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Brewing at Orca Spin Café the Laboratory Way

By Hannah Chao

Located on Dayi Road, Orca Spin Café combines a passion for coffee and remarkable skills in creating heavenly taste, in ways one finds mostly in a laboratory.

While in college, the owners of Orca Spin Cafe, Enix Tsai and Jessie Lin, came across the world of coffee, then they can't help delving into the wonder of coffee. After having two children, they worried about missing children's growth in the long working hours of previous jobs. In order to spend more time with children, with affection and determination, they gave up the previous career plans and opened Orca Spin Cafe in early 2020.

As Enix and Jessie majored in physics and mathematics respectively, they adopt precise methods and take a serious attitude toward brewing coffee, just like they conducted experiments in a laboratory.

During the process, baristas must pay attention to carefully control the temperature and time for brewing. Enix and Jessie transform skills in conducting in a laboratory into an art of making coffee, causing their coffee to take on full and delicate flavors.

"The name of Orca Spin Cafe comes from ourselves," said Jessie, who chose the first word because of her fondness for orcas. Enix set up the second word "Spin" from a physical concept because he majored in physics in college. Combined with these two words, the name also presents a similar pronunciation of specialty coffee in Chinese.

About the entries, Orca Spin Cafe provides espresso drinks and specialty coffee. If customers do not like coffee, they can choose black tea, milky drinks, flower tea, or desserts.

The internal and external designs of Orca Spin Cafe follow the idea of a clean-cut shape and exhibit a perfect match of colors—blue and white. When customers step into the store, they will be impressed by the relaxing vibe with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee permeating the space.

In front of the door, there is a small blackboard which is written down Dessert of the Day. Jessie said, "People can rest assured that the dessert each day is made of all-natural ingredients by myself."

Because the handmade dessert will also be eaten by the owners' children and family, Jessie does not add any chemical substance which harms human bodies, like preservatives. Lemon tart and passion fruit tart are usually listed on the blackboard, and other desserts such as tiramisu and strawberry cheesecake appear occasionally, or based on fruits in season.

Before serving up the desert, Jessie will walk out of the store to cut some herbs from the plants placed on the floor outside the store. Adding a little herb can bring out the fresh flavor. One of the desserts which recommend to people is matcha Swiss roll.

Once taking the first bite of the fluffy cake, the rich fresh cream and matcha sprinkled on top will awake people's senses of taste. After that, the combination of the sweetness of filling, the moisture of cake, and the bitterness of matcha will surely please anyone's taste bud.



The knowledge of coffee has expanded into an immense and boundless world. From coffee beans to brewing, every step plays an important role in the coffee flavors.

Orca Spin Café's specialty coffee has features that make a difference. Walking into the store, people will notice many tags with the name of coffee beans displayed on the counter, and these kinds of coffee beans will change irregularly. Based on customers' personal preferences or the owners' advice, customers choose the most suitable coffee beans and savor the richness of coffee.

A customer, Betty Chen, studying at National Taipei University, said "Today I ordered a latte and a passion fruit tart. Although the latte becomes cold after a while, it still tastes perfect like freshly made." This response reflects Enix's pursuit of coffee. Nevertheless, reaching this high standard of coffee requires persistence on quality.

Orca Spin Cafe provides various kinds of coffee beans to satisfy customers' preferable flavors. For example, washed processed coffee beans from AB Thungari in Kenya provide a sharp fruity and sour aroma like green apples. Naturally processed Bourbon coffee beans from Musasa in Rwanda involve a rich flavor of sweetness like smoked plum or blackberry. Ethiopia Yirgacheffe from Jabanto expresses the mellow flavor of sweetness and brightness like oranges or peaches.

Rather than buying coffee beans through Taiwan distributors, the owners directly order beans from coffee estates. In this way, they can secure the quality of coffee beans.

The process of roasting also affects the flavors. The café owns a coffee roaster placed outside the store. Enix will personally roast coffee beans twice a week to assure the flavors such as richness, acidity, and body.

Every coffee beans release different exotic aromas according to the place of origin and the level of roast, so it is challenging to produce a coffee with a well-balanced flavor and keep the features of different kinds of coffee beans.

For instance, light roasted coffee shows significant acidity and preserves the original flavors from various habitats. Tasting medium roasted coffee, people also find the original flavors of coffee beans, but the acidity is transformed into the complete body.

Water quality significantly influences the taste of coffee, too. "We found a water purifier company which can customize for the store, and water through the purifier can have a certain number of sodium ions and potassium ions," Enix said.

Therefore, a spot of sweetness accompanies water in the store gives coffee the comforting mouthfeel of smoothness and softness. A man who carries several empty bottles will go around the counter to refill the bottles several times a week. He is not an employee of Orca Spin Cafe or a water purifier agent. Instead, he is an employee of a real estate agency next to Orca Spin Cafe. Water is the reason why he appeared regularly.

Inside a small cup of coffee, there are enormous effort and details. "I admire the owners' philosophy and full attention to coffee. You really can enjoy the changing flavor of coffee as time passed," said Ying-Hsuan Chen, an intern for already two months, also a student at National Taipei University.

No matter how much pressure people get in their daily lives, in Orca Spin Coffee, they can release all the stress, fully focusing on meals, and enjoying the time being alone or with friends.



Egg Pancake Crepes Stays Warm at Heart

By Katherine Tai



Shining in burlywood under warm yellow light, a smile greets its customers with cups of tea as customers walk up to Tzai-Shin Egg Pancake Crepe. The menu with each item listed on six little boards shows its simple yet devoting crafts in making egg pancake crepes.

“Tzai-Shin used to be a work for just killing time,” said Tomie U, the owner of the shop. At first, Tomie ran the shop after getting off graveyard shift. However, after finding out that time between two jobs was not enough to prepare for the breakfast business, she resigned to put all efforts into Tzai-Shin.

The business started in May, 2019 as a vendor on Guoji 2nd Street, near the side door of NTPU, and was moved to U-SHOP, a bazaar on Gouji

1st Street, in August of the same year. From vendor to storefront, what remain the same are the long queue at the door, and the passion hidden in the food.

Naming the shop was as important as the decision of startup. The name, Tzai-Shin, which means *to keep in heart* in Chinese, conveys its hope that every customer can remember the taste and the warmth. Its homophony referring revival in Chinese also gives deeper expectation.

“We were considering all the details from the process of launching food items when naming,” Tomie said. “It did take time to figure out what we wanted to offer our customers the most.”

Melody Lin, a junior studying at NTPU, said that she has lunch here every Wednesday. “The owner recognizes me and remembers my order at my fourth visit,” she said, never thinking about being a valued customer.

Melody also mentioned that the reason Tzai-Shin attracted her is its atmosphere. “The warmth of this shop not only remains inside, it is shown on every smile and patience, flowing into food and becomes strength in my otherwise boring daily life,” she said.

While other breakfast shops are pursuing diversification and efficiency, Tzai-Shin asks for perfection and quality. Egg pancake crepe is Tomie’s favorite food, which led to the startup of this shop. Though adding other food choices for customers is under consideration, it will not change their determination to make good egg pancake crepe.

Also, Tomie mentioned her preference for original flavor because of the pure and better taste without processed food. “We are still looking for the best,” Tomie said.

The best seller in Tzai-Shin is egg rice pancake crepe, which serves crepe made up of crust and eggs with rice wrapped inside. It is hard to imagine the combination before visiting this special breakfast shop. This menu came from a wish that everyone can gain satiety even with an easy egg pancake crepe.

The truth that rice is the most common item when people have meals gave Tomie inspiration on trying out new menu.

During the first try on egg rice pancake crepe, the outcome was good as it showed that chewy rice matched well with the egg roll. However, the taste was bland with plain rice. Several tries on steamed rice, sticky rice, and fried rice were done, but they either stuck on egg rolls or brought too much oil inside. The last test on saute rice finally found the silver lining for the breakfast shop.

A bowl of rice, about the quantity used in an omusubi, and two eggs are used in one egg rice pancake crepe. According to Tomie, Tzai-Shin's dishes cannot live without balance. Though sounding simple, the abstract word cost Tomie one month since March, 2019 to define the complementarity between rice and eggs.

In Tzai-Shin, basil-added eggs are used in Egg Pancake Crepe to bring out the aroma of both eggs and crust. As for rice serving in form of saute rice, Tomie used handmade shallot sauce to flavor the ingredient, harmonizing with the taste of basil. Fennel works as an important material in the sauce. It gives addition taste as tangerine-like sweetness, but does not suppress, neither been covered up by the original texture.

The appearance of plaid crust arouses curiosity on the first sight. Instead of a gimmick, the plaid was a product after attempts. The batter used was initially poured on the frying surface in one sheet, but considered a failure for its powdery and unstable quality.

Another try on dotted pattern crust tasted better but appeared too ugly to give it a bite, while the plaid then came out with improvements on both aspects. What's more, time doesn't matter. The crust is crispy upon dishing up, and becomes springy if put for a while before eating.

