

Friday!

Your weekend dining and entertainment guide

What to eat



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PATISSIER WOO

MEYER LEMON GOODNESS

The five stages of Covid-19 management gecs like this: Horror (I tested positive?), more horror (What is with this pounding headache?), panic (I can't smell or taste!), incomprehension (Why am I still testing positive on Day 7?) and resignation (Like that lor).

Before I broke out in cold sweat on Day 5, when could not eat or taste my morning cup of Earl Grey tea, a ray of sunshine pierced through my fortress of dull, monotonous solitude.

It was Patisserie Woo's Meyer Lemon Tart (from \$32 to a 14cm tart that serves four, above right), I had my first taste of this winter citrus, a lemon-mandarin hybrid, during my university days in California and have been smitten ever since.

A decade ago, they were devilishly hard to find in Singapore. These days, you get bags of Sunskit Meyer lemons from New Zealand in supermarkets this time of year, when it is winter Down Under.

Their gentle tartness is a stark contrast to rather more bracing Eureka

lemons, the most common variety. Baker Melissa Woo, who trained in Le Cordon Bleu in London, turns Meyer lemons into a delicious curd for her tart and, for good measure, decorates it with pretty flowers. You can imagine my delight when the tart was delivered.

Store-bought lemon curd is always too sweet for me, but this one is not. It could, of course, be more tart, but I know most people would not go for that, so I am content.

Aside from the flowers, which you can pick off, there are no distractions. Just lemony goodness in a tart shell.

If you know people who are down with Covid-19, send them this tart. It will cheer them up to no end. If they can taste and smell!

WHERE: Patisserie Woo in Dawson Road, Jalan Jurong Kechil and Everston Park. Go to www.patisseriewoo.com for addresses and opening hours. **ONLINE ORDERS:** Order at least three days in advance from www.patisseriewoo.com. Delivery costs \$10 or \$15, depending on location, and is free for orders above \$200.

DA PAOLO GASTRONOMIA

NATIONAL DAY BUN

National Day is approaching and along with it comes a wave of food "patriotism" which is to say people are being galled endlessly with coconut this and that, chilli crab this and that, nasi lemak this and that.

Usually, I roll my eyes. But I do think that Da Paolo Gastronomia's Gula Melaka Coconut Pandan Buns (\$5.50 each, right) are a smart take on cinnamon buns.

Now, it is difficult to imagine anything better than a pinia and made ondeh ondeh in all its pandan, gula melaka, fresh coconut and mochi mochi glory. But this bun comes close.

The key is in the gula melaka, which is thick and smoky. That alone would make the bun worth the calories. So many gula melaka desserts are inspired because the quality of the palm sugar is bad.

Although I deplore overly sweet food, I could do with gula melaka overload in this bun. And instead of any bread with no heft, the sourdough bun, scented with pandan, has just enough chew in it. But not so much that your jaw gets an unwanted workout.

Have it with a teh-kosong.



Singaporean flavours in a bun made by a home-grown Italian food company and a quintessentially local cuppa. It's the Singapore way.

WHERE: The buns are available for walk-in purchase, Fridays to Sundays, from Aug 5 to 28 at Da Paolo Gastronomia's outlets at Paragon, Cluny Court, Raffles City, Holland Village and Great World City, and at Da Paolo Dempsey Restaurant and Bar. Go to www.dapaolo.com.sg/ for gastronomia for addresses and opening hours.

ONLINE ORDERS: Order at least two days in advance from www.dapaolo.com.sg/gastronomia for delivery Aug 5 to 28. Deliveries, only from Fridays to Sundays, and Aug 9 cost \$20. Last orders at noon on Aug 26.



PHOTOS: DA PAOLO GASTRONOMIA, HUMBLE BAKERY, PATISSIER WOO

HUMBLE BAKERY

CHOCOLATE IN ALL HUES

It seems like every minute of every day, a new food business is born. Some show promise, some seem destined to fail.

When I first had Humble Bakery's scones, I thought, nice, not an entire waste of stomach space.

Fast-forward five months and bakers Glenn Lai and Tan Zhuo Guan, who run this online business, appear to be on fire. Their latest pastry box (\$32.80 for six pastries, above) is terrific.

