

APPETIZERS

Spring Roll

\$8.00



Ground Pork on Toast

\$8.00



Lime Garlic Ribs

\$18.95

Lime Garlic Wings

\$18.95

Thai Tacos (tomato, red onion, noodles, pork or chicken)

\$22.95



- 2 MEING COM** (roasted slivers of coconut, dried shrimp, peanut, lime, onion & ginger bits, served with a sweet sauce on an eatable green leaf. **\$17.95**



- 3 PAAPE'ID TOD** (ground pork mixed with eggs, vegetables and glass noodles and a special mixture of spices, rolled in a rice flour wrapper and deep fried) **\$16.95**



- 4 GOB TOD** (deep fried frog legs, served with chili sauce) **\$20.95**
- 5 GEAL KOB** (12 deep fried pork wontons served with a sweet sauce) **\$16.95**
- 6 NAM SOUT** (poached pork with peanut bits, ginger root, and garlic with a lime & vinegar sauce) **\$16.95**

7 NEU'A DAD DEAL (deep fried dried beef)

\$20.95



8 SOM TUM THANG (cucumber salad with peanuts, tomatoes, lime bits, dried shrimp)

\$17.95



9 Grilled Calamari with Plum Sauce.(Grilled tender calamari served with plum sauce)

\$15.95

10 GOUNG TOD, PLAMOOK TOD (deep fried shrimps or squid, with a plum sauce)

\$25.95

11 GUY SATAY (slices of chicken marinated in a special mixture of spices and coconut milk, broiled and served with peanut sauce and cucumber salad)
small for **\$18.95** large for **\$25.95**



NOODLES

12 GUWAY TEAW (Thai noodle soup with either, pork, beef, or chicken and Nit's special spices)

\$17.95
\$22.95



13 GEAL NAM (pork wonton soup)

\$17.95



14 PAD THAI (fried noodles with pork, peanuts and egg bits in a red sauce)

\$20.95



15 LAD NAA (fried noodles topped with either beef, pork, or chicken in a thick sauce)

\$20.95



16 PUD'SEE'EUW (pork & egg bits stir fried with vermicelli noodles and special Thai spices) **\$20.95**

RICE

19 CA'OW MUN GUY (slices of steamed chicken served on a bed of rice, with a ginger sweet & sour Thai sauce) **\$19.95**



19 CA'OW MOU DANG (sliced roast pork in NIT'S red Thai sauce, served on a bed of rice) **\$19.95**

20 CA'OW PUD (chicken, pork, or beef fried rice, garnished with cucumber & **\$19.95**



21 CA'OW POW (extra orders of steamed white rice or rice noodles)
single \$8.00 large orders \$12.00

STIR FRY (served with rice)

22 GUY, NEU'A, MOU PUD KING (stir-fried chunks of chicken, beef, or pork with green onions and ginger root)

single order **\$22.95** large order **\$29.95**

23 GUY, GOUNG, PLAMOOK, NEU'A PUD PIG WAN (chicken or beef stir fried with bell peppers) with Cashews add \$3.00

single order **\$21.95** large order **\$28.95**

with shrimp or squid **\$26.95** large order **\$34.95**



24 GUY, NEU'A, MOU PUD (chicken, beef, or pork stir fried with coconut cream and Thai spices)

single order

\$23.95

large order **\$30.95**



25 PUD PUK RUOM (stir fried mixed vegetables with pork, beef or chicken)

single order

\$21.95

large order **\$28.95**



26 PUD PEIU WAN (chicken, or pork spare ribs, sautéed in NIT'S special sweet & sour sauces with garden fresh vegetables)

single order

\$21.95

large order **\$28.95**



27 GOUND PUD'PONG KA'REE (stir fried shrimps in a curry powder) **\$31.95**

GANG (served with rice)

29 GANG, NEU'A or GUY (beef or chicken, with ground Thai spices mixed in a coconut milk broth)

\$25.95

29 GANG'KA'REE (beef or chicken curried stew)

\$25.95



30 TUM YUM GUY (chicken with a mixture of spices, served in a coconut milk broth)

\$26.95



31 TUM YUM (beef, pork ribs or chicken with a mix of spices, served in a clear consommé)

\$25.95

TUM YUM GOUNG (shrimp add \$7.00)

\$32.95

32 TUM YUM TALAI (a mixture of seafood & spices, served in a clear consommé)

\$36.95

THAI SALADS (served with rice)

33 LAB (sliced beef mixed with Thai spices, garnished with dried powdered rice)
single order **\$22.95** large order **\$29.95**

