



GRUB STREET

Kimmy Tang Beats Enoteca Drago Chef at Mitsuwa Kitchen Masters Competition

By Hadley Tomicki

Kimmy Tang with the Nisei Week parade queens in Little Tokyo Photo: Mitsuwa

9021Pho's founding chef, Kimmy Tang, was awarded with a first place silver trophy yesterday as part of the 72nd Annual Nisei week parade, following her victory last Sunday in Mitsuwa's first ever Nisei Week Kitchen Master's Competition, which mirrored *Iron Chef's* secret ingredient format. After making the final competition following weeks of national contests, Tang faced off last Saturday and Sunday against Enoteca Drago's chef de cuisine, Garrett Mukogawa, over two days of cooking battles for three judges, including Iron Chef Hiroyuki Sakai in Mitsuwa's Torrance location. Tang beat out Mukogawa with dishes that included a pork panko schnitzel, which she named "Tang's Original Tonkatsu Cordon Bleu" and a "Peechy Keen Peach" dessert of mirin-and-sake-poached peach with a blackberry and coconut sauce.

Tang, once the owner of her own Michelia on Third Street, donated her \$1,000 cash prize to H.A.R.K., an arts program and one of several non-profits close to her heart.

Tang says she's gearing up to open three more 9021pho locations with a slightly updated look and feel in the coming months, pending permits, still featuring *pho* as the central component, as well as a new menu of heart-healthy fusion dishes.

So far, the next 9021Pho locations are being considered for Westfield Mall in Topanga, Fashion Square in Sherman Oaks, possibly as early as October, and another in Glendale Galleria, though we're trying to send her warnings of LA Creamery's own unhappy experiences in some of those same properties.