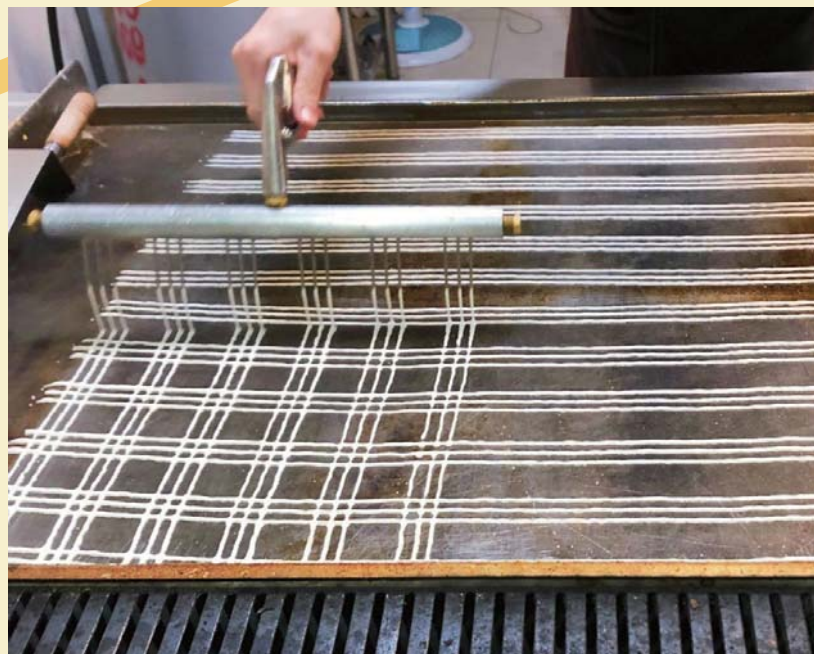
Tofu is another ingredient catching people's eyes. The reason of listing tofu as an add-in recalled Tomie of one customer, who complained that the egg pancake crepe get cold within few minutes. The grumble urged Tomie to find inspiration from her own eating experiences. She then thought that every time she had hot pot, tofu always scalded her even when firstly taken out to cool.

Among hundred layered bean curd, frozen tofu, Japanese tofu, and hard bean curd, Tomie chose hard bean curd because its texture is hard to separate, but easy to bite.

Serving people in lines with drink is another service Tzai-Shin insisted on. It comforts customers' impatience during the wait. Ray Jian is a freshman at NTPU and a milk tea lover. "I order milk tea every time even when I do not plan to order anything else," he said. "But weeks later when I come here again, I have milk tea in hand instead of a cup of black tea which I used to get. I still remember my surprise as being so flattered."

Taking the first step in Sanxia, Tomie is grateful for all customers who have supported the running of this shop. Though having a wish to open new branches, she said that Tzai-Shin will still stay here to serve good food and warmth in the future. "This place has witnessed every step of Tzai-Shin's growth, and it is also people here accompanying them step by step," she said.

There might be people who have not given Tzai-Shin a try, but there will not be a person who only eats once. Just as its name shows, Tzai-Shin brings warmth and stays in every customer's heart.





A Brilliant Breakfast Club Boasting Vibe of Avant-garde

By Betty Chen

The moment stepping inside, one may be stunned by the unusual vibe. With loud but relaxing song *High On The Heels* by The Whitest Boy Alive and wall ornamented with posters of band Radiohead and movie *Lolita*, the frowned, low-voiced receptionist Ronald Kuo said, “There’s no seat.”

However, if one is willing to try to get in another time because of the refusal arousing one’s curiosity, the person will find out that the breakfast shop Zao Dian does not look as terrifying as its appearance, including the warning sign placed in front of the door allowing pets.

In fact, the culture cultivation of uncommon music and unpopular movies, social-issue awareness of domestic politics and Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement in Hong Kong, and the pure artistic atmosphere combined with exotic Kamasi Washington and local David Tao’s albums are essential parts of the store. Let alone the original owner, Ronald Kuo.

When talking about Zao Dian, the stiff and rigid attitude of Ronald turned soft and smooth. “I don’t take it as a breakfast store, but a museum. That’s just the food and beverage department.”

Indeed, Ronald does not decorate his store like others, with ordinary front desk and maximized seating capacity. Zao Dian offers not only delicacy but comfortable dining surrounding with proper space.

Furthermore, he considered the theme of the restaurant an access for customers to understand what has happened all over the world; even the white elephant in the room, such as the disagreement to homophobia and disgust of the former mayor of Kaohsiung.

Therefore, Zao Dian provides an easy entree for students to enjoy considerable refreshment, piles of books, and a unique taste of music.

A total of 24 album records are displayed in Zao Dian. Ronald replaces the album from physical store and adjusted the music style depending on different time of the day. For instance, the quick pace in the morning requires loud rocking Lilium’s “Burbana”, while the cozy and tranquil evening suits comforting, soothing Candy Wine’s “Perfect Sensation.”

As for literature work, up to 281 books are lying on the bookshelf—including *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess, *Brokeback Mountain* by Annie Proulx, and *War and Peace* by Tolstoy—accompanied Ronald for ten years, so he craves for sharing them with the customers. “If I sacrifice the book shelf or music to satisfy some customers’ requirement, there will be no meaning for Zao Dian to keep staying.”

When ordinary people meet extraordinary restaurant, conflicts happen. Ronald let it slipped that he once ran after a customer with a cleaver while hearing the latter’s rebuke. “Just like those famous movies,” Ronald said. “Like *In the Realm of the Senses*, *Central Station*, and *The Piano Teacher*, they’re classic but highly controversial.”

Zao Dian boasts the individuality which is hard to be substituted. Even though some breakfast shops indeed displayed publications next to the seats, those are merely magazines such as *Business Weekly*. Moreover, the regular customers appreciate Ronald’s point of view.

“I’d like having breakfast here because of the progressive style of music,” said Harry Liao, one of the customers. Also, his friend Jovi Wang agreed, “The books and music appeal to us very much.” Liao added, “The decoration in Zao Dian is as cool as its owner, as Ronald demonstrated his ideas through the posters and pictures on the wall.”

The photographs including the performance of Flesh Juicer, the exhibition of Kobayashi Takeshi, the expired concert Slipknot held in Taiwan show the uniqueness of the owner.

Although the distinctiveness is robust and resilient, Ronald still stayed firm, claiming, “The point is not me, but the customers are the soul of this store.”

Moreover, the cuisine in Zao Dian is scrumptious, even though Ronald regarded it as commonplace. While he could not even fry an egg previously, his cookery is complimented by a NTPU junior student, Daniel Chung.

Daniel ordered a tuna egg pancake and became overwhelmed at his first bite. “The tuna sauce is adjusted with mayonnaise appearing smooth and delicious, including salty and sweet flavors.” He continued, “Furthermore, the surface of the egg pancake is crispy, and the combination with the soft egg is incomparable.” Not every egg pancake deserves such a high praise.

Despite the appetizing egg pancake, the handmade patty burger is a must-eat at Zao Dian. Customers shared its photo on Instagram to show how tasty it is and how fond they are of it. The crusty and crunchy burger buns were fried, and the patty was juicy and tender. The union of fresh lettuce, meat with cheese, crispy bun performed a lively orchestra vibrating the taste buds.

Certainly, the pace in the morning is lightning. Although Ronald has many ideas to share with others, he hardly has time, serving the food. In light of this, he decided to open the store at night, supplying a space for him and other customers to communicate and interact.

The quality of customers is relevant and influences one another as well. An entitled attitude not only lights up the mood of the whole store of people, but has an impact on one another.

For the latter, Ronald is passionate about the expanding new knowledge out of echo chamber, imagining kids asking their parent about Anti-ELAB Movement.

“It’s not allowed that only I know the fact,” Ronald said. “We can’t merely rely on the comfort zone.”

Ronald deems that as long as students are aware of the phenomena to be correct, the wrong to be right, they will fight against the system. “Some examples are the mainstream Golden Melody Award ignoring minorities, and the biased history about China’s impact on Taiwan.”

Zao Dian is a distinctive place which possesses the taste of aesthetics found from nowhere. Ronald welcomes customers to come, whether they agree with his points of view or not.

“Maybe you’ll think it’s more interesting if you come back again five years later,” Ronald proposed. Just like his philosophy of life, he promises himself to keep developing prospects, refining Zao Dian and moving forward. Because of Ronald, Zao Dian has become an avant-garde center for people to eat, learn, and indulge.





The Beauty of Thailand Is in the Eyes of a Thai Food Chef

By Eden Wang

“People have their own images of Thailand,” said Hsiao-Yu Chen, the chef and founder of a Thai restaurant. “Thai Two is how I picture Thailand,” he said. Although having never been to Thailand, Chen built the Thai restaurant with his own understanding of the Southeast Asian delicacy.

Thai Two, located on Daguang Road, catches passersby’s eyes with its Southeast Asian style interior design decorated with tropical potted plants and the mural painted by Chen and his wife, Ying-Ying Hsu, who co-founded the restaurant.

Categorized by the cooking methods and the ingredients, the restaurant’s menu is simple, with only 30 dishes displayed on it. Still, the menu includes the classical Thai dishes, such as green papaya salad, fried chicken with spicy pepper sauce, and green curry.

“A table of dishes that complement each other can make the whole meal more enjoyable than a single signature dish,” Chen said when asked about his signature dish.

In Asia, people usually sit together around a table and order a set of dishes to enjoy together instead of eating in their own plate. Therefore, Asians ensure that table is well-balanced when composing their set of meals. “People don’t end up with a meal so rich it’s filled with Thai fried dishes though they are classical,” Chen said.

Chen thinks that the best set to order contains an appetizer, a dish that goes well with rice, a fried dish, a vegetable, and a dessert, making sure the flavors work together since Thai meals do not have fixed courses and all the dishes are eaten at the same time.

Spices play important roles in Thai cuisine. Galangals, lemon grasses, and kaffir lime leaves are the three commonly used spices. However, Chen believes that the spirit of Thai cuisine lies in the use of chili because chili can be added to almost all Thai dishes.

Thai Two is best known for its homemade, preservative-free chili sauce, with the main ingredients of fried facing heaven peppers, whose scientific name are *Capsicum annum* L. var. *fasciculatum* Irish., and are rated as highly pungent in the Scoville scale, as well as chili peppers.

“Every time I opened the boxed meal Hsiao-Yu had prepared for the staffs, I was always comforted by the aroma of the chili sauce after working for hours,” said Robert Lin, who worked part-time in Thai Two for a year. “As I was eating the boxed meal, I could feel the tears slowly fill my eyes because it tasted so fantastic.”

Fried shrimp ball with pineapple and sweet sauce has a combining taste of sweet and sour, decorated with the aroma of galangals and kaffir lime leaves. “Before trying fried shrimp ball with pineapple and sweet sauce, I couldn’t stand the dish that added pineapples, but this dish just combines every element perfectly,” said Apple Huang, a junior student at National Taipei University.

