

唐茶苑 YAUATCHA LIFE

INDIA EDITION



STORIES OF A DECADE AND MORE

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CELEBRATING YAUATCHA INDIA

A LEGACY OF CULINARY EXCELLENCE

Dear Readers,

As we embark on the twelfth year of Yauatcha's journey, it fills me with immense pride and gratitude to reflect on how far we have come. Yauatcha has not merely been a restaurant; it has been a symbol of hospitality, a beacon of fine Cantonese cuisine, and a testament to the power of culinary innovation. Our journey thus far has been marked by a relentless pursuit of excellence, a commitment to delivering unforgettable experiences, and a steadfast dedication to our patrons.

Over the past twelve years, Yauatcha has evolved into more than just a dining destination; it has become a cultural institution—a place where culinary artistry meets impeccable service. Our success lies not only in the quality of our food but also in the warmth of our hospitality and the sincerity of our commitment to exceeding expectations. Each dish crafted in our kitchens is

leadership and cultural exchange. As a global brand with roots in Cantonese cuisine, we have a unique opportunity to foster cross-cultural dialogue and to celebrate the culinary traditions that make our world so diverse. Through initiatives such as culinary workshops, chef collaborations, and cultural exchanges, we hope to inspire a new generation of chefs and food enthusiasts and to contribute to the global conversation on food, and culture. Via brand partnerships with Manish Malhotra, Papa Don't Preach, and LoveChild By Masaba, we aim to innovate, inspire and entice our audience with new offerings and new experiences.

In the years to come, we will continue to invest in our team, our facilities, and our community, ensuring that Yauatcha remains at the forefront of the hospitality industry. But above all, we remain committed to our core values of integrity, excellence, and passion. These values have been the guiding

“Over the past twelve years, Yauatcha has evolved into more than just a dining destination; it has become a cultural institution.”

a labour of love, a fusion of traditional Cantonese flavours with contemporary flair—a reflection of our ceaseless quest for perfection and culinary excellence.

As we celebrate this milestone, it is also a time for introspection—a moment to look back on our journey and to chart a course for the future. The world around us is changing rapidly, and the hospitality industry is no exception. Yet, amidst these changes, one thing remains constant: our unwavering commitment to culinary excellence.

At Yauatcha, we are not content with resting on our laurels; we are constantly pushing the boundaries of what is possible, exploring new flavours, and reinventing classic dishes.

But our vision for the future goes beyond mere culinary innovation; it is also about thought

principles of our journey thus far, and they will continue to inspire us as we embark on the next chapter of our story.

Our vision is to be the most preferred house of F&B brands in the country, which we aim to achieve by enriching lives through the power of food and the magic of shared experiences.

As I look back on the past twelve years, I am filled with gratitude—for our loyal patrons, for our dedicated team, and for the countless memories we have created together. But I am also filled with excitement for the future—a future that promises new adventures, new challenges, and new opportunities to shine.

Thank you for being a part of the Yauatcha family. Here's to the next twelve years and beyond. 🍷

UDAI PINNALI

CEO, Aditya Birla New Age Hospitality



CONTRIBUTORS



AATISH NATH
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Writer, *Beyond the Dim Sum*
Aatish is a food and travel writer based in Mumbai. His work has appeared in dailies and magazines such as The Hindu, Condé Nast Traveller, Vogue and Bloomberg Citylab. His other interests include photography and cooking.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
It's the consistency of the dim sum and how easy and convenient it is to try all of the small plates!



ASLAM GAFOOR
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Writer, *Asia in a glass*
Aslam is a Bengaluru-based food lover, travel enthusiast, hospitality professional, and F&B columnist.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
Yauatcha holds a special place in my heart as it's more than just a restaurant; it's our beloved family haven. Our menu favourites include the steaming dim sum, tempting pâtisserie, avant-garde cocktails, and gourmet teas.



ASSAD DADAN
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Photographer, *The Table Is Set*
With an expert eye, Assad captures the exquisite craftsmanship of the culinary world, transforming each dish and drink into a captivating visual tale. mediumandrare.in

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
Yauatcha's contemporary exploration of a dim sum teahouse has continually sparked my creativity and inspired me to explore new technical horizons.

CONTRIBUTORS



JASREEN MAYAL KHANNA
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Writer, *Don't spill the tea!*
Jasreen is a travel journalist and the author of *Seva: Sikh Wisdom on Living Well by Doing Good*.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
No one does it like Yauatcha and I'm totally obsessed with their dim sum. Here's proof: when the pandemic hit, I was eight months pregnant. When Yauatcha started delivering during the lockdown, I made sure we ordered from there constantly.



KANIKA PARAB
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Writer, *The Table Is Set*
Kanika loves a good story. Following a long print run, this journalist turned entrepreneur, co-founding a media and loyalty company that produces brown paper bag and the coup card.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
I find myself returning to Yauatcha for the natural light, the dark hot & sour soup, the luminous egg fried rice and the bright ideas that constantly come from the kitchen.



KUTBUDDIN PATRAWALA
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Photographer, *Beyond the Dim Sum*
In the ever-evolving world of photography, Kutbuddin thrives on staying ahead of the curve. Being creative and standing out in the industry has always been his aim and that effort shows in his work.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
I have always loved coming back to Yauatcha for the Crispy prawn cheung fun, the warm hospitality and all the natural light that streams through the windows.



AAYUSHII DALMIA
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Creative Director, *Yauatcha Life*
Ayushi is the founder of Phenom Design Studios, a multidimensional design agency. Her clientele spans diverse industries including fashion, beauty, F&B, travel, and real estate.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
Apart from the tasty dim sum (of course), I love Yauatcha for its irresistible desserts. The dessert floor, where various tempting treats are displayed is like a dream come true for me. Among the many decadent delights, the Chocolate mousse with raspberry gateau steals the limelight, as it is my favourite.



DEEPTI DADLANI
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Writer, *India's love for Dumpling*
Deepti has spent a chunk of her life devouring the food in Taipei, her birthplace, and Kuala Lumpur, where she grew up. She is now a columnist and founder of a bodywork studio in Goa called Mats & Chats.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
It's that damn Cheung fun, I tell you! It keeps pulling me back, magically teleporting me to my childhood in Taipei and Hong Kong. It's a delightful time capsule, it reignites memories of my favourite cuisine and floods me with nostalgic flavours.



DHARA DOSHI
@DharaDoshi

Illustrator, *Don't spill the tea!*
Dhara is an ambitious corporate strategist, devoted super-mom, and relentless seeker of all things great in life. flyingpencil.in

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
For me, every trip to Yauatcha is nothing short of sublime. Renowned for its authentic flavours, the dishes at Yauatcha always pack a punch of spice and warmth. Every meal here feels like a pilgrimage to the very origins of culinary excellence. It helps that you are pampered with hospitality that delights and indulges all your senses.



MALEKA SHAH PATEL
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Illustrator, *From The Yauatcha Cookbook*
Maleka a.k.a The Wander Ink explores the business of all things art and creativity, with a focus on custom hand painting on different surfaces: from luxury bags to sneakers, wallets to wedding invites. She collaborates with brands across beauty, hospitality, fashion, travel, and beyond.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
The beautiful consistency of flavour and quality of food! Asian cuisine is amongst my favourites, and Yauatcha always hits the right notes. I especially love the Prawn & Chinese chive dumplings — I can never have too much!



PRAACHI RANIWALA
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Writer, *Dim Sum Duty, Time Travelling Menu & 12 things you didn't know about Yauatcha*
Praachi is an award-winning fashion and lifestyle journalist whose byline has appeared across publications such as The New York Times, FT How to Spend It, The Business of Fashion, Condé Nast Traveller, and Vogue India, among others.

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
That is easy — the Truffle edamame dumplings! No one does it like Yauatcha does. They are the OG BKC restaurant.



VINAYAK GROVER
@lostandhungry.studios

Photographer, *Dim Sum Duty & Time Travelling Menu*
Vinayak runs Lost And Hungry Studios, a food and product content firm that provides shooting, styling and production content solutions

What keeps you coming back to Yauatcha?
Its charm lies in the warm hospitality which makes us feel like family. Shooting food at Yauatcha becomes more than just a task; it's an opportunity to show the world the art the chefs here create. Also, Yauatcha has THE BEST Truffle edamame dumplings in the city!



“I hope you take this opportunity to embrace the spirit of hospitality and open your hearts to the endless possibilities of food and its ability to tell stories that matter and touch lives.”

EDITOR'S NOTE

Earthy yet delicate, the Truffle edamame dumpling is Yauatcha's most well-known, admired, and replicated dish. Soon after it made an appearance on the restaurant's menu, the dim sum in question began popping up across the country, its many iterations a nod to the original creation. But why am I going into such detail about a dumpling? I believe that this piquant pocket is perhaps the best analogy for Yauatcha India: each whiff, a memory of warm moments around the table; each bite, a whisper of kitchen wizardry, each layer, an echo of the tales told, and the many lives touched, since Yauatcha's launch in India in December 2011.

As the restaurant completes more than 10 amazing years in India, we're celebrating the institution that has brought us so much joy (and dim sum!), with stories. We're championing the people who make the restaurant hum and our bellies sing; we're delving into the gastronomic roots of the Indian dumpling, exploring the many facets of Cantonese cuisine and reimagining conversations inside this modern-day chatter house.

Restaurants punctuate life's special occasions by serving as a backdrop for our most treasured stories. I'm not referring solely to birthdays and

anniversaries, but those in-between moments worth celebrating too—like the time you took your family out with your first salary, that evening you first held your lover's hand, or the day you signed a new lease agreement. And while some restaurants warrant only larger-than-life celebrations, Yauatcha, over the years, has been witness to the big, the small, the boisterous and the truly intimate.

The best meals, in my opinion, aren't always about the food, but the pleasure and privilege of sharing a table with your loved ones. As an extension of our communal table, Yauatcha has partnered with KARO, a Mumbai-based non-profit organisation, that provides holistic cancer care to patients from low-income communities and their families, with a focus on teenage and young adult patients. A part of the proceeds of the sale of this book will go to KARO's work, which spans financial assistance, preventive healthcare, rehabilitation and mental health support to underserved cancer patients.

As you flip through these pages and also read more about KARO's work, I hope you take this opportunity to embrace the spirit of hospitality and open your hearts to the endless possibilities of food and its ability to tell stories that matter and touch lives. 🍜

SMITHA MENON

Smitha is an independent F&B Journalist & Editor based in Mumbai.

Follow her @ champarani

In case you were wondering, Yauatcha is pronounced 'Yau-AT-cha'. The name 'Yauatcha' has no literal meaning, but is made up of three words: Yau comes from founder Alan Yau's surname. In colloquial Chinese, 'At Cha' implies 'going out for dim sum', an occasion comparable to 'going down to the pub'. In vernacular English, the phrase 'atcha' is a stylisation of 'at you', implying a playful and relaxed attitude. 🍜





Dim Sum Duty

Praachi Raniwala gets some of Yauatcha's oldest members of staff to share their favourite memories from more than a decade in service

Three outposts, 50 varieties, and 3,150 dim sum folded in a single day — Yauatcha isn't considered the gold standard of dim sum for nothing. We go behind the scenes and ask the people who make the magic happen to pick their favourites (they did protest, saying it's like choosing a favourite child!) and share some memorable anecdotes about the restaurant's most loved offering.

