Hong Kong is such a cosmopolitan city that there is a wide spectrum of palates to cater to, and F&B entrepreneurs from here and afar are quick to identify the strong potentials in a market that accords a high priority on gastronomy. What we lack in numbers is more than compensated for by the fact that we are an acknowledged epicurean capital of the world, and a strategic and affluent market to reckon with. You haven’t arrived until you’ve made a mark here.

We may not have an agrarian industry to speak of, but our excellent connectivity with the rest of the world in terms of transport and trade connections means that we can import all the necessary ingredients for any fine dining one cares to mention. Local gourmands are open-minded, keen on experimentation, and ready to embrace new flavours brought in by an ever-increasing stream of overseas chefs from across the world.

Just when you think you’ve tasted them all, a new restaurant, café or bistro will appear on the culinary map to titillate your taste buds and court your favour. It’s the circle of life in our gastronomic scene.

In this issue, we feature specialty restaurants and talk to the masterminds in the kitchen on how they keep their fans coming back for more. We also probe into their philosophy and their signature dishes for the benefit of gourmands.

Look out for an array of refreshing dishes as we usher in sunny summer after those lingering spring rains.

Andy Ng
Features Editor
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Cheers!

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Gaddi’s new up-and-coming star of the culinary world

The Peninsula’s legendary fine-dining restaurant has a compelling charm that grows ever greater with the passing of time. To lead the culinary cornerstone into a bold new age is recently appointed Gaddi’s Chef Albin Gobil, who has made it his mission to take guests on captivating gastronomic adventures brimming with creativity, innovation and refinement.

 Possessing a lifelong passion for cooking and a relentless dedication to pursuing culinary excellence, Chef Albin is perfectly poised to continue Gaddi’s proud epicurean traditions while infusing the restaurant with a touch of modernity.

 Chef Albin describes his culinary style as “modern classic” and employs a deceptively simple, less-is-more approach that allows the carefully selected flavours of each dish to shine through with minimal distractions.

 This is a shared sentiment with Gaddi’s former Executive Chef Xavier Boyer, who believes that the kitchen is a playground in which to continually experiment with ingredients and flavours, and to fully explore the countless possibilities of culinary art.

 Since his arrival, Chef Albin has formed a creative partnership with The Peninsula’s Wine and Beverage manager Bojan Radulovic to present “Le Weekend du Vin a Gaddi’s” – an experience to give guests a chance to emulate the joie de vivre of a getaway to France.

 Gaddi’s has one of the city’s most extensive wine lists in Hong Kong with over 620 labels and Radulovic, one of the city’s best sommeliers, has curated a unique pairing to Chef Albin’s menu. The special menu with wine pairing promises a sophisticated journey to bring the wines from France, offering guests the perfect opportunity to indulge in a wine-paired brunch.

THE PENINSULA HONG KONG

2 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon
2596 6763


Hailing from Syracuse, Sicily, Chef Angelo was born of fishermen parents. “I think gastronomy has always been in my blood,” he says. He started at culinary school at as early as 14 years of age, and after receiving his first F&B Diploma in Sicily, he started practising his trade all over Europe, starting in Milan, and then covering London, Berlin and Paris.

 The landmark in his culinary career came in 2006 when he came under the wings of Robuchon, and led his various restaurants in Monaco, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Taipei.

 He subsequently branched out ‘to prove himself’ by setting up his own restaurant with the Master’s blessing, first in Taipei, and then in Hong Kong – Locanda dell’Angelo.

 Chef Angelo makes a point of visiting local markets to get a full, first-hand picture of what is available. “It’s a priority for me, and it makes me feel like a child in a toy shop,” he says. But there are key ingredients like sun-dried tomatoes, olives, oregano, and more, that he insists on importing from Sicily because of their unique flavours.

 Chef Angelo has a whole repertoire of signature dishes, but one that’s close to his heart is the Matalotta Fish Soup based on a recipe handed down in the family. Another favourite of his is the Risotto with sea urchin from Hokkaido, which he attributes to the cross-cultural experiences he has gathered over the years.

 “I love Hong Kong because it is such a cosmopolitan city,” he concludes. “The dynamism and the work culture are a constant source of inspiration and motivation for me.”

LEARNING FROM THE MASTER

At the helm of the Michelin-starred Tosca di Angelo Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong is Angelo Agliano, the only Italian chef under the tutelage of Joel Robuchon, ‘the chef of the century’.

There are two main things I’ve learned from Robuchon,” he says. “First, you must cook with your heart. The food you serve in the restaurant must be as good as those you cook for your loved ones.”

“Second, respect the probity of your ingredients,” he continues. “As my superstar mentor often emphasizes, it is more difficult to come up with simple dishes than elaborate ones. So keep it simple and natural, and let the ingredient speak for itself.”

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THE PENINSULA HONG KONG

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What better way to enjoy the Mediterranean way of life than indulging in a deliciously satisfying lunch at Michelin-starred restaurant Tosca di Angelo?

Under the culinary direction of Chef Angelo Agliano, Tosca di Angelo at The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong introduces a special lunch set available every weekend and on public holidays.

Growing up in Sicily by the Mediterranean seaside, Chef Angelo found his passion for cooking through catching and preparing fish with his father, a professional fisherman. Chef Angelo’s upbringing shaped his strengths which exemplify the umami of seafood.

The four-course lunch menu allows diners to sample some of Chef Angelo’s signature dishes.

Embark on a gastronomic journey with refreshing antipasti and choose from a selection of seafood delicacies including Boston Lobster Salad with Avocado and Fresh Burrata, and Blue Fin Tuna with Salmoriglio Sauce and Caviar. Seared to perfection, the flavorful tuna is elevated with this traditional Sicilian sauce.

Savor tantalizing Italian seafood pasta such as Spaghetti Chiustrama Marchi with Langoustines and Datterino Tomato, or Mezzi Paccheri with Sicilian Red Shrimps and Basil Pesto Sauce. Both pasta dishes shine the spotlight on iconic seafood from the Italian Mediterranean coast.

Chef Angelo’s famous Risotto Acquerello with Seasonal Morel and Mixed Mushrooms delights the most discerning palates.

The selection of main courses includes the hearty Red Star Grouper in Matalotta Fish Soup, and the refreshing Seared Line Caught Sea Bass served with Broccoli Rabe and Datterino Tomato Confit, which highlight Chef Angelo’s seafood expertise. You can also go for the Wagyu Beef Sirloin roasted to perfection and served with artichoke and potato.

End the gastronomic journey on a high note with the decadent selection of desserts. Highlights include traditional Ricotta Cream Cannoli with Candied Fruits and White Cheese Ice Cream, and Sicilian Blood Orange Granita with Mixed Nuts Semifreddo and Almond Cake.

