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Understanding the taste of Macao

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Essential Information for Travelling in Macao

The Taste of the Mediterranean in Macao
The stunning variety of distinctive cuisine available in Macao makes this international city a paradise for food lovers. With plenty of fresh ingredients and many restaurants to choose from, there is food to please every palate.

Macaoese Cuisine
Macaoese cuisine is unique and irresistible. It is a special combination of Portuguese and Chinese cuisines, with ingredients and seasonings collected from Europe, South America, Africa and South East Asia.

Portuguese Cuisine
Authentic Portuguese cuisine is also widely available in Macao, affordable and irresistible.
Appetizer - Salad and Soup

Let’s have a relaxing trial on Macanese and Portuguese dishes. There is always an option for 3-course meal, i.e. appetizer, main dish and dessert. In fact, it’s quite common to have appetizer and main dish on the table at the same time in most of the restaurants.

**Squid Salad**
Poached squid with sliced onions, red pepper and lemon juice sprinkled on top. The taste of sour lemon and sweet octopus helps whet your appetite.

**Tuna Salad**
The traditional Portuguese salad is tuna with vinegar-cured chickpeas, all mixed together, while the traditional Macanese salad is tuna mixed with vegetables. The sauce used tends to be olive oil, slightly seasoned with salt. Canned tuna is most commonly used, but in some high-class restaurants, fresh tuna is chosen for its freshness, and it does indeed mean a huge difference reflected by your taste buds.

**Bacalhau Cakes**
It’s a type of croquette with minced bacalhau meat and mashed potato. It’s an appetizer always ordered by locals and tourists.

Seafood Supreme
Each restaurant has its own style of seafood supreme. The rich seafood and cream inside incredibly balance well and form a fantastic taste. Its unique taste makes it really popular among the tourists.

**Portuguese Green Vegetable Soup**
This is the most common soup. It’s boiled with cabbage base, various vegetables and Portuguese sausage “chouriço”. It tends to taste either refreshing or just bland. It is considered as a high-quality green vegetable soup.

**Olives**
This is the best appetizer in Portuguese restaurants. Each restaurant has its own special way to salt the olives, but each way makes them taste particularly refreshing in the mouth with an excellent texture.

Main Dish

**Fried Clams Portuguese Style**
This dish is closer to fried clam soup than Korean stir-fried dish with chili paste dipping sauce. The clams are fried with olive oil and then boiled with white wine, garlic sauce and lemon juice. It boasts the unique taste of clams and flavor of olive oil, while it is also infused with the aroma of wine, adding complexity to the dish.

**Crab Curry**
Crab Curry uses a whole Vietnamese mud crab. It's one of the most expensive Macanese/Portuguese dishes and is also a dish which has been heavily influenced by India. Its unique spices and creamy coconut milk sauce combine together to deliver a superior taste. Usually, it’s served in big portions, so it’s better to order it when eating with 2-3 people. Enjoy the crab meat and mix the white rice with the curry sauce!

**African Chicken**
A traditional Portuguese dish of grilled chicken topped with piri piri sauce, which is a mix of pepper and herbs and has its own unique taste. The cooking style varies according to the restaurant, with some places having a slightly spicy curry sauce than the true piri piri, and some places pouring the sauce on top of the fried chicken.

**Portuguese Style Seafood Rice**
It’s boiled with fresh tomato puree and shrimps, mussels, octopus and other various seafood. It’s an excellent combination of the clean taste of seafood stock and refreshing tomato puree. Restaurants are divided into those that opt for the refreshing taste of tomato puree and those that instead use cream for a creamy taste.

**Grilled Portuguese Sausage**
Portuguese-style sausage served after grilling. It’s an important appetizer for the Portuguese.

**Shrimp in Curry Sauce**
This is a standard Macanese curry dish. It’s known for its spicy taste and has a thicker curry sauce.