NELSON NAIR

AVP Operations, PAN India

A decade-long journey with the brand means Nelson has seen it all—from the launch buzz and the making of now-iconic favourites, to celebrities zipping in and out of the restaurant. Through it all, the Truffle edamame dumpling has remained his favourite. "Italian mushroom married with Cantonese cuisine means it's a burst of bold, strong flavours. And this global favourite was dreamed up by Mrs. Kintu Bajaj right here in Mumbai," he reveals. It's a dish celebrities who frequent Yauatcha are likely to order too, Nelson reveals. Hrithik Roshan, he says, loves to bring his kids here for Sunday lunches, Amitabh Bachchan has celebrated his birthday in the Private Dining Room multiple times, and cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar is a long-time patron too. →



Favourite dish:
Truffle edamame dumpling

Pairs well with:
The Lalu, a cocktail that blends vodka, lemongrass, lime, Oolong tea, lychee



Favourite dish:
Spicy har gau

Pairs well with:
Yang Walker, a delightful combination of Scotch whisky, umeshu, rosemary, grape fruit, lime & lavender

MANEESH KP

Restaurant Manager, Bengaluru

Having been with the Southern outpost since 2013, Maneesh is confident when he says Yauatcha revolutionised the dim sum scene in the city. He adds that the Bengaluru branch often has diners from Hyderabad, Chennai, and other neighbouring cities too, who plan their visits around a meal at the restaurant. "We even have a Chinese patron who doesn't speak English, but loves our dim sum and visits often. He places his order from the pictures of our dishes," says the manager. Poached Peking dumpling, a mix of chicken, prawn, mushrooms, and carrot, is a big hit according to him. "Its dipping sauce—made with Tabasco, rice, vinegar, soya and yakitori—is unique and not something you'll find easily at other restaurants," he adds.

PRADEEP GOMES

Executive Chef, Bengaluru

A 10-year stint at Yauatcha means that Chef Pradeep, and his team of 16, always have their dim sum A-game on. The essence of these delectable beauties, he says, is in the hand craftsmanship. "It's not something you can easily imitate at home. It requires skill, years of training, and great attention to detail," declares the chef. He reveals that a decade ago, Yauatcha started the dim sum revolution in Bengaluru, and ever since, the Crystal dumplings and Crispy prawn cheung fun have been favourites. After studying the city's palate and penchant for spice, he also went on to introduce the Spicy chicken cheung fun only for his outpost. The chef is just as conscientious about ensuring a tailor-made experience for all his diners. "We have a long-time patron who cannot eat dim sum due to some allergies. So every time she visits, we handcraft a gluten-free vegetable crystal dumpling for her, with the skin made from potato starch," he adds.

MERWYN ALPHONSO

Bar Manager, Mumbai

No cake? No problem. Merwyn remembers a time when a diner did not want a conventional birthday cake, so the team whipped up 5 portions of turnip cake in a cake-like presentation, complete with candles and a message for the birthday girl to cut.

As the custodian of the restaurant's bar, Merwyn points towards the Yang Walker (with Scotch whisky, umeshu, rosemary, grapefruit, lime, and lavender) as a great accompaniment to the dim sum. He's often experimenting with ingredients like lemongrass and various teas to add to his cocktails.

→



Favourite dish:
Crispy prawn cheung fun

Pairs well with:
The All Spice Old Fashioned,
made with Bourbon whisky,
ginger liqueur, pimento
dram & angostura

TABASSUM KHAN

Shift Manager - Pâtisserie, Mumbai

Considering Tabassum has spent the last 10 years interacting closely with Yauatcha's diners, she has it on good authority that the dim sum are what they keep coming back for. "Some of the best dim sum we've ever had." Guests' words, not hers. Though she doesn't disagree. The Crispy prawn cheung fun and Crystal dumplings are her personal favourites, she adds. "I remember this time when a guest walked in and asked for something special to celebrate his mother's 56th birthday. Chef Laxman took on the challenge and created a basket of 56 varieties of dim sum for them. You just had to see the presentation to believe it!" →



SOMNATH BHUNIA

Assistant General Manager - Operations, Kolkata

After spending eight years at Yauatcha Mumbai, Somnath is the most recent addition to the Kolkata team. And as he continues to study the differences between the patrons in both cities, he can vouch for one common denominator—the universal love for Truffle edamame dim sum! “The Crispy prawn Cheung fun and the Poached Peking dim sum are other favourites,” he says. One of their patrons even insisted on Yauatcha catering a special event of his. And even though the restaurant rarely engages in pop-ups, this time around, they curated a special menu of eight local bestsellers to serve 1,000 people in one evening!

AKSHAY SASANE

Shift Manager, Mumbai

Akshay may be newer to the team compared to many of his contemporaries featured here, but he has one fact down pat: “Even after 12 years, diners haven’t tired of the Truffle edamame dumplings.” Other current bestsellers, he adds, are the Poached Peking dim sum, as well as its vegetarian version made out of mock meat. “It’s impossible to choose just one favourite, especially considering the incredible variety on the menu. Regulars don’t even need to look at the menu, they just know what they want. There are times when two guests will order half the menu between them,” he says. There was a time when a table of five ordered 30 varieties of dim sum, which is about 18 dim sum per person!



Favourite dish:
Fried turnip cake with vegetables

Pairs well with:
Quimao, a cocktail that blends Tequila, pineapple, lime & jalapeno

LAXMAN GAIRE

Head Chef - Dim sum, Mumbai

As the head of the dim sum department, Chef Laxman has everybody eating out of his hands, quite literally! Christened the in-house ‘dim sum king’, he has been with Yauatcha since its pre-opening days, and is endlessly driven by the excitement of reimagining ingredients in unique ways to create new additions to the menu. “We don’t use any machines to make dim sum. Everything is done by hand, like an art form,” he reveals. As one who is always thinking of catering to the Indian palate, his contributions to the menu—the Chicken coriander dim sum; the Asparagus, corn, and Water chestnut dim sum; and a vegetarian version of the XO sauce—are all bestsellers today. Next, he’s working on perfecting the Siew long bun soup dumpling, as it’s something his patrons have been requesting. You ask, and he delivers! →

GANESH BODAKE

Executive Chef - Pâtisserie, Mumbai

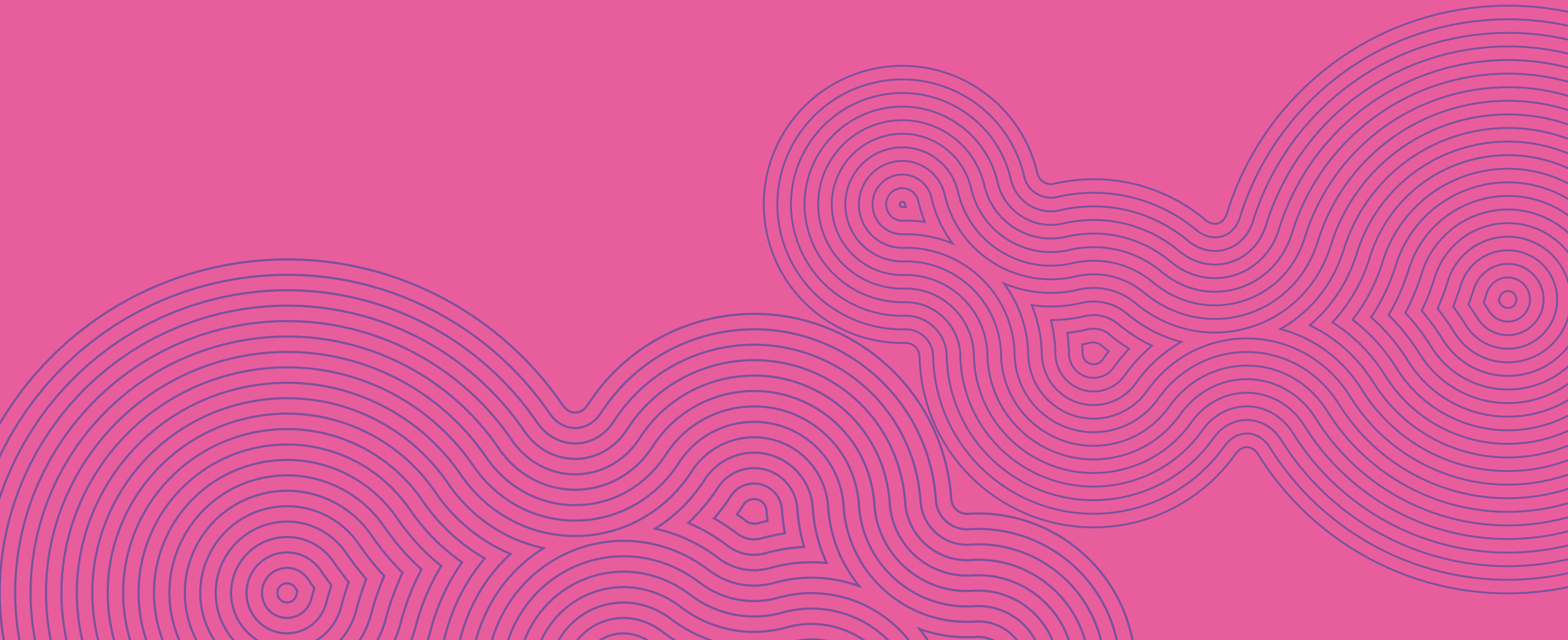
While he may be in charge of the sweet treats at Yauatcha for the last decade, he has picked up his dim sum favourites too: all Cheung fun varieties, the Truffle edamame dumpling and the Turnip cakes. He is quick to add that a dim sum meal is incomplete without the famous Raspberry delice dessert for a sweet ending, or a tub of the in-house ice cream and sorbet to go. "These were always an accompaniment to the dessert, but during the pandemic, we introduced our best ice-cream flavours in tubs. Following its success, Yauatcha Riyadh has been doing the same too!" 🍷



Favourite dish:
Asparagus & water chestnut
dumpling

Pairs well with:
Tian Shang, made using gin,
vodka, raspberry liqueur,
& elderflower foam

India just can't get enough of our iconic Truffle edamame dumplings. 15% of the restaurant's total sales come from this dish! Interestingly, the dumpling was first conceptualised in Mumbai and went on to be absorbed into all global menus, owing to its popularity. 🍡



Alan Yau, the founder of Yauatcha, once tasked his chefs at the London outpost to invent a fruity cocktail. The reward? The cocktail would be named after its creator. Turns out, it was Chef Lalu from Lonavala, India, who won this contest. The Lalu—made with vodka, lemongrass, lime, Oolong tea and lychee juice—can now be found on Yauatcha menus across the globe. 🍹





Don't Spill The Tea!

A guide to traditional Chinese tea drinking etiquette

By: Jasreen Mayal Khanna

Did you know that tea is the world's most consumed beverage in the world after water? Legend has it that in 2732 BC, Chinese Emperor Shen Nong accidentally discovered tea when leaves from a wild plant fell into his pot of boiling water. Being a seasoned herbalist, he decided to try it and enjoyed its flavour and effects. Thus began the trend of tea being consumed as a beverage by the Chinese elite, spreading to Japan and other Asian countries. Tea only reached Europe in the 17th century (the Dutch brought the first consignment) but today, you'll be hard-pressed to find a place where tea-drinking isn't the norm. Here's a guide to traditional Chinese tea etiquette for you.



SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Fill 70% of the cup (not more) with water so it doesn't spill on your guests. Tea is always served with two hands—the right-hand holding and the left supporting. Always serve elders before youngsters, bosses before subordinates and guests first before yourself.

THE FINGER KOW-TOW

Legend goes that an ancient emperor travelling in disguise didn't want to be recognised at tea houses and asked his staff to bow to him using their fingers instead of the entire body. The gesture stuck and even now, the Chinese give thanks to the host by gently tapping their fingers on the table: a single-finger tap for a younger server, a double-finger tap for someone older than you and a full fist if you want to give the ultimate show of respect.



START WITH SCENT

Traditional Chinese tea ceremonies start with a sensory introduction to the tea. The host shows the tea to their guests, telling them a little about it and letting them inhale its aroma.



A DELICATE HOLD

The correct way to hold a Chinese teacup is with your right hand. Your thumb and index finger should go around the rim with the middle finger supporting the bottom (for women the pinky finger will also be slightly extended).

TIPS TO SIP

- Bring your cup to your lips instead of bending your head to the cup.
- Test the tea's temperature with a small sip and then drink slowly, savouring each sip.

BREW IT RIGHT

- Rinse the teapot with boiling water so it is warm and ready for use.
- When you start making tea, always use a spoon to scoop it from the container.
- The temperature of the water should be hot but not boiling. The first steep is discarded to remove any pesticide or impurities and guests are served the second steep.



MATERIAL SWIRL

The Chinese use different teapots for different types of tea. Green tea is typically served in a clear teapot; Oolong tea in a clay teapot; and fragrant, floral tea is served in a covered bowl to retain its aroma.



DARLING, DON'T

- Forget to refill guests' cups if they're empty.
- Make sure the spout of the teapot doesn't point at any of the guests. If there are two teapots, their spouts shouldn't face each other.

A CHINESE GOODBYE

As a guest, if you see that the tea is getting lighter but the host isn't changing the tea leaves, it's a subtle hint to wrap up the party.



On the night of 31st December 2023, Yauatcha Mumbai sold 953 portions of dim sum — a real testament to the city's love for our handcrafted dish! 🥟





All images are used for creative purpose only

THE TABLE IS SET

Kanika Parab is a fly on the wall of this chatterhouse, listening in and dreaming up conversations within



The room, all granite and glass panes, shines like a 24-karat diamond, its brilliance lent by the people who dine in it - suitors and suits, sweethearts and scions, and staples with a suite of beliefs about the kitchen's shui mai.

And with this light, there is sound: conversations - head-to-head and heart-to-heart, heard in haiku snatches,

a 5-7-5 parley rhythm scored by the clickety-clack of chopsticks, perfumed by orchids in heat, overseen by darting fish that seem to be spun from silk. Some diners are glued to sticky, honeyed conversations with all the time in the world, while others, clicking their chopsticks like the seconds hand of a clock, need to be back at their BKC high towers before they turn into turnips. →

ON TABLE 1

Two shy 16-year-olds from a neighbourhood school out on their first unsupervised date.

The girl teaches the boy how to use chopsticks, resulting in, for the first time, their hands touching, as glassy dim sum slip and slide across the table, their laughs backlit by the sun.

This moment is as tender as the meat that will be served next.



ON TABLE 2

A Chinese banker expat and his imperial loneliness are seated at a table for two.

A single Hofan noodle tethers him to home. →





IN YAUATCHA'S PRIVATE DINING ROOM

A bad-boy actor with heavy-lidded eyes and light remarks is shooting at BKC.

He has enlisted the restaurant manager to rehearse lines with him during a daily lunch of soup and nothing else in the restaurant's private dining room. The table is (a) set.

The same chamber will, tonight, host a business titan who loves the kitchen's turnip cakes and needs no fortune cookie at the end of his meal.



ON TABLE 3

A suave man, a restaurant regular usually in good spirits, is reverberating with nervous energy.

When his boyfriend goes to the restroom, he scurries around the table looking by for an appropriate place to hide the ring: in the mouth of a whole cooked sea bass, on the top of a rose-shaped Delice dessert, at the bottom of an uptight Champagne glass tense with bubbles. →

ON TABLE 4

An older couple, a lady with hair like noodles and a man with no hair, are here to celebrate 50 years of togetherness.

They pick up their Champagne glasses and give life advice to the almost translucent dim sum at their table: you need to grow thicker skins.



INSIDE THE KITCHEN

The chef is seen pumping up the self esteem of the 'vegetarian chicken' currently undergoing an identity crisis.

It has received so many kitchen-crew hype compliments by the time it gets to table 5, that it is the best-performing dish of the night. →



ON TABLE 6

Like a murder of crows at the table, a group of black suits peck at their food wondering who among them will be up for the next promotion.

The server suggests a salt and pepper squid game. →

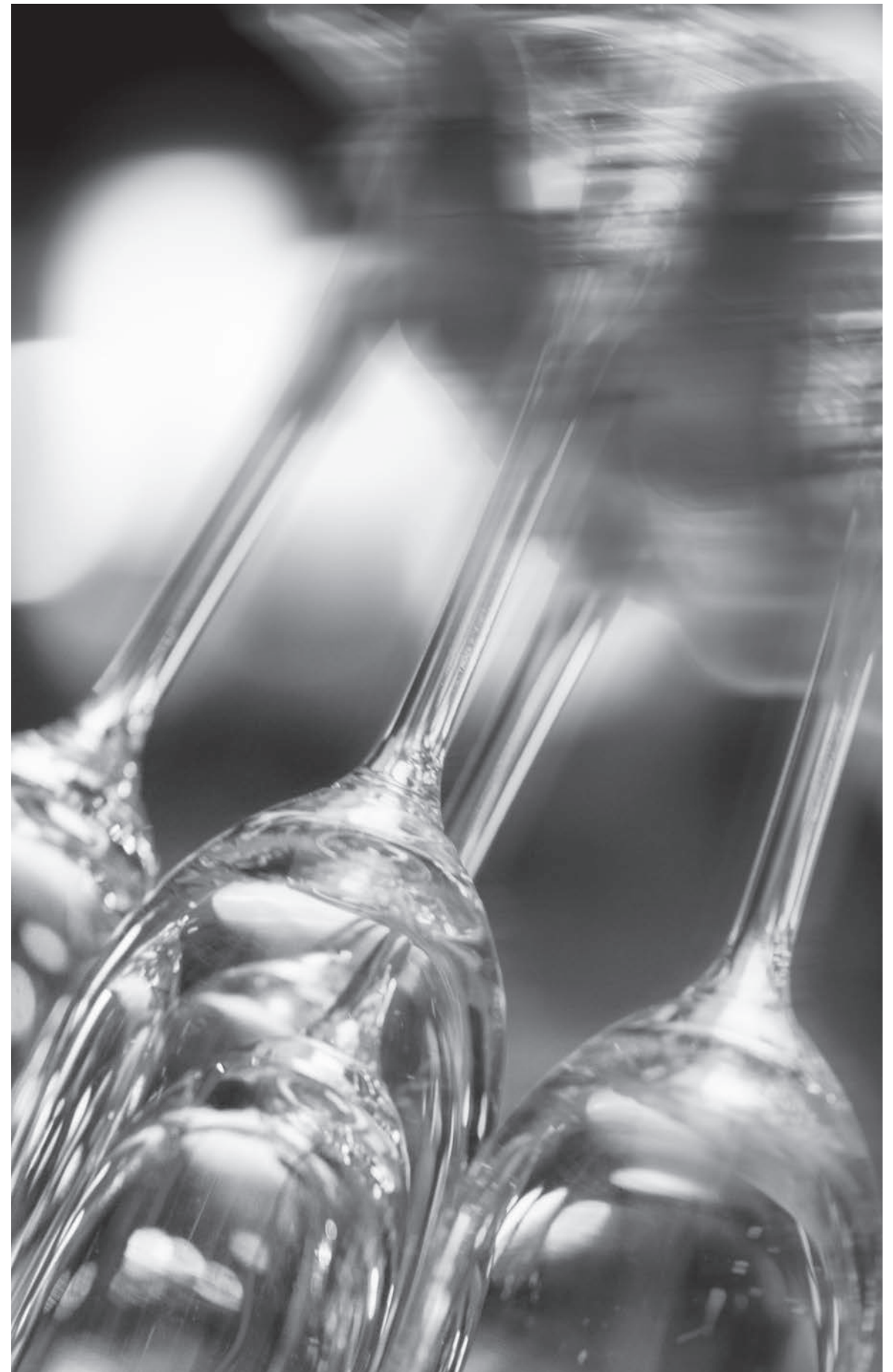


AT THE BAR

Two re-uniting friends sit on high stools. Facing each other, leaning back ever so slightly, knees touching, their bodies make the shape of a wish bone. They request a fellow customer to take a snap.

All of a sudden, a "He said yes!" exclamation floats over from the suave man's table number 3, cutting through the thick buzz of the restaurant, settling over the air like a magic magnetic spell. And for one cool minute, everyone in the restaurant believes that they are in love.

The end. 🍷



Yauatcha is one of the first restaurants in India to champion barrel-aged cocktails. The Aged Negroni is a Yauatcha classic and is stored in oak barrels. The next time you visit, ask our servers for these signature drinks. 🍷





Left to Right: A Bangkok vendor serves hungry customers; Fried Gyozas

A STEAMY ODYSSEY

Deepti Dadlani traces the history of the dim sum across cultures and countries and maps its metamorphosis in India

Much like the elusive origins of culinary stalwarts like the pizza and biryani, the dumpling too is adorned with apocryphal tales and historical threads, its birthplace forever shrouded in mystery. The narrative of how the dumpling found its way to India and may even have influenced some of our iconic dishes like the steamed Khandvi of Gujarat and Modak of Maharashtra, is a journey speckled with tales that make for delicious study, dining, and living room conversations.

Drawing parallels with the legendary beginnings of coffee attributed to the Sufi saint Baba Budan, the most popular records tracing the origin of the dumpling takes us back to AD 210 when Zhang Zhongjing, a revered Chinese physician who made steamed dough parcels packed with black pepper and other herbs to treat frostbites during the Eastern Han Dynasty. Some historians believe that it was the nomadic tribes of Central Asia, and not China, that carried dumpling recipes westward and eastward. So then did the dumpling traverse the Silk Route or follow the footsteps of the Buddhist monk Xuanjing, who travelled to India 1,300 years ago to study

Buddhist texts? The absolute truth may elude us, but the stories are captivating.

Before we go further, let's start with what defines a dumpling. The Merriam-Webster dictionary probably explains it best as "small masses of dough cooked by boiling or steaming or pan-frying," while other explanations embrace baked and deep-fried varieties as well. Food historians suggest that the first iterations were likely unstuffed, conceived by prehistoric hunter-gatherers seeking innovative ways to prepare grains. Popular examples of plain, filling-less dumplings are the German spätzle, the Indian muthiya, Italian gnocchi, and West African fufu.

Wherever and whoever brought us the dumpling, it's safe to acknowledge a universal truth: since time immemorial, societies and cultures, once acquainted with flour, have crafted their versions of these delightful parcels.

WRAPPED IN CUSTOMS

In the tapestry of global cuisine, dumplings emerge as cultural ambassadors, weaving rich narratives through rituals and customs. Take Ukraine, for

example, where the annual celebration of Vareniki Day unites communities in a harmonious symphony of potato, cheese, or berry-filled dumplings. As these foods take shape, songs, dances, and storytelling intertwine, fortifying communal bonds while preserving cherished traditions for generations to come.

