

美酒佳肴

Auspicious eats

By Qian Leung

吉祥
原



LIFE AND DEATH ARE IN THE POWER OF THE TONGUE. IF THAT IS THE CASE, WHY NOT SPEAK LIFE? I SUPPOSE THAT IS THE PREMISE OF WHY THE CHINESE CHOOSE TO SPEAK WORDS OF GOOD, AND NOT OF EVIL, DURING THE 15 DAYS OF CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR. THIS YEAR, FOR A TOUCH OF FUN, WE ASK SIX CHEFS TO CREATE FOR US 15 DISHES THAT BRING GOOD LUCK.

美酒搭配，年菜升级

农历新年的到来，华裔总会保留传统在除夕回到家中与家人坐上餐桌，一起享用年夜饭。在满满一桌丰盛菜肴的餐桌上，大家相依的情感，我想此时此刻没有什么比这刻更加珍贵了。不过，你是否也和我一样有同样的想法：又要吃一顿从小到大不变的年夜饭了，大鱼大肉的佳肴虽然“澎湃”，但在现今的富足社会，这些早已成了日常料理，那么我们又该如何把这些百年“老菜”注入新的“生命”？让老菜上桌后，依然能吸引家人，那就让这五家餐厅，六位师傅教你如何保留年菜传统的意义，但又能够让你的佳肴焕然一新。除了六位师傅教你如何让你的年菜更“精致”，还有侍酒师教你如何用美酒来搭配你的佳肴。侍酒师告诉我，葡萄酒的产区，风味和品种和中式的白酒或黄酒比起来变化较多，和年菜互搭更多“惊喜”。所谓吃年菜嘛，一定有老有少，喝威士忌似乎太浓烈，那么啤酒虽然“平易近人”，但又平平无奇，所以让年轻一代在餐桌上来杯鸡尾酒，这会让她们的年菜更有新意，皆大欢喜。志伟



美酒佳肴



beetroot pasta with shiitake mushroom & apricot in bacon chrysanthemum dashi by Morsels



eight treasure duck with truffle risotto, morel, cep & butter mushroom, foie gras & asparagus with parma ham by Saveur

年菜

PETRINA LOH

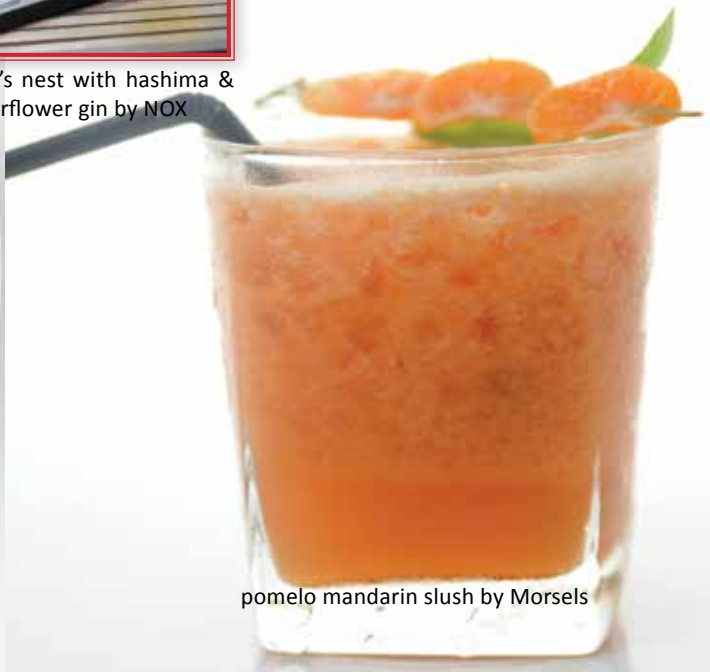
The pineapple drink ties in with the pineapple pork ribs. We want people to feel like they are eating a pineapple tart with this drink.



double-boiled bird's nest with hashima & passionfruit & elderflower gin by NOX



tortellini of scallop with tabasco & lemon in cream of corn by Saveur



pomelo mandarin slush by Morsels

It's the first time I'm seeing pink noodles. "Noodles are a symbol of longevity," explains Chef Petrina Loh, 31, of Morsels. "We homemade the pasta, and add beetroot juice for a touch of red." The noodles sit on a broth made from smoked bacon dashi, littered with bits of house-smoked bacon, shiitake mushrooms, and apricot crumbles. "Pork is prosperous animal that Chinese people love to eat," Chef Loh says. "Apricot crumbles are sweet and look like little bits of gold, and mushrooms are what you'd find in pen cai, a typical Chinese Lunar New Year (CNY) dish." There is a beautiful scent coming from the broth – mysterious and elusive, yet ethereal and enchanting at the same time. "Flowers in bloom are also a big part of CNY, so I've added some chrysanthemum for the scent." Chef Loh has meant for the dish to be an appetiser, and has added ponzu citrus-soy sauce for a little tanginess. The dish is paired with a pomelo mandarin slush, with pomelo signifying fruitfulness, and mandarin denoting gold. "We wanted a cocktail that is refreshing and bright. Also, pomelo is in season this time of the year."

