

A Review of

Mr. Chow

3835 Cross Creek Road
Malibu, CA 90265
(310) 456-7600
mrchow.com
Pricing: \$\$\$\$

By FRANCES SHARPE
Editor-in-Chief

On a recent Saturday evening, my husband and I headed North on Pacific Coast Highway in anticipation of a culinary experience. Although he has frequently dined at Mr. Chow in Beverly Hills, this visit to the restaurant's newest incarnation in the Malibu Country Mart would be a first for both of us.

"Chow-hounds" who relish the authentic Beijing cuisine and impeccable service at Mr. Chow in Beverly Hills will feel right at home here. The minimalist chic white-on-white décor at the Malibu outpost is designed by Michael Chow himself. Compared to the Beverly Hills location, however, this spot offers a more intimate, relaxed Malibu vibe that so many Palisadians, including this writer, appreciate.

Located since 2012 in the coveted spot that used to house Nobu — and before that Bamboo — Mr. Chow has quickly become a Malibu landmark.

Arriving for our 7 p.m. reservation — reservations are a must — we had our choice of several tables and chose one in an intimate corner.

When the famous champagne trolley rolled past, we couldn't resist. Of the five champagnes offered via the trolley, the Veuve Clicquot called out to me while the fruitier Laurent Perrier Rosé appealed to my husband. A glass of champagne always adds to the festive nature of a meal and put us in the mood for a memorable night.

On this particular evening we decided to stick with the classics — some of the signature dishes that



The minimalist chic white-on-white décor is designed by Michael Chow himself.

Allen Lin Photography

have helped Mr. Chow maintain its reputation as one of the finest dining experiences since its first location opened in London in 1968.

Our 'classics' meal began with three hors d'oeuvres selections. In typical Mr. Chow style, the appetizers, served family-style, arrived quickly — within a matter of minutes. We started with the must-have Mr. Chow Noodles, described on the menu as "the classic handmade Beijing noodles Mr. Chow introduced to the West in 1968." One bite of the aromatic fresh-pulled noodles topped with chicken and red bean sauce proved why they have remained a menu favorite for more than 40 years.

After just a few bites of the noodles, we shifted our attention to the Glazed Prawns with walnuts. Ever-so-lightly coated, these large prawns carried just a hint of honey to balance out the savory dish. Served with glazed walnuts that offered a satisfying crunch, this dish is a perennial favorite.

Another Mr. Chow original, the Chicken Satay, served with a mild peanut sauce, was so tender it slid right off the skewer. We both thought it benefited from a little kick of the spicy chili sauce that is always available on the table.

As we savored our starters, the room started filling up with a trend-setting crowd and by 7:30 p.m. the restaurant was teeming with diners and conversation. In the background, a steady stream of muted club music — think Avicii and LMFAO — infused the restaurant with an underlying pulse of energy. Regardless of the number of people and the music, we could easily carry on a conversation without having to shout.

For our next course, we continued with our 'classics' theme, opting for the Steamed Sea Bass, Green Prawns, and Quartet of Exotic Mushrooms, all of which were served on small share plates. Although the omate serving dishes seemed small upon arrival, we

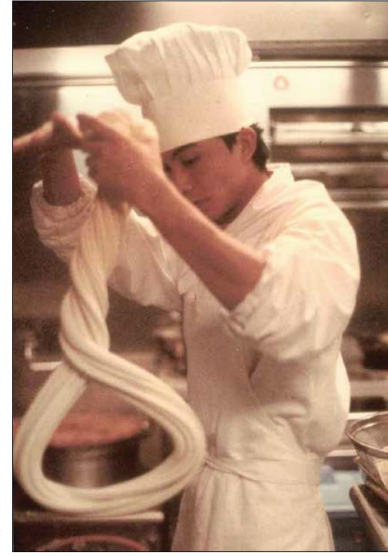
weren't able to finish a single one of them. The Shrimp Sautéed Rice arrived in a charming little pot.

We focused first on the tender sea bass, which was delicately flavored with ginger and cilantro. This proved to be a smart move considering the other dishes packed a more powerful flavor punch. The subtle tones of the sea bass would have been lost had we started with the other dishes.

The Green Prawns with water chestnuts, red peppers and cashews blended well with the exotic mushrooms and rice.

After a superb meal of unique flavors, we capped off our night of classics with a simple green tea ice cream. We also tasted the Chocolate Bomb, a chocoholic's dream with a layer of moist spongy cake topped by white chocolate, dark chocolate and milk chocolate ganache.

As we nibbled slowly on the decadent dessert, we were startled by a few hand claps from the wait



Mr. Chow's nightly noodle-making demonstration has been a tradition for more than four decades.

Allen Lin Photography

staff at 8:20 p.m. Then we remembered that the clapping signaled the debut of Mr. Chow's nightly noodle-making demonstration, a tradition for more than four decades. Right in front of the sleek bar and in view of every table in the restaurant, a noodle maker spun and flipped the dough adroitly in a mesmerizing show that lasted but a few minutes.

This is just one of the many unique touches that have made Mr. Chow an unforgettable dining experience that's ideal for date night, special occasions or

everyday elegant dining — because you're worth it. As an example of just how special a night at Mr. Chow can be, two couples seated next to us asked the wait staff to take their photo.

Mr. Chow in Malibu offers one of the few truly special dining experiences in coastal L.A. After our night of 'classics' we can't wait to return to for a chance to taste some of the newer, more adventurous offerings on the menu, such as the Gold Leaf Shumai, Fresh Sole Water Dumplings and Gambai with Goodies.