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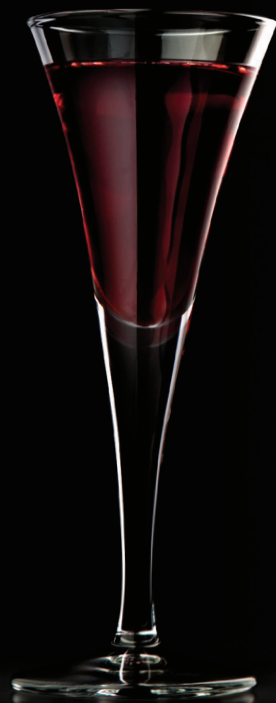
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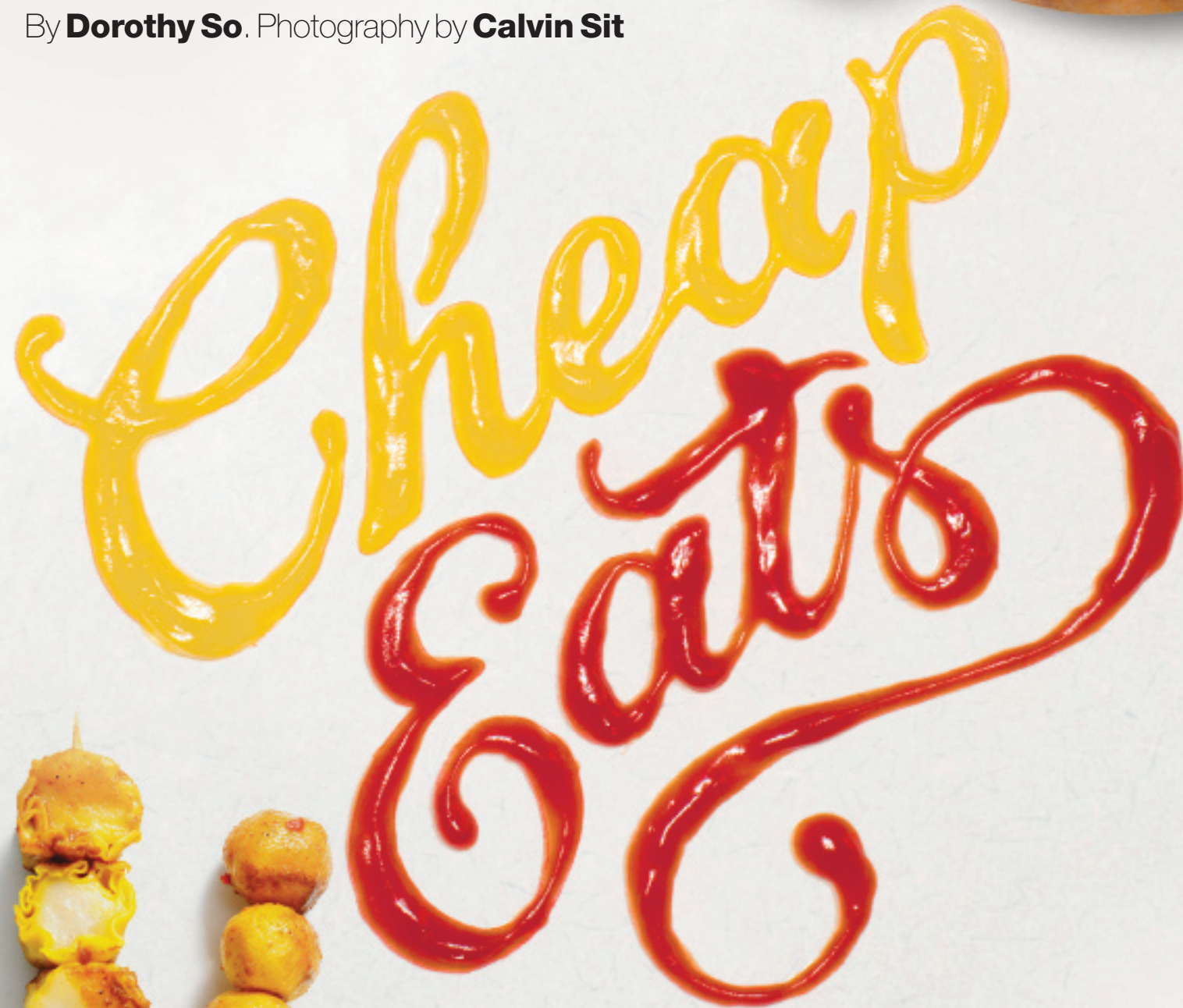
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From street snacks on a stick to spicy noodles slurped straight out of a flimsy tub, *Time Out* presents the definitive guide to Hong Kong's best bang-for-a-buck dining spots.

By **Dorothy So**. Photography by **Calvin Sit**



- Yau Tsim Mong P22**
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*Eateries marked with 'Chinese only' provide menus written only in Chinese

TOP 5

Hong Kong street eats



FISHBALL

These fluffy round balls on sticks are made mostly from flour and contain almost no fish meat. That hasn't stopped the mighty fishball's popularity though and it remains the most widely eaten street snack in Hong Kong. Most vendors do two types of fishballs: regular and curry flavour. Choose your own poison. *Kai Kei Snack, 41 Dundas St, Mong Kok, no phone. \$6.*



FISH SIU MAI

Fish siu mai was originally created as the poor man's steamed pork dumplings. Similar to the fishball, the siu mai you get on the streets are pretty much just kneaded balls of flour served on a stick. But as long as it's served under a liberal dose of soy sauce, we ain't complaining. *Mei Mei Heen, G/F, Mandarin Plaza, 14 Science Museum Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, no phone. \$6.*



COW OFFAL

Hongkongers have a serious love affair with beef guts. At Thirteenth Block, only fresh cuts of offal are used, and these are braised with more than a dozen different spices. A single assorted skewer usually includes intestines, lungs and tripe. If one skewer isn't enough, go for the small bowl, which costs \$35. *Thirteenth Block Cow Offal, 1 Shu Kuk St, North Point, 3575 9299. \$9.*



BOWL PUDDING

The common bowl pudding usually comes in white or brown versions (depending on the sugar it's made from). Both types are studded with red beans. The result is a sticky, glutinous mess that carries just a faint hint of sugary sweetness. It's simple, but also enough to keep it a street snack favourite. *Kwan Kee, Shop 10, 115-117 Fuk Wa St, Sham Shui Po, 2360 0328. \$5.*



EGG WAFFLE

It's amazing how satisfying these simple snacks can be. These bubble-shaped cakes taste best when the centres are still a little warm. Egg waffles specialist QQ does a range of flavours including peanut-coconut and pork floss with sweetcorn, but it's the plain, unadulterated version that deserves our loyalty. *Hong Kong QQ Egg Cake, 124 Wanchai Rd, Wan Chai, no phone. \$13.*

TOP 5

cha chaan teng dishes



CHAR SIU RICE

Rice is always nicer when it's served under a side of barbecued pork. For the best char siu, the meat should be lacquered in molasses before it's cooked to ensure that the surface is crisp and sweet. It's classic Cantonese comfort food served with a drizzle of soy sauce. *Wah Fung, 112-114 Wellington St, Central, 2544 3466. \$31.*

SOUPLESS INSTANT NOODLES

Instant noodles are usually served in MSG-laden broth but they're actually even better when served out-of-soup and tossed in sauce or flavoured oil. Old-school cha chaan teng Lan Fong Yuen does a particularly delicious rendition of soupless instant noodles that's dressed with scallion oil and served with thick slices of roasted chicken (\$38). *Lan Fong Yuen, 2 Gage St, Central 2544 3895. \$38*

CURRY BEEF BRISKET RICE

The sauce is the whole soul of this dish. Hong Kong-style curry is actually more sweet than spicy and it's all the more delicious when soaked up with chunks of potatoes and meltingly tender brisket. *Tsui Wah, citywide including 15-19 Wellington St, Central, 2525 6338; www.tsuiwahrestaurant.com. \$48.*

BAKED PORK CHOP RICE

A proper baked pork chop rice should have several elements. One – perfectly cooked rice that's not too mushy. Two – fluffy cuts of pork that are still moist and succulent in the centre. Three – a tangy yet balanced tomato sauce that's slightly burnt and crisp around the edges. *Mido Café, 63 Temple St, Yau Ma Tei, 2384 6402. \$48.*



STIR-FRIED BEEF NOODLES

Beef 'hor fun' is one of Hong Kong's most-loved cha chaan teng noodles. The secret is the 'wok hei' – the flavourful nuances that develop after being cooked in a well-heated and properly oiled wok. For one of the best beef noodles in town, try Michelin-starred Ho Hung Kee's flat rice hor fun tangled with bean sprouts and green onions. *Ho Hung Kee, 2 Sharp St, Causeway Bay, 2577 6558. \$62.*



