

Some food for thought from a gold-medal Canadian chef

BY LENA FENG



Maurice O'Flynn has been called one of Canada's greatest ambassadors, travelling the world to help promote the Canadian foodservices and hospitality industry. As manager of the Canadian National Culinary Team, he led the team to a first place finish in the Culinary Olympics, held in Frankfurt Germany, in October 1992. Team Canada reigns as Olympic champion for four years, placing Canadian cuisine at the forefront of the international culinary scene.



The Marinated Salmon Crepe: an award-winning entry by Canadian chefs.

O'Flynn was in Hong Kong in May during HOFEX 93 (an International Food & Hotel Exhibition), adding a special flair to both the Canadian exhibit and the Alberta Beef Presentation & Tasting event. He says that his role during this trip was to try and help Canadian industry groups access the food and beverage markets of Hong Kong. Missions such as this one are often a merge of government and industry organizations. "It's important for Canadian industry groups to make a financial commitment to the market and develop long term plans for the market place. The government can then often spearhead industry initiatives as they have the office and the logistical support," says O'Flynn.



Alberta beef was featured at the recent food and hotel exhibition HOFEX.

in the territory in May: "We have developed a really good relationship with the Hong Kong chefs and some of the greatest hotels and restaurants in the world are here." Among his favourites are: La Plume at the Regent, Grissini at the Grand Hyatt, Gaddi's at the Peninsula, the Grill Room at the Sheraton and Stanley's (French). One new establishment he says he intends to visit during this trip to Hong Kong is Portico at Citibank Plaza.

O'Flynn believes Chinese cuisine has made quite a mark on food trends: "If I had to say which cuisines have had the greatest influence in the gastronomic trends worldwide, I would say first of all Italian, secondly Chinese, and thirdly French."

The latest culinary trend, says O'Flynn, is towards "*cuisine bourgeois*, where the flavour of the food is far more important than the presentation, where the empha-

sis used to be. It's going back to a more wholesome cuisine."

When it comes to food, O'Flynn says chefs are open about sharing their ideas: "For us it's a compliment when somebody takes our ideas - they may use it or adapt it." Some of the dishes featured in Team Canada's winning Olympic entry have already been picked up by others. For example says O'Flynn, the *Marinated Salmon Crepe* which combines an appetizer and salad course into one, has been picked up all over the world. "We've had letters from chefs all over on that one," says O'Flynn, adding their *Cheddar Crust* has also been copied extensively.



A selection of foods from different regions of Canada.

With such creativity and leadership being shown by Canadian chefs like Maurice O'Flynn, don't be surprised if your next gourmet meal in Hong Kong has a distinctively Canadian flair! ♦

Lena Feng is a member of the Publications Committee.



Gordon Young and Chris Liu, chef Maurice O'Flynn and David Wong, senior international director of Alberta agriculture.

Though his current schedule takes him more often to Japan and Europe, this champion chef is no stranger to Hong Kong. He says he was happy to be back