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DECEMBER 2008

FREE

Holiday Spirits
Gifts, Gifts,
and More Gifts!
Merci Beaucoup
Colombe d'Or
Keiji Tagawa
Sparkles

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Photo by Collin Kelly

It is always remarkable what happens this time of year. Notwithstanding recent hurricanes and financial storms, the rigors of presidential politics and the burdens placed upon us in our day to day lives, the joyous month of December is a powerful and effective tonic. It is not just effective advertising that lures us to the mall, but an entire mystique that envelops the holiday season like a comfortable blanket. The weather changes and offers a respite from the brutally hot and humid summer. We unpack our sweaters and our corduroy clothes, our scarves and gloves and wool coats. There is no doubt that we are moving into a period in which there will be parties with friends and family, the aroma of honey baked hams, turkey, apple pie and countless others that will make us feel cozy and hungry. And, of course, there is the ritual of exchanging the "perfect" gifts and enjoying the pleasure of those who receive them. Is anything more intoxicatingly joyous than the sheer exhilaration that we see in our children as they tear off the wrapping paper? It is pure magic.

As you would expect, this issue is fully focused on the holidays. Vuthy and Trish offer insight on the intercultural differences in their gift giving traditions. Philip expands upon his previous coverage on the virtues of sparkling wines and Ivy gives you some helpful and healthy tips as you negotiate the gift giving season. Believe it or not, our cover model's nickname is "Gift", which her parents have called her since birth. How perfect is that? And although we did not report on the many holiday parties hosted at the impressive Colombe d'Or Restaurant and Hotel, you will definitely want to learn why the *New York Times* stated, "You will never believe what is in Houston, Texas". It is a spectacle to behold.

Best wishes to you all for a happy and safe holiday season and New Year.

V. Van Hoang



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The color yellow has played a recurrent symbolic role throughout the history of Asian culture. It symbolizes the earth that sustains all life, yet has been embraced by Buddhist monks as an expression of unchallenged power. Such is the role of yellow: always revered but in different ways under different circumstances.

The mission of *Yellow Magazine* is to introduce our readers to the artistic, fashion, lifestyle and entertainment contributions made by Asian Americans. It is our hope that the depth and breadth of the topics and events we cover do justice to the pride that the color yellow has represented throughout the millennia. As the editor in chief of *Yellow Magazine*, my last name is Hoang, which also means yellow. Just as I am proud of my name, I am proud of my heritage, and proud of *Yellow Magazine*.

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On the cover:

Dress by Christian Dior,

Neiman Marcus, \$19,000

Earrings by Kenneth Jay Lane,

Tootsies \$300

Powder Blue Cuffs,

Sakowitz Furs, \$350

Brooch Barrett,

Kuhl-Linscomb, \$54



Down Home
Southern (France) Cooking

Colombe d'Or by HENRI MERCERON

The front of the Colombe d'Or Restaurant and Hotel on Montrose conjures up images of grandeur from Houston's rich past. Built in 1923, it was the mansion of Walter Fondren, one of the founders of Humble Oil and, today, is a Texas historical landmark. When I first contacted Steve Zimmerman, owner of the establishment, I had only intended to write about the hotel's restaurant. What I discovered caused me to expand my scope and report about the hotel, as well. It is a facility that stands apart from its peers in special ways.

As I entered the mansion, it was as though I stepped across the ocean into an elegant home in the south of France. On the right was a cozy sitting area complete with antique furnishings, a fireplace with an ornate mantel and a wall size painting; to the left was a collection of formal dining areas with five, six and nine tables, respectively. The second floor consists of six guest rooms. From the front of the mansion, it did not appear that there would be much more to see. In fact, there was much more. There was a complete art gallery on the third floor, an enclosed garden room ("Conservatory") in which receptions and other gatherings occur and, finally, a breathtaking salon that caused one New York Times writer to declare, "You are not going to believe what is in Houston, Texas."

When Steve acquired the property in the late 1970s, he only wanted to open a restaurant. He pondered what he would do with the rooms on the second and third floors. He decided to pattern the Colombe d'Or on the auberges of Europe where guests drank and dined at fantastic restaurants and stayed overnight in the several rooms that were available. The restaurants drove the business. In the U.S., the focus of hotels was on rooms and not on restaurants. No one would visit a hotel's restaurant for a gourmet meal.

For many years, Steve coaxed the second and third tier chefs at the best French restaurants to come cook in his kitchen for 18 months at a time on a work visa. They would share their new ideas and creativity with his sous chefs. Two of those chefs were Vietnamese, and already familiar with French cooking techniques. Today, one of them, Tomm Troung, is the executive chef and supervises all the banquets and weddings, which account for the majority of the restaurant's business.

After the oil crunch of the mid-80s, Steve's mother stated that oil may go out of style but romance never would, and if you cater to the women they will tell their husbands where they want to go. That was the impetus that established Colombe d'Or as the place to have a wedding or anniversary. To be able to do it right, Steve was adamant about needing a ballroom. He had heard about a salon that was stored in an old airport hangar by John Mecom in the 1950s. Mr. Mecom collected many architectural treasures from Europe that he used to develop properties such as the old Warwick Hotel. Steve found the salon in poor shape, took three years to restore it and built a 9,000 square foot attachment to the hotel in which to house it.

The salon had been carved in 1715 and was the site of the last great ball of European royalty before WWI; guests included Caruso, Czar Nicholas of Russia, Pasteur, Curie, Wagner, Marconi and Proust. Carved in the columns are the names of such historic giants as Kaiser Wilhelm and Edward VII. The room is exquisite. The once painted oak panels (paint was considered a luxury as only the wealthy could afford it) are carved with delicate intricate designs, yet, retain a simplicity that belies its storied past.

When the ballroom was complete in 1996, it was the first standalone banquet facility in Houston, and it now hosts about 200 weddings each year. A large kitchen is divided into distinct areas that prepare meals for banquets and the gourmet restaurant. The quality of the food is the same, and the



Photos by Timothy Frederick

staffs of each are cross trained to ensure uniform preparation and results. Quality control is further strengthened by the fact that half of the kitchen personnel have worked for Steve for 28 years.

