

FREE

30

thirty : your monthly guide to a creative lifestyle

SEPTEMBER 2008 VOLUME 1 No. 4

MUST DO'S

wealth-building tips
from an investment banker

save space,
choose right furniture

30 ways
to save resources

MUST TRY'S

easy sukiyaki party

mad manila
in three hours

Smart Living

**inventive ideas
for tight times**

interiors • food • travel • crafts

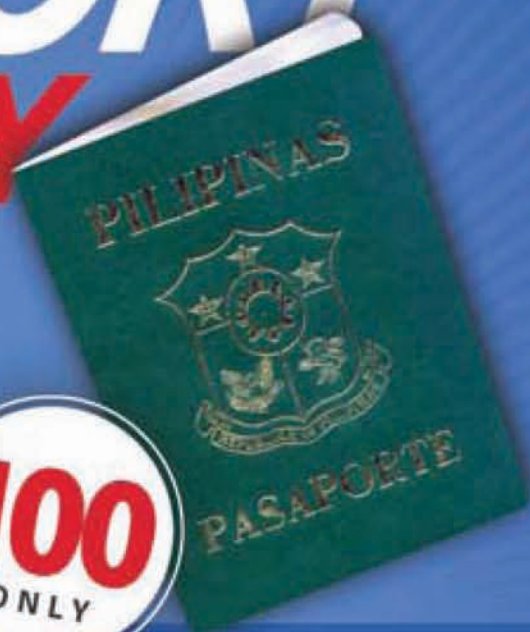
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"Obviously, the highest type of efficiency is that which can utilize existing material to the best advantage."

- Jawaharlal Nehru
Indian Prime Minister

Cover photograph by NICKY SERING



NEXT MONTH:

Clutter?
Learn the Art and Skill of Letting Go

Why not throw an Ukay Party?

Recipe Watch:
Pumpkin from appetizer to dessert!



publisher's note



EVER since a McDonald's establishment opened next to the building where I hold office, I developed a habit of occasionally treating myself to a Burger Mcdo. Other than the fact that I like its localized taste, I believe the sandwich was nicely priced at Ph 25.00 a piece. Recently though, I entered the shop and placed an order for two burgers and confidently handed my fifty peso bill. To my surprise it wasn't enough and the crew asked me for four pesos more. Ouch! My favorite snack had a price increase of almost 10% and it came without a warning.

With the recent sharp climb of petrol price, I was aware that the costs of goods would eventually increase. I just didn't expect that this was how I would get my dose of reality check. Suddenly, "money's too tight to mention".

Though the usual sentiment when faced with inflation is to gripe about it, it is not good to get stuck with the complaining. Instead, we can think of it as an opportunity to improve ourselves. A situation like this allows us to reflect on our lifestyles and our patterns of consumption. Clearly, our comfort levels are being challenged because certain habits will have to change. And in times like this, it helps to have an open mind. It helps to make careful choices. It is wise to make decisions based on priority, versatility and practicality.

As with every issue, 30 aims to provide content that we believe are apt to these changing times. We hope that you, our dear readers, always find a thing or two of value to you (or something worth sharing with someone of value to you) from the varied topics we have.

The present may not be that bright but the future sure is not bleak.

LANCE FELICIANO

30 thirty : your monthly guide to a creative lifestyle

Publisher	LANCE FELICIANO
Editor at Large	KARLA REY
Art Director	J.R. FELIPE
Contributing Editor	ROSSANA GONZALEZ
Writers	LLOYD LLAGA TERESITA REY MARSIA SANTIA JOSEPH SANTIAGO ALANE TY
Photographers	NICKY SERING TAM URAO
Editorial Assistant	ANA MARIE GUTIEREZ
Graphic Artist	EDWARD SUNGA
Illustrator	MARY GRACE MARCELLANA

30 Magazine is published monthly by 10•17 design+concepts, with address at 1519 Cityland 10 Tower 2, HV dela Costa corner Valero Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City, Philippines. Telefax +63 2 7532900. Email us at 30magazine@1017dc.com

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Kaiseki 云席

japanese cuisine



Located in the heart of the burgeoning neighborhood of The Fort, Kaiseki Japanese Cuisine is a restaurant that allows you to enjoy authentic Japanese cuisine that is easy on the pocket. Friends and family will surely enjoy generous servings of Sukiyaki, Tempura,

Gindara, Gyoza and variety of noodles of all kinds – ramen, udon soba and somen, whether hot or cold. Of course, there is the Sashimi and Sushi bar which carries a wide variety of local and imported seafood. Don't forget to try the Crazy Maki®, an original Kaiseki and the all-time favorite dish.