**Stuffed Squid**
Portuguese sausage chouriço, onion, garlic, minced meat and egg whites are all mixed together and stuffed inside the squid, which is then topped with tomato sauce. It’s quite a delicacy!
Fried Bacalhau with Egg, Onion, and Julienne Potatoes
This dish includes fried minced bacalhau meat, eggs, and other vegetables. Think of it as a salty fried dish. It’s considered to be quite a heavy meal.

Roasted Bacalhau
The easiest way to understand it is that it’s like a bacalhau steak. A well-made grilled bacalhau has a unique softness and boasts a light taste to its cod meat. It is served with boiled potatoes and blanched vegetables.

Fried King Prawn with Garlic
King prawns grilled with olive oil and garlic sauce. It is a delicious combination of garlic flavor and sweet prawn meat.

Stewed OxTail with Red Wine
Stewed OxTail steamed in red wine. You can enjoy the unique taste of ox tail steamed tender meat. It also works as an energy supplement during holiday. Try this if you feel a little tired or weary during your journey.

Grilled Sardines
The sardines are grilled with lemon juice squeezed on top. Some restaurants use wine sauce instead.

Roast Duck Rice
It’s a dish with duck meat on top of rice, garnished with Portuguese sausage and bacon, baked in the oven. It’s surprisingly light and lean. Some tourists consider this to be one of the best Macanese dishes.

Minchi, Macao Style
It’s a dish of fried potatoes, onion, cheese and minced meat. This is eaten while mixing them with the egg yolk on top.

Grilled Veal Ribs
Barbecued veal ribs in Portuguese style.

Dessert
Desserts from Portugal were imported to Macao while the pure and original taste remained unchanged. Generally, an Italian or French cake in European style predominates the desserts here. The most famous desserts offered are either pastéis de nata (Portuguese egg tarts) or serradura. Many tourists like to enjoy searching for the famous desserts in the cafes where they can start their culinary journey across Macao.

Pastéis de Nata (Portuguese Egg Tarts)
Though this dessert originated in a monastery in Portugal 200 years ago, it became popular only after it arrived Macao. The egg-custard stuffed pastry with a bitter caramel flavor really captivates everybody’s soul.

Egg Pudding
It’s not fancy and is just a light pudding, but it does the basics well. If you spread caramel on the outside, it becomes akin to caramel custard. Depending on the sauce, you can also make various changes.

Serradura
A soft whipped cream with cookie crumbs layered on top to be eaten with a spoon, it is one of the best snacks of both Portugal and Macao. The taste varies according to the texture of the cream, so it’s recommended to try it in a Macanese/Portuguese restaurant that’s rated above average.

Molotov
With caramel at the bottom, it’s baked with the froth of egg whites. The soft texture of the egg whites combines with the bitter sweetness of the caramel to form an unique taste. It’s one of the most famous Portuguese traditional desserts.

Bonuses Tips
The delights of Portuguese wine could fill a book, but for a brief introduction, visit the Wine Museum in the Tourism Activities Centre before setting out to buy them.

Wine Museum
Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes 431, basement (Tourism Activities Centre – CAT), Macao
10:00-18:00. Closed on Tuesdays.
Taste 2

Chinese Dim Sum and Dishes

A world of excellent taste filled with the history and traditions of the Orient

Chinese dishes can often seem never ending in their diversity and imagination. There is a saying amongst some parts of China, that Chinese people eat anything that flies - except planes; and anything that has four legs - except tables.

Chinese dishes are divided into four major regional styles: Beijing, Shanghai, Sichuan and Cantonese. Perhaps by virtue of its geographical proximity, the most commonly found dishes in Macao are Cantonese.

Cantonese dishes differ from those of other Chinese provinces because of the local wide plains and mild climate, along with recipes that make great use of the easy access to the rich bounty of the South China Sea. There is also evidence of a strong influence from western cuisine, due to historical reasons, which has enabled the region to boast a range of different cooking styles - all of which go together to mean that, to the tourist as much as to the local, there are plenty of delicacies offered.

