

# TAIPEI

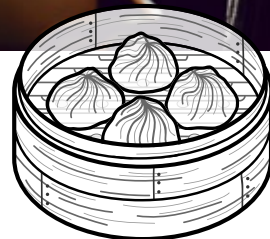
Vol. **12**  
2018  
SUMMER

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Taipei, Culinary Capital!  
A Michelin Valentine



Follow Your Michelin Guide  
and Savor Taipei!  
Fun Stops Along the MRT



Exploring Taipei's Specialty Bars & Pubs –  
Carefree Tippling; Tasting the Night

Taipei's Thriving Craft Beer Scene –  
A Sit-Down With the Creators of 23 Brewing Company

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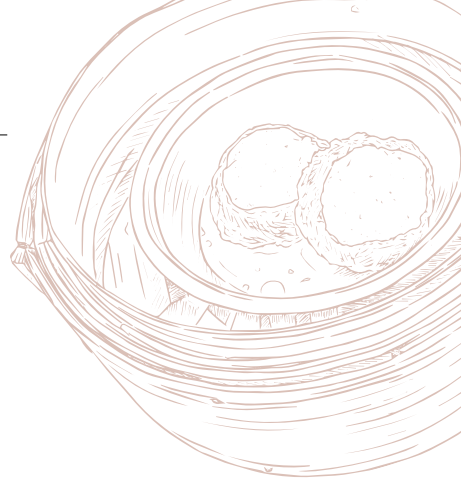
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# Enjoy Gourmet Cuisine in Taipei!



Published for over a century, *Michelin Guide*, the “Gourmet Bible” in the eyes of most foodies, finally added Taipei City to its list this year – the 30<sup>th</sup> city where Michelin stars shine.



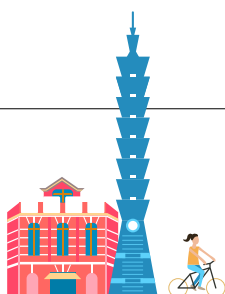
What impresses tourists the most here is the food – in addition to the friendly Taiwanese people, of course! The *2018 Michelin Guide Taipei* introduces Taipei as a city with a variety of vibrant cuisines, beckoning tourists from all over the world. Foreign visitors now have a gourmet guide, so they can “savor” Taipei in different ways.

This issue of *TAIPEI* introduces 20 Michelin-starred restaurants and 36 budget eateries recommended by Bib Gourmand. Delicacies from the Taiwanese, Cantonese, Japanese and French cuisines are ready to tickle your taste buds. You’ll even discover some exciting new night market food! Drawing on the abundance of local ingredients, the chefs of this city are using their creativity and delicate culinary skills to make unique gourmet food and establishing Taipei as the quintessence of global cuisine. Taipei has a rich and profound gourmet culture that is worth taking time to savor.

But there’s more fun than just food! This issue also introduces six traveling routes over different areas of the city. Follow us, taking photos and checking in on social media as you enjoy a taste of hipster or retro culture, and experience the current trends and natural scenery of Taipei City.

When the neon lights come on in the evening, don’t miss all the specialty bars and pubs this city has to offer. Craft beer has really caught people’s attention in recent years, and, as a trendy city, Taipei has shown its creativity in coming up with cool alcohol beverages and places where one can enjoy them. Come experience Taipei’s special drinking culture!

Follow *TAIPEI* to enjoy a full-flavored summer in the city!



Thanks for taking a look at *TAIPEI* magazine. In order to bring *TAIPEI* closer to its readers, the Department of Information and Tourism invites you to fill out this questionnaire and return it to us. For each subsequent issue of *TAIPEI*, 10 completed questionnaires will be drawn at random, and each of those lucky people will receive a free copy.



