# Taste bud tantalising Chinese cuisine

Posted on
The warm hues of the main restaurant

**Flower Drum is a well-known Sri Lankan chain that serves up delicious Chinese cuisine. And the Battaramulla branch is no exception as they also whip up exquisitely flavoured food to tantalise the palate of food lovers.**

**Words** Joanna Eckersley | **Photographs** Indika De Silva

In the centre of Battaramulla is Flower Drum, a Chinese restaurant offering mouth-watering meals and refreshing drinks. The meals are universally popular, and Flower Drum today boasts of a large loyal following of customers who return each week to savour the flavours.

Flower Drum is part of a line of restaurants in Sri Lanka—from Colombo to Kandy—which have catered to Sri Lankans since 1982.The Battaramulla branch is an attractive place. Located up a flight of stairs, the restaurant has a strikingly simple colour theme of red, black and white. These colours can be seen in the Chinese lanterns, which hang from the ceiling, in the suave black wooden chairs around white cloth tables, and in the fish tank, which is full of goldfish—some gold, some red, and some with specks of black on their scales.

The restaurant is known for its food, so it’s worth taking your time over the menu. Regulars’ favourites include Hot Butter Cuttlefish, Chilli Chicken with Cashew Nuts, and Prawn Balls. If you’re still hungry after that, desserts include Almond Junkets, Crème Caramel, Ice Cream and lychees. There’s a special chef’s menu for vegetarians, with meals like Mock Duck to satisfy the palette. This menu has hardly been altered since Flower Drum first opened its doors in Thurstan Road three decades ago—it’s still fine cuisine in big portions.

Flower Drum was started by a Sri Lankan of Burmese descent named David Gyi, whose mother was a chef of fame and acclaim. He started the chain when Colombo only had four or five Chinese restaurants, and it quickly became a go-to place for the city’s high fliers. Impressively, Flower Drum have retained some of the chefs from that era who are still cooking the characteristically tasty food for customers today.

The branch at Battaramulla is fully non-smoking, providing a clean and relaxing ambiance for the entire family. All dishes can be made to customer specifications, so if you have a preference for spicy food they can pile on the chilli, or if you have a nut allergy you can notify the chef. If you’re in a hurry they also offer lunch packets and home delivery. Equally, if you have a special event coming up you can either hire out the restaurant or take advantage of their high-end outside catering service. The artful gastronomy at ‘The Drum’ will hook you from the start, and keep you coming back for more.

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