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Delectable Dining

Photography: John Johnston

Second Locale Makes a Hit

Ring aloud the dinner gong! A second Hu's location is now serving up gourmet pan-Asian cuisine. Located off King Edward Street, Hu's Asian Bistro beckons with dynastically designed digs featuring stunning wood beams, bamboo lattices, plush fabric and dangling paper lanterns.

For cocktails, the Sacred Lotus martini's crushed ice swirl of Skyy Infused pineapple vodka, zesty triple sec and pineapple juice is sensuously finished with a drop of honey.

Signature Shanghai Lemonade sees a tall glass of Skyy Infused citrus vodka filtered through layered red raspberry liquor and lemon soda.

Appetizers are a yin-yang of traditional and contemporary spins on finger foods, salads, and soups. Crab Rangoon features four crisp fried rolls filled with a purée of crabmeat, spring onion, water chestnuts and cream cheese. These rich bundles get dipped in syrupy lotus pink sweet and sour sauce.

Salad Roll fans will rejoice with Shrimp and Mango Summer Rolls. Stuffed with soft vermicelli noodles, leafy mint, and cool shrimp and mango slivers, these rice paper wraps are served with hot and sweet peanut sauce as well as classic nouc cham, and prove light and satisfying.

Curries, noodles, and meat and seafood preparations are perfect for sharing, especially with Jasmine Thai Rice - be sure to try a few.

Pineapple-topped Red Curry Shrimp & Scallops dishes out plump seafood with crunchy red peppers, peas, and green beans awash in a ruddy sweet and spicy sauce.

Chili Steak heartily piles slices of wok-seared 10oz certified Canadian Sterling Silver flank steak on sautéed seasonal julienne vegetables. Bites are hot and tangy with hot chili oil and bright soy sauce.

Western and Eastern bevies wash it all down. From Italy, hay-hued Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio tickles the palate with pear and herb. And hoppy draughts of Singha premium Thai lager harmonizes with Hu's exotic flavours and spices.

For dessert, a Banana Walnut Spring Roll trickling caramel and chocolate is a knockout with its crispy pastry, smooth banana, walnut, and a massive scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Hunting for inspiring after-work cocktails or nighttime revelry? Hu's Buddha Bar offers a lively Happy Hour (weekdays 4pm to 7pm), creative drinks, scrumptious late night menu, and Saturday evening live music.

Hu's Asian Bistro
1747 Ellice Avenue





Down Under Dining

Itchin' to dine down under? Hop to Osborne Village! Billabong's got the menu (and kangaroo!) for you.

Billabong's popular pub atmosphere has extended into the dining room with haute-casual cuisine. The Bistro's dark wood, reds, and contemporary detailing, make you feel at-home and hungry.

The Aussies love bitters - the world's biggest guzzlers, says our waitress - so a Freemantle Cooler cocktail is tabled. This gingery highball blends vodka, 7up, lime cordial, and a bitters shot. A quencher and summer must.

Appetizers include pub faves and temptations fusing international preparations with Australian bounty. The Sydney Rocks Yum Cha plates spins on "dim sum" pot stickers, spring rolls, and wontons for dipping in ginger-chilli sauce.

Pot stickers bundle dense alligator meat with light Manitoba pickerel. Fried spring rolls fill crisped pastry with black bean, shrimp, and bright tropical Barramundi fish. And wontons mince tangy pork, scallop, and deep-sea shark flavour - enveloping it all in crunchy wrapping.

We also land a trio of Kangaroo Tacos. The Tex-Mex inspiration fills crisp homemade tortillas with lettuce, mango, and saucy barbecued Kangaroo. Thai-red chilli dressing accents.

Billabong boasts Manitoba's largest selection of Aussie Wines and Ales. Recommended is a half-litre of South Australian red: Bleasdale Langhorne Crossing. Blending Shiraz liquorice, Cabernet Sauvignon pepper, and Petit Verdot herby allure, the Bleasdale is a lively sip for our mains.

Barbecued Kangaroo is reminiscent of Bison, stacks moist loin medallions, and tops 'em with sunny quail egg. And it's all lathered with a tangy gravy-thick carrot and horseradish cream. Surrounding are steamed zucchini, squash mash, and plump pumpkin and sweet potato pastry pouches. Pineapple and beetroot relish adds zest.

The Barramundi Wrap uses deep green banana leaf to net a creamy lime-coconut treasure of sticky rice, shitake mushroom, and tender fillets of Barramundi, Australia's native fish.

For dessert, Billabong's celebrated Sticky Date Pudding. This warm spongy cake is baked with dates and drizzled with hot caramel sauce. Frothy vanilla ice cream makes the treat perfect for sharing.

Bringing our bistro safari to an end is a classy snifter of De Bortoli port. Amber-hued and syrupy, the mellow 8-year old tawny is sweet and chocolaty.

Billabong Australian Bar and Bistro
121 Osborne Street

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