E-book

# TAIPEI

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Domestic	NT\$180	(Regular Mail)
Hong Kong/Macau	NT\$540	(Regular Air Mail)
Asia/Pacific Region	NT\$660	(Regular Air Mail)
Europe/US/Africa	NT\$900	(Regular Air Mail)

TAIPEI Subscription Services, Postal Wire Transfer: 6 Issues  
Beneficiary Account No.: 16630048  
Beneficiary Name: Department of Information and Tourism,  
Taipei City Government

**Publisher** Su-Yu Chen  
**Editor in Chief** Pei-chun Hsieh  
**Deputy Editor in Chief** Chia Ying Tzou  
**Editors** Julia Szu-Tu  
Kuan-Yu Lin  
Hsiao Wei Lee  
Zih-ruei Lin  
**Integrated Marketing** Shu-Mei Chuang  
Yenhsin Lee  
**Translators** Jennifer Chien  
Jeremy Davis  
Rick Charette

#### Artwork Designer & Production

4Point Design Co., Ltd. **Tel** (02)2321-5942  
**Fax** (02)2321-5944

#### Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City Government

**Add** 4F, 1, City Hall Rd., Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.  
**Tel** 1999 (02-2720-8889 outside Taipei City);  
ext. 2029, 7566  
**Fax** (02)2720-5909  
**Email** qa-juliast@mail.taipei.gov.tw  
**ISSN** 24137766  
**GPN** 2010402342

中華郵政台北雜字  
第 1377 號執照登記為雜誌交寄  
Price: NT\$30



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# Taipei, Culinary Capital! A Michelin Valentine

## Article

Wu Jiayu

## Photos

Mirror Media

Michelin approval encourages chefs to inculcate a spirit of professionalism, and a heightened concern for diners' enjoyment in their culinary work.

First published over a century ago, the *Michelin Guide*, also known as the *Michelin Red Guide*, has been hailed as a culinary bible by lovers of food for more than a century. Taipei has, this year, finally been added to the series, becoming the 30<sup>th</sup> city around the globe where Michelin has planted its flag!

When you ask foreign travelers why they choose Taiwan as a play destination, one of the most frequently-given answers is that they want to explore Taiwan's rich culinary scene. The *Michelin Red Guide* series landed

in Asia in 2007, with Tokyo selected as the first city for inclusion, followed by Hong Kong, Macau, Shanghai, Singapore, Bangkok, and Seoul. Taiwan's cuisine has a globe-straddling reputation, and in no way comes up short against that of Japan or Hong Kong – so why did it take so long for it to win Michelin's favor?

According to Cheng Ying-huei (鄭瑛惠), director of the International Affairs Division in the Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Tourism Bureau, they began in 2009, energetically pushing the Michelin

Group to publish a Taipei edition of their globally-renowned “red culinary bibles.” “It’s like standing on the shoulders of a giant, making us visible to so many more people,” she says. Great food has always been a key reason for visiting Taiwan, and with the endorsement of the *Michelin Guide* the international visibility of Taiwan’s superb cuisine will be raised.

## After a Long Courtship, Michelin at Long Last Comes Calling!

So what stood in the way of a Taiwan edition for so many years? In the beginning it was discussions on sponsorship – which locations to survey, et cetera ... with problems encountered with each potential subject. The Tourism Bureau at one point offered to pay for the Michelin team’s food, clothing, accommodation and transportation, but no agreement could be reached because Michelin inspectors must remain anonymous, and their identities not revealed. Also, it was inappropriate for the government to become involved with sponsorship matters involving private enterprise. Things dragged on for years, until finally, last year, a conclusion was reached to use Taipei, the city with the strongest and most diversified food and beverage culture, as Michelin’s portal. Michelin was finally ready to plant its flag in Taiwan!

The negotiations were long and arduous, and the optimal term of cooperation was subject to debate. A one-off thing, long-term cooperation, or a 5-year term? Those were the choices.

Explaining this in more depth, Cheng says that cooperation for one year is like a flower that blooms once; the benefits are insufficient. But long-term cooperation carries the risk of getting stale. Five years seemed like just the right number – presenting an achievable goal restaurants could work toward.

On the day the Michelin star list was publicly announced, some eateries were very pleased while others were vexed. However, those who did not make the list in this first year should not be discouraged – the struggle for next year’s recognition has already begun, and this serves as a powerful driver for dedicated work and progress. With the Hong Kong edition, for example, 22 restaurants were bestowed with stars the first year, and that almost doubled in the following two years, with about 20 added in each. A similar culinary miracle is hoped for in Taipei over the next five years.