Recently added to the amenities of the restaurant are the Teppanyaki tables on the third floor. After a mouth

watering spectacle of cooking that is done right before your eyes, you will surely enjoy feasting on succulent Wagyu, U.S. Black Angus Beef, prawns, and oysters complemented by Japanese Fried Rice, also a favorite. And the perfect way to end a good meal? A serving of either Boco Pandan, Coffee Jelly, or Banana Tempura ala mode!

Kaiseki is open daily for lunch and dinner. Function rooms are available and for larger private parties, the third floor offers Teppanyaki tables and a Sushi bar for up to 60 persons.

For reservations, please call: 889-1005

address here



A FURNISHING AFFAIR

OFF-THE-FLOOR or
MADE-TO-ORDER?

By PINKY CRUZ-PERALTA

When space and budget are major considerations, which is the smarter choice when it comes to choosing your furnishings—ready-made or custom-made?

Designing a miniscule space with a limited budget is a gigantic task. Arguably, small spaces are easily addressed when there is no limit on what you can spend. Budget then becomes an all-consuming force that would compel one to do either smart design or a cheap one (pun intended). Here are a few things to consider.

The Ready-Made Route

Ready-made is more convenient. It's hassle-free to not hire contractors. You don't have to let in a lot of strange people into your abode and not have to deal with their delays and excuses and all human-related flaws. You take the actual measurements, get a load of ideas from the magazines, then head off to the

shopping mall and buy. You only have you to congratulate or blame in the end.

Ready-made is fast! Since it doesn't involve a lot of people in the decision process, completing the look you want is a breeze. But this of course depends on one's degree of fickle mindedness. The more definite you are with your choices, the easier and faster it will be.

Ready-made furniture when properly planned and canvassed can be a cheaper alternative. But you have to be prepared to endure the rounds, taking notes of which you like, where and how much each cost. When you're done, you go home, choose which you like best (or which you can afford) and return to each store to buy the pieces.



A small space is a cozy playground for built in furniture and custom storage. 1

Pieces like these are hard to find, so when they come around, be sure to grab them and save them for rainy days. A sure hit to any wall! 2

A foyer is an interesting place to experiment with material. A custom made galvanized sheet becomes a console table in one model house. 3



Ready-made is flexible. You will not be stuck with the built-in look for a long time. If you want a new look, you just re-arrange, mix up and recycle, and voila! It can be done in a flash. You don't have to redo an entire wall just to rearrange the position of the shelving units.

Of course, ready-made has its cons too which are the very strengths of the custom-built furniture.

The Custom-Built Route

Custom is custom. It's specially made for your space, tailored to accommodate your personal requests and requirements. No one can tell you it's exactly the same as his! So if you are very particular about putting your seal, this is the route to follow.

More room for your artistic expression. If you are one who enjoys experimenting with different materials, collaborating with other artisans to explore possibilities. (e.g. how to make a space bigger, brighter, dual-function etc.), this option is tailored-fit for you!

More Reasonable. If you look for very cheap labor, do the material purchasing yourself, act as project manager to track down your expenses or maybe even design the furniture yourself, this track is more appropriate. Now, please do not go towards this direction if you don't have a gift for it nor the time. This is not for everybody. A lot of people I know mistakenly choose this path only to quit midway because of exhaustion.

More space sensible. Since you

A great assemblage of furniture pieces and accents that were bought off the floor shows a lot of elbow room in mix matching colors and textures.



will do it from scratch, you can do a lot with spatial economy here.

Personally, I am an avid fan of custom-made. I love the element of anticipation and the surprise when I sketch and see the design come to life. In my experience, custom-built is best used when you are designing entire walls or cabinets that have specific dimensions. Further, it allows me the opportunity to get acquainted with great artists who could help me with implementation. In terms of budget, it costs

a bit higher to do fit outs but it's worth every penny if you just do it right. So choose the right supplier and contractor. See their actual works first and if you are new to this, referral is a must.

