

# Green Queen

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## SpiceBox Organics Debuts New Organic Cafe Menu To Delicious Fanfare



By Jenny Star Lor

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QUINOA

BREAKFAST

DINNER

EATING OUT



Our favorite-favorite salad! Organic kale and roasted beetroot tossed in cold pressed olive oil and lemon dressing. Served cold, the beetroot offers a satisfying crunch with the fabulous dressing bringing it all together.

SpiceBox Organics has quietly rolled out a new signature spring café menu that has us shouting from the rooftops with glee. Filled with fresh, nutritious recipes, there is something on the menu for all types of hungry healthsters alike: from their vibrant organic salads to their gluten-free vegan chili to their traditional Biryani dish with a paleo twist, not to mention the vegan lasagna and the assortment of raw and paleo desserts.

“We have been working alongside our store patrons, corporate customers, in-house consultants, F&B operations team and even product vendors to get this spread ready,” enthuses Spicebox Organics founder Punam Chopra of the month-long project. “Based on their feedback, we made some changes and improvements [to the menu] that I think people are really going to enjoy!” Indeed, the new dishes are light and delicious, and sure to be a hit! Below, Green Queen gives you the full lowdown on Spicebox’s brand new menu.

**Dietary Key:** (GF) Gluten-Free; (V) Vegan; (P) Paleo; (D) Dairy

## Daily Organic Selection

### **Baked Mac and Cheese with Side Salad, HKD60 (D)(GF)**

These cheesy ‘Mac and Cheese’ squares are made using gluten-free quinoa pasta baked with fresh seasonal vegetables and served with a side salad of crunchy red cabbage topped with sesame seeds.

### **Wholewheat Baked Samosas – Set of 2, HKD75 (V)**

Whole wheat pasty samosas are stuffed with organic sweet potato, peas and their special house blend of spices, served with the perfect accompaniment, a tamarind chutney dip.

### **Roti Roll Stuffed with Grilled Tofu and Mushrooms, HKD66 (V)**

A vegan take on a traditional Indian street-food dish, the *Kathi* roll, this SpiceBox twist uses organic multigrain yeast-free flatbread, stuffed with tandoori tofu and mushrooms cooked in cold-pressed coconut oil. Seasoned with red onions and a mint/cilantro chutney, this was a Green

Queen fave!

### **Cashew Lasagna with side salad, HKD66 (V)(GF)**

One of the more inventive dishes on the menu, organic soybean lasagna sheets (from local HK brand Gafell!) are layered with tofu, cashew cheese and spinach bechamel. You won't be missing dairy when you take a bite of this.

### **Paleo Biryani, HKD99 (GF)(P)**

The classic biryani is Layered with cauliflower rice, this deliciously filling dish is made with eggplant and onion, laced in SpiceBox's special biryani spice mix.

## **Organic Salads**

### **Kale and Roasted Beetroot Salad, HKD78 (V)**

This was our absolute favorite salad: organic kale and roasted beetroot dressed with cold-pressed olive oil and lemon juice. It doesn't get more simple and satisfying.

### **Kale and Pasta Salad, HKD68 (V)**

Organic curly kale and gluten-free red lentil pasta glazed in a simple house dressing and topped with nutritious hemp seeds? Yes please! Could a dish be more on trend?

### **Warm Sprouts and Vegetable Salad, HKD78 (V)**

Freshly sprouted green mat beans and black-eyed peas are steamed then tossed with seasonal vegetables, roasted cumin and pink Himalayan salt- this warm salad is packed with sprout goodness!

### **Quinoa and Vegetable Salad, HKD78 (V)**

Fresh organic quinoa salad made with crunch veggies and tossed with organic turmeric and cumin seeds- this light, healthy and delicious salad can be served warm or cold.

## All Day Breakfast

### **Spanish Omelet, HKD70 (D)(P)**

Made with two whipped organic eggs, sweet potatoes and onions, and served with a side salad, we would eat this omelet for lunch everyday if we could. *Le sigh.*

### **Overnight Gluten-Free Oats, HKD75 (GF)(V)**

A SpiceBox special oat mix featuring dates, freeze-dried bananas, cacao powder, hemp protein and chia seeds, all left overnight to soak and blend in almond milk. The tasty consistency is more filling than even traditional oatmeal, and the nutritional profile gets a boost thanks to the hemp protein.

### **Coconut Wonder Chia Seed Parfait, HKD60 (GF)(V)(P)**

Parfaits have been our go-to breakfasts as of late and SpiceBox's Coconut Wonder is at the top of our list. Chia seeds with coconut milk, maple syrup, berries and SpiceBox nut granola? So yum!

