



Mondo - Todd and The Kitchen at Yenakat, his special way in telling the story of the real Thailand

Dal nostro corrispondente a Bangkok - 23 feb 2023 (Prima Pagina News) Apiwat Curtin (Todd) and his location The Kitchen at Yenakat are a very interesting experience aimed at combining the flavors of Isaan cuisine with the spirit of jazz.

In one of the most interesting areas of Bangkok, populated by trendy and refined establishments, good residences but also popular foods street vendors, Todd created in 2015 an absolutely special location made of exquisitely good Thai food, design marked by intimacy and relaxation and everything is surrounded by jazz and live music. In an intricate maze of Soi that unravel in a particularly diverse and at the same time complex urban area, not far from the District that contains the vast Lumpini Park, stands The Kitchen at Yenakat, a very special location because of the ideas behind it and the design that sets it apart. Just near the entrance, there is a covered outdoor patio where smokers can wine and dine, enjoy their dinner, and stay secluded while smoking in relaxing intimacy. Inside, there is a first area surrounding a further, more interior entrance also with several tables where the attentive and caring staff not only serves the clientele but also explains the origins of the courses that are delivered to the clientele's palate. Then, there is a special living room, complete with a large sofa and a lofted upper room, where you can find books, enjoy dinner as if you were in your living room at home or simply have your cocktail and listen to live music. The Kitchen at Yenakat prefers Jazz. Apiwat Curtin (Todd), a very well-built 45-year-old (he looks really younger), founder and owner of the restaurant, explains the ideas behind Kitchen at Yenakat, with his face lit up by a gorgeous, proverbial Thai smile. Thailand, in fact, is known as the "Land of Smiles." Over time, however, you learn to distinguish between the smile used to accompany one's presentation to the world and perhaps to accompany your work and the more intimate, more friendly smile, perhaps to hide certain of one's shyness. Todd's smile is one that smacks of true naturalness, you recognize its sincerity and the great amount of sacrifice experienced in this life to conquer what you are and have today. "From the beginning, my idea-base was to combine the typical flavors of my home region, Isaan and Jazz. The first location venue was actually a five-minute walk from here. The current location was officially opened to the public in 2015, and since its opening, my personal design idea has been to offer our clientele a unique and special experience that is different from the offerings usually found throughout Bangkok when you happen to walk into a typical Thai restaurant or a restaurant where you can taste cuisines from other Nations around the World. When I talk about "unique experience," I mean that I tried from the very beginning to distinguish myself and associate two factors that no one before had put next to each other, that is, to serve the Cuisine of my home area, Isaan, with jazz music. We have regular jazz concerts. The reasons are



related to my personal existential experience, I am a son of a typical agricultural family, my parents are farmers and follow local traditions. I wanted to give my family and my staffs good paying jobs, they are family members working for me. Nowadays, Thai clientele are looking for something different from their historical or agricultural origins, perhaps they consider it all as already seen, already tasted, taken for granted. This happens especially with the curious clientele, who have traveled and have the opportunities to do so." But Thais cannot easily access foreign travel, can they? "That's exactly the point. For economic reasons, traveling abroad is not something within the reach of anyone's wallet here in Thailand, so, those who travel are affluent, have good jobs, and earn good money. Most likely, this is also a segment of the Thai population that has received a good education and therefore, is curious about the world and wants to know more and more about it. The vast majority, however, have lived and live mostly in Thailand, have received an average level of education, and therefore, do not aspire to open their world, their perspective, involved as you all are in dealing with the problems of daily life. Then, there is a formal aspect to consider, it is not easy here to get permits, visas to be able to travel abroad and when you are then able to travel, the destination Nations do not give the Thai passport and accompanying documents the same relevance that is given to other documentation of that type. Personally, I consider myself very lucky, I travel quite often and for even not short periods of time, my preferred destination for personal reasons is Holland, a cosmopolitan Nation, where people come from all over the world, where different religions, different cultures and different skin colors live side by side. Thus I get to make contact with European culture, which is historically rooted and diverse but also marked by modernity, evolution, and change. There is no shortage of downsides even in the West, we all know that Indeed. We could see this, for example, during the hard days of Covid. In Europe, for example, the public economic system and the government-type health care system has been supportive and supportive of its people with specific funds for those who needed it most. Here in Thailand it has been very hard, surviving when your workplace is closed, has been a great feat. Here the spirit of the Thai people in supporting each other, in all giving each other a hand has been crucial. In my venue, for example, because we could not work with clientele who were precluded by anti-Covid regulations, we prepared 222,000 lunch boxes in three months that we donated to the people here around the venue. It was our way of responding to the harshness of the anti-Covid lockdown. We also received many donations from abroad, in that sense the web was very supportive. My employees had no way to work and earn money, they were guests of my family of origin, we helped each other at a historically unique and difficult time. For this solidarity work of mine and ours, I even received a recognition plaque from the Rotary Club of Thailand, a gratification that honors me and came unexpectedly. This is the Thai way of living and recognizing themselves as a people of equals. It is also why I cultivate my plan to live out my human and professional experience in Holland but to live out my old age and retirement period here in Thailand. In the West, retirees, even when they have a good monthly pension, in the vast majority of cases live and die alone. Here in Thailand you are never alone, family, friends, acquaintances are always around you. In Thailand you are never alone." The Kitchen at Yenakat 26/3 Yen-Akat 1, Thing Mahamek, Sathorn Bangkok, 10120 Thailand Tel.: 095 905 7272

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di Francesco Tortora Giovedì 23 Febbraio 2023

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