FE. EXTRAORDINARY

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INTREPID TRAVELLERS EXPLORE AMSTERDAM, BHUTAN, MILAN AND MORE

CHARMS

of CHINA

TRAVEL

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GEORGIA LEE REDISCOVERS THE ALLURE OF THE ORIENT



TATLER FOCUS | LINGZHI VEGETARIAN

PERFECT BITE Skewered mushrooms are marinated in a house-made peanut sauce and grilled over charcoal

Amazing Graze

Fresh flavours take centrestage in the new menu at LingZhi Vegetarian

hink Chinese vegetarian dining is all about mock meats, tofu and fried foods?

Diners looking for a healthier option will find delight in the new menu at TungLok Group's LingZhi Vegetarian restaurant, which has redefined Chinese vegetarian cuisine since 1991. Launched this month, the new menu shines the spotlight firmly on the freshness of fruits and vegetables.

You'll definitely want to start your meal with the mixed fresh fruits and kale salad. Ready your cameras because it's a showstopper: the salad is tossed tableside over a cloud of dry ice, after which you wrap it in Vietnamese rice paper. The multicoloured ingredients—grapes, Chinese pear, cherry tomatoes, candied walnuts, fresh yam, raisins and a tangy raspberry and ginger dressing—work together to deliver sweetness, juiciness and crunch.

LingZhi Vegetarian's mastery of the deceptively simple art of stir-fry is demonstrated in the sauteed fresh cordyceps, *huai shan* (mountain yam) and winged beans, served on a bed of kale and crispy noodles. The flavours are fresh and vibrant, while crunch is aplenty. What's particularly remarkable is the absence of the unpleasant stickiness of huai shan. When the vegetarian satay arrives at the table, what greets diners first is its aroma. The intoxicating mix of smokiness and caramelised sugars is the result of marinating the plump slices of monkey head mushroom in a home-made peanut sauce, before frying and chargrilling the skewers.

While LingZhi Vegetarian may be a Chinese restaurant, its mushroom truffle bisque is a delightful take on the western dish. This rich, velvety soup is made sublime with a finishing touch of truffle oil, truffle paste and an umami-laden sprinkling of trumpet mushroom crumbs.

The poached mixed rice with vegetables may take visual inspiration from thunder tea rice but make no mistake, there's none of the polarising herbal and bitter notes. That teapot of soup is brimming with flavour, the bright green hue achieved by blending house-made vegetable stock with kale. Enveloped in *wok hei*, the rice is a riot of textures: crunchy toasted almonds, diced red peppers, *tau kwa* (beancurd) strips, barley and lentils to

TOSS & TURN

Served with much fanfare, the ingredients of the mixed fresh fruits and kale salad are tossed tableside before they are wrapped in Vietnamese rice paper COMFORT IN A BOWL The mushroom truffle bisque is sure to wow diners with its rich, earthy and delicious flavours

name a few. Have it Japanese chazuke-style and pour some broth over the rice—this is comfort food at its finest.

Steamboat lovers will be glad to know that LingZhi Vegetarian's branch at Velocity@Novena Square also offers hotpot buffets. Soup base choices include tomato, organic mushroom and tom yam, supplemented by a comprehensive buffet spread of farm fresh leafy greens, assorted mushrooms, tofu, a colourful array of root vegetables, and more. There's even a dim sum section with crowd-pleasers such as siew mai, yam croquettes, steamed Teochew fen guo (dumplings) and carrot cake.

Vegetarian food, boring? Not at LingZhi Vegetarian.

LINGZHI VEGETARIAN • 05-01 Liat Towers, tel: 6734 3788 • 03-09/10 Velocity@Novena Square, tel: 6538 2992 *lingzhivegetarian.com*

