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The Daily Meal celebrates the most exemplary epicurean endeavors on the Asian continent

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101 Best Restaurants in Asia

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October 10, 2014



By [Lauren Mack](#)
Writer

Follow

on's dining scene over the course of a
eption in Asia. Building on [The Daily](#)
101 Best Restaurants in Asia, we now
list, which is brimming with newcomers,
list, and long-time favorites.

[See the 101 Best Restaurants in Asia 2014 \(Slideshow\)](#)

It is increasingly difficult to whittle the list of best restaurants in Asia down to 101. It would have been much easier to name 101 excellent restaurants in China alone, or in Japan, or Hong Kong, but we wanted to represent as wide a geographical area as possible, discovering lesser-known gems in unfamiliar corners of Asia as well as recognizing the best establishments in better-known places. Thus, our list covers 12 countries in all, one more than last year – Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Myanmar (making its debut this year with [Padonmar](#) in Yangon), Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam – plus Hong Kong and

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- They enjoy it
- It helps them appreciate the holiday
- They look forward to it each year
- They don't care

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Macau.

This year's list includes 48 restaurants that are new to this ranking. While China led with 28 restaurants on last year's inaugural 101 list, Hong Kong tops the list in 2014 with 19 restaurants, narrowly edging out Japan with 18 (China scored 15).

We offer choices in 28 cities (three more than last year) – not just capitals like Beijing, Seoul, Taipei, and Tokyo, but smaller municipalities, too, including Đà Nẵng (Vietnam), Unawatuna (Sri Lanka), and Taichung (Taiwan).

Our ranking reflects the fact that larger cities like Beijing, Tokyo, and Hong Kong are seeing top-notch competition now from Phnom Penh, Hanoi, and the like. While many of these restaurants didn't open in the past year, they are new to

Much can happen in a region's dining scene over the course of a year, and 2014 was no exception in Asia.

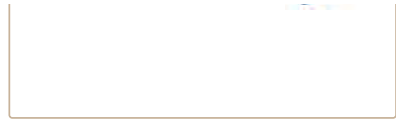
The Daily Meal's list, a testament to their chefs' skill and the ever-increasing competitiveness in the region from new places that aren't backed by big dining-concept companies, ensconced in hotels, or run by celebrity chefs. Three exceptional restaurants on our 2013 list have since closed: [Restaurant Guy Savoy](#) in Singapore (#75), [The Drawing Room](#) in Hong Kong (#57), and [Noodle Loft](#) in Beijing (#49).

In choosing our 101 best, we called upon more than 50 experts who either live in Asia or spend time there frequently – restaurant critics, food and lifestyle writers, and bloggers with wide restaurant-going experience (the roster was slightly different from last year's, which in part probably accounts for the fact that some high-ranking restaurants last year dropped down the list or disappeared this year, as well as for the presence of so many new places). These experts were supplemented by The Daily Meal's well-traveled editorial staff. We asked all the respondents to help nominate places to build upon last year's ballot of 202 contenders, then evaluate the selection and vote for their favorites, country by country ([meet The Daily Meal's panelists](#)).

We further asked our panelists to vote by region in four categories: Cuisine, Style/Décor /Service, Value, and Don't Miss. From innovative menu options to plating and presentation to freshness, quality, and taste, panelists evaluated each restaurant's cuisine and voted only for the restaurants which they believe to be extraordinary, whether showplaces for avant-garde culinary techniques or simple venues specializing in noodles or dumplings. They also rated the overall dining experience, from the restaurant's interior design and dining room ambiance to the skill and efficiency of the service. In the Value category, panelists

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selected the restaurants that offer the best meals in each price category, defined as the price per person for a meal, food only: budget (\$25 or less); moderate (between \$25 and \$100 – and yes, by Asian standards, that counts as moderate); and pricey but worth it for a splurge (\$100 or more). Finally, we asked this question: What restaurant or restaurants should a visitor to each city in our survey absolutely not miss – which places, in other words, are essential to the culinary identity of each city or region?