Ready-made is best used when time is of the essence and when you can't find anything quite close to it in terms of material, craftsmanship and size. I go this way to enhance my custom-made. They come in the form of accent pieces to soften the composition.



PINKY CRUZ-PERALTA

is an interior designer, wife and mom. She owns Creative Post Inc. and has designed a good number of showrooms and showcase interiors for some of the country's leading developers. She and husband Ari, owns and manages, The Room Upstairs, a design-retail-coffee shop at the second level of LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia St., Bel-air 3, Makati City. Call 899 9318 or 8993593.

SIMPLE SENSE

MAKING MINIMALISM HOMEY & FAMILIAR

By MARSIA SANTIAGO

Photographed by NICKY SERING

As it is, living in the city can be stressful. It is therefore understandable that most condo owners prefer the minimalist style—uncomplicated and practical. Minimalist, however, need not be cold. Here are a few tips to consider.

PRETTY PRINTS

Neutral tones are the easy bets when buying your first pieces. However, if you like prints go ahead and have some but only in moderation. Have your stripes, for example, in pillows (these are Sunbrella pillows) or frame a nice fabric and hang on your wall.

CURE CORNERS

Making every space count does not necessarily mean filling every corner with a floor to ceiling shelving system. Sparsely adorned walls give the impression that there is more than enough space that you can afford not to use it. Faced with an odd shaped corner? A circular tray with stand or a floor lamp next should fit that otherwise dead spots and give the room space to breathe.

FUNCTIONAL ART

Art when carefully chosen, not only adds character but also shows how creativity can turn plain into something fun. Take your cue from this wooden chair from Lonely Planet Boracay which is not only a seat, but a pretty focal point as well.

WOOD WORKS

Having a few wooden pieces is a good way of adding warmth. Go for simple lines and basic shapes like this teak round folding table (Cebu P25,000) from Suniture.

STEALTH STORAGE

You can never get enough storage space. This beige ottoman (P2995) from Our Home is hollow inside and can hold books and toys.





CLEANING THE CLUTTER

Thirty's **30** Simple Ways to a Happy Environment

By NIKKI QUIZON

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Cleaning the environment is not new to us. Since we were kids, we were told to do our part in preventing further damage to the already depleting resources of our mother nature. Believing that our home is where we should start, here are some simple yet no-fail tips that I personally do to help clean the clutter. Some are not new but it helps to be reminded of the simple things we tend to ignore:

- 1 Plant in your own backyard. If trees take up much of your space, try to maintain indoor and outdoor plants.
- 2 Regularly sweep the floors in the house to get rid of accumulating dusts. Do the same in front of your house.
- 3 Make your own compost soil by allotting a part of your garden solely for it. This is where you can throw leftover vegetables parts after chopping them. In about a month, you will see that the plants near it bloom generously.
- 4 Put leftover egg shells on the orchids. Yes, they are a bit sticky but its nutrients will certainly stick to the plant especially when the orchids bloom.
- 5 Gather your leftover coffee particles from the coffee maker and sprinkle them on your plants.
- 6 Instead of throwing leftover lemon peels, put them in your bathroom. The scent will leave it fresh and create a clean vibe.
- 7 Reuse plastic bags as garbage bags. Using plastic is already harmful when burned so make sure each plastic—from the small ones that we get from the wet market to the big ones after we make our groceries—are properly stored and used for dry and wet garbage.
- 8 Cut the plastic bottleneck soft drinks. You can use these as pots for your plants. Remember to pinch some holes on its sides so the water can seep through when you're watering them.
- 9 Reuse old baskets as a decorative holder of broken pots of plants.
- 10 Reuse ice cream plastic containers to store meat, fish, and other foods that can be kept in the freezer.
- 11 Put all your empty plastic containers of shampoo, conditioner, mouthwash, and laundry softener, and other tin cans in one big plastic. Some street children hunt for these to be sold in nearby junk shops. Through this, you are able to help them and the environment as well.



Mall of Asia, Ground floor, Main Mall
TriNoma, Level M2

Egypt Indonesia Malaysia Philippines
Saudi Arabia Singapore United Arab Emirates

P e d r o
FOOTWEAR AND ACCESSORIES

enjoy a sukiyaki feast!

