

press release

Recipient of the WGS 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award, Celebrity Chef Sam Leong Presents a Menu about his Life Journey at Forest 森

Chef Sam Leong's new 'I Am Sam' menu is a collection of creations which mark significant milestones in his life and 30-year culinary career



Chef Sam Leong (above) shares his story in his specially curated 'I Am Sam' menu that will be available at Forest 森 located in Equarius Hotel, Resorts World Sentosa from 10 June 2019. Dishes include Barley Porridge with Condiments (top right) which he served to Singapore's founding Prime Minister, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew in 2013, and the Wok-fried Sri Lanka Crab Claw in Black Pepper Sauce with Carrot Cake which won him his wife's hand in marriage (bottom right).

SINGAPORE, 30 May 2019 – Over the past 30 years, Singapore's very own homegrown celebrity chef Sam Leong has pioneered contemporary Chinese cuisine here, helmed the city's top Chinese restaurants, starred in television cooking shows, featured in international food events, mentored younger chefs as well as cooked for guests from all walks of life. Soon, one will be able to get a taste of some of Chef Leong's most notable dishes that traces his inspiring story.

Chef Leong was recently awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the World Gourmet Awards, held in conjunction with the World Gourmet Summit (WGS) in April 2019. This award is given to chefs who have dedicated their life to refining the culinary arts and contributed to the development of the food and beverage industry.

To share his journey which tells of hard work, perseverance, innovation, triumphs, love and family, Chef Leong has specially curated a menu, titled 'I Am Sam', that will be offered at **Forest 森 from 10 June 2019**. A la carte selections (from S\$18++), a 4-course set lunch (S\$48++ per person) and a 4-course set dinner (S\$88++ per person) will be available.

Chef Sam Leong says, "Being a chef isn't easy. You start at the bottom. You have to climb step by step, overcome challenge after challenge, year after year. I was 15 years old when I started working in the kitchen as I did not like to study. It was a time when Hong Kong chefs were heading the top Chinese restaurants, and I had to prove myself by putting in long hours and working very hard so that they will impart their skills to me."

"In the 1990s, I was inspired by the exquisite plating of French cuisine and started to introduce individually plated Chinese dishes at the restaurant I was heading. As contemporary Chinese cuisine was not heard of in those days, the new dishes were not welcomed by the guests as well as the service team who had to serve them. I was discouraged but persevered, and I am very fortunate and grateful that my style of modern Chinese cuisine won me supporters over time. My journey over the last 30 years has been very eventful and I hope to share my story through this special menu."

Chef Sam Leong's 'I Am Sam' menu comprises eight dishes, including *Crispy Wasabi Mayonnaise Prawn with Mango Salsa*, and *Coffee Pork Ribs* – two dishes which he created in the 1980s and 1990s that have become so popular that they can be found in many Chinese restaurant menus today.

Dishes in Chef Sam Leong's 'I Am Sam' Menu	Description by Chef Sam Leong
<p data-bbox="279 1059 694 1126">Crispy Wasabi Mayonnaise Prawn with Mango Salsa</p> 	<p data-bbox="810 1059 1054 1088">Shooting To Success</p> <p data-bbox="810 1128 1407 1480">"This is my signature dish, which brought me international stardom. Coated with wasabi mayonnaise, it's crispy outside and yummy inside. I created it in 1989 when I was with the Lok Wah Hin Restaurant at Novotel Bangkok. It was the first time I used a Japanese ingredient in Chinese cooking. The dish also holds deeper meaning for me. I created it during my stint in Bangkok, when I met my future wife. She was an apprentice chef then."</p>
<p data-bbox="264 1525 711 1592">Pan-seared Lemongrass Chicken Roll stuffed with Glutinous Rice</p> 	<p data-bbox="810 1525 1002 1554">Born From Love</p> <p data-bbox="810 1594 1407 1877">"This is a 'Chin-Thai' entrée, if you may. I'm Chinese and this was the first dish I created together with my Thai wife, Forest Leong. It's born from our love and respect for each other's cuisines, like the cooking school that we run here. Teaching has always been her dream and I think it is meaningful to pass on our skills and knowledge to other chefs or home cooks."</p>

<p>Wok-fried Sri Lanka Crab Claw in Black Pepper Sauce, accompanied with Carrot Cake</p> 	<p>How I Got Married</p> <p>“So Forest and I were in love, but I needed the approval of her parents before I could marry her! I am not very fluent in Thai, but decided to impress them with my cooking. While This enjoy their curry crab, I decided to prepare our Singapore style black pepper crab for them, and brought it to Forest’s home. “Sawadee krap Uncle and Aunty!” Her mum smiled warmly though her dad gave me a cold stare. They both tasted this dish though. What happened next? Thankfully they loved it and gave their blessings for our marriage.”</p>
<p>Chef Sam’s Coffee Pork Ribs</p> 	<p>Taking Pride In Your Work</p> <p>“I presented this fusion dish at the Wolfgang Puck Food and Wine Experience in Los Angeles in 1998. Many thought that coffee and pork ribs were an unusual pairing, but the guests enjoyed it! The dish subsequently became famous overnight in Singapore in 1999 when then Manpower Minister Lee Boon Yang cited me and my innovative Coffee Pork Ribs in Parliament as an example of how a “knowledge worker” can succeed despite a lack of academic qualifications. I continue to work hard today to ensure that my standards never slip, so I don’t let down people who have helped and supported me.”</p>
<p>Steamed Soon Hock Fish in Clear Chicken Stock Reduction</p> 	<p>Relaxing After A Long Day</p> <p>“In 2006, I cooked for the Queen of England and then Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong at the Fullerton Hotel. I was told that the Queen would just like to have fish that is healthy and simply prepared. I steamed a filleted Soon Hock Fish in a clear chicken broth for her; without soy sauce or black bean sauce. You have no idea how happy and relieved I was when I heard the Queen comment that “the fish was soft like tofu”. After the event, I relieved the stress the way I usually did after a long and intense day in the kitchen – with a long drive from Singapore to Malaysia.”</p>