35 YUM NEU'A YAN (slices of B.B.Q. beef or pork mixed in garden fresh vegetables in lime sauce)

single order **\$22.95**

large order **\$29.95**



36 YUM WUONSEN (glass noodle salad with ground pork & spices)

single order **\$21.95**

large order **\$28.95**

with seafood **\$26.95**

large order **\$33.95**

37 YUM THANG WA KA'GOUNG (poached shrimp in a cucumber salad)

single order **\$21.95**

large order **\$28.95**

39 YUM TALAI (poached seafood salad containing shrimp, squid, fish & crab) **\$36.95**

39 YUM PLAMOOK (poached squid with garden greens)

single order **\$21.95**

large order **\$28.95**



THAI SEAFOOD ENTREES

Hoa Tot with chicken **\$21.95**



Hoa Tot with mussels **\$26.95**

B.B.Q Rainbow Trout (served with rice) **\$26.95**

Deep Fried Rainbow Trout in Thai Sauce (with rice) **\$26.95**



Stir Fried Sole (served with rice) **\$26.95**



B.B.Q. Shrimp in a Thai Sauce (served with rice) **\$26.95**

Black Bean Sole in Thai Sauce (served with rice) \$26.95



Steamed Mussels in Thai Sauce (served with rice) sm \$25.95 lg \$32.95



Thai Style Stir Fried Frog Legs (served with rice) sm \$26.95 lg \$33.95



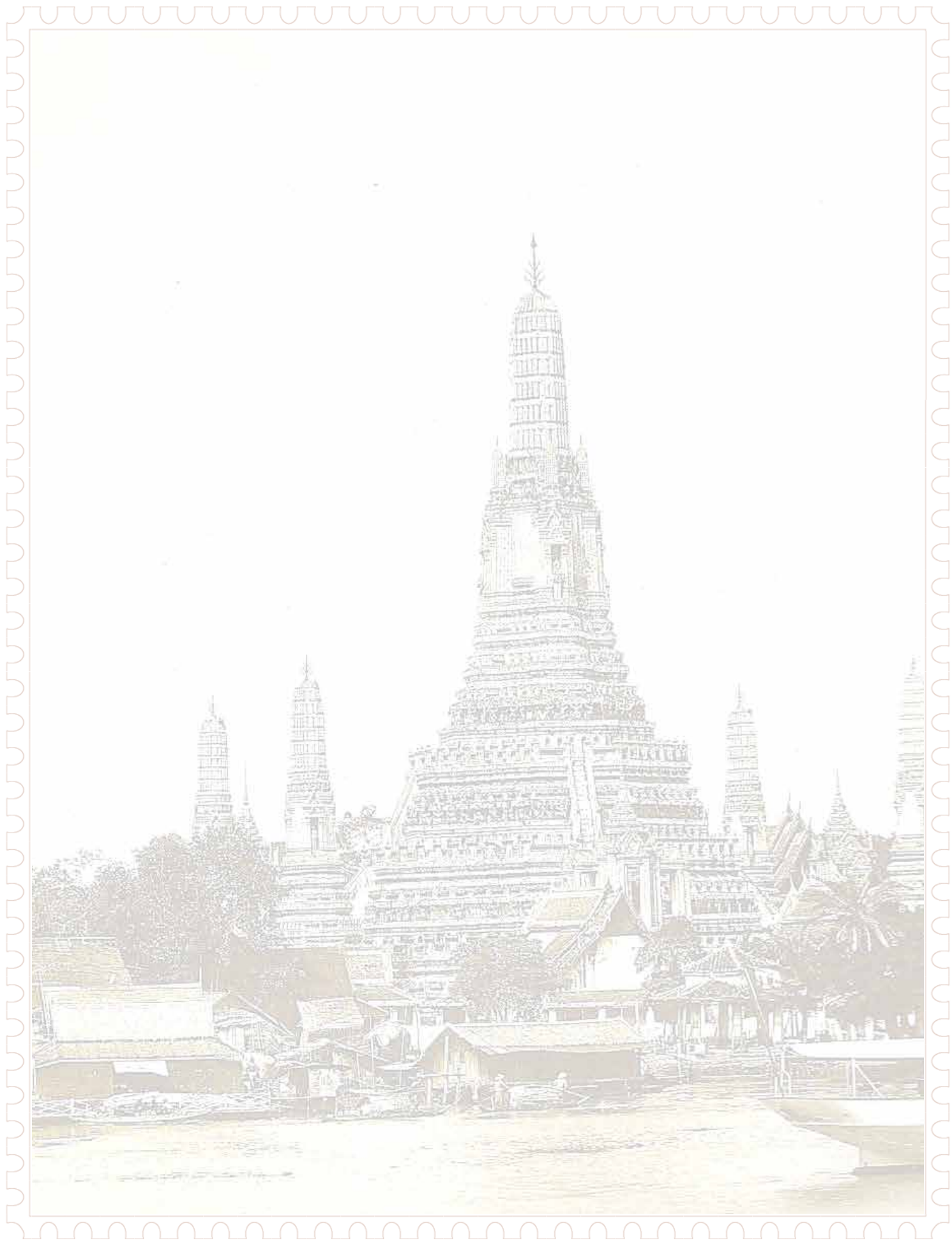
DESSERT

LOWTEE WITH BANANA



LOWTEE WITH ICE CREAM





STICKY RICE WITH ICE CREAM



STICKY RICE WITH FRESH FRUITS



CHINESE FOOD

CHOP SUEY (with rice)

Chicken/Beef/Pork/BB.Q.Pork/Mushroom	\$23.99
Shrimp	\$29.99

FRIED RICE

Chicken/Beef/Pork/BB.Q.Pork/Mushroom	\$21.99
Shrimp	\$27.99

FOO YOUNG (with rice)

Chicken/Beef/BB.Q.Pork/Mushroom/Egg	\$23.99
Shrimp	\$29.99
Egg Rolls (each)	\$8.00

NOODLES (soups)

Wonton	\$15.99
Special Wonton (BBQ-pork, Shrimp & rice)	\$24.99

SPARE RIBS (with rice)

Sweet and Sour Spare Ribs	\$23.99
Dry Pork Spare Ribs	\$23.99
Pork Spare Ribs with Pineapple	\$23.99
Garlic Spare Ribs	\$23.99
Sweet and Sour Boneless Pork	\$23.99

CHOW MEIN (with rice)

Chicken/Beef/Pork/B.B.Q.Pork	\$23.99
Shrimp	\$29.99
Cantonese Style Chow Mein	\$34.99

SPECIAL DISHES (with rice)

Fried Chicken Balls and Pineapple	\$25.99
Diced Chicken with Almonds or Cashews	\$25.99
Ginger Beef or Chicken	\$25.99
Fried Shrimp with Chinese Vegetable	\$31.99
Curried Chicken or Beef	\$25.99
Sweet and Sour Shrimp (deep fried)	\$31.99
Fried Fresh Broccoli and Beef or chicken	\$25.99

EVERDAY COMBINATION PLATE

\$24.00

Choose any three different items: Chicken fried rice, Chicken balls, Dry spare ribs, Sweet & Sour ribs, Deep fried shrimp, Chicken Chow Mein, Sweet & sour pork (add up to 2 extra items for \$9.00 each)



CANADIAN FOOD

SANDWICHES (with fries)

Tomato	\$14.99
Cucumber	\$14.99
Cheese	\$14.99
Club Sandwich	\$14.99

Egg Salad	\$14.99
BLT	\$14.99
Grilled Cheese	\$14.99
Club House	\$15.99

BURGERS (with fries)

