

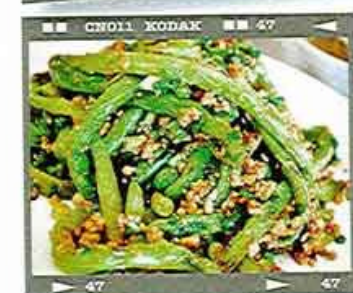
Malaysia is truly Asia—and a few other regions of the world when it comes to food! The country's multi-racial make-up already ensures a good variety of cuisine such as Malay, Chinese, Indian and Peranakan. But as the world grows smaller and morphs into a global village, foods from the far corners of the world regularly find their way into the local food scene—guaranteeing a gastronomical experience that's out of this world!



QING PALACE

Putai Springs Resort
20km, Jalan Pontian Lama
81110 Putai, Johor
Tel: 07-521 2121
www.putaisprings.com

Opening hours: 12pm - 3pm; Daily (lunch)
6.30pm - 10pm; Monday - Friday (Dinner)
6pm - 10pm; Saturday & Sunday



Being only one of the many types of cuisines available in Malaysia, it can sometimes be difficult for a restaurant serving solely Chinese food to stand out. Surprisingly, Qing Palace not only does this with flair—it is also a multiple award-winning restaurant.



Serving a blend of traditional Szechuan and Cantonese as well as localised Chinese cuisine, Master Chef Lim Ming Chong has developed a list of signature dishes that keep diners coming back. Guests have the option of choosing from the ala carte menu or the set menus. Great for first timers or those who love a large variety of dishes, Qing Palace also offers a unique six-course individual set menu consisting of single-serve portions of each dish.

Thankfully, we arrived for lunch on an empty stomach because what awaited us was an unbelievable spread fit for royalty. Served as per the customary Chinese culture, every dish was brought to us course-by-course. As we sat down at the round table topped with a Lazy Susan, we enjoyed the restaurant's carefully selected Eight Treasures Tea. This light and refreshing tea was exactly what we needed to cool off from the sweltering afternoon heat.

Every Chinese meal must begin with a soup and this was no exception. The Szechuan Hot and Sour Soup lived up to its promise and was indeed spicy and sour! Packed with authentic ingredients including bamboo shoot, silky soft tofu, home-made chilly oil and shredded chicken, the soup was addictive! Next was the delicately cooked Camphor and Tea Smoked Duck. The dish was accompanied by a sweet dark sauce and plump mini fried buns. Eaten on its own, the flavours of the tea infused into the duck during the smoking process was evident—it complemented the

sweet tender meat perfectly. The thick dark sauce however, provided an entirely different taste profile once the meat was dipped in. The richness of the sauce complemented the saltiness of the crispy duck skin. We recommend stuffing this between the fried buns for the ultimate smoked duck sandwich. Delicious!

The following course was the Sautéed Prawns with Dried Chilly and Cashew Nut—a signature Szechuan dish at Qing Palace. Chef Lim improvised this time-honoured dish by incorporating chopped, deep fried dough sticks (*Yu Cha Kueh*) together with the juicy fresh prawns and lightly stir-frying it with the traditional Szechuan sauce. Every morsel was polished off within minutes.

Our fourth course was yet another house favourite. The Deep Fried Sea Bass Fish with Curry Sauce and Deep Fried Buns arrived steaming hot and in an extraordinarily large dish. Swimming in a pool of luscious thick curry sauce, the sea bass was fresh and crunchy at the

beginning. As the sauce began soaking through the crispy skin into the firm white flesh of the fish, the dish became more flavourful. Crammed with eggplant, okra and tofu, the sauce was heavenly. We couldn't resist dipping the lightly fried buns into the sauce to soak in more of the heavenly curry sauce!

Stewed Mutton with Dried Soya in a Clay Pot was next. We were told this intricate Cantonese dish takes at least four hours to prepare. After the initial stewing process, the dish must then be cooked with dried beancurd sheets, mushrooms and fresh Chinese parsley. Usually consumed during the winter months to keep warm, it makes for a hearty soup that is tasty and filling. Try it with Chef Lim's specially-made chilly sauce for an added kick!

The vegetable was the last of the savoury dishes. Cooked in a special Szechuan spice, the French Beans with Minced Chicken was delightfully crunchy.

By the time dessert came around, we were ready to roll off our chairs. But Restaurant Manager Brehme Wong promised us that it would be light and that we would regret missing it. So, we cautiously accepted the Honey Dew Sago Soup. Tiny balls of honey dew and watermelon were delivered in a bowl of light creamy milk topped with a giant scoop of vanilla ice cream. As we doled out these mini fruit balls and sipped on the milky soup, it turned out to be exactly what was needed to cap off an extremely satisfying meal.

At Qing Palace, what you get is different styles of Chinese food at its finest. The menu caters to all types of diners and every dish is carefully thought out. It's no surprise that the restaurant is packed with regulars on weekends and continues to win awards. We recommend reserving a table in advance to avoid disappointment.

Check out the various food promotions at Qing Palace this

month. Enjoy the All-You-Can-Eat Menu at just RM50++ per person from Mondays to Thursdays. On Fridays, get 30 per cent off all regular priced dishes on the special 10 Hot Deals menu. 🍴