Chef Chuah Yew Tee, 28, of Saveur has come up with a dish of eight treasure duck, French-style, for our story. "It's supposed to carry the meaning of ying chun jie fu, zhao cai jing bao," says Chef Chuah. "We want to wish our guests luck and wealth, happiness for the entire family, and for the elders in the family, longevity, and unceasing opportunities." Duck symbolises loyalty, and the truffle risotto, stuffed in the duck breast, points to rice, which the Chinese views as abundance. There is also morel, cep, and butter mushroom, rolled into a medallion with duck breast, some foie gras tucked underneath, and some parma ham wrapped around an asparagus spear, grilled. The dish of scallop tortellini is also prepared by Chef Chuah, and it has the meaning of huang jing man di, da ji da li. "The tortellini is a yuan bao (ingot). It represents fortune.

年菜

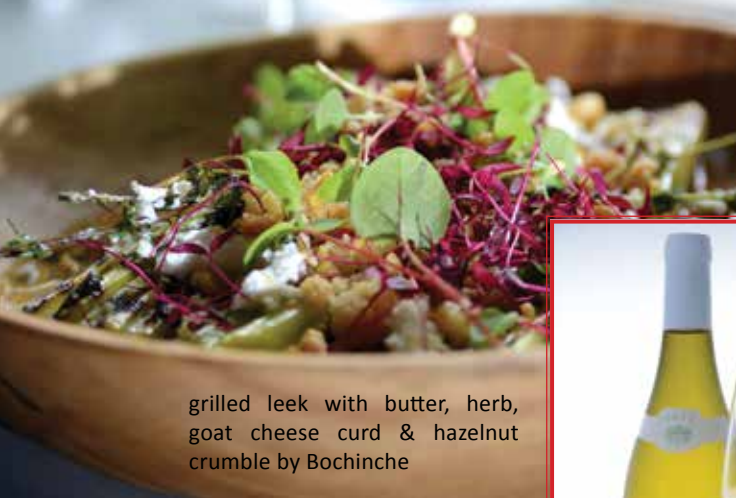
BRYAN CHIA

Pistachios in Chinese mean 'good times'!

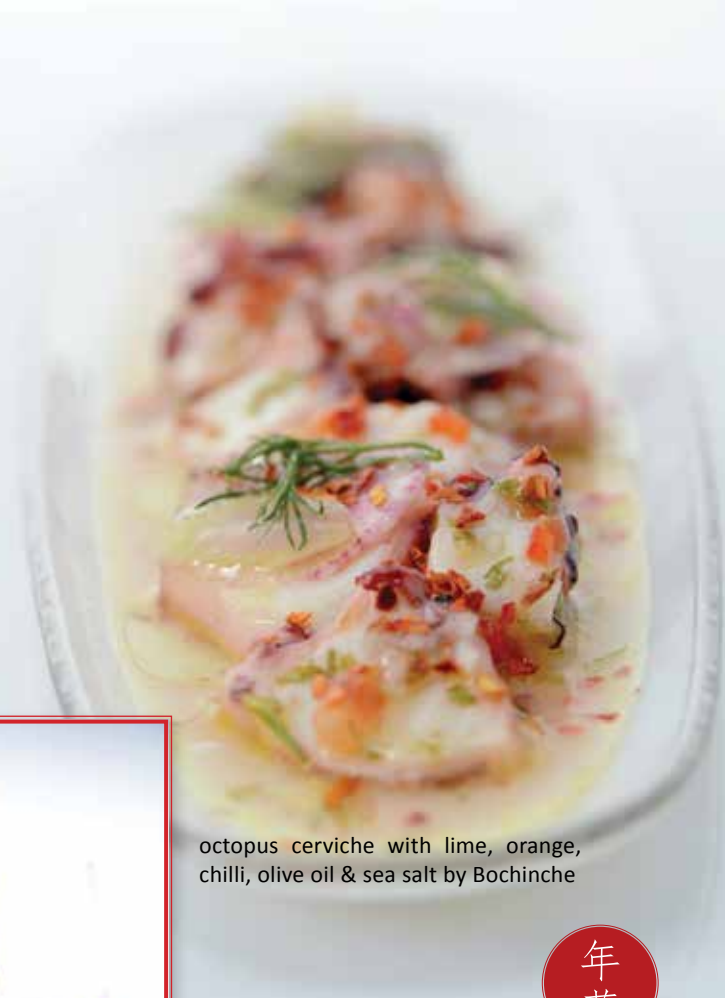


hamachi & seabream crudo with sesame vinaigrette, spring onion aioli & tortilla chips with wild hibiscus royale by Morsels

