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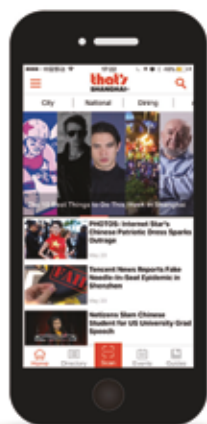
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LARS PACH

Danish Baking Shifu

Interview by Ned Kelly

The love of a friend brought Lars Pach to Suzhou. The love of a woman kept him here. And the love of baking led him to change his career once he'd settled.



What brought you from Denmark to Suzhou?

A true love story. My best friend met a girl through the internet and she lived in Suzhou. When he quit his job, sold his car, gave his dog away and bought his flight tickets... then I suspected that he was serious. When I attended his wedding in Suzhou, I met my friend's fiancé and her family, and soon learned that the Chinese are very good hosts, especially the big sister who was taking good care of everybody.

She made me breakfast, and arranged for me to visit all of Suzhou's famous landmarks, as well as taking me to all the nice restaurants in SIP. At the wedding, I saw her in her nice dress and make-up, arranging and making the wedding a very special day for her little sister and her family. I knew I liked this girl and had to win her heart; and I did, as the big sister is my wife today.

How did you come to open your cafe, Danish Baking Shifu?

My background is in furniture sales and interior design, and when I moved here, I got a job in a local furniture store. The shop mainly sold luxury brands from Northern Europe, and I had the opportunity to visit many well-designed Chinese homes. I noticed that many of these new homes had modern kitchens that were never used, because many didn't know how to operate an oven. So I came up with the idea to host a baking workshop, which was the perfect way to showcase a brand new home.

Since my wife was learning to bake at home, we could put our skills into practice. The idea proved to be a huge success, and we had many requests for making cakes for all sorts of private and corporate events. In the end we earned more money baking than working in the furniture shop, so we decided to open our own cafe.

For people who have not been to Danish Baking Shifu, what can they expect?

We have a saying in our shop that goes, "Expect good things... and a little more." We strive to achieve a better quality than other cafes, and since we bake everything ourselves, we can guarantee what goes into the cakes.

The most important thing for us is to get to know each person coming through the door. A cup of coffee is not simply cup of coffee to us; we want to know how each customer likes their coffee, so communication is essential.

And you have a new venue opening up?

We are opening another shop in the new Rainbow Mall in Xiangcheng, and will do the same as we do on Pingjiang Lu, plus a bit more. We will start to make some Danish food, so customers can enjoy a nice meal in addition to coffee and cake. The theme of the shop is circus, so we are going to be more playful and crazy with colors and creative ideas; It will be an ideal place to go as a family.

293 Pingjiang Lu, by Baita Dong Lu 平江路293号, 近白塔东路 (159 9586 8206)



AKENZ

A Collective of Scandinavian Streetwear Labels

By Dominic Ngai

Founded in 2014 and already with stores in Shanghai, Beijing and Hangzhou, Scandinavian streetwear multi-brand store AKENZ has recently expanded to Suzhou with a shop at the first floor of the Eslite Spectrum lifestyle complex.

Designed with the Northern European aesthetics in mind, the minimalistic décor of the store not only allows the colorful products to be the center of attention, it also accentuates the overall ethos of the design concept that symbolizes the region that AKENZ celebrates.

Reflecting the spirit of streetwear (as well as the season), visitors will find a range of outerwear items, leather jackets, sweaters, hoodies, and denim products on display at AKENZ throughout winter, including items from the AW2017 collection from various brands in its portfolio, including well-known names like APOCS and Naked & Famous, as well as more niche labels like the St. Petersburg-based urban techwear specialist Krakatau, and sneakers from



Finnish label Karhu.

Highlights in the current inventory include Copenhagen-based designer brand Han Kjobenhavn's quilted bomber jackets (RMB3,999) and their puffy hood coat (RMB2,999) – both of which are stylish winter essentials that can keep you warm throughout the next few months.

Unit 105, Eslite Spectrum, 8 Yuelang Jie, by Suzhou Dadao Dong 月廊街8号诚品生活广场1层105室, 近苏州大道东 (www.akenz.com, WeChat ID: AkenzChina)



OHYO KITCHEN

Hearty Brunch Plates All Day

By Dominic Ngai

THE PLACE

Since its inception in the late 1800s, the concept of brunch spread from the UK to the rest of the entire Western Hemisphere over the course of the 20th century, with each country adopting their own spin on the concept with their own favorite dishes and ingredients.

Meanwhile, the Chinese – and more specifically the Cantonese – have also fully embraced the idea of brunch with dim sum, serving an array of buns, dumplings and a range of savory and sweet small bites to families across the country each weekend. Western-style brunch, however, has also been gaining popularity in recent years across the Middle Kingdom's fancy hotel restaurant and casual dining venues.

Located on the third floor of brand new shopping complex The Summit, Ohyo Kitchen's main theme is straightforward and simple – it's all about brunch. A majority of the menu is made up of items that are

inspired by – or are authentic renditions of – traditional hearty brunch plates, served in a relaxing space with turquoise, white and pale wood as its main colors.

