



Time to indulge

Crystal Jade

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Cantonese culinary crescendos

Michelle Chin notes how skilful chefs and hearty ingredients are instrumental to a delectable meal



Above: Lobster broth with mini pumpkin.

Right: Baked fresh scallops served with cheese mayonnaise and teriyaki brinjal.

PHOTOS: COPTHORNE KING'S HOTEL SINGAPORE



From now to Dec 31, 2018, Citi Cardmembers can enjoy 15 per cent off a la carte orders at Tien Court Restaurant (403 Havelock Road, Copthorne King's Hotel Singapore, S169632). Tel: 6318-3193/3198. Terms and conditions apply.

Tien Court Restaurant, Copthorne King's Hotel Singapore

At Tien Court Restaurant, part of the enjoyable dining experience lies in appreciating Master Chef Kwan Yiu Kan's passion for cooking, meticulousness and skill. The other part relies on the outstanding freshness and quality of the ingredients, and the marinades, sauces and cooking methods that accentuate them.

I tried four signature dishes that are new additions to the menu — steamed prawn dumpling with black truffle, lobster broth with mini pumpkin, baked fresh scallops served with cheese mayonnaise and teriyaki brinjal, and braised sea perch with black truffle and mushrooms.

To start off, I had the steamed prawn dumpling with black truffle — a lovely mouthful of succulent prawn with fragrant bits of truffle.

To cleanse my palate, I was offered a mini steamed Malay sponge cake, which was sweet and soothing, and had a hint of coconut milk — a rather surprising dish to find in a Cantonese restaurant.

Up next was the lobster broth with mini pumpkin. Served in a hollowed-out pumpkin, the rich soup was brimming with generous chunks of lobster, scallop and mushroom.

I was on a roll and could not wait to try the baked fresh scallops served with cheese mayonnaise and teriyaki brinjal. I savoured the creamy cheese, a hint of sweetness from the juicy scallops, briny pops of caviar and the fragrance of pan-fried brinjal.

The braised sea perch with black truffle and mushrooms stole the show. The lightly battered fish fillet was perfectly flaky yet retained its natural sweetness; the asparagus and mushrooms, and the heady truffle-infused sauce were perfect accompaniments.

Crystal Jade Kitchen, Holland Village

After a two-month renovation, Crystal Jade Kitchen's branch at Holland Village is back in business — with new items on its menu conceptualised with the help of Group Executive Chef Martin Foo. I sampled a few new items, just a fraction of the extensive list of novel dishes served here.

The Hong Kong style sweet and spicy minced meat noodles with prawn was moreish, intense and flavourful, thanks to its sauce that had minced char siew in it. Fresh prawns, spring onion and red capsicum gave the dish some extra texture.

A surprising twist was the use of a floral element in the soya sauce chicken with osmanthus. The meat's marinade comprised maltose syrup infused with dried osmanthus flowers, which gave the dish a lovely fragrance.

The steamed homemade tofu was topped with assorted seafood that had ample "wok hei" aroma enveloping the egg tofu as well as the accompanying prawn, scallop, capsicum, mushroom, garlic and spring onions.

The "wok-hei" was obtained from stir-frying the toppings and sauce, which had been prepared separately, before being added to the steamed tofu. Bonito flakes were generously sprinkled on top, adding more texture and flavour.

I was keen to try not one, but two desserts — deep-fried sesame ball with lava salted egg yolk, and purple sweet potato and taro with coconut milk, gum tragacanth and sago.

The former was warm and chewy with crispy bits, and as I bit into it, salted egg yolk oozed out. It was rich and had great texture. The latter, with its unusual purple hue, was served cold and had a creamy, starchy consistency. Tragacanth, a natural gum from the dried sap of some species of legumes, tasted like a crunchier version of jelly.



Top: Purple sweet potato and taro with coconut milk, gum tragacanth and sago. Above: Hong Kong style sweet and spicy minced meat noodles with prawn.

PHOTOS: CRYSTAL JADE

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