美酒佳肴



grilled leek with butter, herb, goat cheese curd & hazelnut crumble by Bochinche



octopus cerviche with lime, orange, chilli, olive oil & sea salt by Bochinche



2012 Domaine A. Cailbourdin Pouilly-Fumé Cuveé De Boisfleury by Fleur De Sel

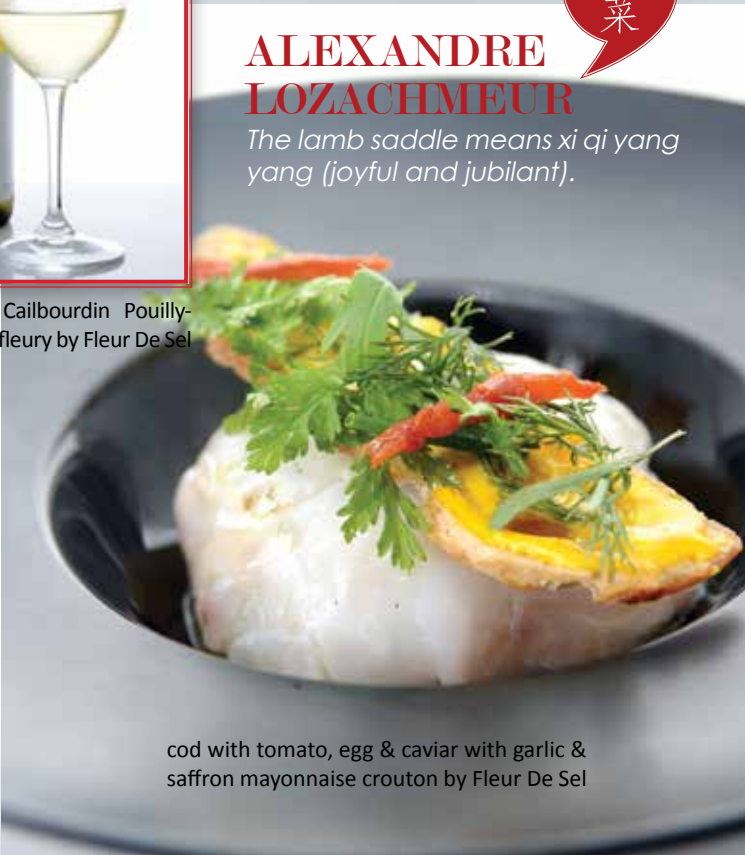
年菜

ALEXANDRE LOZACHEUR

The lamb saddle means xi qi yang yang (joyful and jubilant).



flavours of tom yam by NOX



cod with tomato, egg & caviar with garlic & saffron mayonnaise croustillon by Fleur De Sel

The corn soup poured around the tortellini denotes an endless flow of gold.” We are swooned with Chef Chuah’s red mullet (read page 7), which has holds a promise of hong yun dang tou, nian nian you yu (blessings shall overtake you, and you will have an abundance for every good work). It is truly appetising, with its vinaigrette of olive oil, apricot, lemon, basil, chervil, chive, and parsley, and the spirited crunch of toasted pine nuts. We are dumbstruck by the work that goes into cutting red, yellow, and green dots out of beetroot, carrot, and zucchini peel, and the surgical-like procedure of overlapping the translucent scales, so that they almost seem to refract a kaleidoscope spectrum of colours when they catch the light.

With a martini glass of double-boiled bird’s nest, Chef Desmond Lee, 45, of NOX, has added in hashima. “The hashima look like pearls, so to me, it signifies jing yu man tang,” says Chef Lee. Instead of mandarin peel, Chef Lee has added orange peels, for aroma. Alex Ng, 21, bartender at NOX, creates a light cucumber passionfruit drink, with elderflower liqueur, and gin as the base. “I didn’t want a heavy drink, that would mask the delicate bird’s nest. This is a refreshing cordial.” A dish of hamachi crudo is Chef Petrina Loh and Chef Bryan Chia of Morsel’s take on yusheng. “The spring onion aioli is fragrant, and spring onions (cong) mean intelligence. The hamachi is marinated in a sesame vinaigrette.” Some sliced baby carrots are added to mean hong yun dang tou (blessings of good luck), and the tortilla chips are a symbol of man di huang jin (streets of gold). Chef Chia is also responsible for the dish of pork ribs (read page 9). “The crispy part of the pork ribs is pistachio (kai xing guo), which means good times. The pineapple (ong lai) means wealth, and it is presented as brûlée pineapple, and used in the tomato salsa, and the miso glaze.” As I taste the dish of butter poached leeks by Chef Diego Jacquet, 37, of Bochinche, the tenderness of the leeks astounds me. “We grill, smoke, char, and then poach the leeks with herbs and butter