THIS MONTH'S ENTERTAINING
REVOLVES AROUND A CULTURE KNOWN
FOR ITS SIMPLICITY AND EFFICIENCY.

By ROSANNA GONZALEZ Photographed by NICKY SERING

Special Thanks to JO WU of KAISEKI RESTAURANT

Japanese food and that they will fit into your home. An RSVP is always good to do.

Décor. Cherry blossoms are very Japanese. If you do not like faux ones since we do not have them here, go for the Mickey Mouse plants which are available in the local flower market. A few days before the party, start making your origami cranes or whatever design you choose from the Canon website to dress up your table or certain areas of your unit. Also, if you have Ikebana skills, show them off by making a piece or two to decorate your place.

Food. Make Sukiyaki the heart of the meal. Sukiyaki is a typical family-style, table-cooking dish (free recipe in this issue). This is a great bonding experience for family and friends. Aside from this, prepare appetizers such as sashimi and sushi (which we highly suggest you order outside), agedashi tofu, a Japanese salad, tempura and chicken teriyaki. If guests don't like raw food, say you are hosting it for

your kids and the guests are their age, there is no point in serving sushi. If preparing these dishes seems too much, except for the sukiyaki, you can order everything out. Head to Kaiseki Restaurant, The Fort Pointe, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig for authentic Japanese fare. Call 889.1005 for more information. You may also want to buy some Japanese chips specially those in Wasabi flavor.

Entertainment. Prepare for an origami making session or invite an Ikebana teacher to give you and your guests the basics. When entertaining for Japanese film or anime lovers, have a good title ready.

Giveaways. Since the green tea ceremony is a very important part of Japanese entertaining, a simple tea set with special green tea to go with it is a nice token. If you want to keep it simple and more modern, give a tea cup bought from your favorite coffee/tea place. A pack or can of green tea leaves in cute paper bags also make good gifts.

When you think of hosting a Japanese-themed get-together in your condo, it can seem intimidating. However, given the right menu and a little research, planning this party can be fun and easy.

tea ceremony

The Japanese tea ceremony, or *Cha-no-yu*, meaning "hot water for tea", is more than an elaborate ritual. It is an interlude in which one leads oneself for the moment to the spirit of beauty, quietude, and politeness toward others. The ceremony may be practiced anywhere, at home or in a teahouse.

Four principles of the tea ceremony:
wa (harmony), kae (respect),
sae (purity) and jubuo (tranquility).

HARMONY: with other people and with nature. The tea ceremony is the way of bringing one's self into harmony with nature.

RESPECT: a harmonious relationship with others.

PURITY: cleansing through the five senses—sense of hearing when hearing the sound of water (which remind one of the silence outside), sense of sight when see the flowers, sense of touch when touch the utensils, sense of smell when smell the scent of the flowers, sense of taste when drinking tea.

TRANQUILITY: serenity

rice

Rice is very important to the meal. A few days before the date, start practicing how to cook Japanese rice.



Did you know?

It is improper to stick chopsticks into your food, especially into rice. Only at funerals are chopsticks stuck into the rice that is placed at the altar.

- 1 Setting a table for four works well
- 2 Japanese dinnerware like bowls and chopsticks are available from Japan Home

design you choose from the Canon website to dress up your table or certain areas of your unit. Also, if you have Ikebana skills, show them off by making a piece or two to decorate your place.

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Invitations. Use origami paper for the invitations. You can either buy a pack from your local bookstore or print your own from the Canon origami website (enter this into your browser: <http://cp.c-ij.com/english/index.html>). Choose from the many designs that can be downloaded for free.

Guest list. According to the Japanese Tea Ceremony, four guests would be a good number for the party. If you plan to invite more, make sure they like Japanese food and that they will fit into your home. An RSVP is always good to do.

Décor. Cherry blossoms are very Japanese. If you do not like faux ones since we do not have them here, go for the Mickey Mouse plants which are available in the local flower market. A few days before the party, start making your origami cranes or whatever



wakame salad

SALAD MIX

100 grams lettuce
50 grams wakame (*seaweeds*)
50 grams jellyfish
½ tablespoon sesame seeds
1 slice lemon
100 grams Japanese cucumber (*sliced thinly*)
Parsely

WAFU DRESSING

½ cup soy sauce
¼ cup vinegar
1 cup salad oil
¼ cup sugar
1 piece apple
1 small piece white onion

- 1 Soak wakame in water, set aside.
- 2 Cut lettuce into bite pieces, arrange in a salad bowl.
- 3 Drain water from wakame and add to the lettuce and the cucumber.
- 4 Top with jellyfish.
- 5 Sprinkle sesame seeds on top. Garnish with lemon slice and parsley.
- 6 Serve with wafu dressing.