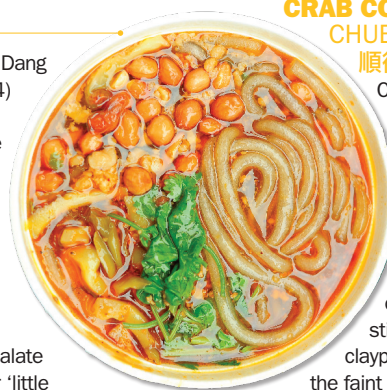
Snack attack TBSL chef Que Vinh Dang hits up Mong Kok for his favourite street snacks

Yau Tsim Mong

SPICY NOODLES

DANG WONG 旦王

Want to set your mouth on fire? Dang Wong's Chongqing noodles (\$14) should do the trick. The chewy sweet potato starch noodles are served in paper bowls brimming with a blood red sour and spicy chilli broth with peanuts, pork, preserved vegetables and coriander. Slurp it down quickly – the longer the noodles sit in the soup, the more the spice is absorbed. Those with a milder palate can go for the 'medium spicy' or 'little spicy' noodles. *72 Bute St, Mong Kok, no phone. Chinese only.*



CRAB CONGEE SHUNDE

CHUEN HOT POT CONGEE 順德村煲仔生滾粥

Congee is the quintessential cold weather comfort food and at this Jordan eatery the chefs do a killer crab flavoured version (\$33) that's big on taste as well as value. The congee is cooked with a whole mud crab and arrives at the table still bubbling away in a mini claypot. It's light and fluffy, with the faint nuances of fragrant crab roe melted into the brothy rice concoction. The restaurant also does other excellent congees, but the crab one is definitely the house favourite. *Shop 3, G/F, Haven Mansion, 108 Woosung St, Jordan, 2385 0328. Chinese only.*

HOT DUMPLINGS JUN JUN 津津

Jun Jun pays tribute to all things drenched in chilli oil and peppers. The best thing here is the slippery skinned Chongqin wontons (\$12), which are flecked with coriander and sesame and served in a mouth-numbing chilli sauce. They also do chilled noodles (\$7) designed to be eaten with chopped peanuts, scallions and Sichuan spicy sauce. *456 Boundary St, Prince Edward, no phone. Chinese only.*

MICHELIN-STARRED DIM SUM ONE DIM SUM 一點心

Since winning its first Michelin star at the end of last year, One Dim Sum has helped divert some of the foodie crowds from Tim Ho Wan. The restaurant does the standard steamed pork dumplings (\$14) and prawn dumplings (\$17) but try and save room for the cottony soft steamed chicken with 'shrooms' (\$15) and One Dim Sum's famous molasses Malay sponge cake (\$14). *Shop 1 & 2, G/F, Kenwood Mansion, 15 Playing Field Rd, Prince Edward, 2789 2280.*

KOREAN STREET SNACKS BUK HOU

北口韓國地道小食

This store dishes up the type of provisions you'll see served on the streets of Seoul. Imagine thick, chewy dubboki (\$25) rice cakes in a gloopy orange sauce and spicy chicken meatballs (\$12) served on a stick with flecks of black and white sesame. When the mercury dips, try the eomuk (\$10) – a folded fish cake served in a piping hot broth. *1E Kimberley St, Tsim Sha Tsui, 2367 1628.*

OBANYAKI JUMBO WAGASHI

Jumbo Wagashi's burger-like Japanese cakelets (\$10 for one; \$27 for three) are swelled with an assortment of sweet ingredients. The adzuki red bean filling is the most traditional but there are other choices as well, including Belgian chocolate and seasonal fruit with sweet vanilla custard. The tiny takeaway-only stall also offers a savoury option of tuna with black pepper and cheese. *Shop G27, G/F, Gi Shopping Mall, 34-36 Granville Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, 6205 5328.*

SWISS ROLL ROLL

The cute, Japanese swiss roll cakes here are a hit with the young shoppers that swarm around Granville. The tiny store bakes up a whole rainbow of fluffy, fresh cream-filled cakes in flavours such as black sesame (\$26), green tea mochi (\$23), Okinawa brown sugar (\$23) and caramel banana (\$26). They also do froyos and an assortment of colourful homemade macarons (\$15). *41C-D Granville Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, 2191 9212.*

KUSHIAGE KUSHI STUDIO

This casual Japanese eatery specialises in kushiage – breaded meats, fish or veg that are skewered on sticks of bamboo and deep-fried. The menu lists 20 different alcohol-friendly kushiage items, most of which cost \$10 to \$12 per skewer. Capelin (\$12), scallops (\$18), octopus (\$12) and

chicken meatballs (\$12) are easy favourites. Aside from the signature deep-fried provisions, Kushi Studio also does a delicious dashi oden, again at \$10 to \$12 per ingredient. *Shop 8, Woodhouse, 36-44 Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, 2721 8832.*

HEARTY SUBS HERO SANDWICH

As the name suggests, this American-style deli is dedicated to the mighty hero sub. The signature ribeye steak sandwich (\$28) comes with plenty of rare, juicy meat, cheddar, tomatoes and onions pushed between two halves of toasted homemade bread. There's also the cold-cut sandwich (\$19) crammed with deli meats and the pizza sandwich (\$23) served with the works. *Shop 7-8, G/F, Shining Heights, 83 Sycamore St, Tai Kwok Tsui, 2523 2333.*

XINJIANG SKEWERS GOU JIANG SNACKS 夠瀾美食

This dodgy looking dive grills its meats to order then dusts them off with chilli and cumin powder. The large lamb rack will only set you back \$25 while a small skewer of grilled mutton goes for \$8 a pop. A host of healthy greens are also offered, including mushrooms, garlic shoots and sliced jade melon (all \$7). You can order-to-go or enjoy the grilled goodies on one of the fold-up tables scattered on the street. *30A Chung Wui St, Tai Kwok Tsui, no phone. Chinese only.*

TAIWANESE BEEF NOODLE A-MAI KITCHEN 阿嬤廚房

There's something innately beautiful about Taiwanese braised beef noodles. It could be the rich and intensely flavourful broth; it could be the tender beef. At A-Mai Kitchen, it's all these things rolled into one. The restaurant's beef noodles (\$30) come in soup that's simmered with a schload of herbs, spices and a healthy dollop of sriracha and Taiwanese bean paste. It's satisfaction in a bowl. *11 Pok Man St, Tai Kwok Tsui, 3483 0196.*

Are you a meat eater?
Then you're gonna like this. Morton's does \$55 cocktails and free-flow filet mignon sandwiches on weekdays from 5pm-7pm. 4/F, The Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers, 20 Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, 2732 2343.

CHEF'S choice

RICHARD EKKEBUS

Director of culinary operations and food & beverage at The Landmark Mandarin Oriental

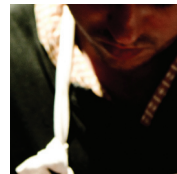


"The beef flank with broth or curried (\$28) at Kau Kee. Make sure you are specific on which part of the flank you want – the staff can be rude but do not take it personally. Also, Mak Man Kee on Parkes

Street in Jordan. It's easy to miss but their wonton soup (\$25) is known to be the best in Hong Kong." *Kau Kee, 21 Gough St, Central, 2815 0123; Mak Man Kee, 51 Parkes St, Jordan, 2736 5561.*

MATT ABERGEL

Chef-owner of Yardbird



"I consistently eat Robuchon sandwiches (\$48). It's the best bread and [they do] a good ham and cheese. It's good hot or at room temp. I also eat Chiu Chow-style fishballs whenever I see them." *Le*

Salon De Thé de Joël Robuchon, Shop 315, 3/F, The Landmark, 15 Queen's Rd Central, 2166 9088; www.robuchon.hk.

