CHINESE BOOST

Chinese cuisine Chinese vocabulary list

88 words with pinyin, 繁體 and meanings, 62 of them with an example sentence.
Every word here links to its entry on the site.

Parts 1 2 3 4

Chinese cuisine Chinese vocabulary list on the web
The same words as a CSV, for Anki or a spreadsheet
A free account, which keeps 简体 or 繁體, pinyin or 注音 and the rest of how you read Chinese on every device

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Elementary (HSK 1-3)

茶
chá tea / tea plant

> 能来点茶吗?
> Néng lái diǎn chá ma?
> Could you get me some tea?

包子
bāozi baozi / bao (steamed stuffed bun)

> 这个包子里有什么?
> Zhège bāozi lǐ yǒu shénme?
> What's inside this baozi?

饺子 餃子
jiǎozi dumpling / pot-sticker

> 我很想吃饺子。
> Wǒ hěn xiǎng chī jiǎozi.
> I feel like having some dumplings.

米饭 米飯
mǐfàn rice

> 我在吃米饭。
> Wǒ zài chī mǐfàn.
> I am eating rice.

面条 麵條
miàntiáo noodles

> 我吃面条。
> Wǒ chī miàntiáo.
> I eat noodles.

绿茶 綠茶
lǜchá green tea / (of a girl) seemingly innocent and charming but actually calculating and manipulative / a girl who has these qualities

> 你喝绿茶吗?
> Nǐ hē lǜchá ma?
> Do you drink green tea?

红茶 紅茶
hóngchá black tea

> 喝杯红茶吗?
> Hē bēi hóngchá ma?
> How about a cup of tea?

筷子
kuàizi chopsticks

> 筷子怎么用?
> Kuàizi zěnme yòng?
> How do I use chopsticks?

餐具
cānjù tableware / dinner service

勺子
sháozi spoon / ladle

> 把勺子给我。
> Bǎ sháozi gěi wǒ.
> Give me the spoon.

碗
wǎn bowl / cup

> 我们有几个碗?
> Wǒmen yǒu jǐ ge wǎn?
> How many bowls do we have?

盘子 盤子
pánzi plate / dish / tray

> 我需要盘子。
> Wǒ xūyào pánzi.
> I need a plate.

Intermediate (HSK 4-6)

中餐
zhōngcān Chinese meal / Chinese food / lunch

> 我们点了中餐。
> Wǒmen diǎn le zhōngcān.
> We've ordered Chinese food.

馒头 饅頭
mántou steamed bun

> 我给你吃个馒头。
> Wǒ gěi nǐ chī gè mántou.
> I'll give you a mantou to eat.

白酒
báijiǔ baijiu, a spirit usually distilled from sorghum / white wine (abbr. for 白葡萄酒[bai2 pu2 tao5 jiu3])

> 你喝过白酒没有？
> Nǐ hēguo báijiǔ méiyǒu?
> Have you had baijiu before?

中国菜 中國菜
zhōngguócài Chinese cuisine

烤鸭 烤鴨
kǎoyā roast duck

月饼 月餅
yuèbǐng mooncake (esp. for the Mid-Autumn Festival)

> 你喜欢吃甜的月饼还是咸的？
> Nǐ xǐhuan chī tián de yuèbǐng háishi xián de?
> Do you like sweet mooncakes or savory ones?

小吃
xiǎochī street food / snack

> 你想尝尝这儿的小吃吗？
> Nǐ xiǎng cháng cháng zhèr de xiǎochī ma?
> Would you like to try the snacks here?

茶叶 茶葉
cháyè tea / tea leaves

> 我们从印度进口茶叶。
> Wǒmen cóng Yìndù jìnkǒu cháyè.
> We import tea from India.

干杯 乾杯
gānbēi to drink a toast / Cheers! (proposing a toast) / Here's to you! / Bottoms up! / lit. dry cup

> 来，大家一起干杯！
> Lái, dàjiā yìqǐ gānbēi!
> Come on, everyone, cheers!

主食
zhǔshí staple food

> 我们日本人以米饭为主食。
> Wǒmen Rìběn rén yǐ mǐfàn wèi zhǔshí.
> We Japanese live on rice.

