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Classic Fine Foods

The Connoisseurs of Fine Foods!

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The Flavour of France at Genting

The Olive Restaurant in Genting was graced by bright shining Michelin Stars in December, Chef Christian Moine.

Michelin Stars are considered the most influential and consequently most prized accolades in the culinary world. A Michelin Star recipient embodies excellence in all aspects of their dining experience, from the quality of the cuisine to the ambience, service and attention to detail.

Chef Christian Moine started his extensive career with the Greuze Restaurant in Tournus as soon as he graduated from the Macon Hotel School. He then became a Commis du Chef to Chef Jean Ducloux followed by a Sofitel chain in the South of France. He further challenged himself by accepting a position of Chef de Cuisine at the Dolce Vita Hotel in Corsica. Thereafter, he joined Francis Trocellier at the Ledoyen Restaurant. Chef Moine was then offered a position of Sous Chef at

the Appollinaire. He worked with Guy Legay as Chef Saucier at the Ritz from 1985-1990. He then went on to become Chef Adjoint at the Meurice hotel, a position he held till 1996. He later moved to manage the kitchen at Maxim's restaurant.

Apart from his wide experience in renowned establishments, Chef Christian is also the administrator of the Societe des Cuisiniers de France. He has also received numerous awards from the prestigious culinary associations such as Les Amis de Curnonsky and d'August Escoffier.

We had the opportunity to try the unsurpassed cooking skills of Chef Moine. We indulged in his delicate creation of Carrot and Cumin Emulsion, Red Tuna, Mediterranean Vegetables & Basil Oil or Bresse Chicken Ballotine and Lean Stuffing with Herbs and lastly Set Custard with Wild Strawberries.

Chef Moine definitely got us wanting more!



Chef Moine and his lovely assistant with Jacques Cosset



White Tuna, Mediterranean Vegetables & Basil Oil



An Afternoon with Chef Antoine

We sat in Conservatory, awaiting Chef Antoine Rodriguez, the recipient of the Best Executive Chef of 2007/08 awarded by Hospitality Asia. He arrived looking buoyant, and we are glad to be able to share his delight in his new accolade won only the night before.



He paused thoughtfully to reflect when asked what his opinion of the latest trends in food and catering is for 2008. Chef Antoine feels strongly that the open kitchen concept will be popular this year. He believes that the public are appreciating the full preparation of dishes where they connect with the chef directly. With the open kitchen concept, there is direct interaction between chef and customer, where the order message gets sent properly and is not distorted. The Malaysian market also likes a wide variety of choice. Nevertheless quantity is valued more than quality. He considers that diners can be picky and need a lot of choices. The discerning diners are going back to simple food; they want to know what they are eating. Chef Antoine advises that the best cooking method is just to be yourself and not hide your dish with complexity. He looks forward to opening Le Meridien's open kitchen concept restaurant, aptly named Latest Recipe.

"Potatoes!" he exclaimed exuberantly when asked what his favourite food product is. Chef Antoine feels that potatoes are fantastic as it is suitable for all cooking methods be it boiled, mashed or even stuffed. He likes adding value to a potato; just a slice of truffles

or a pinch of caviar makes this pliable product a class of its own. With 20 over different varieties of potatoes, each with its individual taste, one can really make cooking potatoes fun!

Chef Antoine's best kept secret to cooking is to always add some chocolate when making red wine sauce. By doing so, we will get excellent colour and taste. In addition, the chocolate will also balance the bitterness of the wine, giving it a velvety taste and texture!

As the recipient of the Best Executive Chef of the Year, awarded by Hospitality Asia for 4 years in a row, it's not a surprise when his brainchild, Prime is such a great success. When Chef Antoine first arrived, he noticed that there weren't many good quality meat restaurants around. He saw an opportunity as usually every country has a top notch steak restaurant. Today, Prime is the only place in KL, to have gourmet steak from every corner of the world. Prime uses simple methods to prepare meat as they serve only the best.

Chef Antoine's greatest challenge in Malaysia is in sourcing for good food products. He regrets that the Halal Certifications sometimes limits the importing of better quality beef. He wishes to have more halal certified variety of food products so that he may bring the Malaysia gastronomy scene to a higher level.


Chef Antoine in Prime

Did You Know? - Food Trivia

If you are familiar with the Grimm brothers' fairy tale about Rapunzel ('Rapunzel, let down your golden hair'), you might know that 'Rapunzel' is also another name for this edible plant. The fairy tale revolves around the theft of rampions from a witch's (or magician's) garden.

The Rampion is a hardy biennial plant native to southern Europe, with edible white roots, up to 10 inches long. The name Rampion is derived from its Latin specific name, Rapunculus, a diminutive of rapa (a turnip). It is still much cultivated in France, Germany and Italy.

The roots are eaten raw in salads, frequently with beets and celery, or cooked like turnips. The long, oval leaves which form a rosette at the root crown can also be used in salads or cooked like spinach. Sometimes the young shoots are prepared like asparagus.



