



FoodPicks

Wong Ah Yoke
Food Critic
recommends

BREAKFAST HAWKER SPREAD AT LOBBY LOUNGE

I love the hawker dishes that are part of the Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore's Lobby Lounge lunch buffet, especially the bak chor mee and beef rendang. So when it started a similar concept for breakfast on weekends, I could not wait to check it out.

There are six hawker dishes which you can order a la carte or as part of a semi-buffet priced at \$29.50 a person. The semi-buffet includes items such as soon kueh, chwee kueh and chee cheong fun, but you

can choose only one main hawker dish.

The hawker dishes are different from what you find at lunch, with lighter fare that is supposedly more suitable for breakfast – although I think that many Singaporeans would not think twice about eating most of these at any time of the day.

The most obvious breakfast item is Soft-Boiled Eggs With Kaya Toast (\$12), with a delicious kaya from a recipe by the hotel's executive chef. Just enough is spread on the toast to balance a thin slice of butter between the bread slices.

The Fried Carrot Cake (\$12) is pretty good too. Also created in-house, it is the old-fashioned type with pieces of rice cake fried with sticky dark soya sauce and bits of pickled radish. It is delicious when eaten hot from the wok.

Roti Prata With Dhalcha And Fish Curry (above, \$12) comes from Springleaf Prata Place near Upper Thomson Road. It is not as crisp or fluffy as some roti prata I have eaten, but is pretty good nonetheless. The fish curry, which is flavourful but not overly fiery, is a winner.

Nasi Lemak (\$19) comes from The Coconut Club in Ann Siang Hill. The rice has a slight whiff of coconut milk fragrance – which I could not detect when I ate the dish at the original restaurant – but overall, the nasi lemak is decent, not outstanding.

WHERE: The Lobby Lounge, Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore, 22 Orange Grove Road **MRT:** Orchard **WHEN:** Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, 7 to 11am **PRICE:** Buffet is \$29.50 for adults, \$14.75 for children



RAMEN GETS OYSTER BOOST

Konjiki Hototogisu, the one-Michelin-starred ramen shop in Tokyo, already has one outlet here at Chijmes serving noodles in a delectable clam broth.

Last month, a second outlet opened at Great World City, but the noodles here come in an oyster consomme instead – a new flavour that is not available at any of its other outlets, including in Tokyo.

There are no actual oysters, but the flavour gets a boost from an oyster paste created by chef-owner Atsushi Yamamoto. It is added to the noodles as a topping and you can taste the broth before stirring it in to see what difference it makes.

I find the soup here not as sweet as the clam broth at Chijmes, but it has its own charm with deeper notes.

There are two versions available: Oyster Shio Ramen (above, \$15.90), with garlic lemon butter, red onions and oyster oil; and Oyster Paitan Ramen (\$15.90), which contains miso as well. I prefer the shio version for its cleaner and lighter taste.

The ramen comes with slices of char siu and you can top it up with side orders such as soft-boiled egg (\$2).

WHERE: Hototogisu Ramen, 01-143 Great World City, 1 Kim Seng Promenade **MRT:** Orchard **OPEN:** 11.30am to 10pm daily

DELICIOUS \$35 SPANISH SET LUNCH

La Cala, the Spanish restaurant at Duo Galleria near Beach Road, offers a good-value three-course set lunch at \$35 nett.

There are three choices for starters and five choices for mains, but dessert is fixed.

The starters are the most impressive, especially the Chicken Cannelloni With Bechamel And Parmigiano Cheese. You get three cannelloni (pasta rolls filled with minced chicken), which is generous for a starter, baked in a delicious creamy, cheesy sauce.

Poached Egg With Parmentiere And Button Mushroom Cream is yummy too. It is like a thick and creamy mushroom soup, with bits of potato in it and a poached egg in the centre.

Among the main courses, my vote goes to Mushrooms Paella (below), which looks simple with just pieces of champignon on a layer of rice, but hidden among the grains are chopped pieces of mushroom as well. The rice, cooked perfectly till it has just a bit of bite left, is really flavourful.

