

food & entertainment



Food, glorious food, comes alive in our special Gourmet Dining supplement, which features some of the truly amazing restaurants in Singapore and Malaysia. From stylish Asian cuisine, to flavourful Spanish food, our focus is going to make you drool! New chefs in some new Asian properties are also looking to stamp their marks on the palates and hearts of guests, while in Malaysia, one amazing woman with no culinary training has become the talk of the town and the skies. Go behind the scenes of a chef's daily life and discover how celebrated chef Sam Leong lives now he is out of the kitchen.



Neo Tradisi Opens at Mutiara Damansara

Chef Zabidi Ibrahim, Hospitality Asia Platinum Award Best Asian Cuisine Chef recently opened his very own restaurant at Mutiara Damansara called Neo Tradisi. The talented Malay cuisine chef who has had past experience in Malay fine dining expands his portfolio by venturing into the casual dining scene, attracting food lovers who enjoy simple and delicious traditional Malay cuisine. The restaurant is designed with a contemporary feel, decked in striking shades of red and black while framing the action kitchen area is an extensive spread of cartoon illustrations. Visit Neo Tradisi at 3-1 Jalan PJU7-7A, Mutiara Damansara, Petaling Jaya to savour the best of Malay comfort food. **ha**



Pork Emince in Erdinger Dunkel



Konig Ludwig Steak Salad

Cooking With Beer

WACS Global Master Chef Jochen Kern who is Director of the School of Culinary Arts at Berjaya University College of Hospitality was invited to do a 'cooking with beer' demonstration at Brussels Beer Cafe in Solaris Mont Kiara. The dishes were exclusively created for the Chinese New promotional menu which featured scrumptious Belgium cuisine cooked with premium beer. Luen Heng F&B Sdn Bhd who is the distributor for imported beers available at Brussels Beer Cafe was represented by their General Manager, Ricardo Loh at the event that saw the Master Chef whipping up specialty dishes. The first dish was a Konig Ludwig Steak Salad. Kern used sirloin steak for this and paired it with butter head lettuce, arugula, tomatoes and Portobello mushrooms. Next, he demonstrated how to make Pork Emince in Erdinger Dunkel. The pork meat was first seasoned with salt, pepper and paprika and then stir fried. Erdinger Dunkel was added into the pan to caramelize onions, and then cream, cornstarch and a little bit of mustard were added to thicken to sauce. **ha**

Sarong Meets Beijing

Sarong, the most sought-after Asian cuisine fine dining restaurant in Bali hosted a three-night culinary extravaganza on 24 to 26 February with the ingenious collaboration of guest chef Chairman Wang from Beijing and Sarong's very own chef Will Meyrick. Employed by Black Sesame Cooking School in Beijing, Chairman Wang's specialities are handmade noodles and dumplings, thus the three-day special menu featured the best of Pan Southeast Asian cuisine coupled with Beijing's tummy-warming cuisine. Dedicated to redefining cuisine culture, patrons at Sarong can expect to experience something exciting on the menu every two months by guest chefs who will present their dishes alongside Meyrick, who is best known for his inventive flair in Asian gastronomy. **ha**



Host Chef Charlie Brown



New Zealand Lamb paired with feta and apricots

Boutique Hotel Brings Local Flavour To The Table

Indulge your appetite for local flavour and international style at Hamurana Lodge – a quintessential experience of rustic New Zealand. Nestled in the rich cultural landscape of Rotorua, the Boutique Hotel boasts New Zealand's first and only organic lodge restaurant. Founded with the philosophy to tread carefully on the earth, Le Manoir restaurant offers a menu sourced entirely from local produce, including the Lodge's own organic vegetable and herb garden.

Host Chef Charlie Brown brings an inspirational menu to the table at Le Manoir, creating flavours synonymous with Aotearoa and the Bay of Plenty region. Brown's own cultural influences are highlighted through his use of native vegetables such as Te Maori and Huakororo potatoes – a truly diverse ethnic offering for restaurant guests. **ha**



Jack Yoss

Chef de Cuisine
W Retreat & Spa Bali-Seminyak,
Indonesia

Jack Yoss is appointed as Chef de Cuisine of Indonesia's first W property – W Retreat & Spa Bali-Seminyak. An accomplished global chef who has served alongside some of the biggest names in the culinary world, Yoss will take the helm of the retreat's Pan Asian concept restaurant, Starfish Bloo, where he will steer the creation and preparation of the menu and day-to-day operations.

Yoss has had an incredibly diverse and exciting culinary career, marked by experiences and fortuitous relationships

with some of the world's most renowned and beloved chefs. Yoss grew up in Las Vegas with a father who fostered a love of cuisine and cooking. He embarked on his career in Las Vegas, eventually landing a coveted job as a saucier at Wolfgang Puck's exclusive Chinois Restaurant in Caesar's Palace. Puck was an early fan of Yoss, and taught him about balancing flavors to create Chinois' signature delicious and delectable sauces. Yoss then moved on to San Francisco – the home of innovative upscale cuisine – where he made a name for himself at Puck's famed Postrio restaurant, working his way up from pastry cook to Chef de Cuisine.

Yoss first visited Bali in 2005 and was inspired by the people, the culture and, of course, the food. In creating the menus for Starfish Bloo and its service operations, he blends his affinity for the local culture with his love of Pan Asian cuisine. **ha**

Ken Liew Kum Seng

Dim Sum Chef
Sheraton Imperial Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Ever since he got his first job at the age of 18 at Merlin Hotel in Melaka, Ken Liew has been besotted with food. While he personifies happiness and is chatty amongst his friends, he makes no compromise whenever it comes to freshness of ingredients, especially seafood.

Liew has always been captivated by China's cultural lifestyle. The cuisine, the people and especially the wide open spaces, beautiful mountains and enrapturing waterfalls beckons him...and that is when he pulls out his beloved camera and turns into a shutterbug.

Asked if there were two special ingredients or herbs that he cannot live without, he reveals that he must have a kitchen well-stocked with fresh spring onions and parsley. His kids play a huge role in his life; he loves to spend time with them, watching them grow and learning from them at the same time. And if the kids are occupied, he turns to a good football match involving Manchester United or his favourite Asian Food Channel. **ha**



Leonardo Concezzi

Executive Chef
The St. Regis Bangkok, Thailand

The St. Regis Bangkok has named Leonardo Concezzi Executive Chef. As such, Chef Concezzi is tasked with menu design, food promotion and food decoration as well as food hygiene and food safety for all of the restaurants. He arrives at The St. Regis Bangkok after three years as Executive Chef at Fortevillage in Sardinia, Italy where he managed and oversaw all operations including 100 chefs cooking up to 4,500 food covers per day.

Prior to Fortevillage, Concezzi worked for top-rated luxury hotels around the globe, most notably the Four Seasons Resort Damascus, as Chef de Cuisine and Executive Sous Chef. At the Four Seasons Damascus, he held the Executive Sous Chef position in which he supported the Executive Chef in implementing new menus, ideas and concepts, as well as staff training and product research for the resort's three restaurants and three lounges.

ha

Sensational Senso



Clockwise from above : Risotto with saffron and goose liver; Executive Chef Yves Schmid; Pan-fried mozzarella wrapped in Parma ham; King tiger prawns with black venere rice timbale

Born in South Korea and raised in Geneva, Switzerland, Executive Chef Yves Schmid began his chef apprenticeship in the 1990s, and honed his skills in renowned establishments such as Domaine de Chateauxvieux, Hotel Richemond and L'Evidence in Geneva. Together with Senso Holdings, he opened Senso (Cras-Montana) at the Swiss ski resort in late 2009, and joined Senso Singapore the following year as Executive Chef.

Always seeking to surprise diners, Yves brings the menu to life through his culinary flair in both traditional and modern Italian cuisine. Hospitality Asia paid a visit to the newly refurbished Senso Ristorante & Bar where its new interiors fuse 21st century elegance and colonial charm. To tempt our palates, Schmid presented buffalo mozzarella wrapped in Parma ham. The mozzarella is enveloped with Parma ham, and then pan fried and served with homemade black olive tapenade and fresh greens. The visually stunning presentation of king tiger prawns is accompanied by Venere – black rice cooked in a bouillon on a sauce pan with extra virgin olive oil. The king prawns are seasoned and pan fried. Avocado

is then mashed with lemon juice and layered in a patty topped with the black rice. The scrumptious prawns are then placed on top of this green and black patty, and garnished with a mixed salad and Sicilian orange.

The Risotto Carnaroli features carnaroli rice infused with saffron for the colour and sweetness. Foie gras is pan-roasted and served with the risotto, while sweet home-marinated port wine cherries are placed on top of this yellow beauty to add flavour and an alluring contrast in colour. Ossobucco is paired with lemon gremolata on rosemary polenta mousse and presented on a cocotte, with the polenta served at the side. The polenta is cooked in broth and milk, before being flavoured with extra virgin oil, butter, parmesan cheese and rosemary.

