



Diner's Diary

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PUBLISHED : Friday, 04 March, 2016, 4:13pm

UPDATED : Saturday, 05 March, 2016, 10:54am

More matcha treats coming at social enterprise iBakery thanks to chef's help

Japanese pastry cook returns to Hong Kong cafe chain that employs mentally disabled staff to demonstrate how to make some new treats using matcha – powdered Japanese green tea



Pastry chef Yasuda Shunji of the Hyatt Regency Kyoto at iBakery in Kennedy Town.

A Hong Kong social enterprise that hires mentally disabled people to make baked goods will have some tempting new

matcha-flavoured items in its stores soon with the help of a Japanese pastry chef.

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Yusada Shunji of the Hyatt Regency Kyoto was in Hong Kong this week to show iBakery staff how to make matcha roll cake, *hojicha* pound cake and matcha biscotti at their Kennedy Town outlet.

Yusada first helped the enterprise, which is backed by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, two years ago by showing them how to make matcha cookies, which were a big hit, followed by matcha pound cakes last year.

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He admits that at first he wasn't sure what to expect teaching people who are not trained chefs and are mentally disabled.

“It was my first time teaching people overseas the skills and knowledge to make the cookies. But I was so surprised to find they are so friendly, happy, even though for me I found it stressful and intense to teach them,” Yasuda explained through a translator.



Pastry chef Yasuda Shunji of the Hyatt Regency Kyoto demonstrates his skills at iBakery in Kennedy Town. “It isn’t difficult to teach people at different levels. There are some challenges because of the language and sometimes I don’t have a translator with me,” he continues. “Attention to detail might be hard to explain, but on the whole it’s not a problem. What I’m teaching is not complicated, and simple to do and communicate, so it’s easy for us to understand each other. I don’t compromise when it comes to taste or flavour.”

With the matcha tea cookies having sold so well, Yasuda is pleased to help iBakery.

“I’m happy to hear the cookies and cakes have sold well. In a micro sense, my mission is to pass on the knowledge and techniques of making these products. In the bigger picture, it’s about Kyoto and traditional matcha, and being able to spread the word about the city’s tradition and culture.”

The new products will go on sale in the next few months. Watch this space.

iBakery, Shop 2, G/F, Block 2, Centenary Mansion, 1 Victoria Road, Kennedy Town.

Tel: 2816 5233

iBakery Gallery Café, Tamar Café at Tamar Park, Admiralty. Tel: 2352 2700

iBakery Express Tamar, Promenade at Tamar Park, Admiralty. Tel: 2511 8230

iBakery Express HKU, G/F, Run Run Shaw Building, the University of Hong Kong.

Tel: 5402 4546

There are also three iBakery pop up stores in Hopewell Centre in Wan Chai, Panda Place in Tsuen Wan, and Olympian City 2.

Source:

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/blogs/article/1920568/more-matcha-treats-coming-social-enterprise-ibakery-thanks-chefs-help>