

# Cantonese treasures 廣東之寶

Chef Tam Kwok Fung is innovative and holistic, yet true to the authentic flavours of Cantonese cuisine. Casting a watchful eye over Treasure Palace and Lung Hin – two signature restaurants at City of Dreams in Macau – CRYSTAL was intrigued to chat with this culinary master.

WORDS: JACKLYN LLOYD

**A**s executive Chinese chef at City of Dreams, Tam Kwok Fung's addition to the fine ensemble of well-regarded chefs has been widely recognised and anticipated by industry peers and guests of City of Dreams alike. Overseeing two of the signature restaurants at City of Dreams, Lung Hin and Treasure Palace, chef Tam's prior culinary expertise has certainly been utilised at these two fine-dining Chinese restaurants.

Recognised for his in-depth understanding of how Chinese medicine can be interwoven with ancient Taoist culinary techniques, chef Tam creates traditional rural Chinese dishes that are also believed to preserve the body's balance, longevity and health. Somewhat of a pioneer, chef Tam is known for developing new angles with which to use food in order to gain a harmonious inner balance.

Born in Hong Kong, chef Tam says his family played a significant role in instilling the value of using only the finest ingredients to enhance authentic flavours. "I learned from my family – from my mother and my grandmother's recipes – about the importance of utilising herbal tea and seasonal vegetables from all four seasons. Things like cooking winter melon and lotus leaf to lower body temperature in the summer, and eating rich goat meat to keep your body warm during the cold winter months." Chef Tam commemorates his family with dishes and concepts perfected over hundreds of years, and manages to recreate these themes within his highly acclaimed restaurants – catering to exceptional palates.

Chef Tam's broad interpretation of fine ingredients and crafting of magnificent dishes stems from more than 25 years of culinary experience. Prior to his involvement with City of Dreams, he was the executive Chinese chef at the Peninsula Hotel in Bangkok. During his time there chef Tam's Mei Jiang Cantonese restaurant was consecutively awarded 'Best Chinese Restaurant' from 1999 to 2005. Prior to leaving the Peninsula Hotel, chef Tam ensured that he left behind a memorable mark and, in 2004, won the Fifth World Championships of Chinese Cooking in Guangzhou, China. Collecting this highly acclaimed

名廚譚國鋒Tam Kwok Fung的廚藝既全面又富於創意，同時又忠於原汁原味的粵菜風格。他主理喜迎樓Treasure Palace和龍軒Lung Hin兩家位於澳門新濠天地City of Dreams的殿堂級餐廳。《水晶》好奇地與這位廚藝大師交談，想要一探究竟。

作為新濠天地的中餐行政總廚，譚國鋒的加入讓這裡的名廚夢之隊更加引人注目。同行與客人都在期待著他的表現。他主理喜迎樓和龍軒兩家位於澳門新濠天地的殿堂級餐廳。譚師傅在餐飲業的豐富經驗在這兩所高端中餐廳得到了充分的運用，并備受尊崇。

譚師傅對中藥與古老的道家烹飪工藝之間可促成的複雜關係了然於心，並以此而聞名。譚師傅所創的傳統鄉村菜式被認為可以維持身體的平衡，令人延年益壽，保持健康。他被認為是業內的先鋒，以善於發掘使用食材的新角度，並由此獲得和諧的平衡內涵而著稱。

譚師傅出生於香港。他說他的家庭北京在他建立價值觀方面扮演了重要的角色，讓他相信只有最優質的食材才能強調菜式的原味。『我從家人那裡學到很多—從我母親和祖母的菜譜中—包括利用草藥茶和四季應時蔬菜的重要性。就像夏天要用冬瓜和荷葉來幫身體降溫，在寒冷的冬季則要吃富於營養的山羊肉讓身體保持溫暖。』譚師傅以傳承數百年來不斷完善的概念和菜式向自己的家族致敬。同時，他能夠在自己主理的著名餐廳中重現這些主題，滿足最為挑剔的味蕾。

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譚師傅擁有超過二十五年的餐飲經驗，這使得他對優質原料的使用和對美妙菜式的創造能力在國際上享有盛譽。在加入新濠天地之前，他曾是曼谷半島酒店 Peninsula Hotel 的行政中餐主廚。在半島酒店工作期間，譚師傅主理的滬江 Mui Jiang 粵菜館從1999年到2005年連續獲得『最佳中餐廳』的殊榮。在離開半島之前，譚師傅確保自己留下了一個難以忘懷的標記，並在2004年舉辦於中國廣州的第五屆世界中華餐飲冠軍賽中獲勝。獲得這個極具知名度的獎項為他帶來了實至名歸的美國、英國、日本和新加坡等國的世界級名廚的敬意。接下來他接下了澳門新濠鋒 Altira (前身為澳門皇冠) 的帝影樓 Ying 餐廳主廚職位，並在2009年為該店贏得了米芝蓮星級的殊榮。

譚師傅總是孜孜不倦地挑戰自己的技藝，這種慾望使得他不斷創造並超越自己的個人成就標杆。當新濠天地的餐飲部副總裁 Kristoffer Luczak 先生提出在新濠天地工作的機會時，能夠與享譽全球的名廚親密合作，並為酒店及其貴賓呈現卓越的美食，令譚師傅眼前一亮。譚師傅告訴《水晶》，『我十分高興能夠成為新濠天地「夢幻之城」這個大項目的一部份。我大約三年前加入了這個公司，現在隨著更長遠的發展，我所吸收到經驗就更有用武之地，也能夠令我個人的夢想變成現實。』