The four-course menu is complemented with free-flow Champagne options – choose from Sommelier’s selection of Veuve Clicquot, Ruinart, vintage Louis Roederer Cristal and vintage Louis Roederer Cristal Rosé.

A vegetarian menu is also available.
As a rugby player in his leisure time, Matthew Thaeron sports a competitive spirit, and knows what it takes to win. Since joining Regal Hongkong Hotel in February, he has brought new ideas and innovative dishes to the hotel’s Alto 88 restaurant on the 31st floor which commands a breathtaking view of Victoria Park. Born in Concarneau, a fisherman town in Brittany, France, Chef Matthew started attending culinary school in his early teens. It’s no surprise that seafood is his first love and specialty, but he is, in fact, also a very accomplished pastry chef, having honed his skills for three years in two michelin-starred restaurants. He had been under the tutelage of the renowned Michelin Chef Philippe Leveille, collaborating at his restaurant Miramonti I’Altro in Brescia and had helmed I’Altro in Hong Kong. “I travel to Italy at least once a year, trying out new dishes across the length and breadth of the country in search of inspirations,” says Chef Matthew. “For my summer menu, for instance, I shall be injecting some unique Sicilian flavours.” “I love simple, traditional food that has stood the test of time, but I would add a modern touch to it,” he adds. “I love new concepts, ideas and ingredients, but the crux is not to overwork your dishes.” “I know Hongkongers are sensitive to strong flavours, and I would strike a fine balance in the application of salt and spices,” he continues. “If you put yourself in the shoes of the guest, you will always win.”

Extraordinary Italian Taste at Alto 88

Indulge in contemporary Italian fare with the stunning harbour view and park view serving as the backdrop.

Book now with the promotion code “FW2019” to enjoy 20% off.

(Terms and conditions apply. Offer is valid from 1 to 31 July 2019)
When crab is in season, there's no time for procrastination. The sweet, juicy crab meat is the Midas touch that lends itself to an array of dishes, elevating them to another level of indulgence.

Just when you think you’ve tried it all with Chilli Crab or Black Pepper Crab, Café Malacca comes up with a pleasant surprise in Crab Bee Hoon, or rice noodles. Absolutely homey and non-spicy, the noodles have soaked up all the sweetness and goodness of the steamed crab, and are a great match with the crab meat as you extract them from the claws, the breast and the legs. And an integral part of the joy is, of course, to test the dexterity of your fingers!

To add a bit of crunchiness, I recommend you pair it with Ipoh Bean Sprouts stir-fried with Salted Fish. It’s a match made in heaven!

Other delightful crab dishes include the appetizer Popiah (spring roll); Penang Char Koay Teow (stir-fried rice noodles); and Crab Fried Rice.

When crab is in season, there’s no time for procrastination. The sweet, juicy crab meat is the Midas touch that lends itself to an array of dishes, elevating them to another level of indulgence.

In Australia, when you make a witty comment or come up with a brilliant idea, your friend may ask you: “Have you been eating fish head?” It would appear that fish head is a widely acknowledged source of inspiration.

Café Malacca is a specialist with the Nyonya dishes, one of which is the Assam Fish Head Curry, which needs to be pre-ordered. It is a bit of an acquired taste and may not appeal to everyone, but you will see aficionados grinning from ear to ear once the lid is lifted from the piping hot clay pot. It is a sight to behold with the meaty fish head resting in a thick reddish broth, sprinkled with chopped ginger flowers on top, and accompanied by Ladies’ Fingers.

The authentic broth is a very special concoction made up of a host of ingredients, including lemongrass, shallots, chilli, laksa leaves, Assam and more. There is no coconut milk in this curry. It looks mind-blowingly hot, but is actually quite mild.

To while away the steamy afternoons, you can’t go wrong with Café Malacca’s Tea for Two Special, served between 2.30 and 6.00 pm. Comprising all the goodies from Samosa to Kaya Toast, Pandan Rolls, Durian Pudding and more, it is an irresistible treat that goes down well with either tea or coffee.

If you need cooling down, I can recommend either the Calamansi juice or Barley water. Served either cold or warm, both are great thirst-quenchers. But to really spoil yourself, go for the Penang Ice Kacang. Topped with rose and sarsi syrups and a dollop of ice cream, the shaved ice covers a treasure trove of sweet nibbles, bringing you utter ecstasy.

Alternatively, try the Cendol, a traditional favourite in Malaysia and Singapore. This coconut milk based dessert of shaved ice is topped with green pandan flavoured mung-bean jelly, red bean and palm sugar, and is bound to round off your meal in the most satisfying manner.
For those who do not know, Argentinean steaks hold the title of some of the best steaks in the world. This is because its grass-fed cows graze under natural conditions, and are allowed to roam on the endless pampas in the country, giving their beef an unrivaled quality.

The best way to savour fantastic beef is to have it served grilled, without excessive seasoning or sauces so the true flavour of the meat comes through, and this is exactly how Tango strives to serve its steaks. As diners enter, they will instantly notice Tango’s Latino passion and vibrancy through its large sizzling open cooking station where the steaks and meat are perfectly prepared with mouth-watering aromas wafting in the air.

Only prime cuts of beef are used, including prime quality Argentinian rump, fillet, sirloin, rib eye, skirt or ribs, all from grass fed sustainable beef, hand selected from a reliable source ranch and cooked over a sizzling grill, giving the steaks a perfect sear and a seductive, rustic charm.

The mains are complemented by a variety of alluring quintessential Argentinian empanada, appetizers, salads and pastas, including a selection of zesty seafood ceviche and scrumptious desserts. For those who prefer other protein choices, the menu also features lamb, chicken and salmon options, plus an extensive selection of vegetarian side dishes.

This gourmet experience is further elevated by an impressive selection of some of the world’s finest wines such as the classic Argentinian Malbec, accompanied by an exceptional mixologist menu which introduces Argentina’s Buenos Aires cocktail culture to diners in both locations.

The superb dining experience is brought to diners by a team of professional South Americans chefs, under the guidance of Corporate Chef Martin Calvo, who strives to bring Tango a flair and passion for cuisine from his Argentina homeland for every guest.
The only 360° revolving restaurant in Hong Kong, The Grand Buffet atop the iconic Hopewell Centre offers a mouth-watering array of international delicacies. The famous ‘a-la-minute buffet’ concept means customers can enjoy their favorite dishes piping hot, as the chef applies his magical touch right in front of them.