火锅 火鍋
huǒguō hotpot / a blocked shot / a block

> 你爱吃辣的火锅吗？
> Nǐ ài chī là de huǒguō ma?
> Do you like spicy hotpot?

菜系
càixì cuisine

> 中国有很多菜系，你最爱哪一个？
> Zhōngguó yǒu hěn duō càixì, nǐ zuì ài nǎ yí gè?
> China has many regional cuisines. Which one do you like best?

川菜
chuāncài Sichuan or Szechuan cuisine

粤菜 粵菜
yuècài Cantonese cuisine

特色
tèsè a characteristic / a distinctive feature or quality

> 这里的特色菜是什么？
> Zhèlǐ de tèsè cài shì shénme?
> What is the specialty food here?

品牌
pǐnpái brand / brand name

> 她只穿这个品牌的鞋。
> Tā zhǐ chuān zhège pǐnpái de xié.
> She only wears shoes from this brand.

乌龙茶 烏龍茶
wūlóngchá oolong tea

花茶
huāchá scented tea

> 你喝花茶还是绿茶？
> Nǐ hē huāchá háishi lǜchá?
> Would you like scented tea or green tea?

年夜饭 年夜飯
niányèfàn reunion dinner on Lunar New Year's Eve (Chinese New Year tradition)

> 今年的年夜饭在奶奶家吃。
> Jīnnián de niányèfàn zài nǎinai jiā chī.
> This year's reunion dinner will be at Grandma's house.

北京烤鸭 北京烤鴨
běijīngkǎoyā Peking Duck

点心 點心
diǎnxin light refreshments / pastry / dessert / dim sum (in Cantonese cooking)

> 点心是苹果。
> Diǎnxin shì píngguǒ.
> Apples were served as the dessert.

豆腐
dòufu tofu / bean curd

> 这是不是豆腐？
> Zhè shìbúshì dòufu?
> Is this tofu?

醉
zuì intoxicated

> 他非常醉了。
> Tā fēicháng zuìle.
> He's really drunk.

油条 油條
yóutiáo youtiao (deep-fried breadstick) / slick and sly person

> 早饭我想吃油条和豆浆。
> Zǎofàn wǒ xiǎng chī yóutiáo hé dòujiāng.
> For breakfast I'd like youtiao and soy milk.

粥
zhōu porridge / congee / gruel
yù used in 薁粥|荺粥[Xun1 yu4] / to bring up / to nurture / to sell

> 早上我喝了一碗粥。
> Zǎoshang wǒ hēle yì wǎn zhōu.
> I had a bowl of congee this morning.

汤圆 湯圓

tāngyuán boiled or deep-fried balls of glutinous rice flour, usually eaten during Lantern Festival

> 妈妈煮的汤圆又软又甜。
> Māma zhǔ de tāngyuán yòu ruǎn yòu tián.
> The glutinous rice balls Mom cooked are soft and sweet.

粽子

zòngzi glutinous rice and choice of filling wrapped in leaves and steamed or boiled

> 粽子刚煮好，小心烫！
> Zòngzi gāng zhǔ hǎo, xiǎoxīn tàng!
> The zongzi just finished cooking, so be careful, they're hot!

鲁菜 魯菜

lǔcài Shandong cuisine

> 我想吃鲁菜。
> Wǒ xiǎng chī Lǔcài.
> I'd like to eat some Shandong food.

苏菜 蘇菜

sūcài Jiangsu cuisine

湘菜

xiāngcài Hunan cuisine

浙菜

zhècài Zhejiang cuisine

> 浙菜很讲究新鲜，味道也不重。
> Zhècài hěn jiǎngjiu xīnxiān, wèidao yě bú zhòng.
> Zhejiang cuisine values freshness, and its flavors aren't heavy.

闽菜 閩菜

mǐncài Fujian cuisine

徽菜

huīcài Anhui cuisine

酸甜

suāntián sour and sweet

> 这道菜酸甜的，我很爱吃。
> Zhè dào cài suāntián de, wǒ hěn ài chī.
> This dish is sweet and sour, and I love it.