夢想是一回事，但譚師傅對美食的現實意義有著十分透徹的理解。『現今的食客認為品質要比樣式重要。現代的舒適感，健康的餐飲，對優質服務充滿熱情的員工—還有迅速的服務—都是我們的商務客戶所欣賞的元素。』譚師傅在主理喜迎樓和龍軒兩家店時，這些因素都是運營方針根本中的根本。

譚師傅看似不經意的烹調方式可能看很容易，然而，他使用最簡單的食材來創造的菜式，可以折服最挑剔的美食家，這點不容小覷。譚師傅曾為很多皇室、喬治·布希 George Bush，甚至流行音樂之王麥可·傑克遜 Michael Jackson 烹制菜肴。他用細緻的手法，創造以純正粵菜風味為特色的菜單，菜式經過重新創造，不斷產生令人驚豔的結果。

譚師傅認為，食物也是一種時尚與藝術，因此他堅持使用最好的原料。他遊歷中國和亞洲各地，從旅行中獲得靈感。當談到最新的飲食概念時，譚師傅為自己的豐富知識而感到自豪。面對著見多識廣的客戶，譚師傅用最優質的原料來為本已令人驚豔的廚藝增色。使用極品鮑魚和上好的葡萄酒是為貴賓與常客們定制的菜單中固定的亮點。在譚師傅使用的材料中，有中國北方出產的野生人參，一口就可能價值一萬五千元。

不難想像，要處理這樣精緻昂貴的食材需要怎樣的細心巧手。然而，對與曾為參加東南亞國家協會和歐盟峰會的世界領導人烹飪美食的譚師傅來說，在一個富有挑戰、不容絲毫差池的環境下烹飪，反而會激發個人原始的天分和自我超越的能力。

譚師傅菜肴里的每個微小細節都能夠體現卓爾不群的品質。他的主打菜—椰香龍蝦卷—為他贏得了第五屆世界中華餐飲冠軍賽。這道菜雖然是極具特色，但仍然保留著粵菜的原汁原味，為譚師傅引來盛譽。他既能為世界上最尊貴的食客創造奇妙的佳肴，又能同時保持謙虛，堅持本味。正是這一原因使得譚國鋒主廚能夠躋身新濠天地無法超越的名廚之列。他為新濠天地帶來的影響是無價的。 **水晶**

award gained him well-earned recognition from world-renowned chefs from the US, the UK, Japan and Singapore. He then took on the role of Chef de Cuisine at Ying of Altira Macau (formerly Crown Macau), where he earned the restaurant a Michelin star in 2009.

Chef Tam's constant desire to challenge himself and his skills has left him creating and conquering his own personal benchmarks. When told about the opportunity to work at City of Dreams by vice president of Food and Beverage, Kristoffer Luczak, chef Tam was inspired by the notion of working alongside chefs that have global reputations, brought together in harmony to offer a diverse range of epicurean excellence and service to City of Dreams and its sophisticated clientele. He tells CRYSTAL, "I am certainly happy to be part of this big project [City of Dreams]. I joined the company almost three years ago and now, with bigger developments, I can contribute my experiences from what I have learned and make my dreams a reality."

Dreams are one thing, but chef Tam is definitely clear about the realistic allure of fine dining: "Substance over style is very much in vogue with diners. Modern comfort and healthy cooking, and staff with a passion for excellent service – as well as fast service – which our business clientele appreciate." These are the fundamentals on which he bases his operations while overseeing Treasure Palace and Lung Hin.

Chef Tam's seemingly nonchalant approach to fine dining may appear straightforward; however, what is truly notable is his ability to use simple ingredients and create dishes that satisfy even the most discerning of connoisseurs. Having cooked for royalty, former US president George Bush and even the 'King of Pop' himself – Michael Jackson, chef Tam uses a delicate hand to deliver menus characterised by authentic Cantonese flavours, recreated with innovative thought to deliver consistently remarkable creations.

Using premium ingredients, chef Tam recognises that food, too, is a form of fashion and art. Drawing inspiration from his travels to different regions of China, as well as outside of Asia, chef Tam prides himself on being well-versed when it comes to cutting-edge epicurean concepts. Catering to a well-travelled and knowledgeable clientele, chef Tam introduces superior ingredients to his already sophisticated repertoire. Using A-grade abalone and fine wine is a customary highlight to bespoke menus created for VIPs and guests. Among other ingredients that chef Tam utilises is wild ginseng from northern China, which can cost up to US\$15,000 for just one bite.

You can imagine the delicacy and intricacy that is mandatory when handling such fine ingredients with such a hefty price tag. For chef Tam, however, who recalls cooking for world leaders at the ASEAN and EU Summits, cooking in a challenging environment where there is absolutely no margin for error can only perfect and challenge one's raw talent and ability to thrive.

Excellence can be seen in every fine detail of chef Tam's work. Even his lobster and coconut roll – a signature dish, which won him the Fifth World Championships of Chinese Cooking – is unique, but still preserves the authenticity of Cantonese cooking for which he is celebrated. His ability to craft magnificent creations for the world's most powerful personalities, while simultaneously remaining humble and true to his core teachings, is why chef Tam Kwok Fung is an invaluable addition to the City of Dreams line-up of unsurpassable master chefs. **C**



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 > Chef Tam opposite page left to right:  
 > Double boiled crocodile tail – Treasure Palace.  
 > Braised Wagyu cheek – Lung Hin.  
 > Classic soup dumplings – Treasure Palace.  
 bottom:  
 One of chef Tam's restaurants Lung Hin.