As a well-travelled chef, Schmid garners most of his skills from experiencing the different cuisines and cultures. He explains, "I enjoy travelling a lot because I get to taste food from different countries and cultures. Not only do I enjoy eating them, but it also broadens my knowledge of different cuisines. Through these experiences, I'm able to constantly improve and refine my cooking style and techniques." **ha**

Celestial Seasonings



The dynamic duo of Executive Chinese Chef Ho Boon and Dim Sum Chef Ken Liew Kum Seng is a stellar culinary pairing. Together, the two are redefining Cantonese cuisine at Sheraton Imperial Kuala Lumpur's Chinese restaurant Celestial Court. With a newly spiffed up kitchen, and a whole new take on how Chinese food is served, the two have managed to perk up even jaded palates with their inventive menu and special dim sum items.

"In dim sum there are some items that are so quintessential that no dim sum chef would try to change them. Things like the traditional shrimp dumpling and siew mai are really off limits to experimentation," explains Liew. To his credit however, Liew's best seller is one of his own creations. "The banana spring roll with wasabi mayo is something I could not take off my menu even if I wanted to. Diners ask for it all the time and really like the pairing of the banana and shrimp wrapped in crisp vermicelli," shares Liew, with his irrepressible grin. His other top sellers are the crispy scallop with mango salsa, scallop and pumpkin dumpling and crabmeat pot sticker – all served with such delicacy that they appear almost ornamental.

Ho Boon's salvo shows why he is so highly acclaimed in his field. He pairs the most succulent asparagus with bamboo pith and shrimp to present a dish as fresh as it is mystifying. Bamboo pith, according to Ho, does not really come from bamboo, nor is it a kind of shoot. Rather, it is fungi



that grows beside bamboo, and is vastly more expensive. Its spongy texture is a cross between tripe and fish maw, and altogether quite an experience.

Ho focuses on simplicity, and his other special items showcase how important fresh produce is. His codfish with enoki mushrooms with ginger is luxuriantly hearty; while his crabmeat with sweet corn and broccoli is a palate tamer, forcing diners to concentrate on the subtleties of the sea sweet shellfish and crisp corn. His signature dessert of pumpkin puree topped with black glutinous rice clearly underscores how avante garde his take on Cantonese cuisine can be. No wonder people keep coming back for more. **ha**

*Top row (from the left): Codfish with enoki mushrooms with ginger; Pumpkin puree topped with black glutinous rice
Above (from the left): Executive Chinese Chef Ho Boon; Dim Sum Chef Ken Liew Kum Seng;*

Presenting a fabulous menu for an event like the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards (HAPA) calls for good judgement, perpetual focus and bottomless passion. Behind the scenes of HAPA Malaysia's Gala Dinner was a devoted team led by three key individuals – The Royale Chulan's Director of Food & Beverage, Azrule Aziz; Executive Sous Chef, Sabri Soid; and Chef Khairul Ghazali, Chef de Cuisine of Bunga Emas Restaurant.

Adding Flavour To HAPA Malaysia



It was a challenge and an opportunity for the F&B team at The Royale Chulan to host the Gala Dinner. After several food tastings with the HAPA Committee, Azrule Aziz and Sabri reasoned that this would be the best opportunity to showcase the degustation menu they long talked about. Says Azrule, "This is a new experience for us. I don't think a degustation menu with 11 courses has ever been done for a banqueting event. The idea came to us in 2009, and we figured this is the most fitting event for a degustation menu." Rising to the occasion only meant that challenges would arise. Azrule recalls the day of the event, "There were some miscommunication between the service staff and the kitchen but I must say everything came

together at the end. The entire F&B division made this dream of preparing a degustation menu of 11 courses possible. I think we are the first in Malaysia to do it, so I'm very proud of my team's efforts."

The inspiration behind the menu, explains Sabri, was to promote The Royale Chulan's two fine dining restaurants. He says, "We decided on French-Malay cuisine because our two fine dining restaurants respectively offer the two cuisines. Degustation means sampler – so it was suitable for new guests to try what we had on our menu." Sabri continues, "As chefs, we always need to have ideas and creativity, and be adventurous in cooking. The HAPA event gave me an opportunity to prove to myself that I was capable of creating a unique menu." After HAPA, the F&B team grew



confident and implemented new menus at the other restaurants. “We introduced a degustation menu in our Chinese restaurant, Tai Ping naming it the Marathon menu,” shares the very animated Azrule.

Khairul shares, “I think the most memorable thing from the HAPA Gala Dinner for me was the teamwork amongst the F&B team. From the apprentice level up to the Director of Food & Beverage and General Manager, every single person gave it their all. It was nice to experience the energy of great teamwork.” Overwhelmed by gratitude, Azrule extends his appreciation to the team for their efforts in making the event a success. “I would really like to thank our General Manager, Franz Swoboda for being our pillar of strength. He gave us room to carry out our ideas - he never stopped us but only gave his input where he felt things could improve. Mr Swoboda kept reminding us that this will be the event of our lives and this notion resonated in our minds. At first, we didn't quite understand what he meant,” remarks Azrule, as the other two chefs laughed in agreement. It was only after HAPA when they realized that it was truly the event of their lives; the biggest opportunity for them to showcase their talents as Malaysian F&B professionals.

One can imagine that preparing a degustation menu of 11 courses for 600 persons would have its ups and downs. Needless to say, there were some moments of great stress, but it all came to a good end. Describes Azrule, “From basement 2 to the kitchens upstairs, every single cook and service staff toiled like machines. They were very patient with our passion. I have never seen such determination and patience before and truly, it was



outstanding to watch. For this, I can never fully express my appreciation to them.”

Khairul narrates the day as he remembers. “Every kitchen was busy. We had to distribute the different courses to the different kitchens. We worked by stations and delegations.” Sabri found that one of the biggest challenges was the plating of the courses. He reveals, “Just one plate goes through five stages, including saucing and garnishing. I think it was important for us because we wanted to prove that as Malaysians, we could do it. That we could pull off a banqueting event with a French-Malay degustation menu. And we did it without the help of any international chefs,” he comments.

When asked about how early they went into work on the day of the awards, Azrule relates, “We didn't go home for three days. We couldn't eat, neither could we sleep. The only thing on our minds was how to make sure the food is kept warm, how to keep the taste intact and how to ensure that the other kitchens are carrying out our instructions properly. We really didn't have time to think about sleep.” On that note, he continues, “We accepted this challenge with confidence because it was our vision to do something that has not been done before in Malaysia. Thanks to HAPA we now realize that we are capable of undertaking such a prestigious event.” The weeks following HAPA have been chock-a-block with events, and good news arrived early. Among them was Sabri's promotion to Executive Chef. “We gained a lot of recognition from HAPA. People started to gain confidence in us and there was an instant awareness on the F&B scene in The Royale Chulan,” Azrule concludes. **ha**



Far left (L-R): Executive Chef, Sabri Soid; The Royale Chulan's Director of Food & Beverage, Azrule Aziz; and Chef Khairul Ghazali, Chef de Cuisine of Bunga Emas Restaurant

Clockwise from the top left: Chef Khairul Ghazali in action – Khairul is best known for his flair in modern-traditional Malay cuisine; The newly promoted Executive Chef Sabri Soid specializes in French-Malay cuisine; Chef Sabri's attention to detail is exemplified in the unique presentation of his dishes; The Royale Chulan chefs present their culinary creativity 'a la minute' with the ingredients they have in hand

A strong believer in the power of dreams, Song does not possess formal culinary training. Her route to amazing food took a detour on the catwalk before it bore fruit. “Yes, I was a model. That was one of my dreams. I have many dreams and one dream leads to another. Before one dream comes full into reality another one forms. It was my passion for food and a want for



good food that made me decide to start a little café in Ipoh. It was more for me – I wanted good coffee, a good machine that makes good coffee, good food, authentic Western food rather than the Malaysianized version and a nice place to enjoy it. I started very quietly with half a shop lot to test the market before taking up a full shop lot and then two shop lots before moving into this wonderful little bungalow.”

The little bungalow now houses her boutique hotel on the upper floor – a project which merged another of Song's dreams and the care she lavishes on her clientele. “Another of my dreams was to own a boutique hotel. It was more for my outstation customers who came to enjoy the food and wine and didn't really want to drive back, so I thought having a little hotel would be good. When I walked into this bungalow, I immediately knew what I wanted to do with the space. The hotel has not changed Indulgence at all. It is still very homely – a lot of hotel guests have found it to be a ‘home-away-from-home’. I actually look forward to coming into the restaurant in the mornings and having a good cup of coffee,” shared the animated Song, who recently tied up with Malaysia Airlines to be Chef On Call to Enrich Platinum Card members on the carrier's first and business classes – something which came about through Song's participation in the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards.

