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MAKING CHINESE CUISINE ARTISTIC: FAD OR TREND?

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ABSTRACT

The Chinese cuisine has been known for its variety of flavors, cooking methods, ingredients, etc., but its aesthetic pursuit is comparatively less manifested. However, recent years have seen fast development in this respect. For example, Da Dong Artistic Conception Chinese Cuisine, a gastronomy brand in China, boasts artistic presentation of Chinese cuisine. The presentation of many dishes in Da Dong resembles Chinese traditional paintings, paired with Chinese poems, enhancing its artistic conception, which has gone far beyond utilization of the visual effects. While the Chinese dining market is still pursuing standardization, the creation of Chinese cuisine with artistic conception at this time point has attracted much attention and debate. Therefore, this study tries to understand the rationales behind the creation of Da Dong Artistic Conception food from the restaurants’ perspectives, as well as the acceptance and perceptions of this type of cuisine from the eyes of the consumers.

Key words: Chinese cuisine, artistic conception, dining experience
INTRODUCTION

To date, many studies have verified that the visual appealing/aesthetics of the dishes significantly influence diners’ sensorial perceptions, including increased appetite (Spence et al., 2014), enhanced taste perception (Michel et al., 2014), intensified dining experience (Hegarty and O’Mahony, 2001), and it also leads to increased value perception (Michel et al., 2014). The visual effect of food is more important when it comes to the concept of experience economy. People’s memory of their food experience is enhanced when the dishes are not only impressive in taste but also in visual effect.

Having understood the role that the visual effects play on diners’ overall perception and behavioral intentions, culinary practitioners try hard to pursue the visual effect of the dishes. As a matter of fact, it is a wide-spread practice to combine art and cuisine, in pursuing such effects (Hegarty and O’Mahony, 2001). Moreover, it is argued that this aesthetic sophistication of gastronomy has gained at least similar importance as dressing, interacting, designing, and entertaining, etc. (Miele and Murdoch, 2002).

The Chinese cuisine has been known for its variety of flavors, cooking methods, ingredients, etc., but its aesthetic pursuit is comparatively less manifested. However, recent years have seen some development in this respect. Among all, Da Dong Artistic Conception Chinese Cuisine (Da Dong), a gastronomy brand in China boasting artistic presentation of Chinese cuisine, is recognized as one of the most representative of such effort. The presentation of many dishes in Da Dong resembles Chinese traditional paintings. Taking an additional step, many of the dishes in Da Dong restaurants are paired with Chinese poems, enhancing its artistic conception, which has gone far beyond utilization of the visual effects. Consequently, the price range in Da Dong Restaurants is relatively higher than other restaurants. The per head consumption can be as high as 500 RBM (around 70 US dollars). Yet, it is observed that there are long queues outside many Da Dong Restaurants every day.

While the Chinese dining market is still pursuing standardization, the creation of Chinese cuisine with artistic conception at this time point has attracted much attention and debate. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to understand the rationales and motives behind the creation of artistic conception of Da Dong from the restaurants’ perspectives, as well as the acceptance and perceptions of this type of cuisine from the eyes of the consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For quite a period of time, food consumption has not only been associated with taste and health consideration, but many other factors have been playing important roles in influencing people’s liking of certain food. Recent research shows an increasing tendency of attention on the aesthetic and other hedonic effect derived from dining experience (Spence, Piquerass- Fiszman, Michel, and Deroy, 2014). Among all, the visual effect of food presentation (or physical appearance) has been one of the key factors. “A meal begins with the eye” (Zellner, Lankford, Ambrose, and Locher, 2010: 576). The
appearance of a dish elicits different level of psychological and neurological responses such as different amount of saliva, different rate of heart speed, and even varied insulin levels (Spence et al., 2014) and eventually leads to perception of better taste and overall dining experience (Mechel, et al., 2014).

In an era of experience economy, the visual effect has become even more important. Pine and Gilmore (1998) put forward that the evolution of consumption can be divided into four stages – commodity, goods, service, and experience. Taking these distinctions into the food sector, the level of consumption can be progressed from unprocessed food items such as meat, to readymade dish, and then having the dish in a serviced environment, and eventually progressed to an upper level of dining experience with more ancillary elements. Pine and Gilmore (1998) argue that the experience is a fourth economic offering after service, creating much more value than the latter.

