

Introduction of Confraria da Gastronomia Macaense (Macanese Gastronomic Brotherhood)

The Macanese Gastronomic Brotherhood (CGM), which was founded on January 9, 2007, as a non-profit association with Portuguese roots, under the patronage of the Association for the Promotion of Education of Macanese, and as defender of the highest values of Macanese identity, in particular its gastronomy, was recognised by the Macau SAR Government in 2012 with the title of Intangible Cultural Heritage and thereafter in 2013 as a Legal Person of Public Utility. The CGM has a current strength of 160 effective members, 5 extraordinary and 30 with merit.

In 2013, the Cultural Institute of Macau, through its Chairman, presented us with a formal invitation to submit by the end of 2014 the candidacy of Macanese cuisine for the national title of Intangible Cultural Heritage of China, having reiterated the full support of the Macau SAR Government for this initiative, particularly in terms of historical research that is inherently required. To this effect, the reputable Macau historian was invited, who immediately surrendered herself to this arduous task of investigating the historical process of the last 500 years, namely the Portuguese presence in the South China Sea and the adjacent cultural legacy.

In Europe, more specifically in Pécs-Hungary, in 2013, and after in Belgium in 2014 in the lovely ancient city of Liège the ties that bind us to the countries participating in the European Oenogastronomic Brotherhoods Council (CEUCO) were consolidated and strengthened, and for this purpose a delegation of CGM was present in these two Congresses held in this historical Hungarian town, which was about the "Hungarians in European cuisine and wine culture" and in Liège where chocolates, beer and the flavours of the European gastronomy were the topic. Macau, presented for tasting some typical dishes pertaining to its gastronomy, which was a great success. In this connection, the CGM has participated in all the Congresses and Grand Meetings since 2007 with tremendous success under the CEUCO motto:

"FRIENDSHIP, CONFRATERNITY and LOYALTY"

Of late, the CGM has been frequently requested to represent Macau abroad, given that we have been officially invited to participate in many activities undertaken by the Macau Government Tourist Office for the promotion of Macau. Henceforth, the CGM will be responsible for the promotion of Macanese cuisine in all promotional activities of the Macau Government.

One of the activities that greatly dignified us last year was held on December 4. It was with great pride and honour that CGM collaborated and organised a very special event - The Meeting of the Macanese Communities - "Macau 2013", where it is estimated that more than 1,200 people were present in the former kindergarten premises, coming from the four corners of the world, or more specifically the diaspora as well as local participants who signed up for this feast or "High Tea", which was very lively and added to another big success for CGM and for all its members and associates who gave their enormous contribution and selfless efforts.

The CGM has immense honour to announce that at the end of November 2014 and with the full support of the Macau SAR Government, presented the candidacy of Macanese food for Intangible Cultural Heritage of the People's Republic of China in Beijing. Subsequently, if all goes well, this will be followed up with the candidacy application for the World Intangible Cultural Heritage under the auspices of UNESCO, through proposal to be submitted by the Central Government of the People's Republic of China.

Let's all cross our fingers for this to happen, that the nomination of our secular fusion cuisine comes to pass, such that towards the end of 2017 or 2018.

Luis Machado

President of the CGM