Every restaurant, then, had the chance to be voted on up to four times in the survey. The percentage scores from each category were weighted. The greatest weight, a full 50 percent, was assigned to our Cuisine category; after all, restaurants are first and foremost about food. Our Value and Style/Décor/Service categories had equal weight with 19 percent each, and the remaining weight, 12 percent, was assigned to Don't Miss.

We considered restaurants offering the cuisines of their own regions, of course, but also those that serve the food from other parts of Asia. We also included a number of the great restaurants offering classic French, authentic Italian, imaginative East-West fusion, and other cuisines of the world. We did not discriminate according to location; no town, island, or enclave went unconsidered ([see the entire 101 Best Restaurants in Asia list](#)).

[Slideshow: 101 Best Restaurants in Asia 2013 \(Slideshow\)](#)

Six restaurants from The Daily Meal's 2013 edition of [101 Best Hotel Restaurants Around the World](#) are also honored here, including three in Hong Kong – [Felix](#) at The Peninsula Hotel, [Lung King Heen](#) at the Four Seasons, and [Man Wah](#) at the Mandarin Oriental – along with [Jade on 36](#) and [Sir Elly's](#) in Shanghai and [Orient Express](#) at the Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi.

The dining options in Asia today are seemingly endless, from street carts to night markets to cosmopolitan cafés to the domains of international celebrity chefs. This has by no means always been true. Sushi bars, for instance, barely existed before the 1920s, and really became ubiquitous around Japan – and then around the rest of Asia and the world – only after refrigerated shipping became common in the last third of the twentieth century, allowing fresh, sushi-grade fish to be sold almost everywhere.

In most Asian countries, in fact, there isn't a long tradition of restaurants in the modern Western sense – which, among other things, helps explain why there are so many European or fusion places on our list. Two other factors, though, have been the rise of the so-called Four Asian Tigers – Hong Kong,



[Slideshow: 101 Best Restaurants in Asia](#)

Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan – whose economies skyrocketed in the latter half of the last century, and the increasing Westernization (and accumulation of private wealth) in China, both of which helped create a customer base for restaurants offering sophisticated French or Italian dining. At the same time, provincial, often humble mom-and-pop places remain the norm in

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vast parts of Asia, and continue to provide some of the best food and most authentic flavors of their regions.

Any list like this one is bound to stir disagreements among discerning diners; even our own staff was divided on which restaurants should make the final cut.

After checking out The Daily Meal's 101 Best Restaurants in Asia, share your compliments and critiques in the comments section below – or on Twitter using the hashtag [#bestrestaurants](#) – and let us know what places you think should have been included, or should have been left out.

If you have dined at any of these restaurants, pin your favorite photos on [The Daily Meal's Eating & Dining Pinterest board](#). Which restaurant made it to the top of the list? The answer might just surprise you.

101. Fox Wine Bistro (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)



With an impressive wine list featuring over 400 choices and an intimate setting with modern, minimalist décor, [Fox Wine Bistro](#) aims to stand out. While wine is a big focus here, the menu features a selection of well-cooked Italian-inspired dishes that pair well with wine. Creamy gorgonzola pasta, grilled squid and octopus salad, beef kebabs with grilled vegetables, and cheese plates are a few of the offerings.

100. Aziamendi (Phuket, Thailand)



Located just steps away from the fine sand and turquoise water of Natai beach and a 20-minute drive from Phuket International Airport, Aziamendi is the fine-dining restaurant at the luxury resort [Inalia Beach House](#). Under the supervision of Michelin three-star Basque chef Eneko Atxa – whose restaurant in Bilbao is the similarly

named Azurmendi – [Aziamendi](#) offers diners a choice of three fixed-price menus, one paying homage to the Bilbao restaurant, one focusing on Thai ingredients and flavors, and one for vegetarians. While the particulars change constantly, dishes previously featured include truffled egg (an egg yolk injected with black truffle jus); Basque baby squid and pigeon with hazelnuts and foie gras; and suckling pig with pumpkin noodles and dashi. While the restaurant is currently closed, it will open again for the season on November 1 of this year.

Lauren Mack, former Travel editor and Special Projects editor at The Daily Meal, lived and dined in Beijing and Taiwan for more than six years. She is The Daily Meal's New York City Travel Editor. Follow her on Twitter [@lmack](#).

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