ESTHER SHAM

Chef-owner of Ta Pantry



"Fishballs and octopus balls rule! My favourite place in Hong Kong is Chiu Yuen Chiu Chow Noodle. One bowl of double topping noodles is just \$23. They still use real manual power to pound their

fish balls until they develop the perfect elasticity and, unlike other places, they make their fishballs with 100 percent fish meat." *Chiu Yuen Chiu Chow Noodle, 37 Spring Garden Lane, Wan Chai, 2892 2322.*

QUE VINH DANG

Chef-owner of TBLS



"I like the beef noodle place [Kau Kee] on Gough Street. The curry beef noodles (\$28) there are awesome. I hear it goes well with single malt whisky..." *Kau Kee, 21 Gough St, Central, 2815 0123.*

VINNY LAURIA

Head chef of Linguini Fini



"My favourites are xiao long bao (\$42) from Modern China, Jack Carson's deep-fried pork belly nuggets (\$88) at Blue Smoke and pho (\$42) at Nha Trang." *Modern China, Shop 1002, 10/F, Times Square, Matheson St, Causeway Bay, 2506 2525; Blue Smoke, 3/F, Grand Progress Bldg, 15-16 Lan Kwai Fong, Central, 2816 9018; Nha Trang, 88-90 Wellington St, Central, 2581 9992.*



Feel the heat Uncle Chef's owner Wong fires up the wok

Kwun Tong & Kowloon City

TOP 5 bizarre eats



SOY-BRAISED DUCK NECK

Juet Mei 絕味鴨頸

Duck neck (\$25) may not be the prettiest thing to eat out of a plastic take-out tub but it is tasty as hell. The dark brown meat is fully imbibed with the savoury, spicy flavours of its soy sauce marinade and tears off the bone like strips of beef jerky. The tiny stall also does other off-cuts of duck, including duck heart (\$30) and tongue (\$50). It's extra tasty when downed with a cold Tsing Tao from the nearest 7-Eleven store. *G/F, Ho King Commercial Ctr, 2-16 Fa Yuen St, Mong Kok, no phone.*

EEL AND RICE BURGER

Hamanako

Rice burgers may not be new to Hong Kong but Hamanako has added its own special twist to the sandwich by filling it with its house special broiled eel (\$12). The unagi is slathered with a sweet soy sauce marinade and grilled before it's shoved in between two pressed rice 'buns' with a pile of preserved vegetables. *Shop G46, G/F, E Plaza, 7 Shing Yip St, Kwun Tong, 2790 1838.*

KOOKY GELATI

I-Scream

I-Scream is known for its unique and experimental gelati flavours. The selection changes regularly depending on what ingredients the owners want to play around with. For example, the café's just launched a new line of cocktail-inspired gelati for the summer with flavours such as Bloody Mary, cosmo and margarita (all \$35). *Unit A, UG/F, Shama Place, 30 Hollywood Rd, Soho, 2605 3881; www.iscream.com.hk.*

DEEP-FRIED DURIAN

Durian King

This takeout counter at Jusco does a stinky selection of fresh durian and durian products. The quirkiest offerings here though are the deep-fried-to-order nibbles, which range from durian spring rolls (\$25) and piping hot fritters filled with iced durian flesh. *1/F, JUSCO Kornhill Store, 2 Kornhill Rd, 2426 0197.*

PEELABLE BANANA POPS

all major supermarkets

This is probably the most bizarre popsicle (\$7.90) we've come across. The ice on a stick comes with a bright yellow jelly layer, which you can peel off like a banana skin to reveal the white 'flesh' in the centre. What's even weirder though is that this banana-themed icicle is... not banana flavoured. The middle is vanilla ice cream and the peel is grape flavoured. Huh?



BEEF CAKES ISLAM FOOD

This is a no-brainer but we're still obligated to mention it because the beef cakes (\$24) are... well, transcendent. The crispy pan-fried pastries are generously plumped with ground halal beef that still swell with meat juices. It's greasy, savoury, meaty amazingness encased in a well-browned crust. Trust us – after the first bite, there's no turning back. *1 Lung Kong Rd, Kowloon City, 2382 2822.*

HEALTH-FOCUSED CAKES

GIOIA BY CHI

Over the last two years, Kowloon City has somehow morphed into the city's premier sugar stretch. Following in the footsteps of Ceres and Tony Wong's cakeshop and froyo spot comes Gioia – a street-level pâtisserie that does health-oriented desserts without sucking out the fun. Fanciful concoctions like the 'Fresh Fruit Surprise' (\$33) of layered summery berries with puff pastry and vanilla cream, and the flowery 'Damascus rose yoghurt' (\$36) are all so tasty, you wouldn't have guessed that they were low-fat and low-sugar. *35A Nam Kok Rd, Kowloon City, 2718 6618.*

ARTISAN FROYO SMILE

Froyo stores are a dime a dozen but Smile manages to stand apart from the rest. After all, this frozen yoghurt store was opened by celebrity pastry chef Tony Wong. Like most other froyo joints, you can mix-and-match your own yoghurt and toppings (\$35 for one topping). But Smile also offers a range of ready-made creations including the signature 'The Garden' (frozen vanilla yoghurt, homemade cookie crumbs, lychee rose sauce, strawberry meringue, osmanthus jelly and passion fruit tuile, \$45). *65 Lion Rock Rd, Kowloon City, 2382 6669; www.smile-yogurt.com.*



MEAT-FILLED FRENCH TOAST

LOK YUEN 樂園

Where else can you get crisp, golden, eggy French toasts stuffed with adzuki red bean (\$18) or – better yet – satay beef (\$19)? The formula doesn't seem to add up at first but when you go in for the initial bite, the whirlwind of sweet condensed milk, savoury beef and butter hits the palate in one fell swoop. It's a mess of flavours – and a thoroughly delicious one at that. *Unit CF6, 3/F, Kowloon City Municipal Services Bldg, Nga Tsin Wai Rd, Kowloon City, 2382 3367. Chinese only.*

'RAINBOW' SOUP NOODLES

THAILAND ROADSIDE DELICACIES

泰國路邊街美食

This restaurant plates up a wide array of cheap Thai delicacies but it's enough to come here just for the noodle dishes. The 'rainbow' soup noodles (\$20) in particular should be on everyone's must-eat list. The wide, flat rice noodles swim in a broth that's flavoured with a savoury mix of red fermented bean curd and chicken broth with a splash of vinegar and sugar. The bowl is then generously loaded with greens, cuttlefish, fishballs, fishcakes and cubes of pig's blood. It's Thai-style comfort food at its best. *26 South Wall Rd, Kowloon City, 2716 3868.*

HOKKAIDO CHEESECAKE

LUNA CAKE

Kwun Tong's industrial area might not seem like the most obvious place for delicate baked goods but that hasn't stopped Luna from turning out prize-worthy Hokkaido-style cheesecakes. The original (\$28) is our favourite with a layer of fluffy génoise covered with cream cheese and then mascarpone. They also do a cocoa'd-up version (\$32) for all the chocoholics out there. *Shop 21, G/F, E Plaza, 7 Shing Yip St, Kwun Tong, 3575 9696.*

TUNG PO-STYLE DINING

UNCLE CHEF 阿叔小廚

Fans of Tung Po should check out Uncle Chef. Chef-owner Wong spent four years at the legendary Java Road market restaurant before opening up his own spot in Kwun Tong. The space is a real dive – expect oil-slicked floors and boisterous triad-types sitting at the next table. But also expect some really awesome down-and-dirty food served straight from the wok. Standard stir-fries like clams in black bean sauce (\$55) and diced beef with onions and black pepper (\$60) don't disappoint. Wong also does some quirkier dishes like the meltingly tender 'dog style' braised pork knuckle (\$68) and crispy, deep-fried durian (\$60) for those who dare to try it. *Shop C19, 4/F, Shui Wo St Municipal Services Bldg, Kwun Tong, 2790 8885. Chinese only.*

Guzzle and gorge
Enjoy all-you-can-eat (and drink!) hotpot for a killer price of \$98 per stomach at Foo Lum Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant.
2-20 Ming On St, Hung Hom, 2363 2883.

CHEAP OYSTERS OYSTER HUT

Oyster Hut's owner has serious connections with the city's seafood suppliers and is able to score some of the freshest shellfish at a fraction of the usual market price. The store offers a whole crew of seafood, from cherrystone clams to chilled Boston crab. But as the name suggests, freshly shucked oysters are the main draw here. The selection changes daily with prices ranging anywhere from \$28 for a US Samish Bay oyster to \$118 for a Belon 0000. Most of the oysters fall under \$50 apiece – it's cheap as chips for what you get. *Shop G2, 29 Tak Man St, 3521 0876.*

QUICK-AND-EASY INDONESIAN

KAM KIU INDONESIAN FASTFOOD

At Kam Kiu, it's all about the nasi kuning (\$35) – a golden-yellow rice perfumed with coconut milk and ground turmeric. Here, they serve it with a liberal helping of pickled vegetables, fried anchovies and roasted peanuts showered in salt. For a full and satisfying meal, order the rice with an extra side of

spicy beef rending and wash it all down with an iced cendol (\$13). *Shop E3, 35 Tung Yan St, Kwun Tong, 2344 9423.*

WONTON NOODLES

DAI GUONG DENG WONTON NOODLE

大光燈麵食巷仔雲吞麵

Housed on a quiet street corner, this humble eatery has been serving kickass noodles to the Hung Hom community for more than 30 years. The one-bite wontons are bundles of fresh prawns and ground pork enveloped in a slippery smooth flour wrapper. Order it served over a small bowl of thin egg noodles (\$20). The restaurant opens at 4pm every day and continues feeding hungry souls well into the wee hours. *247 Chatham Rd North, Hung Hom, 2766 3330. Chinese only.*

