



House of China

107 JFK Rd., Dubuque, IA | 563-557-8275 | HouseOfChina.com

HOURS: Lunch: 11a-2:30p,
Dinner: Mon-Thurs 4:30p-9:30p,
Fri-Sat 4:30p-10:30p, Sun Buffet: 11a-2:30p

ATMOSPHERE: Casual dress, Asian décor,
efficient service

SOUND LEVEL: Comfortable

RECOMMENDATIONS: Crab Rangoons;
Shrimp Toast; Snow White Chicken;
Twice Cooked Pork; Hong Kong steak.

LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar; Mostly California
Wines; Specialty Drinks e.g. Mai Tai;
Zombie, Scorpion.

PRICE: Apps: \$1.50 to \$5.50, Lunch
Specials: \$6.15 Entrees: \$7.05 to \$13.00

RESERVATIONS: For parties of 6 to 100

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Check, Debit,
Major Credit

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS: Dining room and
restroom

TAKE OUT: Yes

DELIVERY: Lunch: 11:15a-1:30p, \$15 min;
Dinner: 4:30p-9p, \$20 min

Argosy's Food For Thought by rich belmont

The Yuan family has been in the Asian food business for many generations. First in China and then in South Korea. Tsai and Shou Yuan were operating a restaurant in South Korea when they decided to move to the United States. They had planned to go to Saint Louis but after clearing US Immigration found themselves in Clinton, Iowa where Shou had friends.

Soon after, they discovered Dubuque to be a quiet place to raise kids so they looked for a place to start a new restaurant. In August 1984 they opened House of China in the space previously occupied by the Cock & Bull Bar & Restaurant. Tsai and Shou did not speak English so they ran the kitchen and put their three children, Johnny, Kevin and Ling in the front of the house. The kids didn't speak much English either, so they had to study their new language along with learning how to cook Chinese cuisine and run a full service restaurant operation that was up to American standards.

The people of Dubuque were soon finding their way to this mysterious Chinese food place located deep within the Asbury Square. After 5 years Johnny and Kevin (Ling went into a different business) knew they had grown out of their current location. So in 1989 they converted the Iowa State Liquor Store into a full scale House of China complete with state of the art stir fry woks, rice steamers and appropriate Asian décor. After all, if you are enjoying Chinese cuisine you want to look around and think you are in China, right?

Today the Yuan family can say they have proudly been serving the Dubuque community for 27 years! The food is American Chinese cuisine prepared in the Mandarin tradition. Mandarin is a style of cooking incorporating fresh, high quality meats and vegetables. Mandarin cooking combines the best elements of Chinese regional cooking found in the Cantonese, Peking, Hunan, Fukien and Szechuan-Hunan provinces. For example, Cantonese cuisine is famous for meat grilling and fried rice; Peking cooking relies on the subtle use of spices; Hunan province is known for sweet and sour; and

Szechuan-Hunan is regarded as the center of hot and spicy flavors.

Of course, the American Chinese culinary art calls for the modification of ethnic food to suit a more Western culture palate. If they cooked the way people in China like their food; trust me, most of you wouldn't eat it! This is why you will find delicious flavorings with a pleasant blend of tastes. In recent years, however, Johnny and Kevin have noticed a significant increase in the demand for more hot and spicy food. As a result their menu now contains no less than 17 spicy dishes!

There are so many scrumptious dishes to choose from. Specialties include Crabmeat Rangoon, Chicken and Chinese Vegetables, Sesame Chicken, Snow White Chicken or Shrimp. Every meal is cooked to order (with the exception of the Sunday buffet) so you are free to request modifications by having ingredients reduced or added. Don't like celery? Tell them to leave it out. Want broccoli? They will add it in. Do you prefer brown sauce (soy sauce based) or white sauce (chicken broth based)? Do you see

something on the menu you would prefer spicier? You can have any dish customized just for you!

If you are health conscious you needn't worry. All food is prepared without MSG. Many of the entrees are steamed instead of fried and the use of oil and salt is kept to a minimum. There are many low carb items identified on the menu, as well.

The Sunday buffet was the first Chinese buffet in Dubuque. It was first offered due to popular demand. The most sought after items are the Egg Drop Soup, Broccoli Beef and Spicy Chicken Wings.

The House of China is without a doubt one of Dubuque's favorite places. It is currently a nominee for the 2010 KCRG TV 9 A-List in the Eastern Iowa's Best Chinese category. It is also the winner of the Hospice of Dubuque's Best Fest 2010 Best Place for Chinese Cuisine. In fact the people of Dubuque have voted it Best Fest's Best Chinese for the last 13 consecutive years!





**The Smoke Clears...
A New "House" Appears!**
by rich belmont

The morning of January 31, 2010, began like any other Sunday for the staff of Café Mana Java West, Dubuque. That changed when someone looked out the window across the parking lot toward House of China, 170 Kennedy Road. Something didn't look quite right. Black smoke was pouring out of all the rooftop kitchen vents and bathroom exhausts.