Meatballs With Baby Calamari And Potatoes is delicious too, though the serving could be bigger.

The sole dessert, Char-grilled Pineapple With Toffee Sauce, Crumbles And Vanilla Ice Cream, is pretty good, so I have no complaints there.

If you are dining in a group, I would suggest you order different dishes and share everything. That way, you get to try more items and, because serving sizes can be quite different, everyone gets enough to eat.

WHERE: La Cala, 01-40/43 Duo Galleria, 7 Fraser Street **MRT:** Bugis **WHEN:** Set lunch available on Mondays to Saturdays, 11.30am to 2.30pm **PRICE:** \$35 nett, includes coffee or tea **TEL:** 6282-9200



PHOTOS: HOTOTOGISU RAMEN; MDM LING BAKERY; SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, SINGAPORE; WONG AH YOKE



RING IN CHINESE NEW YEAR WITH THESE SNACKS

I had not heard of Mdm Ling Bakery even though it has been around since 1991, but last week, a carton of its Chinese New Year goodies landed on my office table.

It contained 12 containers of various cookies and snacks often eaten during the festival, such as pineapple balls, love letters and shrimp rolls.

The interesting thing is that each has a label that not only describes the contents, but is also printed with a different animal from the Chinese zodiac. Plus, there is a short prediction on what to expect in the coming year for those born under a particular sign. For example, green pea cookies belong to the Year of

the Rabbit and those born under that sign can expect an excellent year ahead.

The 12 types of cookies and snacks are good too, especially the premium kueh bangkit, which is light and fragrant.

The only bummer is the price, which, at \$128 for the limited-edition set, is rather high. But you can buy the snacks individually too, at prices that range from \$13.80 for the peanut cookies to \$24.80 for the cranberry florentine.

WHERE: Mdm Ling Bakery **PRICE:** From \$13.80 a can, \$128 for a set of 12 **TEL:** 8787-4142 **INFO:** E-mail hello@mdmlingbakery.com or go to www.mdmlingbakery.com

FOOD

PROMOTIONS

Osaka Cocina Nikkei Pop-Up At Nami

Nikkei restaurant Osaka will debut its first collaboration in Asia and Singapore at Shangri-La Hotel's Nami Restaurant & Bar, which will showcase the blending of Japanese and Peruvian cultures. Osaka's Nikkei Ceviche, its take on the iconic Peruvian dish, features scallops and white fish cured with wasabi sauce. The signature Inka Nigiri Duo comprises tuna tataki and Pisco-braised pork jowl.

WHERE: Level 24 Tower Wing, Shangri-La Hotel Singapore, 22 Orange Grove Road **MRT:** Orchard/Stevens **WHEN:** Jan 21 - 27, 6 - 10pm **PRICE:** \$188++ a person, Peruvian-inspired cocktails \$24++ each **TEL:** 6213-4398 **INFO:** E-mail dining.sls@shangri-la.com

Sakuraya Student Set Meal

Fish Mart Sakuraya is offering a Students' Set (\$9.80 nett) at its outlets. The Tori Karaage Set comprises fried chicken (three pieces), California maki (four pieces) and half udon. Other sets such as Una Tama Don, Gyudon, Tendon and Tori Karaage Oyako Don come with pickles and miso soup.

WHERE (MRT): 02-01 The Seletar Mall (Sengkang, Fernvale LRT); B1-50 West Coast Plaza (Clementi); 01-32 Anchorpoint (Queenstown); B1-84D Parkway Parade (Eunos/Dakota) **WHEN:** Weekdays (except public holidays), 2.30 - 5pm **PRICE:** \$9.80 nett, dine-in only, one order a student pass **TEL:** 6214-3736 (Seletar Mall), 6773-6973 (West Coast Plaza), 6474-2495 (Anchorpoint), 6345-4714 (Parkway Parade)

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Singapore Debut For Hock Wong Bak Kwa

Hock Wong, which began in Kuala Lumpur more than a decade ago and opened in Johor Baru in 2015, set up a factory in Singapore last year to offer its bak kwa here. Already being sold online, it will be available at pop-up stalls in some malls. For the festive season, it comes in gift boxes.