SUGAR OVERDOSE SWEET TOOTH

You should always save room for dessert, especially if it's from somewhere like Sweet Tooth. This Hung Hom dessert store spins delicious panna cotta (\$30) as well as delectably moist cakes made with top-grade Valrhona chocolate. If you really want to spoil yourself, order the 'beauty and the beast' dessert tasting platter (\$42), which combines the store's vanilla bean panna cotta and signature 'ugly' chocolate cake on one large plate. *Shop 1A, Wisdom Bldg, 17 Station Lane, 2773 6023.*

BARBECUED SHELLFISH

HELLO B.B.Q

Your usual prized-and-fleshy seafood gets a down-to-earth makeover at this To Kwa Wan barbecue joint. It's the shelled stuff you're after here – fat baby lobsters skewered and grilled are \$88 a stick. It's a far cry from what you usually have to fork over at other seafood restaurants. Even better are the zebra-striped mantis prawns (\$88) which come with fat strips of bright orange roe. *G/F, 27 Pak Tai Street, To Kwa Wan, 2712 8009.*

TOP 5

deep-fried bites

BIGGER-THAN-YOUR-FACE FRIED CHICKEN HOT-STAR LARGE FRIED CHICKEN

This ridiculously-sized street snack hails from Taiwan (where most ridiculous street snacks come from). A regular piece of chicken meat is pounded into a large slab and dredged in potato starch flour before it's deep-fried. The chicken remains impressively succulent inside its golden crust. To make things even better, order the spicy version, which is dusted off with bright red chilli powder (\$25). *2Y Sai Yeung Choi St South, Mong Kok, 9834 6798.*



DEEP-FRIED SIU MAI HOT.COM

Tired of regular fish siu mai? Hot.com gives these floury street snacks an extra dose of unhealthiness by tossing them into the deep-fryer and finishing the meal off with a glop of cheese sauce. The result is hot and crispy on the outside and billowy soft in the centre. It's mainly the novelty you're paying for, but at just \$10 a pop, it's still worth trying. *430 Dundas St, Mong Kok, no phone.*

JAPANESE FRIED STUFF KARAAGE JAPANESE FRIED FOOD EXPRESS

This streetside stall does a whole rainbow of deep-fried-to-order takeaway snacks. The breaded prawns (\$25) are delicious, especially with a swipe of Kewpie mayo. More off-the-beaten-track offerings include cheese-stuffed chicken wings (\$20), deep-fried enoki 'shrooms and whole soft-shell crab (\$28). *Shop E1, 124 Tung Choi St, Mong Kok, 2380 6993.*



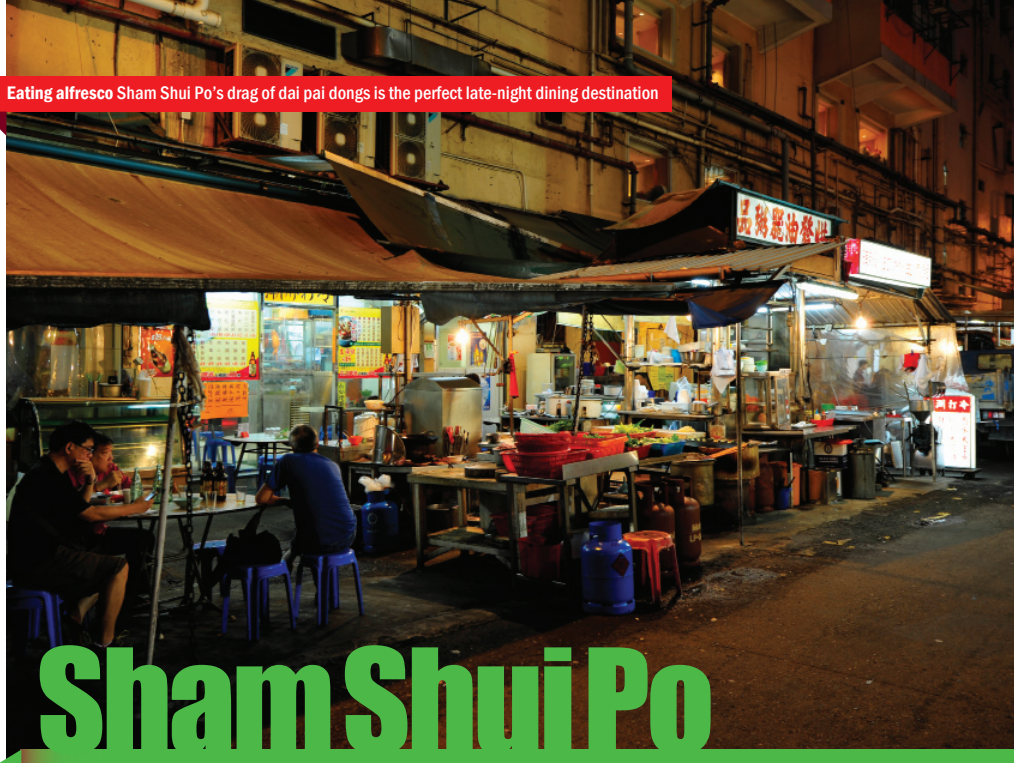
BATTERED MARS BARS BRAT

Trust the Scots to come up with something as insanely unhealthy as the deep-fried Mars Bar. Not many places in town are willing to do this artery-clogging chocolate bomb. Fortunately, Brat isn't one of them and they'll very happily serve you a few hunks of these crispy, gooey treats with a scoop of vanilla ice cream on the side (\$50). *7 Elgin St, Soho, 2549 3088; www.brat.com.hk.*

MOZZA CHEESE BEE TWO

What's better than cheese? Easy – cheese that's been breaded and deep-fried to a sun-kissed golden brown. Though Prince Edward's Bee Two specialises in Vietnamese bánh mì sandwiches, the store also does killer deep-fried cheese sticks (\$20), which ooze with semi-melted mozzarella. *Shop C2, G/F, Prince Edward Bldg, 152A-D Prince Edward Rd West, Prince Edward, 2393 7088.*

Eating alfresco Sham Shui Po's drag of dai pai dongs is the perfect late-night dining destination



Sham Shui Po

NOODLES OF NOODLES CHEUNG FAT 長發麵家

One of the few remaining licenced dai pai dongs in town, Cheung Fat does stellar noodle dishes at dirt-cheap prices. The most popular offering here is the souplless thin egg noodles mixed with Cheung Fat's house blended sweet soy sauce (\$22). This street stall also pounds its own cuttlefish balls, which are best eaten with a bowl of flat rice noodles (\$22). *1 Yiu Tung St, Sham Shui Po, 2777 2400. Chinese only.*

SMOOTH-AS-SILK RICE ROLLS HUP YIK TAI 合益泰小食

The freshly steamed rice rolls (\$10 large; \$7 medium; \$5 small) here are regarded as being the best in town. The slippery rolls don't have any fillings but come doused in a deliciously messy combo of sesame seeds, sweet sauce, soy sauce and peanut sauce. The secret to the dish's success is the splash of lard that's mixed in with the sauces before serving. While you're here, also try the stir-fried noodles loaded with leeks and sprouts (\$8). *121 Lam St, Sham Shui Po, 2720 0239. Chinese only.*

PIG LIVER NOODLES WAI KEE NOODLE CAFÉ 維記咖啡粉麵

Wai Kee's name is synonymous with long queues and liver noodles. The signature dish is essentially just a bowl of instant ramen soup noodles topped with beef and slightly gamedy slices of pig liver (\$25). It's unabashedly simple but it's also delicious enough to draw in the crowds day after day. It's a definite must-eat if you're in the area. *62 & 67 Fuk Wing St, Sham Shui Po, 2387 6515. Chinese only.*

BAMBOO NOODLES KWAN KEE 坤記竹昇麵

Kwan Kee's yellow egg noodles are manually

kneaded the old-fashioned way with a giant bamboo pole. The end product has a beautiful natural sheen and is more al dente than your regular machine-made noodles. The regular bamboo egg noodles in soup go for \$12 a bowl but it's worth tacking on an extra few dollars for the wonton noodles (\$15) or the signature souplless noodles tossed with shrimp roe and oyster sauce (\$29). *Shop E, 1 Wing Lung St, Cheung Sha Wan, 3484 9126. Chinese only.*

FUN FUSION SWEETS CHUNG KEE DESSERT 松記糖水

Chung Kee seamlessly blends traditional Chinese desserts with newfangled, fusion creations. We're especially enamoured with the 'six treasures' glutinous rice dumplings (\$18), which are plumped with everything from red bean to custard and black sesame. For a refreshing warm-weather treat, go for the aptly named 'summer' (\$18) – a duo of ice cream and seasonal fresh fruit served over a bed of chewy tapioca pearls with a generous dousing of mango sauce. *Shop CB3, Smiling Plaza, 162-188 Un Chau St, 2720 7123; www.chungkeedessert.com.hk.*

