

Cooking (solution)

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The given recipes for the dishes contain descriptions for some common ingredients, as well as some preparatory steps which appear across different recipes, and do not seem to make sense. The steps however, can be interpreted as different types of wordplay transformations, which are therefore applied upon the ingredients described. The table below summarizes the preparatory steps and their clued wordplay transformations:

Preparatory step	Clued wordplay transformation
Chop off	Beheadment / Delete first letter
Lightly toss	Reversal / Reverse order of letters
Decorate with the end	Duplicate last letter to insert as second letter
Top off with	Prefix letter
Add	Suffix letter
Debone	Delete middle letter/s
Fill this into	Insert into the middle of word
Trim off	Curtailment / Delete last letter
Slice and save the back	Split word in half and discard front half
Slice and save the front	Split word in half and discard back half
Blend well	Transposal / Anagram
Combine (this) with	Concatenation of another substring to this
Double boil	Duplicate word
Do it again	Repeat last transformation
Little/Pinch/Bit/Dash of	Take the initial letter

Applying the word transformations in the order of the preparatory steps will yield the name of its dish, which is a cuisine associated with one of the nationalities from the given flags. The table below summarizes the word transformations, result and associated nationality for each of the first 13 dishes, with the common ingredients highlighted in red:

Dish	Transformation steps	Answer	Flag
1	TOMATO -OMATO-MATO-OTAM-OMTAM-	SOMTAM	Thailand
2	DILL -LL/ PEAR -PELLAR-PELLA-	PAELLA	Spain
3	FISH -ISH-IS-ISIS-SISI-	SISIG	Philippines
4	ONION -NION-ION-OION/ CUCUMBER -CUCU-CU-OICUON-	GOICUON	Vietnam
5	MOCHI -KMOCHI-KIMOGHI-	KIMCHI	South Korea
6	SAGO -GO/ BREAD -READ-AD-GADO-	GADOGADO	Indonesia
7	SESAME -AME-EMA/ BASIL -ASIL-ASILEMA-ASILEMAK-	NASILEMAK	Malaysia
8	PIGEON -PION-PIO-PIOMOUSSE-PIOMOUSS-	MISOSOUP	Japan
9	TABASCO -TABSCO-	TACO	Mexico
10	AJINOMOTO -TAJINOMOTO-TAJIN-	TAJINE	Morocco
11	BAGUETTE -ETTE/ CARROT -CAR-RAC-RACL-	RACLETTE	Switzerland
12	CHIVE -CHIV-CV-CVQUINOA-	COQUAUVIN	France
13	PAPAYA -AYA-AYATOAST-	KAYATOAST	Singapore

Using the given index for each nationality to extract the corresponding letter (in blue above) from its associated cuisine in order of Dish 1-13 gives the clue phrase **MAIN COMPONENT**.

The recipe for Dish 14 uses the preceding 13 dishes as ingredients, and applying the word transformations in the order of the preparatory steps will yield the name of an Italian cuisine, the only nationality whose flag is unused (and which also has a given index of 0). The table below summarizes the word transformations and result for each step:

Step	Transformation steps
1	MISOSOUP-SOUP-OUP-OP-PO/NASILEMAK-NASILEMA-LEMA-LE/TACO-TA-NTA/ POLENTA
2	RACLETTE-RACL-RA-RBA-ERBA/Z-ZZ/GOICUON-OICUON-UON-ON-ONE/ ERBAZZONE
3	MISOSOUP-PUOSOSIM-PUOS-PUO-PO-POR/KIMCHI-CHI-CH/RACLETTE-ETTE-ETT- ETTA/ PORCHETTA
4	KAYATOAST-AYATOAST-OAST-ST-EST/RACLETTE-RACTTE-RATE-RAT/TACO-TO/ ESTRATTO
5	MISOSOUP-MISO-ISO-RISO/RACLETTE-ETTE-TT/GADOGADO-GADO-GO-O/ RISOTTO
6	MISOSOUP-SOUP-SO-SOSO/GOICUON-GOICUO-CUO-BCUO/SOSOBCUO- OSSOBUCO
7	TAJINE-INE-NE/TACO-CO-C/GOICUON-OICUON-OIC-CIO/ NECCIO
8	RACLETTE-RACL-RAC/TAJINE-INE-IN-ININ-AININ/RACAININ- ARANCINI
9	SOMTAM-TAM-TM-TIM-TIMB/PAELLA-ALLEAP-ALL-ALLO/ TIMBALLO
10	TACO-TA/SISIG-ISIG-ISI/COQAUVIN-COQVIN-COIN/R-RR/TAISICOINRR- ARROSTICINI
11	PEPERONATA

The last step of Dish 14 yields the name of the Italian cuisine **PEPERONATA**, and combining this with the earlier clue phrase **MAIN COMPONENT**, gives the answer for this puzzle **BELL PEPPER**.

Constructor's notes:

This was one of the few answers for this round which is a common phrase/object, so I wanted to make full use of that by having a last step which uses a clue phrase to derive this answer. Since this is a common ingredient, a cooking theme fits this puzzle perfectly. And I really wanted to incorporate different nationality cuisines into the puzzle, since they should be something that solvers would likely be able to identify without the need for additional research, given the multi-national cuisines available in Singapore and that many Singaporeans are also foodies and well-travelled. Another element which I wanted to include was an emphasis on the preparatory steps for cooking, since that is thematically more aligned with a cooking task, while recipes in cooking puzzles are usually more focused on the ingredients. This led to the idea of preparatory steps being references to wordplay, and analogously transforming the names of ingredients along the way to yield the final dish.