## A Taste Revolution – Seeing the Value in Fine Food

Recognition by Michelin not only enhances Taiwan’s culinary aura, at the same time it infuses the whole food culture with a burst of energy. Cheng hopes that Michelin’s critical appreciation of taste will provide guidance in the area of food evaluation for the whole country – shifting criteria from “price” to “quality.” It is hoped that diners will no longer blindly pursue the cheap and mundane “All you can eat for NT\$299” experience. Instead Michelin will lead them to savor a chef’s dedication and inspiration, and be willing to dig a few more bills from their pockets in exchange for finely-crafted creations – each one a treasure!



Taipei’s cuisine is highly diverse; in addition to modern international fare, the traditional old-time flavors should not to be missed. (Photo: Taipei City Office of Commerce)





Taipei offers a tremendous diversity of food styles; chefs deftly synthesize local ingredients with Western kitchen techniques, and the resulting dishes possess distinctive city flavors.

As for the chef, a “spirit of professionalism” must be established, with fastidious attention paid to the use of ingredients and the enjoyment one’s culinary offerings bring to guests. Cost can no longer be the only consideration. In following this path, the use of cheap adulterated cooking oil will be reduced and food safety enhanced.

## Self-Reflections – Spotlight on Great Local Flavors

The Michelin spotlight has now illuminated the stage. Nevertheless, there are differing opinions about the final results. For example, who so many Western restaurants on the list? Does Michelin really understand the appetites of the Taiwanese? Is it appropriate for popular street-food and night-market snack foods to be subjected to Michelin’s assessment criteria?

Yeh Yilan (葉怡蘭), who writes on food, travel, and lifestyle, believes that winning international recognition

from the iconic Michelin Group is a splendid opportunity for Taipei cuisine to gain wider renown and approval, as well as a chance for self-improvement. Equally important, however, is that the people of Taiwan take stock of their own food culture, and not to allow selection criteria to influence or cause loss of local character.

In the past, the Michelin stamp of approval for the mastery of French cooking arts would be sought even if the products served were local cuisine. In the end, however, all this effort brought out nothing of a distinctive personality. “The more local, the more international” – this is the thoughtful insight author Yeh penned after traveling the world. To occupy a clearly defined position in the international community, the most important thing is to be yourself and to show off your unique local characteristics.

In recent years a uniquely Taiwanese sense of identity has grown stronger and stronger. At a number of the Western restaurants selected by Michelin, Taiwanese



ingredients and flavors have been brilliantly blended with Western culinary techniques, creating a Western cuisine with its own special taste. This is the spirit of true fine dining. In the end, it is only through the infiltration of local elements that international cuisine can include the unique flavors Taipei has created, and thereby attract tourists to visit again and again in pursuit of wonderful tastes that can't be found anywhere else.

## Flavor Discovery Touring – Creating a New Travel Trend

“The best way to get to know a city is to eat its food.” Trusting in the *Michelin Guide*, foreign visitors can follow the maps and “eat” their way through the city, thereby creating a strong incentive to come visit. Academic researchers also estimate that release of the *Michelin Guide Taipei* may attract around 100,000 tourists to Taipei to “chase the stars!”

Yeh says she recalls the year Tokyo became the first city in Asia to get its own *Michelin Guide*. The Michelin name had been considered something remote, largely associated with Europe, yet now it was suddenly something accessible, brought closer to home, and it caused quite a stir in neighboring countries. However substantial the tourism benefits prove to be, the *Michelin Guide* will be effective for Taipei in sketching the city's food scene for foreign readers. Those who have an interest in coming to Taipei will also have a clear index they can follow.

