# 2021-2022

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY Dining Guide

Brought to you by

Spectrum

**Where West Meets East** 

sgvpartnership.org



# SGV RESTAURANTS

The San Gabriel Valley (or "SGV" as we like to say) is rich in resources - a highly educated workforce, clean groundwater, and brilliant management of public utilities. But nothing draws people to our region like the diversity and wealth of superb restaurants.

SGV restaurants aren't here to make a splash or be "the place to be seen". They are here for *truly great food*. There's a reason why legendary Los Angeles food critic Jonathan Gold heaped praise after praise on our restaurants, from steakhouses to taquerias to dumplings to donuts.

As the valley has evolved from a suburb of Los Angeles to the most thriving hub of Latino culture in America to being a suburb of the Pacific Rim - offering the best Asian food to be found anywhere outside of Asia - our restauranteurs have always been central to who we are.

One thing we've learned is that you have to engage with our local experts to know what the best of the best is.

This guide is a tribute to the hard work of the incredible restauranteurs of the San Gabriel Valley, who know their stuff as few others do.





# DIAMOND BAR RESTAURANT WEEK



# Explore the diversity of Diamond Bar's food scene

**Unique - Local - Flavor** 

www.DBRestaurantWeek.com



The annual DBRW event is co-sponsored by the City of Diamond Bar and the Regional Chamber of Commerce-SGV







#### **Capsule Systems**

- •Dual operating system designed to brew both coffee and espresso capsules
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#### Thimblety Cino Professional Tea, Coffee and Espresso Machine

Thimblety Baretto brings the cafe to your office by offering the quality of a coffee shop brew without the grind. CINO's state of the art commercial machine allows you to create gourmet coffee, cappuccino's and latte's with the light push of a button. Saretto uses coffee and espresso capsules, creating a consistently delectable beverage while reducing waste and labor. Begin your day, take in the aroma and savor your beverage of choice with Baretto.

For more information contact us at sales@thimblety.com www.thimbelty.com

# Contents

- 1 FOOD AND THE SGV
- 3 Table of Contents
- 4 Top-Rated SGV Restaurants
- 5 MICHELIN NOTED RESTAURANTS
- 6 LOCAL COLOR
- 8 LATIN AMERICAN CUISINE
- 12 Breweries
- 13 Try Something New
- 14 CHINESE CUISINE
- 20 Interview: Theresa Lin 林慧懿



# © San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, January 2021

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All photos in Chinese food section courtesy of **theChiHuo.com** 



# TOP-RATED SAN GABRIEL VALLEY RESTAURANTS

#### Try these classics!

#### **A**LEXANDER'S

This Pasadena steakhouse is already legendary.

111 N Los Robles Ave, Pasadena, CA 91101 (626) 486-1111

#### TUTTI MANGIA

The Claremont staple offers the best Italian in the region in a quiet, romantic bistro.

102 Harvard Ave N, Claremont, CA 91711 (909) 625-4669

#### BISTRO NAS

Michelin-starred imperial Beijing cuisine. If that doesn't do it for you, we can't help.

9055 E Las Tunas Dr #105, Temple City, CA 91780 (626) 286-1999

#### TK92 KOREAN BBO

There's no shortage of Korean barbecue in the SGV, but this may be the best of the all-you-can-eat joints.

250 W Valley Blvd Suite P, San Gabriel, CA 91776 (626) 782-7496

#### A RI RANG TOFU HOUSE

Hot bubbly tofu soup (sundubu) in a low-key setting.

529 E Valley Blvd #128, San Gabriel, CA 91776 (626) 288-6069

#### SANAMLUANG CUISINE

There will be a line, but it's worth it for the best Thai in the eastern SGV.

710 S Indian Hill Blvd, Claremont, CA 91711 (909) 621-0904

#### **ROSIE THAI**

Located along a utilitarian stretch of Arrow Highway, Rosie Thai offers down-home Thai cuisine. Atmosphere and service are not bad, but we recommend take-out for a Netflix and great curry.

20560 E Arrow Hwy, Covina, CA 91724 (626) 331-7679

#### SAIGON FLAVOR

Very authentic Vietnamese. A family-style restaurant with a warm family feeling.

208 E Valley Blvd, San Gabriel, CA 91776 (626) 572-6036

#### THE LUGGAGE ROOM

This iconic Pasadena eatery, once an actual luggage room for celebrity travelers, offers a mean pizza.

