



Chef Kimmy Tang of Bistro Mon Cheri, A Los Angeles Culinary Treasure

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Gerry Furth-Sides) It's not enough that Chef has a long menu of appealing, intensely flavored, fined dishes. She also offers her customers a Chef's Tasting Table menu for \$55 that changes weekly. Dining groups, one a table of eight young ladies, are offered original dinner menus for their regular get-togethers. To ensure that the dishes are never repeated for this or other guests, Chef Kimmy keeps a notebook to ensure this, a la N/NAKA.

(<https://bistromoncheri.com>)



She is, as my mother would say, as “big as a minute” but her energy fills a room. So Chef Kimmy Tang, owner-chef of **Bistro Mon Ami** in **Pasadena** always “had me” just with her radiant smile and bear hug. But that would downplay her exquisite Asian Fusion Vietnamese-centric menu with a French and California influence, and most recently a Romanian twist.



In fact, **Bistro Mon Ami** is named after her favorite restaurant in Romania. And now, Pasadena diners can judge for themselves how they feel about Kimmy's refined comfort food dishes. For an unexplainable reason, Kimmy has made the connection between Greek-Turkish food (dolmades, *breiks*,) and Eastern European dishes (stuffed cabbage) in a totally original way.

Below are three of Kimmy's updated classical Vietnamese dishes she created for a Southern California Culinary Historian's lunch last season. It was a packed house with tables pulled together for communal dining and family-style servings.



Kimmy's glorious energy feels as though it is infused into the food and homey service. Selections (\$8.95- \$13.95) are hearty and generous enough to serve two. Below is the Lemongrass Chicken in a bed of Onion, Bell Pepper, Mushroom, Snap Peas. Oh, would you like it spicier? Chef Kimmy steps away and brings a pot of hot chili paste to the table.



Lemongrass Chicken at Bistro Mon Cheri



Chef Kimmy Tang's Grilled Chicken on Rice

Chef Kimmy's family is Chinese but she was born and raised in Saigon. After a harrowing family story of escape and relocation to California after Saigon fell, Chef Tang first followed her artistic bent in the fashion world, then became widely considered a pioneering visionary in the Asian food market with her formal but pleasing Michelia restaurant just outside of Beverly Hills.

Even her pork meatballs with Lemongrass and Garlic have an artistic, whimsical bent. (\$9.95). You don't even need a bun because there are veggies and greens with them.



Chef Kimmy Tang's Pork Meatball



Must try Chocoliscous Beef Meatballs

In 2008 Kimmy packed up Michelia and set out to explore the world. She revisited her birthplace, Vietnam, and Europe. It was in Romania that Chef Tang became a culinary consultant for the largest film studio and a very popular local TV cooking show host.

It was as a volunteer in the Romanian orphanages that ignited in Chef Kimmy a heartfelt desire to help children. Kimmy currently aids Romanian orphan immigrants and sells the artwork of Children's Hospital patients on her restaurant walls to benefit the Healing Arts Reaching Kids (H.A.R.K.) program of Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Chef Kimmy opens her doors to all student interns and works with them on both how a dish tastes but how the flavors are layered to make it taste a certain way. She is a kind but firm "hands-on" teacher. Kimmy is a frequent welcome sight at most of the community food events. It is all part of her personal goal to "make a deposit in the universal bank of good."

Bistro Mon Cheri, 950 E. Colorado Blvd # 204 Pasadena. CA, 626-787-1323.

<http://localfoodeater.com/kimmy-tang/>