The Grand Buffet provides a bewildering range of delicacies, ranging from live shrimps, fresh seasonal seafood, Cantonese barbecue (Siu Mei) to Tempura, Teppanyaki, and Indian curries. To complement the various genres of food, the restaurant boasts a comprehensive wine list, alongside popular spirits and beer. Operated by Lisboa Food & Wines Limited, The Grand Buffet shares the same phenomenal wine cellar with the Lisboa group in Macau which boasts one of the most outstanding lists in the world with a selection of over 16,800 labels.

The restaurant serves not only lunch and dinner buffet, but also ‘The Grand Brunch’ and ‘The Grand Tea Time’. With a grandstand view of Victoria Harbor, there is no better place to spend an indulgent and relaxing day. The restaurant also provides tailor-made wedding packages that make the most of its commanding panorama for a dreamlike ceremony. With the emerald sea to the north, and the verdant mountain to the south, couples and pledge their eternal love for each other in a perfect setting.

Focusing on quality products, attentive service and a unique setting, The Grand Buffet delivers an upscale dining experience coupled with impeccable views whichever way you turn.
John Anthony in Causeway Bay introduces a new chapter in Chinese cuisine

From the award-winning Mott 32 team is John Anthony, a 7,000 square foot Cantonese restaurant with three custom-built barbecues, a highly customised kitchen and unique interior design. Built with sustainability in mind, the restaurant aims to incorporate as many sustainable features as possible in hopes of setting a new standard of environmental consciousness in restaurant design in Hong Kong.

Executive Chef Saito Chau has teamed up with Mott 32’s Group Executive Chef, Lee Man-Sing to build up John Anthony’s menu. The cuisine is inspired by the journeys along the Spice Routes that brought closer east-west food cultures under which Chinese markets flourished.

At John Anthony, the food celebrates the best of both words with Cantonese favourites such as charcoal grill roasted meats and handmade dim sum, along with regional cuisines such as Szechuan, Hunan and Shandong heavily influencing the menu.

Pairing the finished ingredients found along the Spice Routes with the latest modern cooking techniques to blend old and new, the restaurant presents Razor Clams with White Vinegar & Pickled Peppercorn, the Szechuan Pain-Seared Scallops with Cucumber Salad and the Slow-Cooked Wagyu Beef Cheek with Cold Watermelon & Chili Sauce.

Experience the succulent grilled meats grilled in the custom built BBQ grills drawn from researching ancient tandoor ovens in Southwest China and traditional Cantonese barbecue methods with the signature Char Siu dishes such as the Iberico Presa Pork Char Siu, Australian Wagyu Beef Fillet Char Siu with Shredded Scallions or the Grass-Fed Black Angus Beef Short Rib Char Siu, served on bone.

Dim sum delicacies include the Steamed Rice Roll with Soft-Shell Crab & Squid Ink and the Squid, Cucumber, Tiger Prawn & Egg White Dumplings. The dim sum is handmade every day.

Further underscoring their commitment to sustainability and the environment, John Anthony also boasts a zero-waste cocktail program that utilises local and foraged ingredients from around Hong Kong & China. Signature cocktails include the Uprooted cocktail made with pandan vodka, tea-smoked ginger, kaffir lime, passionfruit, and honey sourced from an apiary in Sha Tin, in addition to the Into the Wilderness cocktail, made with lemon verbena gin, waste falernum, peach, lemon, chilli, and recycled pineapple.

Taking strides to be even more eco-friendly, John Anthony is upcycling waste plastic and paper into coasters and menus. They have also implemented a composter system in its kitchen to prevent food waste, reducing food waste by over 80% as compared to the average non-composter restaurant. Guests will also be provided with a guilt-free dining experience from start to finish as John Anthony also uses recyclable or fully biodegradable take away containers.

Redeem 10% off your bill and receive a complimentary glass of bubbly upon mention of “THESTANDARD” for your first booking of lunch or dinner. (Valid until August 30th.)

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**SUMMER ADVENTURES WITH DREAM CRUISES**

Discover the magic of cruising with the parent-kid summer programs

As one of the largest cruise lines in the world, Dream Cruises has cemented their excellence at sea by ranking in the top 10 Large Resort Ship by Berlitz Cruising and Cruise Guide 2019. Offering an all-inclusive price that includes a one-stop price for cabins, dining, and leisure, Dream Cruises promises to be your home away from home.

Come aboard World Dream to experience the full summer programs with Dream Cruises’ The Adventures of Astronauts and Mermaids, sure to appeal to families with boys and girls alike!

**SPACE AGE**

Among the limitless fun your family can look forward to aboard Dream Cruises’ ships this summer is the Astronaut Training Centres where Dr. Leroy Chiao, a former NASA astronaut will share his experience during the camp activities.

Dr. Chiao is a former NASA astronaut with over 229 days in space – kids can learn through the Astronaut Camp Activities on how to design, build and launch their own rockets; build their own lunar probes with the L-Cross Design Challenge; and learn more about moons, planets and space exploration.

Dream Cruises is turned into an Astronaut Training Centre where both your body and mind are challenged with the “Moon Craters Climb” at Rock Climbing Wall and the “Wire Loop” space mission, as well as the fly missions in Star Wars™: Battle Pod Arcade machines.

On hand is also the award-winning astro-photographer Timmy Wong who can teach guests on how to use cameras to travel along the milky way! Wong was awarded as the Astronomy Photographer (People & Space Category) in 2015 with his photo Sunset Peak Star Trail that is permanently displayed at the Royal Observatory Greenwich in London.

**UNDERWATER FUN**

For families who wish to tap into their inner mermaids, the Mermaid Academy with Mermaid Kat is the activity for you! Girls and boys of all ages can learn how to become a mermaid and swim like them too, with photo session complete with mermaid tails attached to your body for the perfect holiday memento.

There is also the Little Mermaid Singing Class for those who want to keep up with their Mermaid dreams. Dream Cruises’ onboard singers will give lessons on improving singing techniques, while kids who are participating will also have chances to perform during the Masquerade Party and even complete with the Reach for the Star Party for those of you who truly love Pokemon as well as a Ship Parade to see all your favourite characters.

Activities for the whole family include taking part in the “Family Sports Carnival” each family will be given a “Parent-Kid Passport” and participants can collect stamps after accumulating Parent-Kid time through physical activities!

**FAMILY FUN**

For families looking for stimulating and educational fun, the Little Dreamers Program welcomes kids aged from 2 to 12 to join the first STEAM workshops. Free STEAM workshops include LEGO Education “Little Architect”, “Unplugged Coding” and “Kids Music Jam”.

