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Medicine and food come from the same source, goes a Chinese adage. And cooking with traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is becoming the new rage in Asian *haute cuisine*. Chinese "herbs" not only balance the yin and yang of life, but also add delicious flavor.

Yet we never expected the gastronomic heights attained at pricey **Jade restaurant in Singapore's ritzy Fullerton Hotel**, where we feasted on king prawns infused with ginseng in wolf berry sauce; chicken with cordyceps (mummified caterpillar); and gelatinous bird's nest with poached pear. This sell-out 'five treasures' dinner was part of Singapore's **World Gourmet Summit** in April, and prepared by chefs from Singapore's **Tung Lok restaurant group**.

For our full article on TCM go to:

http://www.globetrottinggourmet.com/go/travel/travel/chinese_medicine.htm

We're normally not impressed with restaurant "chains" but here we swallow our words. Literally. The corporate food world can learn much from Tung Lok, and how it produces pure ambrosia in all their properties. Its principal chef is **Sam Leong**, who we met recently at **My Humble House** – a top restaurant that is anything but "modest." We also note that Sam is the youngest chef profiled in the French book *Grands Chefs Haute Cuisine*.

For those yet to experience the remote beauty of land-locked Laos, **there is still space available on our October 16-25 Laos Food Sampler.** We meet in Bangkok, then fly to Thailand's remote Isan region along the mighty Mekong River, taking in the spectacular fireboats festival held annually during *Awk Pansaa* or Buddhist Lent. In Laos, we sample a world of unique and delicious chili jams – from *jeow bong* made with buffalo hide, to tomato *manglak*. Tangy and tart *lap* salads are cooked here using turkey to venison to ox – and locals eat a rainbow spectrum of sticky rice with their meals. We'll visit this former kingdom's historic capital of **Luang Prabang** (now a registered Unesco heritage site) plus the official capital **Vientiane** for boat races along the Mekong. As an added bonus, our tour includes free flight stop-over privileges at **Cambodia's Angkor Wat**. For details on our 3 night tours to Angkor: www.asianfoodtours.com
Hurry! Reservations close in August!!!

Seafood lovers visiting **Sydney, Australia** shouldn't miss the famous **fish markets on Blackwattle Bay**. Second only to Tokyo's Tsukiji fish market, Sydney boasts a variety of reef fish you won't taste anywhere else in the world. The market also hosts a cooking school under the able command of **Roberta Muir**, where we chanced on a fish filleting class with sumo chef **Hideo Dekura**. The school knives have dramatically improved since our last course years ago, and Dekura is such a perfectionist he won't hold Sunday courses because the fish is less fresh on the fishermen's day off. If you are coming to Sydney, click here to sign up for one of the school's daily classes. www.sydneyfishmarket.com.au The market is slated for massive renovations – so short a time after its last incarnation a little over a decade ago. But shoppers will still be able to duck the cranes and tractors during its building phase. One thing that keeps Sydney's market vital is its focus on fresh seafood – and not the touristy take-away food and accoutrement outlets as in, say, **San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf**. Not to say it doesn't exist here...

And speaking of San Francisco, don't miss the newly revamped **Ferry Building** – it's a haven for food lovers. After a complete revamp, the building at the bottom of Market Street hosts leading restaurants, artisanal food outlets, and deli providores – from a specialist mushroom outlet to antiquarian cookery shops. We especially liked **Culinaire, antiques for and about food**, scoring a set of 19th century French cheese knives, and heavy table damask on our last foray. lantiquair@msn.com

Still on our fish bent, keep an eye out for *The Philosopher Fish: Sturgeon, Caviar, and the Geography of Desire* by Richard Adams Carey (Counterpoint Press amazon.com). Although Iran gets quite a beating in the American press these days, sturgeon conservation is one area where the Muslim theocracy outshines neighboring Russia. Not that we're personally buying any Caspian caviar these days. Its not only too expensive, it's just too at risk! When will America follow the lead of countries like Australia, which have long banned beluga imports because of its endangered status?

Transitions: What a difference a few years makes. We're delighted to see **Martin Dishman's Linga Bar** featured so prominently in a *New York Times* article on **Siem Reap's** expanding nightlife. This tiny town abuts Cambodia's spectacular Angkor complex – but while the temples remain ageless, this "little" town has well and truly transformed. A mere three years ago there was only one flight daily from **Bangkok**; today there are seven! Martin is former manager of a prestigious boutique training hotel, grooming at-risk Khmer youth in the hospitality and food industry. He continues his work training the world's next master cocktail shakers. Try the Linga Bar's vast selection of \$3 cocktails. And we mean the real, non-bootleg stuff...For the full article, [CLICK HERE](#)

On the press front: Globetrotting Gourmet was featured on the 5 July **www.foodsiteoftheday.com** This daily email newsletter highlights culinary websites from around the world. In April, Robert ducked into the prestigious library at the Institute of Southeast Asian studies in Singapore to bequeath two autographed copies of his books, *Thai Home Cooking* and *Vietnamese Home Cooking*.

COME JOIN US IN 2005

2-16 Oct - Singapore & Thailand - waiting list only

16-25 October - Laos - hurry, closing soon

Further details on www.asianfoodtours.com

We'll be visiting Singapore's oldest and most reputable traditional medicine shop, **Eu Yan Sang** during upcoming Globetrotting Gourmet FoodTOURS to Asia. If you want to come along, [CLICK HERE FOR MORE DETAILS](#). We also visit a fascinating bird's nest museum, specializing in this very expensive and painstakingly harvested product made from swallow spit. It's usually sweetened with rock sugar -- but not to mask the flavor, merely to give it some taste. It's the gelatinous texture aficionados crave, and its reputedly excellent for the complexion.

North American residents contact Rochelle@marynorth.com for air fares. Australian residents dial (02) 9550 5510 for air fare quotes...

Cheers,
Robert & Morrison

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