



Chinese Restaurant

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GO GET 'EM TIGER: LOVE BITES AT BEN PAO THIS VALENTINE'S DAY

Ben Pao Celebrates Chinese New Year with the Year of the Tiger for Valentine's Day Weekend

CHICAGO (Jan. 11, 2010) – Be a tiger this Valentine's Day. It's the Year of the Tiger, and Ben Pao is celebrating the Chinese New Year over Valentine's Day weekend, Thursday, Feb. 11 through Sunday, Feb. 14 with traditional Chinese New Year menu items, a "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Aphrodisiac" Champagne and sparkling wine tasting, and the amazing and colorful Lion Dance which draws crowds yearly.

Celebration Schedule:

Thursday, Feb. 11 through Sunday, February 14: Year of the Tiger Menu Specials

4 p.m.: Guests can enjoy The Year of the Tiger menu, which includes traditional Chinese dishes made from scratch in the Ben Pao kitchen. These dishes are powerful symbols for good luck, fortune, health, wealth, and happiness. Featured menu items include:

- **Whole Crispy Red Snapper** is the entrée special for the New Year. Fish is not only a common staple in the Chinese diet, but it is a central dish during the New Year. The Chinese word for fish also means the same as surplus or abundance, and serving the fish with the head and tail intact is thought to bring in a good beginning and end to the year. (Market Price)
- **Jaoizi Dumplings** filled with natural ground pork, Napa cabbage, fresh ginger, shiitake and Shaoxing Wine. It is served with a Chinkiang black vinegar dipping sauce and shaped like little purses to symbolize wealth. The half-moon shape is also said to represent golden ingots; another symbol of wealth. \$5.95
- **Golden Coin Turnovers** are crisp puff-pastries filled with tiger shrimp to celebrate the Year of the Tiger. The shrimp themselves represent overall happiness and well being. \$6.95
- **Long Life Noodles** are traditional at every Chinese New Year celebration. The lengthy noodles insure longevity for anyone who eats them, as long as they remain uncut. Ben Pao's Shanghai Wheat Noodles are tossed with star anise braised pork shoulder, shiitake, oyster and cremini mushrooms, and finished with soy and Shaoxing wine. \$12.95

Thursday, Feb. 11: Eye of the Tiger Cocktail Reception

6:00 p.m.: Ben Pao hosts the Eye of the Tiger cocktail reception with Tsingtao Chinese Brewery. Priced appropriately at \$20.10 per person (all inclusive), the menu includes a wide variety of Ben Pao's specially created "tiger-bites" including mini egg rolls, tigershrimp, sticky rice dumplings, and won tons. Plenty of Tsingtao Lager and Pure Draft Beers will be available for guests to enjoy, and everyone receives a fortune cookie with a chance to win a variety of prizes ranging from Ben Pao gift certificates to t-shirts.

Friday, Feb. 12 and Saturday, Feb. 13: Lions, Tigers and Beer, Oh My!

6:30 p.m.: The annual traditional Chinese Lion Dance begins! This colorful and exciting ritual is an

integral part of the Chinese New Year celebration. The Lion Dance is thought to ward off evil spirits and welcome the New Year with a bang. Ben Pao starts the Lion Dance with a mini celebratory fireworks show outside the restaurant before the Lion makes its way through Ben Pao interacting with guests, eating lettuce for good luck and blessing the kitchen. In addition to the Year of the Tiger a la carte menu, Tsingtao Lager and Pure Draft beers will be featured.

Sunday, Feb. 14: Crouching Tiger. Hidden Aphrodisiacs

6:00 p.m.: Priced at \$30 (all inclusive), a Champagne and sparkling wine tasting and bite-sized aphrodisiac appetizers menu mark a rare occurrence: the Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day falling on the same day. The tasting will include sparkling wines and Champagnes from around the world including Cava and Proseccos. The sparkling tasting will accompany a menu that includes appetizers infused with actual Chinese herbs and foods considered aphrodisiacs. Specialists from Heritage Wine Cellars and Southern Wine and Spirits will be on hand to educate guests on some of the world's tastiest sparkling wines and Champagnes. The sparkling wines will also be available for sale at a discount. The Crouching Tiger, Hidden Aphrodisiacs menu items include:

- **Thai Basil Beef and Cucumber:** Sweet basil is said to stimulate the sex drive and boost fertility. It is also said to produce a general sense of well being for body and mind.
- **Ginger Shrimp Dumplings with Spicy Honey Soy:** Ginger root raw, cooked or crystallized is a stimulant to the circulatory system.
- **Duck Pineapple Soong (Lettuce Cups):** Rich in vitamin C, pineapple is used in the homeopathic to boost libido.
- **Spicy Sichuan Style Oysters:** The Romans documented oysters as an aphrodisiac food in the second century A.D as mentioned in a satire by Juvenal. He described the wanton ways of women after ingesting wine and eating "giant oysters".
- **Shanghainese style dumplings with Pine Nuts:** Zinc is a key mineral necessary to maintain male potency and pine nuts are rich in zinc. Pine nuts have been used to stimulate the libido as far back as Medieval times.
- **Chocolate and Banana Egg Rolls:** The banana flower has a marvelous phallic shape and is partially responsible for popularity of the banana as an aphrodisiac food. The Aztecs referred to chocolate "nourishment of the Gods". Chocolate contains chemicals thought to effect neurotransmitters in the brain and a related substance to caffeine called Theo bromine.

For more information or reservations on Ben Pao's Chinese New Year celebration, diners can contact Ben Pao at [\(312\) 222-1888](tel:3122221888) or visit benpao.com.

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