

Food Picks

Rebecca Lynne Tan straitstimesfood.com Editor recommends

GLAMPING AT TBB SAFARI

I went glamping – glamorous camping – in Singapore recently, in the wilds of Minden Road near Dempsey Hill. There, foraged herbs were even included in my food and drink.

The two-week-old TBB Safari is the latest urban glamping bakery experience. It is Tiong Bahru Bakery's newest outlet, housed in a kitschy glamping tent.

The seating area is decorated with ethnic kilim rugs, brass insects and vintage suitcases. Afraid of the heat? Don't worry, there are air blowers for cool comfort.

Aside from the bakery chain's staples like buttery croissants and addictive kouign amanns served in spanking new mess tins, exclusive treats here include pandan-infused pineapple with rolled oats served with a black sesame-infused milk (\$8.80, right) and an apple bircher muesli with rojak flower (\$8.50).

Specialty drinks include the blue bell latte (\$6) – made with blue pea flowers from the garden and coconut milk – and beetroot and ginger latte (\$6.50). Opt for soya or almond milk at no extra charge.

I like the dairy-free turmeric and ginger latte (\$6.50) – a zingy, wake-me-up latte made with almond or soya milk and a smidgen of coconut sugar for sweetness.

Head here for breakfast, tea or a casual tete-a-tete.

WHERE: TBB Safari, 130E Minden Road **MRT:** Farrer Road/Botanic Gardens **OPEN:** 8am to 6pm daily **TEL:** 6877-4876 **INFO:** E-mail enquiries@tongbahrubakery.com or go to www.tiongbahrubakery.com



PHOTOS: ALOHA POKE, GOODWOOD PARK HOTEL, REBECCA LYNNE TAN, TIONG BAHRU BAKERY/SPA ESPRIT GROUP

VERDE KITCHEN'S ASSAM LAKSA

Earlier this year, when Verde Kitchen opened in the place previously occupied by Glow, one of my favourite cafes, I was devastated. Gone were some of my favourite dishes on the menu too.

Thankfully, while the space and most of the menu have been revamped, some items remained, including the Penang assam laksa (\$25, above), which always satisfies. A little more luxe and much more expensive than that from a hawker stall, but I think of it as a treat.

Here, the spicy fish broth is thick, robust and full of flavour. The bowl is huge and the cafe does not stint on ingredients – there is plenty of gravy with chunks of fish, shredded cucumber, pieces of pineapple and torch ginger flower.

WHERE: Verde Kitchen, Level 2 Hilton Singapore, 581 Orchard Road **MRT:** Orchard **OPEN:** 10.30am to 5pm (Mondays to Saturdays), closed on Sundays **TEL:** 6730-3397 **INFO:** E-mail verdekitchen@hilton.com or go to str.sg/oXnd



BEAUTIFUL LOG CAKE FOR CHRISTMAS

I always take descriptions in press releases with a pinch of salt, especially when words like "gorgeous" are used to describe Christmas offerings. I will believe it when I see it.

So when Goodwood Park Hotel's new Yuletide Blossom log cake (above) was delivered to me two weeks ago, I was gobsmacked when I opened the box. The cake was, as described, gorgeous.

The log cake (\$82 for a 1kg cake) is decorated with skillfully hand-piped blooms of butter cream in festive colours – intricate and reminiscent of old-school grandeur.

Expect a lush layer of white chocolate mousse around a

light strawberry chiffon sponge on a hazelnut sable breton base that is not too sweet. In the centre, tangy yuzu-infused pear poached in red wine makes for a less cloying and more refreshing Christmas dessert.

WHERE: The Deli, Goodwood Park Hotel, 22 Scotts Road **MRT:** Orchard **OPEN:** Available for collection till Dec 26. Order at least five days in advance. Order in person at The Deli between 9am and 9pm daily, or over the phone **TEL:** 6730-1867/6730-1868, from 10am to 6pm daily **INFO:** E-mail festive@goodwoodparkhotel.com or go to festivepromotions.goodwoodparkhotel.com from tomorrow to order online. Last day for orders is Dec 19, noon



POKE WITH CAULIFLOWER RICE

It has taken a while for the cauliflower rice trend to take root here, but I am glad it finally has.

Cauliflower rice is essentially cauliflower that has been finely chopped until it resembles a grain. It is then cooked and seasoned.

Poke chain Aloha Poke, which has eight outlets in locations such as Change Alley and Westgate, introduced cauliflower rice (above) to its menu last month.

It has also increased its options of cooked and vegetarian poke, as well as added more salad toppings like marinated jelly fish, ikura and roasted red peppers to its arsenal.