Pan-seared foie gras with caramelised mandarin & shortcrust pastry by Fleur De Sel



(From right to left) twisted tango by Bochinche, da ji da li by Saveur, spicy lolita by Bochinche

in the oven, till they get soft,” says Chef Jacquet. It is served with a mouthwatering goat cheese curd, and crunchy hazelnut crumble, which adds texture. “In mandarin, leek is suan, which sounds like to count money, isn’t it?” The Argentinean chef asks. “And the octopus, because it has eight tentacles, it represents striking it rich (fa).” Chef Jacquet explains that because Argentina is hot, he enjoys this refreshing dish. In cerviche, fresh raw octopus is cooked with a citrus dressing of lime, orange, chilli, coriander, olive oil, and sea salt. It has bite, and texture.



empanada with sweet corn, mozzarella, shallots, oregano & parsley by Bochinche

美酒佳肴

269 Beach Road, Singapore 199546
Tel: (65) 6298 0708



NOX
Dine in the Dark

64 Tras Street, Singapore 079003
Tel: (65) 6222 6861



*Fleur De Sel
& Saveur*

14 Scotts Road, Far East Plaza #01-07B,
Singapore 228213 | Tel: (65) 6736 1121

Here we are...



年菜

DIEGO JACQUET

The empanada is our version of gold ingots. The filling of sweet corn represents gold, money and prosperity.

Bochinche

#02-01, 22 Martin Road, Singapore 239058
Tel: (65) 6235 4990



Morsels

35 Mayo Street, Singapore 208316
Tel: (65) 6396 6302

At Fleur De Sel, Chef Alexandre Lozachmeur, 33, sets a dish of fresh cod in front of us. “It’s like lo hei, you know?” Chef Lozachmeur asks. The fresh cod has been marinated in lemon, olive oil, salt, and pepper, and he has stuffed some sautéed tomatoes, egg, and caviar inside. A croton tops the fresh cod, with some garlic and saffron mayonnaise, for a touch of the south of France. A Chenin Blanc from the Loire Valley, 2012 Domaine A. Cailbourdin Pouilly-Fumé Cuveé De Boisfleury, is chosen for its dryness, which goes well with the cod. Also from Chef Lozachmeur is a dish of pan-fried foie gras. “Foie gras is typically French,” says Chef Lozachmeur. “I pair it with caramelised mandarin orange, because it’s CNY, and the dressing of verjus, sherry, vinaigrette, and orange juice balances the roundness of the foie gras.” The shortcrust pastry that sits under the caramelised orange is buttery and crumbly – delicious. The empanadas are created by Chef Jacquet. “It is our version of the CNY dumplings. The filling is sweet corn, and represents gold, money, and prosperity.” The empanada is a traditional street snack in Argentina, and sweet corn is a popular flavour. It is creamy, with shallot, mozzarella, sweet corn, oregano, and parsley, in a pastry dough of flour and cow fat, rolled out from the pasta machine freshly every day. Chef Lozachmeur’s lamb saddle

dish has a meaning as well. “Xi qi yang yang,” he says, meaning, to be joyful and jubilant. The lamb is served with a ratatouille, which is typical of the south of France, where he comes from. The dish is served with 2009 Château l’Ermitage Lustrac-Médoc Vignobles Thomas, a robust Bordeaux to go with the lamb. For the pork knuckle by Chef Lee, its meaning is heng cai zhou shou, that is, riches within reach. The lotus root (liang ou) denotes nian, and together with pork knuckle (zhu shou), means nian nian zhou shou – riches within reach perpetually. He used to eat this dish as a kid during CNY, when it would be made with Chinese cooking wine and oyster sauce. Here, he does it the French way, with red wine, Port, Madeira, and brandy. A refreshing cocktail of apple, allspice, mint, and whiskey goes with the hearty dish. Chef Lee is also responsible for the lobster creation on page 5. The dish, made with chorizo, water chestnuts, smoked bacon, and leeks, is addictive, and I can’t seem to stop myself from polishing up every last bit of it. “The lobster is long, and the water chestnut is ma ti,” says Chef Lee. “So together they mean long ma jing shen (as spirited as the dragon horse).” Do head on to NOX to give it a try, and have a first-hand experience of dining in pitch darkness. This coming CNY, have you decided on your reunion dinner menu yet? If you haven’t, we hope the sparkly ideas from these six chefs have lit a flicker of desire in your heart, to come up with your very own good-luck dish! QL



2011 Marrenon Les Grains Chardonnay,
2012 La Minga Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot

DESMOND LEE

The pork knuckle with lotus root chips has the meaning of nian nian zhou shou (riches within reach).

braised pork knuckle with lotus root chips in port, Madeira & brandy reduction by NOX