

FOOD & DRINK



Crispy sea cucumber stuffed with tofu fish mousse, served with Mapo minced pork sauce from Hong Kong Cuisine. Photos: Hong Kong Cuisine, Crust Amalfi

City's dining joys continue to multiply

New restaurants are opening across Hong Kong, offering everything from comfort food to fine dining. Here are some of the best to visit this month

Lisa Cam, Charmaine Mok
liscam@scmp.com

Hong Kong's dining scene is expanding with a slew of new openings to tempt you this summer. Read on to see which new openings – listed in no particular order – might pique your interest.

Plaa
Soft opening from today is this seafood-centric Thai restaurant, launched by ZS Hospitality in collaboration with two mega chefs: Richie Lin of Taipei's Mume and Ian Kitichai of Bangkok's Issaya Siamese Club. Head chef Santipap Tonkanya, of Bangkok's L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon, leads the kitchen to execute dishes such as grilled threadfin with local clams, tom kha sauce and nam prik paste, and tuna tart with palm sugar, fish sauce and toasted coconut chips.
2/F, 8 Lyndhurst Terrace, Central

Yucca de Lac
The original Yucca de Lac in Ma Liu Shui, Sha Tin, was once the place to see and be seen. It opened in 1961 in a premises that overlooked Tolo Harbour, and closed in 2005. Now Yucca de Lac is back – this time with a sweeter view over Victoria Harbour thanks to its new location on The Peak. Head there for nostalgic dishes such as stir-fried flat rice noodles with beef, and braised pomelo peel with cauliflower and dried shrimp.
Shop 201-202C, 2/F, Peak Galleria, 118 Peak Road, Central

A Lux
A quaint fine-dining restaurant has taken up the mezzanine level of Baskerville House on Duddell Street. Fine Italian-French fare graces the menu, with dishes like classic Carabineros prawn with Kristal caviar and pesto; beef broth, foie gras and truffle; as well as spinosini (a thin pasta), abalone and bottarga (cured roe sac).
Shop M2, M/F, Baskerville House, 13 Duddell Str, Central

Glasshouse and Dining Room
Two restaurant "extensions" have launched at Rosewood Hong Kong's dining outlets, with Glasshouse at Asaya Kitchen and The Dining Room at Bluhouse. At the former, Italian chef Fabio Nompoggio oversees a sustainable Mediterranean menu that highlights local produce, available Wednesday to Sunday for dinner only. At the latter, a dining room set towards the rear of the Bluhouse is where chef Giovanni Galeota serves seasonal Italian specialities, Tuesday to Sunday for dinner. Rosewood Hong Kong, 18 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui

Town 93
Lionel Bodros, former executive pastry chef of L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon Hong Kong, and Frederic Despres, former executive pastry chef of the three-Michelin-star Epicure in Paris, have opened a cute cafe in Central. Diners can expect fine financiers, madeleines and creamy mont blancs, and exquisite savoury items such as foie gras with sweetcorn and truffle croque-monsieur.
1/F Hong Kong House, 17-19 Wellington Street, Central



Bellini Millefoglie at Crust Amalfi.

An exquisite caviar and champagne-themed eatery has joined the line-up at The Pottinger Hotel in Central

Cha Cha Cha
A new shabu-shabu and sukiyaki specialist has opened up in Causeway Bay featuring rare cuts of melt-in-your-mouth Wagyu beef. The set menus are quite wallet-friendly, with a seven-course shabu-shabu meal starting at HK\$588.
Shop A, Fashion Walk, 66-72 Paterson Stt, Causeway Bay

Terroirs by LQV
If you miss good Parisian food and wine, you will not be able to resist Terroirs by LQV. The French wine bar and retailer has taken up a 185 square metres-plus space at 1 Lyndhurst Terrace and is serving classic fare such as pissaladière – the famous anchovy and onion tart from Nice – and pâté en croûte (a meat pie), alongside a great selection of biodynamic, organic and natural wines.
3/F, 1 Lyndhurst Terrace, Central

Chi Yawaragu
A quaint kushiyaki restaurant has opened its doors on Upper Lascar Row in Sheung Wan. Exotic cuts include turkey gizzards and cuttlefish paste and shiso leaf wrap, but conventional grilled skewers such as prawn and beef tongue are also available.
28 Upper Lascar Row, Sheung Wan

