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Tapas de Portugal introduces an innovative dining concept masterminded by chef António Coelho from the multiple award-winning restaurant António

By Macau Tatler on May 26, 2017



Renowned chef António Coelho has been presenting Portuguese food at his eponymous restaurant Antonio since 2008, and winning acclaim ever since.



Chef António Coelho (Photo: Courtesy of Taipei Village Destination Limited)

A revered local institution, António restaurant has a string of international awards from *The Louis Vuitton Guide*, *Hong Kong Tatler's Best Restaurant Guide*, *Frommer's Guide*, and *Michelin Guide Hong Kong Macau*, which awarded António's a recommendation in 2009—and every year since.

Coelho, however, is not content to rest on his laurels. Located opposite António restaurant in Taipa Village, Tapas de Portugal further expands the chef's flavourful menu with a wide array of contemporary Portuguese tapas, including pata negra ham, assorted cheeses, chorizo, anchovies, olives, cherry tomatoes, pickles and paio, a traditional *embutido* sausage from Portugal.



Lobster rice Malandrinho (Photo: Courtesy of Taipa Village Destination Limited)

“The discovery of a new dish contributes more for the happiness of mankind than a discovery of a new star! Cooking is like an art—every flavourful dish is a masterpiece, carefully crafted with culinary skill, taste and imagination. I love to share my passion and love for cooking with others. Food can only be good when there is love and care,” Coelho has said.



Interior of Tapas de Portugal (Photo: Courtesy of Taipa Village Destination Limited)

The chef's recommendations at Tapas de Portugal include scrambled eggs with Portuguese sausage, codfish à Braz, wet lobster rice, roasted suckling pig with homemade potato chips and mixed salad, and the popular Portuguese dessert serradura (sawdust pudding). Vegetarian and light dishes include salads, sandwiches and starters, with more hearty options such as seafood and meat dishes, alongside both traditional and creative Portuguese desserts.

Dishes are complemented by Portuguese wines, beers and cocktails, and diners can relax at the stylish ground floor bar, the first-floor dining room or on the rooftop terrace overlooking Taipa Village.



Codfish à Braz (Photo: Courtesy of Taipa Village Destination Limited)

One of the earliest pioneers in the area's ongoing transformation, Coelho opened António with the aim of promoting Portuguese food and culture in Macau. A meal there, beneath a beamed ceiling and to the sounds of traditional fado music, is quintessentially Portuguese—and, in turn, most definitely of Macau. The decor at Tapas de Portugal is chic and stylish, with a number of Portuguese design elements, and equally charming.

Like your favourite uncle, António himself is often seen wandering around António restaurant and no doubt will be as visible at the new venue. He never hesitates to tell a story or two about the history of traditional Portuguese dishes.



Bar area at Tapas de Portugal (Photo: Courtesy of Taipa Village Destination Limited)

Indeed, Coelho is an old Macau hand. He was first sent to the city with the Portuguese army in 1969 as part of his national service, then invited back in 1996 as a partner in a restaurant in Coloane, a business he stayed with until January 2008 when he started his António.

Coelho, now in his late 60s, may be considered old-school Portuguese, which shows not only in the art and rustic decoration of the António restaurant but also in the menu, with signature dishes that include lobster cocktail, gratinate goat cheese with acacia honey, Portuguese olive oil and Portuguese duck rice, and milk crème caramel. Desserts in Portugal tend to be extra saccharine, but António has tweaked the level of sweetness in all of his desserts just right.



Scrambled eggs with Portuguese sausage (Photo: Courtesy of Taipa Village Destination Limited)

While he strives to maintain authenticity, the chef does tailor some dishes to suit the tastes of his multi-national clientele. That said, Coelho imports the bulk of his supplies from Portugal, including bottled water, wine, olive oil, smoked ham, sausage, tenderloin, black pork loin, rabbit and chicken.

Yet in spite of his reputation for traditional Portuguese food at its best, the veteran chef's penchant for culinary creativity has not diminished.



Exterior of Tapas de Portugal (Photo: Courtesy of Taipa Village Destination Limited)

“I’m delighted to share my philosophy and passion for cooking with others. Tapas de Portugal complements António restaurant by offering a more contemporary gastronomic experience for our loyal customers. The launch of Tapas de Portugal brings a creative new selection of Portuguese flavours to Taipa Village, adding further diversity to the sought after Portuguese cuisine offerings in the area,” says Coelho.

Tapas de Portugal

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