If you’re looking for activities where parents get as much fun as the kids, Dream Cruises also has a spot for you. With facilities such as the Waterslides, Kids Water Park, Climbing Wall, Mini-Golf, Ropes Course and Basketball courts, guests can fully experience an integrated resort at sea, keeping active and healthy while enjoying a hassle-free form of family travel.

Activities for the whole family include taking part in the “Family Sports Carnival” each family will be given a “Parent-Kid Passport” and participants can collect stamps after accumulating Parent-Kid time through physical activities!

**HOME AWAY FROM HOME**

Aboard Dream Cruises’ ships, guests can look forward to unpacking just once into the myriad of cabins and suites for the ultimate hassle-free vacation. With an All-Inclusive price for accommodation, dining, leisure activities and entertainment, Dream Cruises takes care of everything so your only job is to relax and have fun.

One of the best parts of going on a Dream Cruises holiday is that you can try all the flavors of the world on one cruise ship. Dream Cruises offers its guests food for all seasons: from buffets, afternoon teas and fancy dinners, guests can pick and choose to their whims from an array of international cuisines; Japanese, Chinese, Asian are all available!

Meanwhile, there is a special theme for August sailings, where kids can meet Detective Pikachu at a Meet and Greet, as well as great Pikachu at the “Power On” Ship Parade! Kids can spruce up their language skills at the Power On Language Academy, one of the many programs on offer in selected sailings in August.

**SUMMER DELIGHTS**

For more info on Dream Cruises sailings, visit dreamcruiseline.com.
It takes a few things to be an exceptional chef—talent, passion, and experience. With 20 years of expertise, Chef Johnny Sin at Legend Palace has a keen sense of what it takes to create truly lip-smacking Chinese fare, snatching many international awards including the Silver Awards of Hofex Hong Kong International Culinary Classic endorsed by World Chefs - World Association of Chefs Societies.

When it comes to his culinary philosophy, Chef Sin emphasizes on two things—the first being dynamicity. “I am constantly on the lookout for new angles to create dishes,” says Sin. “When diners come to savour our dishes, there will always be new elements waiting for them to discover, whether it be in terms of presentation or taste, giving dishes an exciting new twist without compromising their traditional charm.”

Freshness is the second secret that gives the chef’s dishes their spark. “I always insist on using the most seasonal ingredients when I cook,” says Sin. “Using the freshest ingredients available instantly elevates flavours and the texture of dishes, giving them an alluring quality that diners instantly notice.”

For the ultimate omakase experience, Chef Sin recommends his signature Roasted Chicken with Chinese Wine Flambe served by gueridon service. This traditional Chinese dish is remade into a gourmet’s favourite. Incorporating lotus leaves and Chinese wine, it exudes irritable flavours that linger on the palate. Its impressive flaming presentation further sets it apart to be a must-try dish.

The Spicy and Sour Fish Maw Rich Bone Soup is another dish that the chef highly recommends. The highlight of it is its fine bone brew which combines pig, chicken and fish bone to bring out flavours which perfectly complement each other. Diners are also allowed to choose how much vinegar they add, tailoring the dish to exactly how they like it for the perfect Chinese culinary experience.

Executive Head Chef Lucio Mauro Cabral Leal brings diners an authentic Brazilian culinary experience like no other. A real master chef never tatters. With 27 years of experience under his belt, Brazilian Executive Head Chef Lucio Mauro Cabral Leal of Macau Fisherman’s Wharf’s FW Rio Grill is the expert in Gauchos cooking. His brilliant dishes have earned him the chance to cook for many dazzling stars like Celine Dion and Oprah Winfrey, gaining the nod of approval from even the most discerning gourmets.

Chef Leal’s passion in cooking stems from his family’s generation of fervor for cooking. In Brazil, food is a sign of hospitality and a way to express love, and this is where the chef finds his drive. “I welcome every guest like my family and use food to show love and tell the story of Brazil’s culinary art. It is priceless when I see a smile on diners’ faces when they eat,” says Chef Leal.

For those who are unfamiliar with South American cuisine, Gaucho cooking is a unique Brazilian barbecue style cooking that emphasizes authenticity and simplicity. Steaks are grilled in a unique yet simple method, using only salt to season with no sauce or even pepper. This allows the true flavors of the meat to shine through. Chef Leal also strictly uses ‘natural flames’ produced by charcoal instead of gas. “Every little detail counts when you are striving for perfection. Many chefs are oblivious of this, but the fire that cooks the food plays a huge role. Fire produced by gas includes many chemicals and impurities which spoils the meat,” he explains.

Exceptional grills that the master chef highly recommends at the FW Rio Grill include the Filet Mignon and the Costela Beef Ribs, known for their unrivalled tenderness that creates a butter-like consistency, melting in the mouth as they are savored, bringing diners the finest Brazilian traditional ‘rodizio’ experience.
Dine in Le Blanc for an authentic French indulgence in a private and romantic ambience.

Whether it's for a special occasion or simply a relaxing night out, the candlelight at Le Blanc instantly puts you in the right mood for some outstanding culinary delights.

The thoughtfully curated dinner menu starts with a selection of ten appetizers, enough to make you play Hamlet in terms of making a decision. Each with its own irresistible appeal, there is the Jambon Iberian, which has gone through 36 months of drying, served with melon, cheese, olives and gherkin ($178); smoked scallop roll with crab mousse and orange caviar ($178); or the signature Sauté Foie Gras with apples and grapes for that superb feel of the soft crumbly fat melting in your mouth.

After a fruit sorbet to cleanse your taste buds, the sumptuous feast resumes with an array of tempting offers. For beef-lovers, munch on the Languedoc braised Beef Angus ($338) or the US Prime milk-fed rib eye ($388). Berkshire rack of Pork with truffle and grilled pineapple and port sauce is another succulent alternative. To seal the juice within the meat, Le Blanc chooses expensive aseptic pork to make medium-well pork dish possible and hygienic enough to savor.

Finish with 9 choices of home-made desserts, such as Earl Grey Crème brûlée, platter of 5 mixed cheeses with dried fruits, for a fulfilling evening.
There are many delectable classic Chinese dishes that take a special place in the hearts of foodies, however, overtime they can sometimes get repetitive.

At Grand Palace, these traditional classics are recreated with new exciting twists added to them all while preserving their original flavours and charm. Dim sums are the favourite of many, and they are all handmade here. The Signature Steamed Soup Dumpling Stuffed with Crabmeat and Siu Mai with Crab Roe are must-try dishes for seafood lovers, while the Steamed Hokkaido Milk Bun is the perfect tea snack to indulge in.

