

PRESS-TELEGRAM

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Cambodian restaurants beckon

By Richard Guzman
RIGUZMAN@SCNG.COM

Long Beach's Cambodian food scene will be under the spotlight next week with the return of Cambodian Restaurant Week.

More than a dozen restaurants are participating in the third annual event, which is meant to highlight traditional Cambodian cuisine as well as creative mash-ups of dishes that may be surprising to some.

The event takes place Sunday through May 25 at various locations, including restaurants in the city's bustling Cambodia Town, a milelong stretch of Anaheim Street roughly between Atlantic and Junipero avenues.

Eateries will offer a dish specially made for the promotion, or offer \$5, \$10, \$15 and \$20 menus.

Diners can expect traditional dishes from places like Sophy's Cambodian Food & Music, a popular spot with a menu that includes beef tuk prahok, a heap of thinly sliced rare meat served with a fish sauce for dipping; and somlaw machu kreoung, a seafood soup with mussels, lemongrass and chunks of pineapple.

Another traditional restaurant on the list is Phnom Penh Noodle Shack, known for its Phnom Penh noodles.

It's a typical breakfast meal made with shrimp, pork and other meaty parts.

But one of the goals of the restaurant week is also to promote the future of



Promotional offers include specials and fixed price menus during Long Beach Cambodian Restaurant Week. **COURTESY OF LONG BEACH CAMBODIAN RESTAURANT WEEK**

Cambodian food with innovative chefs like Hawk Tea, the owner of Shlap Muan, which means “chicken wings” in Cambodian.

So yes, he focuses on wings made with Cambodian fusion flavors.

“I’ve always thought that we needed more representation in the Cambodian community when it comes to food, and we always represent Cambodian wings and we’re the first ones to do it,” he said.

For Restaurant Week, Tea will be creating a lemongrass dipping sauce to go with his wings.

“Its going to be a little bit

sweet, a little sour, a little salty, a little bit creamy,” he said.

Another modern fusion restaurant taking part is the Long Beach pop-up Lemongrass Khmer Grill, which makes smashburgers with a Cambodian twist.

Lemongrass owner Rasmey Kom will be serving his burgers, which he makes using a paste that combines lemongrass with other Cambodian-style ingredients.

“I’ve taken that paste and created a smashburger out of it. It’s very herby — you can taste the freshness and

a little tanginess,” Kom said.

“I don’t know how to cook traditional cultural Cambodian food as well as my family does but I understand the flavors. So I wanted to introduce it to people and offer it inside a burger,” he said.

“I feel like Cambodian Restaurant Week is a platform that enables me to show people who I am along with the flavors that I grew up with in our culture,” Kom added.

For more information go to cambodianrestaurantweeklb.com