260 S Raymond Ave, Pasadena, CA 91105 (626) 356-4440

#### MINT LEAF INDIAN

Solid service and good food on the north side of Pasadena.

2535 E Washington Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107 (626) 460-8776

#### Sushi Umi

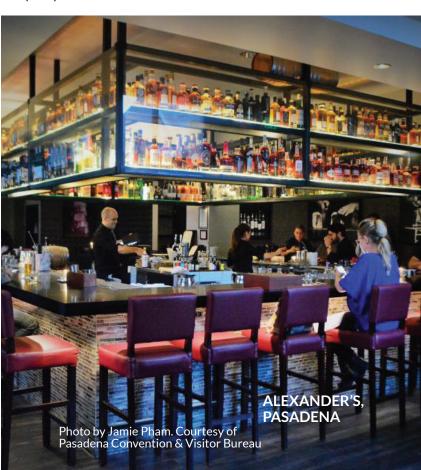
There is a wealth of sushi options along the northern stretch of the SGV, but this is our pick based on their great happy hour and generous portions.

423 E Arrow Hwy, Glendora, CA 91740 (626) 852-9892

#### **K**IYOSUZU

Authentic sushi with friendly service.

921 S Baldwin Ave #B, Arcadia, CA 91007 (626) 445-4756



# MICHELIN-NOTED RESTAURANTS

The San Gabriel Valley has garnered more nods from the Michelin Guide than any other area of Southern California!

#### **BURRITOS LA PALMA**

Jonathon Gold listed this as one of his Top 5 Mexican joints in L.A.

5120 Peck Rd El Monte, CA 91732 (626) 350-8286

#### CHENGOU IMPRESSION

Unapologetically spicy Sichuan cuisine.

21 Huntington Dr Arcadia, CA 91006 (626) 462-9999

#### CHENGDU TASTE

One of the most venerated Sichuan restaurants in SoCal.

828 W Valley Blvd Alhambra, CA 91803 (626) 588-2284

#### Dai Ho

Taiwanese; only open for lunch.

9148 Las Tunas Dr Temple City, CA 91780 (626) 291-2295

#### GRAND HARBOR

Beautiful location for dim sum.

5733 Rosemead Blvd Temple City, CA 91780 (626) 280-2998

#### LaoXi Noodle House

Spicy noodles from Shaanxi Province.

600 Live Oak Ave Arcadia, CA 91006 (626) 348-2290

#### LONGO SEAFOOD

More than just fresh seafood - but the seafood alone is worth multiple trips.

7540 Garvey Ave Rosemead, CA 91770 (626) 280-8188

#### LunAsia

Hong Kong style dim sum. Among the best outside Hong Kong.

500 W Main St Alhambra, CA 91801 (626) 308-3222

#### MEIZHOU DONGPO

You are here for the duck.

400 S Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA 91007 (626) 538-4136

#### **M**IAN

Cold Sichuan noodles. Spicy and tasty!

301 W Valley Blvd #114, San Gabriel, CA 91776 (626) 693-6888

#### SEA HARBOUR

Top notch dim sum in a simple setting. Seafood is excellent too!

3939 N Rosemead Blvd Rosemead, CA 91770 (626) 288-3939

#### Shanghai No. I

Authentic Shanghainese. Braised pork is where it's

250 W Valley Blvd Suite #M San Gabriel, CA 91776 (626) 282-1777

#### SICHUAN IMPRESSION

Fiery favorites, including mapo dofu.

1900 W Valley Blvd Alhambra, CA 91803 (626) 283-4622



# Local Color

You can't say you've lived in the SGV until you've indulged in these iconic local eateries.

#### THE DERBY

Arcadia's upscale steakhouse was built to cater to jockeys, breeders, and celebs visiting nearby Santa Anita Park. Food and service are both impeccable.

233 Huntington Dr, Arcadia, CA 91006 (626) 461-7996

# CLEARMAN'S NORTHWOODS INN (COVINA & SAN GABRIEL) & THE GALLEY (SAN GABRIEL)

Clearman's restaurants are all about hearty - read "gigantic" - portions in a kitchy atmosphere. Northwoods Inn sports an ironic-for-SoCal snowy lodge theme. The Galley is a nautical playground.