Tea

Chinese tea once represented part of the mystery of the Orient to Westerners, with tea in Europe being prized almost as much as gold. Nowadays, of course, tea remains a global phenomenon, drank in cups on every continent and country, with Chinese tea a staple for many the world over.

~ Why is tea traditionally served with meals in China? ~

First of all, most Chinese dishes are greasy.

That is why it’s best to drink tea with your meal, especially for those, whose digestions tend to be weak because of greasy food, as the tea can in fact work with the food to leave your mouth feeling refreshed.

In Macao, some good Cantonese restaurants offer a separate tea menu. Indeed, some particularly high-class restaurants may also offer a tea professional, who is there specifically to provide patrons with the best quality tea and to recommend teas that go well with your meal.

~ Types of Chinese tea (Local pronunciation/Chinese characters) ~

Here are a few of the best kinds of tea that are particularly worth a sip.

Oolong Tea
Thanks to the fermentation process, a unique scent arises in this tea. Unless it’s your very first time with Chinese tea, Oolong tea will leave you captivated and wanting more.

Longjing Tea
This is the best example of Chinese green tea and is a renowned specialty of Hangzhou, near Shanghai. If you see the shape of its tea leaves, which are dried flat, you can easily tell it apart from other types of tea. Its delicate flavor leaves the mouth refreshed.
Puer Tea
It’s from Yunnan Province of China, and is a fully-fermented tea. It’s black in color and is particularly loved by Cantonese people. It makes you feel relaxed and works really well at removing grease from the body especially after eating. That might be why Macao locals generally order Puer tea after eating Dim Sum or to go with their meals.

Wuyi Tea
It’s a tea from Wuyi Shan that goes through a process called Hongboae, giving it a deeply smoky flavor, which somehow, in the tea itself, lends a delicacy to its taste, meaning even beginners can enjoy it.

Black Tea
This is simply black tea. It differs from English black tea, which is a blended mix of various tea leaves, whereas, in Chinese black tea, what is enjoyed is the tea leaf itself. You can try out the different black teas that each region specializes in; it’s generally best to stick to Keemun black teas, which are the most accessible black teas and are widely popular.

~ Dim Sum for the Brave and Adventurous ~

Glutinous Rice with Assorted Fillings
This is chicken with chewy rice, all covered in a lotus leaf. If you enjoy the unique smell of the lotus leaf, you will definitely like this.

Steamed Beef Balls
Beef is minced well and steamed into the shape of a ball. The combination of cilantro, orange peel and sesame oil give the beef an amazingly fresh flavour.

Turnip Cake
This Dim Sum features a puree of grated white radish that’s mixed with sautéed preserved pork, small dried shrimps, and dried mushrooms, and then steamed before finally; it is slightly grilled.

~ Dim Sum for those who want to delight their taste buds ~

Steamed Barbecued Pork Buns
This Dim Sum has a thick outer layer, akin to steamed buns, and is stuffed with a sweet pork filling which has been boiled in soy sauce and sugar. As it’s bigger in size than other Dim Sum, it’s particularly popular with those who prefer to travel on a full stomach.

Dumpling in Soup
This is a big Dim Sum, served within a soup. It’s a type of high-quality Dim Sum, accompanying soup made from chicken bone which has aged 10 years. In Macao, it’s a hugely popular health food. The flavor of the soup is quite thick.

Deep-fried Shrimp Dumplings
Deep-fried shrimp dumplings, have a cover that’s as crunchy as nachos. It’s classified as Dim Sum, but some restaurants simply label it as a dish.

Steamed Chives Dumplings
A Dim Sum which includes minced pork and chives. Thanks to the unique flavor of the chives; it’s not as greasy as the other Dim Sum.

~ The best 3 types of Dim Sum ~

Steamed Pork Siu Mai
This Dim Sum has a pork and shrimp filling, covered with a thin layer of dough mixed with eggs. Some expensive Shaomai have fish Roe, crab Roe, or are decorated as a swallow’s nest. It’s divided into Southern style Shaomai, which is the one available in Macao, and the Northern style.

