

QANTAS

THE AUSTRALIAN WAY

CHINESE: AUSTRALIA'S TOP 10

Flower Drum

17 Market Lane, Melbourne.
(03) 9662 3655. flower-drum.com
Our finest temple to *haute* Cantonese cooking, long a standard-setter for service in restaurants. The Peking duck to beat.

Dainty Sichuan

176 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Melbourne. (03) 9078 1886.
A local landmark for lovers of spicy food, and now an internationally recognised flag-bearer for China's fieriest cuisine. Not all that dainty. The "fish-fragrant" eggplant is a revelation of lightness and heft.

Golden Century

393-399 Sussex Street, Sydney.
(02) 9281 1598. goldencentury.com.au
The latest of Sydney's Chinatown late-nighters, the greatest of its Canto-palaces, and beloved after-hours chef hangout. Also one of the great crab eateries of the world.

Billy Kwong

1/28 Macleay Street, Potts Point, Sydney. kyliekwong.org
"Australian Chinese" used to indicate the least-delicious end of the Cantonese cooking spectrum here, but Kylie Kwong has reclaimed the term with gusto. Expect

a gutsy, artisanal-leaning drinks offer (including collaborations with brewers, vintners and distillers) and a menu that celebrates the local, whether it's kingfish collars braised in Young Henrys beer then deep-fried and served with native basil, sea parsley and caramelised tomatoes; or buckwheat cakes filled with weeds picked from community gardens.

Mr Wong

3 Bridge Street, Sydney. (02) 9240 3000. merivale.com.au/mrwong
Big, bold and an instant success thanks to the complementary gifts of its head chefs: Dan Hong and Brendan Fong, and dim sum master Eric Koh. Killer wine list, too. Hit the steamed dumplings by day, the excellent roast meats after dark.

Lee Ho Fook

92 Smith Street, Collingwood, Melbourne. (03) 9077 6381. leehofook.com.au
It seems about as serious as a restaurant named for a lyric in a Warren Zevon song can be, yet the Fook is quietly stealing a march on its competition with chef Victor Liang's incisive palate and commitment to quality ingredients. Watch out for its new Melbourne CBD version this year.

Ying Chow

114 Gouger Street, Adelaide.
(08) 8211 7998.
A BYO hall-of-famer and a benchmark for Chiu Chow food nationwide. Order anything involving duck, and the "broad beans", beancurd and chilli.

Me Wah

16 Magnet Court, Sandy Bay, Hobart.
(03) 6223 3688. mewah.com.au
Where better to enjoy the oysters, lobsters and abalone of Tasmania's cold, clean waters than at the source? The pan-fried radish in XO sauce is reason enough to book in for yum cha.

Spice Temple

10 Bligh Street, Sydney.
(02) 8078 1888.
8 Whiteman Street, Melbourne.
(03) 8679 1888. rockpool.com/spicetemple
The provinces of Yunnan, Xinjiang, Hunan and Sichuan inspire the flavour-packed eats at these sultry basement restaurants. The quail with savoury custard and peanuts is a standout.

Chairman Mao

189 Anzac Parade, Kensington, Sydney. (02) 9697 9189.
Mao Zedong was reputed to have said that one couldn't be a revolutionary without eating chillies. There's certainly no shortage of fire in the belly at this leading exponent of the food of his home province, Hunan.