Northwoods Inn Covina: 540 N Azusa Ave, Covina

Northwoods Inn San Gabriel: 7247 Rosemead Blvd, San

Gabriel

The Galley: 7215 Rosemead Blvd, San Gabriel

#### DONUT MAN

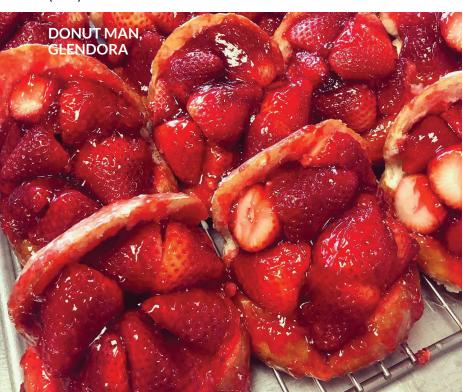
The Michaelangelo of donut shops. They put more fruit on their strawberry donut than your grocery store's entire produce department.

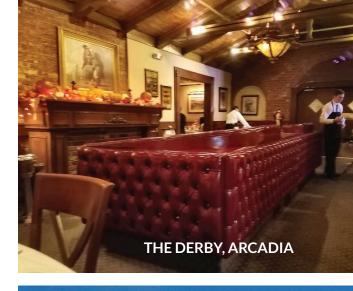
915 E Rte 66, Glendora, CA 91740 (626) 335-9111

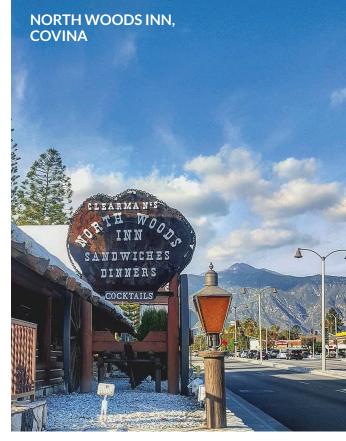
#### THE DONUT HOLE

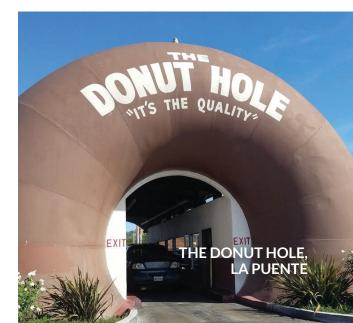
A drive-through donut bakery. What's not to love?

15300 Amar Rd, La Puente, CA 91744 (626) 968-2912















#### Porto's

Admittedly, Porto's began in nearby Glendale, but we are proud to host America's most famous Cuban bakery's West Covina location. Oh, those potato

584 S Sunset Ave, West Covina, CA 91790 (626) 214-3490

#### BROGUIERE'S FARM FRESH DAIRY

After an outcry surrounding their potential closure in 2019, the makers of the best eggnog on Earth are back.

505 S Maple Ave, Montebello, CA 90640 (323) 726-0524

#### THE HAT

If you can finish one pastrami sandwich on your own, you are a champion. Locations across L.A.,



#### ONO HAWAIIAN B-B-Q

This SGV original offers simple, healthy Hawaiian plates at fast food prices. Monterey Park, Glendora, La Verne, Puente Hills, Rosemead, Rowland Heights, and more.

#### Dog Haus

Sit down, Pink's. "The Absolute Wurst" offers the best hotdogs around! Claremont, West Covina, Alhambra, and Pasadena.

# LATIN AMERICAN CUISINE



#### GUASALMEX RESTAURANT

Specializing in Guatemalan cuisine, Guasalmex also serves Salvadorean horchata with pumpkin seeds and churro donuts with ice cream.

150 W Holt Ave, Pomona, CA 91768 (909) 623-1107

#### CHAMO VENEZUELAN CUISINE

Many fine choices of arapas, but try the cachapas (Venezuelan corn pancake with filling).

950 E. Colorado Blvd, Pasadena, CA, 91106 (626) 639-3339

#### Peppe's Pollo

A modest strip-mall exterior hides authentic Columbian fare within.

1209 S Glendora Ave, West Covina, CA 91790 (626) 918-0604

#### COCO PALMS RESTAURANT

This Cuban dining experience offers one of the best views of the valley from atop its cliffside perch.

1600 Fairplex Dr, Pomona, CA 91768 (909) 469-1965

#### RIO PICANHA BRAZILIAN STEAKHOUSE

Churrascaria is Portugeuse for "mountains of slow-cooked beef on skewers". Mmm!