Chen said the dish was inspired by a dream, in which he dreamed about a dish—chicken with pineapple and sweet sauce. However, Chen said that dicing chickens is time consuming, so he decided to replace chickens with fried shrimp balls.



Robert also mentioned that when he was asked to recommend a dish suitable for children when he was working there, he suggested fried shrimp ball with pineapple and sweet sauce because he observed that children like the sweet and sour taste so much that they cannot stop eating the dish.

When Chen was 16 years old, he already knew that he wanted to open his own restaurant one day, but only as an operator. However, the fate seemed to draw him to the path of becoming a chef.

Having shown his interests in cooking since he was a junior high school student, Chen studied food and beverage management in college. After graduating from college, he was assigned to serve as a mess steward in the military. After the army, he became an office worker, but before long he found out that he could not stand the repeated office work. Therefore, he quit the job and became an apprentice at Thai Heaven, one of the biggest chain Thai restaurants in Taiwan.

Thai Two is not the first Thai restaurant Chen has opened. In 2009, having learned how to cook Thai cuisine at the chain restaurant for three years, Chen decided to open his own Thai restaurant dubbed B Bar with his father on Fuxing Road in their hometown, Sanxia District, and Chen has become a Thai chef since then.

The reason why Chen wanted to open his own restaurant was that he thought no matter how hard he cooked at the chain restaurant, the customers were only impressed by the chain's name without knowing it was him that cook the meal for them. "I wanted to be recognized," Chen said.



Chen also mentioned his biggest change after running his own business for ten years. "You wouldn't care that much about what you have learned from others, but you would cherish what you have learned by yourself, though the self-exploring process is longer and self-taught ability is also required," Chen said.

B Bar was closed in 2017, but Chen hasn't forgot his dream to start a restaurant, and he brought the spirit to Thai Two—making delicious dishes in a careful and detailed way.

Take the dish cabbage with shrimp paste for example. If the cabbages are overproduced, the cabbage will be so juicy that its juice will dilute the flavor of shrimp paste and arouse fishy smell, so Chen has to cook the dish when the season is in for cabbage.

Although Chen's dishes have received opinions from the customers for not being authentic, he believes that making delicious food is more important than making the authentic one.

"I intended to make delicious dishes for my guests even though they might not be authentic, and that is also the reason why I started this restaurant," Chen said.

Although Chen has never been to Thailand, he wants to share his imagination of the country through the dishes.

From B Bar to Thai Two, Chen and Hsu came to realize that instead of satisfying all the needs of every customer and losing their core spirits, they wanted to focus more on the customers who have the same values as them. "When we are able to make the dishes in our own way, the guests will come," Hsu said.

“When I was young, I liked to work or study in a comfortable environment,” said Zong- Xian Yang, a 36- year- old shaven-headed man in a plain hoodie, also the shopkeeper of Laifa, “so the idea of opening a coffee shop has already ingrained in my mind since then,” he said. In 2016, Mr. Yang opened the first Shulin branch of Laifa Coffee Bar, then expanded to Sanxia four years later.

Laifa is the name of Mr. Yang’s father. The idea came from Mr. Yang’s filial affection to his father and his desire to create a sense of humor. Also, Laifa in Chinese sounds like an auspicious wish to Laifa customers.

On Laifa’s one- paged menu, items are listed in prices, quantity, and categories to let the customers quickly browse. Names of items such as *Laifa’s lifeline – no-bake cheesecake* or *Zong Xian’s Tiramisu without formulas* were created by Mr. Yang.

Customers visiting Laifa for the first time may feel confused about a small piece of blank paper given by the staff along with the menu. The paper is for ordering. When the store was opened, as the computer system hadn’t been installed, Mr. Yang had no choice but to give the customers ordering sheets to write which items they wanted.

Customers not accustomed to handwriting started to observe friends’ and their own writings. Friends chirping together, laughing at others’ chicken scratch or praising each other’s small and neat handwriting was out of Mr. Yang’s expectation.

People take out a cup of coffee from convenient stores like 7-11 or Family Mart before going to work every day. Mr. Yang’s believes that coffee has become a part of people’s lives. He positions Laifa as a community coffee shop, hoping to give locals a cup of Laifa’s coffee.

At first, to run the store within budgets, Mr. Yang chose not to roast and grind coffee beans on his own; instead, he bought high quality coffee beans from individual shop and designed two main hits—*Laifa coffee* and *Specialty coffee*.

Laifa coffee is made of high roast blend coffee from Ethiopia Sidamo, Colombia, and Republic of Guatemala. Customers can taste balanced acerbic and bitter flavor in mouth. *Specialty coffee* is made of estate- grown washed coffee from Ethiopia, giving customers blended but intense acerbic flavor.

Laifa provide various specialty beans for customers, and they can choose to make pour over coffee, espresso, Americano, or latte.

Mr. Yang compared Laifa to the bar Ferryman in *See You Tomorrow*, a movie talking about Mo Chen, a ferryman whose job is to help people get out of the shadow of painful love, tried to train a girl Yu to become another ferryman.

A coffee shop is not just a place where a barista shares coffee with customers. “I hope customers can feel relaxed to share their thoughts and concerns with a barista who may not attend in their daily lives,” said Mr. Yang.

The background image shows the interior of the Laifa Coffee Shop. It features a blue wall with a sign that says "LAIFA AM 04:00". There is a window with a wooden frame and a small plant on a table. The room is furnished with wooden tables and chairs, and a striped cushioned sofa. String lights are hanging from the ceiling, creating a warm atmosphere.

Laifa Is a Coffee Shop that Means to Bode Well

By Wendy Wang



He created *Cheng Wu Jin* and *Chao Wei Liang*—names of two drinks—after watching the movie. For Chung Guan, Mo Chen’s co-worker played by Cheng Wu Jin, Mr. Yang used Vodka and lemon coffee to represent Chung Guan’s passion and intense love to his lover, Mao Mao. For composing Mo Chenm, acted by Chao Wei Liang, he combined whisky with pipe tobacco coffee to display the character’s calmness and pain hid deeply in his mind.

“Every time I come here, I order it,” said Eric Huang, who started visiting Laifa in April this year on his hairdresser’s recommendation, while taking a bite of Laifa signature dessert, no-bake cheesecake.

Sitting on the navy-blue porcelain plate, the ivory and compact cake body with a small pile of walnut on the top looks like children’s delicate skin. When cutting it with a fork, customers can feel the crunchy digestive biscuit and solid cake body. Lack of gelatin, the cake body is easy to collapse under room temperature, but when putting it in the mouth, such rich flavor and smooth texture let customers delve into the world of cheese.

Customers can enjoy no-bake cheesecake in classic, berry, or caramel flavor, and Mr. Yang reduced 60 grams of sugar into 30 grams to make the cake heathier.

At night, a group of regulars gather outside the Shulin branch Laifa Coffee Store. They chat with the staffs, calling each other in their nicknames. In Laifa, they not only get a cup of coffee but some small talks. “I remembered last weekend we even hanged out to eat Ichiran Ramen at midnight. It’s ridiculous,” Eric Haung said.

“When I was taking photos, I accidentally found the coffee store,” said Vic Hsieh, a local train driver who drives between Miaoli and Haulien. He came to Laifa at least once a week. For him, it’s convenient to have a drink after work because the train will finally stop at Shulin station. “I usually order a cup of coffee and chew the fat with staffs and other regulars,” he added.

Since Mr. Yang opened Laifa Coffee Bar, he has adopted membership system. Customers only need to spend NT \$1,000 to become members, and they can have NT\$ 10 discount for each item. The membership is indefinite and can be used in Laifa’s other branches, expanding customer base and increase staffs’ interactions with locals.

Located at Guoguang Street, Sanxia district, Laifa Coffee usually stands out on the corner with its indigo roll-up door with big, bold and white words LAIFA Coffee Shot on it. Behind the counter, Mr. Yang is listening to customers’ orders, bringing out glasses decorated by Azulejo, and pours iced Americano in them.

Laifa has no plans to become chain stores, and each Laifa store is directly managed by Mr. Yang. Visiting Laifa, sometimes customers can see Mr. Yang making no-bake cheesecake or Tiramisù, greeting customers, or discussing with another staff about how to deliver cakes to other branches.

“Remember to deliver them carefully,” he cautioned the staff. “These cakes are not solid enough yet.” Aside from coffee and cakes, Laifa provides its humanity taste.





A Homey Place for Breakfast with Forest Wonders

By Andy Hong

Walking into Rainbow Forest, the owner, Wu-Jyun Hong always greets warmly with a smile. The aroma of fresh baked toast and smell of caramel syrup surround the whole store. Waiter bustles around, trying to give the best service to customers.

Rainbow Forest, a breakfast bistro on Guoqing Road, is popular among students. The name contains expectations of the owner. Mr. Wu said, “I hope that guests can feel relaxed while they are having meals, just like walking in the forest.”

He also said that rainbow is rare in the forest, indicating the determination of offering customers unique dining experiences through his cooking skills.

Compared to other breakfast stores, one of the features of Rainbow Forest is that customers can refill drinks since its opening. Mr. Wu realizes that the location is away from National Taipei University. Therefore, he needs to offer distinguishing features to attract customers.

Moreover, through unlimited refills, guests will be attracted. Because of the strategy, sales revenue increases 10% each month. Mr. Wu said, “In my core value, customers are important, I maintain a spirit of service to open the store.”

Rainbow Forest’s black tea and milk tea are famous. Mr. Wu said, “It is difficult to offer unlimited refills to customers because the cost will increase 12% on sugar and tea leaf.” Therefore, he decided to cooperate with Sanxia local tea supplier, Tian Fang Tea. Mr. Wu chose to provide Formosa-honey black tea to customers.

The reason why Mr. Wu chose Formosa-honey black tea is that this black tea can offer honey flavor instead of the use of sugar. “Cooperating with local tea supplier can reduce the freight cost. At the same time, the honey flavor is not that cloying compared with sugar.”