'SILK DOLLS' EIGHT HUNDRED MILE NOODLES 八百里珍珠粉專門店

Eight Hundred Mile pays tribute to the Guizhou province's rich culinary tradition. The menu is starch-heavy with a wide selection of slippery rice noodles with mix-and-match toppings. As much as we love the noodles though, it's the beautifully named 'silk dolls' dish (\$28) that grabs our attention. Similar to a Vietnamese rice paper roll, this Guizhou specialty consists of a rainbow of different ingredients – from shredded chicken and bean sprouts to julienned cucumbers and carrots – wrapped in a paper-thin rice flour crêpe with a dollop of hot sauce. We could eat these all day. *17 Cheung Fat St, Cheung Sha Wan, 2386 1228. Chinese only.*

Java junkies

Check out Blue Mountain Café, which does the city's cheapest, freshly brewed Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee at \$20 a cup. *289 Lai Chi Kok Rd, Sham Shui Po, 2720 1068.*

Tastes like chicken Long lunch lines for Chinese and European Food Store's awesome poultry rice



Central & Western

CHICKEN RICE CHINESE AND EUROPEAN FOOD STORE 龍江雞飯店

The name can be a bit misleading as this eatery serves up a random selection of cha chaan teng-esque dishes. Think meat stir-fries with steamed rice and assorted sandwiches made with white Garden bread. But the main attraction here is the awesome fried chicken rice (\$26). The meat on the bird is savoury and succulent while the skin is crisp with a little fat underneath. Super satisfying stuff. *Shop 167-169, World-Wide House, 19 Des Voeux Rd Central, 2522 3616.*

GOURMET SANDWICHES FREY & FORD

Frey & Ford's beautiful petite sandwiches could pass as miniature jewels with their delicately arranged fillings. It's all about premium ingredients on freshly baked bread, like the salmon dill crème sandwich (\$22), which has slices of smoked salmon, avocado, dill and cream cheese on crostini. The Peking-style chicken breast and cucumber pita sandwich (\$20) is another popular choice. One petite sandwich won't be enough for a full meal so order the three sandwiches set, which comes with a daily soup or salad for \$58. *Shop 69, B1/F, Hong Kong Station, Central, 2530 1298; www.freyford.com.*

HONG KONG-STYLE HOTDOGS WING LOK YUEN 永樂園餐廳

Authenticity doesn't matter at Wing Lok Yuen, where its signature HK-style hotdogs sell like hot cakes day in and day out. The secret weapon here is the homemade sauce – a tangy and sweet mayo-like concoction that they glop onto their sausages. It's \$10 for a single sausage hotdog and \$12 for an extra frank in your fluffy, toasted bun. *19 Chiu Lung St, Central, 2522 0965. \$50. Chinese only.*

PROPER FRENCH BREAD LEVAIN BAKERY

Named after the leavening agent used in traditional

French breadmaking, Levain Bakery specialises in freshly baked artisan loaves and pastries made from only the best ingredients. The sourdough (\$23) here is spot-on – crunchy crust with a chewy, moist centre. It's also hard not to get addicted to the cheese volcano (\$9), which oozes melted mozzarella when you bite into it. *39 Aberdeen St, Central, 2559 0889; www.levain-bakery.com.*

HOMESTYLE JAPANESE BENTO JP DELI

JP Deli packs the sort of bento sets you would see sold at train stations in Tokyo. The tiny store offers a decent range of bento sets, including teriyaki chicken (\$45), Nanban-style deep-fried chicken (\$50) and Japanese hamburger steak (\$48) all served with a side of veggies and steamed rice. Daily bento specials are also available at \$50 a set. *18 Jervois St, Sheung Wan, 2544 513.*

MARKET-STYLE ROBATA YAKI KAWO NAGOMI

Kawo Nagomi does a concise menu of simple Japanese dishes in a no-frills market environment. Start your meal with the complimentary miso soup before diving into a few rounds of grilled or deep-fried items, such as grilled aubergines (\$15), pork neck (\$25) and deep-fried potato fritters (\$15). To anchor the meal, go for a bowl of ramen noodles served in a meekly spiced broth (\$28). *Shop CF7, 2/F, Sheung Wan Municipal Services Bldg, 345 Queen's Rd Central, Sheung Wan, 2319 1383.*



BLOGGER'S choice

KC KOO AKA 'KC GOURMET'

www.gourmetkc.blogspot.com



"Like durian, people either like it very much or vomit right away at the sight of deep-fried pig intestines (\$10). It has its own distinct flavour though. Be sure to remember that only the ones that are cut right before serving are good." *Tong Dynasty Dim Sum Kitchen, 79 Woosung Street, Jordan, 2783 0113.*

PAOLA & JESSICA AKA 'THE KITCHEN NOMADS'

www.thekitchennomads.com

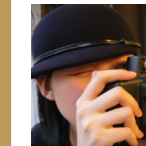


"Shau Kei Wan's main street has great options for eating. It's delicious, cheap and full of local life. The wet market is also one of my absolute favourites in Hong Kong.

[We] love On Lee Noodle. Best beef brisket on Island East but queues can get long!" *On Lee Noodle, 22 Shau Kei Wan Main St East, Shau Kei Wan, 2513 8398.*

JANICE LEUNG AKA 'E_TING'

www.e-tingfood.com



"[I love] barbecue pork belly on wide noodles (\$34) from Yat Woon Min. If your Cantonese barbecue guy met an Italian mama and they went on a date in a kitchen, in my head, this is the kind of thing they'd make. Tiles of crispy pork

on bouncy, floury ribbons – what's not to love?" *Yat Woon Min, 93 Wharf Rd, North Point, 2578 0092.*

TOM AKA 'TOM EATS'

www.tomeatsjencooks.blogspot.com



"I am addicted to the sandwiches at Yue Hing. I go for their special egg sandwich with spam or leftover pork (\$25). It's perfectly folded – steamed eggs between toast with a slither of lettuce for crispness and peanut butter or chilli sauce. Think

McDonald's Egg McMuffin but turned into an artform." *Yue Hing, Shop 15, Stanley St, no phone.*

RITA SUTTARNO AKA 'MOCHACHOCOLATA RITA'

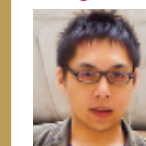
www.mochachocolatarita.blogspot.com



"Nam Kee's pork and spring roll rice noodle soup (\$35) has springy noodles, tender and flavourful pork, chewy spring rolls and crunchy sprouts and chives, plus sweet and sour broth. What more can I ask for in a bowl?" *Nam Kee, citywide including 66-72 Stanley St, Central, 2576 8007.*

HK EPICURUS

www.gourmetkc.blogspot.com



"With plenty of 'wok hei' and double servings of minced beef and eggs, the special beef fried rice at Hing Fat cha chaan teng is an unbeatable deal at \$43." *Hing Fat, 19 Moreton Tce, Causeway Bay, 2504 0888.*

TOP 5 street sips

TAPIOCA MILK TEA COME BUY

This Taiwanese drink took the world by storm a good few years ago. While the popularity has waned since the first craze, these black tapioca beverages still remain one of the most commonly seen items around Mong Kok and Causeway Bay. Come Buy does one of the best tapioca milk teas in town and it's a pretty sweet deal at just \$14 a cup. *Citywide, including 3B O'Brien Rd, Wan Chai, 2574 2992.*

HERBAL TEA HERBAL COLLECTIONS

Not all tapioca milk teas are loaded with sugar. Herbal Collections does healthy drinks made from all-natural ingredients. The beverages are supposed to have some type of medicinal property, like the house special pearl powder brown rice milk tea (\$15), which claims to nourish the skin and aid the body's growth and repair. *88 Stanley St, Central, 3484 3366.*

SEA SALTED SIPS SHARE TEA

Taipei's number one tea chain keeps pushing the envelope with its quirky drinks. Their latest offering is the sea salt series. Give the sea salt with green milk tea (\$14) and sea salt with oolong milk tea (\$14) a try. If you don't like it, you can always wash the taste away with a good ol' trustworthy regular milk tea (\$12). *Citywide, including 7 Cannon St, Causeway Bay, 2836 0832.*

COFFEE X TEA KAMI TEAPRESSO

Move over frappuccino – Kami's teapresses are taking over as the coolest (pun totally intended) iced drinks in town. For a double jolt of caffeine, try the signature 'caffe matchaccino' (\$25). The street stall also brews other fancy drinks such as the 'matcha deluxe' (\$32) with adzuki red bean, konjac jelly and tufts of whipped cream. *Shop G19, Gi Mall, 34-36 Granville Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, 8206 8318.*

