



CAFE ABOONG

Korean Dessert Delight

Growing increasingly popular all over Asia, the beloved snack brand is now available in Hong Kong courtesy of JO WAN and REGINA LEE.

The cultural influence Korea exerts on the world, particularly for the youth, is unquestioningly immense. It has been heavily felt in music, film and fashion for years. Hong Kong's youth market has long expressed its fandom for the neighbor's exports, which has now extended to a popular street food variety brought to the city by partners Jo Wan and Regina Lee.

"We accidentally caught a glimpse of this unique snack on a trip to Korea, and seeing prospect in this product, we decided to bring it back to Hong Kong," says Jo.

Regina and Jo then travelled back to Korea, returning to Hong Kong with a franchise license for the famous Cafe Aboong Soft Ice Cream Fish Bun.

Unlike anything ever eaten

Cafe Aboong's trademark treat uniquely combines three well-loved Korean desserts – fish buns, frozen yogurt, and chocolate fondue – creating a twist of an iconic Korean snack item mixed with modern, international touches. The infusion of multiple tastes, textures and novel presentation has whet the appetites of many, and Hong Kong is not about to miss out.

"When we first started, there was no such combination in Hong Kong," says Jo. "Although there are many imitations out there, we are still determined to stick to the original recipe. We use only frozen yogurt, and all the ingredients are air-freighted straight from Korea."

Health was a major consideration for the partners when choosing to adopt Cafe Aboong for the local market. Regular ice cream does not address this concern as the company wanted more than just a fun dessert.

Adding to its character is a three fruit chocolate fondue skewer, and the bun



itself. Its charming, distinct shape hides an inner layer of soft waffle opposite its crispy shell. It can hold the frozen yogurt for a lengthy period without collapsing, and within it, beneath the cup, is a special red bean or custard cream filling – dessert in a dessert.

Backbone of Success

Jo Wan and Regina Lee were neophyte entrepreneurs, with little besides a dream and dedication when they began their endeavor.

"We had no experience in operating businesses, we really knew nothing," says Jo. "We were not abundantly funded, and there were only two people in the shop. It was very tiring. In time, all of the

early problems, except perhaps for the matter of space, have been solved."

The franchise is now able to hire more part-time staff, and is already extending its opening hours. Plans for three more franchises are underway, as is the launching of even more products. Diligence and an unwaveringly positive attitude have seen the partners through, as Cafe Aboong continues to delight the populace with its delicious, signature snack. ■

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