

RESTAURANTS

Alley (弄堂)

Address: 311, Bade Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市八德路二段311號)
Telephone: (02) 2777-2549 **Open:** daily from 6pm to 12am
Average meal: NT\$700 to NT\$800 **Details:** Menu in Chinese, English and Japanese; credit cards accepted

There seems to be a new Japanese barbecue eatery popping up in Taipei every month. Alley on Bade Road is a relatively new addition to the gastronomic map of a city that loves its late-night grilled snacks and ice-cold beer.



Prime fatty beef is a must-try at Alley.

PHOTO: HO YI, TAIPEI TIMES

At first glance, the smart-looking restaurant could be mistaken for a pub with its Shanghai-chic vibe. Its bold red and turquoise palette is balanced with sedate brown hues and black. The plush appearance aside, the dining atmosphere is designed for hospitality. Wait staff chat like friends with patrons who sit along the bar and serve food on fine ceramic ware, which comes from Yingge (鶯歌), Taipei County.

Though Alley is a grill-it-yourself restaurant, the attentive, well-trained waiters are keen to share their barbecuing tips. Salted cow tongue with scallion (鹽蔥牛舌, NT\$220) is a recommended starter. The tongue is cut into thin slices and simply flavored with salt, pepper, chopped scallion and lemon juice.

On the lighter side, the Matsusake pork (椒鹽帶降松阪豬, NT\$200) has a crispy texture. Salted and peppered king oyster mushrooms (椒鹽杏鮑菇, NT\$90), which are thinly sliced, ooze savory juice.

Fresh from Keelung, the prime-quality thick cut salmon (厚切鮭魚, NT\$180) can be enjoyed raw.

Diners who fancy a richer tasting option after a glass or several of Orion beer, shochu, sake or liqueur, could do no worse than the barbecued fatty beef (烤肉醬牛五花, NT\$240) or prime fatty beef (達拉斯, NT\$350).

The restaurant also has several specialties not found on the menu. Eaten raw with barbecue sauce and mustard, the scallop with crab roe (干貝蟹膏, NT\$180) is divinely sweet and has no hint of the fishy smell of less than fresh seafood. Curry-flavored chicken ankles (咖喱雞腳踝, NT\$180) are a grilled rarity whose textures are notable for their gelatinous skin and crunchy cartilage.

There are also a few choices available for dessert such as butter and cheese sweet potato (奶油起土地瓜, NT\$100) and baked banana (烤香蕉, NT\$60) with chocolate sauce.

The attentive service at Alley goes beyond the dining area and extends to the warmly lit restroom that offers feminine hygiene products. Lockers and a wardrobe are camouflaged as wooden walls for diners' outerwear and handbags. The restaurant is also cyclist-friendly with bike racks and locks for customers who arrive on two wheels.

— HO YI

Climontine (克莉蒙汀麵包生活館)

Address: 149-1, Xinyi Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市信義路四段149-1號)
Telephone: (02) 2706-7061
Open: Meals served from noon to 10pm; bakery and cafe opens at 10:30am
Average meal: NT\$400 for lunch, NT\$600 to NT\$1,500 for dinner; 10 percent service charge
Details: Chinese menu only; credit cards accepted for purchases over NT\$1,000
On the Net: www.bazzurro.com.tw

Hidden at the back of an upscale bakery and cafe on Xinyi Road, Climontine looks more like an antiques showroom than a restaurant that serves buffet lunches and Italian-style cuisine for dinner.



The quality of the lunch buffet at Climontine is on par with that found at most five-star hotels in the capital.

PHOTO: DAVID CHEN, TAIPEI TIMES

The dining area, split into two rooms, has a classic European feel. The main room resembles a Viennese cafe with its white tablecloths, dark wooden floors, crystal chandeliers and old lamps. There is also a Victorian vibe, provided by worn shelves full of vases and fine china, and floral trimmings.

The windows at the back of the main dining room look onto an orchid garden; the side dining room is full of mirrors encased in ornate frames. Diners sit either on sofas or French antique chairs with wine-colored upholstery.

Many of the furnishings can be bought from the owners, who run an import and export business. An Italian cupboard with glass doors can be taken home for NT\$48,000; the crystal chandelier above my table was marked at NT\$188,000. All this made the lunch buffet seem reasonable at NT\$388 (not including the 10 percent service charge). The spread was a fusion of Italian and Chinese-style dishes, with the emphasis on the latter. The main course on my first visit, which changes daily, was Taiwanese-style chilled chicken.

Nearly everything was good, and on par with, if not better than, the average five-star hotel buffet. Some memorable morsels included roasted peppers and sweet potato, and shrimp sautéed with celery served in a butter and garlic sauce. A humble serving of stir-fried green beans and braised pork was melt-in-the-mouth delicious, and sliced apples added a novel touch to a Thai salad. The sickly sweet corn soup was boring — an obvious concession to local tastes.

But there were no compromises with dinner at Climontine, which serves an excellent antipasto buffet spread (NT\$580 per person). Some notable selections on an evening visit included tasty, succulent roast chicken served on a bed of tomato and onion, and sliced pork loin with a tart and creamy tuna sauce. There were three green salads on offer, including a refreshing and flavorful combination of snow peas, black olives and ham.