BEEF JUICE NATURAL GREEN

The juices here are prepared sans-sugar, sans-additives and sans-anything that's bad for you. Natural Green will pretty much juice any fruit they can get their healthy hands on – but the store is especially proud of its beetroot series, which includes a cleansing beet and apple juice (\$19 cup; \$21 bottle). *Shop A1, G/F, Chi Po Bldg, 311 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai, 2598 9111; www.naturalgreen.com.hk.*

Bread and butter The Drawing Room and Hainan Shaoye owner Tony Cheng enjoys a cup of milk tea and toast at Ho Wah Café



Wan Chai & Causeway Bay

CHEAP ROBATAYAKI SAN WU TING

San Wu Ting's owner hails from Happy Valley's robatayaki powerhouse Yakitoritei. Freshly grilled skewers such as calamari with shiso leaves (\$24), chicken gizzards (\$20) and French Rougie foie gras (\$88) are substantially cheaper than most other robata joints of the same calibre. But the real deal starts after 10pm when most of the robata menu items go for \$15 a skewer. It's wallet-friendly dining until the restaurant closes at 1am. *Shop 9, G/F, Dandenong Mansion 379-389, Jaffe Rd, Causeway Bay, 2838 2285.*

CHEESECAKE À LA MODE LA BALANCE GINZA

You get two sweet treats rolled into one at La Balance Ginza. Originally from Tokyo, this dessert brand is most known for its cotton soft Japanese cheesecakes. You can buy a whole cake (\$78) but we recommend going by the single slice (\$35), which is doled out in a tub and decorated with a swirl of Hokkaido 3.6 milk soft serve and a choice of chocolate, custard or fruit sauce. *B/F, Sogo, 555 Hennessy Rd, Causeway Bay, 2831 8463.*

HALF-PRICE TONKATSU GINZA BAIRIN JR

A meal at Tokyo-based Ginza Bairin will easily set you back \$200 a person but now with the branch's first take-away counter, you can try their famous deep-fried tonkatsu pork cutlets at a drastically slashed price. The signature hire katsu don (deep-fried pork loin and egg served on steamed rice) is only \$58 compared to \$148 at the restaurant. Meanwhile, deep-fried pork, prawn and fish bentos with rice are only \$45-\$48 a box. *B/F, Sogo, 555 Hennessy Rd, Causeway Bay, 2831 8453.*

SILKEN SCRAMBLED EGGS AND RICE SHUN HING CAR NOODLE CHA CHAAN TENG 順興車仔麵茶餐廳

Despite the car noodle reference in the name, most people come here for the incredibly comforting scrambled eggs and rice dishes. The chefs have timing and temperature control down pat and the eggs always come out perfectly cooked with just the right amount of still-runny yolk spilling off the sides. Shun Hing does two versions of its famous scrambled eggs – one embellished with char siu pork (\$38) and the other with fat pieces of prawns (\$42). Both come with a drink and a small vat of soy sauce that's perked up with chopped scallions. *18 King St, Tai Hang, 2576 6577. Chinese only.*

ASSORTED TOASTS HO WAH CAFÉ 豪華咖啡茶廳

It's inspiring how many tricks Ho Wah can create with just a simple slice of bread. The thick toasts here come slathered with anything from sweet condensed milk to butter, fresh kaya, or a combination of all the above (all \$7-\$8). The restaurant also does savoury toast sandwiches stuffed with eggs and a choice of cha chaan teng-style deli meats (\$10). *226 Johnston Rd, Wan Chai, 2574 3069. Chinese only.*

CINNAMON SWIRL YEAST FACTORY

Yeast Factory markets itself mainly on its frozen yogurt (\$25 including one topping) but the real hidden gems here are the delightfully flaky French pastries. We're partial to the cinnamon swirl (\$14), which is buttery and fragrant with sweet, ground spices, but without being overly saccharine. We strongly advise that you get a caramel froyo to go with that flaky swirl. *1-11 Spring Garden Lane, Wan Chai, 2573 0918.*

MIX-AND-MATCH NOODLES CAR NOODLE'S FAMILY 車仔麵之家

This standing-space-only shop is dedicated to the humble car noodle. The secret weapon here is the umami broth base, which is made by slowly simmering large amounts of pork bone and chicken. A cake of noodles (you can choose your own noodle type and size) is thrown into the broth and then the mixing and matching begins. Want fishballs (\$7), curried cuttlefish tentacles (\$6), beef brisket (\$7) or chunks of sweet and sour wheat gluten (\$5) with your noodles? The options are endless and chances are you'll end up forking out just \$25 dollars or so for your meal. *1A Anton St, Wan Chai, 2529 6313. Chinese only.*

PHILIPPINE-STYLE PORK-OUT MANG AMBO'S

Mang Ambo's has it out for the pig. Stewed and sautéed meats are proudly displayed in metal vats, blanketed in dark gravy and ready to be scooped up and served with rice (\$25 for one type of meat; \$28 for two types of meat). It's a beautiful sight for any carnivore. Go for the soy sauce, garlic and vinegar braised pork adobo or the more exotic dinuguan, which has chunks of meat stewed in pig's blood. The restaurant also does a mean lechon kawali – a Filipino version of crisp-skinned, Chinese roast pork made from the loin of the hog. *120 Jaffe Rd, Wan Chai, 2143 6164.*

STICKY RICE KEUNG KEE 強記美食

Keung Kee does a wide array of cost-effective snacks and dishes but the one that stays closest to our

hearts and stomachs is the sticky glutinous rice studded with preserved Chinese meats, scallions and mushrooms (\$25). This is soul food done Hong Kong style with rice that's cooked just right so that it's neither too dry nor too mushy. The portion might seem unassuming at first but with all the ingredients crammed in there, it's more than enough for a satisfying lunch or late (Keung Kee stays open until 2am) night snack. *382 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai, 2572-5207. Chinese only.*

TAKEAWAY PORK KNUCKLE GERMAN ITALIA SNACKS

This roadside take-out stall has really hit a niche market with its German bento boxes. Get the sliced and salted skin-on pork knuckle set (\$38) that's served with soup, mashed potatoes, sauerkraut and a choice of any side from potato wedges to German sausages. As the name suggests, the menu is also padded with various Italian pastas starting at \$29 with soup and sides. *4-6 Morrison Hill Rd, Wan Chai, 2893 5118.*



KNOW your mock meats

They don't look like meat, they're not healthier than meat, and they definitely don't taste anything like meat. Yet, there's still something about these sauce-soaked chunks of wheat gluten ('jai' in Cantonese) that makes even a non-vegetarian's heart flutter. To help the mock meat newbie, here's a what's-what guide to Hong Kong's most popular alternative protein...



Abalone \$7



Sweet and sour wheat gluten \$7



Roast barbecue pork \$7



Roast goose \$20



Chicken \$7



Curry wheat gluten \$7



Duck kidney \$10

Tung Fong Siu Kee Yuen 東方小祇園齋菜 261 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai, 2519 9148.

TOP 5 baked treats



EGG TART

This is hands-down Hong Kong's most iconic baked goody. The discussion over who bakes the best custard-filled pastries in town is ongoing but we're willing to side with ex-governor Chris Patten and settle with Tai Cheong Bakery. *Tai Cheong, 5 Lyndhurst Tce, Central, 2544 3475. \$4.50.*



PINEAPPLE BUN

This seemingly harmless snack is infamous for being one of the unhealthiest local delicacies around. On its own, the damage is not too bad but the pineapple bun can only be fully appreciated when it's slit across the middle and stuffed with a thick slab of butter. Goodbye arteries. *Kam Fung, 41 Spring Garden Lane, Wan Chai, 2572 0526. \$6.50.*



COCKTAIL BUN

Legend has it that these buns got their names because they were originally made from the random, daily leftover scraps at local bakeries. Of course, nowadays, most places make these sesame-studded sweet rolls with fresh ingredients. The pulpy filling is a mash-up of shredded coconut and butter. It's insanely delicious for something so simple. *Happy Cake Shop, 106 Queen's Rd East, Wan Chai, 2528 1391. \$2.50.*



CHICKEN PIE

These buttery, lidded pastries are something the Brits brought over and made popular. They're a staple at most Hong Kong bakeries but Honolulu Café's fresh-out-the-oven pies pumped up with peas, corn, ham and chunks of chicken meat rank as one of our favourites. *Honolulu Café, 176-178 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai, 2575 1823. \$9.*



PAPER-WRAPPED SPONGE CAKES

These soft and cottony cakes are named after the pieces of baking paper they're wrapped in. It's not the most imaginative of naming methods but the simplicity is charmingly apt for these fluffy egg-and-butter treats. *Hoover Cake Shop, 136 Nga Tsin Wai Rd, Kowloon City, 2382 0383. \$5.*