Song had to embark on a brand new journey of learning the in and outs of in-flight food preparation, from the ground level up, and from there customize her own recipes using the airline's ingredients, in order to create a menu similar to what Indulgence offered – simple, tastefully done fine dining. Song created 25 dishes for the Enrich Platinum Loyalty Programme which was received with much acclaim. “Chef On Call is a 24-hour pre-order concept. Once the Enrich Platinum member logs in, they are automatically directed to the chef-on-call menu where they can order

On A Dream And A Song

Julie Song – chef extraordinaire, restaurateur, recent alumnus of Malaysia Airlines' Chef On Call programme – is one of Malaysia's living culinary treasures. In a short span of time, her restaurant Indulgence has made Ipoh a sudden stop for gourmets, while the recent addition of an enchanting boutique hotel has seen her entrepreneurial star shine even more brightly.

from a pre-course choice of starters, mains and desserts. They were very pleased with the menu and there were a lot of orders. Travellers really appreciate Malaysian Airlines' efforts in launching this menu and the extra service. Whenever they travel, they dine and I believe they appreciate the quality of the fine dining menu on-board," says Song matter of factly; herself being the possessor of many air miles.

The Chef On Call venture sparks another dream in the passionate foodie. "I hope to provide more consultancy services in KL. In a way it also promotes the restaurant as many people get to know about the restaurant through me. Indulgence Restaurant & Living will always remain in Ipoh. It will never be franchised and I have no intention to branch out. The only way to promote the restaurant is for me to go out and do something different."

Song walks the line between irreverence and affront in the same delicate manner in which she runs her businesses. While never denying her lack of formal culinary training, she believes it has helped her individualize preparations to reflect her personal taste. "All the ingredients I use are a personal choice. Whatever I taste which I don't like, I don't serve in my restaurant. It's different from having a culinary background where you are restricted by rules or preparation techniques. I prepare my dishes differently in a way that I can choose to use whatever ingredients I have and not follow the norm. My customers are always surprised as my dishes are completely different from other restaurants serving Western cuisine. I concentrate on fresh ingredients and prepare it in the simplest way, without over saucing it and accompany it with special vegetables like baby carrots or purple carrots. There are some vegetables you may not have even seen before, as I am the only person in Malaysia importing them," she says, comfortably, secure in her accomplishment.

So does her success suggest that passion and innate talent are all that it takes to make it in the hospitality business? Again Song shows off her well-balanced approach to life. "Nothing is easy and you have to have that at the back of your mind. Anyone venturing into this business will have a lot to learn. Passion plays a big part and maybe 40 percent is innate talent. I strongly believe as a chef you have to love what you're cooking and you have to eat what you're cooking. There is no saying that just because you cook every day, you're just fed up of it," asserts the entrepreneur who sees her travels as part of her education.

"Every day there is something new. That's why I do a lot of travelling. Just to see what new ingredients there are and to see what's new in



other restaurants in other countries. There will always be new restaurants coming up and new hotels coming up. We always have to be one step ahead of everything."

Unafraid of challenge, Song believes her customers dine often at Indulgence (sometimes as many as four days out of the five that the restaurant operates), because they are continually refreshed as the same dish is never prepared the same way. "There is no way someone can say they have tried everything on the menu. Everyday there is something new. A dish is always prepared differently every week," she laughs.

She is, however, as bold about taking criticism as she is careful about giving it, and when asked what she would do if she had not enjoyed a meal at another establishment, she muses, "I'm not sure if I would comment on it! But actually, if I like a restaurant and dine there often, I would like to be able to share my views with the chef. It really depends on the chef. I would welcome it and accept it. I would rather have a complaint than a compliment, because it helps me improve. If there is something wrong with my food, I would like to know about it. At least I can do something about it and remedy it. That's very important." **ha**

*Far left : Chef extraordinaire and restaurateur – the enigmatic Julie Song
Above : Indulgence Restaurant & Living, neatly tucked in the heart of Ipoh; Each room at Indulgence Living is delicately designed and homely; Each dish is a work of art and the pastries at Indulgence Restaurant are simply mouth-watering*



Fame comes and goes for some, but Singapore's favourite chef Sam Leong has earned his and now takes a step back to become a family man. It is hardly the case of walking away from a career that he is deeply passionate about, but Leong prefers to decode the decision as the most significant of his life. "I achieved all my goals as a chef; honoured with so many awards, given the opportunity to be on television and I travelled the world. I was even fortunate enough to work with the prestigious Tung Lok Group. But one day it struck me that I should put a stop somewhere and focus on my family," he says.

Leong recounts, "I've been married to my wife for 20 years and the pattern with me never changed. I went to work at 8 am and came back at 12 am. I poured out all my effort into work, and my family understood." While it would have been too late to regret not spending enough time with his family when he is older, Leong quickly took a leap into pursuing a venture that has always been dear to his wife, Forest.

"For many years my wife wanted to open a restaurant in Singapore but I told her it's too competitive. I suggested that she use her talent to teach people cooking instead. So we started out by having classes at home for close friends and neighbours," the humble television chef narrated. It was during that time Forest gained confidence and began feeling comfortable teaching bigger groups. "When the decision came to me to give up my job, I realized that I wanted to provide her with the opportunity to teach in our very own cooking school. I have fulfilled my dream, so as a husband I'm here to fulfil hers."

Living The Dream

As a chef, Sam Leong has achieved more than he could ever dream of. From being the Director of Kitchens at Tung Lok Group to becoming a celebrity chef appearing on multiple television shows, he has had it all. But what made this icon step out of the spotlight to become a fulltime family man and focus on building a cooking school with his wife, Forest Leong? Hospitality Asia caught up with the down to earth, well-loved chef and we got a sneak peek into their newest adventure, the Sam.Leong@Forest Cooking School.



The school is located on the second floor of a quaint shop house on Craig Road. The design is kept simple and cozy – as the concept aptly suggests that only a lucky handful will get to experience the hospitality of Sam Leong. There is a self-sustained cooking studio that comfortably seats up to 20 students for the exclusive cooking classes. The studio features a built-in camera and LCD screen to visually project cooking demonstrations, while the Leongs conduct their classes in the most intimate way possible for students to fully grasp the lessons. Betting that nothing is ever too basic at this school, the duo believes in building relationships with students and ensuring they get the best out of their time here. Lessons are not just about learning how to hold a knife or what might be the best way to prepare pad Thai, but it is cooking made fun and approachable. “We try to keep the groups small so that we have more time to attend to them individually – in a way it’s very exclusive and intimate,” explains Leong.

The courses range between SGD 80 to 100. “Forest teaches Thai cuisine, while I teach Chinese and Asian. Most housewives want to learn home cooking; so the ingredients we use are obtainable from accessible places like the market or NTUC,” Leong says. “It is important to know that an experienced chef doesn’t necessarily know how to be a culinary instructor. Just because I have used fancy ingredients when I was cooking professionally, that doesn’t mean I have to teach my students the same. We need to be flexible in teaching.”

As the father of two expands his portfolio to being a culinary educator, in addition to being



Far left : Forest lives her dream of teaching culinary arts, with the support of her celebrity chef husband

Above : Chef Sam Leong and his wife, Forest at their new cooking school

Left : Blast from the past – some 20 years ago when Sam and Forest were in their teens

an occasional guest chef, he looks forward to spending quality time with his wife and children on weekdays. On Fridays to Sundays, Sam and Forest dedicate their time at Sam.Leong@Forest Cooking School to engage in culinary action and discussion. Forest’s goal is to impart to students how comforting Thai food is, while deflating the myth that cooking Thai cuisine is complicated. Inspired by Forest’s passion for teaching, Sam hopes to impart to both beginners and trained chefs alike not only the skills of innovative cooking but also the essence of food and hospitality. “We treat our students as friends and hope to give back to society with the years of culinary knowledge and experience we have accumulated,” he says with a warm smile. [ha](#)

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Anna Olson in action

Pastry's Sweetheart

The Asian Food Channel treated bakers and would-be pastry chefs to a treat when it presented Sweet Secrets With

Anna Olson at Le Meridien recently. The celebrity TV host of Sugar and Fresh was in Kuala Lumpur as part of her first ever visit to Asia. Lucky guests were able to see the sunny natured Olson in action at a series of cooking demos and lunches.

The one at Le Meridien saw the popular chef present raisin butter tarts, maple walnut ice cream and apple, date and cheddar muffins. Ever the crowd-pleaser, Olson made it a point to interact with the crowd, answering questions on processes and ingredients as she went along. **ha**



RW Genting Celebrates Songkran Festival

Resort's World Genting invites you to join in the fun at their annual Songkran Festival which promises a thrilling experience with its array of activities such as the water splashing party, elephant rides, cultural Thai dances and an extensive spread of mouth-watering Thai fare. From 1 April to 30 April 2011 make your way to First World Cafe, level 3 of the First World Plaza. On 11 April to 13 April, you can join in the excitement at VIP Restaurant, level 2 of Highlands Hotel. And lastly from 11 April to 12 April, head to Arena of Stars located at the Outdoor Theme Park for a fun-filled time featuring a splash pool party. **ha**

Potato Thoughts

The All About US Tablestock Potatoes held at the Sheraton Imperial Kuala Lumpur Hotel was a great way to make both chefs and laymen look differently upon the humble spud. While Malaysians and most of Asia use potatoes as a matter of course, the main thrust of the event was to introduce fresh, new potato varieties to the Malaysian markets. To do this, the United States Potato Board enlisted the help of culinary genius Rajesh Kanna, Sheraton Imperial Kuala Lumpur's Executive Chef.