For carnivores, barbecue specialties such as Signature Barbecued Pork and Roasted Foie Gras, and Honey-Roasted Pork Belly will make their mouths water. Heat seekers will particularly love spicy mains such as Sautéed Scottish Giant Razar Clam with X.O. Sauce and Double Cooked Sliced Pork with Sichuan Style, and of course there are the famous classics which everybody knows including Kung Po Chicken with Chili and Peanut, and Spicy Ma Po Tofu which will surely give you a good sweat.

There are also a plethora of lip-smacking poultry dishes to savour, but guests may want to try the signature Sautéed Chicken with Wild Fire Cracked Chili and Black Bean, and definitely the Roasted Chicken with Chinese Wine Flambe served by gueridon service which is presented in flames.

The perfect Chinese dining experience cannot be complete without a quenching soup and scrumptious desserts. The Spicy and Sour Fish Maw Rich Bone Soup features a rich fish maw and bone soup that contains collagen and is fantastic for the skin; while desserts such as Almond Latte with Egg White and Mango Cream with Sago, Pomelo and Aloe Vera are luscious yet not overly sweet, ending the meal on a high note.

INNOVATIVE CHINESE DINNING
Rediscover classic Chinese delicacies in contemporary style at Grand Palace in Macao

THE GRAND PALACE
2/F, Legend Palace
(853) 8801 8008
11am - 3pm, 6pm - 11pm
A true carnivore is constantly in search of amazing grills that are to die for, and at Rio Grill, they will find what they are looking for. Gaucho cooking is a unique and traditional style of Brazilian barbecue cooking that highlights authenticity and simplicity, and this is exactly the kind of fare you will find at the restaurant.

Rio’s rodizio style grill includes a myriad of choices from chicken and pork to beef and lamb rodizio, perfect for fickle minded foodies. The star of its menu is definitely its grills which are effortlessly delightful. Only salt is used when cooking the protein, without sauce or even pepper, and only natural flames lit by charcoal instead of gas is used. This way, the true flavors of the meat shines through, untainted by chemicals and impurities.

Aside from rodizio, there are also other mouth-watering options from the a la carte menu which includes a variety of grilled seafood such as calamari, bacalhau, and prawns, as well as traditional dishes such as Feijoada. For more classic Brazilian dishes, diners may also try out the buffet where they will find delicacies like Coxinha, Salgadinhos Mistos, Moqueca Capixaba, and Manjar de coco.

When diners step into Rio Grill, they will find themselves immersed in a classic Gaucho environment as if they have traveled to Brazil. As they look around the chic restaurant they will find themselves surrounded by different Brazilian style art work including vintage cowboy artwork and trinkets, giving them a truly Brazilian culinary experience that they will relish in.
Craftily named Beauty & The Bees, the dinner set is a joint presentation by Guerlain and Cova, and is available at HK$888 for two at selected Cova outlets until the end of July.

Taking inspiration from the Guerlain tradition, Cova executive chef Sergio Landi has created a 5-course tasting menu imbued with the French perfumer’s classic, floral-scented colognes, as well as the nourishing honey from its emblematic bee product line. Each dish is artistically conceived from ingredients, preparation and presentation to evoke a delicate hint of the floral notes and honeyed tastes of mid-summer.

The Rosy Garden mocktail makes a refreshing start to the dinner with its homemade rose and strawberry syrup base, prepared with mixed summer berries, a helping of fresh rose leaves, lemon and lime wedges, and topped up with oolong tea and soda water. You can ask for a cocktail version that comes with an extra shot of prosecco.

Amidst a waft of perfume comes the appetizer that is a pleasure for the eye. The beetroot marinated salmon is complemented perfectly with the light-pickled radish that is finished with a dollop of lemon oil and horseradish sauce. Cool - literally and metaphorically.

One can be deceived into thinking that the soup that follows is cold because of the billowing mist in the presentation. But the sweet potato, ginger & honey soup is in fact served piping hot, which warms the heart and nurses the stomach.

If you like your risotto without an overdose of butter, then you will enjoy chef Sergio’s version cooked with homemade mixed herbs, pesto and fennel pollen. There is a choice for the mains. You can go for a French cod lightly pan-fried with two types of gnocchi – beetroot and spinach. The dish is garnished with red ‘beehive’ crisps and sprayed with honey and miso sauce. Alternatively, you can spoil yourself with an Australian black onyx sirloin that is chargrilled to perfection, with a side of cherry tomato peeled and carefully injected with honey, plus beehive-shaped potato duchess that has been immaculately seasoned, cooked and grilled.

The final sweet intoxication comes in the form of a white silky-smooth chocolate panna cotta, paired with an irresistible sauce of honey and passion fruit, crushed pistachio and chocolate crisps. Mamma mia!

This exquisite but unpretentious dinner is aimed to please and impress without breaking the bank. What more can you ask for?

COVA
www.pasticceriacova.com
Under the direction of Group Executive Chef Jesus Pascual who has just returned from a stint at Gaggan in Bangkok, one of The World’s 50 Best Restaurants, and Executive Chef Fabio Pombo, Casa Lisboa has come up with a suite of summer dishes that are bound to bring pleasant surprises.

For a thirst-quenching start, drop red or white wines for the moment and go for green instead. The Gazela contains only 9% alcohol, and tastes a bit like lime soda – but in a much more sassy way!

Turning simplicity into sublimity, our culinary magicians use everyday Portuguese ingredients like eggplant, tomato and zucchini to create a healthy, light vegetarian dish called Casa Lisboa Vegagna. Their immaculate skill is reflected in the way they blend the components into a consistent texture.

Foie gras goes well with crispy toast, but for a touch of finesse, it is mixed with roasted beef bone marrow, and balanced with softly cooked onion that is caramelized in port wine and balsamic reduction, thereby lifting a simple appetizer to the next level of indulgence.

For the mains, Casa Lisboa has refined the traditional dish of Cabidela by replacing chicken blood with a homemade guinea broth and Portuguese dark beer and spices to cook the rice. They have also opted for the more elegant and rich-tasting Guinea Fowl in place of chicken.

Fed on acorns, Iberico pigs have gained favour with gourmands who adore the meat for its taste, aroma and texture. The chefs have further enhanced its appeal by complementing the prized pork chop with an exquisite apple sauce that is made from pork broth and Madeira wine.

For short ribs with a twist, Casa Lisboa has paired it with an authentic side dish called Alheira Migas. Alheira is a Portuguese game sausage that comprises pork, pheasant, quail meat, and duck meat which are mixed with bread, olive oil, garlic and paprika, giving the tender Australian Angus beef ribs a smoky and game flavour.

