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# foodtalk

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## Man of the Moment

Marcus Mathyssek  
*Grand Hyatt Hong Kong*





# Revisiting Chinese Roots

Michelin-starred Pearl Dragon at Studio City Macau, helmed by seasoned Chef Lam Yuk Ming, is about showcasing and elevating age-old Cantonese traditions with new ingredients and techniques

By Karen Chiang Photography courtesy Studio City Macau

**FT(Foodtalk): How did you get started in Chinese cuisine?**

**LYM(Lam Yuk Ming):** I was referred into the industry by my family, and stayed because I found it to be a way for me to explore and share my Cantonese roots. I've not thought about working with other cuisines because I felt it was important to me to stay true to my origins.

**FT: What brought you to Macau?**

**LYM:** I came in 2015 from Beijing, where I was based for four years. As an international city, it has so much varieties and options in terms of ingredients and cuisines too, which I enjoyed exploring and playing with.

**FT: When did you first learn about Chinese ingredients?**

**LYM:** When I was very young. In my childhood, my family often enjoyed both dried and fresh seafood. In a harbourside city such as Hong Kong, it is quite common to use ingredients from the sea where it is freshest and most abundant. My palette was moulded when I was young, but my cooking techniques solidified when I started culinary school.

**FT: What do you think about Chinese herbal soups?**

**LYM:** I definitely believe they can act as an aid to health. Traditionally we should drink different soups each season. For example, in the summer we make use of cooling ingredients such as winter melon and barley to balance out the heat in our bodies. It is a complex subject, and in culinary school we had to learn the correct use of plants, roots and exotic animal parts to create medicinal soups.

## 把中國風味發揚光大

位於澳門新豪影滙的米芝蓮星級餐廳玥龍軒由中廚大師林鈺明師傅打理。林師傅利用創新食材及烹調技巧，為歷史悠久的粵菜演繹新風格

**FT(Foodtalk): 你是如何展開中廚的職業生涯？**

**LYM(Lam Yuk Ming):** 起初是家人推薦我學廚，但我發現廚師能讓我探索和分享我的廣東文化，於是便一直留在這行業。我從未想過要烹煮其他地方的菜式，因為我認為飲水思源很重要。

**FT: 是什麼原因吸引你來澳門發展？**

**LYM:** 我在2015年來澳門，之前我在北京待了四年。澳門是國際都市，有五花八門的食材和各式各樣的料理，讓我能盡情探索，一展所長。

**FT: 你從何時開始學習烹調中菜？**

**LYM:** 我從很小的時候便開始學習中菜了。童年時，爸爸很喜歡吃新鮮或是曬乾了的海產。像香港這類沿海地區尤其盛產海鮮，而且全都非常新鮮。我自小已培養出廚師的味覺，其後我進入烹飪學校，烹飪技巧才逐漸成熟。

**FT: 你對中式藥材湯水有什麼想法？**

**LYM:** 我絕對認同藥材湯水對健康有莫大裨益。傳統中醫提倡不時不食，湯水也不例外。例如在夏天，我們應善用如冬瓜和薏米等解暑的食材，讓身體降溫。湯水無疑是一門學問。在烹飪學校，我學到了如何使用合適的植物或動物的各部分來熬煮具藥用療效的湯水。



*Braised abalone, fish maw  
and Japanese sea cucumber*



“I've not thought about working with other cuisines because I felt it was important to me to stay true to my origins”

「我從未想過要烹煮其他地方的菜式，因為我認為飲水思源很重要」



*Baked Brittany lobster  
with sea urchin*

**FT: Why does Pearl Dragon use western ingredients in its dishes?**

**LYM:** There are aspects of Chinese cuisine that can be improved through the use of new ingredients. We hope that through combining the east and west, we can elevate the dish and make it even healthier and more delicious. For example, our signature oven-smoked parcel with honey-glazed pork is usually made with chicken liver and pork belly. But we've now paired it with goose liver and oyster mushrooms to make it lighter but more flavourful.