381 N Azusa Ave, West Covina, CA 91791 (626) 727-6449

#### **Pupusas Galore!**

Try the flat cakes at any of these bakery restaurants.

La Caravana (See article.)

La Casa de Abuelita 3133 San Gabriel Blvd, Rosemead, CA 91770 (626) 288-2707

Melys Pupuseria 863 N Lake Ave, Pasadena, CA 91104 (626) 794-1776

El Garrobero (See article.)

Llego El Sabor 1308 N Lake Ave, Pasadena, CA 91104 (626) 765-6309

Los Planes De Renderos 11819 Valley Blvd, El Monte, CA 91732 (626) 453-0475



# Committed to ke community more Because we live h

**Spectrum** is proud to support the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership.

eping our connected.

energe too.

Spectrum

# Breweries

What do you do when your region boasts unusually clean groundwater? Make beer, of course! The SGV offers beer lovers a remarkable number of choices.

#### CLAREMONT CRAFT ALES

1420 N Claremont Blvd Ste 204C, Claremont, CA 91711 www.claremontcraftales.com (909) 625-5350 Closed Monday

#### CRAFTSMAN BREWING COMPANY

1260 Lincoln Ave. Pasadena. CA 91103 www.craftsmanbrewing.com (626) 296-2537

#### HOP SECRET

162 W Pomona Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016

www.hopsecretbrewing.com

#### 38 Degrees Ale House

100 W Main St. Alhambra, CA 91801 www.38degreesalehouse.com (626) 282-2038

#### LA VERNE BREWING COMPANY

2125 Wright Ave Ste C15, La Verne, CA 91750 lavernebrewingco.com (909) 596-5804

#### MT. LOWE BREWING COMPANY

150 E St Joseph St, Arcadia, CA 91006 www.mtlowebrewing.com (626) 244-7593

#### OGOPOGO BREWING

864 Commercial Ave, San Gabriel, CA 91776 ogopogobrewco.com (626) 427-1652 Closed Monday & Tuesday

#### OHANA BREWING COMPANY

7 S 1st St, Alhambra, CA 91801 ohanabrew.com (626) 282-2337

#### **OLD STUMP BREWERY**

2896 Metropolitan Pl. Pomona, CA 91767 www.oldstumpbrewery.com (909) 860-9052 **Closed Tuesday** 

#### OVER TOWN BREWING COMPANY

227 W Maple Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016

www.overtownbrew.com (626) 408-5814 Closed Monday & Tuesday

#### PACIFIC PLATE BREWING COMPANY

1999 S Myrtle Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016 pacificplatebrewing.com (626) 239-8456

#### PROGRESS BREWING COMPANY

1822 Chico Ave. South El Monte, CA 91733

www.progress-brewing.com (626) 552-9603

#### RT ROGERS BREWING

38 E Montecito Ave, Unit 1 Sierra Madre, CA 91024 rtrbrew.com

(626) 921-0308 Closed Monday & Tuesday

#### STONE BREWING TAP ROOM

220 S Raymond Ave Ste 103 Pasadena. CA 91105

www.stonebrewing.com/visit/outposts/ pasadena (626) 440-7243

#### WINGWALKER BREWING

235 W Maple Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016 wingwalkerbrewing.com (626) 720-1983 **Closed Tuesday** 

Locally, rainfall was several inches below normal this past year.

Less local rainfall means less local groundwater supply.

Groundwater is a precious resource, less expensive than imported water.

# Every day

is a chance to save water







# TRY SOMETHING NEW!

The SGV is known for top-notch cuisine from around the world - but we also offer some quirky treats and lesser-known specialties.



Rainbow Elotes, 626 Night Market, Arcadia



Hand-pulled lamian noodles, Northern Cafe. Temple Citv



Plantain empanadas, Don Carlos Pupuseria, South El Monte



Cereal Milk Shake with Boba Pearls Boba Tea Lounge, Covina



Chang fen (rice noodle rolls) & milk tea, Yin Ji Chang Fen, San Gabriel\*



Korean barbecued seafood, RH BBQ, Rowland Heights



Bacon-wrapped unicorn leg, L.A. County Fair. Pomona



Raspado (shave ice) cart. Pomon:



Fresh zongzi. Dim Sum King. El Monte

# Chinese Paradise

Name any style of Chinese cuisine - we've got it!