To round off a perfect meal, the creative Mango and Passion Fruit Burrata is an absolute winner!
At Causeway Bay’s iconic Tower 535, Wagyu Vanne by Gosango showcases the intricacy and timelessness of Yakiniku, a traditional Japanese grill cooking in which the quality of ingredients is fundamental.

In view of its close relationship with Hiyama, one of Japan’s oldest and finest meat suppliers, Wagyu Vanne is in a position to punctuate its menus with the finest cuts of the delectable Hiyama Kuroge Wagyu beef.

Renowned for its fine grain and superb marbling, Kuroge Wagyu is the benchmark for luxury and boasts a rich flavor and intense aroma that lends itself perfectly to this refined grilling technique. The new Yakiniku restaurant is helmed by celebrity chef Vanne Kuwahara, founder of Tokyo’s acclaimed ‘Yoroniku’ restaurant Ebisu, a favorite among Japanese celebrities, and is his first Hong Kong restaurant concept.

Intimate and discrete, Wagyu Vanne by Gosango’s interiors include frosted glass screens inspired by traditional Japanese shoji, which divide the space into a variety of sections catering to a total of 100 guests. A sense of pageantry is created as guests arrive and are welcomed by a glass display wall showcasing cuts of Hiyama Wagyu beef being prepared.

Beyond, the dining area is dressed in earthy tones, with natural timber, cool slate and exposed brick, framing spacious leather booths and timber latticed walls. The space also includes eight private dining rooms, catering to 4 and 20 diners.

This intimate dining atmosphere is the canvas on which inspiring celebrity chef Vanne Kuwahara taps into his extensive experience both in the kitchen and at the DJ turntables, to create an unapologetically contemporary dining experience that remains steeped in tradition.

At Wagyu Vanne by Gosango, you enjoy a sophisticated multi-sensory dining experience where the coveted Japanese Hiyama Kuroge Wagyu beef is the star of the show.

At Wagyu Vanne by Gosango, the accomplished chef gives a subtle but definitive Western twist to traditional Japanese grilling, with a focus on intimate service and the finest ingredients. Professional Yakiniku consultants guide diners through the grilling process.

In addition to signature Kuwahara dishes, guests at Wagyu Vanne by Gosango can enjoy dishes created specifically for Gosango as part of both the a la carte and set menus, which include the special Deluxe Hiyama Wagyu Menu by Hiyama x Vanne, a multiple-course tasting menu. Priced at HK$998 per person, highlights of this exclusive affair include stunning Wagyu sushi; salt-crusted Wagyu short rib; Wagyu oxtail soup; signature Tataki Wagyu rice; Wagyu pappardelle Bolognese; daily special meat cut in “Shabu Shabu” style with shaved truffle and A5 Wagyu Chateaubriand, which is cooked in front of diners and paired with truffle potato foam. This spectacular menu is concluded with special dessert including the choice of traditional Japanese shaved ice with green tea or salted egg custard topping.

Alternatively, Wagyu Vanne by Gosango’s a la carte menu has something for every lover of fine beef, including Wagyu consommé; Wagyu cheek ravioli with beef-scented tea; A5 Wagyu served “Ocha-Style”; the “Hiyama” A5 mini burger; and the ultimate comfort, the Hiyama A5 Wagyu sandwich, served for two and made with a choice of Chateaubriand or chunk flap cut. These dishes are complemented by Hiyama A5 Wagyu cuts that guests can cook on the Yakiniku grill in one of the city’s most intriguing and refined dining experiences of the year.

WAGYU VANNE BY GOSANGO
1/F, Tower 535, No. 535 Jaffe Road, Causeway Bay
2885 0533
www.gosango.com.hk/wagyu-vanne
Hailed as one of the Top 10 Indian TV Chefs, celebrity chef Harpal Singh comes from Northern India and recently became one of the Top 20 Chefs to follow on YouTube. Incorporating Ayurvedic concepts into his famous Indian recipes, Chef Harpal continues to explore and utilize the nutritional values of the endless Indian produce available, including chilli, an ingredient that is integral to the new menu.

But fear not as three levels of spiciness will be applied to the new dishes, including the mildly spicy Bengali Daab Chingdi, an authentic Bengali-style curry served inside a fresh coconut with stir-fried prawns, green chilis and grain mustard. To snack on, there is the spicy Pizza Samosa – delicious cheese and tomato salsa stuffed pockets served with a hot cheese sauce and cold honey mustard mayo sauce – and Asparagus Pakody, crunchy deep-fried asparagus dipped in cold garlic-chilli mayo. As for a more filling dish, opt for the slow-cooked Braised Lamb Shanks of level two spiciness, perfectly paired with potato masala, spicy Rogan Josh sauce and a choice of garlic naan or jasmine rice.

Other refreshing non-spicy creations include the earthy Mushroom Cappuccino soup served with truffle oil and mushroom cremini. Watermelon and Goat Cheese Salad enticed with tamarind glaze to beat the summer heat; Chicken Gilafi Seekh Kebab, a tandoori-baked chicken mince kebab deliciously balanced with creamy mint sauce, pepper Brunoise and a tandoori salad; and Chef Harpal’s 24-hour slow cooked Black Dal.

As for dessert, there is the Chocolate Samosa Mango Ice Cream with chilli mango chat whole black and green gram, and Carrot Halwa Spring Rolls dunked in a dolce maple Rabdi and served with frosted fruits.

The enticing choices are wonderful for any age and cater to both meat lovers and vegetarians.

The first restaurant in Hong Kong to be mentioned in the Michelin Guide (2013) for Indian cuisine, award-winning Jashan continues to commit itself to quality and authenticity with a menu that is set to impress. Breathing new life into this gastronomic institution, Jashan now boasts an elegant new interior design, coupled with innovative buffet lunch and brunch menus that capture the flavours, aromas and traditions of Indian cuisine while complementing dishes with a modern twist.

Bathed in golden light from banks of suspended chandeliers, with soothing hand-painted detailing on the walls and comfy, colonial-styled furnishing, Jashan’s dining room is bright and sophisticated, serving as the perfect canvas on which the culinary team presents its modern take on traditional Indian fare.
Hailing from South Africa, the abalone has been bathed in a homemade herbal broth based on a secret formula before being placed in a circular vessel laced with dry ice. The addition of an edible liquid soap to the dry ice creates a white cloud that can be nurtured into a bubble through some nifty handiwork. As the bubble steadily builds up into a dome, it eventually bursts, dispersing a mist of white clouds to reveal the abalone. And the treasured delicacy tastes as good as it looks!