**FT: Tell us more about abalone and bird's nest – why are they used so much in Cantonese cuisine?**

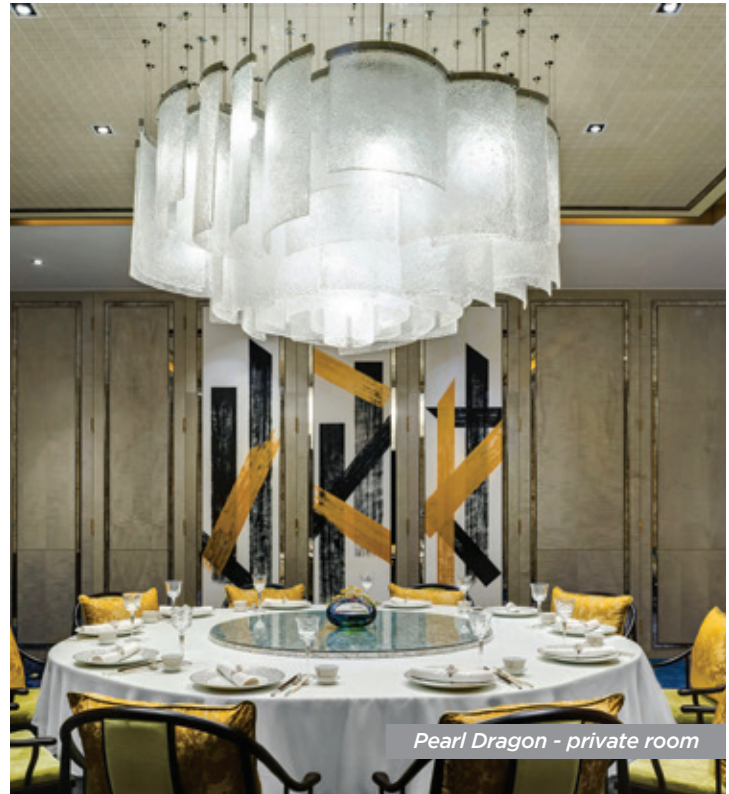
**LYM:** Abalone is rich in protein and unsaturated fat, and in terms of Traditional Chinese Medicine, is good for the liver and eyes. We tend to work with dried abalone from Japan, and fresh abalone from Australia. For bird's nest, Indonesian ones are the best, with a higher amount of protein and a concentrated taste.

**FT: What's the most difficult part of your job?**

**LYM:** Getting to know and working with new ingredients. It is often a challenge to initially gain an understanding of unfamiliar products.

**FT: How do you help Pearl Dragon maintain its Michelin-star standards?**

**LYM:** Ultimately it is about delivering consistently high quality food and service. We always serve the freshest seasonal ingredients – this is part of Cantonese cuisine's ethos. We have specials every month, and a new menu every two seasons. In winter, for example, we make use of game such as French partridge and pheasant to achieve a richer taste.



*Pearl Dragon - private room*

**FT: 為什麼玥龍軒會使用西式食材來烹調食物？**

**LYM:** 使用新的食材能彌補中菜在某方面的不足。我們希望混合中西食材能使食物味道昇華，使其變得更健康和美味。例如我們的招牌菜鵝肝金錢雞，一般的金錢雞只會使用雞肝和五花腩來烹調，但我們則加入了鵝肝和杏鮑菇，使口感輕盈之餘，味道亦更為豐富。

**FT: 為什麼粵菜經常使用鮑魚和燕窩？**

**LYM:** 鮑魚含有豐富的蛋白質和不飽和脂肪。在中醫角度來說，鮑魚對肝臟和眼睛都有很好的功效。我們多數使用來自日本的乾鮑和澳洲的新鮮鮑魚。而印尼的燕窩品質最好，含較多蛋白質，而且味道濃郁。

**FT: 工作上最大的挑戰是什麼？**

**LYM:** 最大的挑戰是如何能運用新的食材。如何把不熟悉的食材融入菜式中，發揮食材最高水洗準，往往是最困難的。

**FT: 你是如何保持玥龍軒米芝蓮級的水準？**

**LYM:** 保持一貫的高質素食物和服務最為關鍵。我們循烹飪粵菜的一大原則，就是只選用時令的新鮮食材。我們每月都會推出限定菜式，並且每兩季轉換一次餐牌。例如在冬天，我們會烹煮如法國鸕鶿或野雉等野味，使菜式味道更為豐富。

“ We always serve the freshest seasonal ingredients  
– this is part of Cantonese cuisine’s ethos ”

「我們循烹飪粵菜的一大原則，就是只選用時令的新鮮食材」



*Oven-smoked parcel with goose liver and honey glazed barbecued Iberico pork*

**FT:** How long does it take to create a new dish?

**LYM:** Around a week, although it can take longer when we are working with new ingredients that need to be sourced and imported. There will be several meetings with our chefs to see how we can best create something that is true to Pearl Dragon’s quality and taste.

**FT:** What’s the biggest difference between Pearl Dragon and the previous restaurants you’ve worked at?

**LYM:** There is no margin of error allowed here. We have to taste each dish on the menu every morning. If it is not up to standard, we may take it off the menu for the day.



*Wok-seared Australian wagyu beef cubes with black garlic*

**FT:** 創作一款新菜式需要花多少時間？

**LYM:** 大概一星期吧。如果要用上進口的食材，這可能需要更多時間。我們的廚師團隊會進行多次會議，討論如何烹調新菜式，以符合玥龍軒的品質和客人的口味。

**FT:** 在玥龍軒工作和在其他地方工作有什麼不同？

**LYM:** 在玥龍軒，我們不允許任何誤差發生。我們每天早上需試食餐牌上的所有菜式。如果味道未如理想，我們會從當天的餐牌上取消這款菜式。🍴



*Pearl Dragon - main dining area*