Scandinavia, with its unique traditions, adds a touch of radiance to this global narrative with the Swedish midsummer celebration when the crafting of saffron-infused sweet Saffransbullar dumplings take on a symbolic ode to the sun's warmth on the year's longest day. Across the seas in Tokyo, Japan, culinary artisans and food enthusiasts gather annually at the Gyoza Festival. Here, the artistry of crafting delicate and flavourful dumplings takes centre stage. The atmosphere crackles with creativity as participants experiment with innovative fillings, pushing the boundaries of traditional flavours. Matcha-infused or sushi-inspired, these dumplings become edible canvases, each a work of art that celebrates both tradition and innovation. Journeying further East to India's state of Bengal, at the Pithe Puli Utsav festival, revellers craft and share sweet and savoury dumplings to strengthen familial bonds and enhance matrimonial celebrations.

"Since time immemorial, societies and cultures, once acquainted with flour, have crafted their versions of these delightful parcels"

The global exploration of dumplings extends beyond borders and culinary traditions. From Poland's Pierogi and Afghanistan's Mantu to Russia's Pelmeni and India's cherished Samosa, these delightful parcels serve as a unifying thread that connects disparate cultures. In Sweden, Palt, sweet potato dumplings with lingonberry jam, provide a tantalising taste of tradition. Meanwhile, Norway presents Klubb dumplings, adding its chapter to the story. In Germany, Knoephla dumpling soup soothes the soul, while Austria offers Mohnnudeln, filled with poppy seeds, butter, sugar, and rum, as a sweet indulgence for the senses. In Southeast Asia, we revel in dumpling artistry with Japan's Mochi and Takoyaki, the Philippines' Siopao Asado, Singapore's Putu Piring, Indonesia's Cilok, and a bit further west is Azerbaijan's Dushbara.

In this culinary mosaic, dumplings transcend their humble origins, becoming not just a treat for the taste buds but also a window into the rich tapestry of human traditions, history, and unity.



The Indian Samosa can be traced back to Persian Cuisine

Each dumpling, whether sweet or savoury, carries within it the essence of its culture, the stories of its people, and the shared moments that bind communities and generations together.

ON HOMEGROUND

Bringing our explorations closer to home, the array of what we can refer to as dumplings in India unfolds as a mind-opening revelation. 'Dumplings' as a noun to describe iconic regional dishes unfolds with the arrival of Chinese cuisine to our land. Long before the word 'dumpling' graced our menus, local Indo-Chinese restaurants like Nanking, Nelson Wang's China Garden, Eau Chew in Chandni Chowk, the Tangra food stalls in Chinatown in Kolkata introduced the moniker of 'wonton' to our MSG-virgin palates, some nearly as early as 1945. Most of us recall spotting wontons boiled in soup or deep-fried, which unbeknownst to many at the time, was the precursor to what we now recognise as a dumpling. The realisation dawns now that, even then, as we relished wontons, we were partaking in the broader narrative of introducing the expression 'dumpling' into Indian culinary parlance.

Arguably the most beloved Indian dumpling – the momo – goes back to the Tibetan migration to India, mainly in the northern regions driven by the Chinese occupation of Tibet in the 1950s. Tibetan immigrants found refuge in places like Dharamshala, McLeod Ganj, Darjeeling and New Delhi, transforming these →



A plate of Modak

among the Monpa and Sherdukpa tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, residing in the West Kameng and Tawang districts. Their version often features minced pork and mustard leaves, served alongside flavourful chilli paste. Meanwhile, in Sikkim, momos have become a comfort food staple across communities, including Bhutias, Lepchas and Nepalis. Sikkim's momos, closely related to the Tibetan variety, have overshadowed even their traditional dish Hyontoen, made of millet flour and churpi cheese.

“My culinary exploration of Indian dumplings reveals a vibrant mosaic of flavours and textures, with each region contributing a unique chapter to this rich tale”

THE FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR

Food writer Jenn Harris writes in a piece for the *LA Times*, “I think the problem is people always want a narrow answer, and when you think of the breadth of what a dumpling is you have to be really flexible. When you realise that every single cuisine has a dumpling ... food is a way to unite us, not divide us, so be generous with the answer.” With this in mind, my culinary exploration of Indian dumplings reveals a vibrant mosaic of flavours and textures, with each region contributing a unique and delectable chapter to this rich culinary tale.

In Gujarat, the spotlight shines on the Khandvi. Crafted from a blend of gram flour and buttermilk, this delicacy's glossy surface, adorned with tempered black mustard seeds, reflects a certain resemblance to the Cantonese dim sum dumpling known as Cheung fun. But the artistry doesn't stop there. As the mixture sets, it transforms into bite-sized morsels, revealing Gujarat's culinary finesse. And then, there's the you-cannot-just-eat-one Modak, iterations of it across India are known as Kadubu in Kannada, Kudumu in Telugu, and Kozhakattai in Tamil. A traditional Indian dumpling often made from rice and wheat flour dough, it can be sweet or savoury, steamed or fried, depending on which region and festival of the country you are enjoying them in. The history of the modak, however, deserves its very own feature as some historians trace it back to 200 BC, holding a sweet space in Ayurveda, and texts like the Ramayana and Mahabharata as a confectionery favoured by Ganesha and Buddha. And let's not forget the Portuguese-influenced Goan Rissois, with its creamy, seafood-filled goodness, representing a delightful twist in the Indian dumpling tale.

Venturing west to the arid landscapes of Rajasthan, the Besan Chilla ki Subzi adds a spicy twist to the narrative. This dish features strips of chickpea flour dumplings cooked with a burst of Indian spices and →



Clockwise: A food market in Beijing; a Japanese Wagashi cake; the Gujarati Khandvi

“Establishments like Yauatcha do more than pay homage to a cherished culinary tradition; they extend an invitation to partake in a shared experience that transcends geographical confines.”



⇒ locales into vibrant cultural and culinary hubs for Tibetan cuisine. In the bustling city of Kolkata, a significant Tibetan community emerged, grappling with economic challenges. It was here where Tibetan refugees began to set up small eateries and roadside stalls, marking the birth of Tibetan momo stalls in the city. This confluence of Indian and Tibetan culinary traditions gave rise to innovative creations, like the 'tandoori momo'. A fine example of diasporic cuisine, these momos are marinated in a blend of Indian spices and yoghurt before being roasted in a tandoor. The resulting dish represents a harmonious fusion of Tibetan dumplings with the artistry of Indian cooking techniques. Among the culinary landscape, several historic and iconic momo spots have gained recognition: Kusum Rolls in Kolkata is renowned for its tandoori momos, while Dilli Haat in Delhi stands as a famous market offering an array of momo stalls. Then there is McLeod Ganj in Dharamshala, a focal point for 'authentic' Tibetan momos and inventive variations, a tribute to the resilience and entrepreneurship of the Tibetan community in India.

While momos are not traditionally a part of the local Khasi cuisine, the credit for introducing them to Shillong goes to the Chinese community who have made the city their home. Venturing into the North-eastern region, momos find a unique place



flavours. Meanwhile, in the spiritual city of Varanasi, Dal ka Dulha unfolds a fusion that brings to mind shui mai and ravioli – a wheat pocket filled with lentil goodness, a testament to the city’s culinary creativity.

Heading into the heart of India, the delectable Kachori entices palates. Found across various regions, this deep-fried delight showcases regional variations, from the fiery spices of Rajasthan’s Pyaaz ki Kachori to the savoury pleasures of Uttar Pradesh’s Bedmi Puri featuring spiced lentil fillings. These crispy spheres are an embodiment of beloved Indian street food, encapsulating the nation’s diverse flavours within a golden, crispy shell. Continuing our culinary journey, we arrive in the picturesque state of Himachal Pradesh, where Babru is a local favourite. These wheat flour dumplings, often filled with a mixture of lentils, showcase the region’s love for hearty, rustic flavours.

Further south in Tamil Nadu, the delectable Kozhukatta emerges as a star. These steamed rice dumplings come in both sweet and savoury variations, showcasing the region’s love for rice-based delicacies. As we traverse further into the diverse culinary landscapes of India, each dumpling narrates a story of innovation and adaptation,

connecting communities through the shared joy of food. These culinary treasures showcase India’s ability to embrace diversity, celebrating it within the folds of each delicious dumpling.

A METAPHOR FOR DISCOVERY

In the realm of Indian dumplings, we are presented with more than mere culinary delights; we are granted access to a universe teeming with flavours, narratives, and global connections that stretch across generations and national boundaries. In a poetic reflection, Lu, a luminary artist, entrepreneur, and bilingual TEDx speaker, aptly observes, “Dumplings conceal a filling that could be savoury or sweet; they have their element of mystery – a little packet of the unknown.” With each delectable bite, we embark on a sensory journey, unravelling the enigmatic allure encased within these humble parcels.

In celebrating the tapestry of dumplings, establishments like Yauatcha do more than pay homage to a cherished culinary tradition; they extend an invitation to partake in a shared experience that transcends geographical confines. 🍡



The list of A-list celebrities who love Yauatcha runs very long. Typically, the stars use our secret back entry to enter the Private Dining Room and avoid the paparazzi. There was a time when actor Sanjay Dutt would book one of the PDRs at least once a week for dinner. 🍽️





FROM THE
Yauatcha
COOKBOOK

A selection of the restaurant's most treasured recipes,
illustrated by **Maleka Shah Patel**

Make the purple skin by adding equal portions of heated purple cabbage stew to potato starch



Pro Tip:
Let the purple cabbage simmer on a slow flame to extract the right colour

For the filling:
Brunoise minced chicken, shiitake mushroom, lotus root, coriander, salt, carrot & yam bean

Dim sum folding

Steam in bamboo baskets

Serve hot and fresh

CHICKEN & CORIANDER DIM SUM



THIS RECIPE COMPRISES TWO COMPONENTS:

- Minced chicken filling
- Dim sum skin

Minced chicken filling
INGREDIENTS:

- 30 g minced chicken
- 30 g coriander leaves
- 10 g spring onion
- 50 g water chestnut
- 30 ml red cabbage juice
- 3 g Chinese seasoning
- 30 ml onion oil
- 18 g sugar
- 15 g salt

METHOD:

Finely dice all the vegetables and mix them with the minced chicken. Thoroughly mix the filling and add all the seasoning. Rest for 30 minutes.

Dim sum skin
INGREDIENTS:

- 20 ml red cabbage juice
- 15 g wheat starch
- 15 g potato starch

METHOD:

Combine the three ingredients to make a dough. Work on the dough until it's soft.

ASSEMBLY:

Make thin wrappers from the dough. Add the minced chicken filling. Steam the dim sum in a bamboo basket for six minutes. →

In Cantonese culture, dim sum was originally an exclusive luxury made for the Emperor, his family and the very wealthy.



