



AS IT IS

COVID or Not, Sales of Peking Duck Continues

May 19, 2022

Beijing recently placed a ban on eating inside restaurants to help control the spread of COVID-19. That means restaurants in the Chinese capital must now depend on carryout sales to survive.

One restaurant supervisor and his team of cooks have found a way to increase sales of their most popular food, Peking duck.

The **carving** of the duck and cutting of its skin at the table is part of the dining experience at Ziguangyuan Restaurant. Restaurant supervisor Zheng Po has worked to save that tradition. He has set up areas outside his restaurant where **customers** can watch their duck get carved before they take it home.

"Our Peking duck sales have even gone up," Zheng told Reuters. "Our sales of the ducks are even better than what they were before this round of COVID control measures."

Zheng's cooks begin work at 6 in the morning to meet the new demand for the Peking ducks. That is two and half hours earlier than the restaurant's usual opening time.

The birds are cooked until they are a shiny, golden-brown color. The first carryout customers arrive as early as 8 in the morning.

One customer, who identified herself as Zhao, said her main concern during the pandemic was getting food on the table. But she respected the effort to keep some of the old enjoyment alive.

"In normal times ... customers are not only coming to eat but also want to experience the service too," Zhao said.

Even before the May 1 ban on indoor dining, Beijing's **hospitality** industry had been severely affected by COVID-19. In April, the city's **catering** income decreased 25.33 percent from a year earlier.

"My biggest wish," Zheng said, "is that the pandemic can be over as soon as possible so dining in can **resume**."

I'm Jonathan Evans.

Thomas Suen and Ryan Woo reported this story for the Reuters news service. Jonathan Evans adapted it for Learning English.

Words in This Story

carve - v. to cut into pieces or slices

customers - n. people who buy from or use the services of a company, especially regularly

hospitality - n. the activity or business of providing services to guests in hotels, restaurants, bars, etc.

catering - n. the provision of food and drink at a social event or other gathering, typically as a professional service.

resume - v. to begin again