A good number of elements may constitute the final visual effect of a certain dish. Color of the food, texture, shape, ingredient elements and their combination, spatial arrangement, and even the number of items in the dish, all of these may lead to different visual effect of the dish (Spence et al., 2014). The visual appeal of the dish is usually supplemented by other ancillary factors, such as tableware, restaurant atmosphere, decoration, and even service staff. Spence et al. (2014) discuss the effect of plating on diners’ eating experience. Plating here does not only mean choice of different plates, but also different visual elements of the plate ware and other possible contextual elements that may pose effect. Spence et al. (2014) also provide a review on several issues related to plating: size of the plate, color of the plate, shape of the plate, material, and other properties of the plate, and how these properties interact with other visual elements, conveying messages of the dining occasions. In a more comprehensive manner, Sobal and Wansink (2007) discuss “built environments” that may influence the type and amount of food people take in. The coinage of four terms – “foodscapes, platescapes, tablescapes, and kitchenscapes” is the highlight of Sobal and Wansink’s argument. Apart from the food itself, the appearance / look of the container (or plate), the furniture or other elements that assist the consumption of the food, and possibly the kitchen setting, influence food intake in many ways.

Now that people have realized that the diners like the food better if the presentation is more appealing, restaurants, especially the fine dining ones, go a long way to pursue the aesthetics of dishes they prepare. One such effort is to present the dishes in an artistic manner. Chefs have started to translate art elements onto the dinner table, and the effect has been positive. In an experimental study conducted in Oxford, participants were given three dishes with same ingredients but different visual arrangements – regular presentation, neat presentation, and art-inspired presentation (Wassily Kandinsky’s paintings), and the result is that the participants had significantly higher ratings for tastiness, liking, and willingness to pay higher for the dish that was arranged in an art-inspired manner (Michel, Velasco, Gatti, and Spence, 2014). In another research report, Michel, et al. (2015) provide similar findings that diners like art-inspired presentation than regular ones. But this time, Michel, et al. (2015) provide an additional finding, which says that the diners like it better when the food is presented in the center of the plate, compared to the presentation with the main item placed off to one side.
There is other evidence supporting the fact that visual effect influences diners’ liking for the food and other consequential behaviors. For example, Piqueras-Fiszman, et al. (2012) have identified that desert served from a white plate was perceived to be more intense and sweeter than it was served from a black plate. For another example, it is empirically proved that that people are willing to pay a higher rate for food that is presented nicely and is plated in a higher quality container (Wansink and Payne, 2010).

Although very few prior studies have touched on the variable of the diners’ individual difference in influencing their dining behavior, some experts do try to call attention to diners’ different responses. For example, Spence et al. (2014) point out two potential factors. Firstly, people from different cultures may respond differently to same type of food presentation. Secondly, even within the same culture, different people may have different level of sensitivity to the visual aesthetics. While the first point is relatively easier to understand due to knowledge available on different cultures, the second point is much more complex, for the level of sensitivity is attributed to numerous factors such as personal experience, individual level of exposure to art, mood, dining occasion, and even the background of the dining venue such as lighting. In Western societies, people have established knowledge that various socio-demographic characteristics including level of education, income, occupation, social class, etc., influence people’s food consumption (Tivadar and Luthar, 2005).

Chinese cuisine is known to the world by its cooking method, doubled with the use of ingredients and various combinations (George, 2000). The Chinese cooking methods include steaming, sautéing, braising, deep frying, stir frying, stewing, etc., which make Chinese cuisine a unique one. With the variation of ingredients, flavors, as well as cooking methods, Chinese cuisine is divided into at least eight sub-categories or schools, or the “eight cuisines in China”. Nevertheless, for anyone who is familiar with Chinese cuisine, the most memorable feature would always be its flavor. Very little discussion on its artistic presentation exists in literature. With the creation of Da Dong cuisine boasting artistic conception, it is intriguing to know how Chinese cuisine is associated with art, the rationales behind its creation, and how this type of creation is received by the customers, and hence this research.

RESEARCH METHODS

To address such a query, the research team adopted a case study approach, which is suitable when single instance or unit is the focus of analysis (Babbie, 2007). The case study approach has been a preferred strategy when the “why” and “how” questions are posed, and it helps retain a holistic picture of a real life event (Yin, 2003).