Just about the only thing you will find in the kitchen's freezer is ice cream. That is because none of the seafood or meats is ever frozen. Everything is flown in regularly and prepared fresh. Steve's philosophy is to supersize quality and not quantity. I was ready to put the gourmet kitchen to the test.

The menu is filled with enticing selections with French titles and English descriptions (thank goodness). I was thrilled to find Escargots Bourguignons (12.95) described as "Traditional escargots with fresh garlic and parsley." I am a purist when it comes to escargots; I am not interested in a clever rendition of the original or some "fusion" enhancement. To my absolute delight, this appetizer captured the traditional flavor that has eluded me at other establishments. The escargots provide only texture and rely on the bold flavors of the parsley and garlic and the richness of butter. Of course, I could not resist dipping my bread into the pools of butter, garlic and parsley until there was none remaining.

My first entrée was the Loup de Mer Grills au Fenouil (37.00) or grilled herb crusted Chilean sea bass with extra virgin olive oil and fresh fennel. Other ingredients included diced tomato, basil, cauliflower, and bok choy. The generous portion of fish was thick, moist and seared to perfection. Its distinctive buttery flavor profile was prominent, as it should have been.

My next entrée was Carre d'Agneau (42.00), individual rack of baby lamb grilled with natural herbs and red wine sauce. I hesitated to try this entrée because I am not a big fan of wine sauces. But I love lamb, so I succumbed. What the menu does not state is that this lamb is from Colorado, considered the best on the planet, as well as the most expensive. This entrée was surprising in several respects. To my delight, had the menu not stated that a red wine sauce was present, I would not have known it. More often than not, the flavor of the lamb is muted by the sauces, herbs and spices that are used in its preparation. The judicious use of herbs and sauces by Colombe d'Or's chef allowed the flavor of the lamb to dominate the dish, even though Colorado lamb is much less gamey than others. Finally, either by the way the chops were butchered (butchering is done in-house), the nature of Colorado lamb, or the manner of preparation, the meat on each chop was plump, juicy and tender. It caught my attention because I am used to having chops that have a flatter appearance and the meat generally requires more vigorous chewing.

Dining at Colombe d'Or is an experience that will transport you by virtue of its authenticity. If the ambiance alone does not make you feel like you are in southern France, your first bite of food will convince you. And if you want to be transported to an era steeped in royalty and high society, stop by the grand salon. You can almost hear the tenor voice of Enrico Caruso or see Isadora Duncan dance across the room. When you step into a salon older than the United States, itself, your imagination can take over. Bon appetite.

La Colombe d'Or Mansion & Le Grand Salon

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Mixing Drinks
and Mixing Friends

Holiday Spirits



There is no need to spend a small fortune on drinks for your next holiday party. Yellow Magazine has compiled a list of new and classic spirits that can be used to quickly and easily blend new and traditional cocktail recipes that will energize your parties.

Bourbon

Kentucky Champagne - Add a bit of sparkle to your holiday toast!

- 1 ounce Maker's Mark
- Chilled Sparkling apple cider
- Maraschino Cherry

Pour Maker's Mark into a champagne flute; fill with chilled sparkling apple cider; add maraschino cherry.

Vodka

Holiday Appletini – When a little *Sex and the City* is desired.

- Equal parts DeKuyper® Sour Apple Pucker
- Schnapps and Vox® Vodka

Shake with ice; strain into a chilled martini glass; add several drops of Rose's Grenadine; and garnish with an apple slice.

Gin

Mistletoe Martini – Be careful who you are standing next to.....

- 2 parts Bombay Sapphire gin
- 1 part cranberry juice
- 1 part lemonade

Add ice and shake; strain into a chilled martini glass; garnish with a mint leaf.

Cognac

Side Car – Rev up your engine and let the good times roll.

- 2 ounces Martell VSOP
- 1 ounce Cointreau
- 1 oz fresh lemon juice

Shake all ingredients together and serve in a tumbler.

Rum

Take your eggnog to the next level while adding spice to a good cause. A portion of the proceeds of each bottle of Old New Orleans Rum Spice that is sold will go to supporting New Orleans artists. What a great excuse to keep coming back for more.

- 2 ounces Old New Orleans Rum Spice
- 6 ounces milk
- 1 whole egg
- Nutmeg

Shake all ingredients (except nutmeg) with ice and strain into a Collins glass. Sprinkle nutmeg on top and serve.

Tequila

Agave Kiss. You will definitely want to kiss and tell.

- 2 oz. Tequila Herradura
- 1 oz. white crème de cacao
- 1 oz. double cream
- 1/2 oz. Chambord

