

FOOD

PROMOTIONS

Heytea Brings Brulee And Oreo Bobo Tea To Singapore

Heytea has brought to Singapore its brulee boba tea and oreo boba tea, which are among its top sellers in China. As part of the launch, it will give out 100 free cups of boba tea tomorrow and on Sunday to people who are spotted wearing polka dots near its boba truck outside Ion Orchard.

WHERE: B4-29 Ion Orchard, 2 Orchard Turn **MRT:** Orchard **WHEN:** 10am - 10pm daily **PRICE:** \$4.80 - \$5.80 **INFO:** facebook.com/heyteacn

CHRISTMAS

Gourmet Gifting With Jamie's Italian Christmas Hampers

The Epic Jamie's Italian Hamper (\$300+) is a beverage bonanza of wines, beers and more, while the Indulgent Jamie's Italian Hamper (\$350+) has gourmet goods such as Sorensina Pecorino Romano and grated mullet bottarga. The Great Jamie's Hamper (\$600+) is full of goodies such as a black olive pate spread, balsamic vinegar from Modena, a bottle of prosecco and a Jamie Cooks Italy cookbook.

WHERE (MRT): 01-01/04 Forum Shopping Mall, 583 Orchard Road (Orchard), 01-165/167 VivoCity, 1 Harbourfront Walk (HarbourFront) **WHEN:** Till Jan 6 **PRICE:** \$300+ - \$600+ **TEL:** 6655-7676 (Forum), 6733-5500 (VivoCity) **INFO:** E-mail enquiries@jamiesitalian.sg

Surprise Five-Course Festive Feast At Open Farm Community

Open Farm Community is offering a five-course surprise selection of its best dishes. A la carte items will still be available - with snacks (\$6 - \$17), appetisers (\$17 - \$18), pastas (\$26 - \$28) and mains such as chicken in a wreath (\$28), 16-hour braised Canadian pork belly (\$30), steamed Tiberias barramundi (\$30), spice braised beef cheek (\$32) and Pure Black grass-fed Tasman beef porterhouse (800g, for two; \$120).

WHERE: Open Farm Community, 130E Minden Road, Dempsey Hill **MRT:** Botanic Gardens **WHEN/PRICE:** Five-course menu (Dec 24 & 25): \$65 a person (minimum two), add \$45 for wine, a la carte (till early January): various prices **TEL:** 6471-0306 **INFO:** E-mail enquiries@ofcsingapore.com.sg

Heritage Eurasian Christmas At Folklore

Folklore's festive menu features seven time-honoured Eurasian dishes for dine-in and takeaway. White Debal (\$42+ dine-in/\$45 nett for takeaway) is chef Damian D'Silva's family rendition of the popular Eurasian stew commonly referred to as devil's curry. Other dishes include pork vindaloo (\$35+/\$38 nett) and dry mutton curry (\$42+/\$45 nett).

WHERE: Level 2 Destination Singapore Beach Road, 700 Beach Road **MRT:** Nicoll Highway **WHEN:** Till Dec 31, noon - 2.30pm & 6 - 9.30pm **PRICE:** Various prices, takeaways (orders end Dec 25) require five working days' notice **TEL:** 6679-2900 or 9021-9700 **INFO:** E-mail reserve@folklore.sg

Christmas On The Sampan In Boat Quay

The Sampan's Christmas three-course lunch and dinner will feature a choice of three starters, two mains and a dessert. Smoked salmon rillette, ham hock terrine, turkey ballotine, Yorkshire pudding, honey baked salmon and whisky-soaked Christmas pudding are some of the highlights. **WHERE:** 63 Boat Quay **MRT:** Clarke Quay/Raffles Place **WHEN:** Mon - Dec 29, 11.30am - 2.30pm (Mon - Fri), 5pm - midnight (Mon - Sat) **PRICE:** \$59+ a person **TEL:** 6732-1698 **INFO:** E-mail info@thesampan.sg