I like having the option of cauliflower rice because that way, I can cut down on boring and unnecessary carbohydrates – I like to

save those calories for hawker food. Aloha Poke's version is tasty on its own – mildly spiced and fragrant. Build your own poke bowl for \$10.90 and opt for cauliflower rice (additional \$2) in place of white or brown rice.

For a vegetarian option, try the Green Giant (\$17.90) with cauliflower rice, cubes of tofu in a sesame sauce and sauteed oyster and button mushrooms.

WHERE/MRT: Aloha Poke, eight outlets including Tikki Bar by Aloha Poke, 92 Amoy Street (Telok Ayer), tel: 6221-6165; Takashimaya Shopping Centre (Orchard), B2-31, tel: 6732-1420; Bugis Junction (Bugis), 04-01, tel: 6266-8553; Westgate (Jurong East), 01-09, tel: 6252-7996 **OPEN:** Various opening hours **INFO:** www.alohapoke.com.sg

FOOD

PROMOTIONS

Morton's Goes All-Natural With Autumn Menu

Steakhouse Morton's of Chicago is celebrating its 40th anniversary with an all-natural, hormone-free tender cut. Highlights of its new autumn menu include the All Natural 10oz Filet With Bone Marrow (\$108++) and 18oz Dry-Aged Prime Bone-In New York (\$138++). A fan favourite is the thick-cut Nueske's Bacon Steak (\$20++). Morton's 2015 Caymus, Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley (\$180++), is highly recommended. Diners can also enjoy a Steak & Lobster dish for \$108++ (offer ends on Dec 30).

WHERE: Level 4 Mandarin Oriental Singapore, 5 Raffles Avenue **MRT:** Promenade **WHEN:** Mon - Sat 5.30 - 11pm; Sun: Noon - 9pm **PRICE:** \$108++ - \$138++; wine \$180++ **TEL:** 6339-3740 **INFO:** morton.com/singapore

Dishes By Justin Quek At Xin Wang Outlets

Celebrity chef Justin Quek has teamed up with Xin Wang Hong Kong Cafe to roll out a series of limited-time-only dishes. It kicks off with a quintessentially Hong Kong experience, including starter French Duck Foie Gras Pate, Luncheon Meat & Fluffy Scrambled Egg Toast (\$7.80++); mains Sea Bass Fillet Curry With Steamed Rice (\$15.80++) and Hae Mee Soup Nissin Noodle (\$12.80++); and Pulut Hitam Pudding (\$5.80++) for dessert.

WHERE: Xin Wang HK Cafe outlets at Anchorpoint, AMK Hub, Changi T3, Compass One, EastPoint, Heartland Mall, Jem, Northpoint, NUH Medical Centre, Plaza Singapura, Springvale @ Siglap, Tiong Bahru Plaza, West Coast Plaza, White Sands & Yew Tee Point **MRT:** Various **WHEN:** From Dec 13 **PRICE:** \$5.80++ - \$15.80++ **INFO:** xinwang.com.sg

Dinner With MasterChef SG's Sowmiya Venkatesan At Flying Monkey

Flying Monkey is holding a four-course dinner for two nights only with chef Sowmiya Venkatesan of MasterChef Singapore. The menu will feature a traditional South Indian feast that includes Amuse Bouche of Medu Vadai with Neer Moru; Curry-leaf Poori with Potato Masala and Tamarind chutney, and a tasting platter of Pepper Mushroom, Coconut Cabbage, Raw Plantain Fry, Pumpkin Sambar with Coconut, Lemon and Tamarind Sevai. The non-vegetarian menu has Pepper Prawns, Coconut Cabbage and Spicy Chicken Stir-fry.

WHERE: 67-68 Bussorah Street **MRT:** Bugis **WHEN:** Tue & Dec 11, 6.30 & 8.30pm **PRICE:** \$45 nett; for reservations, go to bit.ly/2AdkbCH **TEL:** 6291-0695 **INFO:** E-mail hello@flyingmonkey.sg

CHRISTMAS

Free Wine With Lobster Specialties At Jumbo Restaurants

The Jumbo Group of Restaurants is ushering in the festive season with live lobster specialties and exclusive dining deals. Diners will get complimentary red or white wine (worth \$35) with every order of live Boston Lobster (about 600g). Each Jumbo brand will be cooking its signature style such as Chui Huay Lim's Wok Baked Live Boston Lobster with fermented beans and garlic Teochew style (\$12.80++ per 100g); Jumbo Seafood's Live Boston Lobster baked with cheese and butter (\$11.80++ per 100g); and Singapore Seafood Republic's White Pepper Live Boston Lobster (seasonal price). Diners can also enjoy the live Boston Lobster (\$10.80++ per 100g), complemented with JPot's Seafood Platter (\$58.80++) or premium meats such as sliced-to-order Sliced Wagyu Ribeye (\$24.80++), Sliced Kurobuta Pork (\$11.80++) and JPot's signature Hand-made Jumbo Pork Ball (\$5.80++).

