

# Char Kway Teow

(炒粿條)

a musical composition inspired by a Chinese  
Malaysian noodle dish

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# Sedap Cycle

- A large-scale composition based on the 6 potential meals of the day in Malaysia:
- Sedap: Malay for “tasty/delicious”
- Breakfast
- Afternoon Tea
- Morning Tea
- Dinner
- Lunch
- Supper

# Sedap Cycle

- Breakfast - Nasi Lemak (Malay) (British/Malay)
- Morning Tea (British/Malay)
- Lunch - Nasi Campur (Malay/Mixed)
- Afternoon Tea
- Dinner - Char Kway Teow (Chinese Malaysian)
- Supper - Roti Canai (Indian Malaysian)

# Char Kway Teow

(炒粿條)

- **Ingredients**

(source:

<http://www.malaysia.travel/en/es/experiences/a-taste-of-malaysia/char-kway-teow>)

- Flat rice noodles (kway teow)
- Stir fried over soy sauce, chill, prawns, pork (Chinese style only), bean sprouts, chives, and egg
- Optional: other vegetables, pork belly, sausage, fishcake



Char Kway Teow (Hokkein  
Penang style)

Penang, Malaysia

(photo by author)

# Char Kway Teow

(炒粿條)

- Origins
  - “Poor Man’s Food,” high calorie, cheap cost
  - “Penang-style” most famous
  - Farmers, fishermen, other labourers.
  - Adapted regionally and with variations (extra or removed ingredients)




Char Kway Teow (Malay style)  
UPSI Cafe  
(photo by author)

# Char Kway Teow

the composition

- **Structure**

- Theme: Min Nan Jin'ge song titled "Cui Zoh" (寻祖) or "Searching for Ancestors" 

- Movement falls under the category of a "fantasy"

- Divided into large parts:

- Part 1: Ethereal

- Part 2: Rhythmic (mixture of Hokkien, Chinese, Malaysian, Western, folk, classical, and popular influences and styles)

# Char Kway Teow

## the composition

- **Interpretation (applies to all movements of *Sedap Cycle*)**
- Autoethnographic
  - I am not Malaysian, but American living in Malaysia
  - Perception of all elements of Malaysian culture are influenced by my background, food and music
  - Music is not “Malaysian,” nor claim to represent the country or its people
  - One possible goal: serve as a model to use a musical structure that is Malaysian (or whatever country one is in) to create something traditionally reserved

# Char Kway Teow

## general structure of composition

	Part 1	Part 2			
		Main theme	“Gamelan blues”	Caribbean	Chaotic
Theme	Slow, changes with harmony	Closest to original	Contour retained, adapted to different harmonies		
Malaysian Influences	countermelody loosely inspired by Malaysian drumming patterns	Gamelan-inspired accompaniment		several ornament-inspired passages in countermelodies	
Other influences	Polytonal, pandiatonic	Partially 12-bar blues	Swing, full blues influence	Salsa, merengue	Free jazz, progressive jazz
Rhythm/Meter/Phrasing	Extended phrasing, quartal harmonies	Phrases of unchanged theme cross chord changes		5 bar harmonic phrasing	Shifting time signatures
Connections to the food	“Preparation”, uncertainty of outcome	Hokkien dish made in Malaysia: Hokkien song accompanied with Malaysia-inspired music	Personal (American) interaction with food	(Personal) Unexpected spiciness, reminds me of Caribbean food	Spiciness starts to be unbearable, rush to finish the dish.



