

**FOOD**

**PROMOTIONS**

**Positano Risto's New Menu Launch**

Italian restaurant Positano Risto has launched a fresh menu with more than 10 new creations. For starters, try the Arancini Balls (\$11.95), made with fragrant Italian rice and stuffed with mozzarella. The thin crust Roma-style pizza (\$16.95 to \$28.95) is crafted by an Italian pizza chef and the calzone, topped with turkey ham and pepperoni strips, is worth mentioning. The signature Boston lobster fettuccine (\$58.95, serves two) comes with creamy lobster bisque and a whole Boston lobster. **WHERE:** 66 Bussorah Street **MRT:** Bugis **WHEN:** Lunch: 11.30am - 3pm (Mon - Sat); dinner: 6 - 10pm (Mon - Thu), 6 - 11pm (Fri), 6pm - midnight (Sat); 11.30am - 10pm (Sun) **PRICE:** Selected items: \$9.95 - \$58.95 **TEL:** 6292-1866 **INFO:** positanoristo.com

**Hida Wagyu At Keyaki**

The wagyu beef promotion is making its return to Keyaki, with prime cuts of Hida beef prepared and served in five menus showcasing the robust flavour of the premium meat. The beef comes from black-haired Japanese cows raised in Gifu Prefecture for at least 14 months. Highlights include the teppanyaki Hida wagyu beef steak, pan-fried Hida wagyu beef on rice and Hida wagyu beef sashimi. **WHERE:** Level 4 Pan Pacific Singapore, 7 Raffles Boulevard **MRT:** Promenade **WHEN:** Aug 6 - Sept 30, 11.30am - 2.30pm, 6.30 - 10.30pm **PRICE:** Lunch set menus: \$68++ - \$210++, dinner set menus: \$190++ - \$210++ **TEL:** 6826-8240 **INFO:** E-mail dining.ppsin@panpacific.com

**Kimme & Hey Handsome Four-Hands Collaboration**

Louis Han and Nicco Santos, the respective head chefs of Kimme in Singapore and Hey Handsome in Manila, will come together to present a seven-course tasting menu. Kimme's speciality is modern Korean dishes, while Hey Handsome focuses on the flavours and textures found in Malaysian and Singaporean cuisine. **WHERE:** Kimme Restaurant, 47 Amoy Street **MRT:** Telok Ayer **WHEN:** Aug 1 & 2, 7pm **PRICE:** \$135++ a person **TEL:** 6514-1588 **INFO:** E-mail info@kimmerrestaurant.com

**Oishii So Japan! At Carousel**

Guest chefs Tomoki Kogure and Kenko Kimura of Royal Park Hotels Japan will be dishing out their signature creations at Carousel's Oishii So Japan! promotion. On opening night, diners can expect a cutting ceremony of an 80kg blue-fin tuna, a taiko drum performance and cosplayers. The menu features dishes such as ika meshi (boiled squid stuffed with rice), umaki (roasted eel in omelette), tai no marine (marinated sea bream), and 13 flavours of ice cream such as wasabi cheese. **WHERE:** Level 1 Royal Plaza on Scotts, 25 Scotts Road **MRT:** Orchard **WHEN:** Aug 10 - 19, 6.30 - 9.30pm **PRICE:** \$83++ an adult, \$49++ a child **TEL:** 6589-7799 **INFO:** E-mail carousel@royalplaza.com.sg

**NATIONAL DAY**

**Local Dim Sum Delights At Yan**

Yan's a la carte National Day dim sum menu of local delights presents six items. Among the highlights are steamed Hainanese chicken with sticky rice wrapped in lotus leaf (\$4++ a piece), deep-fried satay chicken wonton (\$6.80++ for three pieces) and spicy steamed xiao long bao in laksa stock (\$5.80++ for four pieces). Others include soon kueh transformed into steamed pork and mushroom dumpling with chives (\$6.80++ for three pieces), pan-fried buns filled with sweet and spicy chilli crab meat (\$9++ for three pieces) and steamed yam cake with mushroom and dried shrimp (\$5.80++ a piece). **WHERE:** 05-02 National Gallery Singapore, 1 St Andrew's Road **MRT:** City Hall **WHEN:** Aug 1 - 31, noon - 2.30pm **PRICE:** \$4++ - \$9++ **TEL:** 6384-5585 **INFO:** E-mail reserve@yan.com.sg

**Heritage Buffet At Azur**

Celebrate the nation's birthday at Crowne Plaza Changi Airport's Azur with a special heritage buffet featuring local culinary flavours. Besides seafood on ice such as Boston lobsters, French oysters and flower crabs, there are local favourites like bak kut teh, Katong laksa, Hainanese chicken rice, kueh pie tee and Asian roasts. End the meal on a sweet note with ice kacang, waffles and rainbow-coloured bread with local flavours such as gula melaka. **WHERE:** Crowne Plaza Changi Airport, 75 Airport Boulevard **MRT:** Changi Airport **WHEN:** Aug 9, noon - 2.30pm, 6 - 10pm **PRICE:** Lunch: \$53++ an adult/\$26.50++ a child; dinner: \$68++/\$34++ **TEL:** 6823-5354 **INFO:** E-mail azur.cpa@ihg.com

