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GOING GLOBAL

A GLORIOUS WEEKEND IN VANCOUVER

page 84

Meet the quirky
desert community
of Joshua Tree

Top restaurants
bring something
new to Manila's
food halls

Ghost-themed
walking tours
in Melbourne



Singapore

The guild masters

Chinatown's latest restobar is a happy alliance of American comfort food, Singaporean flavors and a craft beer lineup from Hong Kong

OPENING

Behind saloon doors, in a grand dark-wood room occupying the ground floors of two early-20th-century shophouses, diners munch on bak chor mee tagliatelle bolognese and grilled slabs of bacon reminiscent of char siu. At the back, a Peranakan pattern tiled floor separates a cylinder-shaped, 20-tap bar from the dining area. Here, bartenders prepare boilermakers with enticing names such as the Rye on Rye (rye ale paired with Michter's Rye) and Singapore Handshake (pale ale with Bloom gin).

Opened in June, The Guild is the latest in a five-year slew of trendy eateries moving into refurbished shophouses on bustling Keong Saik Road, an area on the fringe of Chinatown once known for its brothels and secret societies. While neighboring establishments serve the classics, such as Old Fashioneds, burgers and unagi rice bowls, The Guild offers food and drink pairings that toy with the taste buds. The restaurant sources many ingredients from small-scale, independent farms in Singapore, such as Jurong Frog Farm and Sea Farmers at Ubin.



The fusion menu at The Guild evolved as executive chef Vinny Lauria, a New Hampshire native who's also opened restaurants in Hong Kong, and Singaporean sous chef Alton Huang started cooking together and "getting into a groove".

The result is devilishly good comfort food: the General Tso's frog legs, drizzled with a homemade sauce of orange juice, sesame, rice vinegar, chili, pesto and honey, is a re-interpretation of the Chinese-American dish made with chicken. There's also the brawn terrine, consisting of braised pig head brined for six days and served with spicy fermented vegetables.

To wash it all down, diners can choose from a wide selection of imported beer from Young Master Brewery, Hong Kong's largest independent craft operation. "We envisioned from the start a collaboration that would bring about a drinks menu that's as extensive as the food menu," says local brewer Sylvester Fedor, who oversees Young Master's sales and marketing in Singapore.

Fedor recommends the 1842 Island, an imperial IPA named after the year Great Britain took over Hong Kong. "It's spicy and floral with complex flavors that linger on the palate." It's one of the six core beers always on the menu; the rest of the taps will offer different options on rotation. Fedor also singles out the Galactic Passion sour ale, brewed with passionfruit for a tart fruitiness. "It's always fun when I have a sour beer convert," he ruminates.

Judging by the crowds swarming at The Guild since it opened, scoring converts won't be a problem. theguild.sg – Dana Ter

