



THE BUTCHERS CLUB

A cool new concept beckons meat-lovers with artisanal sausages, house-made burgers and a lot of dry-aged beef.

Text by **Debbie Soo**, photos by **Samantha Sin**

The Butchers Club rewards foodies who venture into industrial Aberdeen. Its wooden shop front is loaded with certified US Angus prime and Australian Stockyard Gold steak, American Kurobata pork, sustainably harvested shellfish, Australian lamb, house-crafted burgers and sausages, and homemade desserts. This destination for meat-loving gourmands, who appreciate ingredients sourced and treated with the utmost care, was opened in May by Jonathan Glover, who also launched luxury deli and grocery store Pacific Gourmet.

“We are a butcher’s shop that does private dining,” he says. “We focus on sourcing the best ingredients and improving them. As far as I know, we are the only place in Asia that does dry-ageing to order. It’s a purely product-driven establishment, which we can afford to do because we are in an industrial building.”

The cavernous dry-ageing room is a temperature- and humidity-controlled space fitted with shelves of large cuts of beef, each tagged with a client’s name. Customers purchase a whole piece of beef before making a private dining booking, then the reserved beef goes into the dry-ageing room for 30 to 45 days until it’s ready for eating.

“Dry-ageing produces a large difference in the texture and flavour of the meat,” explains chef Aarik Persaud. “The natural enzymes within the beef break down the connective tissue and water evaporates out to intensify the beefy flavour. Dry-ageing also dissolves the moisture from the fat so you don’t get those gelatinous bits.”

A private dining table is set up every night in the store. Seating eight to 10 guests, it’s the setting for a feast: troughs of live oysters and fresh clams, buckets of steamed mussels, trays of jumbo king prawns and freshly baked bread basted with beef trimmings. The steaks arrive cut and cooked to every guest’s preferences, with dipping sauces, organic garden leaves and thrice-cooked duck-fat fries followed by artisan cheese and homemade key-lime pie or cheesecake. Prefer roast beef? Skip the steaks and opt instead for a whole slow-roasted prime rib on the bone, carved tableside and served with giant bowls of minted English peas, Jersey potatoes roasted with rock salt and caraway, and Yorkshire puddings.

The Butchers Club also runs a Sunday brunch and cooking lessons, including a sausage-making class where participants learn to make (and eat) their own bangers and mash. Made-to-order barbecue sets, professional catering and home-dining options are also available, or go to the online shop to select a piece of beef for dry-ageing. ■

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SEAFOOD PLATTER

A trough of ice arrives loaded with Coffin Bay oysters and marinated giant Cloudy Bay storm clams. The oysters are huge, providing sweet and cold sensations as we slurp them down. Several house sauces include a mango, capsicum and coriander salsa, and a Tabasco and wasabi-spiced cocktail sauce that we love. Other fresh seafood treats (not pictured) include Bloody Mary oyster shooters, iron pots of steamed mussels, king prawns and a Pacific island-style tuna poke.



BACON-WRAPPED HOKKAIDO SCALLOPS

A special addition for The Butchers Club’s Christmas menu, the scallops arrive piping hot and wrapped in house-smoked bacon made from cured Canadian pork belly. The fatty, salty slices are the ultimate balance to the sweet scallops. A sauce crafted from dried cranberries, veal jus and balsamic is sweet and slightly acidic, adding more flavour to the dish. Texture-wise, the crispy edges of the bacon and the slight chewiness of the cranberries are nice departures from the smooth scallop meat.



THE BIG BEEF EXPERIENCE

The Christmas surf ‘n’ turf betrays an Australian influence. Diners tuck into their reserved beef – certified Angus rib, striploin or shortloin – that is dry-aged to perfection, cut and cooked the way you like it. Enjoy it alone to fully appreciate the tender quality and robust beef flavour, or try the sauces, such as the piquant green peppercorn and brandy jus or Argentinean style chimichurri. The duck-fat fries, triple-vacuumed and triple-cooked then sprinkled with the house beef salt, are out of this world.



HOMEMADE SAUSAGES

Available only at the sausage-making class or from the shop, The Butchers Club sausages are crafted in-house with care and contain 100 per cent meat with no filler. The Irish pork sausage, with its mild flavour and smooth consistency, is a big hit among kids. We liked it with a hearty smear of grainy horseradish mustard and the house ketchup. Other sausage flavours include lamb with mint and rosemary, spicy lamb merguez, and dry-aged beef and horseradish sausage made from 30-day aged beef chuck.



KEY LIME PIE

Applause for the desserts goes to Glover’s wife, Jorene Low. She makes regular trips to Malaysia to bring back limes, which she believes accurately emulate the bite of real key lime pie. It’s a zesty finish to the meal, with the creamy yet tart lime filling perfectly matched by the crumbly graham cracker crust and hearty topping of whipped cream. Low’s chocolate cheesecake is also absolutely decadent and impossible to resist.

BILL
(Dinner for one)

\$1,150

* Minimum \$10,000 to book private dining room
* Menu is priced at \$1,150 a person or \$1,300 for the Christmas menu. The cost of the beef is in addition to the menu price.
* Advance purchase of the beef for your meal acts as a deposit.
* Corkage for more expensive bottles is priced at \$200 with sommelier service. Otherwise, corkage is \$100 / bottle.