**Three Ways To Celebrate At Aura**

Aura will be having three separate promotions in both the restaurant and the Sky Lounge, where guests can

enjoy the fireworks. Besides the five-course National Day Exclusive Menu (\$138++ a person), there is a Pre-book Table Package (\$200++ minimum spend for four people) where diners can book their table for a selection of drinks and food. The Walk-In Package (\$52++ a person) includes two complimentary house pours. **WHERE:** 05-03/06-02 National Gallery, 1 St Andrew's Road **MRT:** City Hall **WHEN:** Aug 9, 6.30 - 10.30pm **PRICE:** \$52++ - \$138++ a person **TEL:** 6866-1977 **INFO:** E-mail book@aura.sg

**Hawker Favourites At Feast@East**

Grand Mercure Singapore Roxy is serving popular hawker dishes at its Feast@East Buffet Restaurant, such as chilli crab, char kway teow and fried carrot cake. On Aug 9, there will be a live screening of the National Day Parade and diners get 50 per cent off adult and child prices. **WHERE:** Level 3 Grand Mercure Singapore Roxy, 50 East Coast Road **MRT:** Eunos/Dakota **WHEN/PRICE:** July 28 - Sept 2; lunch (noon - 2.30pm); \$46++ an adult/\$23++ a child (pioneers/seniors: \$31/\$35 nett); dinner (6 - 9.30pm); \$51++ - \$53++/\$25++ - \$26++ (pioneers/seniors: \$32/\$38 nett) **TEL:** 6340-5665 **INFO:** E-mail H3610-FB3@accor.com

**Deliveroo's National Day deals**

For a limited period, orders of selected items from a number of restaurants via food delivery service Deliveroo will be priced at or carry a discount of \$5.30. The discount applies to A-One Claypot House's Claypot Chicken & Mushroom Rice, Sushi Tei's Sushi Roll with Grilled Spicy Fish Cake (otter) and Soup Restaurant's Samsui Ginger Chicken (half). The \$5.30 items are Sushi Tei's Nasi Lemak Roll and Qi Ji's Prawn Poppiah Roll (two pieces). Customers can also take part in Food Battles - vote on Deliveroo's Facebook page for your chosen Ming Kitchen (by Sunday) and Boon Tong Kee (Aug 3 - 5) dishes to be available at a discount. **WHERE:** deliveroo.com.sg **WHEN:** \$5.30 offers: July 23 - Aug 12 (check with Deliveroo for other relevant dates) **TEL:** 3163-7074 **INFO:** E-mail support@deliveroo.com.sg or go to facebook.com/DeliverooSG

**MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL**

**New Ice-Cream Mooncakes From Hello Kitty Orchard Garden**

Hello Kitty Orchard Garden is introducing two ice-cream mooncakes. The Pink Passionfruit Punch, made with passionfruit ice cream, and Butter Me Up - salted butterscotch ice cream with cookie crumble bits - are wrapped in delicate pastry skin embossed with the iconic feline. Also available is the cafe's traditional baked mooncake, Over The Moon, salted egg yolk in lotus seed paste with lotus seeds and wrapped in a traditional baked pastry skin. **WHERE:** Arrival Hall Central, 01-22 Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3, 65 Airport Boulevard **MRT:** Changi Airport **WHEN/PRICE:** Open 24 hours; Aug 15 - Sept 7: \$29.80++/nett dine-in/takeaway; Sept 8 - 24: \$33.80++/nett for box of two pieces **TEL:** 6241-6127 **INFO:** HelloKittyOrchidGarden.com

**Perennial Favourites And Three New Flavours At Cherry Garden**

Cherry Garden at Mandarin Oriental, Singapore presents perennial favourites and three new mooncakes. Two new traditional baked mooncakes highlight pairings often found in Chinese cuisine. The classic taro and coconut dessert is reinterpreted as a mooncake with sea salt caramel (\$42+ for two pieces/\$82+ for four pieces), while the pandan mooncake (\$38+ for two pieces/\$72+ for four pieces) has a red-bean core with melon seeds. The snowskin collection (\$75 for eight pieces) includes the mango puree with macadamia nuts and the signature lychee martini with chocolate truffle. **WHERE:** Level 5 Mandarin Oriental Singapore, 5 Raffles Avenue **MRT:** Promenade **WHEN:** Aug 16 - Sept 24 **PRICE:** Snowskin: \$75+ (eight pieces), baked mooncakes: \$38+ - \$42+ for two pieces, \$72+ - \$82+ for four pieces **TEL:** 6885-3081 **INFO:** E-mail mosin-mooncakes@mohg.com