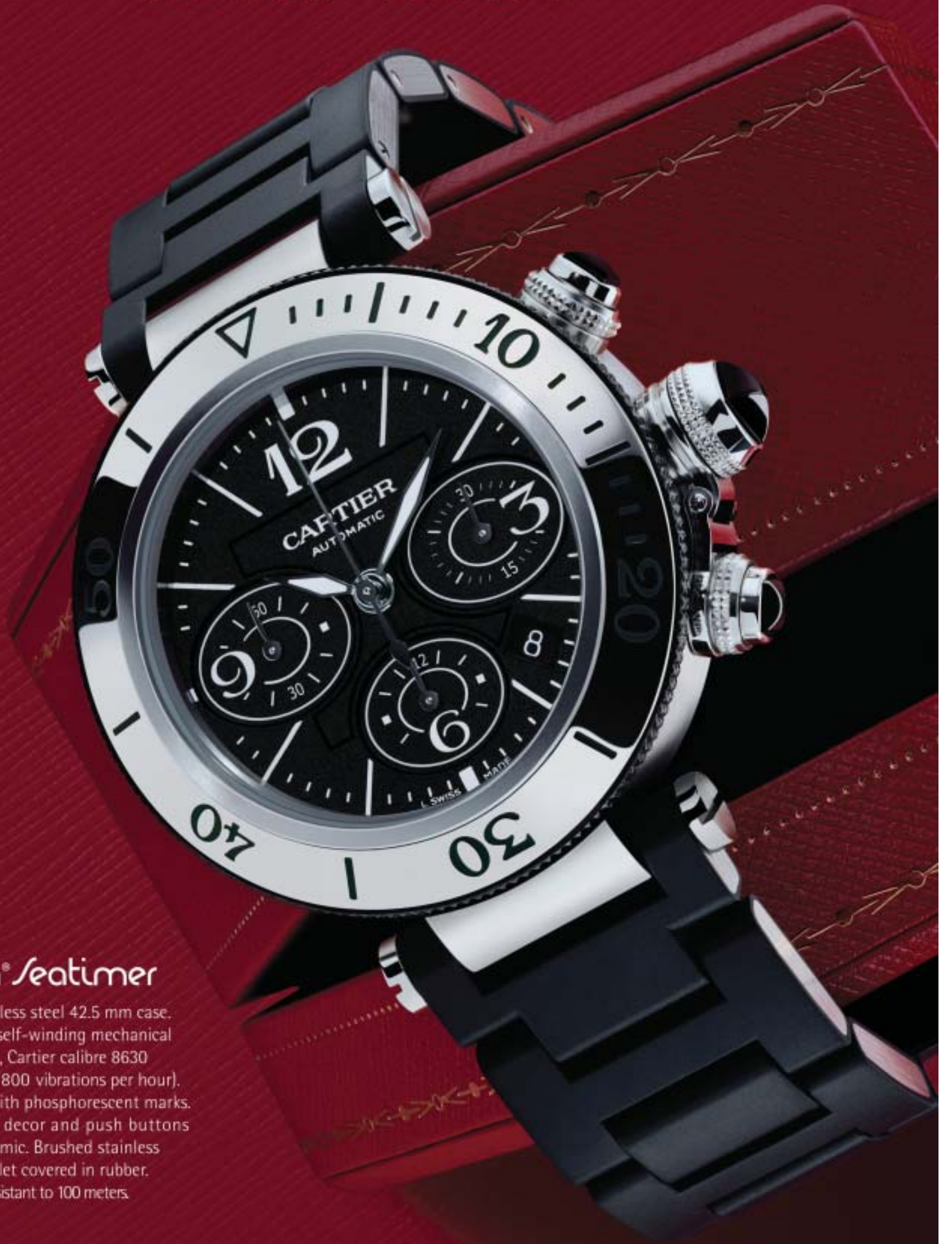
In a shaker with ice, add Herradura tequila, white crème de cacao, double cream and Chambord; shake for 15 seconds; pour into a chilled cocktail glass rimmed with white chocolate; add a skewer of fresh raspberries and serve.



If you do not want to spend a lot of time making popular vodka shots, DeKuyper has just made your job easier for three of the most popular ones. You can now stock your bar with bottles of Kamikaze, Washington Apple and Red Headed Slut shots that are premixed in perfect proportions. And that includes the vodka, too! Just shake with ice and strain. A perfect pour every single time.



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Unwrapping the Meaning Behind the Gift

From The Heart

Trish Volore and her husband, Vuthy “Woody” Kuon, have been blissfully married for almost two years. As is the case with many newlyweds, the first couple of years present an array of challenges, discussions and compromises. Coming from different cultural backgrounds, they found that there are some challenges that are unique to their special circumstances. This month, we learn a bit about differences in gift giving.



I love the holiday season. Since my mom was a stay-at-home-mom and my dad was a school teacher, we had little extra money. They believed that Christmas should be the most memorable day of the year, so they saved what they could to buy presents and food to make it a huge celebration. We would spend the entire month of December preparing for Christmas on them. We participated in our own church’s Christmas program and would attend the programs of other churches. We watched Christmas movies like *It’s a Wonderful Life* and went caroling with groups of friends. We sledded and made ice cream with snow and drank hot chocolate. On most Christmas Eves we attended a candlelight service to celebrate Jesus’ birthday and on Christmas day we woke up early to open presents, eat, play games, nap and spend time enjoying our friends and family.

When my wife didn’t get me a gift on our anniversary, it really wasn’t about the gift for me. It was more about the thought. I have told her many times that she really doesn’t need to spend money on me for gifts. I am actually happier to save that money for emergencies or just some peace of mind, especially in a down economy.

I admit, I was genuinely sad, but that was because I didn’t receive any acknowledgement...not even a card! I wouldn’t have minded just hearing that she thought of me. Just imagine your wife always gives you great, thoughtful, loving gifts on every possible occasion, then all of a sudden *nothing!*

We were in Colorado visiting Tricia’s sister and I had planned an elaborate all-day anniversary celebration. First, I planned to take her to Marianna Butte to go golfing through lush green fairways overlooking the mountains. Tricia loves golf!

Then, after that, I planned to take her to lunch at an Indian buffet restaurant which we both love, followed by a rafting adventure down the rapids to cool off. For dinner, I would take her to eat her favorite food, Thai. Lastly, when the sun went down, I’d drive her to a rare drive-in movie theater for a romantic hour and a half underneath the stars to complete the “outdoor” theme.

Due to baby-sitting constraints, we had to do some of these activities on different days and eliminate others altogether. Also, my sister-in-law made me realize that most sane women would prefer not spending their entire anniversary day outdoors. We didn’t go rafting. The drive-in movie moved to an air-conditioned indoor theater. The Thai food was replaced by Chinese, as that was conveniently available on the way to the theater. We had to rush the waitress so that we wouldn’t be late for the movie.

All this would have ended very nicely, if it weren’t for the fact that the movie we watched was *Tropic Thunder*. Despite being offended and not laughing for almost two hours, I still think we had a good time. The golfing was amazing. The 14th hole was an unbelievable par 3 that had us tee off from the top of a cliff that drops straight down onto the green. You should have seen the size of the dimple I made! Anyway, it was lots of fun.