Cheng says that from notice of publication to actual release, this guidebook has been a topic of intense interest, with media “hype” exceeding expectations. In one early example, a Hong Kong television program came to Taipei and shot “star-chaser” programming, predicting which eateries would be granted stars. And, after the official list was released, there was a frenzy in the Malaysian media to come interview those who had made it. “Strong interviews do not just focus on Michelin,” Cheng says. In addition to discussing listed eateries, they also introduce

the overall gastronomic environment in Taiwan. Through the broadcast of a series of program reports, it is hoped that this interest will continue to be stimulated.

## Happy Palate Surprises – Using Food in City Marketing

According to Su-Yu Chen (陳思宇), Taipei City Government's Commissioner of the Department of Information and Tourism (DOIT), Taipei's superb food has always been a key in marketing the city, and now the city has another badge of international recognition to use in telling the world: “Taipei is indeed a true culinary capital!” Michelin is certain to be a highlight topic of discussion at this year's Taipei International Travel Fair, and will also be a focus at other large-scale city events and activities. For example, gourmet eating will be paired with flower appreciation for the annual Taipei Azalea Festival (台北杜鵑花季). Foreign groups will also be invited on special promotional tours to take in the Taipei experience.

Chen adds that DOIT is also engaged in planning the use of fine foods to link sightseeing attractions. For example, Beimen (the North Gate; 北門) in Taipei's old West District has, in recent years, once again become a highly visible landmark, enabling sightseers to enjoy a unique historical streetscape, while visitors to the area can also enjoy internationally recognized fine foods.

In recent years, the Department of Economic Development (產業發展局), Taipei City Government, has grouped the city's diversified cuisine according to theme, such as “The Most Memorable Taste in Taipei” and “International Cuisines in Taipei.” The annual Taipei Traditional Market Festival (台北傳統市場節) has also been staged for over a decade now, continually bringing “undiscovered” yet long-popular vendors of delicious street-market and market foods to prominence, such as Kuaiche (快車肉乾; various types of jerky), Yichang Yufang (億長御坊; traditional cooked foods), and Tong Jia Mantou (童家饅頭; traditional steamed buns). We sincerely hope that the wave of interest brought by the new



In the past, most tourists' impressions of Taiwanese cuisine were confined to night-market snacks. Now that Michelin has entered the scene, a new perspective on Taiwan gastronomy has appeared.

*Michelin Guide* will enable the international community to see the great diversity of Taipei's cuisine.

## Beyond Tourism – What Other Benefits?

The anticipated effect on tourism caused by the *Michelin Guide Taipei*, in terms of material economic benefit, is that in addition to increased consumption of inexpensive fare and popular snack foods, there will be an upsurge in consumption of high-priced cuisine among tourists. Yeh Yilan believes that the most positive impact will be to the international community's impression of Taiwanese cuisine, extending from night-market snacks to high-end fare. A depth and meticulousness not often seen in the past will now be recognized.

"Tourism development cannot solely be built on Michelin," says Liu Hsi-Lin (劉喜臨), vice president of the National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism. Outside the industry there is a high expectation that Michelin will boost local tourism, and he also believes there will indeed be certain benefits. But what is now even more important is to leverage the momentum, and raise Taiwan's profile as a key tourist destination.

From the government's perspective, advice should be offered to related industries. For the travel, accommodation, and other sectors, for example, Michelin chefs could be invited to give demonstrations, and "In Search of our Roots" tours could be organized to show tourists where ingredients used in Michelin cuisine come from, and how they are prepared. Such initiatives will help with resource expansion.

Liu adds that food companies also need to be self-supporting. In the past, chefs from local hotels would, from time to time, visit Michelin restaurants in faraway lands for study. However, new approaches can now be taken. The Le Palais restaurant at the Palais de Chine Hotel (君品酒店頤宮中餐廳), which was awarded three Michelin stars, is able to rotate its chefs among fellow properties within the LDC Hotels & Resorts Group. Other starred restaurants can send their renowned chefs to visit hotels in Taiwan's central and southern regions to serve as guest chefs, passing on Michelin benefits and know-how.

