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EXCLUSIVE CHAT WITH THE FRENCH BEATMAKER, PLUS  
COURTNEY BARNETT, MARSHALL JEFFERSON, INVADER AND MORE

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# BATTLE OF THE STEAK FRITES

At first we thought it was just a fad in Hong Kong, but over the past year steak frites restaurants have multiplied like rabbits.

With Le French May underway, we decided to test out three of Hong Kong's most popular versions of the French dish in order to track down the best steak frites experience.

STEAK  
FRITES



## Le Relais de L'Entrecôte

Rating 評級: ★★★☆☆ Price 平均消費: HKD\$201-400

**T**raditional Parisian diner le Relais de L'Entrecôte is world famous for its steak frites dish, largely down to the mystery sauce slathered on the meat. We were excited to try the dish that more or less launched the world's enthusiasm for steak frites, but sadly we were a bit disappointed.

The set meal at le Relais de L'Entrecôte is 100% grass-fed sirloin from Australia. The steak is around 7oz, presented in two servings, with unlimited fries. Since recently, there's also a light lunch option with just one serving of steak and one serving of fries, which has apparently been very popular, but didn't sound like enough to us. The staff recommended we try it rare or medium rare, so we got one of each. The rare was perfectly tender, but disappointingly the medium rare was chewy, leaning more on the medium/well-done side.

The famous brownish green sauce is used in each of the 18 restaurants across Europe, the Middle East and Asia, but supposedly only one person in the world, the daughter of the original creator Paul Gineste de Sours, knows the recipe.

To taste, it's mustardy - you're even encouraged to add more French mustard to it from a pot on the table. It's simultaneously creamy and vinegary, and it's easy to see why it's become so popular around the world, but it overpowers most of the taste in the actual steak. The fries are freshly hand cut, and completely unseasoned. As a result, they are sweet with the natural taste of the European potatoes, which creates a nice dynamic against the pepperiness of the sauce.

The dessert was ultimately the highlight of our meal. The most popular dish is the Vacherin D'été, a beautifully balanced tower of cream, meringue, vanilla ice cream and raspberry sorbet. It was a lovely finisher to the experience.

We can't help but think le Relais de l'Entrecôte is a little overrated. This might be largely down to the fact that there are other places in Hong Kong that have worked on the French dish and evolved it into something a little more satisfying. That being said, it's a lovely representation of quaint French gastronomy, and its trimmed meat makes for a lighter and leaner meal.

傳統餐館Le Relais de L' Entrecôte的牛扒薯條譽滿全球，主要是因為他們淋在牛扒上的神秘醬汁。我們對可以一嘗這世界聞名的牛扒薯條起源有莫名的興奮，可是我們最終是失望而回。

儘管Le Relais de L' Entrecôte坐落在灣仔皇后大道東上，法國味道卻一點也不減。這香港分店擁有華麗的巴黎風格裝潢，女侍應生全都穿上法國女僕裝，落地玻璃窗令餐廳每個角落都被日光照耀著。

Le relais de L' Entrecôte套餐的牛扒是來自澳洲百分百青草餵飼的西冷牛肉。牛扒大概七安士，分開兩份上碟，而且薯條無限供應。近來他們也增添了一份牛扒一份薯條的午市套餐，聽說也挺受歡迎，可是大概也不能滿足我們驚人的食量。

他們建議我們試試一至兩成熟 (rare) 或三至四成熟 (medium rare)，我們兩款都點來試試看。一至兩成熟的那份非常的嫩，三至四成熟的就被煮得太韌，比較像是六至七成熟甚至全熟，令人失望。

著名的棕綠色醬汁在遍佈歐洲、中東和亞洲的十八家分店都會用上，但據說全

世界只有原創者Paul Gineste de Sours的女兒知道配方。對於醬汁的成份，在互聯網上亦有數之不盡的議論，其中一些人提出了醬汁的秘密在於雞肝。醬汁吃起來像芥末，餐廳甚至在桌上預備好小瓶的法國芥末，鼓勵你再加上來調味。

醬汁亦帶有奶油的味道，同時也有醋味，很容易就能理解到它聞名世界各地的原因，可惜的是它將原本牛扒的味道蓋過。薯條是新鮮人手切割和完全無調味，滲透著歐洲馬鈴薯的甜味，與醬汁的胡椒味成了一個很富動感的組合。

甜點是這趟試菜的亮點。這裡最受歡迎的是Vacherin D' été，由奶油、蛋白酥皮、雲尼拿雪糕和紅莓雪葩組成的高塔，拼上蘋果餡餅和清脆的檸檬酸橙雪葩一起品嚐，為我們的午餐添上美味的句號。