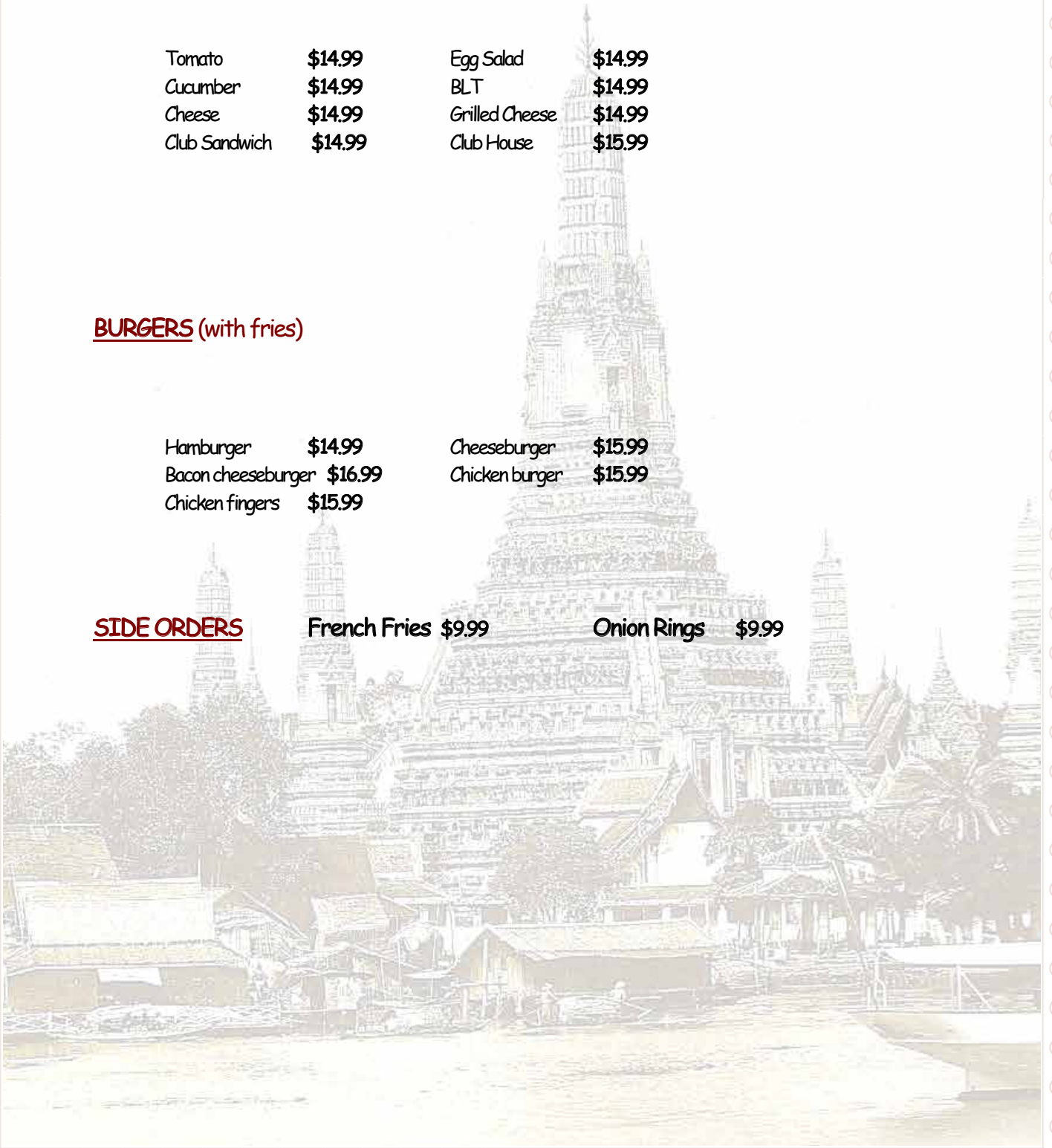
Hamburger	\$14.99
Bacon cheeseburger	\$16.99
Chicken fingers	\$15.99

Cheeseburger	\$15.99
Chicken burger	\$15.99

SIDE ORDERS

French Fries \$9.99

Onion Rings \$9.99



BEVERAGES

Soft drinks	\$3.00
Tea (regular)	\$3.00
Coffee	\$3.00
Thai Iced Tea	\$5.00
Small Milk	\$3.00
Lemonade	\$3.00
Apple/orange juice.	\$3.00

BEER

Domestic beer (bottle)	\$6.75
Imported Thai Beer (bottle)	\$9.75

LIQUOR

Liquor (1 oz bar shots)	\$6.75
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HOUSE WINE

by glass (6 oz)	\$7.00
Carafe (1/2L)	\$23.00
Carafe (1L)	\$35.00

Please note. Prices do not include the G.S.T. or the L.C.T.

CATERING & SPECIAL GROUPS

NIT's can deliver a catered meal to anywhere in Moose Jaw or Regina. Prices average from \$16.99 - \$30.00 plus taxes per person, or higher and depend on the complexity of the dishes and the availability of the ingredients. We have catered in-home meals with chef and server and large dinner groups of more than 200 guests.

Special occasion meals require planning, purchasing and preparation. Please consult with us well ahead of your event. We can prepare special dishes or modified menu dishes to suit your group's requirements.

