

## TUNG LOK SIGNATURES WITH A DIFFERENT VIEW

AMY VAN

food@newstoday.com.sg

WHEN I visited Tung Lok Signatures at VivoCity last year, I was struck by its understated chic. Equally impressive is its newly-opened branch at The Central, Clarke Quay.

While its VivoCity sister has a stunning harbour view, the outlet at The Central overlooks the Singapore River and the vibrant Clarke Quay enclave. It also boasts an outdoor dining area – The Balcony – where diners can enjoy the waterside view.

Ambience aside, the highlight at Tung Lok Signatures is its stellar menu, of course.

The cuisine is essentially a combination of selected signature dishes from Tung Lok's traditional Chinese restaurants such as Paramount, Lao Beijing and the flagship Tung Lok Restaurant, as well as new dishes exclusive to Tung Lok Signatures.

Chef Li Ngai Man, previously from Lei Garden Restaurant, is the man behind Tung Lok Signatures' new dishes.

The nutritious double-boiled soup of sea treasures with Chinese herbs (\$28 for two to three persons) is one of Chef Li's creations. The herbs, red dates, abalone, sea cucumber, chicken and lean pork is boiled for five-and-a-half hours which results in a deliciously-fragrant and concentrated broth.

Another must-try is Chef Li's crispy roast pork belly (\$9), which goes through a painstaking cooking process.

A chunk of pork belly is first roasted till it is half cooked. The fatty bits are then removed and the remaining pork is roasted again. This process is repeated three times. By the time the pork belly is completely roasted, the meat is perfectly succulent and its skin delightfully crispy.

Worth ordering, too, is the barbecued pork shoulder (\$16) which was just as tender and toothsome.

Another appetising dish to try is the deep-fried coriander balls with cheese (\$14)

– a creation from Tung Lok's House of Hunan. Chef Li has modified this recipe by adding mozzarella cheese to the original filling of prawn paste and chopped coriander.

The steamed layered bean curd (\$20) was not only pretty but also very satisfying. The thinly-sliced *tofu* was assembled like a delicate fan, and encircled a mixture of diced capsicum, barbecued pork, mushrooms and ginkgo.

I also liked the Lobster Prepared in Two Ways, one of the restaurant's specialities.

At the VivoCity branch, the lobster (\$38) is served both steamed and fried. Prepared with egg white and superior stock, the steamed version is a lovely contrast to the fried minced lobster meat, which is served in a golden tart. The delicately crispy "tart" is deep-fried bamboo pith.

This dish is also available at The Central, but diners won't get a rehash of the steamed and fried versions. Instead, the lobster here is served chilled with *mayonaisse* mayonnaise sauce and *crispy* fried with fresh pepper and white wine sauce (\$22 per person).

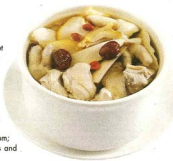
The restaurant managers recommended these special dishes and new creations not listed in the menu (most of them require one day's advance booking). If you like, let them suggest what dishes to order, and simply sit back and look forward to a great dining experience.

### TUNG LOK SIGNATURES

**WHERE** The Central, 6 Eu Tong Sen Street #02-88; VivoCity, 1 Harbourfront Walk #01-57 (at Waterfront facing Sentosa Island)

**TELEPHONE** 6336 6022 (The Central); 6376 9555 (VivoCity)

**OPENING HOURS** 11.30am to 3pm, 6pm to 10.30pm, daily (The Central); 11.30am to 2.30pm; 6pm to 11pm (Mondays to Fridays); 10am to 2.30pm; 6pm to 11pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays (VivoCity).



**SIGNATURE DISHES:** Double-boiled soup of sea treasures and Chinese herbs (above) and roast pork belly (below).

