

Press Release
For Immediate Release

Chef Oliver Li Redefines WHISK as Innovative French-Japanese Dining Concept with a New A La Carte Menu

20 February 2020, Hong Kong: Spearheaded by Chef Oliver Li who has over the past two years been gradually navigating the culinary concept of WHISK towards innovative French-Japanese cuisine, the modern restaurant of The Mira Hong Kong has launched a new, concise a la carte menu that is a celebration of premium, hand-picked ingredients from Japan, France and seasonal produce sourced locally.

A complement to the ever-changing 8-course omakase dinner set that is the best showcase of WHISK's culinary flair awarded with a Michelin Plate in the 2020 edition of the Hong Kong & Macau guide to exceptional dining, the new a la carte selection of innovative French fare infused with Japanese ingredients features **8 Chef's inspiration starters and 10 mains featuring some of the best of meats and seafood including an impressive collection of luxurious beef** ranging from highly sought-after Japanese wagyu to heritage French beef.

The menu opens with a single must-try, or a true conversation starter, of original **Soja Bread (HK\$88)** that is an original recipe of Chef Oliver's perfected over a countless number of trials until it reached its desired result of a dense, chewy in texture sourdough-like bread. Rested for 2 days, the dough made of yoghurt, flour, sake lees and soya sauce is fried in the oven at high temperature to produce irresistible golden-brown crust with glossy sheen and rustic appeal.

All effortless pairings with a Wine Spectator-awarded wine list of nearly 400 picks, ingredient-focussed plates by Chef Oliver Li are precise and thoughtful creations. Among the notable Inspiration Starters, there's a **Karatomari Ebisu Oyster (HK\$148)** simply sake steamed to let the bountiful flavors of much-loved, plump bivalve from Fukuoka's shores shine. **Hokkaido Scallop "A la plancha" (HK\$258)** served in 2 ways combines sweetly and meaty glorious piece of pan-seared seafood presented on a bed of charcoal-grilled leek in a St. Jacques shell with a little bowl of scallop fricassee with parsnip puree and fresh lily bulbs – a crunchy, floral delicacy bursting with intense aromas. The scallop is dressed with warm coconut milk and coriander sauce, reminiscent of vibrant green, frothy matcha, lending not just a visual contrast but also herbaceous coating to the palate. **Tempura Namako (HK\$288)** is an adventurous take on a revered sea cucumber, which in Chef Oliver's rendition is stuffed with bouncy yet homogenous squid mousse, then briefly deep-fried in pitch black squid ink batter. Served in a warm stone adding earthy appeal, the tender sea cucumber is further accentuated by umami-rich lobster jus with Malabar pepper and garnished with a meadow of microgreens such as brown fennel adding a sweet and refreshing finish.

An entirely plant-based choice is an impressive **Asia's Best 50 Salad (HK\$338)**, referring to the number of ingredients presented within. Prepared by the entire kitchen team daily in limited quantities, the combined effort is homage to the most succulent, crunchy and flavorful vegetables and greens sourced from the farms of Kyushu, Yunnan, and even chef's own hydroponics. Standing out on the list is a signature **French Aged Beef Tartare (HK\$298)**, meticulously hand-chopped to a tender perfection the beef from Lorraine in the northeast of France is gently seasoned with capers, olive oil and served in a custom tin box each bite bursts with nutty notes of gentle meat. As if on the opposite side of the texture spectrum is a silky smooth **Duck Foie Gras Crème Brulee (HK\$268)**. The velvety custard with texture of

freshly made tofu with crackly golden surface arrives with a popped cracker of slightly salted, scrambled then dehydrated duck egg - a twist on a classic brioche often paired with pan-fried fowl liver.

Among a curated selection of main courses is the new **Smoked Wood Pigeon (HK\$338)** served in 4 ways allowing for a – pun intended – a true flight of the intensely flavorful, dark meat. A focal point is the plate with marinated and smoked, pan-seared **pigeon breast** resting on a pumpkin puree and drizzled with a cassis sauce offering most juicy, tender bite while next to it is a slender **pigeon leg** marinated in soja and deep-fried for crispy texture. Completing the dish are 2 smaller plates of extremely tender **confit of pigeon leg** slow-cooked then deep-fried in crunchy batter presented with a dollop of black garlic sauce; and **miso and pigeon bone royale**, or creamy custard, topped with gentle bits of pigeon breast and roasted Brussel sprouts.

Introduced as the cornerstone content are 2 signature dishes of Chef Oliver Li, both ever-popular crowd pleasers now served with a new twist: the **Lavender & Honey Roasted Whole Aged Duck (HK\$1,380)** served in 4 creative renditions following a “nose to tail” concept – from duck neck ragout to stuffed duck wings with foie gras; and grilled **Brittany Blue Lobster (HK\$820)** with homemade tagliolini in saffron rouille adding creamy layers to the cooked live seafood from the Atlantic coast of France. Rich **Hokkaido Sea Urchin Risotto (HK\$398)** with artichoke and aromatic herbs and branded **Hokkaido Kamuiton Pork (HK\$388)** are two other examples of how main focus of the menu has been put on the Japanese ingredients of utmost quality.

