

PHILADELPHIA

Winter 2008

DINING OUT

the great restaurants of philadelphia

what's the **strangest** dish
you've ever made?



Joe Zhou
Susanna Foo

That would have to be braised sea cucumber. The popular Chinese name for sea cucumber is *haishen*, which means, roughly, ginseng of the sea. It's not a vegetable, but a marine animal that is soft and cylindrical like a cucumber. First the internal organs are removed, and dirt and sand are washed out of the cavity. Then it's boiled in salty water and air-dried. Later, it's softened in warm water and boiled again.

I've stewed them with ribs, stir fried them in black pepper sauce, and boiled them in chicken stocks. Bland by itself, sea cucumber has the ability to absorb and accentuate the flavors of the ingredients it's cooked with.



Chinese Firecracker Cocktail

from **Susanna Foo**

Mix 1-1/2 ounces of **Leblon Cachaca** (liquor made in Brazil, from pure sugarcane), 1/2 ounce **fresh lime juice** and 1/4 ounce **pomegranate nectar**. Pour into a martini glass rimmed with **spicy pepper mix**.