TIP

You can remove the jellyfish for vegetarian guests.

RECIPE COURTESY OF KAISEKI RESTAURANT, THE FORT STRIP

sukiyaki

500 grams beef sirloin
(*sliced paper-thin*)
30 grams beef suet
3 stalks leeks
150 grams Shiratake (*noodles*)
½ block tofu cut into
1 inch squares and grilled
1 large onion cut into 8 slices
50 grams Enoki mushrooms
4 pieces Shitake mushrooms,
soaked and quartered
100 grams Chinese cabbage
50 grams spinach

SAUCE

2 cups dashi
½ cup soy sauce
½ cup mirin
1 ½ tablespoons sugar

- 1 To make sauce, combine all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to boil, set aside.
- 2 Cut the leeks diagonally into thin slices.
- 3 Parboil the shiratake for 5 minutes. Drain and soak in cold water. Squeeze out the excess water and cut the threads into thirds or quarters to make them easier to eat.
- 4 Cut the grilled tofu lengthwise in half, then crosswise into pieces about 1 ½" (3.5 cm) wide.
- 5 Pull the leafy stems off the Spinach discarding the hard stalks.
- 6 Arrange the meat and other ingredients on a large serving platter.
- 7 Heat the sukiyaki skillet on the cooking stove. Add the beef suet and melt over low heat.
- 8 Add ½ of the leeks and sauté over a low heat until fragrant add ½ of the beef, one slice at a time. Each guest takes an egg, breaks it in a bowl and lightly beats it. When the food is cooked, they help themselves, dipping it in the egg before eating.
- 9 Add the rest of the leeks and beef. Then add the shiratake, grilled tofu and Shitake a little at a time. As the broth boils down, replenish.

Put the eggs in a separate dish. Take the dishes and seasoning to the table.

A butane single burner stove is perfect for this party. Check out Ace Hardware for the stove and the butane cans.

The fun of Sukiyaki is in the activity of cooking together at the dining table. However, if not everyone can fit in your table, this can be prepared in the kitchen instead.

TIPS

RECIPE COURTESY OF KAISEKI RESTAURANT, THE FORT STRIP

tori no nabe teriyaki

14 oz. (400 g) chicken thighs,
boned but with skin left on
4 tablespoons katakuriko or cornstarch
1 ½ tablespoons vegetable oil

TERIYAKI SAUCE

3 tablespoons sake
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons shoyu
2 tablespoons mirin

GARNISHES

1 red pepper
1 green pepper
1 yellow pepper
1 tablespoon shoyu

- 1 Trim the fat off the chicken. Cut the chicken pieces lengthwise in half, then diagonally into thin slices.
- 2 Cut the peppers lengthwise in half. Remove the seeds and slice into thin strips.
- 3 Blanch the peppers in salted boiling water. Drain in a colander, then mix with the shoyu and salt.
- 4 Prepare a gauze pack of katakuriko. Heat the oil in a frying pan and remove from heat. Pat the chicken slices with katakuriko and add to the pan.
- 5 Return to the heat. Cook the chicken over medium heat, shaking the pan gently until browned all over. Dab each piece with a paper towel to absorb excess fat.
- 6 Mix the ingredients for the sauce and pour over the chicken. Cook over medium heat for 1-2 minutes, turning occasionally. Once the sauce thickens and the chicken becomes glazed, arrange on a dish. Garnish with the drained peppers.

TIP

Recipe can also work with chicken breasts.

