

Tea-Smoked Pigeon  
Vea

At Vea, chef Vicky Cheng offers elegant modern Chinese cuisine. Each dish is a sculpted artwork, on gorgeous platters and colorful porcelain. Everything rocks, but Vea's pigeon is on another level, rich and juicy on the inside, perfectly crispy outside. Utterly addictive. [vea.hk](http://vea.hk)



Caldoso Rice  
Ando

Emphasizing that Hong Kong isn't just an Asian-food mecca, we have paired meals at two classy Latin restaurants. Ando chef Agustin Ferrando Balbi offers Argentinian treats such as his signature Caldoso Rice. A tribute to his grandmother, this version is five-star Hong Kong congee, packed with Hokkaido scallops, clams, squid and spicy chorizo. [andohk.com](http://andohk.com)

## 6 DISHES HONG KONG

This SAR has long boasted some of the best food on the planet. Here's a crib sheet to modern fine dining in the new Hong Kong. **By Ron Gluckman**

WHAT CULINARY PARADISE claims more Michelin stars than London or New York, in fact more than any other municipality worldwide besides Paris and a trio of Japanese cities?

I recently ate and drank my way through Hong Kong in the company of a group of chefs and travel writers on a gastronomy tour taking in top-ranked restaurants, street-food shops, and heritage clan houses, plus even dumpling factories and fermentation centers. How refreshing for me, who lived in Hong Kong for nearly a decade, to reconnect with all that makes the SAR such a dreamy dining destination. It was also illuminative of how the city has evolved, because, while for years, the non-stop shopping, conferences and nightlife kept Hong Kong atop all the world's tourist lists, the long covid lockdown forced a rethink, and some reinvention. Tasty reinvention, I'd say. Here, six highlights from some of my memorable most-recent meals:



Truffle Pudding  
Roganic

A farm-to-table restaurant in this intensely urban metropolis, Roganic proves a delightful surprise. There is a rooftop garden, and meticulous recycling: table scraps power kombucha in various flavors, a refreshing change from wine pairing. Every dish is a hit. I am blown away by the starters, especially truffle pudding with local honey, topped with cheddar cheese. [roganic.com.hk](http://roganic.com.hk)



Flowery Crab  
The Chairman

We start at Michelin-star The Chairman, which in 2021 became the first Hong Kong restaurant ranked No. 1 by Asia's 50 Best Restaurants. Owner-chef Danny Yip regales us with tales of fermentation and serves a feast of his famed dishes. The Flowery Crab in aged Shaoxing wine, fragrant chicken oil, with rice noodles is a creamy and colorful grand slam. [thechairmangroup.com](http://thechairmangroup.com)



Corn Arepa  
Mono

Like Ando (above), Mono is near food and nightlife center Lan Kwai Fong. Here, chef Ricardo Chaneton explores flavors of South America at Mono, dishing up a yummy Corn Arepa, a snack from his homeland of Venezuela. [mono.hk](http://mono.hk)



Roast Duck  
Xin Rong Ji

There is duck and then there is Xin Rong Ji, an iconic chain claiming a dozen Michelin stars among eight locations in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing. The bird is meticulously roasted to remain succulent, so it melts in your mouth. Insanely awesome, a standout in this quack-crazed city. 138 Lockhart Rd., Wan Chai

Will Goldfarb,  
in Ubud.



## HEAD OF THE CLASS

Room4Dessert Academy in Bali has room for all interests—from making pastries, of course, to studying botany. **By Marissa Carruthers**

THREE YEARS AGO, chef Will Goldfarb caved to guests' requests to learn the recipes behind the mouthwatering dishes at Room4Dessert in Bali's Ubud and launched R4D Academy. Since then, its scope has grown from a pastry-only program to classes that range from rustic-urban Thai cooking to running a zero-waste kitchen to Miyawaki forest design. Paying enrollees come from around the globe, but—importantly—R4D Academy also offers scholarships to Balinese and Indonesian students as part of its ethos to have positive social impact.