There is an old Chinese idiom: "Does the monk from elsewhere preach a better sermon?" Taiwan's private sector suffers no shortage of food experts, associations, and other related organizations. Liu proposes that Taiwan make good use of these resources in setting up its own culinary appraisal system, with food and travel programs at educational institutions acting in a consulting role. The research and experimentation done in Taiwan's various food industries could be systematically combed for evaluation and reference, showcasing local academic strength. "The ability for us and Michelin to learn from each other – that will be the most important thing." 

## Michelin-starred Restaurants in Taipei



01 Le Palais (Palais de Chine Hotel)



02 RyuGin

03 The Guest House (Sheraton Grand Taipei Hotel)



04 Ken An Ho

05 Kitcho

06 Sushi Nomura

07 Sushi Ryu

08 L'ATELIER de Joël Robuchon

09 La Cocotte by Fabien Vergé  
(Closed indefinitely)

10 RAW

11 Taïrroir

12 Tien Hsiang Lo (The Landis Taipei)

13 Ya Ge (Mandarin Oriental, Taipei)

14 Golden Formosa

15 Ming Fu

16 Three Coins

17 MUME

18 Da-Wan

19 Danny's Steakhouse

20 Longtail



Michelin Guide –  
the official website



# Taipei's Michelin Stars – A Who's Who

Article / Photos

Taipei Pictorial issue 603

## Le Palais: Ken Chan and Matt Chen

### Authentic Guardians of Cantonese Cuisine



(Photo: Le Palais)

Le Palais at Taipei's Palais de Chine Hotel (君品酒店頤宮中餐廳) has two master chefs: the Group Executive Chef specializing in Chinese cuisine, Ken Chan (陳偉強) from Hong Kong, and the Executive Chef specializing in traditional Cantonese cuisine, Matt Chen (陳泰榮) from Macau. All cookware and sauces used on the Cantonese side are from Hong Kong, but all the fresh ingredients are grown locally here. With reasonable prices and high-quality ingredients,



Le Palais hopes that everyone will come and enjoy their authentic Cantonese gourmet. A favorite of foodies is the Barbecue Pork (叉燒皇). Its lean meat comes with just a bit of fat and a sweet sauce. It just melts in your mouth!

## Shoun RyuGin: Ryohei Hieda

### The Taiwanese Ingredient Challenger



Appointed Chef de Cuisine of Shoun RyuGin (祥雲龍吟) by the Executive Chef of Tokyo's RyuGin (龍吟), Seiji Yamamoto (山本征治), Ryohei Hieda (稗田良平)

came to Taiwan three years ago. He uses almost 100% Taiwanese ingredients in his contemporary cuisine created with bold thinking. His most popular dish is duck, for which he imports Hoyeh duck from Yilan (宜蘭). This he hangs in a chilled aging room to dry for five days, before cutting it open to let it dry for 10 more days. After that, he smokes it with straw, giving the duck a milder taste.





## The Guest House: Lin Juwei

### A Surprising Chinese Cuisine



(Photo: The Sheraton Grand Taipei)

The Guest House at The Sheraton Grand Taipei (喜來登請客樓) specializes in Chuanyang wheat flour dishes and authentic Sichuanese cuisine, but its traditional Suhang dishes and delicious appetizers are just as good. The chef, Lin Juwei (林菊偉) uses only top quality Taiwanese

ingredients in his Chinese food. The open-style kitchen allows this chef to show off his excellent cutting skills, his proficiency at the culinary arts, and the things he has learned in 20 years of experience making wheat flour dishes. His signature dish, the well-simmered Chinese four-herbal soup (四神湯) is a favorite among Western tourists.



(Photo: The Sheraton Grand Taipei)

## Ken An Ho: Wachi Isao

### The True Samurai Spirit



Situated in a back alley off Anhe Road (安和路) in Taipei, the Japanese restaurant Ken An Ho (謙安和) just started in 2016 but has already been awarded one Michelin star.

The chef, Wachi Isao (和知軍雄) believes that the primary element in Japanese cuisine is water, so he chooses mineral water that has a similar quality to that found in Japan for making his stock and rice and even for washing up. For stock, he insists on using only *Katsuobushi* (dried bonitos) from pole-and-line fishing, which he then shreds into flakes with a special shredder. The sashimi comes from fish caught off Japan and Korea, and a different selection is offered every day.



