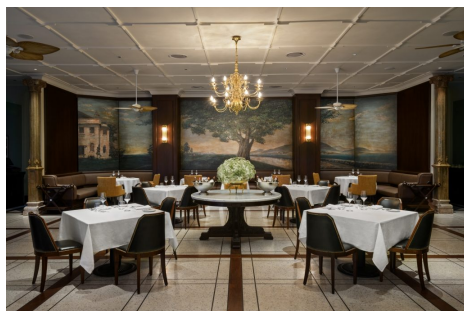


# The Yum List

eat • drink • stay • spa • explore



## Java Tree Penang, Eastern & Oriental Georgetown

*Java Tree Penang*

Monica Tindall

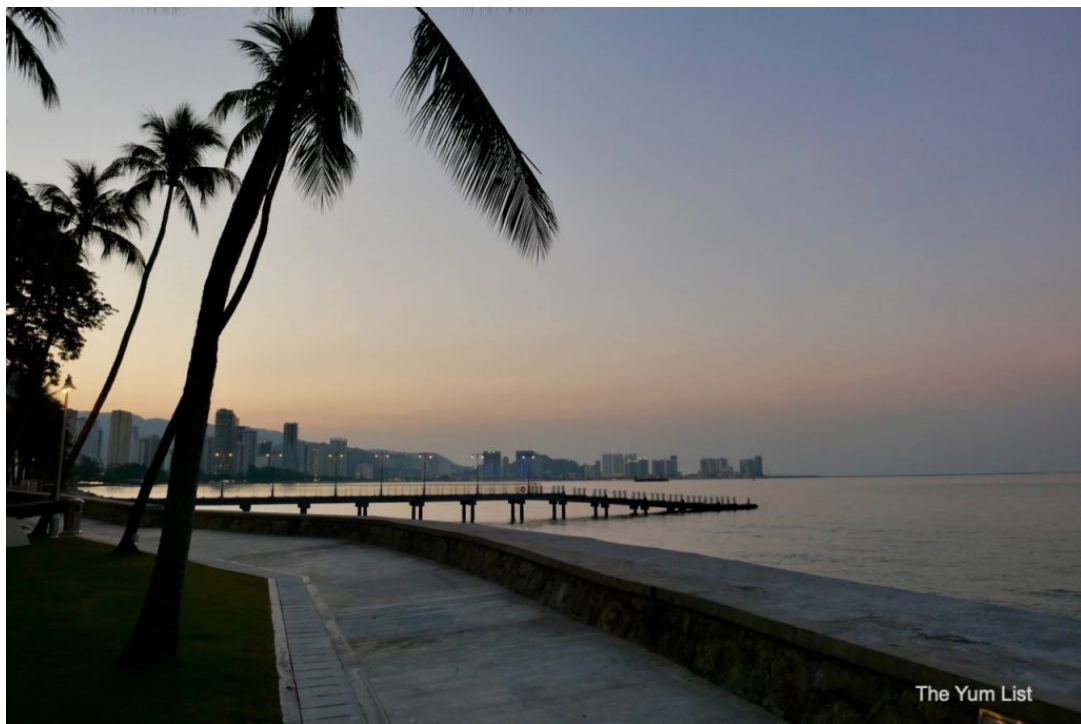
Named after the oldest living species of the tree on [Penang](#) island, Java Tree restaurant connects to the past not only in title but also in function. Located in the Eastern & Oriental hotel, both the menu and setting celebrate a rich cultural heritage.

The dining room features linen-dressed tables seated with studded leather chairs below an elegant central chandelier. White walls are accented by dark wood doors and, an entire wall displays a period-style landscape painting with the hotel's ancient java tree as the focal point.

The menu is a dual offering of Nyonya Straits cuisine and European classics. It's recommended to order the Nyonya Signature Set and back it up with some a la carte dishes from the European side to get a taste across the kitchen. Food is supported by an excellent wine list, one of the most varied I've seen on the island of Penang.



*Nighttime at Java Tree Penang*



*View From the Patio*



*Java Tree Penang*

## **Wine List - Eastern & Oriental**

There are close to 30 wines available by the glass at Java Tree Penang, which is an impressive offering! Although we're already spoilt for choice, we have the double fortune of trying a white usually only sold by the bottle. Clos des Lunes, Lune D'Argent, Domaine de Chevalier, 2018 (RM 280 bottle), brings white Bordeaux to the table. Generally, in this part of the world, reds from this region garner all the attention. As such, it's a pleasant surprise to find this blend of Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc make the wine list. With soft aromas of stone fruit and citrus in the bouquet, it follows through to a gentle palate with nuances of grapefruit and lemon butter. Ending with a dash of lime in the finish, it's a natural choice to open the appetite, and does especially well with the difficult-to-pair asparagus dish in our appetizers.





*Clos des Lunes, Lune D'Argent, Domaine de Chevalier, 2018*

Later we move to a glass of Cannonau di Sardegna “Riserva,” Alberto Loi, Sardinia, Italy (RM 51 glass, RM 255 bottle) on the advice of the knowledgeable restaurant manager, **Gianluca**. Versatile and food-friendly, this Italian Grenache, does particularly well with grilled items, picking up on the smoky notes of a good char. We also find it attractive chilled just a tad more than other reds. We like it with our duck, and it’s not bad with the oxtail in our mains either.