Noodling around Yat Woon Min owner Michael Lo and astronaut David Yip share a meal at Xiguan Congee & Noodle

Island East

BRISKET AND BROTH SISTER WAH 華姐清湯腩

Sister Wah packs in the crowds with its stellar beef brisket in broth. The tender meat is delicious but the main star is really the sweet, umami soup base that's been carefully boiled, simmered and skimmed for hours. A single order of brisket in the miracle broth goes for \$40 but you can also order it over noodles for \$28. *13A Electric Rd, Tin Hau, 2807 0181. Chinese only.*

KYOTO CONFECTIONS MITSUKIYA

Mitsukiya is the only sit-down restaurant in town that specialises in proper wagashi. Part of the space is set up like a traditional Nippon-style living room so you can enjoy the intricate, homemade confections while pretending to be in the comforts of your own pad. The menu might be a little difficult to understand at first with all its poetic wagashi names but it's always a safe choice to start with the warabi mochi with matcha powder and black sugar kinako powder (\$38) or the grilled dango rice flour dumplings (\$36). If you're really not sure what else to choose, go for one of the dessert set menus, which are priced anywhere from \$55 for one person, to \$198 for four hungry stomachs. *15 Tsing Fung St, 2806 3389.*

SUPER FINE WONTON NOODLES XIGUAN CONGEE & NOODLE 西關粥麵

At first glance, Xiguan just looks like any other cha

chaan teng. But you'll be quickly converted once you try the signature wonton noodles (\$28 small; \$38 large). The thin egg mien are finer than most other places and have that insanely satisfying bite to them that necessitates a noisy, proud slurping. The wontons are first-rate as well – small, one-bite wonders with a slippery thin skin wrapped around fat, juicy prawns. *Shop 6B, G/F, 2-10 Whitfield Rd, Tin Hau, 2566 1820.*

HOTEL-GRADE TAKEAWAY FEASTAWAY

East Hotel's Feastaway take-out counter boxes up five-star quality meals that won't put a huge dent in your wallet. The menu pits together a healthy lineup of soups, sandwiches and salads starting at \$45. We love the chicken tikka wrap with mango chutney (\$55) but we'd also happily gulf down the ham and cheese on five grain bread (\$45). Feastaway also does a rotating selection of rice and pasta dishes every week at super decent prices. *1/F, East Hotel, 29 Tai Koo Shing Rd, Tai Koo, 3968 3777.*

FISH TACOS AND MEAT BURRITOS MR TACO TRUCK

Mr Taco Truck remains the city's undisputed king of Tex-Mex cuisine. The fried fish tacos (\$17) are worth getting evangelical about and come piled with shredded lettuce, pico de gallo and a swipe of mayonnaise on a soft flour tortilla. We're also big fans of the burritos here, especially when they're

fattened up with carne asada, rice and pinto beans (\$51). *Shop E, 22 Finnie St, 852 Quarry Bay, 2590 6911; www.mrtacotruck.com.*

FIST-SIZED SOUP DUMPLINGS TOM BAO KING 湯飽皇

This is one of our all-time favourite spots for soup-swelled Shanghaiese dumplings. There are only four xiao long baos (\$28) to an order but each of the dumplings measure up to the size of a baby's fist. The flour wrappers are just the right thickness, the broth is rich and the fatty pork filling is oh-so-tender... there's a reason we love this place. *38 Pan Hoi St, Quarry Bay, 2186 7156. Chinese only.*

CHEAP GRILLED MEATS INDONESIAN SATE HOUSE

Located just a stone's throw away from the Shau Kei Wan MTR station, this tiny street stall does all sorts of marinated and grilled meats on a stick. The standard beef, pork and chicken are \$7 a skewer and come with the requisite peanut dipping sauce. The stir-fried vermicelli with prawns is also worth a try. It might not be the best noodles in the area but it's a killer deal at \$28 for a huge, heaped plate. *76D Shau Kei Wan Main St East, Shau Kei Wan, 2886 5796.*

SWEET NOODLES, DESSERT LO MA 甜品老媽

This perpetually packed dessert shop does a decent selection of traditional Chinese sweet soups and glutinous rice dumplings. But the thing to order here are the dessert 'noodles' (ie, flat white sheets of gelled coconut milk). Dessert Lo Ma does two types of noodle dishes. One is a steamed rice roll-like dessert filled with fresh mango (\$24) and the other is a coconut 'hor fun' served with assorted fresh fruits (\$24-\$34). *Shop B, G/F, 14-22 Shau Kei Wan Main St East, Shau Kei Wan, 2886 1681.*

CUTESY CRUNCH CAKES CLOVER

Clover is a haven specially created for sugar addicts. The store is best known for its petite crunch cakes (\$25), which have layers of light génoise blanketed under a dome of whipped cream and crushed honeycomb. If one cake's not enough for you, tuck on a mini puff tower of carefully stacked, cream-filled profiteroles (\$30). *126 Wharf Rd, North Point, 2887 0838; www.clover-cakecoffeehouse.com.*



BEST budget burgers



CHEESE AND MUSHROOM BURGER BURGER MIX

This under-the-bridge fastfood shack does some of the best value burgers in town. The ground beef patties are made fresh every day and slide snugly in between two sesame-studded buns. They do the classic hamburger of course, but for the same price, you can get the signature cheese and mushroom burger (\$20). *254-280 Electric Rd, North Point, 3520 2012; www.burger-mix.com.*

CHEESE-FILLED BURGER BURGER HOME

Burger Home's cheese-filled cheeseburger (\$41) is not for the fainthearted. The monster sandwich comes with lettuce, tomatoes and a hefty handmade beef patty that's pumped up with Cheese Whiz in the centre before being topped off with a partially melted slice of Kraft. Welcome to something that might clog an artery or two. *Shop 12, G/F, 51 Cross Lane, Wan Chai, 2575 1575.*

MISSIONARY BURGER SHAKE 'EM BUNS

Shake 'em Buns' missionary burger is the most expensive item on our list at \$52 a crack. But the price is justified; the large-and-in-charge all-beef patty weighs a good one-third of a pound and is slathered with mayo before it's plopped onto a bun with fresh lettuce and tomatoes. *76 Wellington St, Central, 2810 5533; www.shakembuns.com.*

HONG KONG HAMBURGER SI SUN 時新快餐店

This old-school establishment was one of Hong Kong's very first homegrown, American-style fastfood stores. Aside from the awesome retro vibes, Si Sun's also kept up its food quality over the past few decades. The prices have gone up a bit since the 60s but it's still dirt-cheap with a hamburger clocking in at \$11 and a signature double cheese at \$15 (additional \$2 for a pan-fried egg). *1A Whampoa St, Hung Hom, 2362 1279.*



CLASSIC BURGER MY PANTRY

Burgers in a computer store... who would've thought it? FlexiDiGi Center is a software and computer maintenance store by trade but at the far end of the shop lives a small open kitchen where they do juicy six-ounce beef burgers. They've added their own spin on the classic burger (\$38) by folding chopped olives into the patties and topping them off with fresh cress and a squeeze of honey mustard. It's a surprisingly wholesome burger in one of the most unexpected locations. *16 Wo On Lane, Central, 8102 2244.*

TOP 5

Chinese desserts



MANGO PANCAKE

Honeymoon Desserts 滿記甜品

Pancakes may not sound very Chinese but these sweet packets are a mainstay at many local dessert joints. Hong Kong chain Honeymoon Desserts does some of the tastiest filled pancakes stuffed with generous helpings of whipped cream and fresh mango (\$21), banana (\$19) or durian (\$26). *Citywide including 9-10ABC Po Tung Rd, Sai Kung, 2792 4991; www.honeymoon-dessert.com.*

NINGBO RICE DUMPLINGS

Tei Mou Koon 地茂館甜品

Sweet ginger soup and black sesame-filled rice dumplings are one of the most comforting combinations a dessert store can dish up. If you happen to be around Kowloon City, pop into Tei Mou Koon, which does four sticky rice balls for a wallet-friendly \$10. *47 Fuk Lo Tsun Rd, Kowloon City, 2382 5004. Chinese only.*

STEAMED MILK PUDDING

Australia Dairy Company 澳洲牛奶公司

We could eat these silken steamed milk puddings every day (\$20). The texture is similar to thick clotted cream and there's a delectably light, milky fragrance to every spoonful. Australian Dairy Company in Jordan is our (and pretty much everyone else's) go-to spot for these custardy desserts, but be warned – there's always a huge line outside so be prepared to wait if you want to try these signature puddings. *47-49 Parkes St, Jordan, 2730 1356.*