Create chocolate mousse and add it to the moulds

The lucky stone:
The Cantonese consider chocolate to be very lucky and extremely auspicious

Place the liquid insert in the centre and cover with the base of the chocolate brownie

Chocolate glaze ingredients:
12 ml milk
10 g whipping cream
18 g dark chocolate
1 g neutral cold gel

Remove the pebbles from the fridge and glaze them. Refrigerate until solid

Refrigerate the moulds

CHOCOLATE PEBBLE

THIS RECIPE COMPRISES FOUR ELEMENTS:

- Chocolate brownie
- Chocolate liquid centre
- Chocolate mousse
- Glaze

Chocolate brownie
INGREDIENTS:

- 10 g butter
- 10 g sugar
- 1 g baking powder
- 10 g dark chocolate
- 8 g refined flour
- 8 g water
- 1 g cocoa powder
- 4 g almond powder
- Pinch of salt

METHOD:

Bring water, sugar, fine salt, and butter to a boil. Once boiling, remove from heat and add chocolate. Mix until fully melted, then transfer the mixture to a machine bowl. Sift flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and add to the mixture. Mix well. Finally, add almond powder to the mixture, ensuring a well-blended and fluffy consistency. Spread the mixture onto a tray lined with a silpat mat. Bake at 160°C for 10 to 12 minutes. Allow to cool, then place into the freezer.

Chocolate Liquid Centre
INGREDIENTS:

- 20 ml milk
- 8 ml whipping cream
- 5 g dark chocolate
- 4 g cocoa nibs
- 0.2 g sea salt
- 1 g sugar



METHOD:

Place cocoa nibs into a pan and lightly roast. Add milk, salt, sugar, and cream. Allow to infuse for 15 minutes. Bring to a boil, then add chocolate. Whisk continuously while boiling. Pass through a fine chinoise and allow to cool. Once cooled, place into a sauce dispenser and pipe into small truffle silicone moulds. Freeze to set.

Chocolate Mousse
INGREDIENTS:

- 9 ml milk
- 34 g whipping cream
- 1 g sugar
- 20 g dark chocolate
- 4 g Agar Agar
- Pinch of salt

METHOD:

In a pan, combine milk, whipping cream, caster sugar, and salt. Bring to a boil, then add Agar Agar. Pour mixture over chocolate and mix well. Hand blend to emulsify into a smooth ganache base. Allow to cool to 40°C, then fold in semi-whipped cream.

Chocolate Glaze
INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ml milk
- 10 g whipping cream
- 18 g dark chocolate
- 1 g neutral cold gel

METHOD:

In a pan, combine whipping cream, milk, and neutral cold gel. Bring to a boil. Pour over the chocolate and mix well. Emulsify with a hand blender. Place into a container in the refrigerator to set up. Gently melt in the microwave, then hand blend. Use at 35°C.

ASSEMBLY:

Set the liquid inserts in the fridge to become firm. Create the brownies and allow them to cool. Create chocolate mousse and add it to the moulds. Place the liquid insert in the centre and cover with the base of the chocolate brownie. Refrigerate the moulds. Make the glaze, then remove the pebbles from the fridge and glaze them. Refrigerate until solid. →

The Chocolate pebble is a light, airy and eggless dessert that comprises different textures of chocolate from top to bottom. This dessert is a real crowd favourite at Yauatcha.

Muddle the raspberries in the shaker



Did you know?

The restaurant uses its in-house raspberry liqueur for the cocktail which is made with fresh raspberries, to add depth to the drink

Add the vanilla sugar and lemon juice
Add the remaining ingredients
and shake well with ice

Serve in a coupe glass
Garnish with fresh raspberry and mint



LEMON BERRY MARTINI

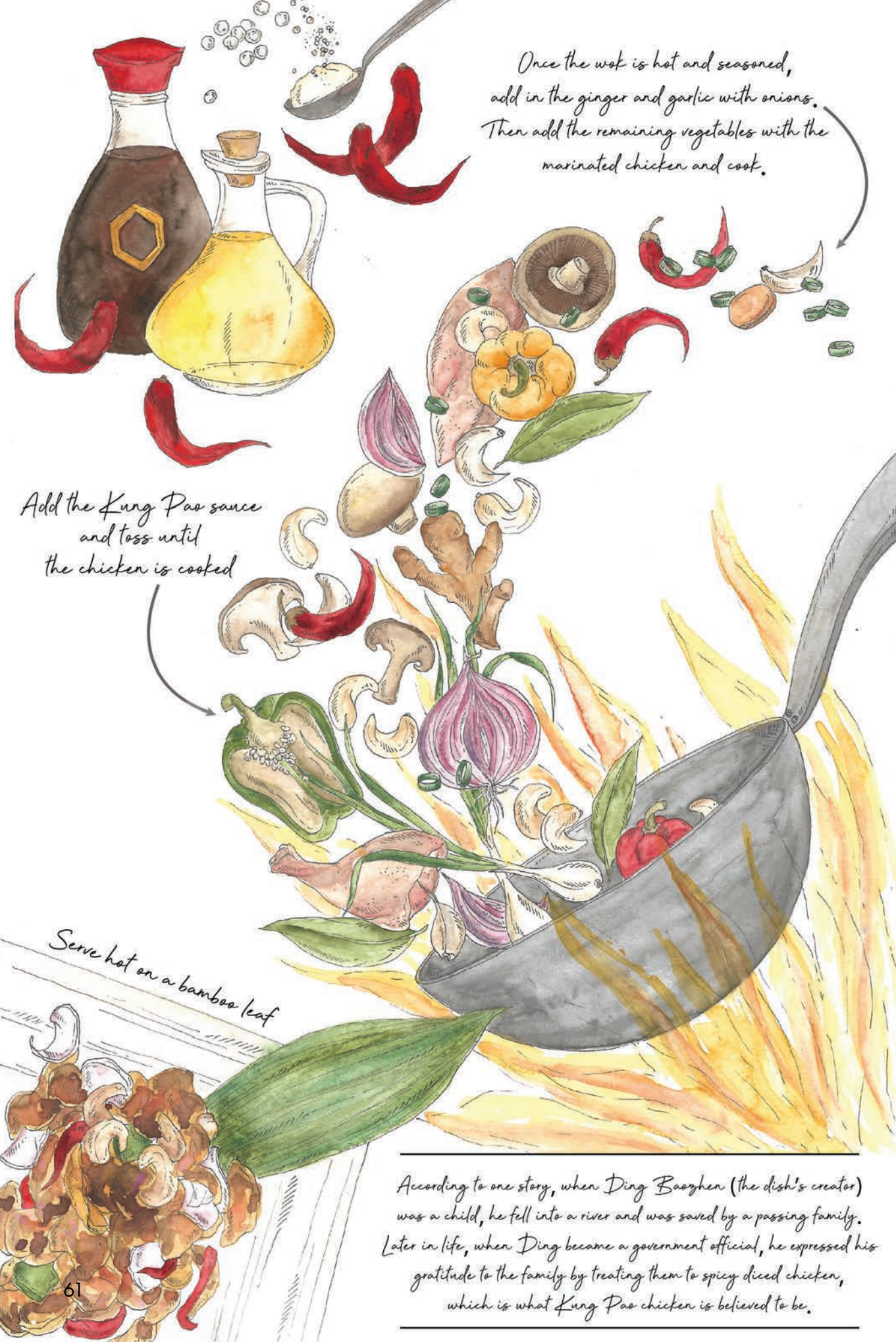
INGREDIENTS:

4 raspberries
10 g vanilla sugar (mix of vanilla pod and sugar)
10 ml lemon juice
30 ml cranberry juice
35 ml vodka
15 ml limoncello liqueur
15 ml raspberry liqueur
Garnish with raspberry and mint

METHOD:

Muddle the raspberries in the shaker.
Add the vanilla sugar and lemon juice.
Add the remaining ingredients and shake well with ice.
Serve in a coupe glass and garnish with fresh raspberry and mint. →

Make the raspberry liqueur infusion, four to five days ahead of time to enhance the overall flavour of the cocktail and make it potent, fresh and delicious!



Once the wok is hot and seasoned, add in the ginger and garlic with onions. Then add the remaining vegetables with the marinated chicken and cook.

Add the Kung Pao sauce and toss until the chicken is cooked

Serve hot on a bamboo leaf

According to one story, when Ding Baoghen (the dish's creator) was a child, he fell into a river and was saved by a passing family. Later in life, when Ding became a government official, he expressed his gratitude to the family by treating them to spicy diced chicken, which is what Kung Pao chicken is believed to be.

KUNG PAO CHICKEN

THIS RECIPE COMPRISES THREE ELEMENTS:

- Kung Pao Sauce
- Marinated Chicken
- Wok Hei Toss

Kung Pao Sauce INGREDIENTS:

- 5 ml dark soy sauce
- 20 ml red wine vinegar
- 15 ml plain vinegar
- 15 g seasoning powder
- 2 g white pepper
- 25 g sugar
- 20 ml water
- 4 pieces panda chilli

METHOD:

Combine all the sauces and set aside.

Marinated Chicken INGREDIENTS:

- 200 g boneless chicken leg
- 4 g salt
- 6 g potato starch
- 10 g egg white
- 10 ml oil
- 4 g chicken powder
- 6 g sugar



METHOD:

Combine all the ingredients and let the chicken marinate for 30 minutes.

METHOD:

- 10 g potato starch
- 200 g marinated chicken
- 1 bamboo leaf

Wok Hei Toss INGREDIENTS:

- 15 g sliced onion
- 10 g cashew nuts
- 15 g yellow bell pepper
- 15 g red bell pepper
- 15 g green capsicum
- 8 g panda chilli
- 6 g minced ginger and garlic
- 50 ml Kung Pao sauce

METHOD:

Once the wok is hot and seasoned, add in the ginger and garlic with onions. Once tossed, add the remaining vegetables with the marinated chicken and cook. Add the Kung Pao sauce and toss until the chicken is cooked. Serve hot on a bamboo leaf. →

The traditional Chinese culinary technique Wok-Hei is used to make this stir-fry at Yauatcha. It is said that when a wok breathes energy into a stir-fry, it gives the food a unique flavour and aroma.

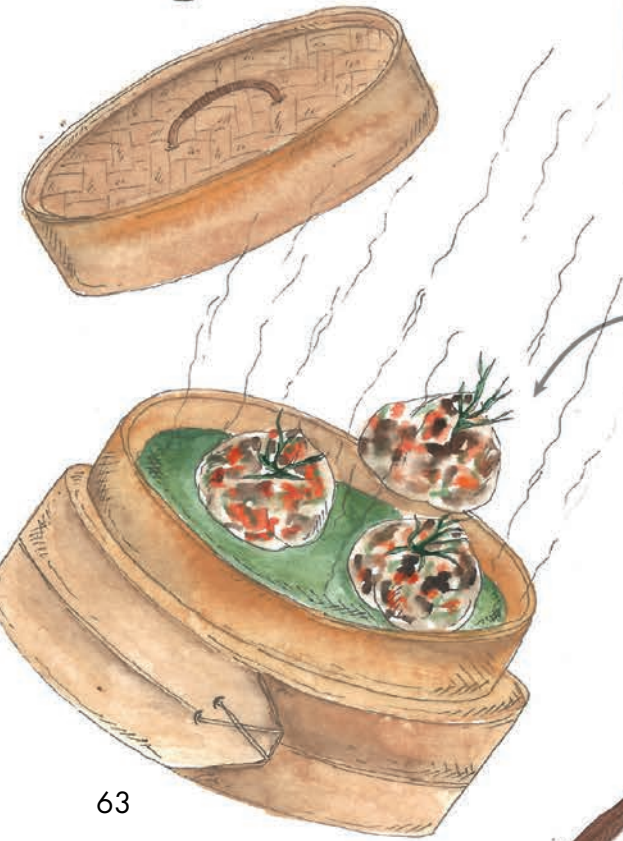


*Did you know?
This dim sum is gluten-free
and made with potato starch*

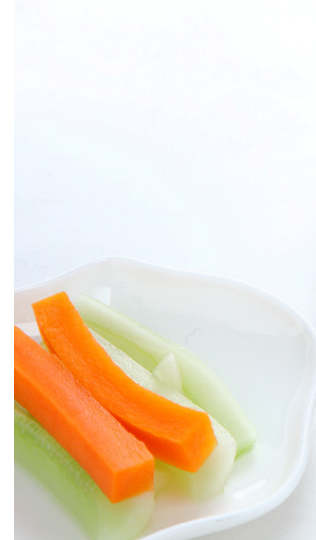


*Make thin wrappers
from the dough*

*Add the vegetable
crystal filling*



*Steam the dim sum in a bamboo
basket for four minutes*



VEGETABLE CRYSTAL DUMPLING

**THIS RECIPE COMPRISES
TWO COMPONENTS:**

- Crystal Filling
- Dim Sum Skin

**Crystal Filling
INGREDIENTS:**

- 4 g coriander leaves
- 4 g white seasoning powder
- 4 g sugar
- 2 ml sesame oil
- 2 ml shallot oil
- 9 g dry shiitake mushroom
- 21 g black fungus
- 21 g yam bean

- 9 g lotus root
- 12 g carrot

METHOD:

Mix all the ingredients together and set aside.

