

PEOPLE

Circling the World on a Flying Platter: NTU Global Food Day

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Breaking Language Barriers Through Food: When people sample delicious food together, language no longer seems like a barrier to them. (Photo courtesy of interviewees)

“Hello, bonjour! Would you like to try some French crepes?” In the corner of a bustling classroom, Rosan from France warmly offers her griddle fresh crepes to her new friends. She had stayed up the previous night, cooking these golden, paper-thin pancakes to perfection. Rosan delicately smooths jam over the crepe then expertly rolls it. “Voilà! There you go!” she says brightly, handing over the treat. From the first bite, her friends feel they have been transported to the romantic streets of France!

Project Romulus: Breaking Down Barriers Through Food

This taste of crepes was just a sampling of the multicultural feast organized by Project Romulus, a student-led initiative that hosted the “Around the World Potluck Party.” Students, both local and international, brought dishes of their



Rosan’s Griddle Fresh Crepes: A Crowd Favorite: Rosan (far left) serves her homemade French crepes, a hit at the event. (Photo by Huang Yu-Chun)

home countries to share with others. The food table was covered with an array of global delights: French crepes, Indonesian spring rolls, New Zealand pies, and Taiwan's famous oyster omelet. "We hope that by hosting this sharing of different foods, we will bring people closer together!" said Andy, the team leader, who enthusiastically introduced the group's mission while recommending his favorite dish.

Project Romulus is the initiative of seven students in the Advanced Leadership Seminar. Andy explained that many international students face challenges trying to participate fully in campus life due to cultural differences. Through hosting activities like this potluck, the team hopes to foster warm connections between international and local students. "Just as Romulus in Roman mythology mediated conflicts between groups, we aim to eliminate discrimination and prejudice on campus," Andy shared.

The potluck party was the first event hosted by Project Romulus, but they only decided to host it after many brainstorming sessions. "We were concerned there would be a low turnout and even planned having small games as a backup," Andy admitted. However, the potluck turned out to be lively and well-attended, with students interacting freely and enjoying each other's company. When it came time for the event to end, everyone felt reluctant to leave, demonstrating that, with a feast of delicacies to sample together, people's cultural and language barriers quickly disappear.

Bringing Cultures Closer, One Dish at a Time

Haru, an exchange student from Japan, prepared a Japanese breakfast staple: natto. The dish's strong aroma attracted curious Taiwanese students willing to give it a try. Haru, meanwhile, found himself drawn to the glistening bowl of minced pork rice on the next table.

Another highlight was Angelica's Burmese salad, which she had brought from a shop in Huaxin Street. "It tastes exactly like what my grandma makes back home!" exclaimed Angelica, a Chinese-Burmese student. Deeply engaged with issues facing Taiwan's immigrant communities, she believes that such sharing of foods is an effective way to bridge cultures. Angelica hopes that holding events like these will help dispel stereotypes about Southeast Asia among Taiwanese students.

The evening concluded with a selection of traditional Taiwanese snacks, leaving everyone with full stomachs and warm memories. The Project Romulus team promised to plan more cultural exchange events. "We hope to create a platform where local and international students can connect and foster a more inclusive campus environment."



Project Romulus Team: The diverse Project Romulus team is united in their mission to eliminate campus prejudice. (Photo courtesy of interviewees)



Breakfast Options: New Zealand pie vs. Taiwanese minced pork rice—such tough options at breakfast time! (Photo by Huang Yu-Chun)



A Multicultural Evening of Laughter and Food: The potluck party concludes joyfully with a hearty mix of languages and laughter. (Photo courtesy of interviewees)