RECIPE COURTESY OF KAISEKI RESTAURANT, THE FORT STRIP

agedashi tofu deep-fried tofu

½ Silken tofu
Cornstarch for breading
Vegetable oil for frying

SAUCE

1 cup dashi stock
1 tablespoon sake
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 teaspoon mirin

GARNISHES

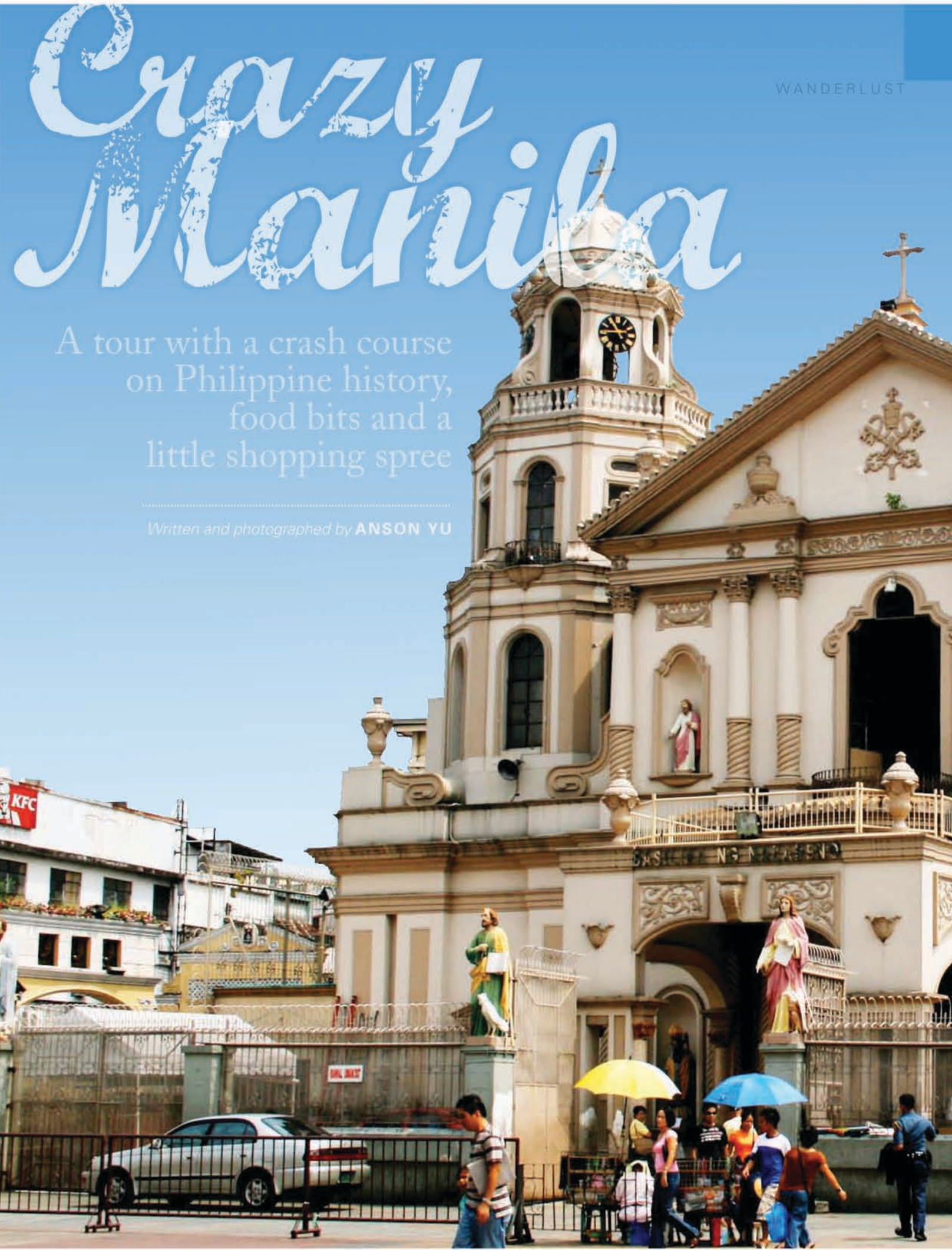
Bonito flakes (*katsuboshi*)
Grated daikon

- 1 Mix all ingredients for sauce Set aside.
- 2 Wrap tofu in a clean cloth to remove water. Cut into quarters.
- 3 Coat tofu with cornstarch.
- 4 Deep fry in hot oil.
- 5 Arrange fried tofu in a deep bowl. Garnish on top with grated daikon and bonito flakes.
- 6 Pour the sauce around the tofu.