"Our philosophy is to restore the community through food, cook for people, be creative," says Goldfarb, who was voted World's Best Pastry Chef in 2021 by the 50 Best academy. "But it's also healing with food, honoring traditional wisdom, and reflecting cultural respect." Plans are currently in the making to roll out an intensive pastry program comprising three five-day sessions and a mini-intensive course of three three-day classes in 2024. These will be complemented by workshops covering various topics in the ever-expanding Goldfarbian encyclopedia.

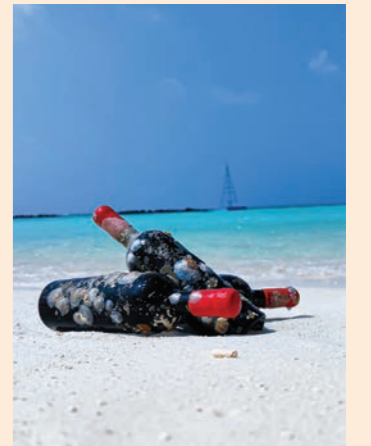
"The biggest thing for us is how do we create meaning?" he says. "How do we make our presence here valuable? How do we expand our community of sharing, growing and learning?" [room4dessert.com/r4d-academy](http://room4dessert.com/r4d-academy).

## Sunken Treasure

Maldives resorts are aging wine in the Indian Ocean, and it seems these vintages have (sea) legs. **By Katie Lockhart**



Clockwise from left: The dining room of Sea, the underwater restaurant at Anantara Kihavah; bottles of Caviro reds from Tuscany custom-made for Emerald Maldives; vintages retrieved from the depths, at Anantara Kihavah. Bottom: Vakkaru Maldives.



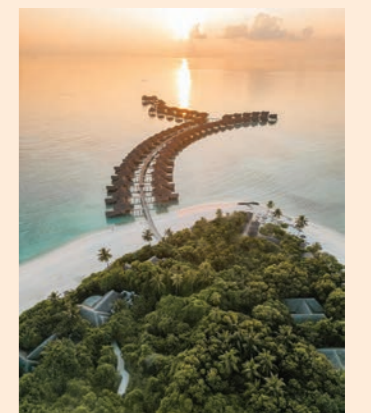
IN THE MALDIVES, treasure sparkles underwater, but instead of pirate booty, we're talking wine. Inspired by the cargo of sunken ships, Anantara Kihavah ([anantara.com](http://anantara.com); doubles from US\$1,480) decided to experiment with sinking bottles of 2008 Dom Perignon. They discovered that after a year of riddling in the current, the vintages had changed.

"The Champagne had developed distinctive flavor notes, enriched by elements of seaweed, minerals and a subtle salinity," says Arunkumar Tamilselvan, senior wine guru at Anantara Kihavah.

In the name of enology, Emerald Maldives ([emerald-maldives.com](http://emerald-maldives.com); doubles from US\$759) had a blend of Sangiovese, Merlot and Syrah custom-made in special bottles by Tuscany's Caviro Winery. The first year, they dropped 60 bottles 30 meters into the ocean for six months, and the next they lowered down 500 bottles of 100-percent Sangiovese. "This wine created a smooth texture that caresses the palate with every sip," says Nash C. Kanyangarara, chief sommelier.

This watery wine-aging trend continues at Vakkaru Maldives ([vakkarumaldives.com](http://vakkarumaldives.com); doubles from US\$1,336), where the head sommelier of this Robinson Crusoe-like island, Sam Hewawala,

put 36 bottles at the edge of the resort's reef for a month and a half. "Maldives' underwater magic allows young wines to develop a uniquely refined character," says Hewawala, "thanks to its steady temperature, gentle currents, and minimal light exposure." Don't believe him? Join one of his post-cerulean-sea-submersion wine tastings, where guests compare the sunken vino with the same bottles that never left land to try to detect the effects of the motion of the ocean.



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY OF XIN RONG JI; COURTESY OF ROGANIC; COURTESY OF MONO; COURTESY OF ANDO; COURTESY OF THE CHAIRMAN

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF R4D ACADEMY; COURTESY OF ANANTARA KIHAVAH; COURTESY OF EMERALD MALDIVES; COURTESY OF VAKKARU MALDIVES; COURTESY OF ANANTARA KIHAVAH