



As someone of dual Chinese and English heritage, brought up by a Chinese mother in Manchester, I have followed the Chinese tradition of Sunday dim sum. I have also tried to raise my children with a few Chinese customs and so have explored almost all the restaurants in London and Manchester. My children LOVE dim sum and Chinese food in general and I'm frequently asked about Chinese restaurants and where I like to go with the family. So here are my suggestions for where to celebrate the New Year or enjoy any time of the year.

There are so many mediocre and over-priced restaurants that it might put you off eating traditional Chinese food. There are of course the high end ones: **Hakkasan**, **Yauatcha**, **Ping Pong** and **Gilgamesh**, all very good quality, slightly designer Chinese food, but all very expensive. **Gilgamesh** is the teenagers' choice,

trendy interior and more like a nightclub style restaurant in New York. Dinner at **Hutong** in the Shard is an experience – it has a fabulous view and the food is delicious, though very spicy; you can ask for some of the dishes to be made not so hot. There is definitely a wow factor when you see the view of London lit up. I know that the viewing platform is higher up the

2018 is the Year of the Dog, the symbol of loyalty and honesty. People born in this year have some of the best traits of human nature: they are honest, friendly, loyal and have a strong sense of responsibility.

Shard, but if you are going to pay to just see the view, it may be worth going for one course or a drink in the bar to experience it. All the restaurants and drinks are pricey in these tall buildings, but you may as well eat and drink rather than paying £25 just for the viewing platform.

My kids just love traditional Chinese barbecue roast pork (char siu) and roast duck, which is only sold in the more everyday style restaurants, so we frequent the following: **Royal China** on Baker Street (always busy, so be prepared to queue), **Wing Yip** in Cricklewood, a very big, busy and noisy traditional restaurant but great value, and you can then do your food shopping in the vast adjoining supermarket. **Imperial China** on Lisle Street, through a door and courtyard, is very good and moderately priced, and then there is **The Good Earth** in Mill Hill, a smart and smaller restaurant, perfect for





taking grandmas to – my mother in law loved this place and it was close to her house. We recently discovered **Phoenix Palace** near Baker Street. It's fine as an alternative to Royal China especially if you hate queuing. Also on Baker Street is **Bright Courtyard**. It's quite upmarket and they have iPads to order from which totally put my son off the restaurant! But it is high quality dim sum, similar in price to Royal China. **Princess Garden** in Mayfair is very good quality and you can book at lunchtime, which is a rarity. I also recommend **Pearl Liang** in Paddington Basin. We tried a new, very different restaurant

recently: **A Wong**, a Michelin star establishment, for lunch. The dim sum is very 'designer,' but not too expensive. I was divided in opinion, some were good, some were over thought out but my husband absolutely loved it. Dinner, I've heard, is a different experience.

Good choices in London's Chinatown include **Joy King Lau** as well as **Dumplings Legend** which has nice, freshly made dumplings with the famous Shanghai soup dumplings, where the soup is in the dumpling! During New Year's celebrations in Chinatown remember that restaurants will all be unusually busy all

weekend. A good tip on normal weekends is to go either very early, i.e. midday or even just before, or after 14.30 and you won't have to queue so much.

In Manchester we take my mother for dim sum at **Tai Pan**, which is just outside of the city centre. It is consistently good standard and importantly it is easy to park there. There are a lot of good Chinese restaurants in Manchester – Chinatown is a place that I frequented during my childhood. My mother was a waitress at the **Yang Sing** restaurant all through my childhood years, so dim sum was, and still is, a regular occurrence.



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