我們不禁覺得他們有點被評價過高，這很大程度因為在香港還有其他地方已經將新思路加入傳統法國菜，並最終演變成一些更令人滿意的結果。話雖如此，這裡確實盡顯了古色古香的法國餐廳一面，來吃一頓精簡的法國餐也倒是一種享受。



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www.relaisentrecote.hk

# La Vache!

Rating 評級: ★★★★★☆ Price 平均消費: HKD\$201-400



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**La Vache!**  
48 Peel Street, Central  
中環卑利街48號  
T: +852 2800 0248  
www.lavache.com.hk

**F**ew places in Hong Kong boast an atmosphere like La Vache! on Peel Street, but does their staple dish live up to the hype? After a boozy lunch session at the popular French hideaway, we certainly think so. Walking under the neon signs of La Vache! into its interior is a quirky experience in itself. The walls are lined with red and white-checked tablecloths in front of either drawings of French scenes or wood paneled mirrors, and the bar is lit like a smoky Parisian cocktail bar.

The set meal begins with a light and crispy walnut salad, paired with soft and warm bread with real and addictive French butter. While we finished our salads, our orders were taken (i.e., how we wanted our steak cooked) and a candle was lit in the centre of the table. The steak arrived not long after on a silver plate, which was placed on top of the candle in the traditional French style. The steak at La Vache is a trimmed entrecôte (although a few small chunks of fat are still in the meat), served with unlimited thin cut fries. Our first round of fries had hardened slightly since cooking, but the restaurant's

creamy signature sauce saved the day as a dipping alternative to ketchup and mayonnaise (which, unlike in many traditional steak frites eateries, are also served at the table). Our second round of fries later on were piping hot, salty, and dangerously moreish.

The meat (we ordered rare, as recommended) is wonderfully cooked; browned to perfection on the outside with a juicy, pink middle. The creamy Béarnaise signature sauce not only serves as a dipper for the fries, but also perfectly balances out the richness of the meat and the house red. The whole experience is essentially a flawless steak frites dish.

Hoping for something light and sweet for dessert, we were slightly let down with a fairly tasteless profiterole. Though a meal at La Vache! usually includes a wide choice of dessert from a tray, including a cheese platter and fresh fruit tarts, so the profiterole could be more or less excused.

Of the three restaurants we went to, La Vache! all-round won for atmospheric experience - a brilliant and tasty spot to book a table for a birthday dinner or to take visitors.

在香港很少餐廳有像在卑利街 La Vache! 的氣氛，但他們的招牌菜是否只是炒作？當我們在這法國小店渡過一個酒醉的午飯時段後，我們可以肯定絕對不是。從 La Vache! 門口的霓虹燈下走進餐廳已是一個獨特的體驗，餐廳牆壁以紅白桌布裝飾，配上一幅幅法國風景畫和木架鏡子，眼前的不就是巴黎雞尾酒酒吧。

套餐以香脆的核桃沙律作頭盤，搭配著柔軟而熱烘烘的麵包，及令人上癮的法國牛油。當我們吃完沙律後，服務員便來為我們點菜（就是問我們的牛扒想要幾成熟）和燃點起在桌子中央的蠟燭。沒多久服務員就把放了牛扒的銀盤子送上，依傳統法式風格放置在蠟燭上面。La Vache! 提供的是切片的上盛牛扒骨肉（雖然肉還是帶了幾小塊肥膏），還有無限的薄切薯條供應。我們第一輪的薯條略嫌放太久了，有點硬，但餐廳的招牌醬汁有把薯條

的味道救回來，成功取代了茄汁和蛋黃醬（有別於其他傳統牛扒薯條餐館供應的醬汁）。而第二輪的薯條則是新鮮熱辣的，簡直令人欲罷不能，吃過不停。

牛扒烹調得非常美味，我們順從服務員的建議點了一至兩成熟（rare）。牛扒外皮煎至完美的焦黃，內裡還能保持著粉嫩多汁。招牌的 Béarnaise 蛋黃醬不僅可以用來沾薯條，亦同時為豐富的肉味和紅酒的味道作一個完美的平衡，整個牛扒薯條的體驗可以算是完美無瑕。

之後我們想要一些清甜的甜品，但味道稍淡的泡芙就令我們有點失望。但 La Vache! 的甜點餐車通常都載滿不同的選擇，包括芝士拼盤和新鮮水果撻，所以區區泡芙的失手也是可以原諒的。

在我們去過的三個餐館之中，La Vache! 以整體氛圍和美味勝出，絕對是為朋友慶祝生日及介紹給遊客的首選。



# Steak Frites by The Butcher's Club

Rating 評級: ★★★★★☆ Price 平均消費: HKD\$401-800

**T**he Butcher's Club have pushed their boundaries as beef specialists by tapping into the traditional French dish, with indulgent, delicious and original results.