**WINE EVENT**

**Damilano Wine Dinner At Zafferano**

Zafferano Italian Restaurant & Lounge is offering a five-course dinner curated by head chef Emanuele Faggi, with wine pairings from Damilano Wine Company. Highlights of the menu include the veal tongue ravioli served with tobacco and laurel sauce (paired with Barolo Lecinquevigne 2013) and the pan-roasted venison served with oven-baked quince apple and broccoli (Barolo Cannubi 2012). **WHERE:** Level 43 Ocean Financial Centre, 10 Collyer Quay **MRT:** Raffles Place **WHEN:** July 26, 7pm **PRICE:** \$98++ a person **TEL:** 6509-1488 **INFO:** E-mail info@zafferano.sg

**FoodPicks**

**Tan Hsueh Yun Life Editor recommends**

**BAKED GOODS A HIT**

After classes at New York's International Culinary Center, Naadhira Ismail would walk past the school's bakery, inhaling the scent of sourdough loaves that students turned out. They could help themselves to the goods too, and the pastry student became enchanted with bread.

After completing her course at the centre, formerly known as the French Culinary Institute, she worked for French bakery chain Maison Kayser and, later, Runner & Stone, a bakery in Brooklyn, before coming home.

Two months ago, she opened Mother Dough Bakery in North Bridge Road, naming it after the sourdough starter used to make good bread.

Her loaves, including a Baby Baguette (\$2), are crusty and craggy, and have the tang of good sourdough. Toasted and spread lavishly with salted butter and drizzled with honey, the baguettes make for compulsive eating.

But the 32-year-old started as a pastry student after all and her almond croissant (\$4, right) is smashing. Many bakeries make them with unsold croissants, but at Mother Dough, they disappear so quickly that she makes croissants just for this treat.

Bite into one of these beauties, studded with sliced almonds, and there is crisp lightness and then not-too-sweet cream flecked with brown from almond skin. Cue waves of pleasure.

The croissants are more compelling than the plain ones (\$3) or those stuffed with chocolate and almonds (\$4.40); turkey ham and cheese (\$4); cheese (\$3.40); and beef pepperoni and cheese (\$3.80).

Her wares sell out fast, but if Lemon Cake (\$4 a slice, right) is available, pounce. The pound cake has a velvety crumb and is not too dense. It has a bright lemon flavour and I don't even mind the drizzle of icing on top. It looks lethally sweet, but is not.

The Banana Walnut and Chocolate Espresso cakes (\$4 a slice) have perfect texture, but the bananas need to be more ripe and I would like a stronger coffee flavour.

Mostly, I am happy with my almond croissant or lemon cake and a cold brew tea (\$6) and I always leave with a



Baby Baguette (or three) for when I need a bread fix.

And to think, before culinary school, Ms Naadhira "baked for fun". After a decade organising fashion events in Singapore, she took the plunge and went to New York.

"I had a good feeling about it," she says.

**WHERE:** Mother Dough Bakery, 01-01, 749 North Bridge Road **MRT:** Bugis **OPEN:** Noon to 7pm (Tuesdays to Saturdays), 11am to 5pm (Sundays), closed on Mondays **TEL:** 6909-6604 **INFO:** www.motherdough.com.sg



**UGLY DELICIOUS**

It takes courage to serve unpretty food these days, when style so often trumps substance and looks trump taste.

The Salted Plum in Circular Road has that courage. The restaurant, which grew out of a pop-up in South Bridge Road called Five Ten, serves Taiwanese-inspired small plates, which cost \$5 or \$10 for the most part.

At lunch, the restaurant serves \$10 lunch bowls for the office crowd, but the dinner menu is far more interesting. Bamboo Shoots (\$5) braised in pork broth tastes clean and I cannot get enough of the juicy shoots. Also good are the crackly-skinned Smashed Baby Potatoes (\$5) sprinkled with plum powder, a decidedly weird combination which works.

From the \$10 part of the menu, I order two pork dishes, which do not stand up to scrutiny. Pork Chop is described on the menu as "juicy af". It is not. The pork is sliced too thin so the meat dries out. Haus Bacon is similarly lacklustre. It comes without the promised raw garlic, but I doubt even that would have made it better.

There are, however, dishes to like. Oyster Steamed Egg (\$10) is delicate and wobbly, the flavour of the homespun dish amped up with dashi and fat little oysters. Braised Pig Intestines (\$10, above), soft from long cooking in a rich soy braising sauce, has no trace of funk. Spoon the gravy over Shiny Rice (50 cents), slicked with lard and garlic oil. The kicky chilli sauce is perfect with the offal too.

