

Taiwan: Drinking bubble tea from the source

Posted by Elise Kirsten on 28 February 2020

Bubble tea, also known as boba or pearl milk tea is a popular drink in many parts of the world. Bubble tea shops have popped up across the USA to South Africa. The creamy tea with its tapioca balls at the bottom is said to have originated at a little teahouse called Chun Shui Tang in Taiwan in the 1980s.



Chun Shui Tang teahouse in Taichung, Taiwan where bubble tea was invented.

Image credit: Elise Kirsten

I visited the teahouse in Taichung on a recent trip to the city to experience the [2020 Taiwan Lantern Festival](#) and, having never tasted bubble tea before, I was delighted to have discovered a new favourite.

The milky drink which has morphed into multiple versions (both hot and cold) was first created by Hsui-Hui Lin, one of Chun Shui Tang's employees in 1987, when she accidentally put tapioca balls (often used in desserts) in milk tea. The combination worked and the dividing line between tea and dessert was broken.

A narrow staircase leads down into the teahouse which has worn wooden door frames, chairs and tables which give the restaurant a welcoming atmosphere. Flowers, paintings and display items make it similar to teahouses in the Song Dynasty, according to its owners.

I enjoyed a cup of original pearl milk tea. The soothing warmth with frothy milk and the addictive tapioca balls which I scooped up with a teaspoon really had me sold on boba. You can order this drink cold, too.

Drinking my first cup of bubble tea (also known as pearl milk tea or boba) at Chun Shui Tang, the teahouse in Taiwan where it was first invented in 1987. [#bubbletea](#)



I have no doubt that had I been living in Taichung, this would have become one of my favourite spots to enjoy a cuppa. In addition to the food and drink on offer, the lighting is warm and welcoming and invites you to linger.

Cost: NT80 (about R40) for a small cold pearl milk tea and NT 95 (about R47.50) for a hot one. Besides the original, other flavours include pearl milk tea with rose salt or chocolate pearl milk tea with Oreo and pearl jasmine milk tea, to name a few.

珍珠奶茶又稱波霸奶茶是國際風行的休閒飲料，分店遍及美國及南非等國家，這種以奶茶搭配粉圓的飲品據聞是一家名為春水堂的小茶館在1980年代研發的產品。我在最近參訪台中2020台灣燈節活動時順道造訪了這家知名茶館，很高興首次品嚐了

這種飲料，也成了我的新美味。這種冷熱皆宜的奶茶是由春水堂的員工林秀慧在1987年時無意間嘗試將奶茶加入粉圓而開發出來的，這種組合也打破了點心與飲料分流的飲食習慣。

春水堂老闆表示，由進入茶藝館的狹窄梯道、舊木製屏風及餐桌椅，加上花卉、掛畫及擺設，意在營造宋朝茶館風格的氣氛。

我品嚐了一杯道地的珍珠奶茶，用湯匙舀起溫潤香甜的泡沫牛奶跟讓人上癮的粉圓，波霸魅力令人著迷，而且冷熱咸宜。

真實地融入台中，享受一杯珍珠奶茶成了我的最愛，除了美食與飲料，溫馨的燈光及熱情的款待讓人流連忘返。

珍奶售價：小杯冷珍奶約40南非幣；小杯熱珍奶約47.5南非幣，除了原味，珍奶還有鹹玫瑰、巧克力及茉莉花等口味。