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DINING

Best things to eat at new Malaysian food court EatAlley at Orchard Gateway

Some popular food spots from Kuala Lumpur have made their way to Singapore and the KL-style Hokkien mee and dry beef noodles rank high on our list.



EatAlley at Orchard Gateway features KL stalls such as Koon Kee Wonton Mee and Hong Lai Hokkien Mee. (Photo: EatAlley)

**Annette Tan**

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A stems from having one thing in common: An obsessive love for it.

Good food is good food regardless of any discourse about who made it first or who makes it better. Plus, don't we love a good Malaysian food court in Singapore? The latest of these to hit Singapore is EatAlley, which opened last week in the basement of Orchard Gateway.

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At this 4,300 sq ft space clad in green clapboard, Malaysian towkay Sebastian Low – who brought us the PappaRich chain – has rounded up his favourite hawkers from his native Kuala Lumpur (KL).



EatAlley at Orchard Gateway. (Photo: EatAlley)

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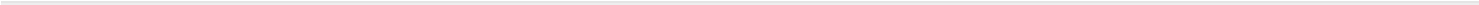
Uncle Beh Pork Noodle in Kuala Lumpur. (Photo: Annette Tan)

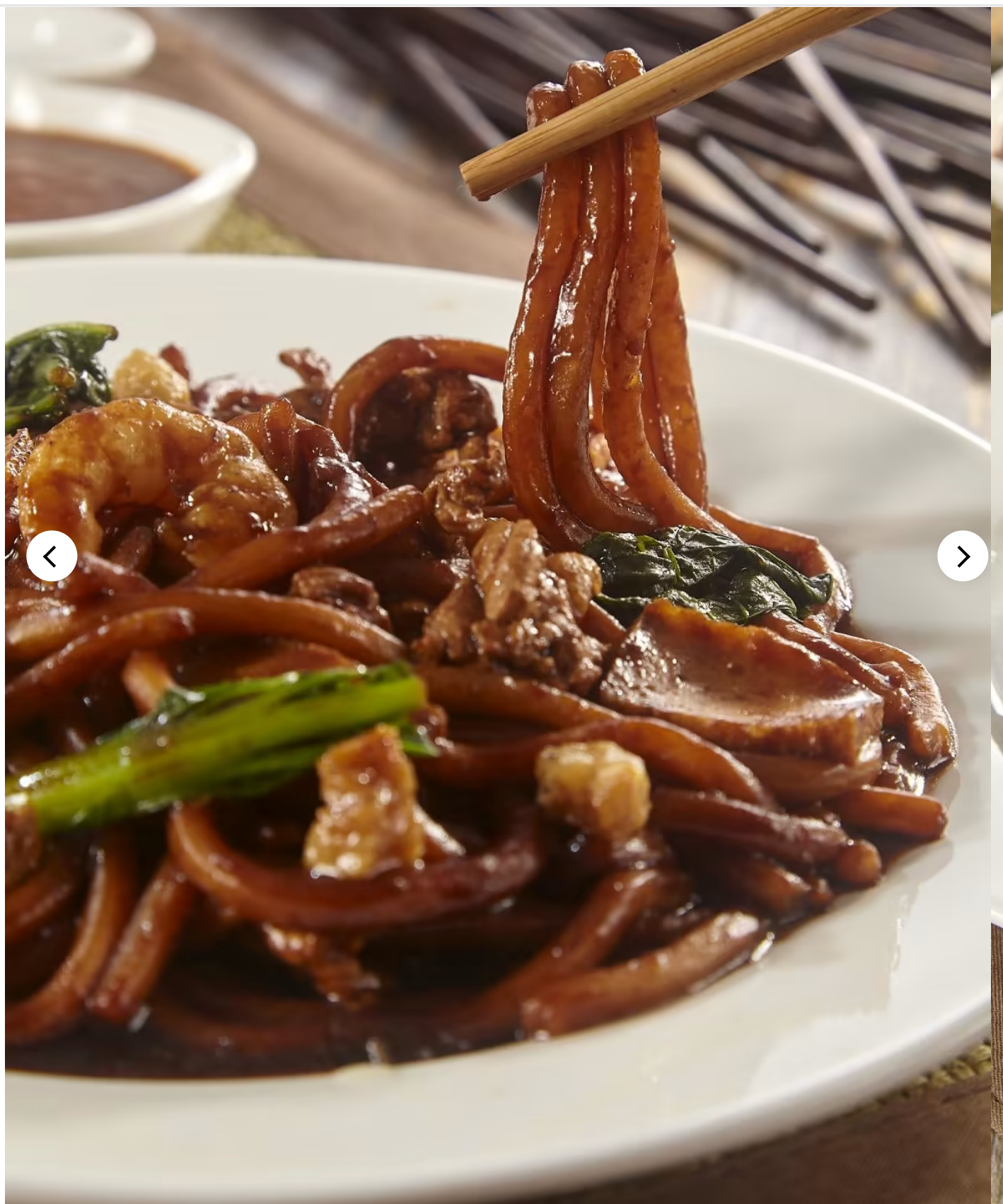
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If we had to pick a favourite, it would have to be Kedai Kopi Dan Makanan Hong Lai's Hokkien mee. At its mothership along Jalan Genting Kelang, roaring fires translate to flame-licked woks which imbue the fried noodles with incredible wok hei (that inimitable smoky flavour of the wok's breath).