Andrew Chou said that he drinks five cups of black tea every time he comes to have breakfast.

Rainbow Forest offers various breakfast, and the most popular meal is hot plate noodles. At first, it only had white noodles. In order to cater to customers’ preferences, Mr. Wu decided to offer udon noodles, alkaline noodles, and fried noodles.

Mr. Wu said, “It is very difficult to stock four kinds of noodles at once. However, I spend three weeks searching for suppliers with good quality. Finally, I decided to cooperate with Sanxia local noodles factory, Jia Jia Noodle Factory.” Mr. Wu said that cooperating with Jia Jia Factory not only promotes local industry but also acquire fresh noodles.



Shu-Hai Wu, a 70-year-old living in Banqiao, comes to Rainbow Forest just for hot plate udon noodles every Saturday. “The noodles are al dente. Moreover, the homemade pepper sauce which is different from other stores is made by Mr. Wu.”, he said.

Another popular food is Donburi. Mr. Wu started to offer Donburi in September 2018. It only served Beef Donburi when Mr. Wu first launched this meal. “We never offered this kind of food in our store before, so we were afraid whether customers would like it at that time,” Mr. Wu said. To his surprise, Beef Donburi sold out every day.

Mr. Wu purchases row beef in traditional market the day before. He said, “The process is complicated and time-consuming, and I also have to make the special dressing by myself.”

Leo Yeh, a 32-year-old engineer living in Yingge, said, “I come here four times a week, because beef donburi is my favorite. Dipping beef in egg mixture make the flavor to another level.”

In October 2020, Mr. Wu started to offer Chicken Donburi because of a customer. Mei Hui Lin, a devout Buddhist, said, “I saw other customers order Beef Donburi every time, but I do not eat beef.” When Mr. Wu heard this, he decided to offer Chicken Donburi. Beyond his expectation, Chicken Donburi becomes a hit among customers.

French toast is another special entry in Rainbow Forest. Mr. Wu will cut French toast into small pieces, so every piece can fully dip into the eggs and milk mixture. Moreover, Mr. Wu

also selects Taiwan Longan Honey basted on the French toast. He said, “The sweetness of Taiwan Longan Honey is adequate enough, and at the same time, it will not cover the smell of French toast.”

“It is easier for children to eat with small pieces, so it is convenient for parents,” said Anny Chang, a 35-year-old mother with a six-year-old baby.

Management philosophy is the feature that makes this breakfast store different. In Mr. Wu’s core value, relationship between he and customers is the most important. Mr. Wu said, “I try to build up a sense of belonging for every customer, hoping that every time they come for breakfast, they feel like going back home.”

Feeling that the breakfast store offers, quality and safety of food, and the dining environment are essential factors.

Rainbow Forest is located in the neighborhood. Therefore, 70 percent of the customers are families. Mr. Wu launches Family Set for parents and children. Additionally, there would be no food wasted. Diana Hu said, “Because of family set, I do not have to worry about whether my kids can finish their plates. Moreover, my kids and I can choose both of our favorite in a set.”

Mr. Wu cares about the dining quality. It is not allowed to bring pets, but customers will still bring their pets into the store. Mr. Wu worry if there are customers allergic to pets, thereby affecting the dining experience. Therefore, he decided to put a sign outside to prevent the situation.

Rainbow Forest has been in this place for eight years, providing food and services. In the future, Mr. Wu will invent more dishes for customers and maintain passion to serve everyone.





An Italian Pizza House that Stands the Test of Time

By Grace Hu

Bella Italia Pizzeria on Jiayuan Road at Shulin District is located a little bit far from National Taipei University. However, people can hardly neglect the existence of this Italian restaurant with cheese smell emanating from the kitchen, attracting passersby to walk in.

There are sixty flavors of pizza available at Bella Italia Pizzeria, with all flavors created by the owner, Nigi Wang. Each flavor is unique in itself, mixing with cuisines from Italy, India, Mexico, Germany, America, and Thailand. The original menu had fifteen flavors, divided into three categories—meat diet, seafood, and vegan. In order to expand the customers' base, the menu has added three more categories since 2019, which are Lacto-vegetarian, flexitarian, and vegetarian meat.

"The restaurant's core value is to create natural and healthy homemade pizzas," Nigi Wang said. Mr. and Mrs. Wang put efforts into preparing fresh dishes for customers. They select the origin of each ingredient to ensure the hygiene of food. Instead of taking a break on holidays, they go to markets to buy ingredients, do stock preparation, and create new recipes.

Each flavor is developed and tested for at least six months. Pizzas that add different cheeses have even being tested for three years before they become an option on the menu. "Each flavor may taste differently considering various factors, such as the weather, the eating time, or the mood of the customers," said Mr. Wang. "A great pizza should remain delicious in any situation."

"The cheese is the vital element to make a scrumptious pizza," said Mr. Wang. While cheese differentiates from its brands and harvest seasons, each cheese features different textures according to the humidity and temperature of its origin. Therefore, the cheese types change with seasons to serve with the same taste. What's more, there is usually more than one cheese added to a pizza to enrich its taste.

Black truffle pate mushroom pizza, a flavor available for Lacto-vegetarian with the mixture of Mozzarella and Parmesan, is one of the classic choices for cheese lovers. Italian handmade crust sprinkles with Parmesan, coming with the tangy texture and umami taste with a dusting of cheese. Meanwhile, Mozzarella is layered above to offer a moist and creamy texture with a strong aroma of milk, adding heavy savor to this pizza.

Although the pizza was available in Italy, it still took Mr. Wang three years to improve its recipe. Considering the customer's eating habits and the difficulty of obtaining ingredients abroad, the owner replaced seafood and meat with cheeses, satisfying Taiwanese's appetite by emphasizing the multilevel of cheeses and the flavor of black truffle pate mushroom.

After this flavor was launched, it received recommendations from customers. "Black truffle pate mushroom pizza has a distinctive taste that I have never had in any other Italian restaurant," said Emily Hsu, a junior student of National Taipei University. "It is so delicious that I can't hold back my hands and pick up for another piece."

Another popular flavor recommended for meat lovers is Mince Pork Pizza. The secret behind the flavor is using Sanxia's black pork, Duroc pig, which is more succulent and tender. Spiced with black pepper and red peppers, the combination of Italian handmade crust, Parmesan, Italian tomato sauce, and mushrooms are remarkable, making gourmets want to keep munching on.

In 2010, Mr. Wang handed over his China's company in Chongqing to his brother for taking care of his sick father in Taiwan. Meanwhile, he decided to start a new career to fill up his life and the idea of opening an Italian restaurant struck him on the spot. Therefore, he opened a restaurant around his home in Sanxia.

After opening for two years, Mr. Wang decided to move to the NTPU community to attract more customers. In the beginning, the target customers are NTPU students, but it turned out that most customers are residents who live nearby. Besides, many customers who live far away are recommended by friends, some people even coming to the Sanxia just to have a taste of pizzas.

Mr. Wang had learned how to make Italian food earlier. Fifteen years ago, he was a regular at an Italian restaurant. He became a friend of the Italian chef after frequent visits. Under the chef's guidance, he learned the techniques and steps for making Italian pizza. At that time, Mr. Wang considered cooking as his personal interest, and he didn't expect that one day his habit can make a living.

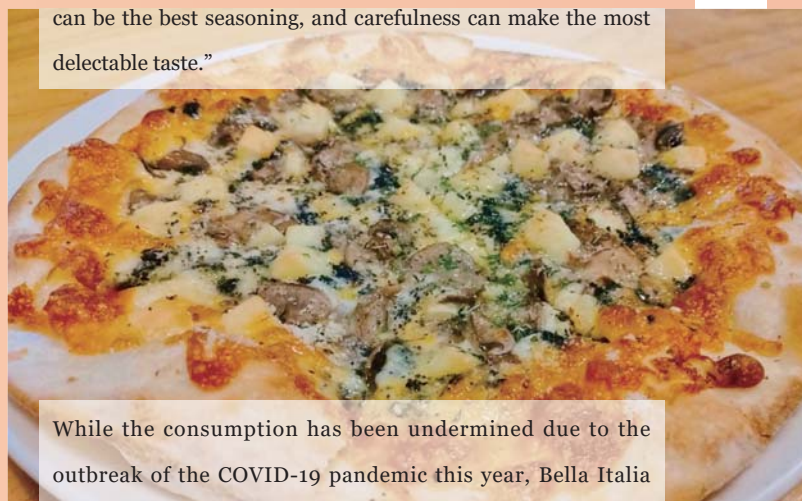
For Mr. Wang, the core spirit for managing the restaurant is to view customers as friends, treating them sincerely. "I hope that through communication with customers, they will not only enjoy delicious food with pleasant mood but also sense the warmth of the restaurant," he said.

Paul Miller, a customer from Manchester engaging as an antique importer, is a patron of the restaurant. Initially, Paul and his Taiwanese wife found the store and fell in love with the taste. Since then, they came by every week and became close friends with the owner. Paul said he even invited Mr. and Mrs. Wang to their wedding.

"For us, Bella is more than just a delicious pizzeria. From being single to married, this restaurant has carried many precious memories in our life," Paul said with a smile.

Nonetheless, the making process of pizza won't be stuck in a rut. Nigi Wang will observe customers and adjust the ingredients of each flavor, depending on the age of the customers. "If there is a family with children, I will add lesser pepper because kids are not used to eating such heavy-tasting food," said Mr. Wang. "If foreign customers visit our restaurant, I will put more cheese."

"Cooking relies on the accumulation of experience," Mr. Wang said. "Although the ingredients are the same, the attentiveness can be the best seasoning, and carefulness can make the most delectable taste."



While the consumption has been undermined due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic this year, Bella Italia Pizzeria's business is booming. Though customers are reluctant to eat at the store, more and more people choose to takeout and get NT\$20 discount for each pizza. As was famously said in A Tale of Two Cities, "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." Bella Italia Pizzeria proves that out of crisis comes opportunity.