**Kitcho: Kyo Hsu****The Amazing Culinary Arts**

(Photo: Kitcho)

Kitcho's (吉兆割烹壽司) Chef, Kyo Hsu (許文杰) didn't know they'd awarded him one Michelin star until the day of the presentation ceremony! Being one of the few Taiwanese chefs of Japanese cuisine so honored gave him an incredible feeling. In 20-plus years of culinary experience, he has completely mastered his cutting skills. He is always very careful in

selecting ingredients, and insists on choosing only fresh and natural ingredients from Japan. His specialties are mainly *nigiri* sushi, and sometimes he even invites Michelin-starred Japanese chefs to host dinner parties in Taiwan. This is something people look forward to eagerly. Michelin has noted that Hsu is a chef who likes to provide his customers exquisite Japanese tastes in recipes created with his own two hands.



(Photo: Kitcho)

**Sushi Nomura: Yuji Nomura****The Impeccable Ingredients**

Sushi Nomura (野村壽司) Chef, Yuji Nomura (野村裕二) came to Taiwan 11 years ago. Known as "The God of Sushi" in Taipei, he is grateful to be awarded a Michelin star, but finds it quite challenging and stressful, so he keeps a low profile and refuses any interviews. What attracts foodies most are his excellent cutting skills and impeccable ingredients. He uses Koshihikari and Hokkaido Nanatsuboshi rice, as well as sashimi shipped by air from Tsukiji Market in Japan, and spring water from Mt. Fuji for tea. When it comes to attention to detail, he sets the bar extremely high. The Michelin Guide mentions that Chef Nomura's standards for rice are rigorous; the marinated silver-skinned fish and the anago are particularly worth savoring.

**Sushi Ryu: Yang Yonglong****The Youngest Michelin Winner**

Sushi Ryu (鮨隆) has been in business less than 6 months but has already got a Michelin star. And there's a six month waiting list in their reservation book. Chef Yang Yonglong (楊永隆) teared up when he received the award. With 26 years of



(Photo: Sushi Ryu)

culinary experience, he notes that Japanese cuisine has a very complicated preparation process, and you need to know about way more than just cutting fish. He adjusts his methods of preparing fish according to the weather and humidity. He leaves home before six o'clock in the morning, and doesn't come home until after midnight. Every week, he orders ingredients from Japan, and he uses three different vinegars in making his sushi rice – in order to match the sashimi's flavor perfectly.



(Photo: Sushi Ryu)

## L'ATELIER de Joël Robuchon: Olivier Jean

### The Classic French Cuisine



(Photo: L'ATELIER de Joël Robuchon)

This is the 35<sup>th</sup> Michelin star L'ATELIER de Joël Robuchon has garnered globally. It was, in fact, the very first Michelin-starred restaurant to open a branch in Taiwan, and, when it did, Master Chef Joël Robuchon appointed his outstanding apprentice Olivier Jean to be Chef de Cuisine. The dishes here are creative while maintaining an authentic French taste – a taste which set the trend for Taipei's gourmet world. The chic bar design and the open-style kitchen make this restaurant a place where diners can enjoy good food and watch the chefs' excellent culinary prowess at the same time.



(Photo: L'ATELIER de Joël Robuchon)

## RAW: André Chiang

### The Creative Michelin Starred Cuisine



RAW opened its doors more than three years ago, but its founder, André Chiang (江振誠) has never lost the strong character traits he displayed at the beginning. He returned his two Michelin stars last year in Singapore and then came back to Taiwan; and this year, when Michelin awarded him another star in Taiwan, he still didn't attend the awards ceremony! He takes things like crispy snack noodles, three-color eggs, and traditional Taiwanese foods and brings brand new ideas to them. For example, in one recipe he deep fries spaghetti, and in another he combines chicken eggs with three-color fish eggs and steams them! Another signature dish is his combination of scallion pancake with elements of *okonomiyaki* (Japanese pancake with various toppings) to create a delicious new taco-like dish!



