

# Thai Binh Duong, where families eat



If you talk to people who live outside the Tenderloin about Vietnamese restaurants, the first place they mention is Tu Lan on Sixth Street off Market. Now many of these folks will not have eaten there, Sixth Street being less than an ideal location, but there's no denying the place gets a lot of ink.

For people who live in the Tenderloin, it's a different matter. The Tenderloin must have 50 Vietnamese restaurants, from hole-in-the-wall affairs to elaborate, multiroom emporiums, from basic noodle joints to fancy seafood specialty houses. Naturally, the prices vary. Just because it's a Vietnamese restaurant in the Tenderloin doesn't make the prices low or the food pleasing. For Tenderloin residents, the trick is to find a restaurant that serves tasty, well prepared food at the rock-bottom prices everyone expects but doesn't always get.

One place that does is Thai Binh Duong at 337 Jones (between Ellis and Eddy). People from our office have been going there for a couple of years. Usually we're the only non-Vietnamese in the place.

Thai Binh Duong seats about 50 but looks larger because the back wall is all mirrored. It's a little disorienting at first, but once you're seated with the menu in front

of you, things get better quickly. Thai Binh Duong serves two basic types of dishes – rice plates and noodle soups – and most are priced at \$4.50 or lower. They are also incredibly good.

I often prefer the soups at lunch. The broth has a such terrifically rich beef flavor it could be eaten alone, it's that satisfying. What goes into the broth depends on your taste. For

soup as desired.

The rice plates are equally delightful. In addition to plain steamed rice, Thai Binh Duong serves "broken rice," tiny pieces of rice grain that combine to form a lighter type of rice with a consistency not unlike couscous. All are served with lettuce, tomato and salad dressing. The rice plates cost a little more than the soups. Grilled center cut pork with lemon grass with steamed rice costs \$4.75. You can order shredded pork, charbroiled pork and five spices roast chicken for \$5.25, while a charbroiled pork and imperial roll combination is priced at \$4.75.

Any way you look at it, these are incredibly good prices for meals where the meat is nicely cooked and the portions are generous. The service is quick and while the staff speaks English almost as broken as its rice, they are friendly and the ambiance is warm. The restaurant is also clean.

Another thing about Thai Binh Duong that I like a whole lot is the number of small children in the restaurant at lunchtime. Restaurant reviewing in the Tenderloin is a tricky pursuit, but I have a lot of faith that mothers won't feed their children food that will make them sick.

## CHEAP EATS

by Phil Tracy

big beef lovers, Tai Nam contains medium cooked beef slices with well-cooked brisket for \$3.95. Tai Bo Vien has thin-sliced beef with meatballs for \$4.25. Chin Sach offers well-done beef slices with tripe at \$3.95 while Chin Hot Ga gives you well done beef slices with egg for \$4.25.

If beef is not your thing, you can choose from among a selection of chicken rice-noodle soups with a broth that is a tantalizing counterpart to the beef broth. Ingredients may include chicken heart and chicken liver, bean thread or well done brisket – they really like their beef at Thai Binh Duong – and the dishes run from \$3.95 to \$4.50. All the soups are accompanied by generous portions of cilantro, basil and bean sprouts that you add to the

## SO, WHO'S RUNNING?

Thirty-one people had filed for candidacy in the race to be supervisor of District 6, most of all the districts. When it came down to it, however, only 17 wound up on the ballot, still the most running in any district.

*The Extra* phoned all of the candidates remaining in the race as of Sept. 1 and asked them for their professional identification — or, if retired, what they used to do — plus how long they'd lived in District 6. We caught a few at home or work, several e-mailed us back, we bumped into one at the Department of Elections. For those who didn't respond, we've listed their official "ballot designation," and put it in quotes.

### Joseph Blue

"Senior loan consultant"

### H. Brown

Special ed teacher/writer/former fireman/sailor  
20 years off and on

### Gilbert F. Criswell

Journalist for *Spectrum* newspaper  
6 years

### Denise D'Anne

Retired resource recovery program manager, Dept. of Human Services  
25 years

### Chris Daly

Affordable housing organizer  
"Since early this year"

### Chris M. Dittenhafer

"Commissioner/bank manager"

### James Leo Dunn

Inventor  
33 years

### Brenton Holland

"Business owner/property manager"

### Dennis Isner

Former Youth Commissioner/community activist  
4 years off and on

### Garrett Jenkins

"Community relations officer"

### Davy Jones

"President, cancer nonprofit"

### Beryl Magilavy

President, environmental nonprofit  
6 years

### Jim Reid

Retired building contractor/transit and housing advocate  
"Moved to District 6 the day before Katz officially declined to seek re-election"

### Joan Roughgarden

Ecologist/author/professor  
1 year

### Marc Salomon

"Engineer"

### Carol Ruth Silver

"Attorney/businesswoman/mother"

### Hank Wilson

(no ballot designation)

## Alliance for District 6 forum draws candidates

District 6 supervisorial candidates got to state where they stand on district issues and on the November ballot measures at the forum sponsored by Alliance for a Better District on Aug. 16 in the 111 Jones community room.

"We believe that government at all levels must be responsible and accountable to the needs of all people, particularly those people who are underserved and under-represented," said Alliance President Michael Nulty, in describing the Alliance as the forum got under way.

Former Supervisor Carol Ruth Silver, once again a candidate, pledged her years of experience as a legislator. "The homeless mentally ill," noted Silver, "are the most visible of the unique problems in the district." Internet access and transportation on Muni and bicycles were among the issues high on her agenda.

Chris Daly said he has long been active in the Tenderloin, South of Market and Hayes Valley, trying to build community opposition to displacement, improve conditions in residential hotels,

organize for police accountability, and open abandoned buildings to homeless families.

Denise D'Anne said she spent her teenage years on the East Side of Manhattan. Now she's on the executive board of the Democratic Women's Forum. She said she

to improve our neighborhoods with economic methods: "Solving homelessness means respecting street people, fighting poverty, supporting police to reduce drug dealing and improving public hygiene, including funding clinics and home care." Prof Roughgarden proposes that Mission Bay plans be augmented to include more area for community facilities, specifically a space called "Diversity Plaza," which she said could also harbor a "Statue of Diversity" affirming District 6 as home to all.

Marc Salomon expounded his Green Party views, saying that as District 6 supervisor, he would create an office of Public Advocate to represent residents before county government at all forums. The office would be funded by high lobbyist license fees. He vowed to defend affirmative action against all enemies, both racist and opportunist.

"Everybody wants to live, work and do business here," Salomon said. "Yet the Democrats ignore the high demand to locate here and are giving away the store at fire sale prices."

## WHERE THEY STAND

by Challa Tabeson

worked for the city for 30 years, was a member of SEIU-Local 400 and worked on the union newspaper. She has fought for tenant rights and worked for the environment and quality of life issues. She backs Propositions M and H for slow growth and waterfront integrity.

Joan Roughgarden, who lives in South Beach, listed on her qualifications as author, ecologist and Stanford professor. Her centrist stance was