Another dish that creates a bit of drama as it unfolds before you is the Lobster Rice Soup that is served in a Korean style of stone vessel. To the rice is added an assortment of premium ingredients, including chopped lobster, tomato, long silky melon, preserved vegetable, mushroom, spring onion and crispy rice bubbles. A piping hot fish soup is then added to the rice which is mixed well with the condiments before serving. It’s the epitome of home-cooked comfort food.

Chef Chak has come up with a series of other crafted dishes for the Imperial Feast. For a refreshing starter, try the sliced beef topped with a vinegar jelly that is perfect to counter the summer heat, or the exquisite honey-glazed Char Siu (BBQ pork) that pleases the palate with its flavor as well as texture.

Seafood lovers will have a field day as they savour the yummy Baked Lobster Tail with its complementary chopped onion, mushroom and cheese. To awaken your taste buds, you need go no further than the Deep-fried Prawns in a light batter and drizzled with a lemon sauce. But my champion vote would have to go to the Giant Grouper fillet topped with black truffle. What a super fusion dish!

It’s like watching a David Copperfield show!

I have attended dinners where the restaurant put on a noodle-making show, organized a pasta-making workshop, or demonstrated pouring milk tea through the air, but it’s the first time I have seen a magic show that reveals a top signature dish, writes Andy Ng.
L’Envol is helmed by award-winning chef Olivier Elzer who brings with him over 20 illustrious years of culinary craftsmanship, having previously led Pierre and L’Atelier de Joel Robuchon to two and three Michelin stars respectively. His own restaurant, Seasons, also won him a Michelin star in 2014.

Decorated in soft cream and beige, L’Envol is the work of distinguished designer Andre Fu based on his interpretation of the contemporary French salon. Oozing charm and exuding glamour, the restaurant features hand-painted silk murals splashed with gold, and hectares of ivory Carrara marble underfoot, while hexagonal chandeliers comprising brass and ivory agate hang from the ceiling.

For an immersive French culinary indulgence, you can do no better than try the restaurant’s 5-course Signature menu paired with an extensive French wine selection. For starters, one moves from decadent French Shadi caviar to Tuna in five spices complemented with crushed avocado and crispy shallots. Whether you’re a seafood fan or a meat lover, neither of the mains will disappoint. The roasted French John Dory comes with eggplant confit and a red wine sauce, while the seared A3 Kagoshima beef fillet is cooked in tilleul and French green asparagus. Take your time to muse over the subtlety and the meticulous care to details in each and every dish.

For a sweet conclusion to a delectable dinner, the rhubarb poached in verbena syrup, lemon Chantilly and white peach sorbet is simply scrumptious.

As only becoming of a luxury hotel, the newly-opened St. Regis Hong Kong at Wanchai boasts a French haute cuisine restaurant in L’Envol.

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Hyatt Regency Hong Kong is bringing over the petit bleu, Brittany blue lobster, to its restaurant Hugo’s from July to September. Executive Sous Chef Josef Gallenberger brings the blue lobster from the largest peninsula of France to Hong Kong.

Decorated with a suit of armour, ornate mirrors, chandeliers, guns and shield plaques, Hugo’s has an array of traditional serving apparatus, including Christofle hors d’oeuvres and dessert trolleys, all presenting a unique and classic European atmosphere.

To delight the palate of every seafood lover, the lobster is first presented in two cold appetisers and one hot creation with superior culinary finesse. Chef Josef debuts a classic yet luxurious blue lobster and seafood platter that features tsarskaya oyster n°2, bouchot mussels, periwinkle snails and Cristal blue prawn with four homemade sauces. This is a truly scrumptious option to be shared between two diners.

Another starter is the refreshing blue lobster ceviche with cucumber, mint, pink pepper, salmon caviar, finger lime and olive oil that is perfect for the summer. The ingredients offer a harmonised collection of sour, salty, and mint flavours all on one plate. Or else try the flavourful blue lobster Bouillabaisse with saffron, parsley and tortellini, in which the exceptional aroma of blue lobster is heightened.

Continue along the petit bleu culinary journey with the butter glazed blue lobster medallion with avocado, young bok choy, turnip, peas, salicornia and crushed potatoes where the fine delicacy is presented in bite-sized pieces to offer extra tenderness.

For meat connoisseurs, opt for the traditional yet show-stopping surf and turf: half blue lobster and an Australian A4 Wagyu sirloin. The dish is flambeed table-side with bourbon whisky and topped with green asparagus, pineapple, corn, bacon, sweet potato and herb butter as garnish.

Hyatt Regency Hong Kong is bringing a world-class delicacy to Hong Kong.
HEALTHY DELIGHTS

Regal Court at Regal Kowloon Hotel introduces seasonal, healthy dishes

Emphasizing seasonal ingredients and healthy cooking methods to refresh your palate, the Chief Executive Chinese Chef at Regal Court presents an array of dishes to customers this June.

Conveniently located in Tsimshatsui, Regal Court at Regal Kowloon Hotel is renowned for its traditional Cantonese favourites, authentic Sichuan delicacies as well as splendid Dim Sum in an exquisite setting. Regal Court also offers well-equipped private rooms which are ideal for functions and private gatherings.

Highlights include the Steamed Egg White with Maitake Mushrooms and Seafood. Chef Tsang explains that Maitake is a sought-after mushroom with a fluffy texture and fantastic aroma, and that the best way to taste its freshness is by steaming it with seafood and egg white.

Chef Tsang has also concocted the Braised Chicken with Fig and Salted Lemon. Fig is a summer fruit with a high nutritional value and paired with the refreshing salty lemon, the dish is sure to bring guests a taste of summer.

Continue along this journey of fresh ingredients brought out by Regal Court with the Steamed Grouper with Black Garlic, Fungus and Angled Luffa. The iron-rich fungus and refreshing angled luffa are healthy picks, and complement the sweet and sour taste of black garlic to go along with the fresh fish.

For beef lovers, the Stir-fried Diced Wagyu Beef with Dragon Fruit and Mushrooms is not to be missed. To give the Wagyu that melt-in-the-mouth sensation, it is slightly stir-fried and the juiciness is balanced out with the fiber-rich dragon fruit to elevate the flavour of the meat.

Finally, for a simple yet delectable choice, the Poached Jade Sprouts with Goji and Clams in Fish Broth. The jade sprouts are firstly braised in the protein-rich fish broth to soften the texture and then stewed with clams and goji, ensuring that guests are served the original flavour of vegetables.

Regal Court presents a Spanish-Portuguese Dinner Buffet

Regal Court at Regal Kowloon Hotel, 71 Mody Road, Tsimshatsui
Tel: 2313 8681
www.regalhotel.com

SkyCity Bistro at SkyCity Marriott Hotel is offering the dinner buffet that highlights traditional dishes such as Portuguese Pork Stew, Spanish-style Fish and Chorizo, Chickpeas and Tripe Stew and Chicken Paella.