Hong Lai's Hokkien mee (S\$9.80) features thick egg noodles strewn with fresh seafood, all drenched in a glistening coat of dark soy sauce. The moonlight kway teow (S\$9.80) is equally divine, served with the requisite raw egg on top, which you mix into the noodles so that it clings to each delicious strand.

Another highlight is the dry beef noodles (S\$9.80) from Soong Kee Beef Noodles. A texture-rich tumble of sliced tripe, beef balls and slivers of tender beef served over springy egg noodles doused in a tasty dark soya sauce.



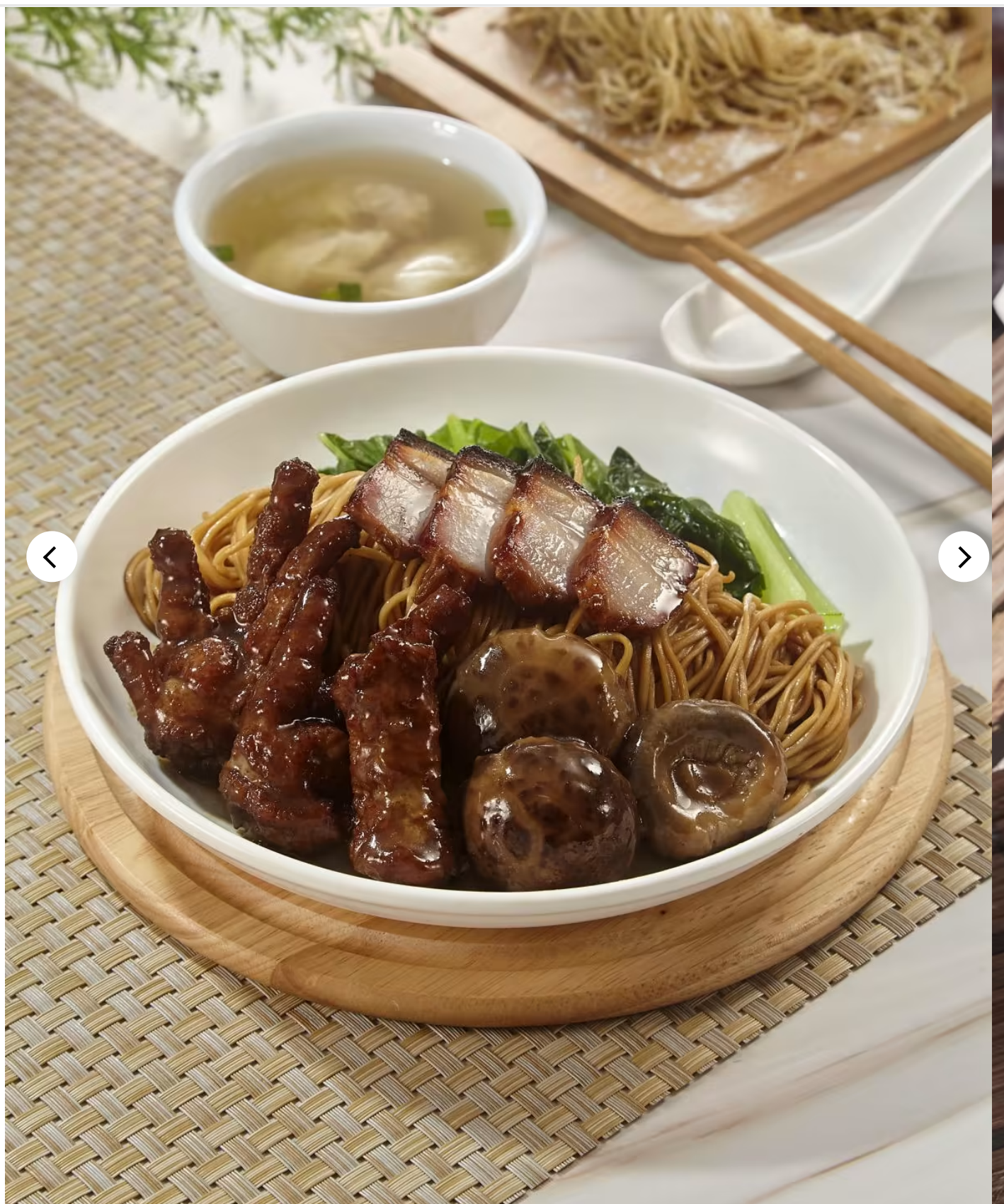


Kedai Kopi Dan Makanan Hong Lai's Hokkien mee at EatAlley at Orchard Gateway. (Photo: EatAlley)

with minced pork, sliced pork, pig intestines, liver and kidney.

These dishes make the case that dark soya sauce and lard are the ticket to elevating any simple noodle preparation. If you like a cleanly flavoured pork bone soup, try Siong Huat Bah Kut Teh's rendition. Owner Loh Hock Huat maintains this ascetic flavour by leaving out the cuttlefish that other KL-style bak kut teh purveyors tend to include for an umami hit.

If an austere broth isn't your style, then the dry bak kut teh (S\$10.80) might hit the spot instead. It is easy on the herbs and heavy on the Chinese wine and chillies, which give the dish an appealing kick.



Koon Kee Wanton Mee at EatAlley at Orchard Gateway. (Photo: EatAlley)

poster-boy for young hawkers having given up his studies overseas as a young lad to take over the stall when his father passed away.

Kam Heong's Teochew-style braised duck is distinctively herbal thanks to the eight herbs such as dang gui (angelica root), gan cao (licorice) and orange peel that the birds are braised with for up to six hours. What's unique about this dish is the rice, which is first fried in butter before it is cooked in chicken stock. The result is chicken rice-style grains that are a rich complement to the tender slices of duck. For S\$9.80, you get a complete meal of butter rice, salted vegetables, braised duck and a soya-braised egg.

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At Fatty Nasi Lemak's stall in Kuala Lumpur. (Photo: Annette Tan)

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Malaysian-style nasi lemak is a rare thing in Singapore, which makes kampung nasi lemak a welcome addition. Owner Fatty (that's his mononym and he's sticking to it. Like, you know, Bono or Drake) ran an itinerant roadside stall for years before settling down at Overseas Union Garden in 2012. His nasi lemak comes with hearty sides like ayam masak merah, beef rendang and sambal cockles. The signature set comprises nasi lemak with ayam rempah, fried ikan bilis, peanuts, a fried egg and sambal (S\$8.80). Same same, but different.

EatAlley is located at B2-12 Orchard Gateway.

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