WHERE/WHEN: Pop-ups (till Feb 3) at Suntec City (from Mon), Westgate (Jan 14), VivoCity (Jan 15), Nex (Jan 17), Marina Square (Jan 18), Causeway Point & Waterway Point (both Jan 21) and Tampines Mall (Jan 23) **PRICE:** \$33 (600g) & \$49 (1kg); Bacon: \$48 (600g) & \$72 (1kg); gift boxes: \$148 (five 600g boxes) & \$245 (five 1kg boxes) **TEL:** 6904-5520 **INFO:** E-mail sales@hockwong.com.sg or go to hockwong.com.sg

Lapis, Tarts And Other CNY Goodies From Pan Pacific

Pan Pacific Singapore's Chinese New Year goodies include a lapis selection (\$58+ - \$62+, 1kg) – Lapis Surabaya, Rainbow Kueh Lapis, Classic Kueh Lapis and Prune Kueh Lapis. The Pineapple Pastry Combination (\$58+, 18 pieces) features three flavours: traditional pineapple tart, charcoal pineapple tart with Korean yuzu tea, and Japanese matcha tarts with red bean. Other items include traditional treasure pots or pen cai (\$368+ - \$699+), yu sheng platters (\$38+ - \$198+), barbecued treats such as crispy whole suckling pig (\$338+) and roasted duck (\$78+); hampers (\$318+ - \$438+); koi nian gao (\$30.80+).

WHERE: Pickup at Hai Tien Lo, Level 3 Pan Pacific Singapore, 7 Raffles Boulevard **MRT:** Promenade **WHEN:** Jan 21 - Feb 19, 11am - 8pm (till 5pm on Feb 4) **PRICE:** Varies **TEL:** 6826-8240 **INFO:** E-mail dining.ppsin@panpacific.com or go to pacificmarketplace.sg

New Yu Sheng Stars At Min Jiang

The Fruitful Abundance Yu Sheng with whole abalone in raspberry and sour plum sauce (\$118++ small, \$168++ large, dine-in at Min Jiang at One-North) features fruit such as peaches, dragon fruit, honeydew, mangoes and kiwi. There will be nuggets of ingot-shaped yuzu jelly with strawberries and six baby abalones topped with red tobiko to make a crown. The version at Min Jiang in Goodwood Park Hotel – Prosperity Fa Cai Yu Sheng (\$168++ large only) – is served on a plate with a drawing of eight pigs enjoying a stroll and comprises raw salmon slices, abalone and housemade bak kwa. **WHERE (MRT):** Min Jiang at One-North, 5 Rochester Park (One-North); Min Jiang, Goodwood Park Hotel, 22 Scotts Road (Orchard/Newton) **WHEN:** Jan 18 - Feb 19, 11.30am - 2.30pm & 6.30 - 10.30pm **PRICE:** \$118++ - \$168++

INFO: 6774-0122 (One-North) e-mail mj1n@goodwoodparkhotel.com; 6730-1704 (Scotts Road), e-mail min_jiang@goodwoodparkhotel.com

Feast Of Abundance At Lime

Lime Restaurant's feast features dishes such as baked seabass with housemade spicy glaze, stir-fried sliced pork with leek and spicy bean sauce, drunken seafood bowl (clams, oyster, baby lobster and mussel), roasted chicken with Sichuan pepper-infused BBQ sauce, roasted beef sirloin and Lime's signature baby lobster laksa. For dinner, there are unlimited servings of baby lobster and pan-fried foie gras. The Prosperity Yusheng Platter (\$48++ - \$88++), served with fresh salmon slices, crispy fish skin and gold coin bak kwa, is complimentary for groups of at least 10 people for dinner and Super Lunch Sunday.