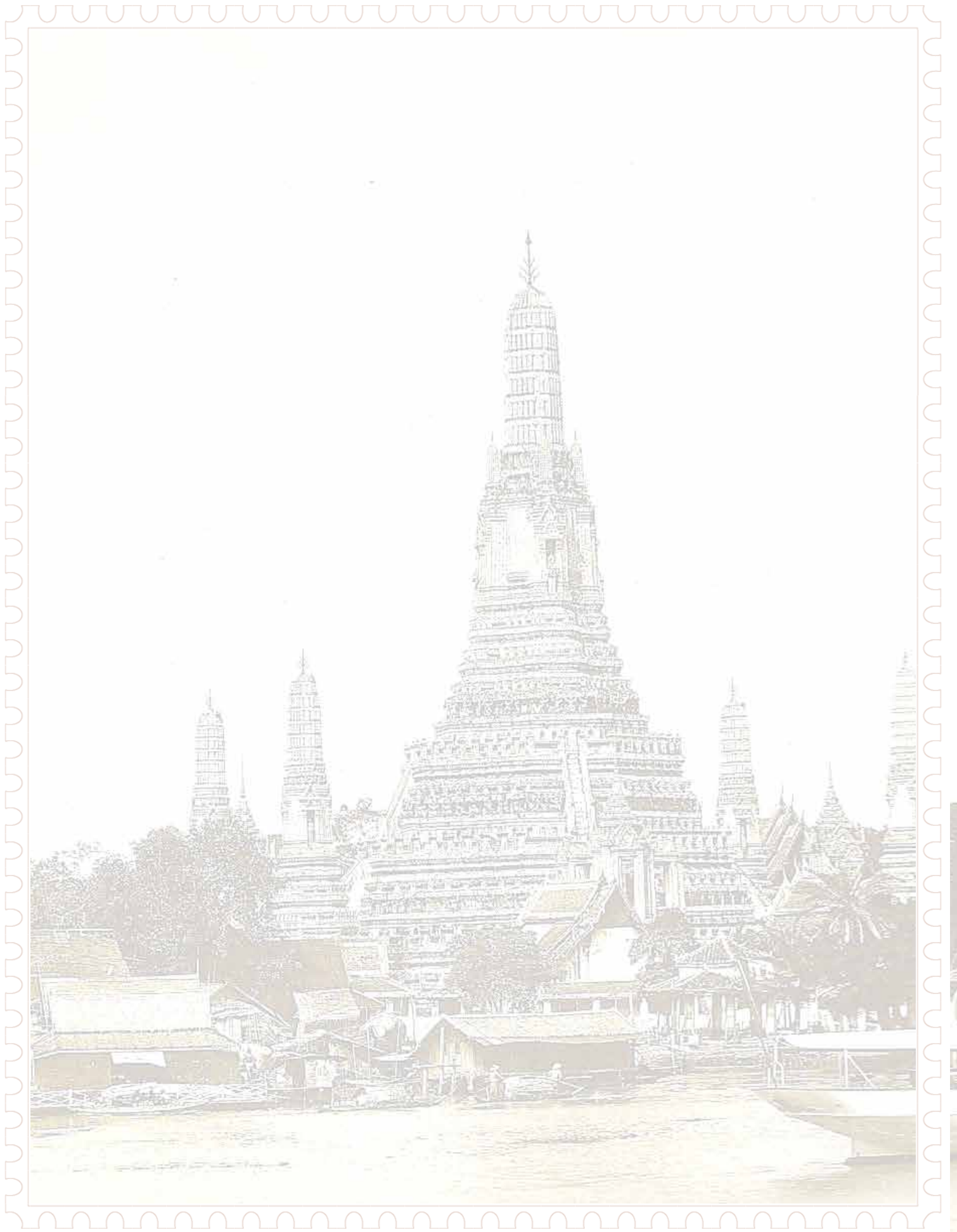
DIETS & ALLERGIES

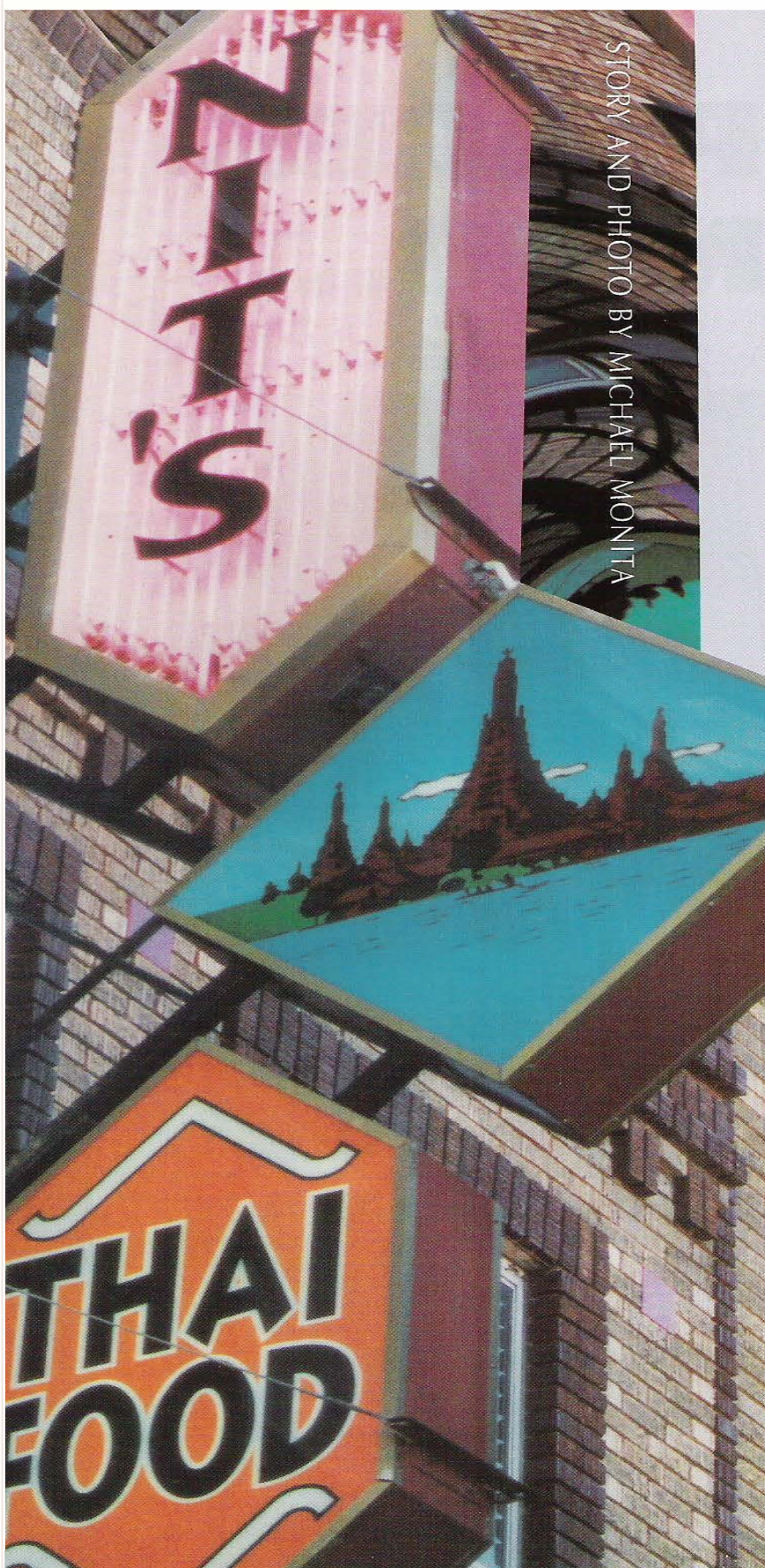
With very few exceptions all of our food, including the spice mixtures are prepared from raw ingredients on site and under our control. We can cater to allergies and special diets. **If you have any dietary restrictions please inform our staff.** We are not expert chemists or dietitians but we do know our dishes and what's been put into them. We can add or subtract ingredients from many of our dishes.

HISTORY & REVIEWS

NIT's opened for business on 11/November/1992 and has operated continuously since. We started serving Thai Food at a smaller location with only 26 seats. Due to demand we moved to this location in February/1997. We are a family operated restaurant and all of our chefs are Thai.

