

Hurricane Ivan 2004

COUNTRYSIDE COUNTRYSTAR

BRINGING HOME COMMUNITY NEWS

June 2005

Countryside's Best Newspaper - 25¢

Gemini /Cancer
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Hurricane Ivan 2004

DUNEDIN HIGHLANDER



BRINGING HOME COMMUNITY NEWS

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Dunedin's Best Newspaper - 25¢

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PALM HARBOR PANTHER SOUTH



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June 2005

Palm Harbor's Best Newspaper - 25¢

Gemini/Cancer
Birthstones - Pearl

THE Best CHINESE RESTAURANT 2004 & 2005
-Tampa Bay Magazine



(727)

734-3998

2192 Main St. (SR 580)
Dunedin

West of Belcher rd, in Kash 'n Karry Plaza
Sun-Thu 11 am-9:30 pm
Fri-Sat 11am-10 pm

FANTABULOUS FUSION of CHINESE CUISINES from coast to coast

Operated by
Master chef Jeffrey WU

-over 20 year experience Chinese cooking-
-Founder of Dragon & Phoenix cuisine, across
from Bay Pines VA Hospital-

Restaurant review by
Mr. William Stone
of
the Dunedin Highlander,
Palm Harbor Panther North,
and
Countryside Cougar.

Ivory Mandarin Bistro: The Best Fusion Of Chinese Food This Side Of The Pacific Rim

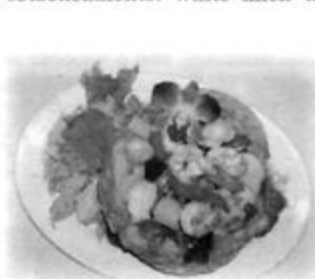


by William Stone

These days, one may travel to the orient and still not manage to obtain authentic Chinese cuisine. American chain restaurants dot the orient and western influences on the native food abound. Likewise, in the United States, much of the Chinese food labelled as "authentic" is anything but. Bridging the gap between authentic Chinese and Chinese-American is no easy feat. Food critics have been known to take to task many restaurant claims of "authentic" Chinese food, maintaining when an ingredient is omitted, substituted, or added, the integrity of the dish is instantly compromised. Nothing could be further from the truth at The Ivory Mandarin Bistro, located on Main Street in Dunedin. The location has long housed Chinese restaurants, but it is only the most recent incarnation that is receiving the accolades it deserves. The new owners practically gutted the interior and their remodeling efforts are nothing short of spectacular. The fact that this is a non typical Asian cuisine restaurant is readily apparent upon entry. Gone are the dark and dim lights, as are the deep red and jade-green colors one is apt to find in most Chinese restaurants. The ambience delivers a bright atmosphere with an upscale flair and a class of service one is loathe to find in many comparable dining establishments. White linen table-cloths adorn



Ivory Mandarin Bistro, 2192 Main Street: Fine Asian Dining without compromise.



Fantabulous Fusion: Water Lilly, by Chef Wu

relaxing atmosphere in a remarkably clean environment.

Most noticeable is the lack of a buffet. In this regard, it was a most deliberate and positive omission. While many Chinese restaurants are leaning toward fast food type service, the opposite is strived (for) and achieved at Ivory Mandarin Bistro. Looking for Chinese fast food? Forget it, as nothing so pretentious can be found on the menu.

Referring to this establishment as Chinese, or even Mandarin, is a misnomer, however, and doesn't quite do it justice, for the Ivory Mandarin Bistro bravely forges a new dining experience by successfully merging only the finest Chinese food, yet draws from Cantonese, Hunan, Szechuan, and Mandarin styled preparations. Such a feat can only be accomplished by trained Chefs who maintain an absolute and thorough knowledge of Chinese cooking and distinguish the differences between the styles, whether dramatic or subtle.

Much of the success of the restaurant can be attributed to owners Steve Srirairasri and Master Chef Jeffrey Wu, former owners of the Dragon Phoenix restaurant, located across from Baypines VA Hospital. Srirairasri majored in Hotel/Restaurant management, honing his skills to perfection in his native Thailand. Wu has over twenty years experience creating Asian delicacies. From southern China to the San Francisco area of Chinatown and all the way to Miami, Wu has delighted fine diners all over the world with both unique creations and authentic dishes. Coupling their talents, these two have managed to not only successfully fuse Asian foods, but managed to do the same with unique American-Asian foods, such as east coast-US meets west coast-US. For example, the Cantonese style of food preparation, explains Wu, is mostly preferred by those on the west coast of the US. Cantonese style is tamed

down and not as spicy, compared to the Szechuan style preferred by most on the east coast of the US, who by-and-large prefer a zestier, more spicier concoction. Wu can accommodate the diner regardless the style preferred.

Wu's menu creations are nothing short of testament to the wide variety cooking styles of which he is skilled, with prices that are easily digested. The Macadamia Seafood, in addition to the Water Lilly, are works of delectable culinary art, as is much of what originates at the hands of Wu. While such special offerings please the palate, this column would be remiss without waxing the virtues of the Peking Duck. Long has it been since such properly cooked duck graced the Dunedin area. Chef Wu nails it.

While the entrees all come with fanciful garnishing, it is the variety of foods offered here, paying homage to the Chinese regional cuisine styles, that retain the authenticity such aficionados come to expect when restaurants make the oft-fictitious claim of "authentic".

Of worthy mention is the second "secret" menu The Ivory Mandarin Bistro offers. While not as large as their main menu, this menu does offer over seventy five items. The menu is usually reserved for only those who request it and is extremely popular with the local Asian population, as the prepared dishes are practically exact replicas of the bona fide fare found in their homeland. Steamed Fish (your selection of Grouper, Snapper, or Flounder, in season) with Ginger Scallion Sauce is among the favorites, as is the Peppercorn Combo of Shrimp, Squid, and Scallops, but again, it is the Duck that is all the rage among the local Asian food connoisseurs.



The Elegance of Fine Asian Dining is found here at Ivory Mandarin Bistro

Beer and wine is also available, and they serve the world famous Tiger Beer from Singapore, winner of the prestigious 2004 Gold Medal Award, bestowed by the US Brewer's Association. In addition, house favorites such as Plum wine and other domestics are on hand.

Nothing is compromised at the Ivory Mandarin Bistro, where their slogan "The Fantabulous Fusion of Chinese Cuisine from Coast to Coast"



Culinary Work of Art by Chef Wu: Macademia Seafood Creation

only begins to tell the story.

The restaurant is located at 2192 Main Street (State Road 580) Dunedin, just west of Belcher Road, in the Kash-n-Karry shopping plaza. The establishment is open seven days per week. Their hours of operation are Sunday through Thursday from 11:00 AM to 9:30 PM and Friday and Saturday 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM. Lunch specials 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. They can be reached by phone at (727) 734-3998, and remember, they do deliver!