Danielle Rawson, a Café Mana Java employee, called the Dubuque Fire Department. They received the alarm at 8:08 a.m. and arrived at the scene within minutes at 8:12 a.m. The building was locked and unoccupied, requiring a forcible entry. Breaking the front doors the firemen encountered zero visibility. The interior was filled with smoke from floor to ceiling. The fire fighters crawled to the kitchen looking for the origin of the fire. Finding no heat they kept moving until they reached flames in a storage room. It was a strange fire. The building is made of fire resistant concrete block, has a steel roof, and is devoid of windows. The fire was unable to spread quickly and consumed the oxygen in the sealed building; it probably smoldered for several hours.

Kevin Yuan, one of the owners, had locked up at 10:30 p.m. the night before. By the time the fire was discovered at 8:00 a.m. it had been generating little heat but a lot of smoke.

Kevin was the second person called. At first he thought it was a joke. He knew he had followed all the normal closing procedures; his father turned off all the equipment and he double-checked, insuring kitchen appliances and gas-fired woks were shut off. His second thought was of his father, Shou Yuan, who opened the restaurant around 8:00 a.m. every morning. Kevin knew he would have gone into the building to find out what was wrong. Surely Shou would have been overcome by the smoke. Kevin raced to the restaurant. When he arrived about 8:20 a.m. he found the firemen inside. They had already extinguished the fire, broken a hole through the roof, and used their fans to dissipate the smoke. But Kevin's father was missing! The firemen did not find him in the building. After several frantic phone calls Kevin learned that Shou had deviated from his usual routine and had gone to Sam's Club to buy supplies. Shou was safe. None of the firemen were injured.

So why the fire? Since the cause could not be immediately determined Dubuque Fire Marshall, Mark Ludescher, was called in. He discovered the fire originated in a small room where kitchen equipment was stored and kitchen towels were cleaned in a washing machine and then placed in this storage room to air dry. He knew even washed kitchen towels still contain oils and grease capable of igniting at low temperatures. There was probably enough oil in the cleaning rags to cause spontaneous combustion. The fire had been contained to a small area. Luckily, paper and plastic products stored

nearby did not ignite. Mark estimated \$10,000 in fire damages plus unknown smoke damage.

The Fire Department had done an excellent job. Their mission was completed in less than 20 minutes. Kevin next thought of his employees; the cooks, kitchen personnel and waitstaff all needed their jobs. So he conferred with his father, Shou, and his brother Johnny. They decided to reopen as soon as possible. They called their insurance agent, Paul Wright, of Tricor Insurance and then their contractors and suppliers. Within a couple of hours they were all there: Black Hills Energy to restart the gas lines, A & G Electric to work on the electrical problems, Giese Companies to replace heating and AC systems, MMC Mechanical Contractors to rework some of the plumbing, carpenters, roofers and flooring people. In fact more than 60 specialists worked around the clock. ServiceMaster was called in to provide fire restoration services. Tricor Insurance and Servicemaster coordinated the restoration. Because the smoke had permeated the building so thoroughly the entire restaurant had to be completely emptied. Kevin said when the building was stripped to bare walls he could not even find a pair of chopsticks! Smoke got into everything. Half the electrical wiring had

to be replaced. All of the following equipment had to be replaced: 3 heating and air conditioning units, 3 exhaust fans, 5 reach in coolers, the walk-in cooler, all the AC ducts.

The entire ceiling, carpeting, most of the light fixtures, and about 30% of the kitchen equipment was replaced. The interior was completely repainted and half the artwork is new. The main computer system had to be reworked and that alone cost \$6,000. Even the dishes and silverware had to go. The cost of cleaning would have been more expensive than buying new tableware.

With reconstruction all current Fire Codes and Americans with Disability Act standards have to be adhered to. The grease trap was relocated to underground; electrical wiring and plumbing had to be updated and relocated. The restrooms reconfigured for wheel chair accessibility.

Fire Marshall Ludescher stated smoke detectors, sprinklers and key lock boxes were not originally required because of the building size. The Fire Department strongly recommends they be installed anyway. At his urging

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Voted Dubuque's Best Chinese 13 Straight Years!

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www.houseofchina.com

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a new "house" appears continued from page 21

some of these safeguards are included in the House of China restoration.

And what about the food? All of it had to be thrown away. Even the sealed liquor bottles. Tim Link, the Dubuque Environmental Sanitarian was there to supervise the disposal of all food and beverages. Four and half tons of food and liquor were destroyed.

Johnny Yuan is cognizant of his good fortune. This calamity occurred in winter, the slow season for his tradesmen. They were available to start rebuilding immediately, working 24/7. All of their suppliers tapped into their resources to ship in new equipment including air conditioners, coolers, smoke detectors, dishes and all the food and liquor. Not everything was

readily available. Tablecloths, some wall partitions and panels are back-ordered. The carpeting is temporary. Some seafood and other menu items were out of stock.

Johnny says there are no words, in English or Chinese, to adequately express the Yuan family's gratitude for the support provided by the City of Dubuque Fire Department, Tricor Insurance, ServiceMaster, and all the electricians, plumbers, carpenters, painters and food and liquor wholesalers. The family is indebted to its staff who all worked tirelessly to rebuild. They will be reimbursed for lost wages.

