

SOME
LIKE IT

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

BY LOUISA SHAFIA





Sour & Spicy
Sweet Potato Noodles
(Suan La Fen), p.85

FOOD
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY LEIGH
BEISCH

LOCATION
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY KRISTINA
KRUG



When 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 from the rural foster family who gave her safe haven—if little affection—for five years, to the urban home of two English-speaking strangers. She was traumatized. “I was too young to understand the idea of adoption or going to live somewhere else,” Fongchong speculates now. “In my picture [in her adoption 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.”

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