



Learn Vietnamese home cooking at Citronella Café in Hoi An.

NOTICED

Class Act

Want to learn how to cook like a pro? Cookly is here to help. BY DIANA HUBBELL

"I'M REALLY A FOODIE and this all started when I wanted to book a class for myself while I was traveling," says Benjamin Ozsanay, cofounder and CEO of **Cookly** (*cookly.me*), a start-up hoping to change the way travelers seek out cooking classes. Although culinary schools are littered throughout Southeast Asia, booking usually requires a phone call, an email and a wait—hardly an efficient use of precious vacation time. He sat down with fellow traveler Etienne Marleau-Rancourt, now cofounder and COO, and the two began to hatch a plan. "We contacted five of the top schools with our idea. Within 24 hours, all of them wrote back with a positive reply," Ozsanay says. "We realized there was a gap to fill."

The resulting streamlined platform, launched late last year, makes it a breeze to find, compare and book cooking classes from more than 60 partner schools in Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia. So far, participants from 30 different countries and six continents have pounded up spice pastes at Bumbu Bali Cooking School, simmered pho at Hanoi Cooking Centre, and whipped up vegetarian Thai curries at

May Kaidee. In the future, the team hopes to offer more varied experiences such as wine tastings and food tours everywhere from Japan to Australia.

"By digitalizing the whole process, we're hoping to make these kinds of activities more accessible for everyone," Ozsanay says. So you can spend a little less time mincing words and more time mincing herbs. 🍴

Grain by Luke Nguyen Cooking Studio, Saigon.



T+L
BEST
BITES



TEA-LEAF SALAD

HOUSE OF MEMORIES, RANGOON

The first time I went to Burma, there was only one thing on my checklist: *lahpet thoke*, or fermented tea-leaf salad. I wasn't just curious to try this world-famous national delicacy that has garnered much love from San Francisco to Shanghai; I was *yearning* for it. More than a year had passed since I tried the savory snack in Shanghai, where I singlehandedly finished two shared plates of it. Its sweet-sour lightness pleased my Thai palate, while the deep-fried nuts kept me voraciously chomping. It was a delightful teaser, but the trip to Burma promised a more authentic introduction, and the **House of Memories** in Rangoon didn't disappoint. Here, soft whole tea leaves (as opposed to chopped cabbage in Shanghai) soaked up the zingy dressing and married beautifully with sweet fried shallots. Each bite was a juicy feast. An assortment of crispy broad beans, peanuts and split peas provided an addictive crunch and soon my plate was empty. But it is salad after all, so I had no qualms ordering up another plate, just for myself. *houseofmemoriesmyanmar.com*; lahpet thoke K2,500.

— MONSICHA HOONSUWAN