For future plans, Mr. Wang plans to work with his son Jack, who is a chef in an Italian restaurant in Taipei, to rollout other Italian dishes, such as spaghetti or Italian desserts. In addition, he also intends to cooperate with the food delivery platform to expand operations.

Bella Italia Pizzeria has been established for ten years, while having lots of loyal customers, the owner is not complacent with his achievement. "I will work harder, developing more flavors for customers," Mr. Wang said. "Only by constantly innovating new recipes can we create differentiation and become irreplaceable."

A Cozy Toast Bistro Serving Aromatic Sandwich with Zeal

When one steps into Birnana Toast, the rich aromas of chocolate and peanut butter fill the nostrils immediately. Then, customers will be gently embraced by the heart-warming sunny yellow lighting, and the exquisite ornaments and bright color decorations soon come into the view.

Mezzanine design provides a visually spacious dinning environment as well, making customers spend quality time with friends or families.

Birnana Toast, a tiny sandwich shop located on Daguan Road, is run by Adam Wang and his parents. Because of cost considerations, Adam and his family moved from Yonghe to Sanxia six years ago, noticing that customers are willing to wait for hot, appetizing sandwiches. "Most of my target customers are students; also we get little profits from this business, so I feel like we are doing volunteer service," Adam said with a wry smile.

There are only four categories and 18 items on the menu: Toast with spread sauce, sandwich, fried food, and beverage. "We are short-staffed and equipment have restricted menu development," said Adam. "But a simple menu and a serving of toast with egg roll are enough to bring customers a wonderful morning," he continued.



By Jason Chiang

"The crushed nuts in peanut butter taste crunchy and sugary, reminding me of Hong Kong-style peanut butter toast that I missed so much," said a Taiwanese-Hong Kong couple.

Two years ago, the couple came to Sanxia and walked in Birnana Toast. They ordered two servings of peanut butter toast and loved them so hard that they took some pictures of their meal and uploaded them to Instagram. Adam was standing aside, feeling delighted that his dishes can make someone nostalgic, or moreover, gleeful.

There are three flavors of toast provided in Birnana Toast: butter, peanut butter, and chocolate. The peanut butter is homemade with domestic peanuts. Adam created this peanut butter after over 20 times of trial. "Almost all sauces in Birnana Toast is home-made because if our dishes lose the features, they will taste the same as other breakfast store's," said Adam.

The sandwiches in Birnana can be put on the dish or packed in a paper bag. If customers choose to put sandwich on the dish, Adam will separate it into toast and fillings wrapped by golden egg roll and cheese, which makes the customers feel like they're having brunch instead. Or, they can still choose to have it like a regular sandwich, enjoying every layer of it with a big bite.



Another feature of sandwich lies in customized services. Besides the packing of sandwiches, customers can pay extra NT\$10 to change the flavor of toast with more spread sauce. Moreover, every sandwich can be made with chili, and Adam will adjust the seasoning, not to change the original flavor. If the layer of homemade sour sauce is not enough, the guests can freely use the condiments at the corner.

The best seller in Birnana Toast is the minced beef with egg sandwich. The pleasant aroma of beef is locked inside the fluffy egg roll and freshly melted cheese. The golden brown butter toast invites the diner to have a bite of it. Other kinds of sandwich like cheese, hash browns, and crispy chicken are also popular among customers.

Apart from sandwiches, French fries and chicken nuggets also sell well. Adam said it can take out the worry of “two sandwiches are too much, but eating one is not enough.”

“The black tea and milk tea taste good. It’s sweet but not greasy,” said Yvonne Lin, a NTPU student having lunch in Birnana. “What’s important, the black tea is only NT\$15,” Annie Huang, Yvonne’s friend said.

Low prices and aromatic flavor of tea attract customers to have one cup during the meal. The black tea in Birnana is cold-brewed to reduce the astringency in tea. “The black tea served in breakfast chain stores usually goes astringent within three hours, but by cold brew, the sweet taste of tea will linger much longer than the previous,” Adam said.

Though the prices of beverage seem satisfying to Annie, another college student, James Chang, considers the sandwich too expensive. “The sandwiches here are great, but NT\$65 each is too costly for me to afford every day,” James sighed. “Also, they are slow in serving. We usually wait for for 20 minutes to half an hour, and it depends on the number of customers,” he said.

“Actually, we’ve got a lot of feedback like that,” Adam laughed. “Birnana Toast is a mini shop with only three staff. It’s impossible for us to make a sandwich hastily. It’s all about quality.” As for the price, Adam explained that rent and ingredient costs have become heavy burdens, and that is the reason why they don’t hire another person to help. “To hire a new cook sounds easy, but it costs a lot and you need to teach them from the very beginning.”

Speaking of his management philosophy, Adam said he heard a statement from a TV program: diet forms a culture. He linked it to the success of tofu pudding shop in Sanxia Old Street, Spring Water.

“When tourists come to Sanxia Old Street, Spring Water’s good reputation attracts them, forming a culture like ‘when people go to Old Street, they visit Spring Water’,” said Adam. “And what I want to do is to form a culture like that.” His efforts have paid off when Adam saw some student graduating from NTPU still visited here to have a lunch and chat with him and his parents.

Though Birnana Toast is a tiny store in an alley with an inconspicuous appearance, it is always crowded during weekdays. “The owner’s mother is so nice that she always puts a smile on her face and says thank you when she delivers the food or receives the money,” said Yvonne. The magic lies in the palatable taste of sandwiches and the staff’s affability and perseverance.





Take a Big-bite of Onigiri Wrapped with a Native's Love of Sanxia

By Christine Tsai

"Born and raised in Sanxia, I always feel connected with this place, because it gives me a sense of belongingness," said Hong-Yi Lu, a native of Sanxia, who has been living here for over 30 years. As the owner of Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri, Mr. Lu attributes his decision of choosing Sanxia to this lasting familiarity. "I think working and living in Sanxia is a true blessing."

Taiwanese onigiri, commonly known as rice ball, is similar to a breakfast burrito where glutinous rice replaces the tortilla. The fillings can vary and be customized, but they usually include crunchy cruller bits, pickled vegetables, and pork floss.

As for Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri, it provides five flavors—sweet onigiri, vegetarian pork floss onigiri, pork floss onigiri, shacha sauce onigiri, and pork onigiri.

Since 2018, Hong-Yi has started his business Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri with his wife as a stall on Guoji 2nd street, across the side entrance of NTPU. Because of its affordability and delicacy, it managed to attract customers. As days went by, Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri gained popularity, causing Mr. Lu's aspiration to expand his business by moving his store from a stall to a nearby store in August 2020.

Initially, Big-Bite Taiwanese Onigiri only hired the Lu family, including Hong-Yi's parents and his wife when it was still a small stall. Moving into a store, given longer working hours, more ingredients to prepare, and their consideration for the future stability, the Lu family became understaffed.

Therefore, Hong-Yi decided to recruit more staff because he believed that maintaining energy is the key to keeping his store's quality.

Before having extra manpower, Mr. Lu used to be so busy that he embarrassed himself. "I wore apron inside out, and even asked customers if they wanted spicy in their black tea, just to name a few," said Hong-Yi.

Sherry Lin, a NTPU sophomore, claims that she comes to Big-Bite Taiwanese Onigiri at least twice a week. "It is Big-Bite Taiwanese Onigiri's affordability that makes me a regular customer. After all, a normal college student does not have the budget for high-priced breakfast and lunch."

To be fair, there is nothing special in the store itself. Without shining decoration and strong lights, Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri creates its own style with neatness and simplicity. They emphasize neither the atmosphere nor the exterior. What they truly value is the quality of their onigiris.

This seemingly ordinary store somehow brings energy to the place by taking good care of peoples' stomachs with its tasty Taiwanese Onigiri.

Speaking of onigiri, Hong-Yi said that he and other staff can make two onigiri within one minute. Funny enough, he reveals a little secret—They play upbeat songs to speed up as they desire to wrap it up earlier for the day. With fast-paced music, their potential of making onigiris will be accelerated as well.



Occupational hazard lies in most jobs. Having to hand make onigiris for at least seven hours a day, all employees need strong hands, to say nothing of suffering from trigger finger, scalds, incised wounds, and De Quervain's disease, which is commonly referred to Mother's hands in Chinese. "But those are the occupational risks that we have to bear," Hong-Yi said.

Hong-Yi is also an amateur writer. He shares his own fictions on Big-Bite Taiwanese Onigiri's fans page on Facebook, which in turn increases the interaction with customers. Occupied with work, he does not have the luxury of time to chat with customers. And this is where the fans page comes in handy.

During the rush hour, Ryan Lee, aged 25, was lining up for his favorite pork onigiri. "I work in Shulin, but I come to Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri twice a week. I've tasted over ten different Onigiri shops in New Taipei City, but none of them beats Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri. So, I think it is worthwhile to drive 15 minutes to Sanxia."

Another regular, Shawn Wu, said that it is needless to prove the popularity of the store, with the long queue lining up for a big-bite. "During lunch time, you have to wait for approximately 15 minutes if you did not preorder online," Hong-Yi added.

Recalling his past two years since opening, Hong-Yi pointed out there was a customer who left a strong impression on him.

One day, the customer came to buy a pork floss onigiri with extra eggs. However, the staff gave him a sweet onigiri with extra eggs instead. A day later, the customer came to tell them that he got a wrong onigiri the day before and ordered the same one again. The couple, Mr. Lu and his wife apologized, but it turned out that they made a mistake again. What they gave him this time was a pork floss onigiri without extra eggs.

On the third day, the customer still came to order the exact same onigiri with the exact flavor, hoping he could have the opportunity to taste his favorite pork floss. Yet he got sweet onigiri in the end. As usual, the staff said they were absolutely sorry to him since he had got the wrong onigiris three days in a row.