# Beijing

Beijing food is rich: salty, fresh, and tender, with a liberal use of sauces. Peking duck is world-famous, but flashboiled mutton, shredded sautéed meat with soy bean paste, and quick-fried tripe are also staples. Beijing is also known for side dishes like stir-fried liver, thousand-layered cake, pea cake, donkey rolls, and mung bean milk.

那家小館 **Bistro Na's** 9055 Las Tunas Dr, Suite 105, Temple City, CA 91780 (626) 286-1999



#### 同顺居 (Rowland Heights店) Beijing Restaurant

18888 Labin Ct Ste C101, Rowland Heights, CA 91748 (626) 986-4106



#### 北京烤鴨 PEKING DUCK

One of the most iconic Chinese foods of all time, *Beijing Kaoya* has a thin, crispy skin and tender meat - sometimes carved in front of diners like a Thanksgiving turkey.

#### 眉州東坡 Meizhou Dongpo Restaurant

400 S Baldwin Ave , Arcadia, CA 91007 (626) 538-4136



鹿鼎記 **Duck House** 501 S. Atlantic Blvd, Monterey Park CA 91754 (626) 284-3227





As the most influential Chinese food and lifestyle community in North America, CHIHUO Inc. has been exploring every aspect of the dining industry for nine years. CHIHUO's media matrix has covered 14 major cities in North America and earned the trust of nearly 1.6 million fans.

During its growth, CHIHUO has witnessed rapid innovation of Chinese cuisine in the United States. Such achievement is built upon the Chinese community's passion for food and tireless advancement within the restaurant industry. CHIHUO Inc. hopes to show the highest respect to the pioneers who are striving to broaden the global vision of Chinese food.

thechihuo.com

biz@thechihuo.com

# Нот Рот

Hotpot is the perfect group experience - gather your friends and family to cook just what you want in a bubbling cauldron of mild-to-spicy goodness!



海底撈 Haidilao 400 S. Baldwin Ave. Unit 2015, Arcadia CA 91007 (626) 445-7232

1600 Azusa Ave. Unit 178, Industry CA 91748 (860) 266-6666



山城辣妹子 Shancheng Lameizi 1530 S. San Gabriel Blvd, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 766-1700



馬路邊邊 MLBB Hot Pot 18194 Colima Rd. # A, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 820-9206

#### 唇辣號重慶火鍋 Chun La Hao Chong Qing Hot Pot

5701 Rosemead Blvd, Temple City CA 91780 (626) 777-7878



大龍燚 **Dalongyi Hot Pot** 250 W Valley Blvd Ste L, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 872-6690



## **C**ANTONESE

Mild, fresh, natural, and slightly sweet - a Cantonese chef seeks to preserve food's original flavor, rather than bury it under spices and oil.

凯悦大酒楼 Happy Harbor Restaurant 1015 Nogales St, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 965-2020



#### 半岛海鲜酒家 New Capital Seafood Restaurant

1330 Fullerton Rd, Rowland Heights, CA 91748 (626) 581-9813



半島海鮮酒家 Five Star Seafood Restaurant

140 W. Valley Blvd, 4th Fl, San Gabriel, CA 91776

(626) 288-1899



新港海鮮 Newport Seafood Restaurant 518 W Las Tunas Dr, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 289-5998









鴻德品位 Longo Seafood Restaurant 7540 Garvey Ave, Rosemead CA 91770 (626) 280-8188

## TAIWANESE

Taiwanese cuisine relies on an abundant array of seasonings for flavor: soy sauce, rice wine, sesame oil, fermented black beans, pickled radish, and much more. An important part of Taiwanese cuisine are *xiaochi*, small plates, similar to Spanish tapas.

福軒雅敘 **Cafe Fusion** 510 E Live Oak Ave, Arcadia CA 91006 (626) 447-6488



辛巴樂 Simbala Restaurant 510 E Live Oak Ave, Arcadia CA 91006 (626) 581-9885



印地安啤酒屋 Uncle Yu's Indian Theme Restaurant 633 S. San Gabriel Blvd, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 287-0688

## HUAIYANG

Huaiyang cooking tends to have a slightly sweet side to it and is almost never spicy. This light, meticulous cuisine often features pork, as well as freshwater fish and other aquatic creatures.