<p>Cold and Hot Avocado Coconut, served with Black Sesame Glutinous Rice Ball</p> 	<p>Innovating from tradition</p> <p>“This is a cold and hot dessert that I created for top Spanish Chef Ferran Adrià when he visited my restaurant in 2008. It is my version of the traditional Tang Yuan (glutinous rice dumpling in sweet soup) and he loved it. As Chinese restaurants typically only offer classic desserts, I wanted to create a modern dessert that is light and healthy, and with a pleasing contrast of temperatures. The ‘soup’ is a cold refreshing blend of coconut water, coconut flesh and avocado with a tinge of palm sugar. In contrast, the handmade glutinous rice ball is filled with hot black sesame paste and coated with crushed peanuts.”</p>
<p>Barley Porridge with Condiments</p> 	<p>Being thankful</p> <p>“I’ve always cherished how I’ve had the opportunity to meet and cook for so many famous people. Back in 2013, Singapore’s founding Prime Minister, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew visited Forest 森 for dinner. The whole kitchen was very excited about this. This was the dish that Mr Lee picked, and I remember he told me that it brought him plenty of warmth and comfort.”</p>
<p>Ah Sam Abalone Mee Sua, braised with Sri Lankan Crab Meat in Superior Chicken Stock</p> 	<p>A Small Dream</p> <p>“I set up Forest 森 in 2012 and I’m now 54 years old. Now that Forest 森 is established, I do think of the future. When I finally retire, I’ll probably set up a hawker stall instead. Maybe a stall that sells Mee Sua!”</p>

Booking details:

Forest 森 is located on the lobby level of Equarius Hotel in Resorts World Sentosa. For reservations, please call (65) 6577 7788/ 6688, email forest@rwsentosa.com or visit www.rwsentosa.com/forest. Forest is open for lunch from 12.00pm to 2.30pm, and dinner from 6.00pm to 10.00pm. It is closed on Wednesdays, except on eve of and on Public Holidays. Chef Sam Leong’s ‘I Am Sam’ menu is available daily except on Wednesdays and during Sunday lunch.

- Ends -

ANNEXE: Profile of Chef Sam Leong

Singapore's very own homegrown celebrity chef Sam Leong is a trailblazer with a stellar culinary career spanning more than 30 years. A forerunner of modern Chinese cuisine in Singapore, the multi-award winning chef has cooked for world famous public figures such as Singapore's founding Prime Minister, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew, former US presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton as well as Queen Elizabeth II. He has also appeared on many television cooking shows and published several cookbooks.

Starting his training at 15 years old under his father who was a renowned Cantonese chef, Chef Leong has come a long way. His list of accolades includes being named Best Asian Ethnic Chef of the Year at the World Gourmet Summit Awards of Excellence in 2001, 2002 and 2004, and Executive Chef of the Year and Chef of the Year in 2005.

He was also named Chef of the Year at the Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards (HAPA) in 2006 and 2007. In 2008, Chef Leong achieved the Five Star Diamond Award by the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences which recognised him as one of the finest chefs worldwide. In 2009, World Gourmet Summit conferred him the regional category award of Asian Cuisine Chef of the Year. He most recently attained the Lifetime Achievement Award at the World Gourmet Awards, held in conjunction with the World Gourmet Summit (WGS) in April 2019.

ABOUT FOREST

Forest is where local celebrity chef Sam Leong, a household name in Singapore, crafts a mod-Chinese menu. He expertly marries cooking techniques from the West with flavours of the East to create exquisite dishes that are elegantly plated. Refreshed seasonally, the menu delights and surprises with chef Sam Leong's original creations as well as reinterpretations of classics, from premium seafood such as crabs, abalone and lobsters, to soups, meats and noodles.

The restaurant features an open theatre kitchen offering an unobstructed view of the chefs as they create masterpieces, set against a backdrop of a lush rainforest-themed décor with a high ceiling and full-length windows.

ABOUT RESORTS WORLD SENTOSA

Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), Asia's premium lifestyle destination resort, is located on Singapore's resort island of Sentosa. Spanning 49 hectares, RWS is home to world-class attractions including Universal Studios Singapore, S.E.A. Aquarium, the Maritime Experiential Museum, Dolphin Island and Adventure Cove Waterpark. Complementing the adventure and adrenaline of its theme parks and attractions are six unique luxury hotels, the world-class Resorts World Convention Centre, a casino and the Asian flagship of a world-renowned destination spa. RWS offers award-winning dining experiences and exciting cuisine from around the world across its many renowned celebrity chef restaurants, establishing itself as a key player in Singapore's vibrant and diverse dining scene and a leading gourmet destination in Asia for epicureans. The integrated resort also offers world-class entertainment, from original resident productions to concerts and public shows such as Crane Dance and Lake of Dreams. RWS has been named "Best Integrated Resort" since 2011 for eight consecutive years at the TTG Travel Awards which recognises the best of Asia-Pacific's travel industry.

RWS is wholly owned by Genting Singapore, a company of the Genting Group. For more information, please visit www.rwsentosa.com.

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EDITORS' NOTES

1. High resolution photographs can be downloaded from link: <https://app.box.com/s/dis4oz0fdrafbp10c7hmfusqtcpwpe6>
2. All photographs are to be attributed to: *Resorts World Sentosa* (圣淘沙名胜世界)