Le Binchotan Christmas Supper Special

Rather than a European-style pork roast or slices of ham, chef Jeremy Chiam of Le Binchotan is presenting his version of the local favourite bak kut teh - rich, piping hot broth made from scratch with a pork bone stock and spiced with white pepper and garlic, served with Japanese Kurobuta pork ribs. The restaurant is also serving fruit cake in a glass, reimaged as a rum-based cocktail. **WHERE:** 01-04, 115 Amoy Street (via Gemmill Lane) **MRT:** Telok Ayer **WHEN/PRICE:** Mon - Dec 29, from 11.30am for the fruit cake cocktail (\$21+), from 9.30pm for the Kurobuta BKT (\$19+) **TEL:** 6224-1045 **INFO:** reservations@lebinchotan.sg

Pork, Fish Or Beef At Ding Dong

The main courses for Ding Dong's Festive Lunch are pork belly with charred baby leeks, sweet potato puree and spiced plum jus; ocean trout with tom kha, baby carrot and Thai basil oil; or beef striploin. Starter options are foie gras ganache, smoked salmon terrine or heirloom baby tomato, and dessert choices are

FoodPicks

Tan Hsueh Yun Food Editor recommends

**SAUSAGE IS STAR OF THE BLACK SWAN'S MEAT PLATTER**

Turkey and ham are de rigueur this time of year, but who made these rules and why do we have to follow them?

The Black Swan restaurant in Cecil Street is offering a festive meat platter (\$188++) that will find favour with cave men and women types.

On it is a 400g Westholme wagyu ribeye, two 150g Maori Lakes T-bone lamb chops and a housemade pork sausage.

Accompaniments are a terrific dish of grilled marinated zucchini topped with cool and tangy sesame yogurt, pecans and mint, and two sauces - preserved lemon chimichurri and crab bearnaise. I could eat the zucchini every day, but am not at all

convinced there's a need for either of the sauces. The meats are best eaten unadorned.

I have always found a lot of Japanese and Australian beef lacking in the flavour department. But this cut of Westholme, from Queensland, is robust.

One reason it's good is due to chemistry - a hard sear to trigger the Maillard reaction, the Western version of wok hei. That the meat is done perfectly medium rare makes it even better. No sauce is needed.

Although I keep jawing on about how the lamb we get here does not taste of lamb, I need to acknowledge that most diners are horrified by gamey meat. These chops will not give grandma the vapours at dinner.

The best thing on the platter is the

sausage, which has pork, beer, pistachio, apple and sage in it. The filling is not ground too fine and I love biting into pieces of pistachio. This is the sort of thing I want with a big scoop of mashed potatoes and a pile of caramelised onions.

The platter is good for two and will feed three people with more dainty appetites. It is available at dinner time only, until Dec 29.

WHERE: The Black Swan, 19 Cecil Street **MRT:** Raffles Place **MEAT PLATTER AVAILABLE:** Till Dec 29, 5 to 11pm, last order 9.30pm (Mondays); 5pm to midnight, last order 10.30pm (Tuesdays to Fridays); 5pm to midnight, last order 10.30pm (Saturdays); closed on Sundays, Dec 24 and 25 **TEL:** 6438-3757 **INFO:** www.theblackswan.com.sg

**CHAR KWAY TEOW TO GET OUT OF BED FOR**

It takes a lot to get me out of bed early - or at all - on a Sunday. But a trek to Yishun for Penang fried kway teow was well worth it.

Apollo Penang Char Kway Teow, in a busy coffee shop, opened barely a month ago, but has already built a following. Not that you will see a queue. You order, pay and get a round plastic chip with a number on it. Collect the noodles when the number flashes on the digital display at the stall. Check the stall's Facebook page before heading out, in case the char kway teow is sold out for the day. It usually is, well before closing time.

The \$4 plate of noodles is fried with care and boasts good wok hei. If I want to quibble, I would say the noodles can be cooked a little less so they are more springy, but I won't. I am too enchanted by how the egg is not petrified, despite the expert charring of the noodles. A generous helping of sliced Chinese sausage, fish cake, cockles and two large prawns complete the dish.