Research target – Da Dong Restaurants

Da Dong is the founder’s nickname, meaning Big Dong. His real name is Dong Zhenxiang. Initially, the restaurant specializes in Beijing Duck, which was derived from the renowned restaurant for Beijing Duck – Quanjude in Beijing, but later he established his own Beijing Duck restaurant – Da Dong Beijing Duck Restaurant. The company got very successful. There is a saying that if you ever visit Beijing, Da Dong is a must place to go. Based on its success with Beijing Duck, Da Dong started to create artistic
conception food, inspired by all schools of Chinese cuisines, and the essence of Chinese culture from different dynasties, including Chinese traditional art especially Chinese traditional ink and landscape painting, Chinese Zen aesthetics, and even the pastoral and poetic lifestyle of old times (Da Dong, 2017). Western art and modern art also pose certain level of influence on the creation of some dishes.

The term “artistic conception” has existed since long time ago in China when people tried to describe the utmost level of Chinese traditional painting / art, reflecting Chinese cultural tradition and philosophy. Da Dong (2009) has described “artistic conception” in his blog as a form of art or “poetic space” where there is a fusion of feelings and settings, a combination of virtue and real, and a rhythm of vitality.

The company started officially in 1985, and now operates 13 restaurants in Beijing and Shanghai, with three different types of offering – Da Dong, Small Da Dong, and Da Dong Beijing Duck. Most of the restaurants are located in CBD areas where there is large flow of traffic. Although the number of restaurants is small, the company enjoys high reputation with Chinese and even foreign tourists.

**Data collection and data analysis**

The study draws on multiple data sources, including in-depth interviews with executives and managers of Da Dong restaurants in Shanghai and Beijing, document analysis, participant observations, and online comments made by consumers. The rationale that the study involves multiple informants and draws on different data sources is two-fold. Firstly, the enquiries of this study are directed at both the restaurants and the customers, which cannot be answered via single perspective. Secondly, having additional data sources serves the purpose of data triangulation as well as supplementation. The data collection process started in December 2015, and ended in December 2016.

For the in-depth interviews, the research team approached five executives and managers of Da Dong restaurants – two female managers, two male managers, and one male executive chef. The interviews all took place in Da Dong restaurants, after lunch time when the interviewees did not have work obligations and were more relaxed to talk. Each interview lasted for more than one hour. During the interviews, we asked questions mostly related to the creations of Da Dong artistic conception food and the motives behind. Since the study was at its preliminary and explorative stage, the researchers kept the interviews in a rather open manner. Discussions extended well beyond the two starting queries, which greatly contributed to the researchers’ understanding toward the nature of the restaurant, strategies adopted, the effort behind each creation, success and challenges, and so on.

Thanks to the support of the company, the research team was allowed to have access to various corporate documents and training materials. This included 1) Da Dong’s comprehensive cook book exemplifying 97 artistic conception dishes; 2) Da Dong’s company introduction document – development history and strategy; 3) Da Dong’s training document – a series of PPTs; 4) Various awards that the company had won over the years; 5) Da Dong’s blog contents over the years. In addition, back and forth email correspondence with the managing team helped to clarify multiple queries that the
research team came across during the writing process. The managing staff offered generous support in explaining and introducing the facility of the restaurants, techniques adopted, as well as the service design of the restaurants, during the researchers’ first two observation trips to Da Dong restaurants.

To gain first-hand experiential data as participants, the research team patronized four Da Dong restaurants, two in Shanghai and two in Beijing, without disclosing researchers’ identity. Both weekdays and weekends, lunch and dinner were covered, to have a comprehensive understanding of the restaurants and to experience the food and service in Da Dong at different time points. The researchers took pictures as the regular customers would do, and interacted with the service staff in a usual manner. Immediately after each meal, the researchers took notes and made reflections, and this was included as one source of data.

For the online comments, the research team selected two representative restaurants in Shanghai and two in Beijing as the target. All comments on these four Da Dong restaurants from Dianping and TripAdvisor during the time period from January 2015 to December 2016 were manually distracted and documented in the excel files. Due to technical limitation, comments in languages other than English and Chinese were not included for analysis. A total of 5,830 online comments were extracted from internet (4,800 from www.dianping.com; mostly Chinese; and 1,030 from www.tripadvisor.com, mostly in English language by foreigners).

Data analysis was divided into two major stages. During the first stage, the researchers mainly analyzed data derived from the in-depth interviews with executives / managers, corporate documents and training materials, and participant observations to understand the first query of this study – the creation and motives behind. This has been done via content analysis, and coding of this part of the data is based on recurrence of the themes. During the second stage, the researchers focused on customers’ perceptions and responses via examining the comments that customers posted online. Notes and pictures from participant observation supplemented. This has been done via content analysis by frequency.