TIP

For vegans, replace the garnishes with chopped spring onions.

RECIPE COURTESY OF KAISEKI RESTAURANT, THE FORT STRIP





Here is a very common dilemma: you have a friend or a relative coming from abroad and he or she has only one day in Manila before hitting the beach or going up north to Baguio. Where can you bring them to give them the essence of Philippine culture and history? You may want to consider booking them on Mad Manila Mix Up, a tour conducted by Old Manila Walks.

Old Manila Walks is a group that was started by Ivan Man Dy and includes some of Manila's most passionate cultural trippers and urban adventurers. In the past three years they have made a reputation of offering some of the most interesting walking tours in the city. The Mad Manila Mix Up condenses three of the group's

most popular walking tours down to three fun-filled hours. Unlike their regular walking tour, guests booking this tour are expected to provide for their own vehicle to get them from one historic district to another.

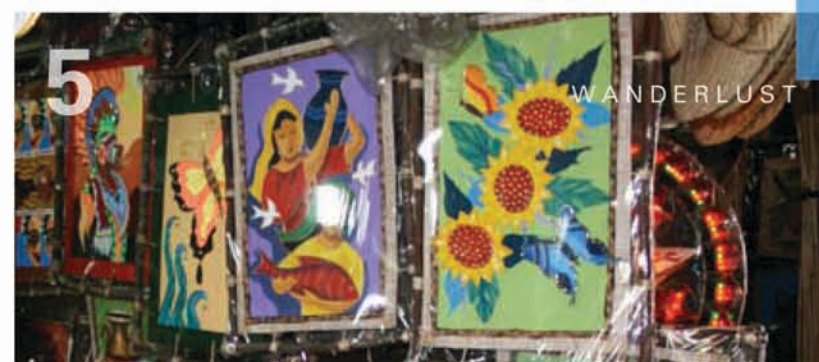
The tour starts at the historic San Agustin Church and Museum inside Intramuros. This church was built in 1604 and has more than four hundred years worth of stories waiting to be told. Upon meeting with Ivan Man Dy himself, we literally started our walk into Philippine history—with Ivan's skillful weaving of the country's alongside the story of this church—from the tomb of the Spanish conquistador that claimed this archipelago for Spain to the memorial of those who



- 1 San Agustin Church
- 2 Preserved interiors of churches built during the Spanish time are grand and ornate
- 3 Hopia Ube is unique to the country
- 4 Bite into an authentic Chinese spring roll
- 5 Crafts from different parts of the country are available under the bridge



"Ilalim ng Tulay," the city's largest handicraft market underneath the Quezon Bridge.



were massacred by Japanese soldiers inside the church during the closing days of World War 2.

After gaining an overview of Philippine history and the Spanish contribution to our culture, the tour then proceeds to Binondo. If Intramuros was more about the Hispanic side of our culture, the Binondo leg explored more on the Chinese influences that we have. Starting out from the statue of Roman Ongpin, we were surprised to learn that Manila's Chinatown is probably one of the oldest in the world. Founded in 1596 it has managed to survive by learning to adapt to pinoy tastes and to the changing local environment. We then experienced an example of this cultural adaptation through food by visiting the popular Eng Bee Tin Deli for its ube hopia. Ube hopia combines a flaky pastry common in Southern China with the popular local root crop resulting to a unique treat that is only found in the country. But aside from exploring how the Chinese have adopted to the country, the tour also showed how the Chinese have managed to hang on to their roots. Weaving in and out of the district's narrow streets, the group stopped to visit a Buddhist vegetarian restaurant for traditional style Chinese spring rolls and afterwards into a traditional Chinese wedding shop.

From Binondo, the group then

proceeded to Quiapo where we stopped at the historic Plaza Miranda. Here, we observed how Filipino folk animism meets Roman Catholicism creating a unique mix. It is quite amusing to have fortune tellers and amulet vendors on the side of Quiapo Church where we had a glimpse of the life-sized Señor Nazareno or the Black Nazarene which the church is famous for. The tour then winds up at the "Ilalim ng Tulay," the city's largest handicraft market underneath the Quezon Bridge. Here you can find almost every form of handicraft from every part of the country—from woven messenger bags from Baguio to baskets from Bicol to batik malong from Davao—available for those looking for nifty items for souvenirs or for pasalubong. The selections were fantastic, not to mention, very affordable.