**Dim Sum Skin
INGREDIENTS:**

- 30 g potato starch
- 30 ml regular water
- 60 ml hot water

METHOD:

Mix the potato starch with regular water.

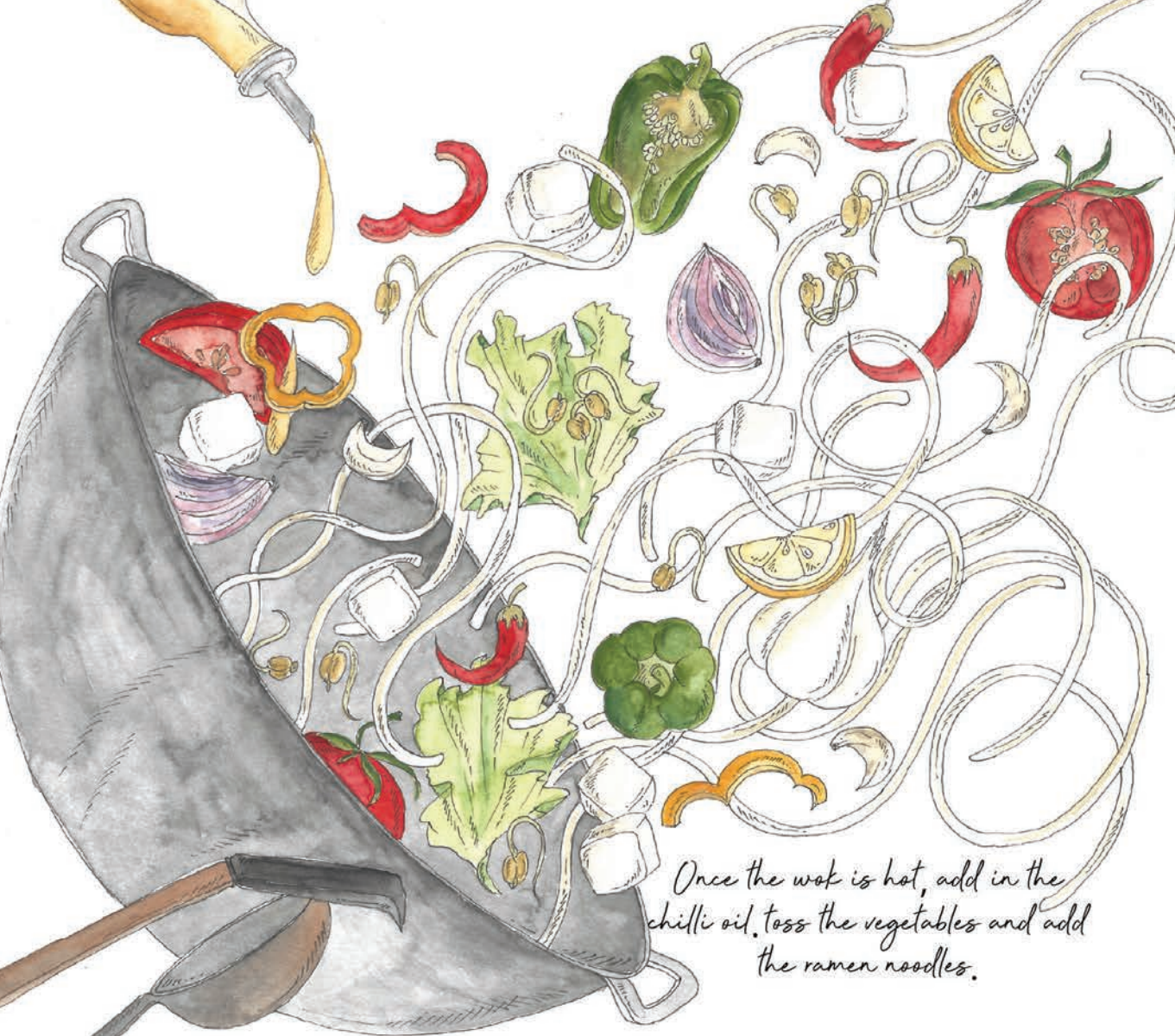
Slowly add the hot water and start mixing vigorously. Soon, you will get a transparent gel. Take that gel and add some potato starch to create a dough.

ASSEMBLY:

Make thin wrappers from the dough. Add the vegetable crystal filling. Steam the dim sum in a bamboo basket for 4 minutes. Serve hot and enjoy.



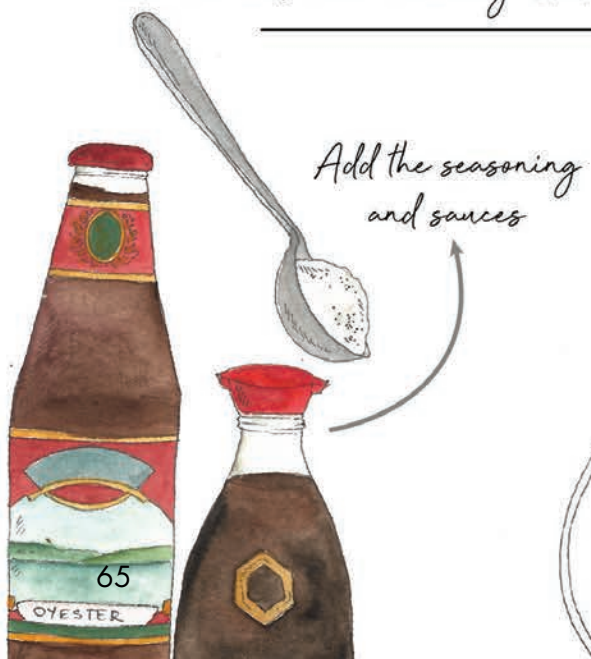
The fresher the ingredients are, the more flavourful and vibrant the dim sum will be. Don't forget to pair it with our signature Yauatcha sauces for an extra burst of flavour.



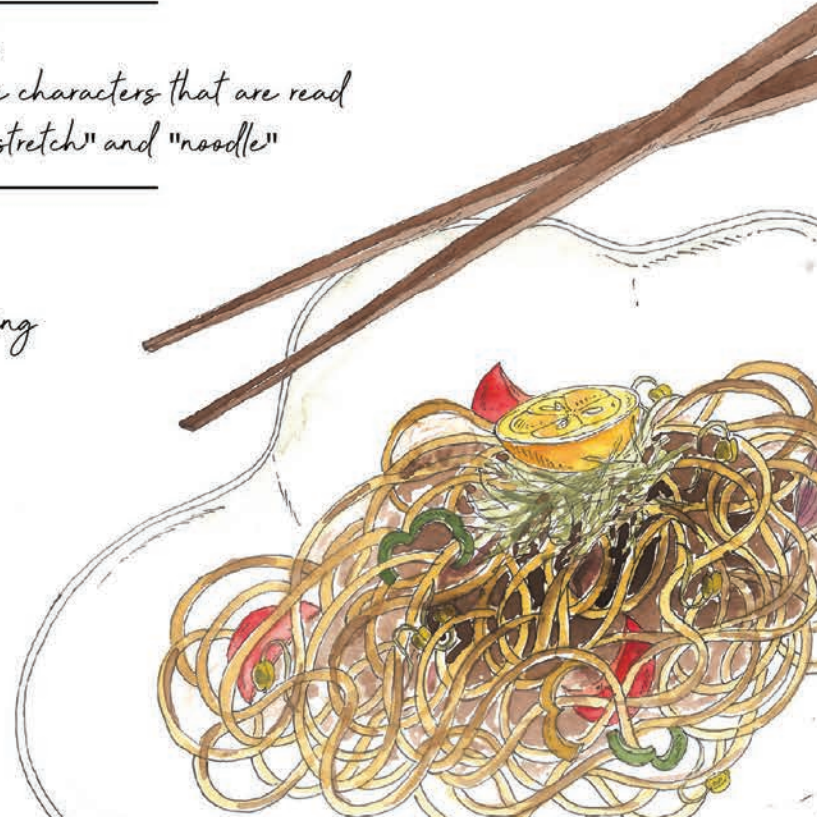
Once the wok is hot, add in the chilli oil, toss the vegetables and add the ramen noodles.

Fun fact:

The word comes from two Chinese characters that are read as "ra" and "men" meaning "stretch" and "noodle"



Add the seasoning and sauces



STIR-FRY RAMEN NOODLE

INGREDIENTS:

- 150 g ramen noodles
- 40 g bean sprouts
- 15 g fried tofu
- 12 g sliced onion
- 24 g white seasoning
- 12 g red bell pepper
- 12 g yellow bell pepper
- 12 g green capsicum
- 30 ml chilli oil
- 14 ml veg oyster sauce
- 8 ml dark soy sauce
- 8 ml chilli sauce
- 20 g iceberg lettuce
- 1 lemon wedge

METHOD:

Once the wok is hot, add in the chilli oil. Wok-toss the vegetables and add the ramen noodles. Add the seasoning and sauces. Garnish with iceberg lettuce and lemon wedge. 🍋

India was first introduced to the noodle— in the form of sevai or vermicelli—via trade with Persia and Arabia on the Silk Route.