So why is the stall called Apollo?

It turns out that is the nickname of owner Pan Poh Loh, who is from Penang. He used to be in the bar industry and decided to follow his passion for cooking.

Good decision.

WHERE: Apollo Penang Char Kway Teow, Block 293 Yishun Street 22, 01-261 **MRT:** Yishun **OPEN:** 8.30am to 4pm (Tuesdays to Fridays), 8.30am to 5pm (Saturdays and Sundays), closed on Mondays **INFO:** http://bit.ly/2LbukVD

PHOTOS: TAN HSUEH YUN, THE BLACK SWAN

LIGHT AND FLAKY CRUFFIN AT THE COFFEE ACADEMICS

In a bid to spawn the next cronut (croissant + doughnut), made popular by New York's Dominique Ansel Bakery, pastry chefs have been on a roll, creating pake (pie + cake), dookie (doughnut + cookie) and all manner of frankenpastries.

Here, you can get the cruffin (croissant + muffin) at The Coffee Academics. As far as I can tell, it is all croissant, baked in a muffin-like tin so it has that distinctive shape. I try the passionfruit (\$5.50) one and am

delighted to find a deep well of passionfruit curd running from top to bottom. It could be more tangy, but Singaporeans don't seem to like tart flavours. I am glad the pastry is light and flaky, although it could benefit from light toasting.

WHERE: The Coffee Academics, Level 2 Scotts Square, 6 Scotts Road **MRT:** Orchard **TEL:** 6538-1940 **OPEN:** 9am to 10pm (Mondays to Thursdays), 9am to 10.30pm (Fridays and Saturdays), 9am to 9.30pm (Sundays) **INFO:** www.facebook.com/TheCoffeeAcademicsSg



kopi luwak and apple cheese tart. **WHERE:** 115 Amoy Street **MRT:** Telok Ayer **WHEN:** Mon - Dec 24 & 26 - 31, Jan 2 - 5, noon - 3pm **PRICE:** \$36++ - \$48++ a person **TEL:** 6557-0189 **INFO:** E-mail enquiries@dingdong.com.sg

The Butcher's Wife's Festive Lunch

The meal is over two or three courses and main course choices are housemade pappardelle with squid, prawn and coriander; roasted duck breast or grilled sprouting broccoli and radicchio salad. For starters, pick from roasted pumpkin, chicken liver parfait or tuna and quinoa salad, while dessert choices are lemon pavlova, cheese of the day with grapes and crackers, sorbet or ice cream.

WHERE: 19 Yong Siak Street **MRT:** Tiong Bahru **WHEN:** Till Jan 4, noon - 2.30pm (Tue - Fri) **PRICE:** \$27++

- \$32++ a person; add \$10++ for liquor or \$5++ for coffee, tea or soft drinks **TEL:** 6221-9307 **INFO:** E-mail hello@thebutcherswife.sg

Caffe B Celebratory Menu

Caffe B's executive chef Masanao Saito has curated a four-course celebratory menu comprising Italian cuisine with Japanese influences. The meal kicks off with a yuzu-marinated foie gras terrine served with black fig and Okinawan spinach drizzled with aged balsamic. Two mains are available - lamb rack with cauliflower puree and rosemary and eggplant caviar, or black cod on cauliflower puree with sauce of cioppino and drizzle of dill oil. Dessert is Glass Montebianco with chestnuts sprinkled with "fluffy" chocolate and white chocolate powder.

WHERE: 64 Club Street **MRT:** Telok Ayer **WHEN:** Tue - Dec 25, 2pm to

midnight **PRICE:** \$69++ a person, add \$26++ for wine-pairing **TEL:** 6887-3311 **INFO:** caffebsg.com

Dinner, Brunch, High Tea And Satay Turkey At Hotel Fort Canning

Besides takeaway goodies such as log cakes (\$64+ - \$68+) and gourmet roasts (\$138+ - \$168+), which include satay/chilli crab/salted egg yolk turkeys and honey baked ham, Hotel Fort Canning is also serving a Christmas Eve dinner (\$108++ adult/\$54++ child), Christmas Day Brunch (\$128++/\$64++) and Festive High Tea (\$32++ - \$82++ a person).

