

Thursday, 19 March 2020

Specially curated for a good cause



(Clockwise) Southern style fruit rojak, egg Pindang, chargrilled turmeric ginger glutinous rice with serunding filling.

BRAISED beef ribs in a rich kuzi sauce, Bandung noodles served with river lobster and golden pomfret baked in spices and wrapped in lerek leaf.

These are among the dishes diners can enjoy through a month-long fundraiser for at risk and B40 group children.

In collaboration with Yayasan Chow Kit (YCK) and Epic Communities who will be managing the project, OpenHouse, a Malaysian fine dining establishment in Suria KLCC, has pledged to donate profits from a specially curated menu to conduct a programme in the creative industries which will be held in Langkawi.

Revealing that it will be held at the holiday home of the late Yasmin Ahmad, YCK founder Hartini Zainudin said some 90 children aged between 10 and 16 will benefit from it.

The programme will require RM250,000 to run. To help YCK achieve its goal, diners can eat their way through a curated menu this month featuring culinary specialities from Johor.

Restaurant owner Andrew Wong said it took his kitchen team of 20 over a year to obtain the recipes. Some ingredients used were so rare, dispatch runners had to be sent to the jungles to buy them from the Orang Asli.

To start, Wong recommends the Bandung noodles from Muar, featuring river lobster in a light coat of sweet, chilli marinade and rich orange roe. The spaghetti is drowned in a hearty beef broth with dried shrimp. An onsen egg, with its yolk spilling forth like golden lava, tops the dish.

Those who like eggs should consider having a side dish of Pindang egg to go with the noodles. Slow cooked for four days in senduduk, guava and mangosteen leaves, it has a creamy centre and a pleasant herbaceous aftertaste.

To enjoy the kuzi beef ribs and golden pomfret parcel, there is white rice sprinkled with garlic fruit powder, infusing the fluffy grains in an earthy aroma not unlike that of truffle.

The beef falls easily off the bone. Pomegranate seeds, deep fried onions and almond flakes give texture.

Pounded lemongrass, fresh turmeric and herbaceous notes of ulam dominate the fish dish. Bearing a delicate sweetness, a lemon rind-like fragrance from its lerek leaf covering permeates the white flaky texture.

Another item which blends harmoniously with the rice is the yellow ungkep chicken, which derives its meaty bite from a kampung bird cooked with lemongrass and turmeric. The rich paste which also sees a combination of shallots, garlic, coriander, sweet and white cumin adds a lovely fragrance to the rice when eaten on its own.

Diners must not forget to try the variety of sambal which contain uncommon ingredients like rubber seed, buah keluak, turkey berries, splitgill mushrooms and mango ginger.

We were told that villagers seek out rubber seeds for their buttery and nutty flavour.

The starters here can also be enjoyed as dessert. We liked the green message conveyed by the Southern-style fruit rojak which features lambuk (yam leaf stalk) together with the likes of water apples, jackfruit and ambarella.

The sauce made of palm sugar was presented in little containers made of folded banana leaves. A fish skin topping adds crunch.

We also liked the Burasak, which is similar to compressed rice steamed with coconut milk and topped with a savoury coconut floss of prawn paste, shallots and ginger. Peanut brittle gives this dish a sweet twist.

For an unforgettable ending, try their chargrilled turmeric ginger glutinous rice. The portion of beef serunding filling is indeed generous. For ultimate satisfaction, break the rice ball open and pour over the accompanying perchik sauce.

OpenHouse, G48, Suria KLCC Lakeside, Kuala Lumpur. Tel: 03-2162 0888. Business hours: 11 am to midnight. Non-halal.

This is the writer's observation and not an endorsement by *StarMetro*.

In light of the Covid-19 movement control order from today until March 31, the month-long fundraiser may be postponed.

(Source : <https://www.thestar.com.my/food/eating-out/2020/03/18/specially-curated-for-a-good-cause>)