The next time you go to Yauatcha, ask for the Bajaj Sauce. It's a concoction invented by the the Bajaj family, the first promoters of the brand in India: a secret mix of table sauces in a specific proportion along with chopped red chillies and soy sauce. A word of caution: dunk your dim sum into it at your own risk, this one is a real spice bomb! 🌶️





BEYOND THE DIMSUM

Aatish Nath explores the lesser-known hallmarks of Cantonese cuisine

A meal at a Cantonese restaurant is a showcase of just how varied flavours and textures come together for a great meal. There are crispy fried bites, salty soy, heat from a good chilli mix, crunchy vegetables and slow-cooked ready-to-serve meat. Taken as a whole, the meal is a unique opportunity to see how cooking techniques and simple ingredients come together to form a peerless dining experience, whether it's a simple streetside wok dish or an elaborate meal at a fine dining establishment. Cantonese food is perhaps the most widely disseminated of China's traditional cuisines. So it's no surprise that the visuals we've come to associate with 'Chinese' food, — the hanging roast meats, carts full of dim sum and wok-based stir-fries — all fall under the remit of this regional cooking style. The food of Canton, which is what the Chinese city of Guangzhou was once known as, has evolved to suit different palates as it spread across the world. At its most basic though, it is characterised by certain cooking styles and very particular ingredients. →

As is the case with many Asian cuisines, there's a focus on bringing out the inherent flavours that ingredients have and showcasing them to their best effect. The most common seasonings used are ginger, spring onion, and garlic. Then there's the smokiness and mild char that wok hei imparts – which requires a well-seasoned wok and deft cooking skills. Lastly, it's not just what's being made, but the cookware used as well. So much of what sets a dish apart is in the details and that's why the clay pot has endured, because of its ability to allow for flavour absorption and moisture retention. If you thought Cantonese cuisine was all about the dim sum, think again. These are the pillars that unite Cantonese cooking—whether at a streetside vendor in Hong Kong or a swish restaurant in London's Mayfair district.

CLAYPOT COOKING

Bàozai is the Chinese clay pot prized for its ability to evenly distribute heat and maintain a stable temperature. While it is best known in popular culture as a vessel for cooking rice, which is moist, charred and fluffy – it is also a popular way to cook proteins like chicken and tofu evenly. Claypot cooking is unpretentious and fuss-free, so it's no surprise that it is part of daily life in millions of Cantonese kitchens. Known for its ability to retain heat and warmth, the claypot is used for dishes like the Braised tofu claypot at Yauatcha, a crowd favourite among vegetarians at the restaurant, where it's served with mushrooms in a chilli and black bean sauce. Given Chinese medicine's holistic outlook, it should come as no surprise that the very same clay is a healer for headaches, allergies and arthritis – with a preference to use a bàozai for medicinal purposes as well. →



WOK HEI

Translating to 'breath of a wok' in Cantonese, wok hei has come to mean many things for fans of the cuisine. Obsessed diners trawl street food stalls and local hole-in-the-walls seeking out the smokiness it imparts. To break this down: the concentrated flavours and stronger char result from cooking the food in their vapours – the steam condenses in the air and then vaporises when making contact with the wok again, while dishes are 'wok-tossed'. Even as chefs and enthusiasts work to understand the scientific reason, diners can't get enough of the complex flavours in dishes like wok-tossed lobster or stir-fried noodles. Woks also allow for quick cooking, which means that dishes come together in no time, with the final stir-fry always tasting better than the sum of its parts. →





STEAMING

Traditionally, a whole steamed fish, with the head and tail intact, is served at Cantonese wedding banquets, to symbolise the success of a couple's marriage from the beginning of their lives together to the end. The best fish is served flaky and with a sauce that complements both the type of fish used and the other dishes – like roast duck or noodles – that are part of the meal. A delicate sauce of soy and ginger is the most popular, but as the cuisine morphs, chefs are also working to showcase different sauces. Given India's love for strong flavours, Yauatcha serves a black bean sauce (known as doubanjiang in Cantonese) atop steamed Indian sea bass for a delicate but flavourful bite.



BRAISING

Given that traditional Cantonese cooking makes use of even tougher cuts of meat – braising was a popular way to ensure those cuts were well-cooked and tender. Braising is a method of cooking where the food is first browned at a high temperature and then heated in a closed pot, so that the moisture formed also cooks the meat through. So, you'll find braised pork or lamb on most menus but the technique is also now used for vegetarian staples like mushrooms and tofu, where a crispy char on the outside adds texture to the dish. Braising as a cooking

method can be used across proteins – from red meats to tofu and even mushrooms – and is a popular, albeit time-consuming way to prepare food. Usually, a good braise gets its flavour from herbs and aromatics and braising liquid (water, stock or wine) that come together.

Cantonese cuisine's depth of flavour has made its delicate recipes popular the world over. At its most basic, there's a respect for the ingredients and for age-old cooking techniques that have shaped the cuisine. So next time you visit a Cantonese restaurant, know that there's more than Har gau or Shui mai to try. 🍜

When Yauatcha London opened about 20 years ago, the only Champagne served by the glass was pink. This pink bubbly complemented the royal blue interiors of the restaurant, and over time, the two hues have become our signature colours. While the Champagne list has grown exponentially, pink continues to be very significant—also conspicuously evident in our logo, cutlery, and cocktails. 🍷



The Time-Travelling Menu



12 years, countless innovative dishes.
Praachi Raniwala takes on the mammoth task of unearthing the dishes that defined each year of Yauatcha India's journey

2012 →

Truffle Edamame Dumpling

A star is born, one whose wattage hasn't eclipsed or dimmed over time. It all began when Mrs. Kintu Bajaj, the former owner of Yauatcha Mumbai, conceptualised the now iconic Truffle edamame dumpling during the pre-launch to combat the London outpost's limited vegetarian options. Her vision was to combine the Italian umami of truffle with edamame and lotus root. Ever since, these dumplings have been a signature at Yauatcha India, even making it to the chain's global menus. Safe to say, it also inspired the truffle edamame dumpling revolution across restaurants in the country.



↓

2013

Chicken Coriander Dumpling

Since the launch, the chefs at Yauatcha Mumbai have been constantly innovating to add dishes to satiate the Indian palate. That is how this superhit addition came about. The skin of this now hugely popular dim sum is dyed with organic purple cabbage ink, freshly made in the kitchen every morning. The dumpling is then hand-rolled in its signature shape and steamed to perfection, serving as a proud homage to Indian culture and local ingredients. →



2014

Chilean Sea Bass Mooli Roll

The hallmark of every Yauatcha dish is the focus on freshness, and this bestseller is a classic example. Chilean Sea Bass is freshly shipped from Chile to the restaurant twice a week to be masterfully paired with radish and pumpkin. The snow-white steamed sea bass rolls are covered in a delicate sliver of radish and tied with green chives to create this melt-in-your-mouth signature dish.



2015

Asparagus And Water Chestnut Dumpling

Drawing from ancient Chinese culture, in which it was a custom to welcome honoured guests with an asparagus footbath, the Asparagus and water chestnut dim sum was introduced to amp up the vegetarian options at the restaurant. The hero ingredient here— asparagus—was believed to symbolise growth, protection and emotional well-being. This particular concoction is a symphony of flavours and crunch, with a yellow skin that is an imperial colour in traditional Chinese symbolism, associated with power, royalty and prosperity.

2016

Truffle Braised Rice

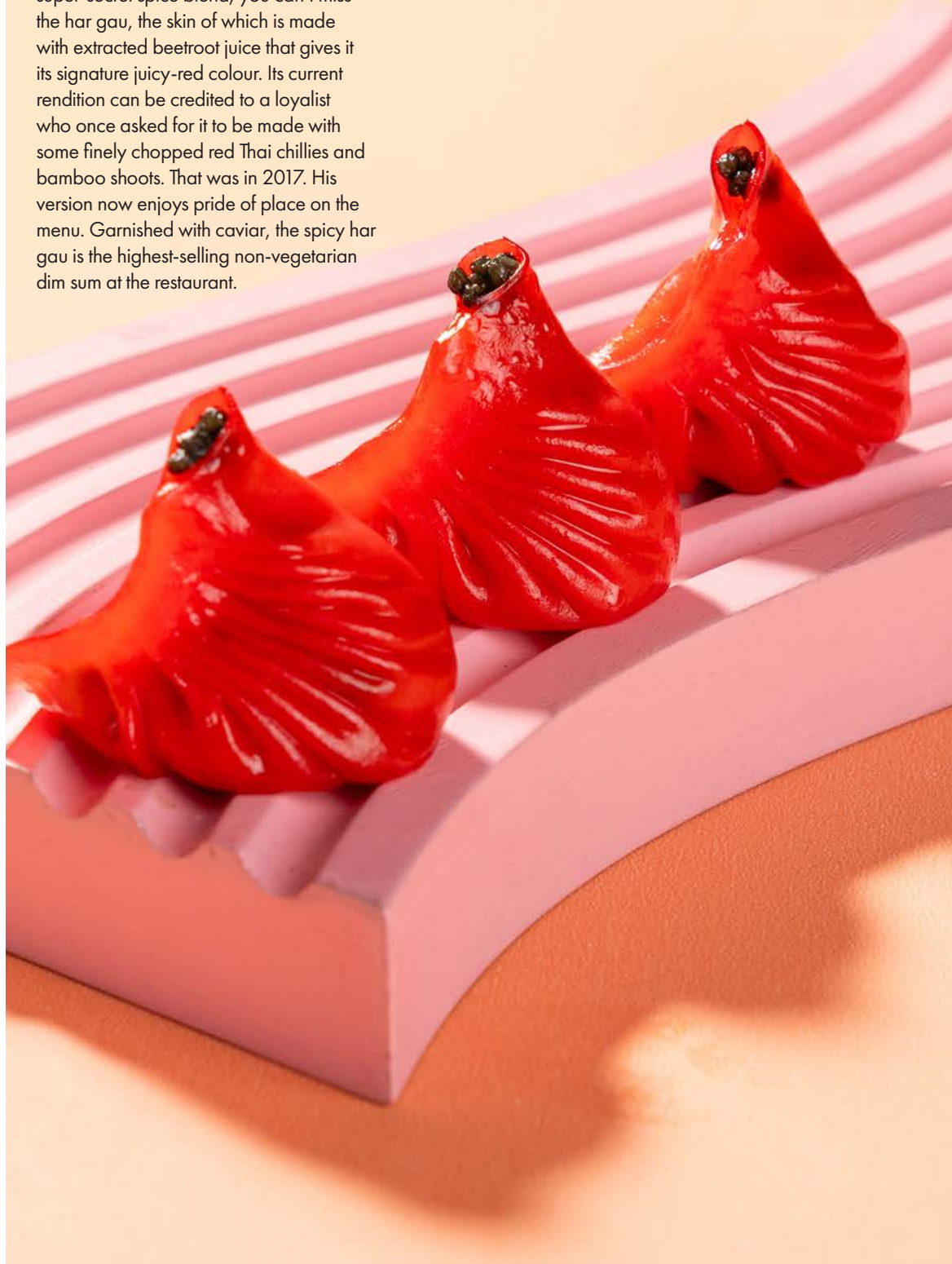
With the truffle obsession now firmly gripping the city, the introduction of this Truffle braised rice was but a no-brainer. It proved to be an instant hit. The umami flavours of fresh and stored truffle gave the classic fried rice a winning edge. This has become a Yauatcha classic in the years since and pairs beautifully with the bar's Aged Negroni. →



2017

Spicy Har Gau

Made with minced prawns and a super-secret spice blend, you can't miss the har gau, the skin of which is made with extracted beetroot juice that gives it its signature juicy-red colour. Its current rendition can be credited to a loyalist who once asked for it to be made with some finely chopped red Thai chillies and bamboo shoots. That was in 2017. His version now enjoys pride of place on the menu. Garnished with caviar, the spicy har gau is the highest-selling non-vegetarian dim sum at the restaurant.



