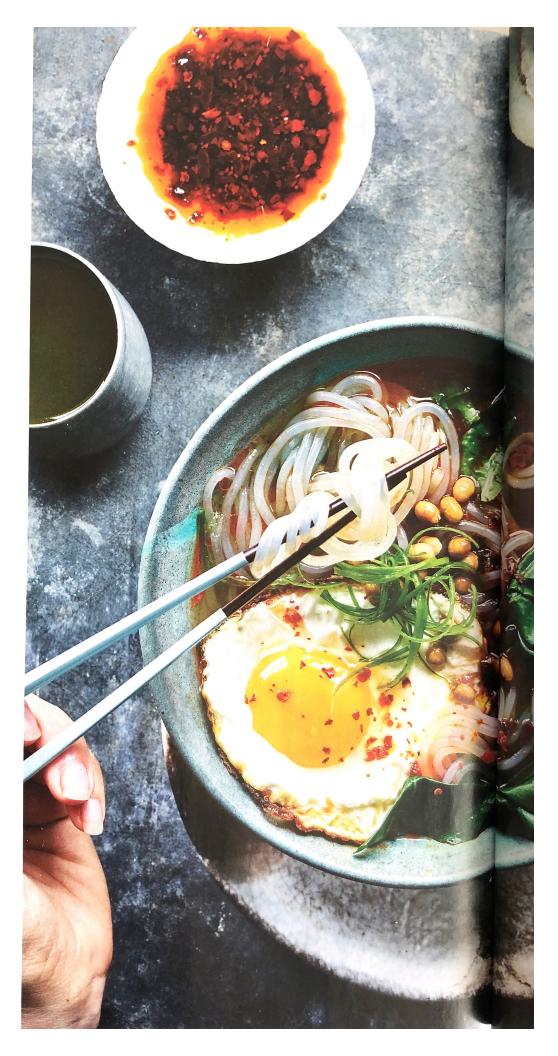
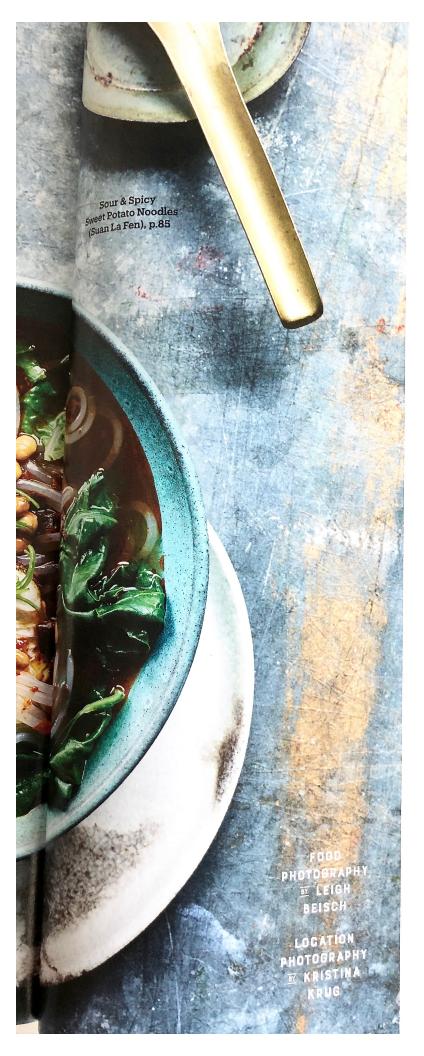


The spicy food of the Sichuan province of China ignites deep passions. This mother and daughter are living proof.

BY LOUISA SHAFIA







hen 11-year-old Fongchong Havighurst first arrived in Nashville from China, she had little use for Craig Havighurst and Taylor Holliday, the couple who had adopted her. She had gone directly

> family who gave her safe haven-if little affection-for five years, to the urban home of two Englishspeaking strangers. She was traumatized. "I was too young to understand the idea of adoption or going to live somewhere else," Fongchong speculates

from the rural foster

profile] I look upset."

Along with Fongchong's resistance to her new parents, she was just as negative about their food. "She wouldn't touch my chicken-fried steak," says Taylor, an Oklahoma native, "let alone a sandwich."

now. "In my picture [in her adoption

Fongchong wanted only Chinese food, but not just any Chinese food. It had to be red-hot Sichuan Chinese. Sichuan province is the region near Tibet where masterful dishes like fiery mapo tofu and cashew- and chile-spiked kung pao chicken originated. Sichuan peppercorns, tiny orbs of citrusy flavor