

MALA



The popular

MALA

menu

in Thailand



The thriving popularity of “**mala**”, a spicy and numbing seasoning originating from China, has inspired creativity among brands in Thailand. From sukiyaki hotpots to snacks and even pizza, eateries continue to serve inventive mala offerings to their customers. With the distinctive flavor profile of mala, combined with Thai people's palate for spice, and brands in Thailand keenly listening to “consumers' voices” in online communities and social media, it comes as no surprise that mala hotpots, in both traditional and conveyor-belt style, have emerged as the favored choices among mala enthusiasts.

dxt 360

All the data utilized for insights was collected using **DXT360**, a social listening platform by dataxet:infoquest. The data was gathered between August 31 and September 11, 2023.



Mentions

3,697

Engagements

315,561

2,691 Mentions
4,875 Engagements



455 Mentions
175,225 Engagements



281 Mentions
95,804 Engagements



270 Mentions
39,657 Engagements



Why did

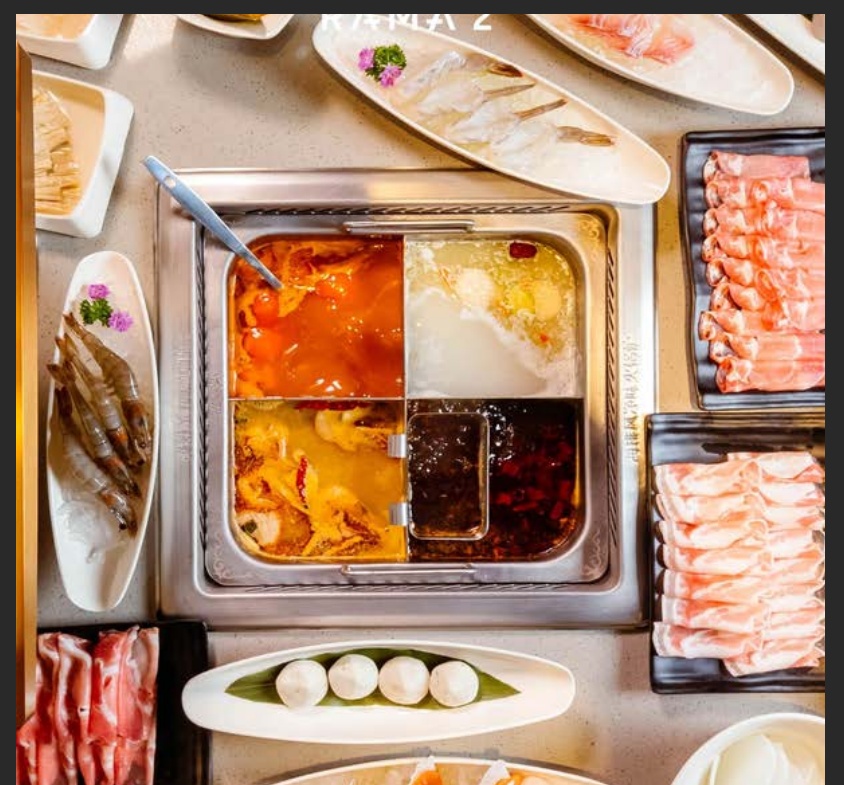
MALA

become so popular?

Over the past year, the trend of “mala shabu shabu hotpots,” or “conveyor-belt mala hotpots,” skyrocketed in popularity. This mala phenomenon is traced back to 2018 when “mala grilled skewers” took the town by storm, sparking the initial wave of the mala trend.

The buzz was later rekindled as “**Hai Di Lao**,” a famous mala hotpot chain from China, opened its branches in Thailand and received enthusiastic reception from its very first day. The arrival of Hai Di Lao has prompted the Thai restaurant market to introduce mala as a key ingredient in their menus, with many new mala hotpot restaurants joining the market.

Since then, conveyor-belt mala hotpot restaurants can be seen on every corner. The pioneer of this sensational trend is “**Suki Jinda**.” Apart from its conveyor-belt gimmick, the restaurant also offers an affordable individual hotpot setup with skewered ingredients ranging from 5 to 50 baht. Many are willing to queue up for hours to taste the experience.



Based on the data gathered on the **DXT360** platform regarding the topic of "mala", "mala shabu shabu" emerged as the most frequently mentioned term on social media. Trailing behind were "craving mala" and "mala hotpot". The findings suggest that "mala shabu shabu" and "mala hotpot" were the varieties of mala dishes that garnered the most interest among social media users.

When discussing popular dishes that immediately come to mind, shabu shabu hotpots, sukiyaki, and grilled skewers are undoubtedly part of the lineup. Paired with the term "mala," the data reveals that "mala shabu shabu" received the highest proportion of mentions followed by "mala sukiyaki", and "mala grilled skewers"



Mala Shabu Shabu

46%



Mala Sukiyaki

37%



Mala Grilled Skewers

17%

Is the Thai market oversaturated with **MALA** *restaurants?*

"Mala" has emerged as a significant trend in the restaurant industry. Data collected over the past 12 days, from August 31 to September 11, across platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter, reveals that during this period, there were mentions of 11 new mala hot pot restaurants in Bangkok alone, averaging nearly one mention per day.



Apart from conveyor-belt mala restaurants, which are on trend, many mala hot pot restaurants also provide an all-you-can-eat option, catering to a wide range of budgets. Data collected from 24 all-you-can-eat mala hot pot restaurants indicates that prices range from 159 baht to 599 baht, with an average price of 289 baht.

MALA Trend:

Short-term Fad or Spice Powerhouse?

It is still too early to know how long the mala consumption trend will remain popular among Thai consumers. Nevertheless, as of now, "mala hot pot" and "conveyor-belt mala" restaurants continue to be in vogue. Data collected through **DXT360** shows ongoing interest in mala among social media users, affirming its trendy status. This is further evidenced by numerous restaurants, including chains, introducing new menus and campaigns featuring mala as a key ingredient to capitalize on this social trend. These restaurants include:

The Pizza Company



The Pizza Company has unveiled a new pizza featuring mala as a topping, merging Italian and Chinese culinary influences

Lay's



Lay's has seized this opportunity by reintroducing Lay's mala BBQ, which was first introduced in 2020

Baanbanfood



Baanbanfood, a dessert restaurant, has innovatively incorporated the spicy and aromatic flavors of mala into a dessert, such as the mooncake

MK Restaurants



MK Restaurants has recently introduced two new mala-inspired menus include a mala soup and egg noodles served in mala soup



Mala continues to be a hot topic on social media due to its captivating taste, attracting the attention of many food enthusiasts. Numerous restaurants are embracing its distinctive flavor and incorporating it into a variety of dishes, including both Western cuisine and desserts. This adaptation creates a harmonious balance of flavors, blending mala's spicy and numbing sensation with the traditionally sweet taste found in many desserts and Western dishes.

In the future, we can anticipate mala being integrated into new dishes or innovative menus, further exploring its unique flavor profile. **Mala enthusiasts can look forward to discovering exciting culinary creations that incorporate the distinctive taste of mala, but only time will tell what delicious surprises lie ahead.**

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