The set menu includes the antipasto buffet, pasta of the day and a main course of either rib eye steak, rack of lamb, roast chicken or prawns. Set meals are priced at NT\$1,280 and NT\$1,480.

The house recommendation is the steak, but there should be no regrets with the lamb. I received a tender and juicy cut, which was dressed in a delicate red wine sauce.

Menus are in Chinese only, but a friendly server who speaks English is on hand to help. The wait staff seemed a half-step behind in keeping the water glasses full. But with the comforting food and the room's dated charm, it's easy to forget about the time.

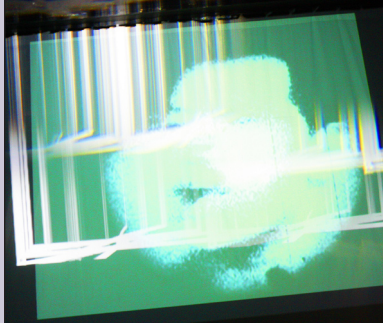
The menu and atmosphere may seem familiar, as the wait staff and chefs are transplants from Portofino, the Italian restaurant on Dunhua South Road (敦化南路) that closed after the building it occupied was sold and torn down.

Getting there is easy enough — Climontine is on the northeast corner of the crossroad of Dunhua South and Xinyi roads. Look out for a bakery with a sign that reads Angelina's, the establishment's former name. As of press time, the sign had yet to be updated.

— DAVID CHEN

Light, moving imagery and faded memory

Au Sow-ye's live performance feels like an experimental film screening at a cinemathèque — geometrical shapes and blurry images overlap, split, hover and stutter on the stage to eerie sounds.



A scenes from Au Sow-ye's Performative Cinema VI: Songlines

PHOTO COURTESY OF GULING STREET LITTLE THEATRE

The Malaysian artist calls her show "live cinema," for which she creates a unique audio-visual experience of light and shadow.

For *Performative Cinema VI: Songlines*, which takes place at the Guling Street Little Theatre this weekend, two LCD projectors and three 16mm film projectors are used to beam images, including still photographs taken from movies starring P. Ramlee, the legendary star of Malaysian cinema of the 1950s and 1960s, sometimes separately, sometimes simultaneously, onto the stage where Au plays with various objects such as a prism in front of the machines. The effect is kaleidoscopic.

To Au, performative cinema addresses the fragility and ephemerality of celluloid imagery and echoes the death of film at the hands of digital production techniques.

"For different generations of Malaysians, he [P. Ramlee] is part of our collective memory, albeit hazy and faded," Au told the *Taipei Times*.

JacAl Map, an experimental music duo from Malaysia, generate static ambient sounds for the performance.

— HO YI

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Performative Cinema VI: Songlines
WHEN: Tonight at 7pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7pm and Sunday at 2:30pm
WHERE: Guling Street Little Theatre (姑蘇街小劇場), 2, Ln 5, Guling St, Taipei City (台北市姑蘇街5巷2號)
ADMISSION: Tickets are NT\$350 per performance, available through NTCH ticket outlets or online at www.artsticket.com.tw
ON THE NET: www.wretch.cc/blog/glttheatre



Is less more? Tomorrow night sees way too many parties taking place in Taipei, all competing for head-shakers. For sure the music will be killer, but will the numbers?

The biggest story of the week is that Chris Sostad, aka **Saucey**, one of Taiwan's longest-serving foreign and favorite house DJs, is returning to Canada and his penultimate farewell set (before his last at Rise at DV8 on Sunday at 4am) will be at China White tomorrow for Return to Paradise with **SL** and **Matt Ward** keeping it deep and funky. It's sad to see Saucey leaving for good this time and the Vinyl Word bids him a fond farewell. Saucey's set is likely to be huge, and a little self-indulgent, hopefully.

"If I could say one thing to all the fans in Taiwan, it would be thanks for making my last seven years in Taiwan



PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER WAN

so much fun and [I] hope that they continue to support such a fun music scene," said Saucey. "I will be back one day for a visit, I have too many friends and memories to stay away forever."

Return to Paradise 3, tomorrow from 11pm to 5am at China White, 2F, 97-101, Dunhua S Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路二段97-101號2樓).

There is a new addition to the party scene. Taiwan MIXER is a group of promoters which helps new people in town get acquainted with its vibrant nightlife.

"Taiwan MIXER is a social networking and party group," said MIXER's manager, Peter Wan (萬力豪), 25. His aim is, "to connect people to form a social community where we just do fun stuff together like clubbing, KTV nights, barbecues, beach parties and birthday bashes."

Tonight's bash is looking pretty full already with music from **Eben** and **Schism**, who will, in their own words, play "unique melodic tech house."

"We are very casual," said Wan, "and our aim is to simply be a platform where people can meet new friends and widen their social circle, to connect mostly returning ABCs, CBCs (American and Canadian-born Chinese) and visitors to come out and have fun. We found that many of these ABCs don't have a lot of friends in Taiwan, so our group is able to help a lot of them make new friends here."