### **Match Madness Chia Seed Parfait, HKD70 (GF)(V)**

All of your superfood faves in one convenient cup: chia seeds with matcha powder, honey, almond milk, cacao powder and fresh strawberries.

## Gluten-Free Desserts

### **Raw Carrot Cake, HKD45 (GF)(V)(P)**

A raw vegan take on a classic favorite: carrots, almonds, pecans, coconut oil, coconut cream and oats...What healthy carrot cake dreams are made of! This treat, as well as the raw brownie below are handmade by life coach and vegan chef Nathalie Sommers.

## **Raw Brownie, HKD45 (GF)(V)(P)**

As big traditional brownie fans, we were pleasantly surprised at how incredibly rich and satisfying these raw babies were, despite having only four ingredients: walnuts, pecans, dates and coconut oil.

## **SpiceBox Style Apple Crumble, HKD65 (GF)**

A British classic served up with a SpiceBox spin, this yummy crumble is made with apples, superfood gluten-free cereal, almond flour, coconut sugar, maple syrup, ghee, and a heavenly holiday spice blend.

## **Chocolate Cupcake, HKD45 (GF)(V)**

A guilt-free treat consisting of the vegan baking trio brown rice flour, potato starch and topped with a whipped dark chocolate frosting made from coconut milk and olive oil, the chocolate cupcake, and the carrot one below, are made by local GF bakery The Cake Minstrel.

## **Carrot Cupcake, HKD45 (GF)(V)**

This delectable dessert is made with a batter of fava flour, sorghum flour, potato starch, and tapioca starch, not to mention shredded carrots. The frosting is a veritable coconut frenzy, a combination of coconut milk, coconut milk powder, coconut flour, organic coconut oil, vanilla extract and lemon juice. *Try saying that five times fast.*

## **Paleo Poppy Seed Cake, HKD45 (GF)(P)**

A light and fluffy paleo-friendly poppy seed cake made with eggs, coconut oil and almond flour, this makes for an ideal low-carb breakfast choice.

## **Paleo Chocolate Cake, HKD45 (GF)(P)**

It's hard to believe that this decadent cake is made from just eggs, coconut oil, almond flour, cacao, honey, coconut cream and dark chocolate frosting. Impressively good!

# Organic Smoothies

## Detox Mixed Greens Smoothies, HKD78

Kale, apple, cucumber, celery, moringa leaf powder, lemon, ginger, coconut water and chia seeds...Loaded with antioxidants and vitamins, this supergreen blend is an excellent daily drink.

## Energize Smoothie, HKD70

Our favorite smoothie of them all, the Energize blends cacao, banana, almond milk, almond butter and zesty spice mix to give you a real pick-me-up buzz.

## Power Protein Smoothie, HKD70

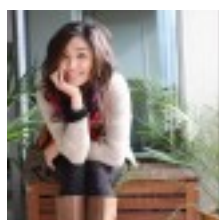
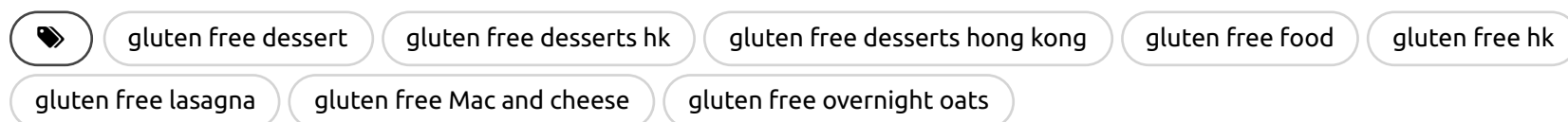
Made with NuZest strawberry pea protein, berries, almond milk and chai spice mix, this amino-acid replenishing smoothie is the perfect post-workout refueling drink.

**Editor's Note:** the entire new menu is only available at SpiceBox Organics' Caine Road and Kennedy Town locations; the Sai Ying Pun only stocks a limited selection of grab and go offerings. You can also order most of it for delivery using FoodPanda and Deliveroo, and Spicebox also works with food waste reduction platform Food Savior.

*For a list of locations, click here. +852 2568 2728; Email [info@spiceboxorganics.com](mailto:info@spiceboxorganics.com) or send a message on Facebook for more information.*

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*All photos courtesy of Green Queen*



### Jenny Star Lor

Jenny Star Lor is Green Queen's resident wellness writer. Originally from Los Angeles, she now calls Hong Kong home. Previously, she wrote and reported for global publications such as The Hollywood Reporter and US Weekly. She is also a passionate pole dancer and teaches classes across Hong Kong.