After in-depth presentations by Monty Smith, Co-Chairman of the United States Potato Board Export Committee, and a technical talk on the handling, and storage of the potato varieties, followed by an Acorn Market Research presentation of consumer perception of US Potatoes and a Potato Nutrition talk by Kalpana Bhaskaran from Temasek Polytechnic, guests were more than glad to sample the stunning potato-centric buffet set out for their enjoyment.

Items designed by Rajesh included confit satay flavoured cod with baked US yellow flesh potato mash, US round red potato and onion tart with nut chutney, US fingerling potato lasagne with spicy peanut butter tossed arugula salad, and his masterpiece, potato ice cream made from blue potatoes as well as the traditional yellow skinned variety. **ha**



The humble potato is exalted by Executive Chef Rajesh Kanna

*every Grape journey
ends in a Kadeka*

Excellent Wine Storage Solutions for Wine Aficionados...

The journey of the best premium wines often ends in a highly regarded Kadeka wine chiller. A case in point: the new advanced **KA 165T** with luxurious features such as **two temperature zones with independent settings**, a sophisticated black finish, wooden shelves and LED display.

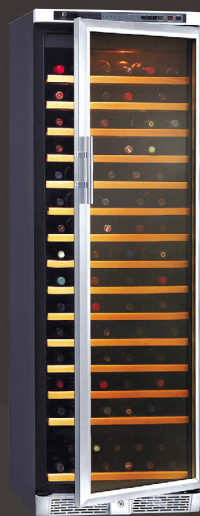
Designed with an exquisite attention to detail, the Kadeka range of wine chillers provides capacities ranging from 39 to 168 bottles. Each is endowed with qualities like **precise temperature control**, humidity box, charcoal filter, vibration-free design and **three-layered anti-UV glass door** – features that true wine aficionados will appreciate.



KA 39WR



KA 110WR



KSJ 168EW



KA 143T

- 3 temperature zones:
upper 5 - 18°C
middle 5 - 12°C
lower 12 - 18°C

KA 165T

- 2 temperature zones
with independent settings



Colourful interiors of The Mix

The Mix

Holiday Inn Kuala Lumpur Glenmarie opened its latest food and beverage, The Mix on January 14 2011. The new premier destination for a perfect night out offers an experience that is both chic and elegant whilst presenting to diners a menu bursting with Asian and Western flavours. The Mix is positioned as a venue for upscale dining delivered by an unmatched ambience and a selection of chart topping beverages. When night falls, The Mix converts into an eclectic atmosphere with great live music from the resident band and in house DJs. Set to become the next hotspot, The Mix offers both a culinary adventure and a nightspot to unwind over some feel good music. **ha**



Stand a chance to win a free stay at Shangri-La Paris (and other Shangri-La Hotels) when you dine at any restaurant in Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore

Shangri-La Celebrates Its 40th Anniversary

On 23 April 2011, Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore will celebrate its 40th anniversary. To mark this significant milestone of 40 years' hospitality excellence in Singapore, the hotel will hold special monthly lucky draws in February, March and April 2011, culminating in a grand draw on 3 May 2011. Guests stand to win free trips that offer the experience of some of Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts' newest properties in the Maldives, Tokyo, Beijing and Paris, including two return business class air tickets on Singapore Airlines. From 1 February to 30 April 2011, every S\$50 spent (after discount and before taxes) on a single receipt at any restaurant in Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore entitles guests to a lucky draw chance. Guests who dine on Mondays will increase the winning probability by 10, as every S\$50 spent (after discount and before taxes) on a single receipt gives 10 lucky draw chances. Participating dining outlets are The Line, The Line Shop, Shang Palace, Nadaman, BLU, The Rose Veranda and Lobby Court. Lucky draw coupons will be issued to diners upon settlement of the bill. The collection of the coupons will cease on 30 April 2011, at 11:59 p.m. **ha**



Boathouse (a participating outlet) presents its special dish; Guinea fowl with foie gras

Singapore Restaurant Week Returns

The most anticipated gourmet event in Singapore, Restaurant Week returns on 21 to 27 March 2011. This time, organizer DiningCity.com aims to create a bigger and better culinary affair after its successful debut in March 2010 when Singapore was the first city in Asia to launch Restaurant Week. Desi Wentink, Managing Director of DiningCity.com Singapore says, "The first Restaurant Week in Singapore in 2010 was such a huge success that we have decided to make it a bi-annual event. We look forward to having more restaurants and diners to be part of this unique and fun event which is all about trying something new." American Express is the presenting partner of the second edition of Singapore Restaurant Week, which is also officially sponsored by BMW, Culina, San Pellegrino, Acqua Panna, Brown Brothers, Chapoutier, Ruffino, Torres, and Time Out Singapore and held in "Your Singapore". Returning restaurants from Restaurant Week 2010 will include Absinthe, Garibaldi, Bedrock Bar & Grill, The Cliff, Forlino, Il Lido, Novus, Oso, Brasserie Wolf, OTTO, Picotin, Krish, Private Affairs, Tatsuya, The Song of India and Takumi Tokyo. New participants this year are already famous restaurants such as Boathouse, Ku De Ta, La Villa, Oyster Bar, Wild Rocket, Culina @ Dempsey, Stellar@1-Altitude, One Rochester, 1 Twenty Six, Cassia and The Knolls (Capella Hotel), to name a few. **ha**

Inspiring Japanese

Decidedly a favourite amongst food patrons at The Gardens, Mid Valley City, Yuzu Japanese Restaurant encompasses a wide array of both authentic and fusion Japanese cuisine. Its understated exterior unveils a spacious dining area, where a partition made from bamboo separates the restaurant into cozy sections with pictured walls and water features. General Manager Raymond Chan highly suggests the Kaiso Salad which is a combination of fresh crunchy seaweed imported from



Hokkaido that comes in dual colours, lightly dressed with wafu sauce. We also tried the salmon belly carpaccio marinated in rosemary, capers, olive oil and teriyaki sauce; followed by white tuna coated with black sesame and drenched in a special sashimi teriyaki sauce, and garnished with potato cake in the centre. For a heartier meal, you might want to try the foie gras pan-fried with butter sauce or the king prawn roll that will surely please all sushi lovers. **ha**



For more information contact :
Yuzu Japanese Restaurant
T236, 3rd Floor, The Gardens
Mid Valley City, Kuala Lumpur
Tel: +60 3 2284 7663

Celebration Of Indian Fare

More than just a fancy restaurant serving up Indian cuisine, Rang Mahal Pavilion (like its sister outlets) celebrates the flavours of Indian cuisine with a widespread menu that caters to the most discerning of palates. The total feel of Rang Mahal Pavilion is artistically accentuated with traditional Indian musical instruments such as dumroos, sitars and flutes which suspend from the ceiling.



Apart from its visually stunning ambience that showcases the essence of India, the menu consists

of evergreen favourites like tandoori lamb chops, Palak Paneer and a variety of scrummy vegetarian dishes. Usually ordered is the Culcatta fish curry – a fragrant dish comprising of fresh sea bass fillet cooked with mustard seeds and simmered in coconut gravy and the well-loved Murgh Makhani (better known as butter chicken) featuring morsels of boneless chicken in velvety tomato gravy enhanced with dried fenugreek. Seafood lovers should try the Lasooni Jhinga which is a portion of scrumptious prawns coated in garlic and gilded in the tandoor. To complement the piquant flavours, try the Kamasutra – a refreshing blend of passion fruit, fresh plum and ice cream soda. **ha**



For more information contact :
Rang Mahal Pavilion
Hard Rock Hotel Singapore
Resorts World Sentosa
Tel: +65 6238 7013

Exclusively Argentine



For more information contact :
SALTA Argentine Parrilla + Grocer
Icon Village, 12 Gopeng Street
#01-56, S078877



Named after a richly historical and scenic city in Argentina, SALTA Argentine Parrilla + Grocer is the fourth concept by Kitchen Language – the F&B arm of Far East Organization – and is the first restaurant to bring the cuisine of Salta into Singapore.

While Argentine cuisine is mostly about grilled meat from the Asado (barbeque), there are many other dishes to savour from. As a start, try the Empanadas which is a solid pastry (almost like a curry puff) stuffed with a selection filling like Carne (beef

& capsicum), Roquefort y Apio (Roquefort cheese & celery) or Cordero (lamb & tomato). These little delights are accompanied by various homemade dips.

