

AZ Insider: Is there really a P.F. Chang?

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"The AZ Insider" with Kathy Shayna Shocket: Get the inside scoop on Arizona's social scene and celebrity news.

Yes. His story is captivating. We had dinner with him and enjoyed the new menu items.

It's such a delightful experience to have dinner at P.F. Chang's with the real P.F. Chang! He's the co-founder of the restaurant chain that now has 200 restaurants throughout the U.S., as well as Hawaii, Kuwait and Dubai.

Yes, it's an honor to sit with the real P.F. Chang for a causal private dinner and have him politely suggest that the steamed dumplings "are even better when you dip in them a bit of hot mustard."

You see, unlike the fictional characters of Mrs. Buttermilk, Aunt Jemima and Betty Crocker- there is a real P.F. Chang. His name is Philip Chiang. He and his co-founding partner Paul Fleming (thus the P.F. initials) dropped the "i" in Chiang's last name for simplicity.

That was in 1993, with the first location in Scottsdale. Obviously the name, the unique Cantonese-Chinese cuisine and the partnership--- was a recipe for success.

It all began because Paul Fleming (a philanthropist and respected businessman from the Valley who also owned Ruth Chris Steak House and is still affiliated with Fleming's Steakhouse) was a huge fan of Chinese cuisine and a frequent customer of The Mandarin restaurant in Beverly Hills. The Mandarin was owned and operated by Philip Chiang who teamed up with Paul to create P.F. Chang's unique menu.



Philip, who is now the company's culinary ambassador, joined us for the wonderful dinner featuring the new Triple Happiness Happy Hour Menu. The scrumptious evening of dinner and great company was hosted by Brian Shaw and Shaun Buchanan, General Manager and Manager of P.F. Chang's at the Scottsdale Waterfront.

Philip who lives in Los Angeles hails from restaurant royalty. His celebrity mother, Madame Chiang was the founder of the Mandarin in Beverly Hills. He also owned the popular Asian eateries in Los Angeles, the Mandarette and the Lucky Duck.

The enhanced menu featured new signature cocktails created specifically to complement the Bistro's menu which boasts the new Tuna Tataki Crisp: sliced Ahi tuna, seared rare on a crispy wonton, topped with fresh diced Ahi tuna, crisp cucumber tossed in citrus-sesame soy sauce.



Kathy Shayna Shocket is a Phoenix based writer. If you have a good item for The AZ Insider, you can email her at redcarpetgirl@aol.com.