

[Greg Boose](#), Contributor

LA freelance writer, author of YA thriller *The Red Bishop*

## Catching Up With 9021Pho's Chef Kimmy Tang

05/16/2012 06:23 pm ET Updated Dec 06, 2017



- Because of her Crayola-bright red highlights and permanent smile, it's easy to spot Chef Kimmy Tang in a crowd. But with her wildly addictive pan-Vietnamese restaurant in Beverly Hills, [9021Pho](#), on the verge of major expansion into several states in the next few years, and with her focus on children's charities, it's going to get harder and harder to track her down. Over handmade pot stickers, mini pork bao and her famous (spicy and sour) pho, I briefly caught up with Chef Tang before it was too late.



**Greg Boose:** I see you smiling there and can literally feel your energy, and I'm sure you get asked this all the time, but what's your secret to all this?

**Kimmy Tang:** Passion. It's the main ingredient in everything I do. And I'm always laughing when I say this, but I believe that if you open a bank account in the universe and make one deposit a day, when you grow up I guarantee you will have a big check waiting for you.

**GB:** Speaking of goodwill, you're starting a silent auction to benefit the Children's Hospital Los Angeles. How did this happen?

**KT:** My life's mission is helping kids. I don't need anything, I don't ask for a nice car or a brand name shirt, but my dream is to really help kids.

When I grew up, my father always helped people, especially his employees. He paid for their children to go to school. He said, "Kimmy, you're lucky you have a wealthy family and you have this and you have that, but lots of kids out there have nothing." I lost my father six years ago, and I always wanted to continue his love, that's why I want to help kids.

When I go to Romania, I always visit an orphanage and bring goodie

bags with clothes, shoes, cheese, candy, everything, and give it to each kid.

The silent auction for the Children's Hospital Los Angeles starts May 23 and 100 percent of the proceeds will go directly to the charity. Five pictures drawn by the kids at the hospital will be on display in our Beverly Hills location, five different ones in Westlake, and it's ongoing every single month. Every single customer has a chance to bid on the pictures.

**GB:** Your Beverly Hills location is doing well, and you opened another location in Westlake Village, and then in September you're taking over a space in the Glendale Galleria. The original spot is intimate and full of light, what's it going to be like in Glendale?

**KT:** The Glendale location will follow the trend that we started in Westlake. There will be 80 seats on the interior, 50 seats outside, an open kitchen and a living garden wall on the inside growing jalapeno, tomato, mint and basil. It will serve Californian and French wines and beers, sake, and we will add to our Asian beer repertoire. It's going to be a colorful location, like how I'm colorful, and I want people to be comfortable when they walk into the restaurant.

**GB:** It's not hard to notice that 9021Pho has a lot of regulars. I'm sure being in Beverly Hills has its advantages. People in the industry must stop by, right?

**KT:** Kevin Connolly from *Entourage* is so funny. When we're busy he gets up and stands with his pho off to the side, and he gives his table to other people. Mickey Rourke comes in every day he is in town. And if he's not here, we deliver to his house.

*You can meet Chef Tang at any of the 9021Pho locations, and at the Taste of Calabasas during the last two days of the Calabasas-Malibu Food and Wine Festival, June 23 & 24. She'll be serving crispy sol with spicy aioli, house chicken salad and more.*