



Munching down in Macau

From the moment you take your first bite of Macanese cuisine, you realise how delicious such a creation can be, courtesy of a melting pot of influences. Spend a bit of time in the Asian centre and you'll find plenty of other delicacies to whet your appetite, writes MIKE SMITH.

servings, steamed dumplings a hot favourite. A feature of the restaurant's décor is the crystal flying dragon. Although the atmosphere is casual, the restaurant has five private rooms for special occasions. Dining on chef Peter Chan's cuisine is an experience worth savouring – at a price that won't burn a hole in the pocket. Appetisers from the a la carte menu start at around \$7, main courses from \$15.

AUTHENTIC MACANESE

RESTAURANT LITORAL, Macau Peninsula

A few strides from Macau's historic A-Ma Temple from which the former Portuguese enclave got its name, this cosy restaurant with its whitewashed walls has been around for 15 years treating diners to authentic Macanese cuisine – a melting pot of Portuguese, Chinese, African, Indian and Malay recipes. Book a table and share a few tasty delights, some spicier than others. Among the treats are deep fried prawn cakes, Goanese-style samosa and a soup made of mashed potato. With glasses filled with a generous pouring of sangria, main courses of spicy African chicken, duck rice and medium-cooked steak follow. And make sure to keep room for dessert, of note the traditional Macanese Serradura, a chilled mix of milk, cream and crushed biscuit. Prices for dinner range from about \$12 to \$18, excluding wine.

PORTUGUESE

ANTONIO RESTAURANT, Taipa Village

For such a tiny restaurant, boutique-style Antonio carries much weight in Portuguese dining circles. Owner-chef Antonio Coelho regularly visits Macau's Red Market in search of fresh meat, seafood, vegetables or any other ingredients for the menu. On the menu are such signature dishes as Portuguese seafood rice, ameijoas (clams) and Caldo Verde (green vegetable soup) along with sardines, Portuguese ham and spicy Portuguese sausage (chorizo) simmered and sliced at the table. Sample Ginginha, cherry-based liquor, and watch in awe as Antonio takes the cork off the bottle of bubbly with his sword. Then there's the fiery Crepe Suzette he prepares at the

table. Expect to pay around \$50 per guest for a truly memorable culinary experience.

CHINESE DIM SUM

WING LEI CHINESE RESTAURANT, Macau Peninsula

Dining on dim sum will not be the same after a visit to this opulent Michelin-star Chinese restaurant inside Wynn Macau. Your nose is sure to be lured by the scent of such delicacies as Peking duck as well as the popular dim sum

STREET FOOD

HISTORIC MACAU, Macau Peninsula

The leisurely stroll along the main pedestrian lane linking Senado Square with the Ruins of St Paul's is not only interrupted by visits to the boutiques and the other fascinating stores. The aroma of cured meats are enticing to sensitive noses, drawing those with a hint of hunger pains to one of a number of tiny takeaways along the often busy narrow thoroughfare. Shopkeepers are more than happy for you to sample the inexpensive





slices before deciding on a purchase. And the delicacies are ideal to share on a sightseeing walk through the historic hub with its restored UNESCO World Heritage-listed sites.

INTERNATIONAL BUFFET

Rossio, MGM Grand, Macau Peninsula

As grand as it looks, MGM Grand's main focal point – European-inspired Grande Praca – is a great spot for lunch or dinner, diners able to mix dishes from a buffet that spans from a corner preparing Japanese delicacies, sushi and sashimi included, to another specialising in carved meats. Curries are also popular. Book a table on a patio beneath the giant 25-metre glass dome and we soon feel as if we are in Lisbon.

GLOBAL DINING

Messa9 Macau, Grand Hyatt, City of Dreams, Cotai

The biggest decision to make in this elegant yet casual restaurant is what to order as diners are spoiled for choices. The vast establishment, inspired by an award-winning namesake, Messa9 in Singapore, thrives on dishing out an array of international cuisine from individual kitchens – under the one roof. In one area is The Grill, another the Sushi and Sashimi Bar, and The Wok for stir-fried Asian dishes.

The Steam Basket serves soups to steamed seafood, Australian lobster included. And, yes, Macanese cuisine is prepared, the famous African chicken and Macanese duck rice piping hot favourites. Sunday buffets are extremely popular – and for good reason. Adults pay a nudge under \$50 and a free-flowing wine price of about \$12 accompanies the deal.

MODERN ITALIAN

Aurora, Altira Macau, Taipa

Housed on one of the floors of the new-look Altira Macau, formerly Crown, is a Michelin-star restaurant with a menu inspired by recipes from the Puglia region of southern Italy and influenced by Mediterranean traditions. Chef Michele dell'Aquila's time in some of leading restaurants in Europe and Asia shows in his dishes, the use of spices subtle but noteworthy. The restaurant's décor is elegant, ideal for formal gatherings. And the five-course evening degustation is a tasty option for a little under \$100 a guest, about \$120 with matching wines.

DESSERT ON THE RUN

Lord Stow's Bakery, Coloane

Locals will tell you the best time to munch on one of Lord Stow's famous tarts is when it's piping hot, straight from the oven. For that reason, it's not uncommon to see queues

forming outside the simple bakehouse in Coloane village. Most opt for boxes of six. Those who don't buy enough have little hesitation rejoining the queue "for just one more". Lord Stow's tarts are a cross between the Portuguese and Chinese tarts, but not as sweet. And they only cost about \$5 a box.

For more information on what to do, see and eat in Macau visit www.macautourism.gov.mo

Images (Clockwise from top left): Mezza9 Macau; Portuguese seafood rice dish; Cured meats in old Macau; Wing Lei's famous crystal flying dragon.



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For further details visit www.wendywutours.com.au or contact your local travel agent.

Image: Visit mysterious Tibet with Wendy Wu Tours

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On the rails in China

Travellers who are fans of train travel will find much to satisfy their desires in China.

IF YOU ARE flying in or out of the Pudong International Airport in Shanghai then you can ride the Maglev train between the city and the airport. The train recently achieved a record speed of 501kph and routinely runs at around 430kph during the day, taking around eight minutes from the city to the airport.

From Shanghai you can ride the new high-speed train to Beijing. It makes the trip in four hours and 45 minutes travelling at a speed of 300kph, and the business class seats are similar to the same service in a plane.

In Beijing make sure to visit the Railway Museum, one of the best historical railway museums

in the world. The subway systems in Beijing and Shanghai are also a very practical way to get around and avoid traffic on the surface.

From Beijing a trip to Xi'an on the deluxe soft sleeper train can be fun adventure. With your own private two-bed compartment (including toilet), you can hide in your cabin and watch the passing scenes.

For a truly epic railway journey, ride the highest train in the world, between Beijing and Lhasa. The journey takes over 50 hours and the train has oxygen outlets so guests can breathe easy in the high altitude.

Helen Wong's Tours is offering an exciting rail journey along the world's highest-elevated track followed by a three-day cruise on Asia's longest river on tour of Tibet and the Yangtze River.

The tour begins with a four-night stay in Beijing before flying to Xian to see the wonder of the Terracotta Army, then continues on to Lhasa before boarding the famous train for the overnight journey to Xining and a cruise of the Yangtze's Three Gorges and a four-night stay in Shanghai. It culminates with a rail journey between Shanghai and the international airport on the Maglev, the world's fastest train.

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