Insights: Perspectives

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2022 | Byron Chin

MAY 10, 2022



Q: To what Asian or Pacific Island country(s)/region are you connected?
A: Taiwan and Hong Kong

Q: When you think of Taiwan and Hong Kong, what feeling does it evoke?
A: When I think of Taiwan, I am reminded of gatherings with my mother's extended family, delicious and spicy food, and Taipei's incredible metro system and nature preserves. Hong Kong conjures the Cantonese dialect that I can understand, the Taishanese dialect that I absolutely can't, dim sum, gatherings with my father's extended family, and in recent years sadness over its regression into a repressive police state.

Q: What are some of Taiwan and Hong Kong cultural traditions? Which of any of these does your family celebrate?
A: Both the Taiwanese and Cantonese sides of my family celebrate major birthdays of the family elders, often convening the extended family for an hours-long dinner celebration that usually includes karaoke. Both sides (but especially the Cantonese side) also give red envelopes containing cash for Chinese (Lunar) New Year, and for many other occasions.

Q: What is Taiwan and Hong Kong known for?
A: Hong Kong is known for being an incredible island metropolis. When I finally visited for the first time, I was amazed to see skyscrapers being erected with bamboo scaffolding. Taiwan carries with it a long history of outside influence, and modern Taiwan is a unique blend of Japanese and Chinese culture.

Q: Is there a particular food dish that reminds you of Taiwan or Hong Kong?
A: For Hong Kong, char siu pork buns and an endless selection of dim sum dishes. My favorite dishes from the Taiwanese side of my family aren't actually Taiwanese at all, but a mix of Japanese and Chinese dishes much like Taiwan itself. One of my personal favorites is matsukaze yaki, a Japanese savory chicken loaf typically served for the new year.

Q: What major holiday is celebrated in Taiwan and Hong Kong?
A: As a first-generation American the only holiday that carried over for my family is celebrating Chinese New Year. Otherwise, my extended family usually celebrated traditional Western holidays, but the food wasn't quite what most American households had. Growing up, I always found the absence of turkey and stuffing at Cantonese Thanksgiving maddening.

Related People



Byron R. Chin

t 415.273.7597

bchin@ktslaw.com