

The Legacy House

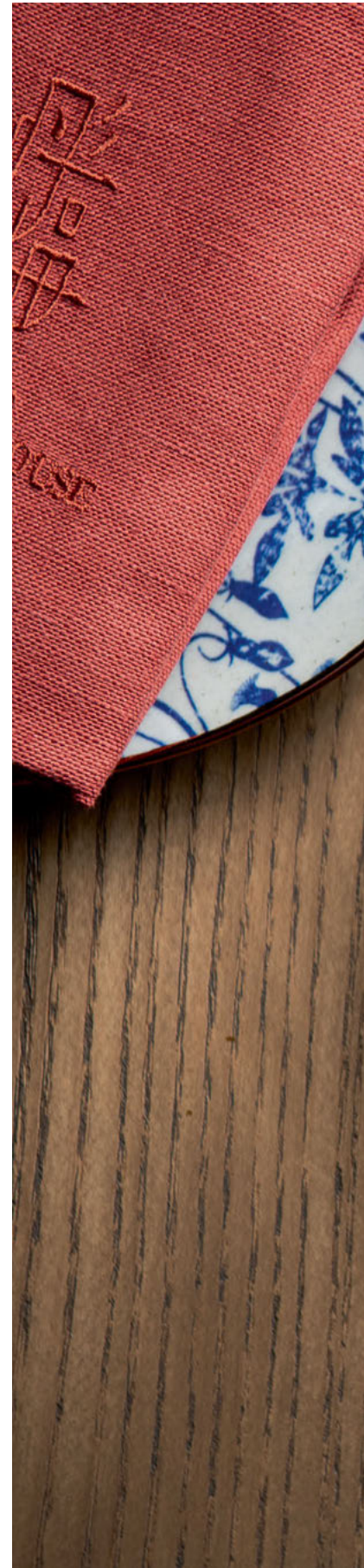
Rosewood Hong Kong

Words: Heleri Rande

On the site of the former Holt's Wharf on the shores of Victoria Harbour stands new ultra-luxury property Rosewood Hong Kong. Rosewood Hotels & Resorts certainly has high hopes for the development, describing the opening as 'a defining milestone for the group, solidifying its stature as one of the world's most dynamic hotel brands'.

No expense has been spared on the Tony Chi-designed hotel, which boasts 413 keys, 33,880ft² of meetings and events space, artworks by Damien Hirst and Henry Moore, room amenities by Zieher, and a plethora of F&B outlets. Currently, visitors can enjoy the local and international menu at all-day dining restaurant Holt's Café, try the artfully created delicacies in the Butterfly Patisserie and Butterfly Room, experience ancient flavours in the adjacent Tea Conservatory, indulge in a nightcap at the DarkSide bar, and take in the views of Victoria Harbour in The Legacy House, the property's signature restaurant.

To honour Dr Cheng Yu-Tung, grandfather of Rosewood Hotel Group CEO Sonia Cheng, The Legacy House focuses on the cuisine of Shunde in Guangdong Province, regarded by many as the basis of Cantonese gastronomy. "With The Legacy House, we wanted to do something different," explains Sandro Gamba, Director of Culinary Operation at Rosewood Hong Kong. "Most five-star hotels in Hong Kong have fine-





Photography: © Callaghan Walsh



Photography: © Edmon Leong

dining Cantonese restaurants, a lot of them awarded Michelin stars. That is not our goal. The main dining room part is very casual and accessible, while the seven private dining rooms offer excellent customised service and a truly tailored experience.”

The kitchen at The Legacy House is overseen by Chinese Executive Chef Li Chi Wai, whose passion for Cantonese cuisine was previously showcased in the hotel spaces at MGM Macau and MGM Cotai. “I was inspired by my mother when I was a boy – observing and learning from her, as she cooked for us every day, was the start of my journey,” recounts Wai. “Under the tutelage of a few chefs who originated from Shunde, I mastered my cooking skills after working in various traditional Cantonese restaurants in Hong Kong, prior to then honing my skills in some of the best Cantonese restaurants in Macau for over ten years.”