# Hakawa Chocolate: Hong Kong First Organic Bean To Bar Chocolate Maker & Cafe



By Jenny Star Lor

Last updated Jan 22, 2018

If you trudge up along the Gough Street stairs from Queen's Road Central that deposits you off at Shing Wong Street (or further up to Hollywood Road), you will be rewarded with the mouth-watering aroma of roasted cocoa beans at the top of those 87 concrete steps. With a mix of hot chocolate and a faint hint of nuts (*or maybe a type of spice?*), that heavenly scent belongs to none other than Hong Kong's newest bean-to-bar chocolate cafe, Hakawa Chocolate.

Sally Kwok Pik and Mandy Wong Ngai, the co-owners and chocolate makers behind the artisanal, handcrafted chocolate company have been churning out small-batch cocoa beans to bricks of chocolate since last summer. The process, called bean-to-bar, denotes that every step of their operation is done by the chocolatier. There's no remelting of chocolate and repackaging it as their own (that process involves using *couverture*, commercially produced blocks of chocolate FYI). **Instead, Sally and Mandy source their raw organic cocoa beans from co-operative farms in Sri Lanka.** Bringing them back to Hong Kong, it all gets lightly roasted in small batches, winnowed (removing the outer shell from the nib), and ground over the course of several days before resting for a minimum of three months to develop flavor. Self-taught, inventing and rejiggering equipment to fit their chocolate needs, this labor of love takes months until the final product is ready.

"One of the reasons Mandy and I set up shop is that we wanted to do something authentic here in Hong Kong," explains Sally. **"When we make our own chocolate bricks, we know it's exactly 72 percent cacao and 28 percent organic cane sugar. There is no additives or chemicals.** The result is a simple bar of chocolate that is supposed to taste exactly what it is."

Their name, *Hakawa*, is a mashup of their motherland, Hong Kong, and *kakawa*, an ancient Olmec (the earliest known major civilization in Mexico) word meaning cacao or chocolate infuses an amalgam of the traditional and their cultural heritage. With interesting flavors like Sichuan pepper, Himalayan salt, and goji osmanthus, most of their ingredients are locally sourced from

nearby markets, like neighboring Yuan Heng Spice Company on Tung Street. **One of their bestsellers? The Sichuan pepper bar, made with two types of peppers and four kinds of chilis!** Note the sharp snap when breaking off a piece of the bar (an indicator of freshness and quality) and the glossy sheen indicative of the craftsmanship. Quality, handmade chocolate has deeper flavor than the typical, ordinary mass produced chocolate, which is clear when you sink your teeth into any Hakawa product: one bite into the Goji Osmanthus bar and I can immediately taste the distinctive and intricate flavors from the cocoa. Speckles of dried osmanthus flowers and goji berries adorn the thin brick of 72 percent cocoa bar, in which I can detect the fruity fragrance of the sweet flowering plant native to eastern Asia.

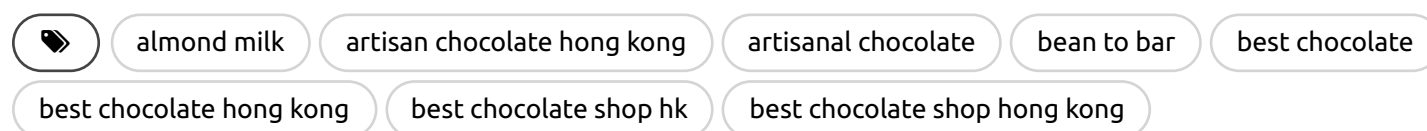
Wedged in an itty-bitty seven-square-meter corner, their storefront has a Scandinavian-chic aesthetic – with its clean white-tiled walls, and minimalist, stark silhouettes – which makes the space seem bigger than it ultimately is. But what they lack in size, they make up for in taste and innovation. **Their drinkable chocolate is another highlight not to pass up.** Two options are provided for their homemade cocoa drinks: 72 percent or 100 percent. All drinks are available with vegan milk options: they feature almond milk and soy milk! Watching outside the shop window as they prepare your cup of hot (or iced) chocolate is fascinating – weighing chocolate from beakers, warming the milk, breaking off and crushing fresh mint (I ordered an iced fresh mint chocolate) and mixing it all together – reminiscent of traditional alchemy in a teeny cafe, crafting some cocoa beans and mint into a delicious, refreshing work of art.

The next time you fancy the finer chocolate confections Hong Kong has to offer, stop by this charming shop on Gough Street. I'll race you up those Gough Street stairs if I'm around!

*Shop 1B, 49 – 51A Gough Street, Central, +852 6163 3563, find them on Facebook here.*

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*Images courtesy of Hakawa Chocolate and Green Queen.*



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