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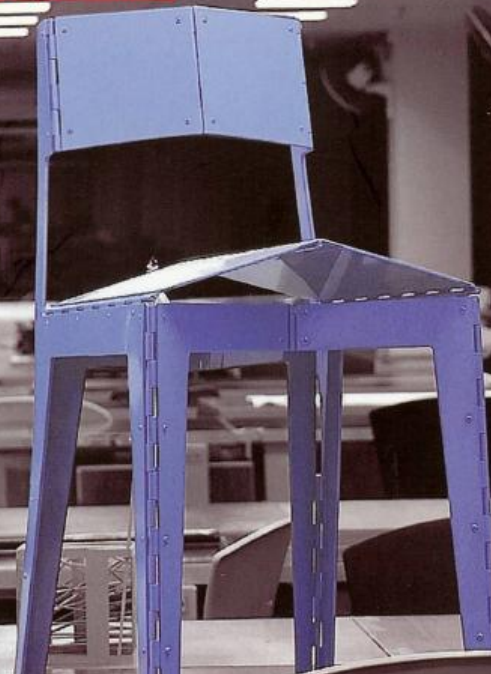
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A COSMOPOLITAN AIR SURROUNDS THE SUMPTUOUS INTERIOR AND EQUALLY LAVISH MEAL ONE CAN RELISH AT JING.

TEXT BY JOLENE LIMUCO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CI&A PHOTOGRAPHY

Chinese restaurants remind one of cavernous lairs teeming with boisterous extended families gathered around large circular tables. It is imperative to traditional Chinese folk that their gatherings are conducted at a round table – so that bad luck is averted from sharp edges and communal dining is easily facilitated. In addition to that, the constant cacophony is a testament to the chef that diners are happily tucking into their sumptuous feasts.

In an upwardly mobile age where cultures zigzag in a cosmopolitan plane, such romantic notions of Chinese restaurants are beginning to fade. The chintzy pink paper napkins, the florid polyester curtains and the dim sum trolley are almost extinct in a sleek and packaged world. Taking their place is a breed of modern Chinese restaurants that serves the same extravagant food but chooses to house their carefully-plated morsels under architecturally sound roofs adorned with bespoke designer fittings.

While some traditionalists might squirm at the idea of dining at square tables and using polished silverware in place of reliable wooden chopsticks, increasingly affluent trendsetters are taking to such swanky venues like bees to honey. One such address luring this discerning set is Jing, an outfit situated at the heart of the city overlooking the much-anticipated Marina Bay promontory.

Owned and operated by the same people behind the hugely successful Majestic Restaurant, the name Jing is a salute to Beijing. In fact, this immensely modern and breezy establishment is poised as a nod towards the Chinese capital's skyrocketing status as a hip destination. Local hospitality design firm, The Antonio Eraso Company, has taken a leaf from the relaxed environment of One Fullerton and transplanted some of the sophisticated chic vibe into the 88-seater restaurant.