BLACK SESAME SOUP

Shek Mo Fong 石磨坊

Shek Mo Fong is renowned for its freshly ground sweet soups. The thick and pasty black sesame soup (\$13) is the clear winner here. Order it hot and load it up with additional toppings such as rice dumplings and tapioca pearls if you really want to spoil yourself. *88 Hak Po St, Mong Kok, 2398 9490. Chinese only.*



GREEN AND RED BEAN SOUP

Leaf Dessert 玉葉甜品

Green bean and red bean soups are like the har gows and siu mais of the Chinese dessert world. Keeping with tradition, Soho's iconic dai pai dong Leaf Dessert cooks its red bean soups with sea kelp and its famous green bean soups with pungent fragrant herbs (both \$7.50). *2 Elgin St, Soho, 2544 3795. Chinese only.*

Island South & Others



The freshest catch Food blogger KC Koo poses with Aberdeen Fishery & Seafood Merchants Association director Chan Chi-ho

TOP 5

endangered snacks



MALTOSE CRACKERS

This is basically just two soda crackers spiked on a bamboo skewer and glued together with maltose syrup. Don't scoff at the simplicity though – maltose crackers used to be one of Hong Kong's most popular snacks back when most kids didn't have enough pocket money to afford fancier things. Now in the generation where it's common for a three-year-old to own an iPad, the demand for these humble snacks has gone completely downhill and most places don't even bother selling them anymore. Super Bowl King is one of the few stores in town that has continued to stock maltose crackers. It's worth a try – after all, it's only a few dollars for a taste of nostalgia. *Super Bowl King, 160A Wanchai Rd, Wan Chai, 2893 7178. \$4.*

CANDY AND COCONUT WRAP

The proper way to eat these sugar-filled wraps is straight from the mobile street vendor. Unfortunately, these travelling sweets salesmen have become an increasingly rare sight. Super Bowl King (see above) and local snacks store Wo Kee Loong still do these retro nibbles and they do it the traditional way with pulled sugar brittle and desiccated coconut carefully wrapped in a paper-thin crêpe. *Wo Kee Loong, Shop 24, Ngong Ping 360 Village, Lantau Island, 2342 7106. \$8.*

STINKY TOFU

Deep-fried stinky tofu is a gravely endangered type of snack thanks to the incessant complaints about its distinct, funky odor. The unique smell comes from the lengthy fermentation process that the bean curd undergoes. This process is also what gives the tofu its awesome flavour and the overall consensus among stinky tofu connoisseurs is that the smellier the curd, the tastier it is. *Chuen Cheong Foods, Shop D, 150 Wanchai Road, Wan Chai, 2575 8278. \$7.*

MOBILE PRESERVED FRUITS

There are plenty of places that sell preserved fruits in Hong Kong, but not many of them sell their wares from a giant, mobile street cart. But if you turn into Hau Fook Street any time between midday and 7.30pm, you'll find one of the city's last remaining street vendors specialising in prunes, plums and other pickled things. Just point at what you want from his rainbow of snacks and he'll throw 'em in a brown paper bag for you. *Street hawker, Hau Fook St, Tsim Sha Tsui, no phone. \$10 and up.*



CHARCOAL ROASTED CHESTNUTS

Streetside chestnut vendors only emerge during the cooler months of the year. When that time comes, you'll usually find one of them stationed under the bridge right outside the Mong Kok East train station. Come winter, it's worth hunting that vendor down just for these sweet and mealy snacks. As an added bonus, the city's chestnut vendors usually do roasted sweet potatoes and salt-baked quail's eggs as well. *Street hawker, Mong Kok East Station, Mong Kok, no phone. \$10.*

FRESHEST SEAFOOD IN TOWN ABERDEEN FISH MARKET CANTEEN 香港仔魚市場海鮮餐廳

Housed inside the Aberdeen Fish Market – aka the Tsukiji of Hong Kong – this tiny canteen is one of the city's best-kept secrets. The speciality here is uber fresh seafood of course and the restaurant operates on an omakase system where you state your price and the owner churns out a menu according to the day's freshest catch. A lunch here will set you back anywhere from \$250 to \$400. It might not sound cheap at first, but it's a steal considering that you're served at least eight dishes of the freshest seafood in town. *Aberdeen Fish Market, 102 Shek Pai Wan Rd, Aberdeen, 2552 7555. Chinese only.*

HANDMADE FISHBALL NOODLES SHAN LOON TSE KEE 山隆謝記魚蛋

Shan Look Tse Kee is known to provide some of the tastiest fishballs in the city. The tiny, fluffy spheres are hand-pounded every day and have an exceptional buoyancy to them. Get the assorted soup noodle (\$36) which piles together deep-fried fishcakes, fishballs, cuttlefish balls and beef balls over a bed of flat rice hor fun or yellow egg noodles. Don't forget to try the deep-fried fish skins (\$20) too, which go swimmingly as a side snack. *80-82 Old Main St, Aberdeen, 2552 3809. Chinese only.*

SEAFOOD FEAST YIU KEE 耀記

Who says you have to pay an arm and a leg for a seafood feast? At this cooked food centre stall, the chef will steam, fry, roast or bake whatever

fresh provisions you bring up from the seafood wet market on the ground floor. All you'll be charged for is the cooking and oil fee, which is \$20-\$40 depending on the dish. The stall is only open in the daytime and lunch usually comes up to less than \$100 a head. *Shop CF3, 2/F, Ap Lei Chau Complex, Ap Lei Chau, 2553 1938. Chinese only.*

TEOCHEW RICE ROLLS CHAOZHOU RICE ROLL 潮式腸粉

This is one of the only places in town that does Teochew rice rolls. Unlike Cantonese rice rolls, which are tightly bundled around their fillings, the Teochew variety takes a large sheet of freshly steamed rice flour batter and loads it up with bean sprouts, eggs, dried shrimps, mushrooms and a variety of meats or seafood with a generous splash of soy sauce. The rice rolls are most traditionally topped off with baby oysters (\$20) but you can add an extra topping here for just \$3. *Shop A6B, King Po Mansion, Che Fong St, Kwai Fong, 2418 9638. Chinese only.*

PURPLE YAM ICE CREAM VICTORIA ORIENTAL SUPER STORE

It's a little known fact but some of the best ice creams actually come from the Philippines. At Yuen Long's Victoria Oriental Super Store, the owners stock ice-cold, creamy concoctions from Quezon City's famous Arce Dairy Company (\$20 for a single scoop). The store offers an interesting range of flavours, including coconut palm, avocado, maize and pandan, but our hearts beat for the 'supreme ube', which is by far the best purple yam ice cream we've had in a long while. *11 Sau Fu St, Yuen Long, 2470 2487.*

BOX SET MEALS TOKYO BENTO

The cutely packed bento boxes here are a huge hit with the nearby office ladies. The focus is on quick and healthy eating with everything prepared fresh to order right on the premises. The signature seaweed bento (\$25) includes nori-covered white rice served with fried fish, pasta and a spoonful of potato salad, but we lean more towards the donburi rice bowls topped with deep-fried pork cutlet and runny scrambled eggs (\$29). *Shop 110B, The Lane, 15 Pui Shing Rd, Tseung Kwan O, 2706 3308; www.tokyobento.com.hk.*

FISH N' CHIPS CAMDEN TOWN

This charming seaside eatery dishes up a finger-licking selection of greasy pub grub. Chunks of battered-and-fried fish come with a crisp, golden crust that's made to be slathered with tartare sauce. It's \$40 with a side of salt-showered fries and an extra \$5 if you want to supplement the plate with mushy green peas. You can order a Boddingtons as well and it's still a steal. *49 Sai Kung Hoi Pong St, Sai Kung, 9279 3839.*

TRADITIONAL GELATI BIBINI NICE CREAM

A stroll around Sai Kung on a hot summer's day pretty much necessitates a scoop of gelato or sorbet. Cue Bibini. The homemade frozen treats here are all made with top notch ingredients and plenty of TLC. The gelati come in traditional flavours such as nocciola, Italian coffee and pistachio, while sorbets play around with seasonal fruit flavours like strawberry and yuzu. It's \$27 for a single scoop, \$39 for a double and \$45 for a triple. *Shop 11, G/F, Ko Fu House, 58-72 Fuk Man Rd, Sai Kung, 6040 7278.*

BLACK TRUFFLE AND CHEESE TOAST DR. CHEESE

This tiny shack is dedicated to all things cheese. Try the nachos (\$33), parmesan-sprinkled bread sticks (\$22) and cheese-laden mashed potatoes (\$18). By far the most interesting and indulgent offering here is the cream cheese and black truffle dip (\$40) designed to be scooped up with slices of perfectly crisp and well-browned toast. This is about as extravagant as street snacks go. *Shop 6, Cheong Tai Bldg, Tsuen Hing Path, Tsuen Wan, 2490 0232.*



Best. Kept. Secret.

McDonald's in the New Territories is cheaper than anywhere else in the city. It's true!