

Singapore HeritageFest 2009
“Arte (factually) Speaking” Story Writing Competition
2nd Prize Winner (Upper Primary Category)



Contest ID: 138
Name: Chan Suen Chi
Gender: Female
Age: 12-year-old
NRIC: SXXXX135F
Nationality: Permanent Resident
School: Bukit Timah Primary School

Artefact: Satay Stall
Museum: National Museum of Singapore

Satay Stall

As Ahmad was shuffling past a Kentucky Fried Chicken fast food restaurant, he heard shrieks of delight. Gazing in through the window, he saw a group of children eagerly snatching fried chicken wings and piling them high on their plate. As Ahmad stood looking, tears of nostalgia welled up in his eyes as he thought back of the times when he was still little.

When he was young, his parents often ordered *satay* from the *satay* stalls. Grilled chicken, beef or mutton, rice cakes, cucumbers, onions, together with a little pot filled to the brim with *satay* sauce. Ahmad would refuse to eat it no matter how much his parents tried to convince him to do so.

On Ahmad's sixth birthday, his parents decided to take him out for a treat. Ahmad was overjoyed. He skipped gaily along, clutching his parents' hands. At the nearby hawker centre, his parents ordered his favourite coconut drink. His parents left Ahmad to enjoy his beverage while they ordered some food. When the plate of mouth-watering *satay* was placed in front of him, his parents tucked in heartily. However, Ahmad flew into a rage, and snapped, "Why did you order *satay*? I hate *satay*!" He ranted and raved. However, his mother tried her best to pacify him. "Eat the *satay*, and I will buy you a new toy, okay?" Reluctantly, Ahmad gingerly picked up a stick of *satay* and put it in his mouth. Surprisingly, the *satay* was delicious and Ahmad could not resist picking up another. Soon, he had polished off the whole plate, leaving not a crumb. The taste of *satay* still lingered in his mouth.

Suddenly, Ahmad snapped back to reality as the restaurant owner tapped him on the shoulder and asked, "Sir, would you like to order anything?" "Oh, no thank you." Ahmad replied. He started to walk quickly to the little *satay* stall near a block of flats and purchased a box of *satay*. He already knew where his legs were taking him. Thirty years had passed and Ahmad was now forty. His parents had aged and were now sixty. As he rapped the door with his right fist of the three-room flat, an elderly lady answered the door. "Hi, Mum, surprise!" Ahmad cried out. His mother smiled and led Ahmad in where the family ate a hearty dinner of *satay*.

Now, it is usually sold in hawker centres but you can still see the stalls at The National Museum of Singapore in the Food Gallery. It is located in front of the Singapore Living Gallery, beside the balcony, behind the Singapore History Gallery.

(430 words)