Steamed Pork Dumplings
This is Shanghai-style Dim Sum. With its thin cover, it’s stuffed full with succulent pork filling. You put the Dim Sum on the spoon and open the cover with the chopsticks, slipping on the juice from the meat first, and then enjoying the Dim Sum after. Adding some thinly cut ginger and vinegar really enhances the flavor.

Dim Sum, a staple of Cantonese cooking
As the basic Cantonese dish, some people say that Dim Sum is the flower of Cantonese food. Most Macao locals have a light breakfast or lunch of Dim Sum and enjoy a meal for dinner. Locally, they call it Yumcha. Take the time to enjoy Dim Sum for lunch while staying in Macao.

10 11
Enjoying real Cantonese dishes

If Dim Sum is a kind of appetizer for Cantonese food, now let’s try the main course, by stepping into the world of delicacies, and getting to the real dishes. In fact, the basic structure of Cantonese food is surprisingly similar to that of Western food. Meals are often served first with a soup, while this is sometimes either accompanied or followed by the appetizer and the main dish. Depending on the cooking style and the ingredients, it’s served as either barbecue, swallows nest, Abalone, seafood, poultry, meat, or in-season vegetables.

~ Cantonese dishes ~

Steamed Fish
This is Cantonese-style steamed fish. Pour hot oil over a slight cooked fish to make the outside crispy and then add a dash of special light soy sauce. You can eat the meat with the soy sauce and enjoy the soft fish meat with the flavor of clear spring onion from the soy sauce.

Rice Noodle Roll
Grind the rice very finely and, after thinly spreading it, steam it. The thinly spread cover is then filled with shrimp, meat, or vegetables and then wrapped. It is often served with soy sauce. The soft cover helps with digestion, which is perhaps why it’s a breakfast staple in Macau. It’s served in a variety of different ways, such that it may seem that every restaurant has its own particular special recipe.

Deep-fried Prawns
This is known as gold shrimp. It’s a deep-fried dish of shrimp roe batter with eggs covering the shrimp. In other words, it’s fried shrimps, but the cover itself is shrimp roe. It’s a delicacy with the unique flavor and texture of shrimp roe.

Sea Cucumber
Sea cucumber is considered a high quality ingredient in Cantonese cuisine, along with abalone and swallow’s nest. It has saponin, which is also found in ginseng, and thus boasts great credentials as a healthy dish, full of nutrition with which to help you recover from fatigue.

Sweet and Sour Pork
Sweet and sour pork has always been a popular dish. The sauce is very appetizing and the dish is also very appealing, with a very colorful combination of ingredients.

Deep-fried Crispy Chicken
This is Cantonese-style crispy chicken. A boiled chicken is marinated in starch syrup and has boiling oil poured on it to make the skin turn nice and crispy. If you are a fan of chicken dishes, you will definitely enjoy it.

Roasted Goose
This is one of the best Chinese poultry dishes, together with Beijing duck. It’s boiled goose marinated in starch syrup, done in the same cooking style as with Deep-fried Crispy Chicken mentioned above. However, roasted goose is cooked first over a wooden fire, sometimes even up to three times, with sauce being applied in each time. This makes for an extraordinarily special texture for the fully marinated meat.

Abalone
This is one of the finest Cantonese seafood dishes. Every abalone dish uses dried abalone, which, depending on its size, is called in units of ‘Yau’. 1 Yau is the biggest, which barely comes out once a year; 2 Yau is half the size of 1 Yau. Restaurants generally have sizes between 12 Yau to 24 Yau. This is about the size of a child’s hand. The name of the dish varies according to the origin of the abalone, the type of sauce used, and also the preferences of the restaurant itself, meaning it might be difficult to order the exact name listed above.

