

Veal chop and pasta at Theo Mistral.
Photo: Alex Chan



“[Theo] Randall is the most famous chef you have never heard of

Jay Rayner, food critic

Robuchon told me: “At the time, I could not find Macau on the map, but I knew it was part of China, so I came to have a look.” His restaurant, now called Robuchon au Dôme, is at the Grand Lisboa and is still one of the best fine-dining outlets in Macau.

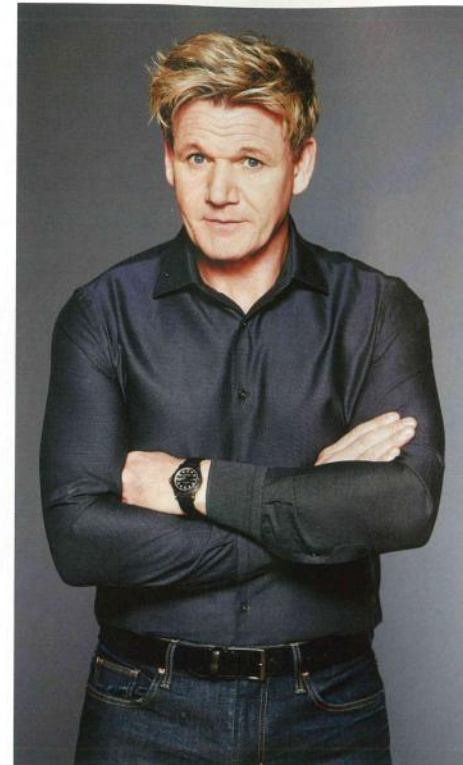
Over the past 10 years, many other big names flocked to Hong Kong with casual and fine-dining concepts, including: Jason Atherton, Gordon Ramsay, Tom Aikens, Alvin Leung, Michael White, Akrame Benallal, Jamie Oliver, Judy Juu, Mario Carbone, and, more recently, Yannick Alléno, Takashi Saito, and Theo Randall. Also, look out this month for David Thompson and Raphael Duntoye with his newly opened French restaurant La Petite Maison.

“I was once told that Hong Kong is where the big boys play,” says Randall, who arrived in Hong Kong this year to

reinvent long-time local favourite The Mistral with his take on simple Italian fare, and renaming the eatery at the InterContinental Grand Stanford to Theo Mistral.

“Hong Kong is one of the most iconic places in the world for restaurants. It’s a bit like making it in America – if you’ve got a restaurant in Hong Kong, it’s a sign [you have arrived],” continued Randall, who made his name as head chef and silent partner at the famed River Café, which helped put London’s culinary scene on the map in the 1990s.

British food critic Jay Rayner once said: “Randall is the most famous chef you have never heard of.” But not any more, as the restaurateur and chef has expanded his brands, with two restaurants in London, one in Zurich and Geneva, as well as Bangkok and now Hong Kong. He has also



Above: Chef Gordon Ramsay

Right: Chef Theo Randall at Theo Mistral Hong Kong.
Photo: Alex Chan



made television appearances on the BBC’s *Saturday Kitchen*, and he has opened his kitchens to *Masterchef* [UK] finalists.

British television chef and restaurateur Gordon Ramsay opened casual eateries in Hong Kong that offer British fare, starting with Bread Street Kitchen in 2015 in Lan Kwai Fong – the restaurant recently closed and will reopen in early 2019 on The Peak. In 2016, he brought gastropub London House to Tsim Sha Tsui East and next month, he will open his popular London steakhouse, Maze Grill, in Harbour City. Ramsay came into the spotlight with his fine-dining Restaurant Gordon Ramsay in London and it was voted the best restaurant in Britain in 2001 and garnered three-Michelin stars. So why did he bring casual concepts to Hong Kong and not fine dining?

“Deciding which type of restaurant to open doesn’t happen by accident,” Ramsay says. “Opening a new restaurant is a costly process which has to be thoroughly planned for and researched. We look at where we are in the world, the consumers who are eating out and what their needs are, and take it from there.”

His concepts here showcase the best of British fare, but like Nobu and other celebrity chefs, he also offers dishes that consider the local palate.

“We always put a local twist on our