## Tai'rroir: Kai Ho

### Having Fun in the Kitchen



Not too many people can make French cuisine out of canned food and still win a Michelin star, but Tai'rroir (態芮) chef, Kai Ho (何順凱) has done it. He doesn't like to talk much but he's very good at cooking! He takes ingredients he's familiar with, matches them in a distinctly Chinese way, and then uses his French culinary skills to come up with



surprising new tastes. For example, instead of truffles, he uses canned pickled cucumbers, slices and stuffs them under chicken skin to make a dish similar to the French delicacy, *poularde demi-deuil*. He also puts marshmallows on Western style pork chops to make them taste like Chinese sweet-and-sour pork ribs.

## Tien Hsiang Lo: Yang Kuangtsung

### Authentic Hangzhou Cuisine



Tien Hsiang Lo at The Landis Taipei (台北亞都麗緻飯店天香樓) has been awarded one Michelin star. The restaurant's chef, Yang Kuangtsung (楊光宗) says that it's such an honor to get this award, although in his mind, there's no such thing as a "Michelin standard." When it comes to cuisine, he just wants to do his best. "The award is only another way to show recognition to the chef." Tien Hsiang Lo specializes in Hangzhou cuisine, which focuses on using less oil, sauce and seasoning. It delivers the ingredients' original flavors without modification from extra processing skills or flavorings.



## Ya Ge: Tse Man

### The New Taste of Classic Cantonese Cuisine



Tse Man (謝文), the newly-minted Chef de Cuisine at Mandarin Oriental, Taipei's (台北文華東方酒店) Chinese restaurant, Ya Ge (雅閣), has mastered the culinary skills of grilling, simmering, roasting and frying such top ingredients as sea cucumber, abalone, and dried fish maw. Amber stock is the soul of Cantonese cuisine, and for cooking abalone or vegetables, such stock adds flavor; but the strength ratio is a closely-





guarded secret in every Cantonese kitchen. Every afternoon at 4 o'clock, Tse will check the flavor of the stock himself, and he often stays after work to discuss cooking with his colleagues. The Oven-baked Crab Meat and Onion (焗釀鮮蟹蓋) has a rich stuffing and is baked golden and crispy, which makes it popular among customers.



## Golden Formosa: Eric Chen

### Bringing Taiwanese Cuisine to the Next Level



Serving Tianmu (天母) for almost 70 years, Golden Formosa (金蓬萊遵古台菜) provides authentic Taiwanese cuisine. The third generation owner, Eric Chen took over the business at age 30, and insists on using only fresh ingredients and unprocessed food. The signature dish, Crispy Pork Ribs (排骨酥) is fried twice in oils of different temperatures to keep it



crispy outside and juicy inside, ensuring an unforgettably delicious taste. Buddha Jumps Over the Wall (佛跳牆) contains over ten ingredients, including chestnuts, medicinal herbs and deep-fried pork ribs, all selected by Chen and put into a pot to simmer. The chicken broth is cooked just right, which keeps people coming back for more.

## Ming Fu: Master Chef A Ming

### The Best Buddha Jumps Over the Wall



The interior of the traditional Taiwanese restaurant, Ming Fu (明福台菜海產) has a rather simple look, just like any residential building. The two main characters at this six-table restaurant are Master Chef A Ming (阿明師), who's in charge of the kitchen, and Lin Liju (林麗珠), who takes care of service. The most famous



dish here is Buddha Jumps Over the Wall (一品佛跳牆), but other signature dishes include Chicken Stuffed with Sticky Rice (糯米雞), Beef Brisket Stew (清燉牛腩), Chicken Testicles and Pork Kidney Cooked in Sesame Oil (麻油雙腰), Barbecued Small Abalone (燒烤九孔), and Barbecued Sausage (烤香腸). The Ming Fu management insists it won't open a branch restaurant, nor do they do take-out or catering. They devote themselves to making high-quality Taiwanese cuisine, in the hopes that they will attract gourmands who truly love and appreciate their food.



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