I don’t consider myself a great gift-giver. In fact, I really do not enjoy giving gifts much at all. Over the years, I have stressed out trying to please my loved ones, only to wind up with disappointed faces. One Christmas, our family tried a “White Elephant” format and I almost cried watching my poor little gift travel around until the final chump got stuck with it for good. I kept thinking to myself, “I’ll bet everyone is wondering, ‘Who’s the idiot that chose that ugly thing?’”

Even when my gift was the most popular one, the Chinese side of me felt badly for outshining all the other gifts. I just don’t understand why Americans love gifts so much. We have so many clothes and toys and stuff all around the house, and we end up giving away most of it to Goodwill anyway. What’s wrong with saving for the future, family emergencies, or another Great Depression? Nothing, I guess, but there is also something to be said about giving gifts, especially if you know that the recipient feels love that way. That being said, I’d better start my planning now. Christmas is just around the corner and I need for her to know that I love her.

– TRICIA VOLORE

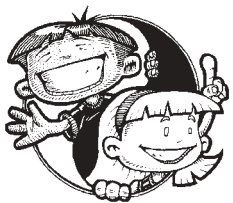
– VUTHY KUON

My dad told us that we, the family, were precious and that that was why he and my mom went to such great lengths to buy presents at Christmas.

Although the whole month was like a celebration to us, one of the most memorable times was giving and receiving gifts. My dad read stories that taught us about the legend of Santa that began with a real man. He told us about the wise men in the Bible who gave Jesus the most precious gifts of gold and two types of rare and expensive perfumes. My dad told us that we, the family, were precious and that that was why he and my mom went to such great lengths to buy presents at Christmas. As we got older, my parents tried to pick presents that could be used for a long time. I received amazing gifts including a wardrobe that my dad designed and built himself, a cradle for my first child, a rocking chair, and a television.

As an adult with children of my own, I was excited to continue the Christmas traditions I had learned from my parents. At times, money had been scarce and I had to work extra hours to save for Christmas. The joy on the faces of my children as they opened their gifts has always filled me with the best feeling. Although it is just one way of expressing love, it is an important one to me. I like to think about the perfect gift for each of our family tried a “White Elephant” format and I almost cried watching right time can be magical.

When Woody and I married, we were both a little shocked by each other’s Christmas practices. I saved and spent a considerable amount of money for Christmas, while he had never been too big on gift giving or receiving for reasons of his own. I have given Woody lots of gifts and he has always protested, although nicely. Recently, I did not give him a gift on our anniversary because he seemed to not want me to buy him gifts. Several days later, he asked me why I had not gotten him anything and he seemed genuinely sad. I felt so bad but kind of happy, too. I’m thinking that Woody finally understands that, for me, giving gifts is an expression of love. I’m already getting started on a surprise or two for him for Christmas this year. Ho! Ho! Ho!



WOODY & TRISH



By Vuthy Kuon

Tiger Beer "Do You Taboo?" Party

Held at The Gallery

Photos by Teddy Tran's Photography, Vinh Luong, Niko Allen

A week before Halloween, hundreds of guests filled The Gallery to let it be known that they do Taboo, too. You could feel the mystique of a den in the Orient as models painted in calligraphy paraded in Qi Pao dresses. Guests enjoyed an abundance of Tiger Beer and relished having their palms read.



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Behind the Scenes w
Russell Wong
By Henri Merceron



snow angel

photographer: Collin Kelly
fashion stylist: Summar Salah
hair & makeup: Tree Vaello
model: Gift Taout

Dress by Christian Dior, Neiman Marcus, \$19,000
Earrings by Kenneth Jay Lane, Tootsies, \$300
Powder Blue Cuffs, Sakowitz Furs, \$350
Brooch Barrett, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$54



Top by Chado, Neiman Marcus, \$4000
Sweater by Ralph Lauren, Neiman Marcus, \$1098
Earmuff by Surell, Neiman Marcus, \$79
Tights by Hue
Quartz Necklace by Vaubel, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$350
Gloves, Neiman Marcus, \$218



Dress by Basix, Tootsies, \$495
Shrug by Cassini, Tootsies, \$795
White Mink Hat, Sakowitz Furs, \$890
White Fox Collar Fur, Neiman Marcus, \$190
Necklace by Vaubel, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$790
Ring by Vaubel, Kuhl Linscomb \$610



Dress by Nina Ricci, Neiman Marcus, \$1990
Cerulean Mini Stole, Sakowitz Furs, \$4000
Necklace by Claudia Lobao, Tootsies, \$130
Long Necklace by Amanda Sterett, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$250



Dress by Donna Karen, Neiman Marcus, \$2495
Vest by Marcelle Danan, Neiman Marcus, \$495
White Mink Fur Coat, Sakowitz Furs, \$6990
Nativity Necklace by Pointel Designs, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$148
Roses Necklace by Pointel Designs, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$315
Leaf Necklace by Melissa Borrell, Kuhl Linscomb, \$36



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Jacket \$3800, Pants \$1750
White Fox Straight Stole, Sakowitz Furs, \$3000
White Fox Cuffs, Sakowitz Furs, \$350
Gloves, Neiman Marcus, \$218
Earrings by Olivia, Kuhl-Linscomb, \$175

Flutes of Sparkling Wines
Shimmer and Shine

Hitting High Notes

by PHILIP CUISIMANO

Demand for sparkling wine is at its highest point in the month of December, thanks to the sheer volume of holiday celebrations that culminates with the grandest of them all, New Year's Eve. Indeed, even those who typically eschew alcoholic beverages will on this occasion join in observance and imbibe. That sparkling wine is the drink of celebration should not surprise anyone, as this wine is uniquely elegant with its festive bubbles, delicious flavors and over-all utility as a beverage that can accommodate practically any type of food. In keeping with the festive spirit of the season, allow me to re-acquaint you with the elements that will help you select the sparkling wines you will provide at your parties and the ones that you will be enjoying at the parties of others.