*Cannonau di Sardegna “Riserva,” Alberto Loi, Sardinia, Italy*

## Java Tree Penang Menu

As mentioned, East meets West on Java Tree Penang's menu, and this is even so with the complimentary carbs. Both slices of rye loaf with French butter and mantao buns with chutney kick off this dual culinary trip.

## European Menu

From the European menu at Java Tree, Grilled Asparagus (RM 30) are wonderfully tender with an enticing char on the edges. They're excellent on their own, but a poached egg and truffle Hollandaise sauce take them up to the E&O standard.



*Grilled Asparagus*

Choosing from the mains, Duck Breast a L'Orange (RM 75) is a hearty portion. Browned edges and pink in the middle, hubby thinks the chef has prepared it flawlessly. Glazed with Grand Marnier, partnered with carrot, orange and beetroot puree, and doused in a habit-forming L'Orange sauce, there are no complaints at our table. Even after the duck is gone, we continue to scoop up the remaining sauce with mantao buns and bread.



*Duck Breast a L'Orange*

## Straits Nyonya Menu Penang

The European menu at Java Tree runs parallel with a compilation of Nyonya Strait's recipes. The easiest way to discover this sumptuous cuisine is through the Nyonya Signature Set (RM 135).

### Appetizers

A trio of small bites launches the set with a mix of dried Nyonya spices as adornment. We begin with the blackened top hats. They're an explosion of flavours, and the best way to attack them is to pop the entire cup in the mouth. The thin, crisp shell is given its colour with charcoal and proves a flawless storage container. Filled with finely shredded jicama, carrot, cuttlefish and shredded egg, we could eat a whole platter of these.

The top hats are partnered with two more Nyonya classics, lobak and otak otak. The first is in a blend of chicken, shrimps, carrot, yam, bean curd skin and Chinese 5-Spice. While the traditional recipe is made with pork, Java Tree attempts to cater to diverse dietary preferences and has made their own recipe pork-free. The second, otak otak, is plated minus the usual leaf wrapping. Just as we prefer our seafood already deshelled, so too this heritage dish is unwrapped. Local mackerel, coconut cream, turmeric and kaffir lime provide familiar tastes that are balanced and approachable.





### *Appetizers*

## **Soup Course**

The soup course at Java Tree, Itik Tim, looks surprisingly simple but is packed with flavour. There's an addictive savouriness to the tomato, duck and broth that has us spooning back for more... and more.



### *Itik Tim - Java Tree Penang*

## **Mains**

The trio of mains arrive in a tiffin carrier; oxtail gulai, pineapple prawn curry and terung tempra. Oxtail is stewed in a rich gravy of turmeric, tamarind and lemongrass. The seasonings make it seriously habit-forming. The local spices slice through the fattiness of the meat with their cleanliness and balance the palate. Two meaty deep-sea tiger prawns are the show-stoppers in the pineapple prawn curry. And, lastly, terung tempra celebrates plump slices of charred eggplant in a lime, soy and chilli sauce.

Kebuli rice, a Baba Nyonya tradition, is served from a woven basket. The long grains have been steamed with ginger and onion. Mixed with pandan essence and sprinkled with fried onion, the rice is gifted a subtle herbal taste and a sweet caramelized crunch on top. We don't even touch the tray of sauces brought to add to the mains. Cincalok (spicy), pineapple acar (sour and spicy) and acar (pickled vegetables); I'm sure add excitement to the meal, but the mains have plenty of relish without them.



*Mains - Java Tree Penang*

## Dessert

Sago Gula Melaka concludes the Nyonya set with a classic. Sago pearls bathe in a pond of coconut milk and palm sugar syrup. It's not your standard sago, though. Here it's been coloured with the local butterfly pea gifting a pretty blue hue and furnishing contrast to the white pond that moats it. It's an excellent choice; a harmonious equilibrium between gently sweet and salty.





*Sago Gula Melaka*

## Dessert Trolley

Ultimately, a dessert trolley at Java Tree is rolled around for extra temptation. Here we have a “sweet ending,” says our waiter. (I’m thinking “a few extra kilometres in the morning.”) Before I manage to say, “No, no no, one dessert is more than enough. Thank you,” hubby has drooled and ordered the Blueberry Cheesecake (RM 32). It’s true to form; creamy, dense, rich and... all gone.



*Blueberry Cheesecake*

*Reasons to visit Java Tree Penang:* charming colonial setting; excellent wine list with a significant number available by the glass; both European and Straits Nyonya cuisine; ideal for a special occasion.

### Java Tree

Eastern & Oriental Penang

10, Lebuh Farquhar

10450 George Town, Pulau Pinang

Malaysia

[www.eohotels.com](http://www.eohotels.com)

\*pork-free

### Java Tree Opening Hours

Friday & Saturday 6:30 pm - 11:00 pm

**Dress code:** smart casual. No flip-flops, shorts, singlets or gentlemen's sandals.

E&O has also established its elegant afternoon tea. [Find the details here.](#)



Australian Boutique  
Wine Malaysia - The  
Strine Wine Co

Urbean Café,  
Superfoods & Coffee,  
Avenue K



## 3 COMMENTS



suituapui

June 4, 2020 at 3:34 am · Reply