FINDINGS

The creation of Da Dong’s artistic conception food

According to the company documents and interviews, the motto of Da Dong was to create authentic and tasty food with artistic conception. Being healthy, being tasty, and being different or full of personality were the guiding principles of all creations in Da Dong. When it started as a restaurant specializing in Beijing Duck, its aspiration was to create something healthy and tasty. In order to do so, the company invested huge amount of money and time in developing cooking techniques, including the patented technique of producing “crispy but not fatty” roast duck, which has attracted a lot of compliments and repeat customers. At the turn of the century, Da Dong, an art lover himself, started to create artistic conception food. By doing so, the chef intended to show the beauty of artistic conception of Chinese traditional art and classical literature. A few frequently techniques that Da Dong integrated in his cooking included the freehand drawing skill of
Chinese painting, the assembly skill of Chinese potted landscape (or bonsai), and the color contrasting technique, etc. For example, Figure 1 presents one of Da Dong’s artistic conception creations, naming “River Snow”, which is “mainly sweet and sour pork ribs”. This creation is inspired by the poem of “River Snow” by a Chinese famous poet Liu Zongyuan from Tang Dynasty. The poem tries to depict the feeling of a lonely fisherman sitting in a lonely boat and fishing on a very cold and snowy winter day. Figure 2 presents another example of Da Dong’s creation – Dong’s Sea Cucumber. This dish is presented by taking the form Chinese traditional paintings, which has an emphasis on simple lines but still maintains a beautiful outline. Figure 3 is an example of how Da Dong uses the technique of modern color contrasting technique to present the visual appeal of the dish.

*Figure 1: Da Dong artistic conception creation: “Snow by the Lakeside”*

*Figure 2: Da Dong artistic conception creation: Dong’s Sea Cucumber*

*Figure 3: Complementary color contrasting of Da Dong creation*
During the observation trips, the researchers found that the ambience in Da Dong was decorated with Chinese historical and cultural elements from different dynasties. Each restaurant has a different theme. Poems from corresponding dynasties were projected on the wall (Figure 4), and printed in the menu to illustrate the kind of artistic conception that Chef Dong wanted to express.

Figure 4: The poetic space in Da Dong
Another feature of the restaurant was to highlight the differences of the four seasons in a year by using ingredients from the current season, and decorating the restaurants with seasonal flowers, and even the package of the tooth pit had seasonal poems on it. This seasonal variation was meant to advocate a healthy lifestyle and present a variation of natural beauty in combination with different plating techniques. For example, the spring theme of the restaurant was “nature, health, vitality, and hope”; the theme for the summer was “grace, gentleness and softness, and tranquility”; the theme for the autumn was “warmth, festivity, and passion”; and the theme for the winter was “purity, dignity, uprightness, and transcending”. For the four different themes in four different seasons, Da Dong created different dishes, using different presentation, along with different decorations.

According to the corporate training material, the creation of Da Dong artistic conception food, in a way, was trying to capitalize the increasingly popular concept of the experience economy, which greatly upgraded the product/service offering under many circumstances. The rationale was that having only good food in a serviced environment did not distinguish one restaurant from another anymore. The restaurants need to come up with food offering, together with service and ambience, which would offer the customers memorable experiences. As such, apart from being tasty and healthy, Da Dong presented the food in an artistic effect, at the same time created a poetic atmosphere, with stories behind, so as to arouse the customers’ positive emotions such as empathy.

The service design of the restaurants, as the research team observed, further set off the artistic and poetic ambience of the food offering. Upon seated, the customers were provided with very big menus, with pictures in great clarity. Each dish was associated with a poem by well-known Chinese poets. Moreover, the waiter served the dish with a brief introduction of the story behind the creation, and read the poems associated with the dishes. Some of the poems were projected on the wall. Most of the dishes were in correspondence with different seasons. Some of the dishes were prepared in front of the customers, in order to impress the customers of the chef’s skills in preparing the dishes. The process itself was often artistically designed. In addition, the table wares, room setting, and restaurant ambience all seemed to highlight the themes – artistic conception.

Customers’ perception of Da Dong artistic conception food

Content analysis of the online comments by frequency count has generated the following bar chart that shows the percentage of mentions of different comment items.