Champagne is a type of sparkling wine but not all sparkling wines are Champagne.

The two key components in understanding sparkling wines are the method of fermentation utilized and the degree of residual sugar or sweetness retained within the cuvee.

Sparkling wine is produced by inducing a "Secondary Fermentation" in still wine. This is accomplished by injecting into the wine additional sugar and yeast. During the secondary fermentation, carbon dioxide is released as a by-product and creates bubbles. The type of process utilized for the secondary fermentation determines a wine's pedigree.

The principle techniques of producing sparkling wine are Methode Champenoise and the Transfer Method. Methode Champenoise is considered the premier process. The secondary fermentation occurs within the very bottle that you purchase and the label will state "Methode Champenoise" and/or "Fermented in this Bottle". The Transfer Method is a process in which the cuvee is fermented in one bottle and then transferred to another for distribution. The label should say "Fermented in the Bottle".

The Charmat Process is a technique in which the cuvee is held in large containers as it undergoes a secondary fermentation before being transferred into the bottle. The label may designate "Charmat Process".

Sparkling wines are classified by their levels of sweetness as reflected in terms of dryness: Brut Natural, Extra Brut, Brut, Extra-Dry or Extra-Sec, Sec, Demi-sec and Doux. It is interesting to note that Extra-Dry is sweeter than Brut, which is the most popular of all the categories.

Finally, I think it is important to make a distinction between Champagne and sparkling wine. Champagne is a type of sparkling wine but not all sparkling wines are Champagne. Only those cuvees produced in the Champagne region located about 90 miles from Paris can be so designated. An exception was made for producers who had used the "Champagne" designation prior to 1996. Thus, you may come across brands labeled as "California Champagne". I find this policy unfair and confusing. It allows some companies to enjoy a marketing advantage while misleading the American public. Bah! Humbug!

Wines available at Spec's Wines, Spirits, & Finer Foods, various locations. Visit specsonline.com for the store nearest you.



You are now armed and prepared to seek out the wine of your choice. However, I offer a few suggestions to consider bringing to your party. Happy New Year!

Efix Brut Non-Vintage

This sparkling wine is from the Italian island of Sardinia and has just arrived in the United States. Sparkling wine from Italy is currently the rage and this rendition is very attractive. It is produced from 100% Vermentino grapes which are indigenous to the island and produce remarkable wine. This offering is soft to medium-bodied with flavors of pears, mangos, vanilla, minerals, honey and cream. The wine ends in a delicate toasty lingering finish. All of this in a very fine balance. Party on! \$18.00

Veuve Clicquot Brut Yellow Label-Non Vintage

I am compelled to suggest this cuvee any time there is a discussion of Champagne as this may be the most popular premium sparkling wine in the United States. This historic Champagne house was founded in 1798 and under the direction of the Widow (Veuve) Clicquot established a legacy of quality that carries through today. The blend consists of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier from only the finest vineyards and results in a rich, full-bodied wine of delicious fruit flavors and cream that leaves a long clean finish. It is always in style. \$42.00

Bollinger Special Cuvee Brut Non-Vintage

The house of Bollinger was established in 1829 and is one of the great enduring names of Champagne. The brand also has received some pop-culture fame as this firm produces the Champagne of James Bond (the Bollinger R.D.). The Special Cuvee Brut is a blend of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier. Renowned for its dry toastiness, this mouth-filling cuvee offers up flavors of apples, pears and, of course, hints of cream. The finish is long and lingering. Molto elegante! \$50.50

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HANS GRAF
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Very Merry Pops
December 12, 13, 14
Michael Krajewski, conductor
Mark Mendell, boy soprano
Houston Symphony Chorus
Charles Hausmann, director
Embrace your holiday memories with the pageantry and cheer of Very Merry Pops. Your family will treasure this festive, heartwarming concert with music from The Nutcracker and Howard Blake's *The Snowman*.
Tickets: from \$29

Handel's Messiah
December 18, 20, 21
Jean-Marie Zeitouni, conductor
Houston Symphony Chorus
Charles Hausmann, director
Handel: Messiah
Tickets: from \$25

Hélène Grimaud's Beethoven 4
February 20, 21, 22
Xian Zhang, conductor
Hélène Grimaud, piano
Ravel: La Valse
Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 4
Brahms: Three Dance Episodes from *Die zwei Töchter*
Falla: Suite No. 2 from *The Three-Cornered Hat*
Tickets: from \$27

Yo-Yo Ma
May 5, 8 pm
Hans Graf, conductor
Yo-Yo Ma, cello
Wagner: Siegfried Idyll
Bloch: Schelomo, Hebraic Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra
Schumann: Cello Concerto
Wagner: Overture to *Zerwulser*
Tickets: from \$50
*Yo-Yo Ma will be reserved for subscriber purchase until April 2009.

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Harajuku Lovers
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sephora.com

Enjoying the Ho Ho Ho's
Without the No No No's

Holiday Health Check

by IVY YANG



Isn't December the happiest month of the year? Holiday lights radiate a festive glow wherever you go. We engage in shopping sprees for Christmas gifts to express our appreciation of loved ones. Family and friends gather at parties to share joyful stories while feasting and enjoying their beverages of choice. Children indulge themselves with sweet delicacies that their parents usually limit during other times of the year.

As much as we enjoy this holiday season, many of us experience some of the side effects of the exuberance with which we celebrate. Fatigue, indigestion, hangover, and SAD (seasonal affective disorder) may affect us even before Christmas arrives. Luckily, we can avoid all of these by making small but effective changes to our lifestyles. The following is the master list to achieve a jolly healthy Christmas and New Year!

Keep shopping time under 2 hours. As much as we take pleasure in holiday shopping, our bodies and wallets can handle only so much. Navigating from store to store while carrying heavy shopping bags can create mental and physical stress, not to mention the apprehension of paying credit card bills in the following months. Any shopping trip longer than 2 hours diminishes the joy of holiday consumption.