WHERE: Jumbo Seafood outlets (East Coast Seafood Centre, Riverside Point, The Riverwalk, NSRCC's Changi Clubhouse, Dempsey Hill and Ion Orchard (opening next month); Chui Huay Lim Teochew Cuisine, JPot Tampines 1, Singapore Seafood Republic (Resorts World Sentosa) **MRT:** Various **WHEN:** Mon - Jan 1 **PRICE:** From \$10.80 for 100g **INFO:** jumbogroup.sg/en/promotions

Festive Feasts At Oakwood Premier OUE

The menu at Se7enth at Oakwood Premier OUE Singapore starts with a holiday-inspired appetiser of Baked Pumpkin and Orange Soup with crab meat. Mains choices are Roasted Turkey Breast with sweet potato and Grilled Ribeye Steak with Brussels sprouts. For dessert, there is Christmas Chestnut Delight. The bar is serving three Yuletide-inspired cocktails.

WHERE: Se7enth, Level 7 Oakwood Premier OUE Singapore, OUE Downtown 1, 6 Shenton Way **MRT:** Tanjong Pagar **WHEN/PRICE:** Till Dec 31, 6 - 9.30pm (Se7enth): one-for-one set dinner at \$98++; tomorrow - Dec 31 (bar) from noon: \$12++ a cocktail **TEL:** 6812-6050 **INFO:** E-mail dining.opsg@oakwood.com

Gourmet Goodies From Marmalade Pantry

Marmalade Pantry's Festive Gourmet Goodies are available for pre-orders. Carvery items include Whole Roasted Turkey with fresh herbs (\$98+), Moroccan Roasted Boneless Lamb Leg (\$88+), Angus Ribeye With Merlot Beef Jus (\$88+) and Maple Honey Glazed Ham (\$88+). Sides (\$20+) include Cauliflower And Burger Salad, Garlic Mash and Roasted Winter Vegetables. For sweet treats, there are log cakes (\$60++) and signature festive cupcakes (\$20++ for a set of four). Festive bundles of one carvery and two sides are available at \$110+. **WHERE (MRT):** 01-02/04 Oasia Hotel Novena, 8 Sinaran Drive (Novena); 01-01 Oasia Hotel Downtown, 100

Peck Seah Street (Tanjong Pagar); or online at themarmaladepantry.com.sg **WHEN:** Till Dec 31. Collection times: Noon - 3pm, 4 - 7pm (three working days' advance order required) **PRICE:** \$20+ - \$110+ **TEL/INFO:** Novena: 6664-0348, e-mail enquiry.novena@themarmaladepantry.com.sg; Downtown: 6385-0741, e-mail enquiry.downtown@themarmaladepantry.com.sg

Bakerzin's Sweet And Savoury Treats

Adorned with a sweet smile on coconut cream, the adorable Snowman cake (\$60, 2kg) with fragrant pandan sponge, cempedak and pure avocado cream is one of Bakerzin's festive offerings. Others include Orange Cinnamon Capon (\$49, 2kg), Pineapple Glazed Gammon Ham (\$58, 1.3kg) and Guinness Beef, Chicken Teriyaki and the meat-free Mushroom Shepherd's Pies (\$24 - \$25, 700g). Other pastries are Strawberry Yoghurt Yule Log (\$46, 900g), Gingerbread House (\$42, 850g) and Peppermint Meringue (\$5.50 a piece). **WHERE:** Go to bakerzin.com/locations for list of outlets **MRT:** Various **WHEN:** Pre-orders by Dec 28 (online by Dec 21, 2pm); last day for delivery/self-collection: Dec 31/Jan 1 **PRICE:** \$5.50 - \$58; festive packages \$78 - \$178; 10 per cent early-bird discount (till Dec 18), 10 - 15 per cent discount on certain cards (till Jan 1) **INFO:** www.bakerzin.com

Festive Treats At Mon Bijou

Fresh from winning the Best Cafe award at the RAS Epicurean Star Awards, Orchard Hotel's Mon Bijou presents a trove of festive treats. Traditional Christmas specialties include Hickory BBQ Baby Pork Rib (\$118+), Honey-glazed Ham with Port Wine Jus and Pineapple Chutney (\$118+) and Slow Roast Turkey with Giblet Sauce (\$138). All three portions serve eight to 10 people. Sweeten your celebration with the new Mon Bijou Island Ananas Milk Chocolate Log Cake (\$60, 1kg) or the Coconut Pulut Hitam Log Cake (\$52, 1kg).