清淡

qīngdàn light (of food, not greasy or strongly flavored) / insipid / slack (sales)

> 今天想吃清淡的食物呢。
> Jīntiān xiǎng chī qīngdàn de shíwù ne.
> Today I want to eat something light.

地道

dìdao authentic / genuine / proper
dìdào tunnel / causeway

> 他讲一口地道的俄语。
> Tā jiǎng yìkǒu dìdao de Éyǔ.
> He speaks Russian perfectly.

宴席

yànxí banquet / feast

酱油 醬油

jiàngyóu soy sauce

> 混合米、蛋跟酱油。
> Hùnhé mǐ, dàn gēn jiàngyóu.
> Mix the rice and eggs with soy sauce.

凉菜 涼菜

liángcài cold dish

> 夏天天气热，我只想吃凉菜。
> Xiàtiān tiānqì rè, wǒ zhǐ xiǎng chī liángcài.
> It's hot in summer, and I only want to eat cold dishes.

Advanced (HSK 7-9)

敬酒

jìngjiǔ to toast / to propose a toast

> 新郎正在向客人敬酒。
> Xīnláng zhèngzài xiàng kèrén jìngjiǔ.
> The groom is toasting the guests.

素菜

sùcài vegetable dish

> 这家餐厅的素菜做得很好吃。
> Zhè jiā cāntīng de sùcài zuò de hěn hǎochī.
> The vegetarian dishes at this restaurant are very tasty.

八大菜系

bādàcàixì the eight major cuisines of China, namely 川魯粵蘇浙閩湘徽|川鲁粤苏浙闽湘徽[Chuan1 Lu3 Yue4 Su1 Zhe4 Min3 Xiang1 Hui1]

> 中国的八大菜系，你吃过几个？
> Zhōngguó de bādàcàixì, nǐ chīguo jǐ ge?
> How many of China's eight major cuisines have you tried?

风味 風味

fēngwèi distinctive flavor / distinctive style

> 你尝尝这道菜，风味很特别。
> Nǐ cháng cháng zhè dào cài, fēngwèi hěn tèbié.
> Try this dish, it has a very distinctive flavor.

老字号 老字號

lǎozìhào shop, firm, or brand of merchandise with a long-established reputation

> 北京有很多老字号饭馆。
> Běijīng yǒu hěn duō lǎozìhào fànguǎn.
> Beijing has many time-honored restaurants.

礼仪 禮儀

lǐyí etiquette / ceremony

> 她没有一点礼仪。
> Tā méiyǒu yìdiǎn lǐyí.
> She has no manners at all.

养生 養生

yǎngshēng to maintain good health / to raise a child or animal / curing (of concrete etc)

> 她喜欢早睡早起来养生。
> Tā xǐhuan zǎoshuìzǎoqǐ lái yǎngshēng.
> She likes to go to bed and get up early to keep healthy.

麻辣
málà hot and numbing

> 这道菜太麻辣了，我不吃。
> Zhè dào cài tài málà le, wǒ bùchī.
> This dish is too hot and numbing, so I won't eat it.

食疗 食療
shíliáo food therapy / treatment via food

茶艺 茶藝
cháyì the art of tea

黄酒 黃酒
huángjiǔ "yellow wine" (mulled rice wine, usually served warm)

> 红烧肉要放一点黄酒。
> Hóngshāoròu yào fàng yìdiǎn huángjiǔ.
> You need to add a little yellow rice wine to red-braised pork.

食补 食補
shíbǔ tonic food (food considered to be particularly healthful) / to eat such foods

药膳 藥膳
yàoshàn medicinal cuisine

满汉全席 滿漢全席
mǎnhànquánxí the Manchu Han imperial feast, a legendary banquet in the Qing dynasty / a sumptuous banquet

主菜
zhǔcài main course

茶馆 茶館
cháguǎn teahouse

佳肴 佳餚
jiāyáo fine food / delicacies / delicious food

> 宴会上佳肴很多，随便吃。
> Yànhuì shàng jiāyáo hěn duō, suíbiàn chī.
> There are plenty of delicacies at the banquet, so help yourself.

