

Industrial revolution



Lai Chi Kok was once known more for its commercial activities than its dining choices, but this began to change two years ago with the opening of the funky D2 Place mall. More recently, the area has seen the debut of several stylish restaurants offering diverse menus.

writer
Vicki Williams



TANG2

Unit G09C, G/F, Cheung Sha Wan Plaza, 833 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Lai Chi Kok, 2341 5788

Tang2 opened in late August as a casual dining concept catering to all culinary moods with Asian and Western dishes, and it is a sister restaurant to Island Tang and Kowloon Tang. The industrial chic-meets-art-deco décor exudes a warm ambience thanks to earth-toned furniture, with the “T-squared” motif featured on the walls and

ceiling. Chinese dishes include barbecued pork - the same as served at the other two Tang restaurants - a beautifully plated tofu salad with sesame sauce, and rice braised with diced chicken and black truffle.

The Western choices include Angus rib-eye with a red wine sauce, and a grilled pork chop with apple sauce. There is also a selection of freshly made juices featuring ingredients such as okra and burdock, in addition to wine.

GREATER CHINA CLUB

Unit A, 10/F, D2 Place, 9 Cheung Yee Street, Lai Chi Kok, 2743 8055

This is another recent opening with a pedigree kitchen team, including two chefs who have worked at Michelin three-star Chinese restaurants in Macau and Hong Kong. The chefs' skill set shows in every dish, and the restaurant makes its dim sum into an art form that is as exquisite to eat as it is to look at. In addition to traditional fare, there are creative modern offerings such as the steamed scallop with beetroot, and steamed morel dumplings stuffed with assorted wild mushrooms. The barbecued pork is made from 36-month Iberico, packed with flavour and so tender that it melts in the mouth. There is also an extensive though not overwhelming à la carte menu of Cantonese dishes. The interiors are elegant, and the service is top-notch.



RUSTICO

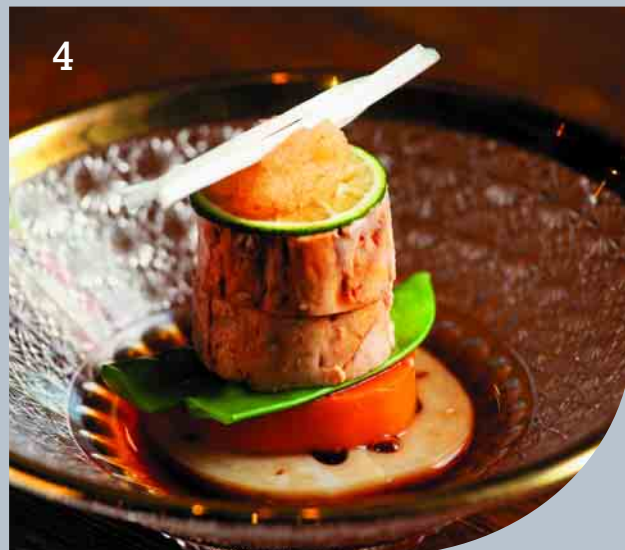
Shop G01, G/F, D2 Place, 9 Cheung Yee Street, Lai Chi Kok, 2743 4511

The interior of this buzzing Spanish taverna is so well done - with its rustic tiled floor, decorative pottery wall features and hanging hams in front of the open kitchen - that it does not take much imagination to feel like you have travelled to Spain. At lunch, the restaurant serves a set menu only, but with generous portions and great choices, while a set and an à la carte menu are available in the evenings. There is a wide variety of dishes on the à la carte menu, ranging from classic tapas such as deep-fried Iberian ham croquettes with creamy manchego cheese, to octopus Galician style with potato and sweet paprika, plus mains such as slow-cooked suckling pig and dessert options that include raspberry gazpacho with mango ice cream.

UMAI

Shop 2, G/F, D2 Plaza, 9 Cheung Yee Street, Lai Chi Kok, 2743 8011

Next door to Rustico is Umami, a casual Japanese restaurant. The interiors are wonderfully playful, combining the style of the izakaya bars in Tokyo's alleys with a Japanese fishing village ambience, featuring traditional lanterns, distressed wood, fishing nets, colourful masks and sake bottle lighting. The menu is extensive, featuring sashimi from Japan, sushi, rolls, ramen, robatayaki and kushiyaki, in addition to set menus. The more unusual items include home-made cheese tofu, deep-fried burdock, and a Japanese omelette with river eel. From Tuesday to Saturday evenings, there is also a nine-course Osaka Kappou-style tasting menu with seasonal dishes chosen by the chef and prepared in front of diners. It is for nine people only, and advance bookings are required. There is also a good selection of sake.





BONDI

Room 3, 2/F, Elite Industrial Centre, 883 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Lai Chi Kok, 3996 7806

Situated in a grungy industrial building that makes it feel like going to a hidden private kitchen, Bondi serves dishes inspired by Australia and is modelled after cafes Down Under. The restaurant serves lunch, afternoon tea and dinner, with value-for-money sets offered at each. The menus change every few weeks, but the made-to-order fish and chips is a signature that stays put, and rightly so, with its crispy thin batter, succulent fish and thick-cut fries. Other dishes include black truffle risotto with king prawns, roasted fish with dill cream sauce, pasta carbonara, and rack of lamb with a coffee crust. The restaurant also does an all-day breakfast on Saturdays, and there is no corkage charge or service charge. The staff are welcoming and add to the experience.

G CUISINE

Room 5, 4/F, Elite Industrial Centre, 883 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Lai Chi Kok, 3590 2168

Situated in the same industrial building, G Cuisine focuses on steak, pasta and pizza. While that may sound a bit boring, the combinations are anything but. There's a kimchi pizza that also includes asparagus, lin chi mushrooms, onion and mozzarella, and a wagyu beef pizza with white mushrooms, spring onion, mozzarella, sesame sauce and shredded dried fish. And there's still a margherita with arugula for traditionalists. Pasta and risotto dishes feature high-end ingredients such as lobster, Parma ham, scallops, caviar and veal jus. At lunch, a semi-buffet is served with appetisers and salad, with main options including grilled beef tenderloin and duck liver with porcini gravy, and roasted sole fillet lemongrass skewers with a Thai chilli lime sauce. The interior has an inviting, casual ambience.



AMUSE

G/F, 909 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Lai Chi Kok, 2997 9098

For something more upmarket, there is Amuse, which serves European cuisine with French leanings and a few Asian twists. The menu is peppered with classic dishes, some of which are hard to find at more contemporary restaurants. They include escargot with mashed potatoes Normandy, lobster Thermidor, pan-roasted red mullet fillet with potato scales in butter sauce, and Kobe rib-eye with cognac pepper sauce. There is also a selection of pasta and risotto dishes. The elegant interior features white tablecloths, plush furnishings, chandeliers and fine wines on display. Amuse also offers a set lunch menu. 🍷

