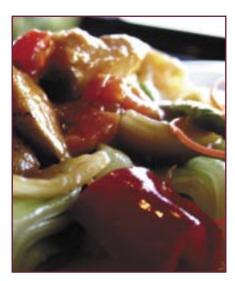


Nyonya Asian Cuisine

You know a restaurant is better than good when it chooses to rely solely on word-of-mouth advertising and friendly recommendation. For a place like that to survive and ultimately thrive, so many things have to be exactly right to keep people coming back and, most importantly, telling their friends. Good food is a powerful magnet with a surprisingly heavy pull. Luckily, everyone loves to spread good news, and the good news in Asian cuisine in the Sandy Springs community is Nyonya.

I'll admit that I've driven right by Nyonya on several occasions, and never even noticed it in the shadow of Big Lots and Tom Jumper Chevrolet. In fact, I almost passed it even knowing where it was! Believe me, it's worth finding. And don't let the shopping center façade fool you. The atmosphere inside the restaurant is a pleasing and effective blend of dark wood accents and deep red tones. Beautiful boxes of exotic spices at the entrance hint at the taste adventure that lies ahead.

left for the kitchen. The Nyonya Hats are simply delicious. The crisp pastry shells stuffed with shrimp and shredded veggies and sweet peanut dipping sauce are truly hard to resist. Or try the Roti Canai, a Malaysian-style pancake served with curry dipping sauce. Of course, all of your favorite soups are here, including the rich lemongrass-infused TomYum soup that's loaded with jumbo shrimp, scallops, squid and mushrooms. If you're craving greens,



try the Nyonya house salad that features kiwi, oranges and cucumber with a homemade ginger dressing.

Grilled lamb chops may not appear on most Asian menus, but Nyonya breaks the mold with their Szechuan Lamb served with a spicy mix of fresh curried vegetables. The lamb is meaty and mild and pairs nicely with a tall glass of Tsingtao beer or a nice glass of red wine. Another house favorite is the Assam Seabass with string beans, eggplants and carrots in a spicy, Indian-derived sauce. One of the chefs was inspired by a trip to Panama and

created several dishes that fuse tastes from that region with those of his homeland. The Panama Beef is delightfully sweet and sour and chocked full of cilantro, bell pepper, tomato and onion.

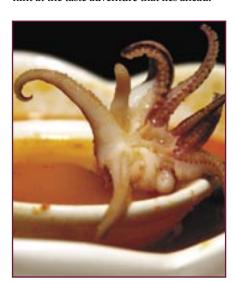
The meal ended with a simple plate of mango and coconut mousse cake, a light and airy conclusion to an amazing meal. With so many favorites from Thailand, Malaysia and China, there's literally something for everyone here. And don't be afraid to bring the whole family as kids are more than welcome and there are plenty of selections for them. So tell your friends and come hungry to what is easily one of Sandy Springs' best kept secrets: Nyonya.

Nyonya Asian Cuisine is located at 7294 Roswell Rd. in the North Springs shopping center in Sandy Springs. They're open even nights a week and serve lunch Monday through Friday. For more information



call 770.394.3071 or visit them online at www.nyonyaasiancuisine.com.

Story by Sandy Springs Living Food Editor Hans Rueffert. Hans has spent his entire life with food and is now host of his own cooking show in North Georgia called "Hans Cooks the World." In 2005, Hans was selected out of 10,000 applicants to be a finalist on the show "The Next Food Network Star" and finished third in that competition. He currently teaches classes in and around North Georgia. Find out more at www.hanscooks.com. Photography by Amy Rueffert.



Nyonya is unique in that it specializes in Thai, Malaysian and Chinese foods by utilizing the talents of three chefs, each one specializing in their respective cuisine. The menu is like a map of the best that each region has to offer. In addition to your favorites (and who can pass on classics like Moo Shu Pork or Pad Thai?), Nyonya's chefs are not afraid to experiment and create signature dishes that have become house classics. But before I get carried away, let's start at the beginning.

There are so many starters to choose from that I was already choosing items for my return visit just moments after our order