上海1號 **Shanghai No. 1** 250 W Valley Blvd Ste M, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 282-1777



隆興記 Longxing Ji 140 W Valley Blvd Ste 211, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 307-1188



**Shanghailander Palace** 1440 S. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia CA 91007

1695 S. Azusa Ave, Hacienda Heights CA 91745 (626) 348-8866

## SICHUAN

Sichuanese cuisine has bold flavors, with pungent spiciness from a liberal use of garlic and chili peppers, as well as the unique flavour of the "numbing" Sichuan pepper. There are many local variations from Sichuan Province and its neighbour, Chongqing.



錦城裡 Sichuan Impression 1900 W. Valley Blvd, Alhambra CA 91803 (626) 283-4622



滋味成都 Chengdu Taste 828 W. Valley Blvd, Alhambra, CA 91803 (626) 588-2284

18406 E. Colima Rd. Suite A, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (909) 675-8888



喵喵**鮮 Miao Miao Xian** 18888 Labin Court, B 109, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 269-0354



成都映像 Chengdu Impression 21 Huntington Dr, Arcadia CA 91006 (626) 462-9999

## DIM SUM

This Cantonese classic is perennially popular because it allows a hundred little flavors in one meal. Bring friends - the more eaters, the more dishes, the better!

#### 海港大酒楼 Sea Harbour Seafood Restaurant

3939 Rosemead Blvd, Rosemead CA 91770 (626) 288-3939



凯悦大酒楼 Happy Harbor Restaurant 1015 Nogales St, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 965-2020



855 S. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia CA 91007

紅館 China Red





海寶潮粤酒家 NBC Seafood Restaurant 404 S. Atlantic Blvd, Monterey Park CA 91754 (626) 282-2323



### Noodles

#### LANZHOU BEEF NOODLE SOUP

Pulled noodles from the minority people of Lanzhou are hearty and chewy - and fun to watch being made!

#### 兰州牛肉拉面 Northern Cafe Lan Noodle

411 E Huntington Dr, #102, Arcadia CA 91006 (626) 618-6686



頤豐圓 Northern Cafe

128N. Garfield Ave, Monterey Park CA 91754

(626) 766-1258

9608 E. Las Tunas Dr, Temple City CA 91780 : (626) 286-5288

#### CHONGQING NOODLES

Spicy! Chongging, like neighboring Sichuan, relies on "tongue-numbing" peppers for extravagant tastes.

重慶特色小麵 Chongging Special Noodles

708 E Las Tunas Dr, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 374-1849



滋味小面 Mian 18459 Colima Rd, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 346-3115

#### GUILIN RICE NOODLES (MIFEN)

Served as a soup, mifen is spicy and sour. The broth and noodles are served with peanuts, peppers, pickled vegetables, and a choice of meats.



桂陝一家 Qin West Noodle 400 S. Baldwin Ave. # 2310, Arcadia CA 91007 (626) 538-4098



粮鼎記 Ludingji Rice Noodle 529 E. Valley Blvd, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 714-3888

18211 R. Gale Ave, City of Industry, CA 91748

# Shannxi Noodles (Biangbiang Mian) & Shanxi Noodles (Dao xiao mian)

Noodles sliced off a lump of dough, straight into boiling broth!



山西面家 New Mandarin Noodle Deli 9537 Las Tunas Dr, Temple City CA 91780 (626) 309-4318



西安食府 Xian Kitchen 18213 E. Gale Ave, City of Industry CA, 91748 (626) 965-9000



Rou Jiamou, a delicious beef or lamb sandwich from Northwestern China, is also available at many pulled noodle restaurants.



Taiwanese Beef Noodles

牛魔王 Blue Samurai Noodle Bistro 1155 S. Diamond Blvd. #E, Diamond Bar CA 91765 (909) 718-9877

# **DUMPLINGS**



JIAOZI 餃子

The crescent-shaped, pinched-closed northern style dumplings are similar to what you'll find in Korean cuisine.

#### 頤豐園 Northern Cafe

9608 E. Las Tunas Dr, Temple City CA, 91780 (626) 286-5288

18495 Colima Rd. Suite 3&4, Rowland Heights, CA 91748 (626) 269-0842

#### XIAOLONGBAO 小籠包

These pouch-shaped dumplings give a burst of stew-like juice when bitten into.

