

# Mooncake 101



Mandarin Oriental

## Traditional Cantonese

For mooncake diehards, there's the traditional baked Cantonese mooncake, a classic version made with a nicely browned, glossy pastry. Fillings range from the traditional red bean paste (*tau sar*) from **Si Chuan Dou Hua** to unique ones like the creamy milk tea paste from **Lai Po Heen** at Mandarin Oriental, or even options like the chocolate-whisky combination from **Genting**. The key lies in the freshness of the mooncake. **Chynna** does a very nice version that's marginally smaller but with a thin, fluffy pastry that's just right. Cut yourself a tiny slice, pour a cup

of gently steaming *tie guan yin* and dig right in.

### Get them at

- **Si Chuan Dou Hua**, PARKROYAL Kuala Lumpur (03 2147 0088/[www.sichuandouhua.com](http://www.sichuandouhua.com)). From RM23.
- **Lai Po Heen**, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur (03 2179 8885/[www.mandarinoriental.com](http://www.mandarinoriental.com)). From RM20.
- **Resorts World Genting** ([www.rwgenting.com](http://www.rwgenting.com)). From RM12.
- **Chynna**, Hilton Kuala Lumpur (03 2264 2596/[www.life.hiltonkl.com](http://www.life.hiltonkl.com)). From RM27.



Banana Chocolate from Ti Chen



Shang Palace

## Shanghai style

This particular mooncake is differentiated by a pale golden, rounded pastry shell that's usually baked with a slightly crackly crust, topped with crunchy lotus seeds. The buttery, flaky and lightly salted crust contrasts well with traditional sweet and creamy fillings. As such, the Shanghai style mooncake is usually available in classic options such as white lotus paste, pandan and yam, some also with one single

salted yolk in the centre for textural variety. Pair them with flower teas.

### Get them at

- **Five Sen5es**, The Westin Kuala Lumpur (03 2773 8338/[www.westin.com/kualalumpur](http://www.westin.com/kualalumpur)). RM25.
- **Shang Palace**, Shangri-La Hotel (03 2074 3560/[www.shangri-la.com](http://www.shangri-la.com)). RM28.

## Snow skin

Inspired by mochi and Vietnamese mooncake (*banh deo*), Tai Pan bakery in Hong Kong first came up with the snow skin mooncake in 1989. Born out of a demand for less oily (as the logic goes, hence healthier) versions of this mid-autumn dessert, the non-bake snow skin mooncake has a delicate 'snow skin' made with glutinous rice flour (somewhat resembling a giant mochi) encasing the filling. Since then, the snow skin has spurred mooncake makers to greater heights with an incredible variety of flavours and ingredients. Think champagne, passion fruit, aloe vera, osmanthus, and our

favourite local represent – the Musang King. This year, Chef Yaw from Ti Chen has designed a unique heart-shaped banana chocolate snow skin, inspired by a Chinese myth of the Cupid-like Yue Lao Yeh (Old Man from the Moon).

### Get them at

- **Ti Chen**, Saujana Hotel Kuala Lumpur (03 7843 1234/[www.shr.my](http://www.shr.my)). From RM25.
- **Chynna**, Hilton Kuala Lumpur (03 2264 2596/[www.life.hiltonkl.com](http://www.life.hiltonkl.com)). From RM27.
- **Dynasty**, Renaissance Kuala Lumpur Hotel (03 2162 2233/[www.renhotels.com](http://www.renhotels.com)). From RM16.80.

## TAKE THREE... contemporary mooncakes



### Ice cream

In addition to ice cream mooncakes, this year Häagen-Dazs offers the Crispy Collection – five Crispy Sandwiches (ice cream encased in thin crispy wafers) in a limited edition box designed by Canadian artist Osnat Tzadok. All Häagen-Dazs outlets ([www.haagendazs.com.my](http://www.haagendazs.com.my)). From RM70.



### Jelly

Yes, these only resemble mooncakes in the sense that they use the same mould as the traditional mooncakes, but the multi-colour multi-layered jelly mooncakes are surprisingly enjoyable, and we like the pandan version at **Q Jelly**. **Q Jelly Bandar Puteri** (03 8063 8859); **1 Utama** (03 7710 1159/[www.qjelly.com](http://www.qjelly.com)). From RM8.50.



### Mochi

Texturally taking things a notch further is the mochi mooncake. **Tai Thong's** version has a jackfruit mochi embedded in a pineapple lotus snow skin, while dim sum Chef Lo of **Tao** at InterContinental has created a mini peanut butter snow skin with a Japanese purple potato paste and yam *omachi* at the centre. Cute. All Tai Thong outlets ([www.taihong.com.my](http://www.taihong.com.my)). RM18.80. **Tao**, InterContinental Kuala Lumpur ([www.intercontinental-kl.com.my](http://www.intercontinental-kl.com.my)). RM20.

## Best mooncake boxes

### Concorde Hotel

Remember those stacks of four red bean mooncakes you can buy from the *kedai runcit*? Concorde's mooncakes also come in stacks, but in a jar instead. The cylindrical jar has two components – the jar (choose from purple, orange or fuchsia) and a silver holder with an intricate oriental pattern. Put candles in the jar or just use it as a vase. While you're at it, remember to get Concorde's legendary Musang King snow skin too. (03 2144 8750/[kualalumpur.concordehotelsresorts.com](http://kualalumpur.concordehotelsresorts.com)). From RM24.50 per piece; from RM98 for four.



### Tao, InterContinental Kuala Lumpur

Tao's mooncakes come in individual butterfly-themed boxes placed in a tasteful cream-coloured box that looks like a traditional Chinese window. It opens with small handles that look like ancient Chinese copper door handles. (03 2782 6000/[www.intercontinental-kl.com.my](http://www.intercontinental-kl.com.my)). From RM20 per piece; from RM112 for four.



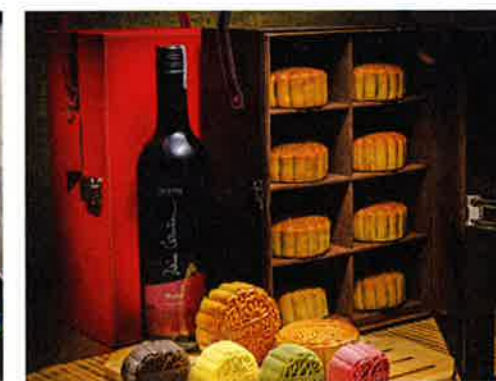
### Pullman Bangsar

Pullman is pulling out all the stops with their mooncake sets that double as convertible wooden tea trays or traditional tea making trays. (03 2298 1888/[www.pullmanhotels.com](http://www.pullmanhotels.com)). From RM20 per piece; from RM120 per set.



### Chynna, Hilton Kuala Lumpur

Chynna channels the Louis Vuitton trunk with stitch-effect finishing and steel fittings. Each box fits four mooncakes, with two on the top and two from the side in small 'drawers'. Comes in red or the limited edition pink. (03 2264 2596/[www.life.hiltonkl.com](http://www.life.hiltonkl.com)). From RM27 per piece; from RM105 for four.



### Ti Chen, Saujana

Ti Chen's mooncake box comes in a faux-leather edition available in red or chocolate, also designed to carry a bottle of wine along with the mooncakes. (016 223 1621/[www.shr.my](http://www.shr.my)). From RM25 per piece; from RM128 for four.