To all the staff's surprise, the customer still showed up the next day, and they finally made the right onigiri. Hong-Yi explained, "I mean, we did not expect to see the customer again because of our mistakes, so it really came as a surprise. We were ashamed but also grateful for him at the same time. Our gratitude knew no bounds."

Hong-Yi stated there are times when he feels touched. Some regular customers are willing to drive 20 minutes just to buy their ordinary onigiris. Their management philosophy is not ambitious, and they merely hope each customer to savor their food with joy. "We would like to be more than just a store, but a store with warmth."

Since a lot of rural areas natives are seduced by the glitter of city life, rural districts are forced to encounter with the exodus of population. Nonetheless, Hong-Yi still sticks with Sanxia. "It's mainly because I do love this place." Big-Bite Taiwanese Onigiri is more than selling food, it represents admiration and love of a faithful native.





The Sweetness Is in the Detail When Stewing Red Bean Soup

By Vivian Lin

Every evening, when Huang-chih Lin lifts the lid of a deep stock pot, there will be a thick cloud of steam rising from it. Then, a sweet smell slowly floats in the air. Lin is the owner of Xiao Lin Sweet Soup, a dessert joint he has run for ten years.

Established on November 7, 2010, the origin of Xiao Lin Sweet Soup was a corner shop in Xindian, run by Lin's parents. After getting married, Lin moved to Sanxia and established his own store selling desserts.

Lin was running his stall during weekdays and helping his parents' shop on the weekends until the shop in Xindian was closed six years ago when his father got sick. "I wanted to preserve the spirit of my parents' shop," said Lin.

Xiao Lin is located in front of a laundry. When he decided to sell sweet soup in Sanxia, he could not find a good location in the beginning. He posted his plans online. One day, an anonymous netizen replied, telling him the proprietor of a South NTPU Laundry would like to rent out the location. With limited budget, Lin took that offer and started Xiao Lin Sweet Soup.

Talking about his food, there is a gleam in Lin's eyes. Receiving a compliment from Eliza Chen, who lives in Sanxia and buys sweet soup every day, Lin just said thank you with a smile. However, when Eliza asked about his food, he introduced all the items like the time it takes to stew the red beans soup or the ingredient he uses in the soup with a higher tone, in faster speed.

"When you are talking with him, you can find that he really takes all his food as his children," says Dora Chou, a senior student at NTPU who works a part-time job at Xiao Lin.

The syrup enhances the flavor of the red beans soup with its caramel taste. To keep the smell of sucrose, Lin chooses to use brown sugar rather than white sugar and makes three pots of syrup by boiling 28.8 kilograms caramelized sugar in 16 liters water.

Red beans soup is the bestseller of Xiao Lin. "There is only one kind of hot soup I would choose—red beans soup, and I come to buy it twice a week," said Tony Chen, a NTPU student.

Spending ten hours to complete the red beans soup, Lin always soaks the beans at the midnight and cooks them when he gets up in the morning. Before boiling, red beans have to be soaked for precisely eight hours to soften the skin. If they are oversoaked, the skin will split and the beans' texture will taste like paste.



Then, he pours water into the pot, boil the red beans for 30 minutes before turning down the heat, simmering for 20 minutes, turning off the stove, and stewing the red beans for one hour.

The temperature of red beans soup has to be maintained at 70-degree Celsius. Going too high, the red beans will melt. Going too low, customers will get a cold soup.

Even for taro balls and rice balls that are added into the soup, Lin would not let his guard down. He keeps boiling until they all float to the top, then he turns down the heat, allowing taro balls to simmer for two minutes and rice balls for one minute. Besides, the most important thing when cooking rice balls is to make sure the rice balls will not be overinflated, or the texture of the balls will taste mushy.

Dora once forgot to go to work, Lin was not mad at her. He just called and reminded her she had to work that day. However, when she overcooked the rice balls, he suddenly wiped the smile off his face. Dora recalled, “He did not give me a lecture, but I knew he got angry. It had been till that time I didn’t realize how strong his persistence of the food quality.”

What Lin cares about seems not only his food, but the package of it. He would scoop the soup and put a lid on the paper bowl, then he uses a rag to wipe the spill on the surface of the bowl. Before stacking another bowl on the one in the plastic bag, Lin adds an extra lid between two bowls to avoid the soup from spilling from the small holes on the lid of the bottom one.

Talking about Lin, Dora said that he cares about details. He teaches every part-time workers everything in person, such as the soup has to be given more than one scoop, the surface of the bowls has to be wiped before putting into the bag, even the way to wash the pot or the rag. For Lin, the last thing he would do is compromise his standards.



Even when Lin is working, he still pays attention to the things happening around him. Dora said that one day, when Lin was busy cooking taro balls and rice balls, he suddenly ran out at the moment she packed two bags of the soup and handed them to the Uber Eats delivery driver.

He brought back one of the bags to the shop and tied it up carefully. “Ok, now the bowls will not tip during the delivery. Thank you so much for delivering,” with that, Lin handed the bag back to the driver.

The future plan of Lin is to turn Xiao Lin into a shop, providing tables for customers to dine in. “I used to worry about too many things to grab the opportunities to have my own shop,” Lin said.

What Xiao Lin sells are simple items—beans, rice or taro balls, and the tapioca balls. However, it is these tiny things that make a bowl of hot sweet soup. Just like Lin, it is his persistence in details that really matters after all.

The tranquility in the room was suddenly broken. Kiwi Chang, the owner of the café house, along with her 11-year-old daughter and friends, entered casually with smiles on their faces. Upon seeing the regulars sitting in the corner, Kiwi paced to the table, offering her greetings with a detailed introduction to their coffee beans.

The story of Lao Chai Café House began in January 2010 on Daguan Road as an idea among a group of high school friends. Behind the dark wooden door, the baristas communicate with each guest through cups of handmade coffee and refreshing dishes, weaving the uncountable interaction with people into a memoir one of a kind.

The café house opens to everyone. People come, and for different reasons, they usually decide to stay, so casual customers turn into regulars. Bakers, florists, farmers swing by during opening hours, carrying their freshly baked bread, flowers and decorations, or just-picked fruits here. Kiwi grinned talking about her acquaintances, “Running the café house gives me access to people’s stories, and I share mine with them, too.”



Lao Chai Café House

Lao Chai Café Is Like a Lighthouse for Harboring Stories

By Vivian Chen

People play important parts in the café house. “A Sanxia-based magician used to come here frequently. He entered National Taiwan University just because he wanted to join its famous magic club,” recalled the owner. “Now he is performing everywhere in Taiwan.”

Additionally, exhibitions of local artists such as painter Jian-chi Wang as well as farming lectures teaching the making of honey and salad sauces have been held on the second floor. On November 20, 2020, the shop further provided coffee cupping lessons for the students and teachers from Sanxia Junior High.

Customers generously spend hours in this calming space:

eating, reading, or simply gazing into the air in contemplation with a cup of coffee on the table. The room is filled with sunshine in the morning, while in the evening, quiet and dimly lit. Joy Wang, a customer in her forties impressed by Lao Chai after her first visit, said, “I am usually busy working but once I am granted a day off, I come here for the perfect atmosphere and the meal sets.”

The breezes of coffee and bread smell dance in the air. Initially, the café house provided meals just to survive the competing business. “People usually came in and asked us whether we have meals,” said the owner. “The second we answered no, they just left.”



The food, unexpectedly, turned out to be new appeals for more visits. Since Kiwi excels in making friends, she gets access to local organic ingredients for the meal sets from acquainted farmers and bakers in neighboring cities, as far as Nuannuan district in Keelung.

The café house alters its menu twice a year, in summer and winter, to provide foods at their best seasons. A popular dish is the avocado focaccia set. Offered only on hot summer days, the set is made up of chopped avocado and seasonal fruits or vegetables such as pineapples and pitaya, along with the focaccia bread lightly baked, crispy on the outside while remaining soft inside. A cup of Roselle tea comes with the set as well, ending the set with a fresh balance.

The specialties in winter include the cinnamon roll set, consisting of fried omelet, twisted cinnamon roll from a Taipei bakery called L'Atelier, roasted vegetables from Taoyuan Vanilla ueno park, and a brown sugar nut yogurt.

The cinnamon roll tastes tenderly chewy but not sticky, accompanied by sliced almond scattered around the plate adding layers of smoky, nutty aroma to the flavor. The delicate yogurt is nothing inferior, stimulating the taste buds with a mixture of sweet brown sugar and tongue-tickling sourness. No more seasoning is needed. Originality tastes genuine.

Anna Wu, a customer who enjoys Lao Chai's service, drives from Yingge to Sanxia with her husband every weekend for brunch, "We cannot come here every day, so we decided to come at least once or twice a week. The food tastes natural and lays no burden on my health."

The café house is renowned for its handmade coffee as well, but before opening Lao Chai, Kiwi Chang knew little about coffee. The shop thus took its time. With an on-site visit to coffee farms in Pha-Tang of Chiang Rai, Thailand, the team of the café house experienced picking coffee beans first-hand and tried eight different coffee bean processing methods.

That chance helped them delve deeper into coffee making from then on. It took the café house over four years to have its first original blend, and now, the blends occupy more than a few pages on the menu.

With beans selected and tasted through three phases of cuppings respectively by the coffee farms, the bean merchants, and the owner herself, the café house manages to control the quality of its products. Beans come from Panama, Ethiopia, and more sites are water processed, barrel processed, or winery processed to bring out their best flavors respectively, either sour or bitter-sweet, delightfully refreshing.

Now Kiwi lets coffee gradually float through all her daily life, "While I am handing the cup of coffee I made to my customers and friends, I am giving them my precious time—a cup of coffee's time." The efforts, the people, and the time mean everything to the café house and its owner.

Hsiao-wei Chu, the manager of Lao Chai who started as a part-time student worker, is a graduate of NTPU. "The feeling of working in Lao Chai is unique," said the manager explaining her reason for staying in the café house for over nine years. "The space is tranquil, and your colleagues care about you as if they were not your supervisors." She also met her husband here. Their son visits the shop from time to time.