Spring Rolls
This is a deep-fried Dim Sum that’s filled with vegetables and meat, wrapped with several covers made out of flour. It’s like one of the spring rolls you can find on the menu at Vietnamese restaurants. The crispy, yet soft texture of the filling makes for a great combination in terms of tastes and textures. Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that increasingly these days, the meat filling is being replaced with shrimp inside, instead.
**Fried Rice**  
Chinese style fried rice is a kind of art in Chinese food. The egg coating between every rice, fine diced meat and vegetables forms a fantastic ensemble.

**Barbecued Pork with Honey**  
It's skewered pork barbeque. After grilling, apply malt to give it a gloss, and use a torch to heat it once again. It's a humble meat dish with a sweet and smoky flavor.

**Fried Noodles**  
These are noodles fast-fried over high heat with various vegetables and soy sauce thrown in, which means that, even without many ingredients, the taste is mouth watering. Similar dishes are thinly sliced beef with rice noodles.

**Barbecued Suckling Pig**  
This is one of the best of Cantonese meat dishes. It's a barbequed newly born baby pig, between 2 and 6 weeks old, and is renowned for its crispy skin and lean meat. Some like to savour only the skin and don't even touch the meat. It's a dish which shows huge variation according to each restaurant.

**Dessert**

Dessert is the finale of a meal. Macao has developed its dessert culture for a long time, meaning there are so many different types of desserts, more than you can imagine.

Some travelers say they come to Macao just for the desserts. Let's journey into a sweetness that can never be escaped.

For your reference, some Cantonese restaurants have dessert menus on the Dim Sum menu. If you can't find the dessert you want, make sure to check with the waiter.

Chilled Mango and Sago Cream with Pomelo  
Normally it's called Sago. It's a dessert with mango juice mixed with coconut milk and grape fruit pulp and various sliced fruits, eaten with a spoon. The taste varies by restaurant, with some places adding a lot of coconut milk in to enhance the smoothness and some places including sour fruits like pineapple to make it more refreshing.

**Pumpkin Cake**  
It's a glutinous rice made out of ground old pumpkin. It has the sweetness of old pumpkin and the softness of a glutinous rice – it's a comfort food.

**Chilled Sweetened Bean Curd Flavored with Almond**  
It's an unfamiliar tofu dessert. It's soft tofu covered with ground almond sweet sauce. The soft texture and tofu and almonds make for a harmonized flavor.

**Egg Custard Bun**  
It's a Dim Sum-style dessert full of custard cream inside a steamed bun. Recently, it's become more high quality, with milk cream added and custard.

**Steamed Milk Pudding**  
This is well known as milk pudding to travelers. It's translated as pudding but it's closer to heated milk. Many people are crazy about it, with its soft texture and the unique sweetness of the milk flavor.
A Taste of Macao’s Daily Life
Find the real taste of Macao at the corner of an old snack shop or somewhere on the street. Leave your stomach empty and peer into the alley.

Dried Shrimp Roe Noodles
It’s dried noodles slightly fried with sea shrimp roe and mixed with egg noodles. The shrimp roe are too small to chew but as it breaks down between the teeth, the flavor is surprisingly strong, so that you can taste the salty sea in your mouth, even with a small amount. It is best with egg noodles that are as bouncy as string instruments.

Wonton Noodles
This is a well-known noodle dish called Wonton noodles. Yellow chewy egg noodles with small shrimp dumplings and the tasty soup made of boiled dried fish attracts the travelers with its taste.

Pork Chop Bun
A Macao-style burger in a crispy baked baguette with thickly sliced grilled pork meat in between. It is different from a regular hamburger as it doesn’t have vegetables or sauce, but just meat to enjoy the taste, and the grilled charcoal flavor on the pork is a great combination.

Porridge (Congee)
Porridge is a favorite breakfast among Macao locals and Chinese people. The most common dish is white porridge, but depending on what is inside, it can also be a high quality dish. The most recommended one is the porridge with fresh water crab that has a whole crab inside. Just like the Chinese saying ‘You can eat a cow secretly but you can’t eat a crab secretly’, the flavor and taste of the crab inside the porridge is outstanding.