The Rampion

Chuao Cocoa Beans

In the valley of Arragua, west of Caracas, lays the secluded village of Chuao. Only accessible by boat, the traditional cultivation of the cocoa tree has been preserved since the time of the Aztecs, who were the first to cultivate this tree.

Cocoa from Chuao is considered the first among the world's best cocoa, the finest of the fine.

In 1500BC, the Aztecs and the Mayans uses cocoa as drinks and also a form of currency. In fact, in 1850, some commercial transactions in Mexico still use cocoa!

South American cocoa comes from the most fragile tree, the Criollo. Once harvesting, ripening and drying are done naturally under the sun, the fermented and dried beans are

lightly roasted at a low temperature. It is then finely crushed and mixed with sugar and sometimes milk, cinnamon or vanilla. The paste is mixed gently before being made into tablets or bars for cooking and eating.

Valrhona uses the Chuao cocoa in its Grand Cru or vintage bars. The fine grained taste and smoothness are out of this world. Balanced with no hint of bitterness, you are able to taste the full glory of the Chuao cocoa.

However, do note, like all high quality chocolates, it should never be refrigerated. It is best eaten on its own or made into a mousse to tantalise your palate.



"Chuao Cocoa Pods."



White Alba Truffles

Piedmont, Italy is the only place that produces this supreme treasure. The valley of Alba and its fertile soils, houses century old oaks which the locals intelligently conserve to date. The yield every year can range from hundred tonnes to almost nothing depending on the weather condition. The white truffle has woody aromas, with dominating leather notes with an extraordinary delicate smell.

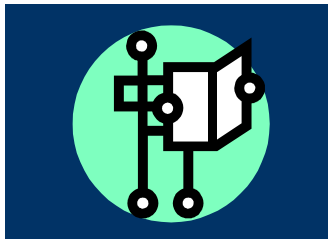
The *tuber magnatum pico*, looks stumpy, grows underground and that gives it a peculiar flavour. It is rare and particularly difficult to find and gather. In years with unfavourable weather condition, it can cost 4 times more than a black truffle. Hounds are trained from a puppy to sniff it out. A trifolau (truffle hunter) will start the treasure hunt at night, when the dogs are less distracted by external noises. Once gathered, the truffles are sold in

Alba at auctions to clients all over the world, from the beginning of October to the end of December. They are then air freighted to the best restaurants and delicatessens. These truffles cannot be preserved or frozen, and should be eaten fresh. If kept, they should be individually wrapped in cloths and put in tightly sealed glass jars in the refrigerator. They should not be kept for more than a week, as the fragrance will diminish.

The white truffle shouldn't be confused with summertime black truffle of Vaucluse or Périgord, which is also whitish, but smells and tastes totally different.



"The white diamond in the kitchen"

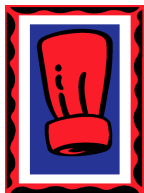


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*Jacques, Alex, Gary and Cold
Storage buyers at Mons cheese
factory in France.*

Did you know that female asparagus stalks are plumper than male stalks? Usually, it is the greener (or whiter) asparagus that are tenderer, not the thin ones.

Asparagus do not store well at all. It is best used the same day, or within 3 days.

Asparagus can be served cold with your favorite low-fat dressing or can be added to any salad. It can also be served as a tasty treat with fresh lemon juice. Steamed asparagus is always a nice addition to any meal, and any leftovers can be used to create delicious soup.

For a good stalk, look for those with closed and compact tips. Another criterion would be smooth, round spears with a fresh appearance. Most of the spears should be a rich green color, and should be tender as far down as the green color extends.

Avoid - Tips that are open and spread out, moldy or decayed, and spears that are ribbed. Also avoid sandy asparagus, because it is hard to clean the tips of sand by washing.

Selection - When selecting asparagus, allow approximately 1/2 pound per serving. One pound wills about 14 spears, 9 to 10 inches long and 1/2 to 3/4 inches thick.

Storage - Refrigerate asparagus standing upright in a container or water. This keeps the spears fresh and crisp. If this isn't possible, wrap the asparagus at the base with a damp towel. Use them as soon as possible. Asparagus will keep in the refrigerator three to five days.



Resolution for 2008

It has been a great year. We thank all our valued customers for all your support. We look forward for another great year working together with you. We pledge to continue bringing the best products and service to the fine food scene of Malaysia.

Do take note of these Upcoming Foodshows:

February 23-26, 2008: Mediterranean Seafood Exposition
(<http://www.medseafood.it/en/>) Rimini Fiera, Italy

March 10-14, 2008: Alimentaria Barcelona
(<http://www.biztradeshows.com/trade-events/alimentaria-barcelona.html>)
Barcelona, Spain

April 22-25, 2008: FHA 2008 (Food & Hotel Asia)
(<http://www.foodhotelasia.com>) Singapore

October 19-23, 2008 SIAL: The Global Food Marketplace (<http://www.sial.fr/>)
Paris, France

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