The eye-catching interiors of The Legacy House have been designed by Melbourne’s Bar Studio. In the main restaurant, rustic and refined materials such as dark wood, tiles, metal and glass have been used to evoke a sense of warmth and nostalgia, while the seven private dining rooms are meant to feel like rooms in a house, a clever way of blurring the transition between hotel spaces. In addition to sculptures from the

Cheng family’s private collection, special commissions include romantic portrait murals from Melbourne street artist Rone.

Interestingly, the relationship between Bar Studio and Rosewood is not a new one. “They really know how to design Chinese restaurants that are both modern and classic at the same time,” says Romain Gissot, F&B Director at Rosewood Hong Kong. “Their work with our brand in Beijing, Phuket and Phnom Penh is a testament to their skill.”

Shunde cuisine is not perhaps a particularly well-known part of Chinese culinary heritage, but having almost disappeared about 20 years ago, its dishes and techniques are now being brought back to life. “Shunde is the region of China not far from Hong Kong, on the side of Macau; people there loved to use fish that came from the river but ended up in the ocean, a place where the fish had both lives and was therefore much more flavourful,” explains Gamba. Some of the traditional Shunde dishes on the menu include pan-fried fish head with ginger and spring onion, minced fish soup, fungus and tangerine peel and stir-fried fish noodles with bean sprout, mushroom and dried sole, but speciality dishes such as suckling pig and Peking duck also appear, and are crafted to perfection. “Our CEO is very particular about the dishes and is always



challenging the team,” reveals Gamba. “She is not a chef, but I am convinced that she knows more about food than I do.”

On the drinks side, the wines are carefully overseen by Nicolas Deneux, Area Wine Director for Asia at Rosewood Hotel Group; the elegant cocktails are crafted by Arkadiusz Rybak, Director of Bars at Rosewood Hong Kong; and everything related to tea is sourced from Hong Kong’s renowned purveyor Tak Cheung. “We collaborate with a local tea house, a place that knows the market and can assist us in creating truly memorable experiences,” notes Gissot. “This is a unique offering in a hotel in Hong Kong.”

From The Legacy House’s interiors to its menu, the level of detail on display here is spectacular. Most of the dinnerware has been custom-made by Gaya Ceramic in Bali, whilst sculptural lighting by New York studio Apparatus and glass pendants by Melbourne-based designer Mark Douglass add craftsmanship. “Artisanal touches and creating a sense of place are very important to us,” says Gamba. Moreover, each of

the seven private dining rooms boast their own unique interiors, each modelled after a different landmark moment in Dr Cheng Yu-Tung’s life. “On the door, there is a logo and date marking a moment in the evolution of the company that the grandfather built,” adds Gissot.

This focus on getting every element right also extends to sourcing the finest produce around. “The beauty of working in Hong Kong is the amount of fresh products available,” explains Gamba. “It is not difficult to reproduce a dish from anywhere as shipments come in so frequently.”

Following The Legacy House’s launch, Rosewood Hong Kong can now turn its attention to opening further hotel restaurants and bars onsite, helping it compete in the city’s impressive gastronomic scene. And with such a dedicated team at the helm, there is every reason to suspect that this landmark property will become just as well-known for its food and drink as for its wonderful location in the years to come. ●

www.rosewoodhotels.com

IN A BITE Covers: 132 • Private Dining Rooms: 7 • Owner: Rosewood Hotels & Resorts • Interior Design: Bar Studio • Head Chef: Li Chi Wai • F&B Director: Romain Gissot • Area Wine Director for Asia: Nicolas Deneux • Director of Bars: Arkadiusz Rybak • Operations Manager: Roy Chang • Dinnerware: Gaya Ceramic • Serveware: Sambonet • Cutlery: Robbe & Berking Silber • Glassware: Schott Zwiesel, Riedel • Catering Equipment: M Style • Table Decoration: Assouline, Blooms & Blossoms • Menu Design: Bing Design Company • Uniform Design: Jourden



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