

Hall of Fame

Six years, six inductees

OUR HALL OF FAME CATEGORY – INTRODUCED FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR – RECOGNIZES F&B EXCELLENCE

BY JFK MILLER

M on the Bund

BUND PIONEER

BEFORE M AND GLAMOUR BAR, SHANGHAI'S MOST FAMOUS THOROUGHFARE WAS A BOULEVARD OF BROKEN DREAMS. AS SHE RECALLS BELOW, MICHELLE GARNAUT WAS THOUGHT MAD WHEN SHE FIRST FLOATED THE IDEA OF OPENING A RESTAURANT HERE IN 1999. BUT SHE PROVED THE NAYSAYERS WRONG, AND M HAS SINCE BECOME THE STANDARD-BEARER FOR BUND GLAM.

Windows

DIVE BAR PAR-EXCELLENCE

WINDOWS NOT ONLY INVENTED THE CONCEPT OF THE "10 KUAI DRINK," IT ALSO BECAME ITS USP (AND HAS GENEROUSLY REMAINED FIXED SINCE 1999 DESPITE RAMPANT INFLATION). EVERYONE'S FAVORITE WATERING DITCH CAN NOW BE ENJOYED IN A MULTITUDE OF VARIETIES - SCOREBOARD, UNDERGROUND, TOO - AND WE PROUDLY RAISE OUR PLASTIC CUPS TO IT.

Blue Frog

EVERYBODY KNOWS YOUR NAME

FROM ITS HUMBLE MAOMING LU BEGINNINGS, BLUE FROG HAS SPAWNED SEVERAL OTHER AMPHIBIOUS HAUNTS IN SHANGHAI, BEIJING, MACAU AND (SOON TO BE) SUZHOU. MANY THOUGHT IT WOULD CROAK WHEN AUTHORITIES CRACKED DOWN ON MAOMING LU IN 2000 AND 2004, BUT IT JUMPED AHEAD TO BECOME ONE OF THE CITY'S MOST LOVED INSTITUTIONS.

Face

ELEGANT SLUMMING

FACE CHANGED OUR NOTION OF A LEISURELY DRINK WHEN IT FIRST ARRIVED ON THE SHANGHAI SCENE BACK IN 1998. SITUATED IN A STATELY OLD MANOR HOUSE OVERLOOKING AN EVEN MORE STATELY LAWN, ITS OPIUM BEDS, WICKER CHAIRS, RED SOFAS, AND GENIAL OLD WORLD CHARM APPEALED TO OUR COLONIAL FETISH JUST AS MUCH THEN AS IT DOES NOW.

Sherpa's

MR. RELIABLE

IF LOCAL SHANGHAI AUTHORITIES WERE TO CONDUCT A CENSUS OF ITS FOREIGN POPULACE IT WOULD NEED ONLY TO ACCESS SHERPA'S DATABASE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION. EVERY RESIDENT ALIEN HAS AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER CALLED UPON THIS FRIEND IN NEED TO DELIVER COMFORT FOOD TO THEIR DOOR. AND RAIN, HAIL OR SHINE IT HAS – DUTIFULLY - SINCE 1998.

Jade on 36

JEWEL IN THE CROWN

JADE ON 36 IS THE JEWEL IN PUDONG SHANGRI-LA'S CROWN, OUTSHINING EVEN THE HOTEL ITSELF. IT HAS RE-DEFINED THE TERM 'HOTEL RESTAURANT', AND ITS AVANT-GARDE BUT ACCESSIBLE CUISINE HAS DESERVEDLY GARNERED SEVERAL HIGH-PROFILE AWARDS, WHILE SETTING A BENCHMARK OTHER HOTEL RESTAURANTS CAN ALL BUT DREAM OF ATTAINING.



Two decades of Shanghai dining

THE BUND'S FIRST LADY, MICHELLE GARNAUT, REMINISCES...

I FIRST CAME TO SHANGHAI IN 1985 AND IMMEDIATELY FELL IN LOVE WITH THE CITY. IT HAD SO MUCH CHARM THAT, IN 1996, WHEN 20-WATT LIGHTBULBS STRUGGLED TO ILLUMINATE THE BUND, I TALKED MY WAY INTO GUEST-CHEFING AT THE PEACE HOTEL FOR TWO WEEKS. THAT WAS QUITE AN EXPERIENCE. I WAS REGULARLY CALLED IN FOR 'ENLIGHTENMENT SESSIONS' BY THE GM, WHO SPENT MUCH OF THE DAY QUOTING EITHER TANG POETRY OR CHAIRMAN MAO. YOU SEE, BACK THEN, THE ONLY WESTERN RESTAURANTS WERE IN HOTELS, BUT THE CUSTOMERS LOVED WHAT WE WERE DOING. IT CONVINCED ME THAT SHANGHAI WAS READY FOR AN INTERESTING, INDEPENDENT WESTERN RESTAURANT. I SPENT THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS SCOURING SHANGHAI FOR THE RIGHT LOCATION. BUT I KEPT COMING BACK TO THE BUND, EVEN THOUGH I WAS TOLD NO ONE WOULD COME ALL THE WAY DOWN HERE FOR A MEAL (THE BUILDINGS WERE EITHER EMPTY OR OCCUPIED BY STATE-RUN COMPANIES). AND ANYWAY, THEY ALL SAID SHANGHAI WAS "NOT YET READY FOR FINE DINING." **M ON THE BUND** OPENED IN JANUARY 1999 AND – QUELLE SURPRISE! – PEOPLE DID COME DOWN. AND THEY WERE DEFINITELY READY FOR FINE DINING. SINCE THEN, WE'VE HAD A FRONT-ROW SEAT WATCHING SHANGHAI'S DINING SCENE GO FROM EMBRYONIC TO INTERNATIONAL. I LOVE THE COSMOPOLITANISM AND VARIETY IN TODAY'S SHANGHAI DINING, AND THE INCREASED SOPHISTICATION OF THE DINERS. SO WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD? HOPEFULLY WE'LL SEE MORE RESTAURANTS CELEBRATING DOUBLE-DIGIT ANNIVERSARIES, AS M WILL DO IN JANUARY. THAT WILL BE THE ULTIMATE SIGN OF A HEALTHY, THRIVING RESTAURANT TOWN!