The following pages contain some of the articles written about us.





STORY AND PHOTO BY MICHAEL MONITA

NIT'S C A F E

A SUMMER DRIVE ACROSS THE
BOTTOM OF SASKATCHEWAN.
TWELVE HOURS EACH WAY
FROM CALGARY TO MANITOBA,
FACING NOTHING BUT INTENSE
HEAT, AM RADIO AND A VIEW
THAT STRETCHES ENDLESSLY TO
THE HORIZON.

During the past three summers
my brother and I have had to
make the trip several times. We
have, however, discovered an
oasis on this drive, a welcome
reprieve that is now our target
for a mid-trip break to another
world.

We leave Calgary knowing
that the first real break
in the journey is in Moose
Jaw. The anticipation builds
we take the off ramp from the
TransCanada Highway to Main
Street. Like a vision, we can
it, somewhere behind the wall
of heat rising from the concrete.
As its pink neon sign comes
view, the part of the brain that
remembers flavours reactivates
our sense of adventure is awa-
kened after hours of mind-num-
bing travel.

Our destination? Perhaps the
Temple Gardens Mineral Spa
that well-known Moose Jaw
resort that has often accurately
been described as a "prairie
oasis" for a quick soak in the
mineral pool and therapeutic
massage? No, while we will
visit, our destination today is
Temple Gardens. Today we are
making a pilgrimage to Moose
Jaw's other oasis – Nit's Café.

MOOSE JAW'S OTHER OASIS

Nit's Cafe was started by Nitaya Chuennai after she moved here from Thailand 10 years ago. From a distance, her establishment looks like many others that are found in small Prairie towns – the menu contains a selection of Thai, Chinese and 'Canadian' food, the vinyl booths and mid-70s rec room décor make you think 'chicken balls and fried rice.' What separates Nit's from other small town diners is authentic, uncompromising Thai food. Authentic right down to the fresh spices that she and her staff grind by hand, uncompromising in that the Thai side of the menu consists of dishes created by Chuennai herself.

This time through, our meal began with an order of chicken satays. Grilled to perfection, they were accompanied with a peanut sauce that contained just the right amount of green curry. The satays also came with a cool yet tangy cucumber salad. Our server also recommended Lab as a starter, a combination of sliced beef, dried powdered rice and spices, which was very light and tasty.

Out came the trio of main courses. From the stir-fry list came Guy, neu'a mou pud, a creamy mix of chicken, coconut milk and spices. In a similar vein, we ordered a coconut milk-based soup called Gang'ka'ree, with generous slices of beef and just the right amount of curry. The sauce from these two dishes alone was simply heavenly over the freshly steamed rice that came with the meal. We rounded

out the meal with Pud puk room, a stir-fry of vegetables with a choice of chicken, beef or pork. Each dish was done to perfection, the meats juicy and tender, the vegetables crisp and colourful.

We also decided to test the range of chili content, with the choices ranging from mild to "Thai hot." After consulting with the intensely helpful staff, we went with medium and up.

At no point did the spices take away from the main components of the dish. Even at the Thai level – which is how the Gang was prepared – the spices were a complement to the meats and vegetables that Nit's so brilliantly puts together. And if you request it, they will assemble a vegetarian meal that is just as wonderful.

The only disappointment from the experience came at the end of the meal. Three people came in, and without so much as looking at the menu, ordered burgers, fries and Cokes. Perhaps, we thought, this was only an oasis for weary travellers like us – those too close to this place must simply view it as another place to go grab a meal. We simply sighed, shook our heads, and continued on our journey, knowing we would seek out this reprieve from the dusty road on our return trip.

IF YOU GO: Nit's Café is located at 124 Main Street N. in downtown Moose Jaw; phone: (306) 694-6404. Moose Jaw is a 45-minute drive west of Regina on the TransCanada Highway. ✈

WHAT SEPARATES NIT'S FROM OTHER SMALL TOWN DINERS IS AUTHENTIC, UNCOMPROMISING THAI FOOD.

Nit's menu caters to three different tastes.

For exceptional Thai food, a full range of noodle, stir fry, gang (soups) and seafood dishes can be mixed and matched to your taste.

Prices range from \$4.99 to \$12.99 per dish. Leave room for the hand-made fresh fruit shakes. A

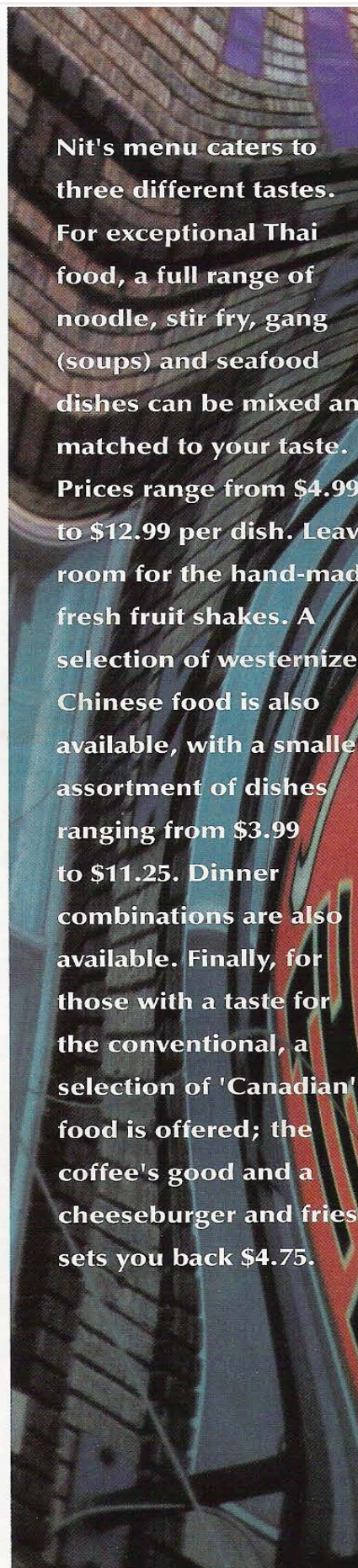
selection of westernized Chinese food is also available, with a smaller

assortment of dishes ranging from \$3.99

to \$11.25. Dinner combinations are also

available. Finally, for those with a taste for the conventional, a

selection of 'Canadian' food is offered; the coffee's good and a cheeseburger and fries sets you back \$4.75.



ABOUT BEING
BETTER—IT'S
ABOUT BEING
THE BEST.