Huso
An exquisite caviar and champagne-themed eatery has joined the line-up at The Pottinger Hotel in Central. Prestigious vintages on the wine list include Vilmart et Cie Grande Reserve Premier Cru Brut and the Maison Mumm RSRV Blanc de Noirs Grand Cru Vintage 2012 that would go perfectly with the caviar, fresh oysters and lobster dishes. The Pottinger Hotel, 74 Queen's Road Central, Central

Crepes & Bakes
A new venue like the Hong Kong Palace Museum

means new restaurants, and one of the additions to the open views of the space is Crepes & Bakes.

Customers can anticipate classic sweet and savoury buckwheat crêpes as well as various types of breads, croissants and baguette sandwiches, tartines, salads, tarts and eclairs, and home-made cookies prepared with Valrhona chocolate.
Museum Cafe 3, LG/F, HK Palace Museum, West Kowloon

Oomaki and G Bar
These are Gaia Group's two new concepts at K11 Musea's Food Playground. Oomaki's menu features a wide range of classic and innovative hand rolls, plus other grab-and-go items such as sushi boxes, dons, ramen and more. On the other hand, G Bar offers a range of seafood items as well as comfort food ranging from pastas, soups and salads to enticing meat dishes.
Oomaki, Shop 203A, B2/F, K11 Musea, Victoria Dockside, 18 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui
G Bar, Shop O, B2/F, K11 Musea, Victoria Dockside, 18 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui

Tangram
In the newly minted AKI Hong Kong in the MGallery building in Wan Chai is the serene Tangram. Specialising in novel "Japas", or Japanese tapas, the restaurant presents dishes such as sous vide Wagyu beef with ponzu sauce, truffle toast with prosciutto ham and quail egg, arancini, rice balls with duck liver pâté and spicy tomato relish, and Wagyu sliders with chef's signature bacon jam.
2/F, AKI Hong Kong, MGallery, 239 Jaffe Road, Wan Chai

Crust Amalfi
It joins a slew of new restaurants in K11 Musea in Victoria Dockside and will offer cakes as well as the handmade ceramics that have delighted patrons at the original restaurant in Wan Chai.

Drop by and grab any one of your favourites, from Mama's babà, Neapolitan babà, millefoglie (the Italian version of a mille-feuille) or Bronte pistachio cheesecake.
B201, Basement, K11 Musea, Victoria Dockside

Hong Kong Cuisine
Hong Kong Cuisine has a new chef, Silas Li, who presents imaginative interpretations of Chinese fare to surprise the palate. Highlights include crispy sea cucumber stuffed with tofu fish mousse served with mapo minced pork sauce; and braised boneless duck web stuffed in chicken wings.
1/F, Elegance Court, 2-4 Tsoi Tak Street, Happy Valley

Breeze Bistro
On the Kennedy Town waterfront promenade, Breeze specialises in the flavours of the Mediterranean, with an all-day menu featuring the likes of lobster linguine, whole grilled sea bass and Sicilian caponata (a ratatouille-like dish).
7-8 New Praya, Kennedy Town

Basin
Another restaurant inspired by the Mediterranean is a new venture by chef Antoni Bernabeu and Erik Kirakozov, previously of Pirata group. The menu is rooted in the culinary traditions of France, Italy and Spain, with dishes such as smoked sardines with ajoblanco (a Spanish cold soup), and zucchini flowers stuffed with goats' cheese, walnuts, truffle and acacia honey. Basin soft opens mid-August.
3/F, Foco, 46-48 Cochrane Street, Central

BAR CRAWL

New and revived places show a city with a thirst for life

After months of social distancing and many closures, watering holes are staging a comeback

Charmaine Mok
charmaine.mok@scmp.com

After months of pandemic-related restrictions and operational roadblocks, Hong Kong's bar scene is making a comeback, with numerous new openings and the highly anticipated return of an industry favourite. Get your RAT tests ready, because here are four new bars to visit right now.

After closing unexpectedly in February 2022, gastropub **Second Draft** (H01, Fashion Walk, 9 Kingston Street, Causeway Bay) has re-emerged with a new look and location.

It was important for co-founder Rohit Dugar that regulars would immediately feel like they are in Second Draft – a testament to the community that was built when the gastropub was in Tai Hang.