For carnivore connoisseurs, limited-edition hand-picked beef includes **Heritage Premium French Aged “Genisse” Cote de Boeuf (HK\$2,380)** that is a generous serving of over three pounds of elegantly marbled meat ideal for larger dinner gatherings. Secured from the local breeders within 38 miles around Lorraine, each cut is aged for 4 weeks on average and benefits from ingenious conditioning called “hibernation” – an innovative storage technique at sub-zero temperatures blown over with hurricane-speed winds which allows for keeping old vintages of meat intact for decades – an inheritance of the legendary Parisian butcher, Alexandre Polmard. Meanwhile, **Dry Aged Kagoshima A4 Wagyu Beef (HK\$1980)** which just like the duck is presented in a sequence of 4 distinctive ways: as wagyu beef tartare with uni, thinly sliced beef with dashi, perfectly seared wagyu beef, and finally maitake rice with beef fat and sakura shrimp.

Proudly featured on the menu is the **Ozaki Wagyu Beef (HK\$780)** with abalone and bamboo shoot, a playful combination of textures from the land and sea. “Ozaki” Wagyu beef comes from a trusted source in Miyazaki prefecture famed for its marbled cuts. Raised in a stress-free environment at a farm owned and managed by Mr. Muhenaru Ozaki who visited WHISK in 2019 to inspect the quality of the dishes served with his prized meat, Ozaki beef is the only wagyu beef in Japan named after a farmer. It is also available in just 2 restaurants in Hong Kong. The cattle are reared for up to 36 months instead of just 28 to intensify the flavor and fed on an antibiotic- and hormone-free diet of freshly prepared daily feed of 15 ingredients including fresh grass and barley mash mixed in a labour-intensive process taking up to 2 hours. The result is a matured meat of sublime texture and distinctive sweetness with melt-in-your-mouth appeal.

The new a la carte menu at WHISK is available nightly from 20 February 2020, at dinner only from 6:30pm till 10pm. Due to a limited quantity of each dish prepared freshly on a daily basis, advance orders are highly recommended.

All prices are subject to 10% service charge.

About WHISK

WHISK is an innovative French-Japanese restaurant in the heart of Tsim Sha Tsui which specializes in ingredient-driven dishes created with premium produce from around the world. Expert French cooking techniques infused with hand-selected Japanese ingredients are whisked into mouth-watering Omakase menus inspired by seasons and offered next to thoughtfully curated a la carte dishes. The food selection can be paired with eclectic wine list most recently awarded with “Best of Award of Excellence 2019” by *Wine Spectator*. Modern setting and relaxed atmosphere of the main restaurant and private dining

rooms located on the fifth floor of The Mira Hong Kong are complemented by a spacious lounge, Vibes, hidden in the green courtyard which serves as al fresco setting for WHISK's lauded Sunday brunch.

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Booking Enquiries: +852 2315 5999 or dining@themirahotel.com or www.themirahotel.com/whisk/

About Chef Oliver Li

Chef Oliver Li has been earning his stripes in the competitive culinary scene of Hong Kong for nearly 2 decades. A meaningful milestone in his career was manning the kitchen of L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon where he was immersed in a world of innovative modern French cooking. A capable and driven Chef de Cuisine of WHISK, Chef Oliver has been the leading force behind the transformation of the modern European restaurant into a dining concept that brings in the best produce from around the world, mainly Japan, and excels at serving original ingredient-driven dishes cooked in modern French way, including creative omakase menus that take inspiration from seasons.

During his tenure with The Mira, Chef Oliver Li has been a part of the success and gained precious exposure to culinary talents from around the globe through numerous Guest Chef events held at WHISK including appearances of Chef Ton Tassanakajohn (Le Du, Bangkok, 1 Star Michelin, Asia's 50 Best No.20), Chef Christophe Hay (La Maison d'a Cote, Montlivault, 2 Stars Michelin), Chef Michihiro Haruta (Crony, Tokyo, 1 Star Michelin), Chef Junichi Nakamine (La Kanro, Osaka, 1 Star Michelin), Chef Taku Tabuchi (S'accpau, Tokyo), Chef Rolf Fliegau (Ecco, Ascona, 2 Stars Michelin), Chef Kazuo Takagi (Kyoto Cuisine Takagi, Ashiya, 2 Stars Michelin), Chef Bruno Grand-Clement (La Terrasse Rouge, Bordeaux), Chef Domenico Francone (La Taverna Castello Banfi, Tuscany), and many more.

About The Mira Hong Kong

The Mira Hong Kong is a smoke-free, design-driven urban retreat with 492 boldly accented guest rooms, including a collection of 56 suites and specialty suites. Overlooking the lush Kowloon Park and centrally located in Tsimshatsui, the heart of Hong Kong's commercial, shopping, dining and entertainment district, the hotel easily connects guests to all parts of the vibrant metropolis being a short walk from MTR stations and the Star Ferry. The Mira Hong Kong is a member of Design Hotels™. www.themirahotel.com



WHISK's New A La Carte Menu – Smoked Wood Pigeon



WHISK's New A La Carte Menu – Duck Foie Gras Crême Brûlée



WHISK's New A La Carte Menu – Tempura Namako



WHISK's New A La Carte Menu – Hokkaido Scallop A la Plancha



Chef de Cuisine of WHISK, Oliver Li



Contemporary designer interiors of WHISK open up to the greenery of al fresco lounge Vibes

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Hi-res images available for download at: http://bit.ly/WHISK2020ALC_Press

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