

Jianguo 328

Shanghainese food with a Taiwanese twist.

By CHRISTOPHER ST. CAVISH

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Location

328 Jianguo Xi Lu near Xiangyang Nan Lu, Xuhui District (建国中路328号
近襄阳)
Shanghai, China

What to order

Eight treasure duck (八宝鸭, ba bao ya), five-spice duck leg (香酥鸭腿),
spring rolls with yellow croaker (黄鱼春卷), fried stinky tofu...



At Jianguo 328, Shanghainese chef Shen Jianming keeps true to the heart of *ben bang cai*—what Shanghainese people call Shanghainese food—but puts a soft Taiwanese spin on everything. You don't have to appreciate his subtle differences to enjoy the food, but they are there.

He slips a bit of dried seafood into the “eight treasure” stuffing for his duck, one that comes whole and bone-in—though the three-day preparation leaves the bones almost soft enough to break with chopsticks. The stinky tofu is wrapped in dried soy-milk skin (the Japanese call it *yuba*) before frying, taming its sharp edge and leaving just the cheesy funk. And instead of using a whole duck to make a classic *xiang su ya*—“fragrant,

crispy duck,” where the duck is spiced, smashed, and deep-fried—they do just the legs, which have a better meat-to-bone ratio.

The restaurant is casual but small, with about thirty seats crammed downstairs and a few large round tables in the second-floor loft—good for bigger groups but, given the low ceilings, not for anyone tall.

CHINA, DUCK, SHANGHAI, TOFU
