

春节食堂



lohei with pomegranate, strawberry, black berry, rock melon, pineapple, pomelo & salad greens, with deep-fried popiah skin & kumquat, honey & olive oil dressing

GU CHUN JIE

My hometown was a farming village, and my family was poor. Chinese Lunar New Year was one of those rare times when meat would appear on the table.

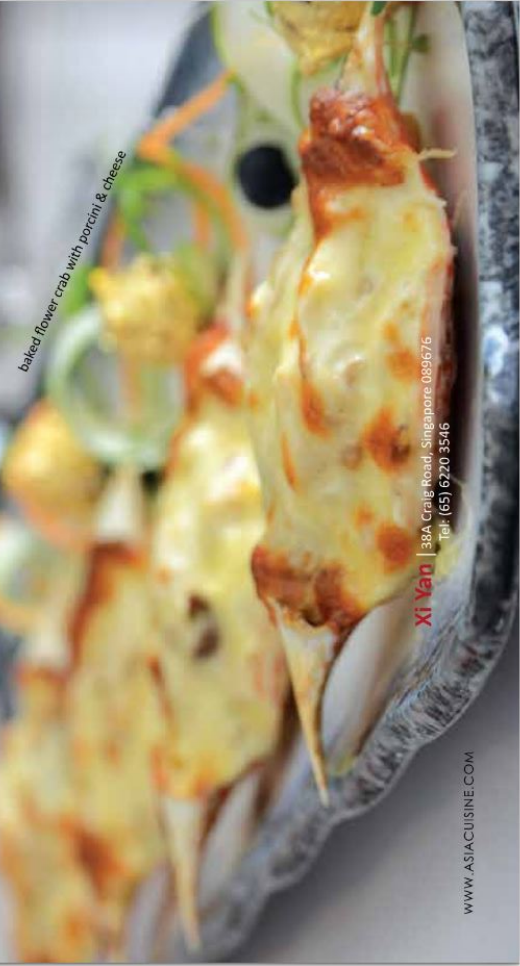
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Roasted chicken stuffed with eight treasures rice



CHEF + CUISINE



baked flower crab with porcini & cheese

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Satisfying Taste buds, Old & Young

Coming from a poor farming village in Kaifeng, Henan, Chef Gu Chun Jie of Xi Yan grew up seeing meat on the table only during Mid-Autumn festival and Chinese Lunar New Year. "We couldn't bear to eat the one chicken that we raised, instead, we'd exchange its eggs for dry provisions." To experience the festivities, villagers would head into the city. "In our family, we might get to eat braised pork with pickled mustard greens on that one day." In his hometown, the local taste buds prefer flavours that are stronger, heavier, saltier, and more oily. Instead of the chilli crab or pepper crab that Singaporeans may be used to, he decides to pick out flower crab meat from their shells, and sauté them with porcini mushrooms till fragrant in a little cream. The mixture is transferred back into the shells, topped with mozzarella cheese, and browned. For the eight treasures rice, glutinous rice is first steamed with oyster sauce, young

and old soy sauce, chicken's essence, and salt. It is then mixed with lotus seeds, almonds, chestnuts, dried shrimps, mushrooms, and lap cheong (preserved Chinese sausages), before being stuffed into a deboned kampong chicken. Finally, it is roasted till the skin turns crispy. Chewy, crunchy, smoky, savoury, and complex, each morsel needs time to be fully appreciated. Yu sheng, originally a simple dish of wolf herring brought over to Singapore by the Cantonese in the 1930s, has now evolved into a bonding activity with colourful condiments being tossed about amidst cheerful proclamations. At Xi Yan, you can try a yu sheng made with pomegranate, strawberries, blackberries, rock melon, pineapple, pomelo, and ten types of salad greens. Deep-fried spring roll skin adds crunch, while a dressing of kumquat, honey, and olive oil brings a mellow sweet-tanginess.

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