The offerings are made using five types of Callebaut chocolate—dark, milk, white, ruby and gold caramel. I was curious because I have baked with the brand's ruby and gold caramel buttons, but the results have been blah. I should learn from these bakers.

The Roasted Pistachio Milk

Chocolate Tart is the best pastry in the box, due in large part to the beautifully crisp and buttery tart shell. It is textbook-perfect.

So good that they should ditch scones and brownies and focus on making tarts. Milk chocolate is not my favourite, but they rein in the sweetness and let the pistachios shine.

White chocolate, I will never quite get. But they make a good case for it with their Parmesan White Chocolate Scone. The sweet-salty contrast would be sharper with more cheese.

Of the two ruby chocolate pastries, the better one by far is the Cherry Ruby Chocolate Pound Cake, dark, rich and with tartness from the fruit and the pink-tinted chocolate, which has a bold flavour.

The green tea powder in the Matcha Ruby Scone is muted when it should provide a deep base note to

complement the bright flavour of the chocolate, and the tart raspberries.

Dark chocolate is turned into a tender financier with orange, a classic pairing that cannot go wrong.

I am on the fence about the Coconut Brownie with Salted Gold Ganache because the coconut is a distraction I don't need.

Despite that, I am glad to have given Humble Bakery a second chance. In my estimation, they have moved from nice to very good. Let's see if they make it to fabulous.

WHERE: Humble Bakery, available until Aug 31. **ORDERS:** Order at least two days in advance from humblebakery.sg. Delivery costs \$10 and is free for orders over \$100. No deliveries to Sentosa or Tuas, and the bakes are available from Wednesdays to Sundays.



What to see



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DANCE

SOAR: A DEVOTION

In its latest production, Singapore Chinese Dance Theatre takes inspiration from the Huma bird of Hindu legends, which is said to never alight on the ground, spending its entire life in flight till it dies.

Choreographers Jimmy Neo and Benedict Soh, whose first co-creation was If It's Now for the Esplanade's Huay-1 Chinese Festival of Arts earlier this year, contemplate notions of devotion and perseverance in this 60-minute work.

WHERE: Goodman Arts Centre Black Box, 30 Goodman Road. **NR1** Hourly: 7pm to 9pm. **WHEN:** Aug 5 and 6, 3 and 8pm. **ADMISSION:** \$38, \$30 (concessions) from soar-a-devotion.pentec.com

Soar: A Devotion (above) by Singapore Chinese Dance Theatre is inspired by the Huma bird of Hindu legend. PHOTOS: ELIZABETH HAK, SINGAPORE CHINESE DANCE THEATRE, TAN CHEE LAY

EXHIBITION

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

Home-grown Chinese-language writers Chow Tek Seng and Tan Chee Lay will hold a joint calligraphy and painting exhibition (right), inspired by local poetry in Chinese, English, Malay and Tamil.

Singapore Literature Prize-winning writer Chow and Tan, an associate professor at the National Institute of Education, have striven to translate these works into forms such as ink painting and calligraphy in scrolls, albums and even folding fans.

The exhibition is part of the annual Poetry Festival (Singapore), which Tan co-founded in 2015.

WHERE: Blue Room, The Arts House, 1 Old Parliament Lane. **NR1** City: 8am to 6pm daily.

WHEN: Tomorrow to Aug 9, 11am to 7pm daily. **ADMISSION:** Free.



THEATRE

THE NEST

All expecting parents want the best for their baby. But raising a child is expensive, especially in a world succumbing to the climate crisis.

Young arts group Rainshadow Studios transports The Nest, German playwright Franz Xaver Kroetz's 1974 eco-fable, to Singapore.

Actors Te Hao Boon and Ethel Yap (both night play working-class parents) Kurt and Martha, who struggle with balancing what they want for their baby with what they can afford.

The production, which draws on minimalist principles and is sourcing its costumes second-hand, seeks to ask how it can be produced in an environmentally sustainable way.

WHERE: 42 Waterloo Street. **NR1** City: 8am to 6pm daily.

WHEN: Next Thursday to Aug 21.



Thursdays to Fridays, 8pm, Saturdays, 3 and 8pm, Sundays, 3pm. **ADMISSION:** \$35, \$25 (student concessions) from the-nest.sg/pentec.com. **NR1** rainshadowstudios.org/ the-nest