

Ribs to tickle your fancy

By Cam Lucadou-Wells

Who would have thought chicken ribs could be so delectable?

Introduce yourself to this surprisingly tender and fleshy offering at Ease Garden, one of Dandenong's few remaining Cantonese-style Chinese restaurants.

Served in a light batter and a simmer of spice, the ribs have become a cult favourite.

Here's a classic Chinese restaurant atmosphere with soft tones, porcelain statuettes, paper lanterns and lobster tanks.

But it's certainly not a typical back-story with owner Alan Tam and sister-in-law Elsie Fung, both of whom have run their own Cantonese restaurants and RSL kitchens in Dandenong, Frankston and Oakleigh.

During the latter era, they expanded their repertoire to steak-and-kidney pies, Christmas roasts and spaghetti.

At Ease Kitchen, they've eased back to tra-

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ditional Cantonese fare - a tradition that's rich with seafood.

Ms Fung says she likes to introduce customers to the little-known allure of chicken ribs - as well as other new culinary experiences.

Such as even the humble green bean.

Many choose to boil or steam these vegies, but at Ease Garden they're flamingly stir-fried in a giant wok.



Chef Hong displays a fiery style to cooking green beans. 183879

Picture: STEWART CHAMBERS

They're tossed with chicken mince and a chilli-laced soy sauce.

Even the fried rice is a little different here. Pink-coloured squares of chicken replace the bacon pieces often found elsewhere.

In fact there is no pork at all on the menu. It's simply adapting to the fact that many customers don't eat pork, Ms Fung says.

Chinese restaurants have become more scarce in the suburbs.

"They shut down because not many of the young generation are going into the industry," Ms Fung says.

"There's a lot to Chinese cooking - it's really hard work to learn.

"The children aren't doing what their parents do.

"Instead they're going to uni and learning professions like IT."

Ease Garden is at the level 2 food court, Armada Dandenong Plaza.