Skewers
The street from Senado Square to the Cathedral called Travessa da SA is famous with the Macao locals for skewers. Macao skewers use every ingredient that can be used to eat it by dipping it inside spicy Chinese pepper oil sauce and spicy curry sauce. It’s one of the Macao dishes that you eat while sweating, and it’s popular among teenagers and young adults. There are skewers made out of animal organs, fish cakes or rolled up noodles.

Almond Cookies
These are some of Macao’s most popular traditional cookies. They have a lot of almonds, meaning every bite is crunchy, but it’s recommended that you eat it with a drink because it’s dry.

Coke Boiled with Ginger
Do not be surprised. This funny named drink is coke-boiled with ginger. It might sound weird to boil coke, but it’s good to drink it when you have a cold or are tired in order to gain energy. You might imagine a weird taste but it’s quite delicious. The combination of ginger and coke make an excellent flavor.

Egg Puffs
It’s a type of waffle made in a certain shape. There are two stories: some say it’s called Egg puffs because there are a lot of eggs in it; and some say it’s because it’s as lumpy as an egg rack. Freshly made egg puffs are crispy on the outside and soft in the inside, which is a good taste to snack on.
The Historic Centre of Macao

1. A-Ma Temple
2. Moorish Barracks
3. Liliu Square
4. Mandarin's House
5. St. Lawrence's Church
6. St. Joseph's Seminary & Church
7. St. Augustine's Square
8. St. Augustine's Church
9. Dom Pedro V Theatre
10. Sir Robert Ho-Tung Library
11. Legal Services Building
12. Senado Square
13. Sam Koo Koon
14. Holy House of Mercy
15. Cathedral
16. Loo Kau Mansion
17. St. Dominic's Church
18. Ruins of St. Paul's
19. Na Icha Temple
20. Section of the Old City Walls
21. Mount Fortress
22. St. Anthony's Church
23. Casa Garden
24. Protestant Cemetery
25. Geia Fortress

Tourist Information
Transport to and from Macao:

**By Air:**
Macao International Airport
- Taxis can use the Macao International Airport, which operates 24 hours a day.
- Macao: +853 2866 1111
- Website: www.macaairport.com

**Helicopter Service:**
- Service Provider: Sky Shuttle Helicopters Limited
- Flight Details:
  - Macao x -> Hong Kong
  - Macao x -> Zhuhai
  - Macao x -> Shenzhen
  - Hong Kong: +852 2787 8888
  - Shenzhen: 0755 3346 8740
- Website: www.skyshuttlehk.com

**By Sea:**
**T热血:**
- Macao: +853 2855 0625
- Hong Kong: +852 2583 0000
- International Tel: +853 3620 9220
- Website: http://www.mcלה.org/rthk/zh

**The Cat Citi-Pep Cat:**
- Macao: +853 2865 3015
- Hong Kong: +852 2583 9999
- Website: http://www.catag.com.mo

Local Transportation:

**Bus Service:**
- Location within Macao (residential)
  - Macao x -> Taipa (Airport Terminal)
  - Macao x -> Cotai
  - Macao x -> Nam Sai Beach

**Taxi Service:**
- Fares:
  - Macau x -> Taipa (Airport Terminal)
  - Macau x -> Cotai
  - Macau x -> Nam Sai Beach

Tourist Information:

**Macao:**
- Border Gate
  - Tel: +853 2869 9010

**Dame Harbour Ferry Terminal:**
- Tel: +853 2869 9010

**Macao International Airport:**
- Tel: +853 2869 1466

**Largo do Senado, Edif Ritz:**
- Tel: +853 2856 6767

**Taipa Temporary Ferry Terminal:**
- Tel: +853 2886 9688

**Hong Kong:**
- Hong Kong International Airport
  - Tel: +852 2990 7777
  - Fax: +852 2981 2971
- Sunny Bay Centre
  - Tel: +852 2567 2287
  - Fax: +852 2567 3608

**Useful Telephone Numbers:**
- Emergency Call: 110/1299
- Tourist Helpline (Macao): +853 2853 3660

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