WHERE: Mezzanine Level, Claymore Connect (beside Orchard Hotel), 442 Orchard Road **MRT:** Orchard **WHEN:** Till Dec 25, collection 10am - 8pm **PRICE:** \$52+ - \$138+ **TEL:** 6739-6738 **INFO:** E-mail monbijou.ohs@millenniumhotels.com

Pre-Christmas Lunch & Dinner At 1919 Waterboat House

The 1919 Waterboat House is serving a three-course pre-Christmas lunch and a four-course pre-Christmas dinner. Menu highlights include Homemade Pasta with White Truffle, Crispy Shrimp and a Spiced Iberico Pluma Pork with Purple Cabbage and Pickled Grapes. **WHERE:** 3 Fullerton Road **MRT:** Raffles Place **WHEN:** Lunch: Dec 10 - 21, noon - 2pm; dinner: Dec 10 - 22, 6 - 10pm **PRICE:** \$35++ - \$75++ a person **TEL:** 6538-9038 **INFO:** E-mail hello@1919.com.sg

Celebratory Cakes From Butter Studio

Halal bakery Butter Studio has put together a festive menu for parties and gifts. Choose from the selection of log cakes (\$58 to \$68), festive gift basket (\$58), Whimsical Cakelets (from \$18.90), cupcakes and gingerbread cookies (from \$3.50). Its signature Holiday Velvet cake (\$48) has also been given a festive makeover with a festive greeting chocolate plaque and holiday decorations. Store collection and doorstep delivery are available. **WHERE (MRT):** Bakery Cafe, 147 Jalan Besar (Jalan Besar); B208-4A Takashimaya B2 Food Hall, 391 Orchard Road (Orchard); B1-K8 Tampines Mall, 4 Tampines Central 5 (Tampines) **WHEN:** Jalan Besar: Mon - Thu, noon - 9pm; Fri, noon - 11pm; Sat, 11am - midnight; Sun, 11am - 9pm; closed on Tue. Takashimaya/Tampines: From 10am daily **PRICE:** Gingerbread cookies & cupcakes from \$3.50, log & other cakes from \$48 (6-inch)/\$68 (8-inch) **TEL:** 6294-7115 (cafe), 6734-6153 (Takashimaya),

6543-9809 (Tampines) **INFO:** thebutterstudio.com

Donuts And Pizzas From One Sushi

One Sushi's chef Wong Eng Chun has turned the classic donut into three savoury items – Salmon Avocado Sushi donut (large \$12.90/small \$7.90), One Sushi Sushi donut (\$7.90/\$4.90) and Refreshing Sushi donut (\$7.90/\$4.90). The One Sushi Classic Sushi Pizza (\$9.90/slice) contains a spread of salmon, maguro, tuna mayo, avocado, egg roe and a handful of sesame seeds. Also available are platters such as Salmon Deluxe Platter (\$62.90), Assorted Sushi Platter (\$48.90) and, for a small gathering, the One Sushi Special Platter (\$8.90). **WHERE:** 01-04 Northpoint City Town Square, 3 Northpoint Drive **MRT:** Yishun **WHEN:** Till Dec 31, 11.30am - 10pm **PRICE:** Sushi donuts: \$4.90 - \$12.90; platters: \$8.90 - \$62.90 **TEL:** 6481-9331 **INFO:** facebook.com/OneSushiSG

WINE EVENT

San Felice-Pietrasanta Wine Dinner

Ristorante Pietrasanta, a Tuscan-style family restaurant founded by the Massimini brothers, Giuseppe and chef Loris, is offering a five-course dinner paired with the Tuscan wines of San Felice. Menu highlights are Seared Tuna Loin, Handmade Tuscan Spaghetti with octopus sauce, Grilled Swordfish belly, Roasted Tenderloin with ricotta cheese and smoked cured ham. Featured wines include San Felice Chianti Classico DOCG 2015, IGT Toscana Vigorello 2013 and San Felice Brunello di Montalcino DOCG Campogiovanni 2013. **WHERE:** Ristorante Pietrasanta, 5B Portsdown Road, 01-04 **MRT:** One-North **WHEN:** Dec 18, 7pm **PRICE:** \$118++ a person, \$94.40++ for HSBC cardholders **TEL:** 6319-4038 **INFO:** E-mail gustoitaliano@sph.com.sg