



Bistro on the Bund

Summer Tastes

Italy's quality and lifestyle is back once again with Hong Kong's **Italian Food Festival**. Under the title *A Tavola!* (Come to the table!), Italian chefs from 12 restaurants will create indigenous specialties from their home regions, each for \$388 and a 10% service charge. The participating restaurants – Gaia, DiVino, Goccia, Va Bene, Isola, Grissini, Joia, Domani, Angelini, Mistral, Nicholini's and Osteria – will feature a variety of dishes from the different regions of Italy to make this a truly wide-ranging and inclusive festival – see www.icc.org.hk for full details. You have just under three weeks to taste all those piatti di alimento splendido, or at least a good many, the promotion running until June 21. Come on, a tavola!

If you feel like a quick Italian bite, **La Pizzeria** (Star Street 2A, 2861 3066) is the place to go. This takeaway joint is as authentic as the pizzerias in the streets of Napoli, its ingredients and recipes coming straight out of Italy. At \$29 for 100 grams, the pizza slices steal the show with the homemade crust matched with a wide variety of regularly changing toppings. Still, the classics, like the Margherita we had, will always be on the menu. La Pizzeria also makes entire pizzas on request and other snacks include the less familiar *zeppole fritte*, a fried dough (\$20), and *arancini* – breadcrumb-coated rice balls (\$28).

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The Kowloon Club used to be an exclusive private watering hole for executives and rich expatriots but has now opened its doors to the public with two affiliated restaurants and a wine shop. At **Bistro on the Bund** (G/F, Harbourfront Horizon, All Suite Hotel, 8 Hung Luen Road, Hung Hom Bay, Kowloon, 2269 7828) we found a truly international menu with dishes from all over the world. The restaurant makes it a policy not to fuse cuisines but caters instead to the precise tastes of customers wherever they hail from. So the menu is an elaborate list of Thai, Indian and Western traditional dishes with several choices in soups, salads, burgers, pastas, pizzas and many more. We only have the highest praise for the fusilli oriental (\$108), 12-ounce Angus beef rib eye (\$228) and fried king prawns with chili paste (\$188) but the surprise of the evening was

kept for last: The tiramisu "My Way" (\$88) is served with coffee, separate mascarpone and a liquor of your choice.

The best thing about buffets is that you will always find at least one dish to please you. That is certainly true at **The Box** (Shop 4010, Podium Level 4, ifc mall, 8 Finance street, Central, 2234 7738) where the Thai lunch buffet (HK\$128+10% service charge) serves starters, main dishes and desserts. For instance, if you're not really into chickens feet salad, you could always plump for the more appetizing looking spring rolls. Main courses include Bangkok-flavoured chicken rice with ginger chili sauce and our favourite, the fried fish fillet with sweet and sour sauce. After that a return to the buffet brings up the course we most look forward to – dessert! The Thai dessert table includes refreshing slices of tropical fruit but of course the sticky rice with coconut milk can't be overlooked. The interior of The Box is somewhat reflected in its name with the main focus on the buffet and floor-to-ceiling glass walls. But what more do you need with such stupendous views of Victoria Harbour?

The freshly opened **Sushi U** (3/F, Century Square, 1-13 D'Aguilar Street, Central, Hong Kong, 2537 9393), as its name implies, serves sushi and sashimi. With private rooms and a long sushi bar in warm yellow, this is a place to consider for that business lunch or dinner. Ask sake advisor Shoichi Tashiro to introduce you to the more than 45 kinds of sake, shochu and plum wine on the menu and more than 300 kinds on show – you will find hot and cold sake in a variety of bottle designs. One of the more interesting is the limited edition Ice Berg (\$720) for which three bottles (\$2,160) become one. The restaurant serves sushi and sashimi in a multitude of varieties such as toro (\$100), blue mackerel (\$80), Red Sea bream (\$60), edo mae egg (\$50), conger eel (\$80) and their sashimi kinki (\$900), botan shrimp (\$80 each) and wiki (\$320). The fish for their one bite edo mae sushi comes from Hokkaido, Japan.

Chocolate Delight

Last issue, we made an awful mistake, and we'd like to apologise for spelling the name of one of our favourite chocolate shops incorrectly. There is a lot to be said for focusing on one product and making that product very well. **Awfully Chocolate** originated in Singapore in 1998 when Lyn Lee got tired of eating poor quality cakes. A chocoholic and cake lover who wanted a moist rich cake that was a real cake, like her mother used to make – not a concoction of artificial ingredients, moose and flavours. Since no one was offering her what she wanted – she decided to do it herself. The franchise is expanding through Asia and the first local outlet at Shop 15, 2-4 Hysan Avenue, Causeway Bay (2882 0450) opened last year. Awfully Chocolate has three types of cake available in 6 and 8 inch sizes; they don't sell by the slice! The *All Chocolate* (\$178/\$356) cake features dark chocolate with dark chocolate fudge. The *Chocolate Banana* (\$198/\$396) adds two layers of fresh bananas while the *Chocolate Rum & Cherry* (\$208/\$416) includes dark pitted cherries laced with rum. This month as the weather's getting warmer it's time for the local launch of Hei chocolate ice-cream, all natural ingredients and lots of chocolate! www.awfullychocolate.com



La Pizzeria



Awfully Chocolate