

NORTH COUNTY VOICE

THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR OCEANSIDE, SAN MARCOS, VISTA & ESCONDIDO

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Chin's Latest Entry Opens in San Marcos



Written by Eric Stunzi, Staff Writer

SAN MARCOS - Those with a taste for Chinese-style short ribs or seafood with an upscale Polynesian/ Hawaiian flair will be happy to know that Chins Maui Bistro has recently joined the 18 other eateries located at in San Marcos famous Restaurant Row.

The Maui Bistro is just the latest in a string of Chinese restaurants opened in the North County by local success story Chin Tsai, who began with the first Chins on Madison in Carlsbad Village back in 1984. Now he owns and operates 11 locations and two more in Hawaii.

"We opened up just four weeks ago," said waiter Sam Mai, as he shined silverware and put out table settings for the dinner rush. "We've been busy pretty much since then."

The new location next to Friars Folly is on the western side of Restaurant Row, adjacent to the Edwards Cinemas and is popular with moviegoers. The décor is Hawaiian with lots of warm burnished wood, Tiki sculptures and quiet Polynesian music setting the tone.

Manager Erin Tan is running the new location while still managing the huge Chins Palace on El Camino Real near the Mall.

"I've been with Chins for 10 years now, since I was 16," says Tan. "I originally came from Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. I just passed the tests and got my citizenship papers this year. Chin Tsai has taught me a lot.

"Chin is a big success story. He originally came from Taiwan to Hawaii and tried there first, but it didn't work out. He didn't give up. Then he came here and succeeded. Now he has two restaurants in Oceanside, one in Carlsbad, one in Vista, and a traditional Szechwan Chinese in Escondido plus six others - also two in Hawaii.

"More than half of our food orders are for seafood. Scallops, seafood curry, Kahala lobster tail, and Kihei king crab legs. We have fresh Ahi tuna salad with wasabi sauce and raw Ahi marinated in soy, green onions and sesame. We also have hamburgers and teriyaki chicken sandwiches for lunch."

Most of the dinners are in the \$15-to-\$20 range, with lunches from \$7 to \$10. Especially mouthwatering is the Makiki slow-braised short ribs with fresh asparagus and mushrooms for \$18 and the Seafood Waikiki with Lobster, jumbo shrimp and scallops deep fried in coconut batter for \$16.

"This summer we are going to raffle a free trip for two to Hawaii," says Tan. "You get a voucher after your meal and throw it in the bucket for a chance at the prize. Also, when it gets warmer this summer we are going to hire Hula dancers."

Chin's Maui Bistro is located at 1020 San Marcos Blvd. Call 760-591-9648 for information or reservations.



Eric Stunzi, Staff Writer

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