The Leader-Post Regina Tuesday, August 1, 2000

Not To Be Missed

Regina and Moose Jaw are it! Both cities have made *Flare Magazine's* Not-To-Be-Missed list, featured in the August issue.



Flare Magazine spoke to the Who's Who across Canada, and they proclaim that Regina has the best: sex shop (Love Plus), corner store (Ngoy Hoa Asian

Foods, an Asian grocery store in the heart of Regina's Chinatown), fun park (Wascana Centre), and wedding photographer (Mark Greschner of Artec Photographic Design Ltd.); and Moose Jaw has the best Thai

Nit's Thai Food receives honour in Flare magazine

By Times-Herald Staff

A local restaurant was called the best-kept secret source of Thai food" in a recent issue of a national women's magazine.

But Nit's Thai Food was given the label without much help from one of the restaurant's owners.

The citation appears in the August 2000 edition of *Flare*, a Canadian fashion magazine. But when the writer called Nitaya Chuennai, who owns the restaurant along with her husband Bruce Fulford, Chuennai hung up on her.

She thought she was being solicited for advertising.

"They called me first. She said she's going to put it in the magazine and I said, 'No, I don't want to do it,'" she explained. "I thought they were going to charge me for it."

Luckily, the writer called back and was able to talk to Chuennai's daughter-in-law, who cleared things up.

Chuennai said that she never advertises, relying instead on word-of-mouth and the food itself to find customers.

She also explained that most of her clientele is actually from out of town, either just passing through, visiting places like the spa or making a special visit from Regina.

The *Flare* writer mentioned the restaurant on the basis of one dish in particular — meing com, which is an appetizer featuring roasted coconut, lime, ginger and peanuts served on bok choy leaves.

Asked if she thinks that dish is one of her specialties, Chuennai is candid. "Not really," she said, adding however that a lot of people do order it.

Life
canada's best

continued from page 39

(403) 228-7703, will do your shopping, travel plans, laundry, repairs, cleaning and pet care.

Best cut flowers:

Beyond Flowers Inc., (888) 252-5715, in

Winnipeg. Everything from simple bouquets to formal weddings.

More Flowers, (613) 241-4681, in Ottawa.

Prices are good, flowers are always fresh.

Rae Fraser Ltd., (506)

382-3366, in Moncton, N.B. A florist with atten-

tion to detail. Will order in anything, within reason, and upon availability.

The southwest corner of Avenue and

Davenport roads in

Toronto has three shops in a row, all selling year-round, from the exotic to everyday blooms.

Best place to get eye-

glasses: Underground

Eyewear by Gaudet

Optical, (902) 429-0958,

in Halifax has frames from around the world.

Best restaurant

that will concoct a

gourmet dinner, deliv-

er and set the table:

Savoir Fare

Extraordinary Catering

& Restaurant, (403)

245-6009, in Calgary has

excellent cuisine and

presentation and will

custom-theme dinners.

Best-kept secret

source for Thai food:

Nit's Thai Food in

Moose Jaw, Sask.,

about 65 kilometres from

Regina, has an amazing

appetizer of roasted

coconut and lime

and peanuts serv-

bok choy leaves.

Best place in

Vancouver to sit

car, look at the

tains and breat

deeply: West 91

Avenue, east of

Best View: Pan

Restaurant and

Lounge, (416) 96

on the 51st floor

Manulife centre in

Best place to h

dinner: Bianca's

Bar and Grill, (7

726-9016, in St.

Nfld. Some peop

search of pamper

for a trip to the s

Newfoundlanders

indulge in the fine

hospitality at Biar

Locals rave abou

sense of commur

and the superlati

service as part of

dining experience

Best non-chain

store in Halifax:

Hollow Books, (

429-3318, has a

selection and sta

actually heard of

you're looking for

Best bookstore

design books:

Another Man's

Poison, (416) 59

in Toronto. —wi

from Karen Asht

Melanie Crystal,

Heiland, Rhea Le

MarcBenoi Lége.

Virginia MacIsaac

McKenna, Kim M

Budovitch, Mirar

More, Margaret

Simone Otis, Voi

Peach, Kristy Sn

Winsor, Sylvia Yu

City on the Rebound

Two stories about Moose Jaw — one about an old decaying city and another about a new and revitalized city emerging out of a tourism boom.

The first, about a tired old railway city in decline, reflected the reality of Moose Jaw 25 years ago.

Downtown Moose Jaw in the early 1980s "looked like Beirut without the bullet holes," said Al Schwinghamer, mayor of Moose Jaw as well as one of the city's biggest boosters.

Schwinghamer says there is no doubt that a sluggish economy had taken its toll on Moose Jaw by the 1980s.

And downtown Moose Jaw, like downtowns in many other Canadian cities, was particularly feeling the pinch as new areas to shop and do business opened up outside the centre of the city.

But a boom in tourism has helped spur dramatic changes in the situation over the past 10 to 15 years, Schwinghamer said.

The story has often been told about the development of the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa Resort in

downtown Moose Jaw and the vital role it has played in attracting tourists and revitalizing the town.

There is also Casino Moose Jaw, which was built across the street from the mineral spa in a development which also involved adding additional hotel rooms and parking space for the mineral spa.

And then there is the development of the tunnels of Moose Jaw — where gangster Al Capone is rumoured to have hid out when things got too hot in Chicago during the prohibition era — as a tourist attraction.

Those well-publicized tourism developments have created spin-off tourism activities in the form of additional attractions, restaurants and hotels, Schwinghamer said.

But Moose Jaw's growth is not just about tourism — and it is not just the downtown, Schwinghamer said.

The ambience downtown, and the positive attitude created in the community, has created an atmosphere in which growth can occur elsewhere in the community, he said.

■ ■ ■

Among those rejoicing in the revitalization of Moose Jaw is Nitaya Chuennai, the owner of the Nit's Thai Food Ltd. restaurant on Main Street North in downtown Moose Jaw.

The menu, which tempts customers with a delicious selection of tasty Thai foods, has been a hit with both local Moose Jaw residents and with tourists.

"I like to cook, I like to eat," Chuennai said, when asked why she decided to open a restaurant.

And business is getting better every year, as tourism continues to grow, Chuennai said.

Bruce Fulford, who is the co-owner of the restaurant as well as Chuennai's husband, said downtown Moose Jaw is on the upswing.