So when the smoke cleared a new House of China appeared. The reopening was February 15, 2010. Total timed closed? Two weeks! Total cost of that unknown smoke damage? One Half Million Dollars!



Sudoku

		9			2	8		5
5			9					1
	7			3				2
9		2		5		4		
	6		8					9
4					1			3
2			7					1
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		6	2			7		

Super Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Not quite closed
 - 5 Doris Day refrain
 - 9 Junket
 - 13 Significance
 - 19 Prepare a pear
 - 20 Author Murdoch
 - 21 Run the show
 - 22 Five iron
 - 23 Electrician's favorite rockers?
 - 26 Shorthand inventor
 - 27 Periwinkle, e.g.
 - 28 Primeval upheaval
 - 29 See 14 Down
 - 31 Mil. policy
 - 32 Lassie's mother
 - 34 Puzzled
 - 37 Word with song or dive
 - 38 Question for a tardy electrician?
 - 44 Figure
 - 46 Nice time of year
 - 47 Genesis name
 - 48 Wordy Webster
 - 50 Eloquent equine
 - 52 Boa, but not cobra
 - 55 Raven maven?
 - 56 Dandy
 - 58 Quick snacks
 - 60 Roller-coaster feeling
 - 62 Apparel
 - 66 Alaric, for one
 - 68 Buddies
 - 70 South Seas novel
 - 71 — Marie Saint
 - 72 TV's "— Haw"
 - 73 Part of USSR
 - 76 Electrician's theme song?
 - 80 "— Parkington" ('44 film)
 - 81 GI's address
 - 82 — down (destroy)
 - 83 Melodious McEntire
 - 84 Galba's garment
 - 86 First state
 - 89 Paradise
 - 90 Sleeve type
 - 94 — nous
 - 95 Cen. segments
 - 97 "— -Tiki"
 - 100 Clear the windshield
 - 101 Loretta of "M*A*S*H"
 - 102 Cuban currency
 - 105 Ladies of the lea
 - 107 Hosp. areas
 - 108 "— luego"
 - 111 Electrician's teatime treats?
 - 115 Wading bird
 - 117 '65 Righteous Brothers hit
 - 119 Capote, on stage
 - 120 "Unforgettable" name
 - 121 Born "— Gay"
 - 122 "— One of the Titans
 - 130 Fleet
 - 133 Electrician's favorite history subject?
 - 137 Tidy up
 - 138 Relate
 - 139 "So — You" ('77 song)
 - 140 — -friendly
 - 141 Borgnine or Gallo
 - 142 Award for 101 Across
 - 143 Chore
 - 144 Work in the lab
 - DOWN**
 - 1 Feigns
 - 2 Dear fellow?
 - 3 Surface measurement
 - 4 Dwell
 - 5 "— vous plait"
 - 6 Skater
 - 7 Heiden
 - 8 Loaded
 - 9 Sailing
 - 9 Wagner hero
 - 10 Capek drama
 - 11 Unwell
 - 12 Italian specialty
 - 13 Mischievous
 - 14 With 29 Across, rum cocktail
 - 15 Washington hrs.
 - 16 Words on an electrician's sampler?
 - 17 Lasso
 - 18 Mortise's mate
 - 24 Wilde work
 - 25 Aim
 - 30 Burro
 - 33 Herd word
 - 35 From — Z
 - 36 Page
 - 37 Bit of parsley
 - 38 Singer Dottie
 - 39 Craving
 - 40 Parent
 - 41 Diamond authority?
 - 42 — Paulo, Brazil
 - 43 Sally Struthers' birthplace
 - 45 Both: prefix
 - 49 Humble house
 - 51 Prevent
 - 53 Torn or Taylor
 - 54 Defect
 - 57 Perform a pirouette
 - 59 "— a Lady" ('71 hit)
 - 61 Andes animal
 - 63 Donizetti's "L'elisir d'—"
 - 64 Got a galley going
 - 65 Fancy dessert
 - 67 Relish
 - 69 Bedtime reading
 - 73 Mean Marquis
 - 74 Removes the cork
 - 75 Poet turned electrician?
 - 77 Nebbish
 - 78 Maris or Mattingly
 - 79 "My word!"
 - 85 Generation
 - 87 La Scala songs
 - 88 Moistens
 - 91 Pride papa
 - 92 Lot size
 - 93 Stack role
 - 96 Splinter group
 - 98 Hold the deed
 - 99 Safety —
 - 103 "— generis"
 - 104 Hospital worker
 - 106 Fast way to the UK
 - 109 Lodger
 - 110 Lincoln or Lyman
 - 112 Betting setting
 - 113 Learn fast?
 - 114 End product
 - 115 Cockamamie
 - 116 Less adorned
 - 118 Ms. Midler
 - 123 Leave out
 - 124 Turner of "Peyton Place"
 - 125 Hill dwellers
 - 127 — majesty
 - 128 Belligerent deity
 - 129 Spanish artist
 - 131 Enjoyed Thanksgiving
 - 132 — Plaines, IL
 - 134 Clear one's throat
 - 135 Common street name
 - 136 NASA affirmative

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Puzzle answers are located on page 30