2018

Manish Malhotra Pâtisserie Collection

For our first-ever collaboration, we had to team up with the very best in the business. Enter renowned designer Manish Malhotra, with whom we launched a line of designer macarons. Inspiration was sought from the couturier's festive collection of the time, and the resulting macarons and petit gâteaux then reflected the fine craftsmanship and intricate detailing of the clothes. This unique blend of delicate French-inspired pâtisserie and Malhotra's Indian craftsmanship made for a new flavour and aesthetic that was all its own. →



2019

Innovations Galore

This was a year of inventions and innovations for Yauatcha, a time when we brought two exciting launches to the menu that still enjoy unparalleled popularity. The first was the in-house bitters and fruit infusion liqueurs for the beverage program, leading to Xing Fu and Tian Shang, the most consumed cocktails at the moment. And then came the melt-in-your-mouth ice-cream macarons, which caused a real stir in the market for its unique blend of two well-loved desserts.



2020

We All Scream For Ice Cream

Yauatcha desserts and the accompanying ice-creams (never a standalone part of the menu until then) had always been immensely popular with our diners. And when the 2020 lockdown hit, Chef Ganesh, our pâtisserie head chef, received multiple calls relaying cravings for it. There was only one thing to be done: officially launch Yauatcha ice-creams in artisanal flavours such as Hazelnut praline, Honeycomb and Chocolate pebble with our special spin. →





2021

Cheung Fun Noodles

This first made it to the menu as a part of the annual Chinese New Year selection. The idea was to cook up a fun take on the Cheung fun dim sum by way of noodles which symbolise longevity in Chinese culture. They turned into such a hit that you can still order the dish today.

2022

Our Private White Wine Label, Ivelle

The drinks at Yauatcha have always been as important as our dim sum, so it was only a matter of time until we introduced some special brews. And therein was born Ivelle, Yauatcha's private white wine label. Made in collaboration with Fratelli Wines, it's a unique blend of wine made with Gewurztraminer and Müller-Thurgau (white grape varieties) created by Hermann Müller from the Swiss Canton of Thurgau in 1882 — a cross between Riesling with Madeleine Royale. Salut!



2023

Crispy Chicken With Kumquat Jam

Chicken with mandarin oranges? It's just what Cantonese culture ordered: a perfect coming together of flavours and folklore. Kumquat is a mandarin orange the size of a gold coin, one that is auspicious to the Cantonese people and culture. It's offered to the young by their elders as a sign of good luck and health. Our Crispy chicken with kumquat jam is our take on the classic Cantonese dish, one of our the newest additions to the menu.



The recipe training sheets made during the opening of Yauatcha Mumbai are still up on the kitchen walls even 12 years later! This is a showcase of the strict SOPs the team has followed since the restaurant's launch. 🍜





ASIA IN A GLASS

Yauatcha's drinks programme celebrates the flavours of the continent, finds Aslam Gafoor

Beyond its culinary prowess, Yauatcha extends its philosophy seamlessly into the heart of its bar program, where mixology transforms into an art form. Elevating the experience beyond expectations, the drinks at Yauatcha echo the restaurant's ethos, embodying innovation and sophistication when it comes to showcasing Asian ingredients. Ranging from classic cocktails with a unique twist to refreshing fruit-forward and tea-infused concoctions, each libation at this London-style bar is a meticulously crafted narrative.

Asian ingredients take the spotlight in Yauatcha's cocktail program philosophy, turning every cocktail into a distinctive masterpiece. From the invigorating zing of lemongrass to the comforting warmth of ginger, Yauatcha's mixologists curate a sensory experience that reflects Asian culinary heritage in every sip. Furthermore, the glassware and ice programme transform into canvases for expression, enhancing visual allure and turning the bar into a dynamic masterpiece where flavours dance and evolve. →



LEMONGRASS

A quintessential Asian ingredient, lemongrass plays a lead role in Yauatcha's mixology, enriching cocktails with its vibrant and aromatic profile. The signature **Lalu** (pictured above) cocktail stands as a prime example of the creative use of lemongrass, blending vodka, lemongrass, lime, Oolong tea, and lychee into a harmonious fusion of flavours. This refreshing and sophisticated drink not only benefits from the citrusy brightness of lemongrass but also gains complexity from its overall contribution.

Yauatcha extends the innovative approach to non-alcoholic drinks like the **Mandarin & Chilli**, featuring mandarin, lemongrass, palm, chilli, mint, and crushed ice, creating a tantalising fusion of sweet and spicy notes. **The Tokyo Cooler**, a delightful concoction of lemongrass, raspberry, elderflower, peach, and guava, exemplifies Yauatcha's dedication to intricate fruit blends, where lemongrass enhances the aromatic and refreshing qualities of these buzz-free delights.

KUMQUAT

A small-yet-potent citrus fruit, kumquat shines in Yauatcha's cocktail creations, contributing distinct features to each concoction. **The Kumquatcha** cocktail (pictured), blending cachaça, Campari, kumquat, orange juice, and demerara, demonstrates the innovative use of kumquat. Served in a Napoli Grande glass and garnished with a kumquat slice, this cocktail presents a fusion of flavours, where the vibrant notes of kumquat complement the depth of cachaça and the bitter-sweet profile of Campari. **The Lunar High Ball**, featuring gin, Cointreau, kumquat juice, and elderflower seltzer, showcases the versatility of kumquat in creating a refreshing and effervescent experience. Served in a pilsner glass and adorned with kumquat slices and a rosemary twig, this cocktail presents a harmonious balance of botanicals and citrusy brightness. →





GINGER

A dynamic Asian ingredient celebrated for its warm and spicy notes, ginger takes the spotlight in Yauatcha's mixology story, crafting cocktails that are both bold and invigorating. **The Ginger Martini** (pictured above), served in a coupe glass, masterfully combines rum, lime, ginger, and apple juice, striking a balance between the richness of rum and the zesty kick of fresh ginger. This creation,

reminiscent of an Appletini, showcases the versatility of ginger and its ability to harmonise with various spirits. In the **All Spice Old Fashioned**, the team introduces a blend of Bourbon whisky, ginger liqueur, pimento dram, and Angostura, providing a twist on the classic cocktail. The addition of ginger adds depth and complexity, complementing the robust flavours of bourbon and aromatic spices.

BAIJIU

A potent and traditional Chinese spirit, Baijiu, showcases its unique characteristics in the **Baijiu Old Fashioned** (pictured here). This exquisite cocktail features the spirit, harmoniously blended with Angostura bitters, orange bitters, and in-house Earl Grey cordial. Served in an Old Fashioned glass, adorned with a grapefruit garnish, this creation marries the robustness of Baijiu with the aromatic nuances of Earl Grey, enhanced by the captivating ice made

with blue pea tea. **The Red River Dragon**, another gem in Yauatcha's repertoire, artfully combines Baijiu with Aperol, Amaro Montenegro, and fresh yuzu juice. This complex concoction, garnished with dragon origami and served in a coupe glass, demonstrates Baijiu's versatility by balancing its robust notes with the citrusy brightness of yuzu and the herbal undertones of Amaro Montenegro. →





UMESHU

A fruity liqueur created from steeped ume plums in alcohol and sugar, Umeshu imparts a unique sweet-tart flavour profile that enhances the cocktail experience at Yauatcha. The **Yang Walker** (pictured above), a distinguished creation, showcases the liqueur's versatility blended with whisky, grapefruit, and rosemary, served elegantly in a martini glass. Striking a harmonious balance between fruity umeshu notes, the robustness of whisky, and the citrusy brightness of grapefruit, this

cocktail is a testament to umeshu's versatility. **The Asian Daiquiri** introduces the liqueur into the classic rum-based cocktail, creating a fusion of aged rum, umeshu, and lime for a nuanced and refreshing twist. **The Kura Mi Ami Martini** exemplifies Yauatcha's inventive spirit, featuring gin, vodka, sake, umeshu, orange marmalade, vanilla, and chilli, resulting in a layered flavour profile that integrates umeshu's subtle sweetness.

TEA

Deeply rooted in Asian culinary heritage, tea becomes a captivating component in Yauatcha's cocktail repertoire. **The Lime & Passion Fruit Ice Tea** seamlessly intertwines the zesty allure of fresh lime juice, the tropical sweetness of fresh passion fruit, and the aromatic essence of Jasmine tea. Served in a highball glass and garnished with a passion fruit boat, this creation is a refreshing symphony of flavours that highlight the earthy flavours of tea. **The Nara Iced Tea** (pictured here), with its blend of passion fruit juice, jasmine tea, cinnamon syrup, vanilla, and chilli sugar, offers a convergence of sweet, spicy, and fragrant elements. **The Jing Mei** cocktail, featuring gin, a home-made floral tea liqueur, and sake, further underscores the artful integration of tea into Yauatcha's mixology creations, delivering a sophisticated and layered drinking experience that pays homage to the rich traditions of Asian tea culture.

From the first pour to the final sip, the multi-sensory journey crafted by Yauatcha's cocktail philosophy leaves an enduring mark, ensuring that every moment experienced at the establishment is an extraordinary celebration of Cantonese legacy. 🍵



Cricketer Hardik Pandya is a long time patron of Yauatcha Mumbai. On a busy night when no tables were available, a special solution was found. A corner of the back office was transformed for 'Kung Fu Pandya' himself! 🍜



Ever wondered why Yauatcha serves three dim sum instead of four? The number four, “sei” in Cantonese, is considered unlucky in Chinese culture because it sounds similar to the word for death, “séi”. 🍜



All Yauatcha restaurants are designed to adhere to Feng Shui principles. A Feng Shui Master is consulted for each venue's pre-design, post-design, and pre-opening phase. Elements of fire, water, metal, wood and earth are incorporated into the design while maintaining an equilibrium between Yin and Yang energies. 🍵



KARO

There's more to healing than medicine

Established in 2014, KARO is a non-profit organisation that provides holistic cancer care to patients from low-income communities and their families, with a focus on teenage and young adult patients.

Born out of the desire to honour the memory of Karan Malhotra, whose own journey with cancer tragically culminated in 2014, KARO is a charitable trust that manifests Karan's vision of establishing an organisation to stand in solidarity with cancer patients, alleviate their burdens, and bridge the gaps within the healthcare system.

At the heart of KARO's initiatives lies its unwavering commitment to ensure that financial constraints do not derail a patient's treatment journey. Recognising the harrowing reality that many bravehearts face, where lack of resources threatens to halt their treatment, KARO provides crucial financial assistance. To date, KARO has assisted over 5,000 individuals, ensuring that not a single Braveheart is forced to discontinue their treatment due to financial constraints.

KARO's efforts extend far beyond monetary aid. In 2019, KARO inaugurated its first accommodation home, "KARO HOME," situated in Mumbai's Sion area, dedicated to teenage female cancer patients and their caregivers. Here, cancer patients from low-income backgrounds and their families find free shelter, and receive rations and counselling. KARO HOME aims to create a holistic healing environment, and so, patients and their families can also engage in yoga sessions, art and music activities at the facility. KARO expanded its accommodation services with the inauguration of a second home in January 2024, to cater to teenage male cancer patients and their caregivers.

As KARO continues to tread its path of compassion and service, it remains committed to its founding ethos - to stand by every Braveheart in their fight against cancer, ensuring they never walk alone.

At Aditya Birla New Age Hospitality, our purpose is to enrich lives through the power of food and the magic of shared experiences. A part of the proceeds from the sale of this magazine will go towards KARO and its noble efforts.

To donate or for more details, log on to www.karo.org.in



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