Steak lovers will be thrilled to find various cuts of free range grass-fed beef that is cooked the Argentinean way – slightly marinated in sea salt and then grilled over a parrilla. If you don't eat beef, order the Solomillo de Cerdo which is black hog pork loin, also cooked in the simplistic Argentinean way. For the sweet toothed, desserts like the chocolate volcano cake with passion fruit sauce and the dulce de leche crepe with vanilla ice cream are guaranteed to set you on cloud nine. **ha**

Dining At The Cliff



For more information contact :
The Cliff Development Co., Ltd
124/2 Tambon Maret, Lamai Beach,
Koh Samui 84330 Surat Thani, Thailand
Tel: +077 414 266



Located on the mountainous terrain between the Chaweng and Lamai ring-road, The Cliff Bar & Grill commands an unsurpassed view of natural boulders next to the water's edge and across a panoramic bay to a tropical headland. Its opening hours from midday makes the place a popular stop for lunch and a meeting place for local business executives. Patrons can choose between the 50-seat terrazzo-floored interior section decked with birds of paradise, hand-painted ceramics and designer decor,

or the 28-seat alfresco area that puts you directly under the stars. Helming the kitchen is Chef Sergio Martelli from Italy who has worked in top restaurants all around the world. He pairs up with Peruvian Chef Adrian Torres and together they present the best of traditional Italian cuisine and Spanish Tapas. Must try dishes include Zarzuela de Marisco which is the seafood platter, Cozze al Vino Bianco – a sinful dish of New Zealand mussels in creamy white wine sauce, Gazpacho Espanol con Langostinos Arrebosado – Spanish cold tomato soup with tiger prawns, and Vieiras a la Parmesana – scallops a la parmesan. Most popular is their beef which comes in weekly from King Island, Australia; aged 21 days and never frozen. **ha**

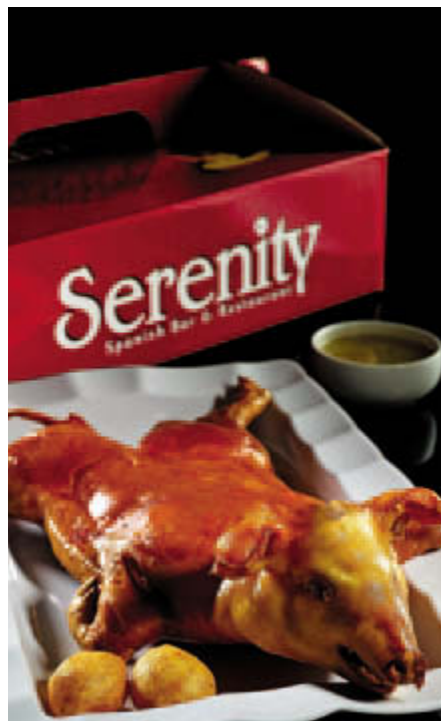


With cross-culture influences and globalization, it is fast becoming a norm not to need to country hop in order to partake of some signature cuisine. Our focus on gourmet dining features some of the most exciting gastronomic adventures to be had in Singapore and Malaysia. Be it authentic paella and Spanish food including the famed Jamon Iberico from Serenity Spanish Bar & Restaurant in Singapore, to beautifully presented modern Malay cuisine which recalls the taste of home grown kampong cuisine at PNB Darby Park's signature Malay fine dining restaurant, good eating is a never ending adventure in Asia.

For more information, contact:
 No.1 Harbourfront Walk #01-98/99
 VivoCity Singapore 098585
 Tel: +63 6376 8184
 Business Hours: Sun to Thu
 (11am-11pm) Fri & Sat (11am-12am)



Right: Paella Sigalas
 Below (left to right): Red Wine Sangria;
 Spanish Suckling Pig; Spanish Octopus



Authentic Spanish flavours and culture, delicious cuisine, charming ambience and attentive friendly service all go towards making Serenity Spanish Bar & Restaurant a place to relax, enjoy and unwind.

As music soothes the savage beast, an acoustic band performs from 7.30pm to 11pm to help set the mood with Spanish and Latin music. Occasionally, you can indulge in flamenco dancing and other foot-stomping Spanish musical performances as well.

Slip into relaxation mode with some Sangrias. Serenity serves more than 24 types of Sangria, with its Sangria de Original being the best-known among Sangria fans.

Partake of a tantalizing selection of authentic tapas before partaking of some amazingly authentic Spanish food including delectable paella dishes and Spanish style suckling pig, which are both highlights of the restaurant. The paellas are made a la minute, so order upon arrival and enjoy the suckling pig's crispy golden skin and tender juicy meat accentuated by selected Spanish herbs and spices before it arrives.

Also on the menu is Jamon Iberico, the famed Spanish Black Pig Ham which is cut and served at the table. The paper-thin meat is a storehouse of flavours which go magnificently with some of the range of imported Spanish cheeses and chorizo (Spanish sausages).

Also on the menu is a range of salads like the ensalada de colores which uses a crispy tortilla as a base sprinkled with various toppings; classic Gazpacho and Spanish noodles known in Catalan as Fideuà. Fideuà is sometimes used as an alternative to rice in paella.

End your meal on a sugar high, with chocolate sauce covered churros, and a plethora of specially imported wines, beers and spirits from Spain and around the world. **ha**



Sweet Serenity

Serenity

Spanish Bar & Restaurant

Flavours of Spain

www.serenity.com.sg



• Spanish Suckling Pig



• Paella Valencia

1 Harbourfront Walk #01-98/99
VivoCity Singapore 098585
Tel: 6376 8185 Email: info@serenity.com.sg

For more information, contact:
 CHINOIS BY SUSUR LEE
 Resorts World Sentosa
 Hotel Michael
 26 Sentosa Gateway, Lobby Level
 Singapore 098138
 Tel: +65 6884 7888
 www.chinois.com.sg

*Right: Braised Shredded Abalone stuffed in Crab Claw topped with Sea Urchin Sauce
 Below: Main dining room; The wine bar
 Bottom right: Seared Foie Gras with Smoked Duck Breast, Avocado and Orange Reduction*



Singapore's TungLok Group has always been in the forefront of innovative cuisine. Their recent venture is a collaboration with international celebrity chef Susur Lee. Chinois by Susur Lee is a novel concept which combines the soul of fine Chinese dining with contemporary innovation. With Chinois' inventive décor hinting at the gastronomic adventures within, its environment creates fusion between dinner and diner.

Susur Lee is an internationally-acclaimed chef decorated with credits such as – At-Sunrice Global Chef® Award 2006, American Academy of Hospitality Services, Five-Star Diamond Award in 1998, CAA Diamond Awards/Four Diamond Award for seven consecutive years. As his first restaurant outside North America, Susur Lee aims to make his mark in Asia with Chinois.

Designed by one of Japan's top design house, MYU Planning, Chinois by Susur Lee features stone and wood accents for a Mediterranean-Zen ambience. The restaurant has four private rooms that can seat from four to ten persons. The total seating capacity is 106.

Amongst the mouth-watering dishes on the menu are Susur-style specialties such as braised shredded abalone stuffed in crab claw topped with sea urchin sauce as well as seared foie gras with smoked duck breast, avocado and orange reduction.

The restaurant also sports a chic long bar where diners can wine and dine on a specially-created tapas menu which offers barbecued eel and taro squares glazed with sweet soya as well as delectable dessert selections. Along with a comprehensive award-winning wine list, specially-created cocktails, artisan coffee and tea menus are also available. **ha**



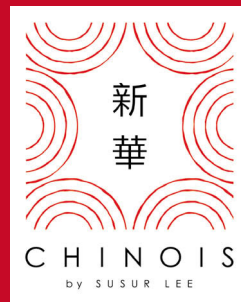
Distinctly Different

The Soul Of Fine Chinese Cuisine

- Hauté Chinese Cuisine
- Innovative Chinese Tapas
- Refreshing Cocktails
- Award-winning Wine List (Wine Spectator USA)

Susur Lee

SUSUR is one of the world's most celebrated chef, known for his innovative combination of Asian and European cooking styles.



Opens Daily

Lunch : 11.30am - 3.00pm

Dinner : 6.30pm - 11.00pm

Hotel Michael (Lobby Level)

Resorts World Sentosa

Tel: 6884 7888

www.chinois.com.sg

For more information, contact:
The 39 Restaurant
PNB Darby Park Executive Suites
Tel: +60 3 7490 3939
E-mail: reservations@pnbdarbypark.com

Right: Otak-otak
Below (from the top): Kuih Melayu;
Patin Masak Tempoyak
Bottom right: Kerabu Mangga



For an upscale taste of the flavours of yesterday, there can be no finer place to dine than The 39 Restaurant at PNB Darby Park Executive Suites, Kuala Lumpur. Executive Sous Chef, Ashar Daud has taken the best of traditional Malay dishes, such as the use of fragrant spices like cinnamon, star anise, cardamom and cloves, and worked his culinary to present Malay fine dining at its peak.

His signature Ayam Golek Perchik (wood-fire broiled chicken dressed with sweet coconut gravy) is accentuated with 'chilli solok' or stuffed green chilli, perchik sauce and wing bean salad. It is also served with fragrant white rice and local vegetable herbs known as Nasi Ulam. Ashar works the same magic on other favourite Malaysian dishes, and his magic touch has helped The 39 Restaurant win numerous accolades for its cuisine, including Best Restaurant 2008 by the Libur Tourism Award 2007/2008. Ashar himself was billed in the Top 5 of the Most Creative Asian Cuisine Chef category by the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards 2008-2010.

Ashar's ability to speak passionately about his food, coupled with the restaurant's breathtaking view of the KL cityscape has made The 39 Restaurant one of the places to go to for a past-meets-present meal rife with flavour, history, passion and tradition.