In fact, the word "Chai" in the name of the café house means firewood, serving as a commemoration for the owner's family members who worked in the furniture industry in bygone days. Meanwhile, "Chai" can also be seen as a combination of "this" and "wood" in the Chinese character.

The owner uses this word to illustrate the idea of growing the roots into the neighborhood, "We have lived here, grown to have feelings for this environment, and then felt that we wanted to be here and take root. That's why we planted our seed here." The simple name contains people's past as well as their prospects for the future.

While people come and go, their stories and memories exchange in this café house. Lao Chai is here to hand customers a cup of coffee with a slice of bread, like a lighthouse in the limitless ocean, open to everyone.



Eva Chen, a mother of two, got wreathed in smiles as she recalled how children reacted to her decision of opening Yirou Kitchen, a vegan restaurant named after the last characters of the kids' first names, "They were tickled pink as if it was a dream we share together."

Back in 2015, Eva's mother started up a vegan noodle shop right across An-Shi Junior High School. However, she got badly injured as the lease was about to expire. "My hand could barely move for several months," she said. "I had braced myself for shutting up the shop."

Upon hearing the news, regular customers suggested that Eva should try a hand at running a vegan restaurant nearby National Taipei University since there was little vegan food around. Although she was reluctant initially, considering the high rent and unlively atmosphere, her enthusiasm about promoting vegan food eventually urged her to take the plunge.

Soon after the name was decided, Yirou Kitchen opened its doors on Xuefu Road in June, 2017. Two days before the grand opening, Eva created a Facebook post to announce in advance. Thanks for those regular customers and their friends who shared the post, Eva was deeply touched to see Yirou Kitchen full of customers on that day.

Even with a good start, it was never a smooth sailing for Eva. Every day, she arrived at the restaurant at nine in the morning and stayed until ten at night. Such a tight schedule deprived Eva of her time to be with children, making them feel lonely and abandoned.

She then asked the kids, "Why don't you come and help mommy? I miss you both badly for not seeing you all day."

As her children agreed, Eva let them deliver meals and clear plates, through which they gained a great sense of accomplishment and realized how assiduous their mother had been working.



A Vegie Restaurant that Offers Entries High in Protein

By Phyllis Liu



The main idea of Yirou Kitchen is to provide health-based and natural food. The restaurant was not vegan at first. However, after watching some documentary films, Eva considered it cruel to implement forced molting in laying hens, which increases both production and quality of eggs.

Consequently, she substituted eggs in the recipe and explained to customers that even if they did not eat eggs, they could still take in rich protein from other alternatives.

One of the alternatives is the rice served at Yirou Kitchen. Eva had tried thirty-some times in order to cook the perfect rice, making it delicious and healthy by mixing millets, plumules, red quinoa, and blackkerneled rice.

She believes that by eating just one bowl of rice, customers can meet their daily protein intake requirements, and this is what Yirou Kitchen is all about—healthy and delicious vegan food for everyone.

As the manager, Eva has to take care of everything in the restaurant, making it impossible for her to stay in the kitchen during meal hours, so she hired chefs to share her workload. In order to cover the salaries, Eva has no choice but to increase the meal price for several times, leading herself to examine if she has been profiteering.

Nevertheless, the fact is that she has already made utmost efforts to balance food quality and price.

“Today, most people are so highly educated that they all prefer brain work over manual work. Therefore, if the pay is low, no chef would come to work with us,” she sighed.

Eva wants to make sure that her customers could enjoy high-quality vegan food without worrying about the price.

“Our food is not intense. We do cut back on oil, but not for salt. After all, nobody could fall in love with flavorless food,” said one of the chefs. “There is no real difference between going vegan and eating meat, the key is to have a balanced diet.”

Yirou Kitchen is a vegan restaurant, but about 80% of its customers are not vegan. “This is distinctive,” said Eva. “Theoretically, only vegans would visit vegan restaurants.” To her delight, this is exactly what she has always longed for. When Eva set up Yirou Kitchen, she just wanted to let everyone, especially non-vegans, know that vegan food is not as terrible as they might have expected.

Take Mandy Li, a regular customer, for example. She used to feel sick after eating shredded cheese, but ever since she visited Yirou Kitchen, the problem has been solved.

It turned out that Eva had tried various kinds of cheese before finding a vegan one that fulfilled her expectation. Since Eva valued customers’ health over cost, she decided to cook with it though the price was higher.

By frequently checking reviews on Google Maps, Eva figures out that 80% of the ratings are above four stars, most of which are also with positive comments. However, Eva pays closer attention to those with only one or two stars. “If it were not for the negative comments, I would become haughty without noticing that I was actually staying in a comfort zone,” she said.

“As far as I know, if people dislike a restaurant, they would just leave in silence instead of leaving negative comments. As a result, you should thank those haters for making you a better self,” she explained. “In fact, no matter what career you choose, similar situations would occur, but all can be readily solved if you are able to stay positive.”

Yirou Kitchen's next step is to make vegan thick toasts. As a licensed baker herself, Eva plans to make the best use of her skills, getting more non-vegans to accept vegan food, especially students who rent apartments around the university.

Saigon Kitchen Offers Vietnamese Dishes and Charms

By Kelly Yang

Located on Daxue Road in Sanxia District, Saigon Kitchen is a block away from the main entrance of National Taipei University. Customers can find the hand-made Vietnamese bamboo baskets at the doorway, surrounded by Vietnamese pop songs in the air. To order, one has to pick up the basket, selecting the meal and to to the counter to check out.

The idea come up from the two daughters of the restaurant owner. Saigon Kitchen is operated by the Lu family, and Fiona Lu is the eldest daughter.

The family has already operated seven restaurants in New Taipei City, including the spaghetti restaurants called Magic Pasta on Guoji 2nd Street, near the side entrance of Taipei University.

The main operator are Fiona's parents. When talking about the motivation of operating the restaurant, she said, "We were surprised at how delicious Vietnamese dishes made by our Vietnamese employees were, so we thought, why didn't we promote Vietnamese cuisine to more Taiwanese?"

Since Italian-styled spaghetti restaurants have become saturated as the Vietnamese ones are still scarce in the market, they decided to open Saigon kitchen in 2018.



The Lu family has adapted the industrial style interior design of the predecessor, the American restaurant called Elephant Pie, and used bamboo hats and other Vietnamese-style decorations for more embellishment.

The yellow illumination on the wall on the second floor also belonged to the predecessor that Mr. Lu now cuts into the pattern of "Sai" and "gon". "It was really funny that my father reused the resource from the former owner. He was so creative," Fiona Lu laughed as she said.

The innovative design as well as the exotic cuisine in Saigon Kitchen had also drawn attention of a photographer, Mr. Ji, in April 2019. He was so attracted that he took pictures and did interviews. Later, his article appeared on the website of Super Taste, a TV show and food guide in Taiwan, gaining popularity for the restaurant.

Vietnamese meals emphasize freshness, requiring a large amount of vegetable, including the mint that is used in iced tea and the lettuce used in raw spring rolls. "But it's very troublesome in rainy or typhoon day. Vegetables would be hard to get," Fiona Lu said.

Most of the raw materials are delivered from agricultural products wholesale markets and production and marketing groups in New Taipei City. Pork neck and warm meat, for example, are bought from Mr. Lu's acquaintance, an old butcher living in Sanxia. Other ingredients are imported from Vietnam directly, such as the wrappers of fried spring roll.





Saigon Kitchen holds the concept of glocalization. Vietnamese love consuming food with heavy or strong taste while Taiwanese tend to have light diet. In order to meet and adjust the taste preferences, the restaurant have reduced the spiciness of each item.

Fermented fish sauce is popular in Vietnam and usually together with spring roll. However, Taiwanese could not accept its stinky smell, so Mr. and Mrs. Lu decide to use lemonade instead to overwhelm the smell. That is also why the Vietnamese staffs in Saigon Kitchen think the flavors of dishes are not authentic.

Sipping the soup of *pho*, letting the warm liquid flows into the throat and reaching the stomach slowly, customers can taste the rich smell of the pork and the Chinese herbal medicines mildly mixed. Up to 12 Chinese herbal medicines are added in the soup, bought and cooked by Mrs. Lu. She believes that can enhance the level of the cuisines.

The signature dish in the restaurant is Vietnamese curry with French stick, which is also the children's favorite. Instead of using traditional chicken broth cubes that Vietnamese people love, Mrs. Lu choose to select fresh vegetables and pork ribs to cook the soup base, adding sweet potato and taro to diversify the texture. These ingredients become soft and mushy through the braising and release stringy vegetable starch.

Didi coffee is the special beverage. It's a kind of Vietnamese coffee with condensed milk made with imported Vietnamese coffee beans. The dark-brown liquid has a little burnt fragrance after roasting, but soon neutralized by sugary condensed milk, creating a bittersweet balance. The coffee items here are separated Americano and Didi coffee for customers to choose from.

"By the way, our staffs are praised frequently due to their good service attitude," said Fiona Lu.

"When we first brought our grandma here, the staffs were so considerate that offered to help us arrange in the sofa area on the first floor," said a customer, Ms. Chen.



There are nine kinds of main meals in Saigon Kitchen, such as seafood pho or chicken curry with rice, designed as set meals because of the concern that more customers enjoy eating their own rather than sharing with others. The average price of each set meal is NT\$250.

In terms of difficulties, various types of companies are coming into the city, so the restaurant must work hard to compete. Student customers are rarely seen even though the restaurant is near the college— one reasons being the price. Helen Li, a student at NTPU had different opinion, "I think it's reasonable to have a set meal at this price. In Taipei, this type of dishes is more expensive, not including service charge."

The table turnover is 30-50 tables on weekdays and 50-60 tables on weekends. Regarding the operating conditions throughout the year, the business doesn't go well especially in the winter. "Because Vietnamese dishes are refreshing and use lots of raw vegetables," Fiona Lu said.