"It's coming along, it's slow," Fulford said, adding that there is still work to be done and some empty buildings to be occupied before downtown Moose Jaw could be deemed to be fully revitalized.

But the opening of the Temple Gardens spa and the subsequent expansions have provided a valuable shot in the arm for the Nit's restaurant, Fulford said.

"As the spa opened and



DON HEALY/Leader-Post
Bruce Fulford and Nitaya Chuennai stand in front of Nit's Thai Food on Main Street North in downtown Moose Jaw.

at each stage (of the expansion) you could feel it," on Main Street, Fulford said.

Neither Fulford nor Chuennai was born in Moose Jaw.

But they met about 18 years ago when Fulford was on a vacation in Thailand.

A romance blossomed and Chuennai moved to Canada to live with her new husband.

They initially lived in Toronto, where Chuennai worked in a Greek restaurant. But they moved to Moose Jaw after Fulford was offered a teaching position at SIAST in Moose Jaw.

And Chuennai subsequently decided to combine her love of Thai food and her experience in the restaurant industry by opening Nit's.

Moose Jaw is a decent place to live, Fulford said.

"I've lived all over the place, it doesn't

matter," he added.

Chuennai gives a somewhat more enthusiastic endorsement to life in Moose Jaw.

"I like it," she said.

While Moose Jaw isn't a big city, it has virtually all the amenities of a larger city readily available, she said.

Just down Main Street from Nit's are several other businesses that have also formed part of the revitalization of the downtown.

Among those is the Chocolate Moose Fudge Factory that sells chocolate fudge — and fudge of almost any other flavour imaginable — along with Gelato ice cream and a variety of other food and non-food items.

"We are famous for our pumpkin pie fudge," said Sid Squires, who is one member of a Moose Jaw family that owns and operates the fudge factory.

"Downtown Moose Jaw is doing well," Squires said.

"People are coming from all over the world to the spa and they keep coming to the (nearby) stores," Squires said.

Squires and his family are also involved in an adjacent Main Street business known as the Lasting Impressions Gift & Craft Mall.

That mall has over 120 square metres (13,000 square feet) of floor space and bills itself as Saskatchewan largest craft mall.

While Lasting Impressions at first sight appears to be one giant store, it is actually several stores in one as various artists and craft producers rent out space within the store to sell their wares.

"Business has been very good, even in tough times," Squires said, adding that there always seems to be a market for crafts.

And business is especially good during peak vacation periods, Squires added.

"From May until September, this is tourist town," Squires said.

■ ■ ■

While new tourist attractions abound in Moose Jaw, the Western Development Museum just keeps chugging right along. Founded in 1976, the museum has a history of transportation theme and attracts about 25,000 visitors per year.

Jackie Hall, the program education officer, said the continuing popularity of the museum can be explained in five simple words.

"It's trains, planes and automobiles," she said.

"Little kids like it (the museum exhibits) because it's really big stuff that stands still, it's not scaring them," Hall said.

Among the exhibits is the Snowbirds Gallery, that pays tributes to the famed air acrobatics team that has long been based at 15 Wing Moose Jaw, just outside the city.

A Tutor jet, like those used by the Snowbirds, is on display in the museum along with a variety of other vintage airplanes including "The Pheasant," which was manufactured in 1927 and frequently used in barnstorming and stunt-flying tours.

Among the prized automobiles on display is the 1902 Holtsman, which had no lights, no horn and was



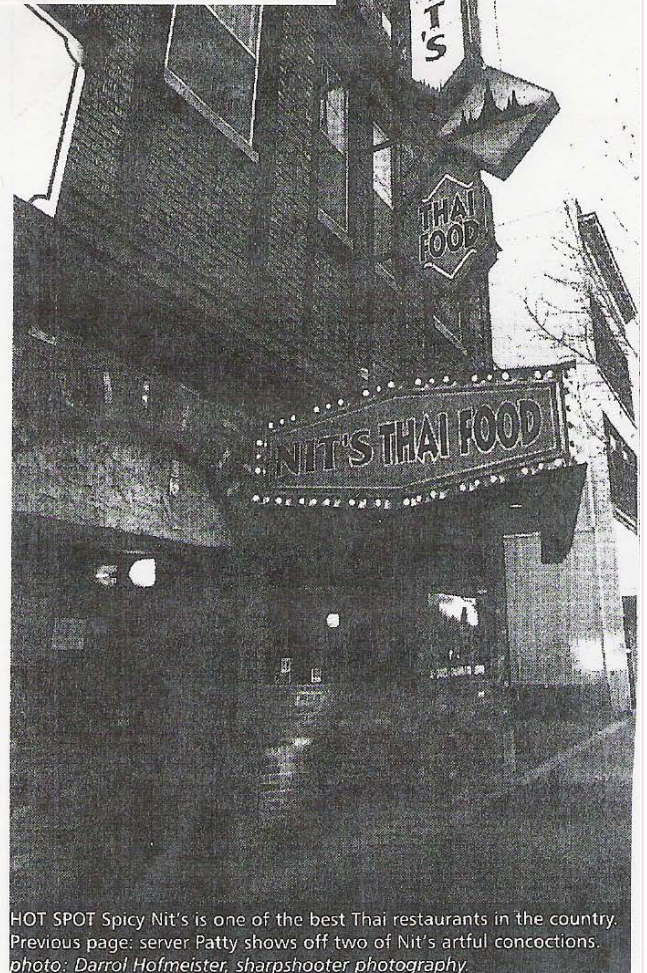
DON HEALY/Leader-Post
Patrons of the Moose Jaw Western Development Museum, including Jackie Hall, look over an Avro Anson MK1. They were used for bomber training in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan in Moose Jaw.

CITY LIFE

PEOPLE | PLACES | LIFESTYLE



Blissfully Tongue Thai-ed



HOT SPOT Spicy Nit's is one of the best Thai restaurants in the country. Previous page: server Patty shows off two of Nit's artful concoctions. photo: Darrol Hofmeister, sharpshooter photography

NIT'S DELIVERS THE AUTHENTIC THAI EXPERIENCE

IT'S THAI FOOD
1 MAIN ST. N., MOOSE JAW
616-694-6404



by Dave Margoshes

OSE JAW - I was in Victoria recently, and friends took me to a restaurant, the best in the city they said. It was good, all right, but I was too polite to tell them it wasn't nearly as good as Nit's.

Until you've had the Nit's experience, you haven't really experienced Thai food. Not around these parts, anyway.