WHERE: Lobby level, Parkroyal on Pickering, 3 Upper Pickering Street **MRT:** Chinatown **WHEN/PRICE:** Jan 18 - Feb 19; lunch (Mon - Sat, noon - 2.30pm): \$68++ an adult/\$48++ a child; Super Lunch (Sun, 12.30 - 3.30pm): \$98++/\$58++; dinner (daily, 6.30 - 10.30pm) \$88++/\$58++ **TEL:** 6809-8899 **INFO:** E-mail lime.prpsps@parkroyalhotels.com

Celebration Of Spring At Zafferano

Zafferano's Italian Table Saturday Champagne Brunch features Chinese New Year-inspired dishes, including crispy-skinned porchetta of slow-roasted pork belly and chicken broth with tortellino, inspired by the traditional Chinese dumpling soup.

WHERE: Level 43 Ocean Financial Centre, 10 Collyer Quay **MRT:** Raffles Place **WHEN:** Jan 26, noon - 3pm **PRICE:** \$98++ - \$128++ a person **TEL:** 6509-1488 **INFO:** E-mail info@zafferano.sg

Prosperity Reunion Package At Sheraton Towers

Families having their Chinese New Year reunion meals at Sheraton Towers can get privileges and freebies. Those who book at least five tables will enjoy free-flow soft drinks and Chinese tea (for four hours), festive cookies and nuts for the pre-event reception, waiver of corkage fee, auspicious goodie bags for all guests and an \$88 F&B voucher. A minimum booking of 15 tables gets a complimentary barrel of 22.7-litre Carlsberg draught beer, while a booking of 25 tables or more gets two complimentary barrels of beer and a weekend stay in a deluxe room with breakfast buffet for two. **WHERE:** 39 Scotts Road **MRT:** Newton **WHEN:** Jan 21 - Feb 19 **PRICE:** From \$888++ (table for 10) **TEL:** 6839-5845 **INFO:** E-mail catering@sheratonsingapore.com

Festive Dishes And Local Favourites At Feast@East

At the Huat Ar! buffet, diners can enjoy a mix of festive dishes and local favourites.

WHERE: Level 3 Grand Mercure Singapore Roxy, 50 East Coast Road, Roxy Square **MRT:** Eunos/Dakota **WHEN/PRICE:** Today - Feb 3, Feb 11 - 19; lunch (noon - 2.30pm): \$58.90++ an adult/\$29.90++ a child/\$41.90 nett a senior/\$37.90 nett a pioneer; dinner (6 - 9.30pm): \$62.90++ an adult/\$31.90++ a child/\$44.90 nett a senior/\$39.90 nett a pioneer **TEL:** 6340-5665 **INFO:** E-mail H3610-FB3@accor.com

Keyaki Yu Sheng Platters

Keyaki's Wafu Yu Sheng features generous servings of tuna, salmon, yellowtail and tobiko, while the Premium Yu Sheng includes sea urchin and lobster. Both Japanese-inspired yu sheng are topped with ponzu sauce and available only for dine-in.

WHERE: Level 4 Pan Pacific Singapore, 7 Raffles Boulevard **MRT:** Promenade **WHEN:** Jan 22 - Feb 19, 11.30am - 2.30pm & 6.30 - 10.30pm **PRICE:** \$138++ platter **TEL:** 6826-8240 **INFO:** E-mail dining.ppsin@panpacific.com

Goodies From Carlton Hotel

The Alaskan Crab Lo Hei (\$138 - \$238 nett) and Carlton Premium Pineapple Tarts (\$28+, eight pieces) are the signature takeaway goodies from Carlton Hotel, while Deep-Fried Fish Skin with Egg Yolk (\$22.80, 250g) is a new item. The Longevity Pen Cai (\$408 to \$688, for six to 10 people) includes baby abalone, scallops, sea cucumber and dried oysters. Also available are items such as abalone yu sheng (\$128 to \$228), roast duck (\$78) and koi nian gao (\$28).

WHERE: 76 Bras Basah Road **MRT:** City Hall/Bras Basah **WHEN:** Jan 21 - Feb 19 **PRICE:** Various **TEL:** 6349-1292 **INFO:** Email restaurants@carltonhotel.sg or go to www.signatures.carltonhotel.sg