Avoiding the complexity of finding a completely new space and renovating from scratch, the team were fortunate to collaborate with chef May Chow to take over a large chunk of the existing modern Chinese restaurant Little Bao Diner.

Elsewhere, bar industry veterans are showing renewed confidence in the scene and launching new ventures. Along with a proliferation of new wine bars, we're seeing a number of specialist and hyper-focused venues that aim to set themselves apart from the generalist cocktail bar.

One intriguing proposition is **Bianco & Rosso** (29 Gough Street, Central), recently opened to the delight of vermouth enthusiasts. Billed as Hong Kong's first bar dedicated to the fortified wine, its menu offers an in-depth exploration of the drink's complex aromas and flavours.

The project was a "no-brainer", according to co-founder Tiana Ludhani, who said that partnering with mixologist and vermouth enthusiast Luca Andrei was "the epitome of a passion project".

Further along in Soho is another escapist watering hole by the name of **CNY Bar** (12/F, FOCO, 48 Cochrane Street, Central).

Its rather esoteric name has nothing to do with Lunar New Year – it's shorthand for "chau nam yan", or "stinky gentleman" – a tongue-in-cheek reference to the stereotypically masculine vices that are all available: high-end sound systems, hard liquor and cigars.

Another recent opening is **Sam Fancy** (3-4/F, The Plaza, 21 D'Aguilar Street, Central), an ambitious multilevel venue consisting of three distinct spaces: Lanai Lounge, Association, and The Merchant, where guests can expect modern cocktails with pan-Asian flavours.

The curious name is a play on the Cantonese pronunciation of San Francisco, which alludes to the concept behind the Chinese-leaning flavour profiles of the drinks.



Clockwise from above: Sam Fancy, Second Draft and Bianco & Rosso show a bar scene returning to life after lean times. Photos: Handouts



I KNOW A PLACE ELIZABETH ZHANG

Asian cuisine seldom off the menu for equity trader



Dishes from Blue Supreme and Sijie Sichuan Restaurant.

Born in Hubei province and raised in the US, Chinese-American Elizabeth Zhang is an equity sales trader who previously lived in Tokyo before moving to Hong Kong.

I like most cuisines but am not really a fine-dining kind of person. I definitely would choose Asian food nine times out of 10; I can't go too long without having rice. For example, if we visit my husband's family in England for a week, I'll probably get the local Chinese takeaway twice.

I love spicy food, in particular the Sichuan mala flavours, so **Sijie Sichuan Restaurant** (10/F, Bartlock Centre, 3 Yiu Wa Street, Causeway Bay. Tel: 2802 2250) has been a go-to option for years. Plus, it offers free BYOB.

For somewhere child-friendly and away from the bustle, we like **Sha Tin 18**, (4/F, Hyatt Regency Hong Kong, 18 Chak Cheung Street, Sha Tin. Tel: 3723 7932) and we make a day trip out of it.

Sweet Home (208 Des Voeux Road West, Sai Ying Pun. Tel: 6225 1198) is my choice for Chinese desserts like almond tea with egg white or black sesame pudding with sweet tofu. Sometimes I have it two or three times a week.

For visitors, I would take them to **Sevva** (25/F, Landmark Prince's, 10 Chater Road, Central. Tel: 2537 1388) for a drink, although it's way overpriced. The terrace view is pretty amazing.

We would have dim sum at **Lei Garden** (various locations including Shop 3008, 1FC, 1 Harbour View Street, Central. Tel: 2798 8768). But my husband and I also like **One-ThirtyOne** (131 Tseng Tau Village, Shap Sze Heung, Sai Kung. Tel: 2791 2684) for special occasions, as that's where we got married.

For American food, my favourite burger place is **Five Guys** (various locations including 60 Johnston Road, Wan Chai) which was founded in Fairfax County, Virginia – near my hometown.

I also love chicken and waffles. There is a yummy fusion version at **Blue Supreme** (21 Tung Street, Sheung Wan. Tel: 5998 3088).

As told to Andrew Sun



Steak, peas and octopus at Terroirs by LQV; signature rolls at Oomaki; crepes, salads and pastries at Crepes & Bakes. Photos: Crepes & Bakes, Terroirs by LQV, Oomaki