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### Hong Kong's best-selling food guide banks on word of mouth

Relax News  
Thursday, 10 December 2009

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(Relaxnews) - When Samanta Pong and Fergus Fung were looking to establish their own guide to dining in Hong Kong they turned to what five years ago seemed like a pretty unique source - the local public.

It proved a canny move. The success since of the pair's WOM guides (<http://www.womguide.com>) - which is short for "Word of Mouth" - has been something of a phenomenon, with the past two editions topping the best-sellers' list at Hong Kong's major bookstores.

"When you want to know which places are good, you ask your friends," Fung told Relaxnews at the launch of the WOM guide 2010 for foodies.

"That was the idea and we are continuing to expand the sections to cover the specific things we think our audience wants to know."

Fung and his partner now have 12,000 registered "Wommers" regularly filing reviews for both the book and the website and such is its reputation that it is talked about in the same breath as New York's famous Zagat guide (<http://www.zagat.com>), which has been asking locals the same sort of questions since 1979.

"What we found is that when it comes to food, people tend to trust other regular local people," said Fung.

He might just be right too considering the controversy that erupted in Hong Kong with the launch last year of the city's first Michelin Guide, which included too many European style restaurants for many critics' tastes - and ignored many local favorites.

This year's WOM guide has included more specific sections - including where to go for specific meals and specific times of the day, where to go for specific dates, where to go for specific dishes (hairy crabs or Hainan chicken, for example) and where to take specific people (small kids, the in-laws, etc).

*WOM guide 2010 for foodies*  
Price: HK\$160 (£14)  
Number of pages: 368  
Number of reviewers: 12,000  
Number of restaurant reviews: 550  
Website: <http://www.womguide.com>

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