隆興記 Longxingji Juicy Dumpling 140 W. Valley Blvd. Suite 211, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 307-1188



鼎泰豐 **Din Tai Fung** 400 S. Baldwin Ave. # M5, Arcadia CA 91007 At the Westfield Santa Anita Mall (626) 446-8588



# Вова

耀記 Yiukee Hong Kong Tea Station 18234 Gale Ave, City of Industry CA 91748 (626) 802-5428

#### 鹿角巷 The Alley

301 W. Valley Blvd. # 102, San Gabriel CA 91776 (626) 656-6319

#### 老虎堂 Tiger Sugar

18830 Colima Rd, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 581-0505

#### 一芳 **Yifang Taiwan Fruit Tea** 534 Valley Blvd. # 6, San Gabriel CA 91776

(626) 872-6884

18495 E. Colima Rd. #5, Rowland Heights CA 91748 (626) 723-4060

# **SGV Delicious**

"The Julia Child of Taiwan" Brings Her Expertise to the SoCal Food Scene

THERESA LIN 林慧懿 CHEF, TV/RADIO PRESENTER, FILM CONSULTANT



#### **CAREER**

In Taiwan, I had a radio program for people who missed their hometown cooking. They would call in and I could offer advice on how to replicate it.

I moved my kids to the United States for their education and started a radio show on AM 1300 in Los Angeles, "What to Eat Today". I had talk shows, one called "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner". I also advertise for top-quality cooking brands, judge cooking contests, and arrange TV shows. I did one called "Good Men Can Cook", and another about boazi, steamed stuffed dumplings. People use the word 土包子, "tu baozi", to mean uneducated, countryside people, so I said, "Why not do a cooking show on excellent baozi to give it some respect?"

#### THE ESSENTIALS

For food to be good, in Chinese we say "色, 香, 味" – "presentation, smell, taste". For me, flavor is the most essential thing.

But presentation needs the five colors: black, red, green, white, and yellow. And not just for the look. Each color is good for a different organ: black *mu er* (wood ear mushrooms) for your kidneys, green spinach or broccoli for your liver, red foods for your heart. Yellow gets overlooked, but it's good for your spleen.

#### EAT DRINK MAN WOMAN

I became the cooking consultant for Ang Lee's film "Eat Drink Man Woman". [Possibly the best movie about food of all time. -ed.] Lee needed a character for his leading actor who knew all Chinese cooking, so I said "Only I can do that!" We had been hiring chefs from across China's eight main cuisines. If you go

to an expert chef, he'll know how to cook Sichuanese or Shanghainese or Cantonese, but nobody can do all of it. Even back in Taiwan, I had already been convening chefs from the different traditions so they could learn from each others' techniques. Lee called me "the Julia Child of Taiwan!"

We got invited to the Oscars for Best Foreign Film, and at Cannes and the Ghent Film Festivals in France and Belgium.

#### SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

I always tell my foreign friends to come to the San Gabriel Valley. We say that it covers the "Eight Traditional Cuisines" of China. It's like a little hometown for every kind of Chinese food. The food is good, the people are kind, and authentic food is inexpensive. San Francisco and New York have good food, but it's too expensive!

#### **LAS VEGAS**

I was the founder and owner of the Royal Star at the Venetian. In 2002 and 2003, we were selected as the best Chinese food in town.

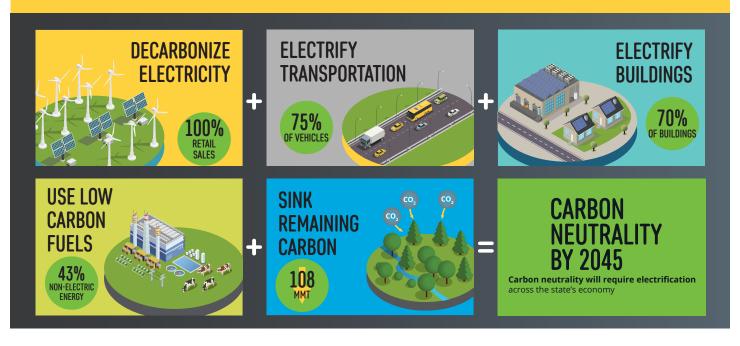
#### PEONY PAVILLION

Once, Professor Kenneth Hsienyung Pai (UC Santa Barbara) hosted a performance of the opera "Peony Pavillion" in Hollywood, and they asked me to do their after-parties. Over 200 people showed up, performers, movie stars, academics! We borrowed a couple vans to bring all the equipment, and had to do all the cooking on his balcony. We did congee one night and then wonton soup with shark, pork stomach, chicken, and eggs. And the last night we steamed beef noodles and dumplings. I still run into people when I go to Santa Barbara who say, "I remember those parties!"



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