Maintain a regular exercise routine. With relatives coming to town, shortened holiday hours at health clubs, and a queue of parties to attend, we tend to forgive a lapse in our normal exercise routine. But exercise is the most effective way to reduce stress, burn off the excessive calories that we intake during all the Christmas parties, and boost serotonin (happy brain chemical). Intensive cardio work-out the day after a feast helps with digestion and avoids weight gain.

Have 3 meals a day as you do normally. We are tempted to skip meals so that we can indulge ourselves with abandon at the many holiday parties. Binge eating one day and limited eating the next interferes with the body's regular metabolism and sends out false signals to the digestive system. This increases the incidence of weight fluctuation and digestive diseases. Don't change your meal times just for the holidays.

Eat citrus foods. We all realize that we are only human and that we will overeat during the Christmas holidays – no matter how disciplined we think we are. To avoid indigestion, introduce citrus foods into your diet. Known as nutritional powerhouses for vitamin B6, folate, and thiamine, grapefruits, oranges, and tomatoes help the liver to digest food and metabolize toxins. If you are already experiencing indigestion, drink some hawthorn juice. When the stomach is challenged by unfamiliar foods, drinking a glass of hot water mixed with honey and lemon can quickly calm down a digestive rebellion.

Remember to take a deep breathe and meditate. Although we look forward to Christmas, company parties, shopping for gifts, negotiating holiday traffic, and pleasing relatives all add up to a state of stress. Being able to manage this stress is important for the prevention of seasonal affective disorder caused by holiday activities. Remember to take a deep breath whenever you feel overwhelmed. Better yet, meditation, especially before sleeping, shifts brain waves from the stress-prone right frontal cortex to the tranquility-receptive left frontal cortex.

Drink green tea after alcohol consumption. Few of us would say no to wine, beer and other alcoholic beverages as we celebrate New Year's Eve. Having a cup of hot green tea right after drinking will help you remain sober. According to a study published in Biological Chemistry, green tea extract protects against early alcohol-induced liver injury in rats. The natural antioxidants in green tea reduce ethanol oxidative stress in the liver. Green tea is one of the easiest and best cures for the prevention of hangovers.

For Any Occasion,
For Every Reason

The Perfect Gift

Yellow Magazine's essentials gift guide range from modern and quirky home accessories to playfully chic items for the whole family. With these fantastic gift ideas, finding the perfect present during this holiday season has never been so effortless.



Givenchy Medium Patent Nightingale Bag
\$1695, barneys.com



Tiffany Metro Bangles
\$5800, tiffany.com



Tiffany Sterling Silver Charms and Bracelet
Prices vary, tiffany.com



Juicy Couture Pavé Lip Gloss Heart Ring
\$68, sephora.com



Hiroshige 2009 Wall Calendar
\$14, taschen.com



Armand Diradourian Peace Sign Pillow
\$250, barneys.com



Cheers Champagne Flutes
\$50, redenvelope.com



Frank Gehry Torque Vase
\$195, tiffany.com



Arts & Architecture 1945-54: The Complete Reprint
\$700, dwr.com



Baby's First Christmas Ornament Kit
\$30, redenvelope.com



Kindle Wireless Reading Device
\$359, amazon.com



BMW Z4 Roadster
\$675, neimanmarcus.com



Philips Digital PhotoFrame™ Display
\$89-\$139, philips.com



Cupcake Canisters by Barbara Thompson
\$16-\$38, momastore.org



The World According to Me Book Kit
\$50, redenvelope.com



Sanctuary Charging Station
\$130, redenvelope.com



Secret Message Cufflinks
\$50, redenvelope.com



Michael Kors Chronograph Watch with Gold Trim
\$275, michaelkors.com



Panasonic RP-HTX7-W1 Old School Monitor Headphones
\$60, panasonic.com



Nike Victory Red Irons
Prices vary, nikegolf.com

Embroidering His Way
To The Top

Keiji Tagawa by V. VAN HOANG

This year, Japan America Society of Houston (JASH) celebrated its 40th anniversary in style at a gala in the Westin Oaks Hotel. JASH invited the very accomplished fashion designer, Keiji Tagawa, to showcase his captivating designs on a runway centered in the middle of the ballroom. Keiji launched his fashion career with gowns adorned with intricate beaded embroidery drawing upon a talent that was self-taught. He is probably the most well known embroiderer in Japan.

I got a chance to speak to Keiji on the day before the gala. He graciously invited me to preview his exquisite collection of ninety dresses. With the assistance of an interpreter, I was able to ask him some questions about his designs.

You are known for your masterful embroidery. When did you make the transition from embroiderer to dress designer?

I started embroidering twenty one years ago and worked with dress designers. Eleven years ago, I made the decision to become a designer. I was challenged to put my embroidery on my own dresses.

Do you follow trends when you design your dresses?

Yes. I believe it is very important to follow trends. I am also inspired by scenery that I try to capture in my embroidering. Examples are the night scenes in Tokyo, Paris and London. The beauty and excitement inspire me.

Your dresses incorporate a lot of jewelry and are quite heavy. Who are the ideal women to wear these dresses?

Before I design a dress I interview the client to find out more about her personality. I want the dress to emphasize her attributes and not detract from them. I think it is really important that a woman wears the dress and not the other way around.

For how much do your gowns sell?

The range is \$15,000 to \$30,000.



You are perhaps best known for creating the world's most expensive wedding gown, the Platinum wedding gown. I believe it is \$1.7 million. What makes it so expensive?

The dress is embroidered with cherry blossom trees and roses made of platinum thread and 1,250 platinum beads. In addition, I used thousands of semi-precious jewels including pearls and crystals.

Where is the dress now?

It is managed by the Platinum Guild International in Tokyo and is displayed at shows and galleries to promote platinum jewelry.

Has anyone requested to buy the dress?

Yes, there was a person in Malaysia.

Are you willing to make another platinum wedding dress?

Yes. If someone requests it, I will definitely make another one.

Your dresses are only available in Japan. Are there any plans to expand to the United States?

