masak lemak chili padi can be found and enjoyed at Malay neighborhood weddings all over the country and also easily found in restaurants that sell Malay dishes.

East coast areas in Malaysia such as the states of Kelantan, Terengganu, and Pahang also have their own unique Malay heritage cuisine. For example, cuisine in the states of Kelantan and Terengganu is heavily influenced by its closest neighbor, Thailand. This influence can be seen from the use of various types of herbs and side dishes in Malay heritage cuisine in Kelantan such as kerabu rice dishes, laksa, and laksam. The use of glutinous rice to make confectionery and sweets is also an influence from Thai cuisine. As for the state of Terengganu, the dishes and cuisine are more or less the same as the state of Kelantan, but have their own processing and taste. Traditional Malay cuisine in Terengganu is based on sea fish, especially cod fish. The menu of nasi dagang gulai cod fish and nasi lemak sambal cod fish are among the popular daily dishes in the state of Terengganu. In addition, keropok lekor is also a popular snack in Terengganu made from fresh fish mixed with sago flour (Zainal, Zali, & Kassim, 2010). Parang fish, tamban fish and selangor fish are among the types of fish used to make lekor crackers. Lekor crackers are usually good to eat either boiled or fried. The state of Pahang is famous for its culinary dishes based on river fish cooked with tempoyak (Abdullah, Ismail, Zamzuri, Aziz, & Muhamad, 2020). Tempoyak catfish goulash is one of the popular Malay heritage dishes in the state of Pahang in addition to sambal

hitam, nasi kebuli, catfish pais, and comb fungus. While the dessert known as Puding Diraja is a special menu of the Pahang neighborhood. The Royal Pudding menu is made from sweet fat bananas, egg yolks, sugar, pandan leaves, and cashews. Royal Pudding is usually eaten with a pudding sauce made from liquid milk. This sweet dish was one of the menus at Istana Pahang before it was commercialized.

In addition to the state of Pahang, tempoyak goulash is also a Malay heritage dish that is famous in one of the states in Malaysia, which is the state of Perak. However, the method of preparation is quite different with its own processing method. In addition, a dish that is often served during Aidilfitri and Aidiladha in Perak is rendang tok (Rahman, 2010). This rendang tok dish is beef cooked with spices such as cinnamon bark, star anise, cloves, cumin, chili powder, turmeric powder, coconut milk, crackers and coconut slices. The use of coconut slices and the long cooking time make rendang tok different from the rendang in other states. There are many Malay heritage foods of Patani descent in Lenggong District that are unique and quite different from other districts in Perak. Among the heritage dishes found in Lenggong District are kebebe, belotak, lemuni rice, senia fish, belotak fish, loma fish egg omelette, mahogany goulash and baby bee porridge. In addition, Lenggong District is also famous for its main production product which is pickled fish. This sour fish is made using river fish that are abundant in this area.

In the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia, the state of Kedah is famous for its Malay heritage food, banana stem goulash, especially among the village neighborhood in Baling. This synonymous menu is served during feasts by making banana pulp, beef or lamb bones as the main ingredients and cooked with special spices. This goulash is usually cooked using a cauldron during a feast and there are also a few people there who call it goulash goulash. The activity of preparing feast meals in a cooperative manner is synonymous with the Malay neighborhood in the past. The state of Kedah is a state known for its nickname of the rice granary. It is also famous for a variety of dishes such as pulut kavoc (gluten cooked with coconut sap), kuih qasidah (wheat flour, ghee, water, sugar, and shallot), kuih bunga pudak (glutinous flour, water, colored dry grated coconut, sugar and salt), pekanga (coconut flatbread), apom lengang (wheat flour, rice flour, coconut milk, sugar, water and eggs), and kuih dangai (gluten flour, grated coconut, salt, and sugar). Apart from Kedah, the state of Perlis which is also located in the north of Peninsular Malaysia has its own culinary assets although not much different than the state of Kedah. Perlis is known as the main producer of sweet mangoes in Malaysia. In addition to being eaten raw, sweet mangoes are popular served with glutinous rice and coconut milk. As for the glutinous rice dish, in addition to being served with fragrant mango and coconut milk, it is also served with dried fish and grated coconut

known as dry fish glutinous rice. Dried fish paste is a daily dish in the morning for the people of Perlis. Ringgi (rice cakes) is also a famous dish in the state of Perlis which is based on glutinous rice eaten with grated coconut. The process of making ringgi is from glutinous rice that is still green, roasted and pounded using a stem mortar or indik (National Department of Culture and Arts, 2021). Around the 70s until the 90s, the preparation of ringgi was an annual ceremony or festival for the Perlis neighborhood, but this festival ceremony is being abandoned.

Malay food in Selangor is heavily influenced by Javanese and Banjar people from Indonesia who have migrated to Malaysia for a long time. Pecal, tempeh, ambeng rice, sambal taun, wadai kipeng, Cambodian bahulu, bugis mandi cake, chicken rice ingkung, soto, and satay (Meen, 2020; Department of Culture and the National Arts, 2021) are among the foods that originate from Indonesia. However, many of these dishes have been prepared according to the tastes of the Selangor neighborhood based on the available materials and equipment. There are also some foods that still retain ingredients and traditional cooking methods as in their country of origin. The food culture and tradition brought from the other side of the country further colors the canvas of Malay food heritage in Malaysia. This concept of kinship between Malaysia and Indonesia must be well preserved so that these heritages continue to be carefully maintained so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.

Although there are differences and similarities in Malay food in every state in Malaysia, basically the ingredients and equipment used to cook a food are more or less the same. The migration of the Malay neighborhood from one state to another patterned the diversity of the Malay cuisine menu in Malaysia. The effect of the migration of the Malay neighborhood in the country is that the special menu of each state can be found anywhere around Malaysia without having to go to a specific state. Cultivating food is one way to ensure that this intangible heritage asset can continue to be enjoyed by future generations. In addition, Malay heritage food that is easily available throughout the country can bring nostalgic value and bring back a person's memories to enjoy food from their place of origin.

7.0 Conclusion

The civilization and culture of Malay heritage cuisine in Malaysia has started since ancient times. Starting with the landscape layout of traditional Malay houses which are synonymous with the culture of growing plants for kitchen use, various recipes can be seen that lead to the variation of Malay heritage cuisine in Malaysia. With the variety of main ingredients, side ingredients, cooking methods and techniques, processed ingredients, taste, color and aroma have patterned the

canvas of Malay heritage food in Malaysia. The cultural differences in each state that have influences from foreign or neighboring countries also give a unique twist to the variety of Malay heritage cuisine and its diversity should be celebrated. Cultivating Malay heritage food is an important asset to maintain the attractiveness and uniqueness of Malaysia. The uniqueness of Malay heritage food in Malaysia should not only be shared, tasted, and enjoyed with the new generation but can also become a cultural heritage attraction for foreign tourists. Therefore, it is hoped that this wakashah can be used as a reference source in ensuring the sustainability of Malay heritage cuisine in Malaysia.

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