And when we say indulgent, we mean that you should probably prepare to unbuckle your belt by the time the meal is over. We sat down in the warm red and mahogany interior, the chefs in the open kitchen sprung into action, and within minutes our meal had begun.

A traditional steak frites meal begins with a light walnut salad to tickle your appetite before the meat marathon. Steak Frites by the Butcher's Club has gone an extra mile with their Wedge Salad - which is far from light and healthy. The salad is much like a simplified American Cobb salad, drizzled with a blue cheese dressing that contrasts playfully with chunks of maple-glazed bacon and sweet cherry tomatoes. As an appetiser salad, it's a little heavy - but we got the feeling that this was kind of the point.

The most popular order for the main course is the 14oz 40-Day Dry-Aged Rib-Eye & Duck Fat

The Butcher's Club把它們的極限推進，從牛肉專家發展到傳統法國菜，效果亦是意想不到的放縱和原創性。

而當我們說放縱的意思是指如果你來吃飯的話，就要準備好解開你的腰帶。我們在溫暖的紅色桃木椅子坐下來後，廚師就在開放式廚房啟動起來，並在幾分鐘之內把我們的菜做好。

傳統的牛扒薯條全都是用清新的核桃沙律作頭盤，主要目的就是要引發你的食慾，讓你在牛扒馬拉松之前作個熱身。The Butcher's Club卻用上薯角沙律，先不要提及清新和健康的問題。這個沙律很像一個簡化版本的美式柯布沙律，澆上藍乳酪，配上像沾上蜂蜜一樣的煙肉和甜車厘茄形成強烈的對比。可是作為沙律頭盤，實在是有一點太重手了，但是我們覺得這應該是他們故意的。

最流行的主菜是十四安士、風乾四十日的乾式熟成肉眼牛扒和鴨油炸薯條，配上Béarnaise蛋黃醬、胡椒或辣根醬。一塊煮到三至四成熟的牛扒出現在我們面前（他們推薦把肉煮到三至四成熟，因為

Fries, which comes with Béarnaise, Peppercorn or Horseradish sauce. A medium-rare order (they recommend medium-rare for its tendency to bring out all the flavours of the marbled beef) landed on our table, giving off a meaty and buttery scent that set off waterworks in our mouths. Dry-aged beef is what The Butcher's Club takes pride in; their Black Angus beef is grown on a farm in New South Wales then aged at a private Butcher's Club facility tucked away in Aberdeen.

This particular slab of meat, which arrived neatly lined against its bone, was succulent and strong in flavour - combining a fair amount of fat with the aged meat's distinctive taste. Even after cooling, the steak was tender throughout; plus, it was a great size.

And of course, the thick duck fat fries, for which The Butcher's Club is famous, melt on the tongue. It's unlikely that anyone who isn't a devout calorie-counter could possibly dislike them.

But, for the health conscious diner, there are still options. They just need to know how to find the Secret Menu. (Hint: QRE code.)

這樣就可以把大理石花紋牛肉的所有味道帶出來)，它散發出肉香和牛油的香味，引到我們口水直流。乾式熟成牛肉是The Butcher's Club最引以為傲的菜色，他們的黑安格斯牛肉在新南威爾斯州的一個農場生產，然後在The Butcher's Club位於香港仔的工場內風乾。

這種特殊的肉類，肉和骨整齊地排列，肉質和肉味都非常強，風乾後牛肉脂肪比例均衡，味道獨特。即使冷卻後，牛扒依然很細嫩，牛肉的大小也剛剛好。

當然，The Butcher's Club的招牌菜鴨油炸薯條早已經在我們的舌頭上融化了，只要你不是減肥狂，你就肯定會對這份薯條難以抗拒。

但是，對於注重健康的客人，他們當然也有其他選擇。The Butcher's Club在牛扒薯條餐廳內推出海鮮選擇作為試驗。作為替代肉類的菜單，客戶可以點Surf and Surf，這是一個結合澳洲珊瑚鱒魚和新斯科舍省龍蝦的菜式，只要你知道如何尋找秘密菜單就會有口福（提示：在餐桌上的墊枱紙中尋找QRE代碼）。



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