MIXER is slightly different from other promotion outfits as it helps members throw their own parties. "We will plan certain events," said Wan. "But we also encourage our

Taiwan MIXER members enjoy a spot of networking.

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Highlight

Carreras, Domingo and Pavarotti they are not. But these "desperate tenors," who perform tomorrow night at Zhongshan Hall (中山堂) in Taipei, take their cue from the most famous opera trio ever by aiming for a wider audience.

In other words, this won't be a typical night at the opera. **Desperate Tenors (三大男高音 — 山棄版本)** promises some campy, self-deprecating humor to accompany earnest performances from Taiwanese tenors **Chang Yao-wen** (張耀文) and **Kung Hsiao-cheng** (孔孝誠) and Filipino tenor **Vicente Fortunato Moran**.



Three hilariously desperate but passionate tenors perform tomorrow night at Zhongshan Hall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NTCH

The performance is being organized by the Taipei Philharmonic Foundation for Culture and Education (TPF, 台北愛樂文教基金會) and the Taipei Philharmonic Chorus (台北愛樂合唱團).

Desperate Tenors at Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yenping S Rd, Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)

► Tomorrow at 7:30pm

► Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$1,200, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

11am to 10pm. Call (02) 2775-5977
 ► Until May 30

Liu Shih-tung (劉時棟) revises the Chinese folk art tradition of paper cutting and merges it with a contemporary aesthetic in **Start From Eyes (始於眼)**. The exhibit features 36 of Liu's mixed-media collage paintings.

► Main Trend Gallery (大趨勢畫廊), 209-1, Chengde Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市承德路三段209-1號). Open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2587-3412. On the Net: www.maintrendgallery.com.tw

► Until June 6

Taiwan's plants, animals and folk customs serve as Hsiao Mei's (蕭梅)

visual language in her solo exhibit

Here Is Where We Meet (飄遊·境遇). The show features more than 30 of her dreamlike oil paintings created between 2003 to 2009.

► Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM), 181, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市中山北路三段181號). Open Tuesday to Sunday from 9:30am to 5:30pm; Saturdays open until 8:30pm. Tel: (02) 2595-7656. On the Net: www.tfam.museum

► Until June 26

Landscape, Taiwan (風景·台灣) is a solo exhibition comprised of 21 landscape and seascape oil paintings by Taiwanese artist Yeh Tzu-chi (葉子奇). The works are a visual diary of the artist's past, where place and memory merge in romantic depictions of the

country's natural scenery.

► Esite Xinyi Bookstore (誠品信義店), 5F, 11 Songgao Rd, Taipei City (台北市松高路11號5樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 7pm. Telephone: (02) 8789-3388 X1588

► Until June 7

Legend of Future (未來的傳說) is a group exhibition featuring 11 of Asia's top artists working in the mediums of sculpture and painting. The show includes South Korea's Kwon Ki Soo, Japan's Yoshitomo Nara and Yoshitaka Amano, and Taiwan's Yang Mao-lin (楊茂林) and Hung Yi (洪易). The works on display are inspired by the aesthetics of anime and manga.

► Metaphysical Art Gallery (形而上畫廊), 7F, 219, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段219號7樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2771-3236

► Until May 31

Chang Dai-chien: Memorial Painting and Calligraphy Exhibition (張大千110——書畫紀念特展) displays 96 works by one of the 20th century's most revered painters working in Chinese art. From his early output, which was firmly rooted in tradition, to his later paintings, which were influenced by modernism, this exhibit provides insight into the painter's evolution as an artist and the different schools of thought that influenced him.

► National Museum of History (國立歷史博物館), 49 Nanhai Rd, Taipei City (台北市南海路49號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2361-0270. On the Net: www.nnmh.gov.tw

► Until June 14

Tonight at **Tone 56 Live Bar** is New Orleans funk and rock ensemble **The Kenyatta Trio**. Tomorrow is electro-disco, hip-hop and funk with **DJ Shorty** and the band **Space Funk**. On Sunday it's acoustic duo **Diamond Jacks**.

► 1F, 56, Minquan E Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市民權東路三段56號1樓), near the corner of Fuxing North (復興北) and Minquan East (民權東) roads. Call (02) 2517-3869

► The music starts at 9:30pm tonight and tomorrow. Sunday's music performance runs from 7pm to 10pm.

► No admission fee

Exhibitions

Tu Pei-shih (杜鵬詩) investigates the vagaries of human nature in her solo exhibition **Happy Bubble Life (快樂泡沫生活)**. Tu uses collage as her primary medium.

► Project Fulfill Art Space (就在藝術空間), 2, Alley 45, Ln 147, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段147巷45弄2號). To arrange a viewing call (02) 2325-0023

► Until June 21

Group exhibition **Matter and Medium (物質·中界)** features sculpture and installation work by six contemporary Taiwanese artists.

► My Humble House Art Gallery, B1, 12, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路一段12號B1). Call (02) 3322-3833. On the Net: www.myhumblehouse.com

► Until June 15

Only Light (光的視覺考古) is a solo