Brussels Sprouts (\$10), sweet from severe charring and piled unceremoniously on a plate with shiitake mushroom slices and salted pork, is supremely ugly, but infinitely delicious. **WHERE:** The Salted Plum, 10 Circular Road **MRT:** Raffles Place **OPEN:** 11.30am to 2.30pm, 6 to 9.30pm (Mondays to Fridays), 11pm to 2.30am (Fridays), 6 to 9.30pm, 11pm to 2.30am (Saturdays), closed on Sundays **TEL:** 6260-0155 **INFO:** www.facebook.com/TheSaltedPlumSG

**ROBUST BAK KUT TEH**

Back when The Straits Times and Lianhe Zaobao ran the annual Hawker Masters programme, we were stunned one year when we could not find a worthy master for bak kut teh. The finalists for that category were underwhelming; turning out thin broth with no meat flavour, broth that tasted overwhelmingly of pepper and pork ribs that were too dry.

If Tuan Yuan Pork Ribs Soup had been open then, it would have won. It serves bak kut teh Singapore can be proud of. The broth is simmered three times in different vats, each time becoming heartier yet remaining clear. You can get it without pepper, with pepper or with extra pepper. The regular amount of pepper is just right - it won't blow your head off, but the broth is still plenty aromatic and robust.

A regular bowl costs \$8, but I pay \$1 more for Spare Ribs Soup because I

love those juicy, fatty pork ribs. Customers can opt for lean ribs too.

Youtiao (\$2), or deep-fried crullers, are perfectly crisp and not oil-logged and they soak up the broth very well. I find the Salted Vegetable (\$3), Braised Peanuts (\$3) and Pork Stomach Soup (\$8) quite forgettable, and the Pork Cartilage Soup (\$8) was too salty when I last had it.

But I would make room for Pork Ball Soup (\$6), full of umami from dried sole fish worked into the meat.

The best part of the meal, however, is lifting the lid on a bowl of bak kut teh and inhaling the aroma of the broth. Then I turn the lid over, to use as a plate for bones, and demolish the bowl.

**WHERE:** Tuan Yuan Pork Ribs Soup, 01-01, Block 127 Kim Tian Road **MRT:** Tiong Bahru **OPEN:** 11am to 1am (Tuesdays to Sundays), closed on Mondays **TEL:** 6684-0123 **INFO:** www.tuanyuan.sg



**PRODIGAL GETS NEW HOME**

For a few blissful weeks, I haunted Prodigal Roasters in Ang Mo Kio, glad to have excellent coffee near work and home.

One Sunday, I popped in for a cappuccino and found that it was the last day of operations.

Fortunately, I can still get my fix - I just have to go to MacPherson. There, in a maze of Housing Board blocks, Prodigal has a larger, brighter cafe which opened in February. On the menu are its excellent cookies, cakes and other bakes, and more substantial food offerings.

Coffee, however, is a must. If beans from Thailand and Myanmar are available, even better.

The Thai beans, from Chiang Rai, are full of power, waking me up immediately. The brew reminds me of local kopi, which powers so many of our mornings.

The Myanmar beans make a smooth, slightly herby and sweet cappuccino (\$5). Both are satisfying in their own way.

The cafe also sells cold coffee in bottles. I love the Magic (\$6.50 for 250ml), two ristretto shots with milk. I'm working up the courage to go for the three-shot Tragic (\$7 for 330ml) and hope I will never need the four-shot Logic (\$7.50 for 340ml).

Owner Glen Ho, 31, got into coffee after a friend pulled him a shot at home. He started making his own using a 10-year-old coffee machine and then bought a popcorn popper to roast his own green coffee beans. It broke down and that led to his getting a proper roaster, and eventually opening a cafe.

As much as I need coffee, I also

need food. If it is available, the Bak Kwa & Cranberry Scone (\$3.50) is a must. Warm, buttery and tender, need I say more?

The Miso Cheese Tart (\$6), drizzled with miso caramel, has a phenomenal crust and I would like more of that caramel. Mr Ho should bottle it. Ground coffee goes into the Brownie (\$5), deepening its chocolate flavour.

For something more substantial, order Mushroom Egg Toast (\$15, above). Thick-cut sandwich bread, lightly toasted, comes from a heritage bakery in Whampoa. The softly scrambled eggs and grilled portobello topped with cheddar go down easily, but what I love most on that plate is the smear of red bell pepper hummus.

I don't even mind going out of my way for it. **WHERE:** Prodigal Cafe, 01-55, Block 81 MacPherson Lane **MRT:** Tai Seng **OPEN:** 10am to 6pm (Thursdays to Tuesdays), closed on Wednesdays **TEL:** 9450-0484 **INFO:** www.prodigalroasters.com



ST PHOTOS: TAN HSUEH YUN