Yes, some day.



Architect, Yoshio Taniguchi, Kumi Taniguchi



Viet Hoang, Nancy Allen



Shara Fryer



Kay Bertrand, Shiey Ibarra



Teri Lee, Donna Cole, Dr. Jeff Lee



Martha Blackwelder, Judge Ed Emmett, Gwen Emmett



Christa and Mike Miyajima



Marilyn Wilhelm, Consul General of the Republic Austria Otmar Kolber

CAMH/Fendi Anniversary

Held at Alden Hotel

Photos by Jenny Antill and Vinh Luong

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) and Fendi celebrated their anniversaries at the Alden Hotel by auctioning off seven one-of-a-kind Fendi Baguettes. Houston artists were asked to create designs on the baguettes in honor of their 10th anniversary and the CAMH's 60th anniversary. The event raised \$25,000 for the Contemporary Arts Museum.



Event chairs: Leigh Smith, Leticia Loya



Connie McAllister, Christie's Vice President Steven Vick



Fendi Baguette styled by Houston artist, Rachel Hecker



Chris Nguyen, Kristie Huynh



Emmie Chang and friend



Joey Jalleo, Ursaline Hamilton



Gabriela Dror, Astrid Van Dyke



Wendy Wagner, Thom Andriola, Alexis Finch, Kenneth Finch



Diane Lokey Farb, Phoebe Tudor, Beth Muecke, Liz Pecker



Jonathon Glus, Alton LaDay



Suzette Betts, Julie Peak



Tim Moloney, Rebekah Johnson, Christine Hoffer, Celina Stabell, William Betts



Liz Dinerstein, Nancy Dinerstein, Brooke Rives



Todd Ramos, Oscar Guevara



Karin Hargett, Paige Pedersen



Kara Rockefeller-Williams, Marita Fairbanks, Lacy Baird, Laura Spalding

Latin Grammy Awards Pre-Party

Held at NE'A House of Beauty

Photos by Peter Tham

NE'A House of Beauty hosted a celebration of Latina health, beauty and entrepreneurs featuring complimentary make-overs, mini pedicures, manicures, and chair massages. Complete with a fashion show by M2M Fashion, the show was the official Houston launch of Mia Mariu, the first network marketing company in the U.S. exclusively dedicated to the health and beauty needs of Latinas.



Chen Chong, Grace Chan



Old New Orleans Rum: Kelly Hoang



Nelvin Adriatico, Dena Ladner, Farah Jumshyd



Christopher Ritchey, Rhabby Domingo, Corrie Domingo, Jerry Maese



President of Hispanic Business Network, Christine Jaques



Nelvin Adriatico, Edric Espinoza, Rebecca De los Santos, Tracy Agha, Charles Chanaba


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Simon Fashion Now Presented by Cadillac

Held at The Galleria

Photos by PWL Studio/Fulton Davenport

Simon Fashion Now presented by Cadillac drew in fashionable Houstonians to view the season's hottest fall trends on the runway. Rock violinist, Bobby Yang, entertained the crowd with his electric renditions of modern rock classics kicking off the Galleria's three day fashion event.



Fashion show model



Bobby Yang



Viet Hoang, Summar Salah



Page Parkes Eveleth, Bob Eveleth



Amber Furguele, Fady Armanious



Todd Ramos, Miya Shay

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Fashion show models



Gail Kaliszkeski, Leslie Swanson, Nicole Davis



Lindsey Love, Brenda Love



Tabitha Pagel, Jo Isabel, Michelle Yeglic



Fashion show model

Dining Guide

Yellow Magazine's featured restaurants

JAPANESE

Sake Lounge

Nouveau Japanese
550 Texas St., 713.228.7253

Sake Lounge offers traditional sushi, with a personalized touch from head sushi chef Yama. Signature items include the Sake Ceviche marinated in a sake cocktail sauce and Sake Lounge Roll which has fresh fruit slices infused into the roll.

Shabu House

Japanese soup
8719- Bellaire Blvd., 713.995.5428

Only beef or seafood items are served and will be cooked with the classic shabu shabu style. Boiling broth is situated at the bar. When the food arrives, place everything in the broth and begin the unique experience.

Tokyo One

2938 W. Sam Houston S., 713.785.8899

Tokyo One is a sushi buffet restaurant, situated in a fancy boat house with an outside deck. The food is fresh and is constantly replenished. Selections include: salads such as sea weed, beef, squid, salmon and watercress. Sushi includes a variety of rolls and sashimi. A "must have" is the escobar. There are also a variety of fresh crabs during dinner. Great price and great atmosphere.



Zushi Japanese Cuisine

5900 Memorial Dr., 713.861.5588

Zushi serves extremely fresh and high quality sushi. Stand out items are the sashimi appetizers served with perfectly paired sauces or any one of the many house specialty rolls.

Uptown Sushi

1131 Uptown Park Blvd. #14 713.871.1200

Uptown Sushi personifies an upscale sushi restaurant located near the Galleria in the swanky Uptown Park Plaza. The menu offers Japanese fusion dishes and a great selection of high-end sashimi and sushi. Side note: Uptown Sushi has "off-the-menu" specialty rolls served daily!

Rickshaw Bambu

713.942.7272

So many great dishes and variety to match, picking a favorite seems to be a daunting task. The East West Chicken Wraps, Mandarin Beef and Rickshaw's Pad Thai are favorite Pan Asian dishes. The sushi menu has seventeen specialty rolls and, of course, nigiri and sashimi.

CHINESE

Auntie Chang's

2621 South Shepherd #290, 713.524.8410

Auntie Chang's offers the most flavorful home-style Chinese cuisine around. Although known for their dumplings, any of your favorite classic Chinese dishes are done extremely well.

Hong Kong Food Street

9750 Bellaire Blvd., 713.981.9888

Peking duck and roasted pork hang from cleavers in a front window display giving a Hong Kong street market feel. In addition, the menu is divided into sections including Seafood, Hot Pot, Special Stir Fry, Sizzling and Chef Specials. The Peking duck, Beef Pot and Dry Scallops are recommended items.