Additionally, a local two-piece band also performs during lunch and dinner daily except on weekends and Public Holidays. An ideal venue to hold business luncheons or private functions, the restaurant has a maximum seating capacity of 120 persons. **ha**



39 Levels Of Satisfaction

THE
39
RESTAURANT

REDEFINING TRADITIONAL MALAY CUISINE

The 39 Restaurant redefines traditional Malay cuisine. Presented in a modern and contemporary setting, the restaurant offers an enchanting view of the city's magnificent skyline, accompanied with soothing live music daily during lunch and dinner.



Darby Park
Executive Suites

10, Jalan Binjai, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel : 03 - 7490 3333 Fax : 03 - 7490 3388
Email : reservations@pnbdarbypark.com Website : www.pnbdarbypark.com



For more information, contact:
Ming Ren
Level 2, Highlands Hotel
Genting Highlands
Tel: +60 3 6105 9879

Ming Ren, the specialty Xinjiang restaurant in Highlands Hotel, Genting Highlands has come full circle, with the return of its original chef, Chew Hock Chai, to the award-winning gourmet restaurant. Meaning 'new frontiers', Ming Ren is the only specialized Xinjiang lamb cuisine restaurant in Malaysia. Xinjiang cuisine focuses on herb-fed lamb which is bred in the Ba Er Lu Ke region of Xinjiang, 3,000 metres above sea level. Fresh air, clean water and chemical free food produce succulent meat which is low in fat and cholesterol.

Chef Chew brings out the best of the premium cuts of Xinjiang lamb in innovative ways, beginning with the signature Catch The Lamb soup. This milky, hearty soup is stewed with tender cuts of lamb, onions and vegetables and is served on a burner for warming, nourishing mouthfuls of goodness.

*Below (from the top): Lamb with barbecue sauce; Steamed estuary grouper
Bottom right: Catch The Lamb*



The marinated Xinjiang lamb with barbecue sauce is served on a hot plate brimming with slivered onions, carrots, peas and sweet corn. Tender and flavourful, it is one of Chew's new menu additions, as is the stir-fried lamb with potatoes and curry sauce which features a creamy, aromatic curry made from spices picked personally by Chew and ground to his exacting specifications.

A seasoned chef, Chew also knows that decadence should be balanced by some good old fashioned food, so he has also included some Chinese comfort food in his new menu line-up. These include such favourites as deep-fried Japanese bean curd with minced chicken and mushrooms served on a hot plate and deep-fried prawns served with thousand islands sauce and assorted fruit – his nod to the salad prawns which were all the rage in the Nineties.

However, being the creative genius he is, he also presents a touch of heat with the steamed estuary grouper with red chilli padi and garlic. The thick fillets are cooked to perfection and each flaky, glistening morsel is accompanied by the generously spicy, piquant sauce which does much to fight the mountain chill.

Chew saves the best for last, with his re-invented lamb ice cream. The special Xinjiang almond and pistachio dessert is made out of vanilla ice cream to which he adds Chinese herbs, spices and delicate shreds of the best Xinjiang lamb. Served with a pool of creamy, salted pumpkin puree, the combination of flavours is a remarkable one, with the savoury balancing the sweet. This balance is just a taste of the great things to come with the new menu additions at Ming Ren. **ha**



New Frontiers, Old Favourites



Ming Ren

Tantalizing Xinjiang Lamb Cuisine

Ming Ren is synonymous with exotic lamb dishes that are both tender and succulent. Prepared and cooked to perfection with a unique blend of Cantonese culinary methods and Xinjiang's traditional spices and seasonings, Ming Ren's lamb dishes are not to be missed, especially for avid lamb lovers.



An interior designer by profession, Chanond Purananda earned his rightful place in the fast-paced Food & Beverage industry after designing numerous bars and restaurants in London. "In order to know how to design it, I had to go work in one. Once I had the experience, I understood how the system works and what it takes to run an F&B outlet." Like the other four HSE trainers – Christopher-Robin Esphagen, Emilie Kollyrd, Maya Samuelsson and

John Murn – Chanond Purananda brings with him a wealth of experience that is ideal in the training and grooming of aspiring F&B professionals. "The team is selected to be here because of our various kinds of expertise. We are offering them training that they have to go to school for, and we do it over a short period of time. Sometimes, we come back here on our own free time, to have a drink and touch base with the trainees, so we know their progress."

The service-centred trainings cover the areas of communication skills, salesmanship and of course talent enhancement. Observes Purananda, "Malaysians are known to be a little shy – they know what to say, but they do not know how to say it, so they tend to mumble. So with the communication skills module, trainees get a boost of confidence." Both front and back-of-the-house get a fair share of training; bartenders are not only trained to create cocktails but they are also taught to grade their own cocktails; chefs are drilled with food safety and hygiene modules; and service staff are geared with skills to provide service excellence on all aspects.

On how the HSE programme benefits the industry as a whole, Purananda puts it plainly, "People demand for better food and better service all the time. It's very competitive in this field, more and more cafes and dining concepts are opening. So we are here to train the workforce from 5-star hotels down to the independent cafes or bars. Even 5-star hotels bring us in to give training because they are constantly looking to improve and learn." He adds, "Our programme is great in that we reward those who excel. There are a lot cash prizes to be won and titles to be crowned like the Best Mixologist competition." **ha**



The HORECA School of Excellence (HSE) is a twice a year programme that is made available in Malaysia with the purpose of raising the standards of the Food & Beverage industry. International trainers are brought in to train the local F&B employees who undergo a series of in-depth training. Hospitality Asia speaks to veteran HSE Trainer Chanond Purananda, to get a gist of what they do as trainers and the exciting line-up of programmes they conduct for participating F&B outlets.

Training Excellence At HORECA

When the idea of opening a soup business arose, there were sceptics who thought soup consumption unsuited to Singapore's hot climate. Fast forward eight years down the road, The Soup Spoon is a successful home-grown food chain that has 11 outlets across Singapore to date. "We had a lot of hardships but we managed to overcome all of them, with the help of the gracious people around us," said owner and SouperChef, Anna Lim.

"The turning point for us had to be when the journalist from The Straits Times walked in to eat one day. We were really helpful towards her and tried to accommodate all her requests, despite not knowing she was a journalist. As she left, she told us that she would like to do a story on the soups and me. So the story was published in Sunday Times and I tell you, that day people were lining up outside the shop from as early as 8am, and at 4pm we were sold out! That was really the turning point in our business," smiles Anna Lim as she recollects the day.

Just as when The Soup Spoon first started, Lim still writes all the recipes. "We started off with a few soups on the menu, and slowly added on as time went by. I take guests' comments very seriously, if they have a suggestion to make another type of soup, I will try to make it," she remarks. "I also get inspired a lot from my travels and I try to incorporate the soups of different cultures into our menu.



I don't necessarily get inspired from other soups, but sometimes it could be a dish I have tried. For example, I went to London last time and I had a delicious roasted beetroot salad in a deli. So I came back and converted that dish into a cold soup."

Today, The Soup Spoon Group is a vision of success with its new sister outlets Soup Broth Asia and The Handburger garnering positive reviews from Singapore's food-lovers. It has also attracted overseas interest for franchise and as of July 2010, two outlets have already opened in Jakarta. [ha](#)



More Than A Spoonful

SouperChef Anna Lim began her career as an embryologist but what caused her radical change of vocation had a lot to do with her experimentation with food in the early days. Still recognizing herself as an embryologist, Anna Lim shares that her very systematic and methodical ways of soup-making is symptomatic of her previous profession.



What is VOM FASS all about?

In German Vom Fass means 'from the cask'. VOM FASS stores around the world are famous for offering the finest fruit vinegars and oils for sale straight from casks. We believe that only the best raw produce should be used in order to be able to offer wonderful products. When you walk into a VOM FASS store, you will see rows and rows of casks labeled with their contents. Our assistants are very happy to help you sample the vinegars and oils. When you make your selection, you will decide on the volume you want and the kind of bottle you want it in. We will then draw the desired product and label the bottle for you.

What makes VOM FASS' products so superior?

The Chinese use rice wine to infuse fruit in when they make vinegar. VOM FASS uses only pure fruit. One litre of our Waldburg Star Apple requires six kilos of pulped, juiced apples, with no added water to make. All the vinegars are made in the Waldburg vinegar



factory near Lake Constance in Germany and are really superior in taste to anything on the market. Our olive oils are all processed mechanically and are chemical-free. They are all from the first cold press, which make them extra virgin, and we offer extra virgin olive oils from Italy (Santini and Madonia), Greece (Agora) and Spain (Don Carlos), as well as truffle, basil, rosemary, lemon and orange infused extra virgin olive oils from Italy. The proof is in the tasting. I guarantee anyone coming in to sample the range at the VOM FASS store will be persuaded! We also have food grade premium oils like argan oil, which is used by beauty houses like Annick Goutal as a base for one of its most popular serums.

Isn't it a bit intimidating for a first timer to come into VOM FASS?