By the end of the tour, we were exhausted! But nevertheless, this short but packed itinerary was a great experience for it provided a foundation of our nation's past and how these affect how we live today. And I personally believe anyone who's coming to the country for the first time should at least get a little shot of pinoy cultural heritage, don't you think?

For more details about this tour:
Phone: 711 3823 or (917) 329 1622
Email: oldmanilawalks2@gmail.com
Website: www.oldmanilawalks.com

FELIX BARRIENTOS

TENNIS CHAMP/BANKER

Currently the Senior Relationship Manager, and Executive Director for LGT Bank in Liechtenstein (Singapore) Ltd., Felix Barrientos used to be a professional tennis player. Born on November 20, 1967 in Manila, He has competed in Wimbledon, US Open, French Open, Australian Open. He was Member of the Philippine Davis Cup Team and has won the Double All-American Singles title, U.S. NCAA Division I. He was ranked No. 1 in Men's Tennis in Asia in 1990. He finished his Masters in Business Administration from the Ateneo Graduate School of Business while working in some of the country's best financial institutions.

Felix frequently travels between Singapore, Hong Kong and Manila for work. He is married to Regina Barrientos and is the proud father of Juan Diego and Alejandro.

When you were a professional athlete, did you consider yourself a celebrity?

Let's see. Wikipedia defines a celebrity as "a widely-recognized or famous person who commands a high degree of public and media attention" so then I guess to a degree you could say that I was since it came with the territory of being a professional athlete and constantly having your performance published in newspapers, magazines and reported on television. However, personally, I was too busy to even think this was my case. It was nice though to get recognized by your peers and public for the things that you did.

What kind of discipline has sports taught you?

Perseverance and the willingness to see things through to the very end. Finding a way to win when all things seem hopeless. These two disciplines stand out in my mind and are traits I very much carry to this day.

How important is an educational degree?

It was very important for me to fulfill my educational goals and fortunate enough to get most of my education for free through scholarships. These are the tools and foundations I now use in the business world where I compete at a very high level in the global financial markets.

Is there any parallelism between your life as an athlete with your present occupation as an investment banker?

Many aspects are quite similar in the sense that you start from scratch and have to build your way up. In tennis, I learned from my losses. In banking, I learned from my mistakes. The knowledge gained is what I use to excel and get better than the competition.

Other than sports and finance, is there anything else you excel in?

Eating... really, I'm good at eating (except

liver. I hate liver. I believe it's because I was forced to eat liver when I was a kid on the pretext that it was good for me).

When you were single, what was the most expensive thing that you ever purchased?

All-stainless steel Omega Seamaster dive watch. I wanted the same watch as James Bond.

For a middle income earner, would it be wiser to buy a home or rent one?

Find a home that fits your means. If you can afford it, get a loan to buy it. Renting is a waste of money in my opinion.

What luxuries do you treat yourself to?

Weekly massages at home. My in-laws also gifted me with a Hammacher-Schlemmer massage table which is absolutely fantastic.

How has married life changed you?

I'm now slightly rounder. I think I'll be going back to the gym soon.

What kind of activities do you and your family enjoy?

Swimming is a great activity all of us enjoy. My boys, Diego and Andro, love the water. We just started tennis last week and so far it seems the boys are somewhat interested in it. I won't force them to play just because I was a tennis player.

I have this bonding activity with my son, Diego, which we dreamt up when he was just three years old. It's my version of a "movie night" in the family room of my house where I, Reggie, and the boys curl up on the couch, freezing aircon, with a thick duvet over us eating caramel popcorn and watching a cartoon DVD on our flat screen TV. My younger son now understands the concept and gets in on the movie-night action as well. For the time-being, this is pretty ideal.

Felix's FINANCIAL ADVICE on:

INVESTMENTS

Be prudent. Try and find investments that can beat out inflation like global inflation-linked bonds.

SAVING

Be thrifty. Make it a habit to set aside at least 30% of your monthly income towards savings and the rest can be used for your monthly expenses- food, fuel, electricity, schooling etc.

SPENDING

Be smart. Find cheaper alternatives to the goods and services you used to patronize before. These are just as good but without the fancy labeling and overhead costs.



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