WHERE: Hotel Fort Canning, 11 Canning Walk **MRT:** Fort Canning **WHEN:** Dec 24, 6 - 10.30pm (The Salon); Dec 25, noon - 3pm (Grand Marquee); Till Jan 1, 3 - 6pm (high tea at The Salon & Tisettanta Lounge) **PRICE:** Various prices; 15 per cent

discount with certain credit cards **TEL:** 6559-6796 **INFO:** E-mail thesalon@hfcsg.com

Hai Tien Lo Oriental Festive Delights

Hai Tien Lo features executive chef Ben Zeng's Christmas and New Year menus. Among the highlights from a six-course set menu are braised Parma ham in supreme stock accompanied with turkey wonton; pan-fried New Zealand rack of lamb in black pepper sauce; stewed Australian whole abalone with fu dai and black truffle; and stewed fish noodles with sea cucumber and scallops. Savour more than 60 classic and contemporary dim sum items as well as the chef's signature a la carte delicacies from the Christmas and New Year Dim Sum Buffet.

WHERE: Level 3 Pan Pacific Singapore, 7 Raffles Boulevard **MRT:** Promenade

WHEN/PRICE: Christmas set (tomorrow - Dec 25, lunch & dinner): \$168++ a person (minimum two); New Year set (Dec 26 - Jan 1, lunch & dinner): \$188++ a person (minimum two); Dim Sum Buffet (tomorrow & Sun, Dec 22 & 23, 29 & 30): \$88++ an adult, \$48++ a child aged six - 11)

Semi-Buffer Dinner At Hilton's Opus

Hilton Singapore's Opus Bar & Grill will offer prime cuts and an array of grilled specialties in its semi-buffer dinner. Pick a main course and enjoy free-flow fresh seafood and appetisers from the gourmet bar and a 6m-long D9 dessert showcase.

WHERE: Lobby level, Hilton Singapore, 581 Orchard Road **MRT:** Orchard **WHEN/PRICE:** Dec 24: \$90++ a person; Dec 31: \$85++ a person **TEL:** 6730-3390 **INFO:** E-mail opus@hilton.com

**IMAGINATIVE BANH MI FROM UNCLE HO TUCKSHOP**

I heard it before I saw it. The sound of bread crust shattering on contact with teeth.

While queuing to place my order at Uncle Ho Tuckshop, I swivelled around when I heard the sound and saw a customer chomping on a banh mi sandwich. Instantly, I decided to order one. It turned out to be the best thing about the meal.

This busy, buzzy restaurant in a commercial building in Pasir Panjang serves good Vietnamese food, but the sandwiches take centre stage for me. The crust on the airy, French-style bread remains crisp for about 10 minutes if you are doing a takeaway. Any longer and the rolls get chewy.

Uncle Ho stuffs them in imaginative ways.

Caramel Pork Banh Mi (\$8.90) is filled with many cubes of wobbly pork belly braised in deep caramel and fish sauce. Pickled strips of daikon and carrot, cucumber and coriander leaves add texture and freshness to complement the smokiness and umami of the meat.

Grilled Chicken (\$8.90, above) is similarly compelling, not least because the meat is scented through and through with lemongrass.

The Chicken & Pork Pate (\$8.90) banh mi is filled with thick slices of housemade, rough-hewn pate, perfect with the pickled vegetables.

I am making my way through the banh mi selection. Next up: Cream Cheese & Luncheon Meat.

WHERE: Uncle Ho Tuckshop, 100 Pasir Panjang Road, 01-04 **MRT:** Pasir Panjang **OPEN:** 11am to 9pm (Mondays to Fridays), 11am to 3pm (Saturdays), closed on Sundays **TEL:** 9624 5761 **INFO:** www.facebook.com/unclehotuckshop