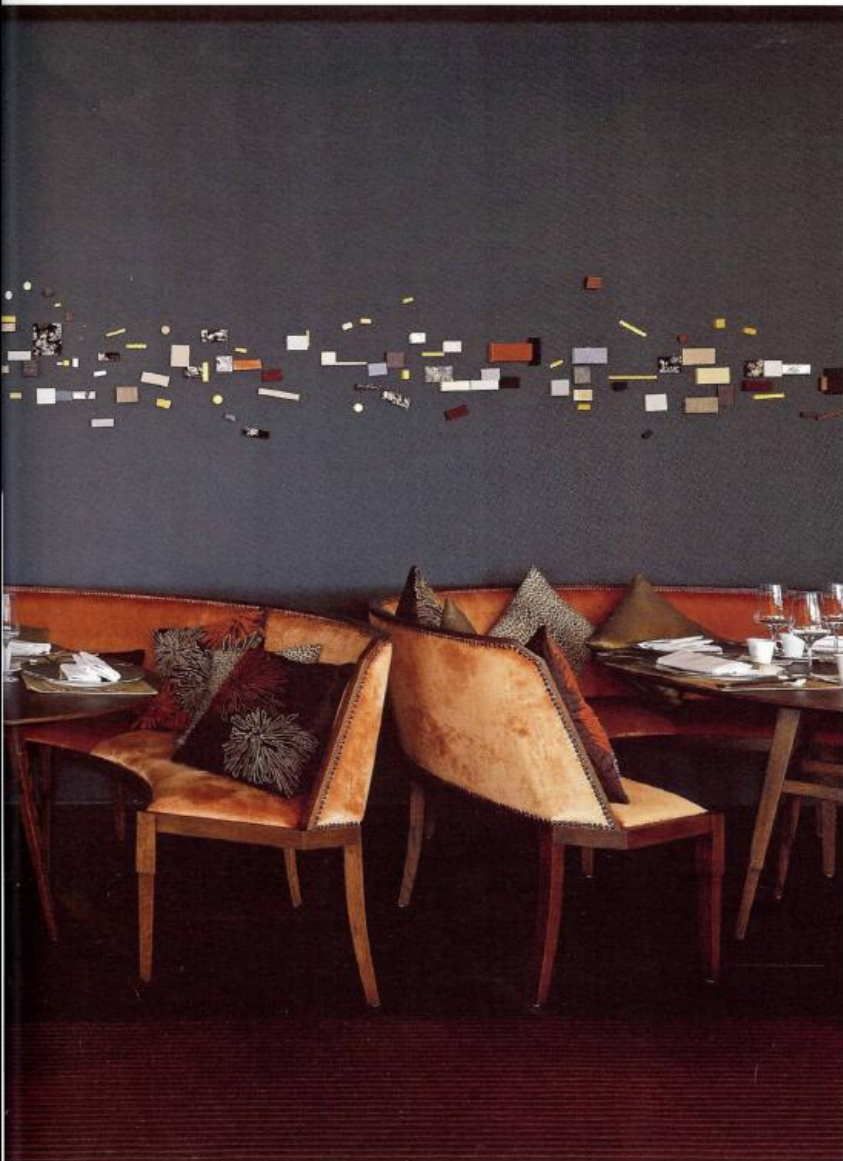
The swish venue exudes a palette of brown, gold and taupe – aptly complementing the smart clientele that walks through its glass doors. Taking centre stage in the uncluttered space that is underlined with just a hint of vintage sheen is a striking geometric ceiling resembling a series of animated waves. The seemingly inverted range of undulating layers and heights of the metal ceiling set a dramatic backdrop for the bustling restaurant.

Elegant curved banquette seats set against a deep gray wall bring a bit of romance to the space. These bespoke rosewood furniture hark back to discreet booths that are found mostly in burlesque stomping grounds, thanks to intricate detailing like the plush peach velvet that envelops the surfaces and a trimming of rivets that encircles the seat rests.

Crowning the intimate booth seats is a piece of art created by Singaporean artist Terence Lin called Panorama of Jing. Made of acrylic, fabric and wood, this site-specific wall installation is a reference to the capital city as well as the word "gold" in Mandarin. Known for his tapestry-inspired art pieces, Lin has woven the various elements of the restaurant to create a stunning visual landscape of irregularly shaped blocks that represents the various layers and essences of Beijing the city as well as Jing the restaurant.

Of the two private dining rooms, one is akin to a viewing gallery with unobstructed views of the Marina Bay area, while the other is an intimate section tucked away behind the cellar. The two private rooms can be opened up via a collapsible wooden door to accommodate larger parties.





Complementing the hip vibe of Jing is an imaginative menu thought up by chef-owner Yong Bing Ngen and head chef Yong Lian Heng. The meticulously planned a la carte and set menus showcase the chefs' versatility with ingredients. Set menus reflect seasonal ingredients, so diners can expect to dine on only the freshest produce.

One of the highlights on the menu is the crispy duck served on a bed of greens with a homemade sweet plum sauce. The appetising dish affords just the right amount of sweetness, saltiness and tartness you can find in a dish, essentially opening up the palate for more exquisite morsels to come. Another signature dish that should not be missed is the four-hour boiled *Jump Over to "Jing"*, a classic favourite re-imagined to please modern taste buds with ingredients such as abalone, shark's fin and dried scallops. The a la carte menu also features sumptuous items like stewed lobster egg noodles served with a generous portion of Boston lobster, wok-fried cubes of beef tenderloin and foie gras served with eggplant and black pepper sauce, as well as pork belly rib baked with angelica root.

It is highly recommended that you finish off your meal with one of the many creative desserts on offer. Of particular note is the fried durian ice cream coated in a crispy shell. The truly satisfying sweet will end your meal in true style – and leave you hankering for another visit.

And why not schedule another visit? This modern Chinese venue seems to have all the elements in place to become a top dining destination. From its well-placed location to the delicious food, Jing emanates just the right buzz that appeals to diners of every age. ■



Jing is located at:
1 Fullerton Road, #01-02/03 One Fullerton Singapore 049213
T (65) 6224 0088 F (65) 6224 3080
www.jing.sg