Thailand, a limited number of Thai restaurants have crept into the menus of many Vietnamese restaurants. Instead, there's much more deep frying (breaded chicken balls, egg rolls, etc.) to be found in Thai cooking as in Cantonese restaurants. Instead, there's much more grilling, stewing and baking. Instead of heavy soy and plum sauces, there are subtler flavours, making use of coconut and coconut milk, lime, lemongrass, peanuts. There's lots of soups, vegetables, fish, hot and cold salads. A lot of use of chili peppers, curries and other spices. Altogether, a very complex, complicated cookery that's certainly not the case at Nit's, one of only two authentic

Thai restaurant in the province that I know of (the other is Koo's Kitchen in Saskatoon). And is the cook's heart in it here? Oh, you bet!

I've got to declare myself upfront that I could happily live on nothing but a certain incredibly delectable appetizer to be found at Nit's (better known just as #2 on the menu). But I'll get back to that.

I'm no expert, but it seems to me that Thai food is to Chinese much like Vietnamese is. In other words, similar, but different. Like most Asian food, ingredients are cut into small portions for quick cooking, and stir frying is the basic preparation method. But there's not as much deep frying (breaded chicken balls, egg rolls, etc.) to be found in Thai cooking as in Cantonese restaurants. Instead, there's much more grilling, stewing and baking.

Instead of heavy soy and plum sauces, there are subtler flavours, making use of coconut and coconut milk, lime, lemongrass, peanuts. There's lots of soups, vegetables, fish, hot and cold salads. A lot of use of chili peppers, curries and other spices. Altogether, a very complex, complicated cookery that's certainly not the case at Nit's, one of only two authentic

exploits the tensions between hot, sour, sweet and salty flavours, the four poles of Thai cookery.

Other appetizers of note are the delicate and mild fresh spring rolls (\$2.50), lime garlic ribs or wings (unlike any chicken wings you've had elsewhere - the mixture of garlic and lime would get the mouth of a stone statue wet) and the ingenious Thai tacos, a mixture of tomatoes, red onion, noodles and pork or chicken in a shell. They might look Mexican, but the flavour is all Thai. These last few appetizers are all priced at \$8, but with enough to share among two or three people.

To me, an ideal meal at Nit's would involve three or four people sharing - not counting drinks, four people can dine like Oriental kings here for 40 to 50 bucks. We'd start with an order of ming com, of course, and maybe another appetizer. Then we'd build a meal of perhaps three dishes: a salad, a soup and a plate of noodles. For the latter, my favourite is the pad Thai, a simple concoction of fried rice noodles with bits of egg and pork in a red sauce concocted of soy, tamarind, palm sugar, chili and god-knows-what-else. It's Nit's version of the famous Pad Thai difference. I just think the place is

named Nitaya (Nit for short) and her family. A friend of mine who's been to Thailand a number of times (and is usually pressed into bringing back bags of rare spices for Nit) claims Nit's is the best Thai restaurant in Canada. She also warns that, on days when Nitaya's sons are in charge of the kitchen, it's not quite as good. My palate's not educated enough to tell the difference. I just think the place is

(They come 8 sticks for \$6, 16 for \$10).

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Labour of Love

Nit's (admittedly, it's perhaps not the best name for a restaurant) is the labour of love of a woman named Nitaya (Nit for short) and her family. A friend of mine who's been to Thailand a number of times (and is usually pressed into bringing back bags of rare spices for Nit) claims Nit's is the best Thai restaurant in Canada. She also warns that, on days when Nitaya's sons are in charge of the kitchen, it's not quite as good. My palate's not educated enough to tell the difference. I just think the place is

terrific.

The menu here is not as extensive as you find at many Asian restaurants, but there's plenty of choice nonetheless, with over 50 Thai items. They range from plates of noodles or rice with meat, vegetables and sauce, to stir-fries to savoury curries to seafood like you've never had it before and exotic salads bursting with flavour. Chili is a key ingredient, so it's best to specify whether you want your meal mild, hot or HOT! And tofu is easily substituted for meat in most dishes.

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continued on page 16

HOT SPOT Spicy Nit's is one of the best Thai restaurants in the country. Previous page: server Patty shows off two of Nit's artful concoctions. Photo: Darrol Hofmeister, sharpshooter photography.

thing clear.)

Nit's also offers some killer seafood dishes, like a barbecue trout, and a unique deep fried salmon that's unforgettable. There's even Thai-style frogs' legs. Prices range from \$11 for small servings to \$16 for large.

Nit's covers its bases by also serving Chinese food (a full page in its 6-page menu, with staples like chop suey, chow mein, fried rice, spare ribs and some fancier dishes, including dinners for groups. There's even some good old Canadian grub, including soups, sandwiches, salads, a breakfast special and a few simple entrees like fish & chips, pork chops and beef stew. But why order Chinese or Canadian when the delicious and exotic Thai is right there?

The restaurant is licensed, but alas, stocks only the big-name domestic beers. Iced coffee, server Vietnamese style, is excellent. There's just one drawback to Nit's. It's almost an hour away from Regina. Is it worth the trip? Hell, yes!

Nit's is open daily, closing around 9 on weekdays and Saturdays, around 7 Sundays and holidays.

The menu uses the Thai names for most dishes, but has English explanations that make every-

("Pad" or "pud" is just the Thai word for noodles). Pudseeuw is a variation that's a bit dryer, with a different spice mix. Both are \$7. For the curry (called kang at Nit's), my choice would be the basic dish, either beef or chicken prepared with a mixture of spices and served in a bowl of heavenly coconut milk broth, creamy and sweet, with hints of lime and anise. The tum yam is a similar dish, but the broth is a clear sour consommé. The curries are in the \$7-\$8 range, except for a couple with seafood that cost more.

The perfect accompaniment to the hot soupy curry is a cool salad, like the yum neua yan, barbecued beef slices mixed with regular salad fixings in a lime dressing, or yum wuonsen, a cold combination of glass noodles and spicy ground pork. Yum indeed! Another salad sure to please is a refreshingly tart mixture of poached shrimp and cucumber. Salads come in small or large sizes, mostly ranging in price from \$8 to \$10.

(By the way, you don't need to speak Thai to get along at Nit's. The menu uses the Thai names for most dishes, but has English explanations that make every-



**IF YOU'VE HAD TIME TO READ THIS FAR YOU MUST BE VERY HUNGRY
AND WE MUST BE VERY BUSY.**

THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND YOUR PATRONAGE

