

# Curio's First Event – FOM Foodies

By Gisella Harrold

In April 2017 FOM launched *Curio*, an exciting new programme intended to give a platform to FOM members' interests, such as theatre performances, photography classes or the 'Foodies'.

The 'FOM Foodies' programme filled within a day and 20 people set out on the inaugural FOM Foodies' lunch on the 6 April. The restaurant we chose is a much-loved Singaporean institution, the Prima Tower, located in the area of Keppel harbour, which is dominated by one of the busiest container ports in the world.

Here you will find Singapore's oldest revolving restaurant and interestingly, it is at the top of a grain silo belonging to the Prima Group. The Prima Group was founded by Mr Cheng Tsang Man in 1961 and is today one of the largest flour millers, but offers a large range of other products, from milled flour to readymade food mixes (check out the local brand for Singapore Chicken Rice at the supermarkets).



Half of the Foodies group



The roasted duck

The restaurant itself was established in 1977 and getting up to the top floor is not only an adventure, using lifts and escalators, but it takes you right back to the 1980s. You will see a fish tank and red carpet and of course the highlight is a stunning view onto the harbour, Sentosa and the Masjid Temenggong Daeng Ibrahim.

Prima Tower specialises in Beijing cuisine and is famous for its Beijing Duck. A classical Imperial Court dish, it was mentioned in a cookbook by Hu Shihui, a court therapist and dietitian during the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368). The name is a misnomer, because it is believed to have originated in

Nanjing and only 'moved' to Beijing with the Ming dynasty. The work-intensive method of cooking is the reason that not many people attempt to cook it at home. After the duck is plucked, air is carefully pumped between the skin and the meat, to ensure extra crispiness. During the drying process, it's coated with multiple layers of maltose syrup, which is also the reason why the duck is so glossy. After this, it is traditionally roasted in an oven or over a wood fire.



The duck being carved

We ate it the traditional way. The skin was carefully removed from the duck and served wrapped in a thin pancake, with spring onions, sweet sauce and cucumber. The meat was carved and served at the end of the meal with a choice of either rice or noodles. The restaurant is also well-known for its *dim sum* and other classic dishes such as chicken with dried chillies, scallops, sliced fish and vegetables.

Since this was an FOM event, we shared some Foodie Fun Facts with the group, about the origin of revolving restaurants in ancient Rome and the life of the Prima Group's founder.

Interested in joining the 'FOM Foodies'? Sign up to the waitlist on [www.fom.sg](http://www.fom.sg) under Activities/Curio, we will get in touch with you as soon as we have enough interested members to start a new group.

In the next issue of *PASSAGE* we will have an article on our May adventure, a trip to another much-loved local restaurant, where during our lunch, the owner called to welcome us.



View from Prima Tower.