I'm not just running a business. My staff are trained to be as helpful as possible, and customers can sample anything they wish and learn about the products. I want to build an appreciation for VOM FASS products and



that can only be done when people have tried the oils and vinegars.

The Malaysian VOM FASS store caters to everyone?

Yes it does. A friend introduced me to the products and I went to Singapore to buy more and was introduced to the principal franchisee. A year later, I was trying to open the first VOM FASS in Malaysia. I knew there was interest, but wondered if it would be just for the novelty of it. As we approach the half year mark I can see many repeat customers, and as the master franchisor for Malaysia will be trying to open more stores, or look for people who want to work with us. We are looking to expand and hope to have two to three outlets by end 2011. We are also looking for a good location for our signature shop which will also offer fine foods and perhaps liquor from the cask! We began as a retail store but since the opening, a lot of interest has come from the F&B industry, from the Chefs Association of Malaysia, right down to chefs and restaurateurs. **ha**

The Pleasure Of Perfection

VOM FASS specialty vinegars have been in the arsenal of Michelin kitchens for a long time. Malaysians are finally able to purchase these amazing vinegars, as well as some stellar oils, thanks to the dogged determination of Teoh Eng Sin who believed enough in the products to bring in six metric tons of shelving and spouts and 500 litres of oil and vinegar in order to give Malaysian palates a heady wake-up call.

Chilewich Signature Collection

Chilewich introduced their first woven textiles to the tabletop industry over a decade ago. Since that time, the Chilewich signature collection has altered how tables in restaurants and hotels are dressed up around the world. The durability of the yarn, its tremendous design versatility and the fact that it is washable, helps hotels and restaurants reduce both energy and laundry costs while maintaining a sophisticated aesthetic. Traditional cloth placemats or tablecloths need to be laundered regularly and incur high washing bills. Chilewich placemats can be easily wiped off or washed in the sink and usually last two years if properly cared for; depending on amount of use. Tablemats and runners are available in an array of textures and colors and custom sizes are available to fit your requirements such as non-standard placemats, tray liners and table covers. **ha**



Hospitality Resources Sdn Bhd

Tel : +60 3 7980 8075 Fax : +60 3 7980 8285
www.hospitality.com.my



VOM FASS Olive Oils

VOM FASS (which literally means 'from the cask') exquisite oils and vinegars are used in Michelin-star restaurants and select hotels all over the world. With over 260 stores worldwide, Vom Fass' oils and vinegars are coveted by gourmets, as gifts and as a natural and healthy "food" alternative for body, skin and hair. Featured here is an unbeatable duo for gourmets, comprising the VOM FASS Truffle Olive Oil (extra virgin) and the aged 25 year balsamic vinegar (Aceto Balsamico di Modena IGP "Riserva di Famiglia"). All bottles can be personalized with a hand written message. There are over 50 varieties of oils and vinegars in the selection. **ha**

VOM FASS Malaysia Sdn Bhd

Tel: +6012 209 5688
E-mail: teohes@vomfassmy.com
www.vomfassmy.com



Vines Juices

Each bottle of Vines white or red grape juice is a mere 187ml – enough to fill a water goblet, and it costs \$3.95. A little pricey you might think, but try it and you'll find it worth the money. You won't find a fresher tasting grape juice than if you stomped on grapes yourself.

Grapes are loaded with heart-healthy flavonoids. While red wine contains the very same flavonoids, most people don't drink wine every day, or can't have alcohol for one reason or another. Vines from Melbourne, Australia use high pressure

(cold water) processing to produce juices from the Cabernet Sauvignon variety of grapes, hence retaining 85 percent of nutrients compared with 40 percent of pasteurised juices, and even less when pasteurised from concentrate. **ha**

Vines Juices Pte Ltd

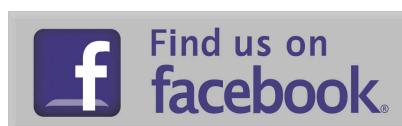
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www.vinesjuice.com



Expanding beyond the medium of print, Hospitality Asia is now online to provide our valued readers and clients with a means of staying in touch with dining trends, travel news and hospitality development. Through www.HospitalityAsiaOnline.asia, every issue of Hospitality Asia is accessible to discerning travellers, fine food aficionados and industry players across the globe who wish to have regional updates at their fingertips.

The Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards (HAPA) website www.Hapa.asia walks you through HAPA's history, its inception and growth over the last decade with a photo gallery and listing of past winners and participants. You can also befriend us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/HAPAAwards and be in touch with hundreds of other nominees from the industry!

Visit our newly refurbished websites at
www.HospitalityAsiaOnline.asia and www.Hapa.asia





From avant-garde designs to contemporary shapes and colours, Porcelaine LEGLE is a distinctive Limoges brand that showcases a timeless passion for china. Known for its sophisticated, natural and durable qualities, LEGLE was developed over five generations ago by a family with an unyielding passion for producing the world's finest china. The family behind this century-old innovation has perfected the manufacturing processes and modernized china production methods and conditions. Today, LEGLE is one of only 150 companies in France that has been recognized by the French Ministry of Economy and awarded the *Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant*; an award given to companies who are faithful to artisan know-how and make a contribution to the reputation of France.

Because of the meticulous techniques in which it is made and the fine lustrous colour it generates, fine porcelain is most apt for professional use. It is fired at very high temperatures, and has kaolin clays that are from the earth, pure and natural. Since the making of porcelain is a pure process, it retains its resilience and its everlasting white, sometimes bluish, translucent lustre. Fine porcelain resembles a jewel; like a hard, smooth piece of jade that can withstand continuous usage while retaining its near perfect lustre. The beauty of LEGLE stems from its world famous designers, ceramists and enamellers who work together with scrupulous care to continue the prestigious legacy and know-how, while using state-of-the-art processes which are Porcelaine LEGLE's trademark.

Among its discerning customers is renowned Singaporean celebrity chef Justin Quek who uses mostly LEGLE's porcelain ware at his elegant Sky on 57 restaurant atop Marina Bay Sands, while in his private dining room, custom-painted LEGLE plates by celebrated artist Lin Hairong are used to present the equally immaculate cuisine. LEGLE is most sought after for its made-to-order designs that have a massive following of chef-owners who have their initials, restaurant names or customized designs adorned onto the porcelain ware.

Sia Huat Pte Ltd is the sole distributor for Porcelaine LEGLE in the Hospitality & Industrial industry in Singapore. For more information on these and other products, visit www.SiaHuat.com



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InterContinental Hong Kong Partners With Moët & Chandon

In association with Moët & Chandon, InterContinental Hong Kong held an exclusive dinner in February to celebrate the excellence of Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage 2002 and Grand Vintage Rosé 2002, and the collection of rarely available vintages 1992 and 1975 (in Magnum).

The five-course dinner menu was inspired by the hotel's Executive Sous Chef Simon Kwok's recent visit to the Champagne House's headquarters in Epernay, with dishes specially paired with the Grand and Rare vintages. Moët & Chandon Winemaker Axelle Araud flew in to Hong Kong especially for this occasion to introduce the vintages. InterContinental Hong Kong's Executive Sous Chef Simon Kwok was the only chef from Hong Kong invited by Moët & Chandon last fall to visit its global headquarters at Chateau de Saran located in Epernay in France's Champagne region. For this event, Moët & Chandon selected seven top chefs from around the world to cook and collaborate with its Chef de Cave, Benoit Gouez. [hka](#)

Vinexpo In Bordeaux

Set to take place from 19 to 23 June 2011, Vinexpo will be held in Bordeaux, France. Everything has been arranged for the international wine and spirits exhibition to live up to its reputation as the keynote event of the year, where wine and spirits markets gain renewed vigour. Vinexpo visitors and exhibitors can expect to see the promotion of a number of tasting areas branded "TASTINGS BY VINEXPO". Companies with international breadth, such as Champagne Louis Roederer, Concha y Toro and Baron Philippe de Rothschild have already booked spaces. Alongside these major groups, are industry giants like Symington Family Estates, Maison Louis Latour, Camus, Angus Dundee Distillers and many more. Italy, France and Spain, which together account for nearly half the world's production and export more than six billion bottles of still light wines, are widely represented at this Vinexpo with national pavilions. In total, the exhibition will cover an area of 90,000 sq m including the three exhibition halls, the Convention Centre, the gardens, Club du Lac, the restaurants, the conference and tasting rooms and all the services. [hka](#)



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Sky High Revelry

When night falls, the SkyPark at Marina Bay Sands turns into a glamorous upbeat chill out spot for dining, drinking and dancing. Hailed internationally as the leading lifestyle destination in Asia, KU DÉ TA makes its debut on Singapore's urban landscape and this time, it is perched 200 metres on the pinnacle of the magnificent Marina Bay Sands integrated resort. Spanning



over 14,500 sq feet on the borderless viewing deck, KU DÉ TA comprises of three separate yet integrated outlets made out of the Restaurant, the Club Lounge and the Poolside Terrace.

