

Nosh upon a Star

L'ETOILE brings French-Japanese flair and flavour to Little India.

Sometimes, keeping things simple is the hardest thing to do. But when simple is done right, the results can be as ravishing and delicious as the food and vibe at L'Etoile, French for "star", a pretty café hidden in an old shophouse off Race Course Road. Its moniker is rather fitting since this space has seen stars (including *Tai Tai* host Chen Liping and Hossan Leong) come and go after an episode of *Ch 8's HDB Tai Tai* was filmed here.

Owner and former property manager Yvonne Low, 34, was inspired by the quirky French-themed indie cafes she visited during her travels to Japan. So she paid tribute with L'Etoile, where a vintage dresser holds trays of water for diners to help themselves to, a sewing machine table doubles as a dining table for two, and comfy armchairs and



sofas invite guests to sink into them for hours on end (the café offers free WiFi).

There's also a shopping corner selling earrings imported from Japan, handmade Oxford shoes from Shanghai, and colourful babushka dolls by a Singaporean artist. And the food is simple yet fabulous. On weekdays, Yvonne serves sandwiches and coffee brewed with beans from Highlander Coffee, where her baristas trained. On weekends, her brunch menu is awesome. She gets some of the best cakes we've tasted in a while from a Cordon Bleu patissier and divine French buckwheat crepes made by a French friend.



THE FOOD

➤ Eggs Benedict (\$5.90)

Though the portion is small, the Eggs Benedict here — with perfectly poached eggs and velvety Hollandaise sauce — beat the ones served at more upscale cafes in town. The downside: the bagel it is served on is too tough. So ask for a regular piece of toast instead.



➤ French Crepes with Butter & Sugar (\$5)

The search for Singapore's finest French buckwheat crepes ends here. The combo is deceptively plain but oh-so-yummy. The thin pancake has the perfect chewy texture, matched by a dusting of cinnamon sugar and salty goodness of melted butter.

➤ Strawberry Shortcake (\$6.60)

Quite possibly the best strawberry shortcake in town. This one has a wonderfully loose crumb, isn't too sweet and has just the right amount of whipped cream so you don't feel *jelak* after a slice.

VERDICT: ★★★★★ Excellent coffee and cakes, and at affordable prices too. It has that winning formula of good looks, comfort and simple but unimpeachable food. We wish they'd serve the cakes and brunch menu on weekdays too. ☺

160 Owen Rd (near Farrer Park MRT station). Tel: 6298-2872. Closed Mon.

➤ advertorial



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