Specialising in all-day dining and international-themed buffets, SkyCity Bistro at SkyCity Marriott Hotel is directly connected to Hong Kong’s largest exhibition and convention venues, AsiaWorld-Expo on Lantau Island. The restaurant offers both a la carte menus and popular international cuisine buffets.

Among these are the signature treats such as fresh and chilled seafood on ice – everything from New Zealand oysters, blue mussels, jade whelks, prawns, Canadian snow crab legs and French edible crabs, to a rich selection of Japanese sashimi like tuna, salmon, snapper, octopus and Botan ebi -- that is served on a rotating basis.

The extensive buffet counter also has aromatic and spicy Indian dishes, piping hot and tangy Asian noodles as well as succulent Cantonese BBQ meats.

With its Open Kitchen, SkyCity Bistro at SkyCity Marriott is just one of the many attractions at the hotel. Guests can avail of the hotel’s luxurious accommodations with 658 spacious rooms, featuring exceedingly comfortable beds, modern room amenities and options of bay or sea view. Its full service facilities include 14 premium meeting rooms for corporate events, 5 restaurants/bars for a variety of dining options and an award-winning Quan Spa for wellness retreats.

Authentic Iberian Delights

Bringing in authentic flavors from the Iberian Peninsula, SkyCity Bistro at SkyCity Marriott Hotel is offering the dinner buffet that highlights traditional dishes such as Portuguese Pork Stew, Spanish-style Fish and Chorizo, Chickpeas and Tripe Stew and Chicken Paella.

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The extensive buffet counter also has aromatic and spicy Indian dishes, piping hot and tangy Asian noodles as well as succulent Cantonese BBQ meats.

With its Open Kitchen, SkyCity Bistro at SkyCity Marriott is just one of the many attractions at the hotel. Guests can avail of the hotel’s luxurious accommodations with 658 spacious rooms, featuring exceedingly comfortable beds, modern room amenities and options of bay or sea view. Its full service facilities include 14 premium meeting rooms for corporate events, 5 restaurants/bars for a variety of dining options and an award-winning Quan Spa for wellness retreats.
Food and wine make perfect partners, and nobody knows it better than Renaissance Harbour View Hotel Hong Kong as they launch yet another popular pairing event of German Riesling Weeks.

Beat the summer heat with some cool, refreshing Riesling at the Renaissance as it celebrates German Riesling Weeks when exquisite seasonal German white asparagus delicacies are paired with luscious Riesling and German wines at Dynasty and Mirage Bar & Restaurant. Wine lovers can also create their own German wine pairing experiences with premium seafood at Café Renaissance.

From over 100 German wines of the diversified grape variety, let’s focus on the full-bodied Thörle Saulheimer Weissburgunder Kalkstein 2016, the herbaceous Hans Wirsching Kalb Silvaner Erste Lage 2016, and the fruity and floral Philipp Kuhn Riesling ‘Tradition’ 2017.

At the Dynasty Restaurant, Executive Chef Suen Kam Sing has crafted a series of Cantonese dishes using seasonal German white asparagus. Take the Steamed Assorted Asparagus in Black Truffle Paste for instance, its perfect match would be the Thörle Saulheimer Weissburgunder Kalkstein 2016, as the dry and full-bodied Pinot Blanc elevates the genuine flavor of white asparagus and complements the aroma of black truffle paste.

Gourmands will not want to miss other tantalizing creations including Sautéed White Asparagus and Assorted Fungus with Avocado and Pan-Fried White Asparagus and Silver Cod with Bay Salt.

At the Mirage Bar & Restaurant, there is a German white asparagus wine pairing menu (HK$268 / person) crafted with premium ingredients accompanied by German white asparagus to be paired with Riesling and German wines.

Explore the creative sparks between Pan-fried Salmon and Poached White Asparagus with the refreshing Philipp Kuhn Riesling ‘Tradition’ 2017, which enhances the umami flavor of salmon and the natural sweetness of the White Asparagus with its tropical fruit aroma. Other choices of white asparagus dishes are available including enticing Serrano Ham and flavoursome Sliced Angus Flap Steak.
Rhone Valley has always had a special place in my heart as it is the birthplace of Syrah (Shiraz) - my favourite grape variety. It yields a full-bodied red wine that pairs immaculately well with a succulent steak, writes Andy Ng.

Originating from the Swiss Alps, the Rhone flows in a north-south direction into the Mediterranean. Since geological times, the river has deposited its alluvium along its 800-plus km course, feeding the hilltops of the vineyard along its banks with minerals.

A recent tasting workshop organized by Inter-Rhone Association on Rhone Valley Vineyards was at pains to orient participants in the correct direction. If you look at a map of the Rhone Valley, most people would instinctively associate the west bank as the left bank, and the east bank as the right bank. And, of course, they are wrong. The way I look at it, the easiest way of differentiation is simply look downstream, and you’ll be correct 100% of the time!

But let’s get back to business. The Rhone Valley can be roughly divided into two major areas based on climate. From Vienne to Valence, the northern part of the appellation is made up of narrow valleys with a temperate continental climate, while the southern part has a Mediterranean climate characterized by lower rainfall, more sunshine and milder temperatures, thanks in part to the Mistral that blows in from the Sahara.

As a result of its diverse soils, grape varieties and climate, the Rhone Valley produces a variety of red, white and rose wines, as well as natural sweet wines. Fruity, full-bodied, gourment or spicy, robust and structured, reds (including Syrah, Grenache, Mourvedre, Cinsault and Marselan) go great with all kinds of cuisines from lasagna to rich dishes in sauces. On the other hand, whites (including Viognier, Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Clairette and Roussanne) also go well with a range of recipes due to their floral and fruity characters, while roses are versatile with their fresh and tender or spicy and flavourful qualities.

Inter-Rhone Association points out that Rhone Valley has had four great vintages in a row. Although the 2018 growing season was not the same for everyone (some areas were badly hit by downy mildew), harvesting throughout this France’s second largest AOC winegrowing region took place in balmy summer conditions, with the grapes fully ripened and in excellent health.

Michel Chapoutier, President of Inter-Rhone, is thankful for the harvest weather. “With September being so sunny, our main focus has been to preserve acidity and potential minerality in our whites,” he explains. “As for the Syrahs, we have made the most of their phenolic complexity and excellent levels of physiological ripeness.”

Based on the 2018 vintage, the Rhone Valley Appellation production breakdown is 74% red, 16% rose, and 10% white.
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