The venue offers a 360 degree panoramic view of Singapore's glittering skyline where patrons can luxuriate over some of the best cocktails concocted by the skilled team of mixologists twinned with a dance floor that comes alive with eclectic beats from the state-of-the-art Funktion-One sound system. Keep those expectations high as you'll be impressed with its soundscape and musical direction from critically-acclaimed Musical Director, Vinnie Quek. The Club Lounge is dressed with plush banquettes and a sleek bar that will appeal to those looking for the perfect venue to entertain clients or party with friends. **ha**

For more information, contact:
KU DE TA
1 Bayfront Avenue
Sands SkyPark
Marina Bay Sands
Singapore 018971

Non-Merchants Welcome

Combined with the attentiveness and efficient attributes of the staff, The Merchant Pub, Hotel Armada Petaling Jaya, reigns as one of the busiest pubs in town. Filled with plush, comfortable leather English sofas, the pub is the perfect place to just kick back and listen to the favourite retro tunes sung by the ever-versatile in-house band.

The Merchant Pub appeals to the after-office crowd, particularly businessmen who prefer to unwind in a more refined atmosphere offering blended to single malt whiskies to an extensive wine selection. The Merchant Pub also offers an exceptional array of quality beverages to cater to all tastes. Food at The Merchant Pub boasts of primarily Asian delights as well as Japanese and Western selections.

The Merchant Pub is also an ideal venue for private functions. With the longest bar counter in town, the pub is also popular for its British pool game and tournaments.

Located at level one, the outlet caters for the adult professional crowd especially those working in the nearby area. Happy Hour is from 4.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. daily and Ladies Night is on Saturdays from 6.00 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. **ha**



For more information, contact:
The Merchant Pub
Hotel Armada Petaling Jaya
Lorong Utara C, Section 52
Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan,
Malaysia
Tel: +60 3 7954 6888 ext. 4558



Above (from the top): Lindemans' Hunter River winery; There are scores of vineyards in the Hunter Valley

The Hunter Valley is the birthplace of the Australian wine industry as it was here that vines were first planted and commercial wines produced. Today, it is the premium wine growing district in New South Wales. While many grape varieties are planted in what is known as the Lower Hunter (to distinguish it from the Upper Hunter which located in another part of the expansive valley and home to the famous Rosemount Estate among others), two varieties stand out; Shiraz (red) and Semillon (white).

Aged Hunter Semillons are what the region is best known for with these dry wines being austere but exhibiting good evidence of minerality. As they age in the bottle they take on burnt toast qualities. Semillon is also used to make dessert wines here just as they are in France. While no longer permitted to be called Sauternes, the similarity between the sweet wines of the Hunter and those of the more famous French wine district, is uncanny.

One of the Hunter Valley's appealing qualities is that it is just two hour's drive north of Sydney, the gateway for many visitors to Australia. Restaurants, resorts, guesthouses and golf resorts complete the Hunter Valley tourism package so that visiting the vineyards for a few days is popular with those who like to relax amongst scenic vineyards and enjoy the fruits of the vines.

Vintage wines

There are scores of vineyards in the Hunter Valley with most offering cellar door wine tastings and it is recommended that visitors sample at least half a dozen to appreciate the depth and variety amongst the wines available.

Learning more about wines is made easy for the uninitiated by attending a wine appreciation course at the Hunter Valley Wine School located in the Hunter Resort. The resort offers a total winery experience with a two-hour introductory course that includes a tour of the adjoining winery and an overview of wine appreciation.

Hunter Valley vineyards include famous pioneering families and labels such as Lindemans, Tyrrell's, McWilliam's and Drayton's. Newer vineyards are also producing award-winning wines from less common grape varieties as well as the

The Pioneer Wines Of Hunter Valley

By David Bowden



Top row (left to right): Several golf courses have opened in recent years to add another dimension to the Hunter Valley wine touring equation; The vineyards are a spectacular sight

Bottom row (left to right): The Hunter Valley was also one of the pioneer Australian wine regions to offer a complete wine experience; Some of the region's more interesting wineries include Allandale, Bimbadgen Estate and Ben's Run; Expect to sample a whole range of wine styles from dry whites to sweet dessert wines as well as sparkling and fortified



more recognizable ones. Some of the region's more interesting wineries include Allandale, Bimbadgen Estate, Ben's Run, Briar Ridge, Brokenwood, Capercaillie, David Hook Wines, Gartelmann, Lake's Folly, Margan Family, Marsh Estate, Pepper Tree and Tamburlaine.

Thomas Wines is also generating a lot of interest especially with its Reserve 2006 Braemore Semillon which has lime and lemon fruit but with a grassy complexity on the palate.

Brokenwood produces arguably one of the finest classic Semillons bottled under its ILR Reserve Semillon. This is normally released after several years of bottle aging. While dry, the wine shows toasty and buttery characteristics. The 1999 Brokenwood Semillon, which is still available, is one of the finest ever produced by the winery.

Expect to sample a whole range of wine styles from dry whites to sweet dessert wines as well as sparkling and fortified. Some estates like Margan and David Hook are producing excellent Italian-styled wines like Barbera from locally-grown Italian varieties.

Wine Touring

The Hunter Valley was also one of the pioneer Australian wine regions to offer a complete wine experience – wines, food and lifestyle. Esca in Bimbadgen Estate is one of the best restaurants especially as it is located in a magnificent setting overlooking the vines and the Vintage Golf Course. Some other good restaurants to visit include Amanda's on the Edge, Margan Restaurant and Hunter Valley Restaurant Sanctuary located in Peppers Guest House.

Musical festivals and concerts are also now an essential part of the Hunter experience with a few wineries now staging regular outdoor summer musical concerts.

Several golf courses have opened in recent years to add another dimension to the Hunter Valley wine touring equation. The Vintage, designed by Greg Norman, is the region's premium 18-hole course. Guests can enjoy luxurious accommodation in the adjoining Grand Mercure Apartments while savouring creative regional cuisine and local wines served in the Legends Grill. The Hunter Valley appeals to golfers as there are three championship courses within ten-minute's drive of each other (Cypress Lakes and Hunter Valley Golf and Country Club being the other two courses). **ha**



Azrule Aziz

Director of Food & Beverage
The Royale Chulan Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia

Azrule Aziz offers more than a decade of accomplishment-laden experience in the Food & Beverage industry having worked and studied overseas in five-star establishments including hotels and star cruises. Driving achievements for top service from the kitchen as well as in the operation area, Azrule is out to prove to the world that Malaysians can carry the highest of standards in the hospitality industry. Currently a pioneer in one of Malaysia's up and coming and only traditionally inspired five-star hotel, Azrule brings valuable insights and knowledge concerning leadership and management challenges faced by established names and new organizations in the industry.

Under his watch, The Royale Chulan, officially opened by the Honourable Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak has received various accreditations and hosted high profile events such as Miss Universe Malaysia 2009 & 2010, the Malaysia International Gourmet Festival 2009, World Asia Summit 2010, the United Nations Associations Malaysia, the First Ladies Summit and many more. [ha](#)



Burhan Cülcüoğlu

Director of Food and Beverage
Fairmont Singapore

No stranger to Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Burhan Cülcüoğlu has been directing various banquet and F&B operations at The Fairmont Orchid Hawaii, The Fairmont Kansas City and The Fairmont Hotel Chicago. He began his career in the bartending field at the Hotel Royal, then as a bar supervisor for Club Marco Polo. After mastering bartending, Cülcüoğlu's passion and creativity were shifted to fine-dining when he transferred to the Swissôtel Chicago as Assistant In-room Dining Manager. He worked there for three years, before being promoted to Director of Restaurant Operations in 2000 and finally as a full-fledge Director of Food & Beverage in 2004 at the Fairmont Hotel Kansas City.

After a two-year stint with the Fairmont Hotel Olympic, Seattle's only AAA Five Diamond hotel, Cülcüoğlu moved to Fairmont Singapore and was appointed Director of Food & Beverage in October 2008. He has since supervised the food & beverage operations encompassing banqueting, the collection of six restaurants and bars, the cutting-edge Raffles City Convention Centre, in-room dining and the seasonal promotions of one of the country's leading 5-star hotels. [ha](#)



Damian Olivares

Senior Manager Food and Beverage
Operations (Opening Team)
Marina Bay Sands Singapore

Damian Olivares' journey at Marina Bay Sands Singapore began with his joining the opening team and today he oversees operations for all the food and beverage outlets. The Mexican spent 26 years of his life in San Francisco, California, where he pursued a career in the food and beverage industry. Prior to his appointment as Senior Manager of Food and Beverage Operations in Marina Bay Sands Singapore, Olivares was based in San Jose, California where he helmed the food and beverage operations for three years at Club Corp, a world leader that operates golf courses, country clubs, private business clubs and resorts worldwide. There, he oversaw two clubs, one restaurant, one bar and a 15,000 square feet banquet facility. In 2006 he was Banquet Manager at The Ritz Carlton Hotel, Half Moon Bay, California where he led operations of a 17,000 capacity banquet space. In his earlier years, he expanded his portfolio by undertaking the role of Director of Banquet Operations in hotels like Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa, Monterey and Hotel Sofitel, Redwood Shores. [ha](#)