THE FOOD

The Ohyo king size brunch platter (RMB88), which consists of sausages, cubes of steak, strips of grilled chicken, onion rings, French fries and toasted baguette with garlic butter, is the perfect jam for meat lovers. Ohyo Kitchen clearly knows its strength is the chicken, so they've also incorporated it on their version of a savory French toast (RMB68) along with some creamy scrambled egg and a side salad.

Inspired by the ample natural light that the restaurant enjoys from the windows of the shopping mall, Ohyo Kitchen also has a couple of 'picnic box' options for its guests. The omnivore version includes one of the most traditional brunch dishes – smoked salmon eggs Benedict (RMB68) – while there's also a vegetarian version, in which health-conscious eaters can enjoy a spinach eggs Benedict served with country-style hash baked with olive oil.

THE VIBE

With various office buildings and serviced apartment complexes in the neighborhood, Ohyo Kitchen gets the heaviest traffic during lunch hours and on the weekends. While there are still a few details to be refined, the brunch concept is flexible enough to be updated on a seasonal basis to keep things fresh for diners.

Level 3, The Summit South Tower, 119 Suzhou Dadao Xi, by Xinghai Jie 苏州大道西119号苏悦广场南楼3层, 近星海街 (185 0150 0238)



EVENTS



● Yu Fei'an Art Exhibition: Splendid Creation of Nature

Known for his famous paintings of flowers and birds, the works of Shandong-born artist Yu Fei'an (1899-1959) are featured in the 'Splendid Creation of Nature' exhibition at the Suzhou Museum.

> Through Sunday, March 4. Suzhou Museum, 204 Dongbei Jie 东北街204号 (512 6757 5666)

● Alexandro Querevalu: The Last of The Mochicans

Born in Lima, Alexandro Querevalu is an accomplished musician who has mastered indigenous musical instruments of North and South America, and specializes in wind instruments like quena, quenacho, antara and basto zampona. The Peruvian musician is concert series named after the famous 1992 film to Suzhou for one night only.

> Saturday, January 13, 7.30pm. RMB80-380. Suzhou Culture & Arts Center, 1 Guanfeng Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区观枫街1号 (www.sscac.com.cn)



● A Piece of Americana

Suzhou Symphony Orchestra team up with Alessandro Lanzoni trio for their January 20 show. Conductor Xu Zhong and the Italian jazz trio will perform Gershwin's 'An American in Paris,' 'Rhapsody in Blue' and 'Porgy and Bess' for the show.

> Saturday, January 20, 7.30pm. RMB80-580. Suzhou Culture & Arts Center, 1 Guanfeng Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区观枫街1号 (www.sscac.com.cn)



● Qu Lijun's Jade Carving Art Exhibition

Famous for his intricate work in jade carving and incorporating his training in Chinese painting into his work, Suzhou-born artist Qu Lijun's solo art exhibition is available through January 17 at the Suzhou Museum.

> Saturday, January 17. Suzhou Museum, 204 Dongbei Jie 东北街204号 (512 6757 5666)



● Jingzhou Cultural Relics Exhibition

Available through the end of February, Suzhou Silk Museum's Jingzhou Cultural Relics Exhibition will showcase antiques and artifacts such as bronze dating back to the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC).

> Through Wednesday, February 28. Suzhou Silk Museum, 2001 Remin Lu 人民路2001号 (512 6753 6506)



● Riverdance in Suzhou

Performing six shows in four days, the world-renowned theatrical show featuring traditional Irish music and dance will be coming to the Suzhou Culture & Arts Center this month. Debuted back in 1995, the show has performed in 450 venues worldwide and been seen by more than 25 million people.

> Thursday, January 4-Sunday, January 7, 7.30pm (and 2pm on Jan 6-7). RMB100-800. Suzhou Culture & Arts Center, 1 Guanfeng Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区观枫街1号 (www.sscac.com.cn)

CITY SCENES



Marriott hotel group announced the openings of two properties – Renaissance Suzhou Taihu Lake Hotel and Suzhou Marriott Hotel Taihu Lake on October 22. The hotel complex is aimed to attract both leisure and business travelers in this thriving region.



Showcasing custom-made pieces by designers Mae Laurence and Ding Fei, W Suzhou's first ever fashion show combines modern design with traditional Chinese aesthetics.



Located in the Tianfu National Wetland Park, the brand new Holiday Inn Kunshan Huaqiao offers 253 chic guestrooms and suites, full-service lakefront conference center and a plethora of dining options.



To celebrated Christmas, the talented students from Dulwich College Suzhou Junior School Strings Orchestra serenaded the school with enchanting Christmas tunes at the concert.



Thanks to its commitment to sustainable and green practices, Element Suzhou Science and Technology Town recently received the LEED certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).



Zhangjiagang was listed as one of China's 'Top 10 Happiest County-level Cities' this year. Jiangsu's Taicang, Kunshan and Pizhou also made it into the top 10.

EVERYTHING SUZHOU EVERY. SINGLE. DAY.



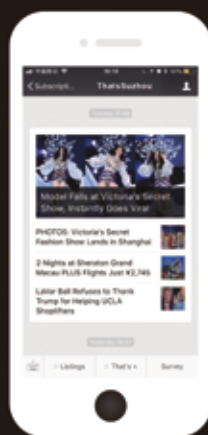
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