宴请 宴請
yànqǐng to entertain (for dinner) / to invite to dinner

凉拌 涼拌
liángbàn to dress cold food with sauce / there's not much you can do about it (wordplay using 拌[ban4] instead of its homophone 辦|办[ban4])

> 凉拌黄瓜里要加几滴香油。
> Liángbàn huángguā lǐ yào jiā jǐ dī xiāngyóu.
> You need to add a few drops of sesame oil to the cucumber salad.

沏
qī to brew (tea)
qiè to surge and strike (of waves)

> 她给我沏了茶。
> Tā gěi wǒ qīle chá.
> She made tea for me.

酿造 釀造
niàngzào to brew / to make (wine, vinegar, soybean paste etc) by fermentation

> 外婆每年都酿造米酒。
> Wàipó měinián dōu niàngzào mǐjiǔ.
> My grandmother makes rice wine every year.

涮
shuàn to cook by dipping finely sliced ingredients briefly in boiling water or soup (generally done at the dining table) / to rinse / to swish (in water) / to trick / to fool sb

> 锅开了，快把肉片涮一下吧。
> Guō kāile, kuài bǎ ròupiàn shuàn yíxià ba.
> The pot is boiling, so quickly swish the meat slices in.

花椒
huājiāo Sichuan pepper / Chinese prickly ash

丸子
wánzi pills / balls / meatballs

> 锅里的丸子熟了没有？
> Guō lǐ de wánzi shúle méiyǒu?
> Are the meatballs in the pot cooked yet?

米酒
mǐjiǔ rice wine

> 服务员，请再来一壶米酒。
> Fúwùyuán, qǐng zài lái yì hú mǐjiǔ.
> Waiter, could we have another pot of rice wine, please?

卤味 滷味
lǔwèi food prepared by stewing in soy sauce and spices

> 我想买点卤味当晚饭。
> Wǒ xiǎng mǎi diǎn lǔwèi dāng wǎnfàn.
> I want to buy some stewed deli meats for dinner.

Outside HSK

功夫茶
gōngfuchá very concentrated type of tea drunk in Chaozhou, Fujian and Taiwan

> 吃完潮州菜，再喝功夫茶。
> Chī wán Cháozhōu cài, zài hē gōngfuchá.
> After finishing the Chaozhou dishes, we'll have gongfu tea.

普洱茶
pǔ'ěrchá Pu'er tea, a type of black tea produced in the Pu'er region of southwestern Yunnan

龙井 龍井
lóngjǐng Longjing tea (abbr. for 龍井茶|龙井茶[long2 jing3 cha2])

> 龙井要用八十度的水泡。
> Lóngjǐng yào yòng bāshí dù de shuǐpào.
> Longjing should be brewed with water at eighty degrees.

茅台 茅臺
máotái maotai liquor 茅臺酒|茅台酒[mao2 tai2 jiu3] / Maotai town in Renhuai county, Guizhou

全聚德
quánjùdé Quanjude (famous Chinese restaurant)

> 来北京一定要去全聚德吗?
> Lái Běijīng yídìng yào qù Quánjùdé ma?
> Do you have to go to Quanjude when you come to Beijing?

东坡肉 東坡肉
dōngpōròu stir-fried pork, favorite of Northern Song writer Su Shi 蘇軾|苏轼, a.k.a. Su Dongpo 蘇東坡|苏东坡

> 东坡肉要慢慢炖才好吃。
> Dōngpōròu yào mànmàn dùn cái hǎochī.
> Dongpo pork has to be stewed slowly to taste good.

麻婆豆腐
mápódòufǔ mapo tofu / stir-fried beancurd in chili sauce

宫保鸡丁 宮保雞丁
gōngbǎojīdīng Kung Pao Chicken / spicy diced chicken

> 食堂今天有宫保鸡丁吗?
> Shítáng jīntiān yǒu gōngbǎojīdīng ma?
> Does the canteen have kung pao chicken today?

小笼包 小籠包
xiǎolóngbāo steamed dumpling

转盘 轉盤
zhuànpán turntable / rotary (traffic)

> 老式电话要转盘拨号。
> Lǎoshì diànhuà yào zhuànpán bōhào.
> Old-style phones need a rotary dial to place a call.

公筷
gōngkuài serving chopsticks