San Dong Noodle House

9938-F Bellaire Blvd., 713.271.3945

Authentic hand pulled Chinese noodle dishes are served at a reasonable price. A few favorites include the Roast Beef Noodle soup served in a beef broth accented by ginger and soy, or the oh so addicting pan fried dumplings.

Sinh Sinh

9788 Bellaire Blvd., 713.541.0888

The seafood at Sinh Sinh is quite exciting because everything served comes from live tanks. Prawns, Australian king lobster, King crabs, Coral Leopard trout, Surf clams, Geoduck clams, Trunk clams, Elephant clams, etc...are all featured as live seafood.

Arco Seafood

9896 Bellaire Blvd., 713.774.2888

A refreshing take on Chinese seafood offering an upscale ambience. Subtle flavors allow the natural taste of the seafood to emerge. Dishes to try: Sea Cucumber, Crab Meat and Fish Maw Soup, Noodle's with Abalone Sauce, Sautéed Snow Pea Leaf or the Steamed Whole Tilapia.

KOREAN

Airang Korean Restaurant

9715 Bellaire Blvd., 713.988.2088

From the décor to the cuisine, everything about this place exemplifies tradition. The Moh Dum Bulgogi is a classic family style dinner which includes barbecued short ribs, squid, chicken and a vast assortment of side dishes such as the potato salad, kim chi and spicy cucumber salad.

ITALIAN

Da Marco Cucina E Vino

1520 Westheimer Rd. 713.807.8857

If you are looking for authentic Italian food, Da Marco is the place to find it. It has a charming atmosphere to go along with the excellent fare. All of the entrees are subtle and prepared nearly perfect. Must try Sweet Corn Ravioli and Lobster and the Sea Bass with Aceto Tradizionale.

THAI

Thai Spice

8282 Bellaire Blvd. 713.777.4888

Thai Spice on Bellaire is a foodies dream. It's a casual place that serves Thai dishes you won't find anywhere else in Houston, with a huge selection of interesting, rare, tasty dishes at excellent prices. A must have is the whole fried tilapia with hot and sour dipping sauce and papaya salad and Tom Yum soup.

Nit Noi

6700 Woodway Pkwy, Suite 580
281.597.8200

Nit Noi means "a little bit" and Thai food lovers pack Nit Noi restaurants and cafes all around Houston. Nit Noi will always be known for their Pad Thai, but other must try dishes include PadThai Korat (flat noodles stir-fried with chicken, pork or shrimp with vegetables) and Tom Yum Goong (spicy and sour shrimp soup).

Red Basil

11322-C Westheimer Rd., 281.293.0426

A gourmet take on traditional Thai cuisine, Red Basil offers fabulous food at a reasonable price. If you are a fan of Thai soup try the Tom Yam with shrimp. It will evoke all of your senses of taste with its sweet, sour and spice flavors. The papaya salad and the Massaman curry beef are a few others to try.

Tony Thai

10613 Bellaire Blvd., 281.495.1711

A sophisticated approach to traditional Thai cuisine, Tony's executes with perfect balance and pizzazz. Tony's Wings, wet or dry, and the Steamed Mussels are popular appetizers. For the main course try the Basil Lamb, Garlic Salmon or the Steamed Fish with Chili.

INDIAN

Kiran's Restaurant

4100 Westheimer Rd. #151, 713.960.8472

This northern Indian style restaurant embodies a fusion approach to its cuisine. With a focus on well balanced flavors rather than spice, the Flaky Halibut Swimming in Watermelon Curry sauce and the Tandoori Platter typify this perfectly.

VIETNAMESE



Kim Son Restaurants

2001 Jefferson (and other locations),
713.222.2461

The menu is the most imposing part of this casual, highly regarded landmark Vietnamese restaurant. There are no poor choices among the 100 or so options. Enjoy finely prepared delicacies as well as the expected fare, such as the pork vermicelli and fried eggroll. Must try is their black pepper softshell crab. Expansive banquet and special event facilities are also available.

Vietopia

5176 Buffalo Speedway, 713.664.7303

Trendy yet elegant, Vietopia delivers top notch Vietnamese cuisine at reasonable lunch prices and a stellar dinner menu. The lounge at Vietopia works perfectly for those who want a less formal dining experience but still want to enjoy quality food.

Van Loc Restaurant

3010 Milam St., 713.528.6441

A great lunch time eatery serving classic Vietnamese cuisine which, according to the establishment, has around "200 menu items that come straight from mama." Dishes to try are the Vietnamese egg rolls and the beef cubed steak with lettuce and tomato.



Mo Mong

1201 Westheimer Rd. #B, 713.524.5664

This Trendy Montrose establishment has a great lunch crowd as well as a packed martini night on Wednesdays. But the real draw is the food- traditional family recipes mixed in with some tasty modern dishes. Must try items include the Mango Spring Rolls, Shrimp and Avocado Spring Roll, Volcano Chicken, and the Bo Luc Lac.

WINE BARS

So Vino Bistro & Wine Bar

507 Westheimer Rd., 713.524.1000

So Vino highlights the unique tastes and styles of Southern Hemisphere wines. The pairing of stellar wines with the new interpretations of traditional world cuisine is the passion of co-founder Elizabeth Abraham. Must try include cooked mussels served with a soy potatoe patty and topped with a mushroom ragu, also the short ribs.

The Tasting Room

1101 Uptown Park Blvd. #18, 713.993.9800

Each of The Tasting Room's three Houston locations offers a unique food and wine experience. Uptown has a more sophisticated feel that attracts a hip, professional crowd. It is the newest "in" spot to sip and be seen. Check out the Sunday Brunch Buffet for \$24, or their delicious thin crust pizza anytime.

To have your restaurant featured in Yellow Magazine, or to recommend a restaurant that you enjoy, please email the information to dining@yellowmags.com.

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Design by Francesco Rota

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