As for the best day, the revenue on Mother's Day can increase by 80%. "Mothers do not want to slave away over a hot stove that holiday," said Fiona.

Want to try non-spicy curry with baguette? Experience the exotic flavor? Come to Saigon Kitchen and explore the charm of Vietnam. "If there is a chance, my family and I would like to go to Vietnam to see the real Saigon kitchen there," said Fiona, who promises to do their best to provide customers with a better experience.

Curry without Carrots is a Recipe for Savory Taste

A rich and aromatic smell of Japanese curry comes to the nose as soon as customers step into the door. Decorated simply and lighted in soft burnt orange, Curry Weiman is a restaurant opened in July, 2020, located on the 1st floor of U-Shop. The name is from the restaurant's logo, a man who looks like samurai in the Shogunate era of Japan.

Before opening a branch in Sanxia, Jojo Wang, the owner and the chef, learned culinary skills for a year from the friend who opened a curry restaurant in Taoyuan, the founding store of Curry Weiman.

"The reason for choosing Sanxia is because there are residential buildings around the school district," Jojo continued. "There are business opportunities because of the presence of many franchises."

The tangy curry flavor comes to nostrils when customers open the door. It smells like mom cooking in the kitchen when children arrive home after school.

"The menu is specially designed for our convenience," said Jojo. "We pursue fast serving because the location of the store is around school." By reducing the choices on the menu, she can not only cut down preparation time of ingredients, but also make sure students will not be late for afternoon class.

This specially designed menu has divided into quarters. "I was confused about this before," said Ivy Zhang, one of the regulars who lives nearby. However, seating arrangements in the store are based on two to four people, so a menu with a quarter is enough for a table. Otherwise, each meal can be customized.



By Sara Hsu

There is only one kind of curry available in Curry Weiman—Japanese curry. Customers can choose different types of meats to serve with curry, including pork, chicken, and beef. In addition, fried side dishes are provided, such as Japanese fried chicken karaage, cheese pork chops, and fried shrimps.

Taking a bite of crispy fried foods will sometimes have the upper jaw scratched when eating deep-fried foods because of the difference of batter powders. This won't happen in Curry Weiman. The sweet gravy accompanied with the crunchy crust is sinful but would make customers unable to stop munching.

Curry Weiman, different from other curry cuisine restaurants, uses lumpy potatoes and carrots as ingredients. The garnish of the curry is based on food presentation, which is garnished in three colors, more beautiful than one. "Food presentation is a kind of arts," said Jojo. In order to embellish the curry, she uses cherry tomato, baby corn, cucumber, and pea sprout to complete the dishes.

Don't like to eat carrots? Don't worry. Customers won't see any carrot in the meals because carrots are not stewed with curry in the original cooking process. Besides, customers reflected that they don't like to eat carrots, so Jojo decided not to add carrots as essential ingredients in her curry entries.

There are three options for meat—pork shoulder butt, chicken fillets, and beef brisket. The meat is more fresh and tender than other options. Moreover, their chicken has less fat, making it light and not greasy. As for the pork and beef, the chef will marinate again in order to soak the meat with plenty of flavor.



In Curry Weiman, Jojo stew curry with potatoes first, and then stew with meats afterwards. However, before stewing with curry, potatoes need to simmer for 15 minutes. In this way, potatoes will be soft. It takes about 45 minutes for stewing the curry. This is also the reason why customers won't see lumpy potatoes in the curry because potatoes are already melted.

Chicken fillets curry rice is a popular order among customers, recommended by the owner herself because of the texture of chicken.

"I was stunned by their chicken when visiting here for the first time," said Jenny Wang, a student at NTPU. The chicken doesn't look different from ordinary ones, but it tastes tender and not chewy. Furthermore, skinless fillets of chicken have less fat. It's not only healthier, but also suitable for people who are on a diet.

Customers will have their order placed in a porcelain bowl. Curry and runny egg cover the rice, decorated with four colorful side dishes. Piercing the runny egg, golden yolk flows out and integrates with curry. Scoop up a bite of rice mixed with yolk and curry.

"Over-easy egg on the curry is my favorite," said Jack Wu, a customer who lives in Sanxia. "Sometimes I will upgrade over-easy egg to omelet for an extra NT\$30."

Only costing extra NT\$10, customers can have a taste feast with curry rice and cheese. A slice of cheese on the curry rice may look plain, but it adds savory and sweet flavor to the meal which gives the curry rice a rich taste.



A female part-time worker carried a meal carefully to the table leaning against the wall. "It's your chicken curry rice with extra cheese," said the worker. A young man wears round wire glasses in white shirt said thanks to her with shiny eyes and happy smile.

"I know I'm not good at building relationship with customers, but I still consider every customer to be important, even students," said Jojo.

Alice Huang, a student at NTPU, was touched by owners' intimate attitude when first visiting the restaurant. Business was good at that day, resulting in shortage of rice. "She served us with croquette and fried shrimp cake for free, asking us that if we were full occasionally," said Alice Huang. This shows Jojo's insistence on quality service.

"Focusing on cooking is more important than building a relationship with customers," said Jojo. She caters to every meal, just like she takes care of the potted plants, aroid palms, outside the store every day.

On weekdays, most customers are NTPU students. Considering students may not have enough to eat, Curry Weiman serve one extra rice and curry paste for free.

Customers can refill miso soup, black tea, and ice cream. "We will not reduce the quality of our main courses by providing these services," said Jojo. "These services come with the meals."

The average price in Curry Weiman is around NT\$90 to NT\$130. Without a break time during the opening hours, Curry Weiman is a good option to people who are too busy to have a decent lunchtime. Jojo not only wants her customers to taste a good meal during the day, but also treats meals with her heart to make every customer feels at home.

Orca Spin Cafe (鯨旋咖啡)

Recommended Dishes: Specialty Coffee, matcha
Swiss roll

Open: Monday to Sunday 10:00-18:00 except for
Thursday

TEL: 02-8672-5012

Address: No. 227, Dayi Rd., Sanxia Dist., New
Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Tzai-Shin Egg Pancake Crepe (在心蛋餅鋪)

Recommended Dishes: Egg Rice Pancake Crepe

Open: Monday to Sunday 7:00~13:00 except for
Tuesday

TEL: no telephone number (Line Account:
@872vvutc)

Address: No.21, Guoji 1st St., Sanxia Dist., New
Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.) (U-SHOP)

Laifa Coffee Shop (來發咖啡峽)

Recommended Dishes: no-bake cheesecake,
specialty coffee, Laifa coffee

Open: on Monday to Saturday 12:00-22:00,
Sunday 12:00-18:00

TEL: 02-2673-6749

Address: No. 73, Guoguang St., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City, 237, Taiwan (R.O.C)

Rainbow Forest (彩虹森林)

Recommended Dishes: beef donduri, hot plate
noodle

Open: Monday to Sunday 6:00-13:30 except for
Tuesday

TEL: 02-2673 1586

Address: No.102, Guoqing Rd., Sanxia Dist., New
Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Big-bite Taiwanese Onigiri (大口吃飯糰)

Recommended Dishes: pork onigiri, pork floss
onigiri

Open: Tuesday to Saturday 6:30-14:00, Sunday
6:30-12:00

TEL: 0963-371-437

Address: No. 33-2, Guoji 2nd St., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Xiao Lin Sweet Soup (小林甜湯)

Recommended Dishes: Red beans soup with rice
balls, taro balls, and tapioca balls

Open: Tuesday to Saturday 16:00-23:00

TEL: No telephone number

Address: No.52, Guoji 1st St., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Saigon Kitchen (西貢廚房)

Recommended Dishes: Vietnamese curry with French stick

Open: Monday to Sunday 11:00-21:00 except for Tuesday

TEL: 02-2668-1188

Address: No. 192, Daxue Rd., Sanxia Dist., New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Zao Dian Breakfast Club (找点早點)

Recommended Dishes: set meal,
egg panckae with tuna, handmade patty
hamburger

Open: Monday to Sunday 8:30-13:00, Monday
to Thursday 17:30-20:30

TEL: 02-8674-2050

Address: No.28, Daguan Rd., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Thai Two (泰貳泰式風味料理)

Recommended Dishes: fried shrimp ball
with pineapple and sweet sauce, green curry,
cabbage with shrimp paste

Open: Wednesday to Sunday 11:00-14:00,
17:00-21:00

TEL: 02-2672-1231

Address: No. 96-1, Daguan Rd., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Bella Italia Pizzeria (貝里義大利薄餅披薩)

Recommended Dishes: Black truffle pate
mushroom pizza, Mince Pork Pizza

Open: Wednesday to Friday 10:30-14:00,
16:30-20:00

Saturday to Sunday 10:30-20:00

TEL: 02-8970-3390

Address: No. 612, Sec. 3, Jiayuan Rd., Shulin
Dist., New Taipei City 238, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Birnana Toast (蕉丫吐司)

Recommended Dishes: crispy chicken
sandwich, Birnana milk tea

Open: Monday to Sunday 08:00-14:30

TEL: 02-8671-7180

Address: No. 120, Daguan Rd., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Lao Chai Café House (老柴咖啡館)

Recommended Dishes: cinnamon roll set,
avocado focaccia set

Open: Monday to Friday 09:00-20:00,
Saturday to Sunday 08:00-20:00

TEL: 02-3501-2656

Address: No. 113, Daguan Rd., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Yirou Kitchen (益柔廚房)

Recommended Dishes: bibimbap, handmade
turnip cake

Open: Monday to Sunday 11:00-14:00, 17:00-
20:00

TEL: 02-2671-5388

Address: No. 36, Xuefu Rd., Sanxia Dist.,
New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Curry Weiman (咖哩衛門)

Recommended Dishes: chicken fillets curry

Open: Monday to Sunday 12:00-20:00

TEL: 02-2671-2818

Address: No. 33, Guoji 1st St., Sanxia Dist., New Taipei City 237, Taiwan (R.O.C)