*Figure 5: Customer comments on Da Dong Restaurants*
It is not a surprise that the majority of the comments and interviewee responses focused mainly on the taste. Excluding those general and short comments such as “good” “good experience”, comments with elaboration on the diners’ experience unavoidably described the taste of the dishes they had in the restaurants, good or bad. Some briefly narrated the taste with one or two sentences, while others generated much detail on each dish they had. The Beijing Duck has attracted a lot of comments. Other signature dishes have also attracted much discussion, such as the Cherry Foie Gras, Chef Dong’s Braised Eggplant, Braised Cabbage with Chestnut in Saffron Sauce, and so on, many of which were not done in a conventional way.

About two thirds of the diners had noticed the uniqueness of the plating / presentation of the dishes, the elegance of the table ware, as well as the overall ambience of the rooms. To many people, the presentation was novel, creative, and delightful to look at. This type of comment usually extended to the table ware and the ambience of the restaurant. Words such as “tasteful”, “upscale”, “exquisite”, “romantic”, etc. often appeared in the comments. The design of the menu has obviously attracted many diners’ attention, by its large size, clear and big pictures, and accompanying poems for each dish.

About half of the diners overtly expressed their concern for the price. The wording in many comments bore the patterns of “a bit pricy but...”, “more expensive than other restaurants but...” etc., trying to express that it was expensive but it was worth the money. Others said that it was worth the money if it was for special occasions. A small portion of the comments simply complained that the food was not worth the amount of money they had paid.

Service is an integral part of the fine dining restaurants. The diners’ comments for Da Dong in terms of service fell under two main voices. The positive category was about the attentiveness of the service, and how the staff members’ interactive style of service contributed to their dining experience, etc. On the other hand, the other category of voice was more negative than positive. The concerns raised were mostly about the quality of the service team. Some diners said that the poems were not recited in a passionate and
rhythmic manner. Some English comments reflected that the service staff did not speak much English, and were not able to explain the dishes in a more meaningful way.

Less than half of the diners did try to give some comments on the creativity of Da Dong’s artistic conception food. But the comments were mostly limited to the wordings of “creativity”, “innovation”, “interesting”, “unique”, etc. without going further to comment on the connotation or meanings adhering to each creation. In other words, it seems that the diners did not have much clue of what type of art or artistic conception that Da Dong wanted to express. And interestingly, there were quite a few comments accusing the small portion of the dishes, by saying that it was not enough for everyone. Meanwhile, quite a few people complained about the long queues outside Da Dong restaurants, although this type of complaint was often made in a subtle way, such as “prior reservation is highly recommended”. Only a very small portion of the diners mentioned either Chef Dong or the artistic conception behind Da Dong’s creation. They had either read about Chef Dong, or were very particular about food offering in fine dining sector in China.

Scrutinizing the English comments from tripadvisor, where majority of the comments were from foreigners, it seems that the foreign diners were mostly impressed by the Beijing Duck in Da Dong. For many of them, patronizing Da Dong restaurant for Beijing Duck was a must-do activity. Most of the compliment was on the taste of the duck and how it was prepared. Almost two thirds of the comments from tripadvisor focused on various aspects of the duck. The description was in a rather detailed way, words such as “crispy”, “juicy”, “melting”, “full of flavor”, and “tender inside” were more frequent. In addition, to many foreign customers, the way the roast duck was served was unique. There were over a hundred mentions of the chefs being there to carve the duck and serving the guests in an on-the-spot manner. The foreign customers also found the presentation of some dishes impressive, but they did not seem to understand the cultural background behind, judging from what they said. For many foreigners, the taste was good, and the service setting was “unconventional”; the menu was unconventionally large, and the dishes were “unconventionally” presented as compared to traditional Chinese dishes, and the atmosphere was “unconventionally” decorated.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Da Dong, as a unique restaurant brand, has offered the diners with different dining experience, which is unique and memorable. The diners are much impressed by its taste, presentation, and service. When other competitors are still focusing on taste only, creating something that does not only please the taste bud but also enhance the diners’ other sensorial perception certainly gives Da Dong an incomparable competitive advantage. In the experience economy era, food experience does not only entail food with good taste and contributes to health, but also extends to other levels such as engaging diners’ emotions.

However, artistic conception, by name, is something that depends largely on the audience/diners’ perceptions. The diners’ perception on Da Dong as reflected by their comments showed different level of appreciation of the dishes. This is in line with what is discussed by Tivadar and Luthar (2005) and Spence et al. (2014). For those who
understand Da Dong’s artistic conception creation, the dining experience is of utmost pleasure, which creates hedonic value that goes far beyond the taste. For them, a meal in Da Dong is not limited to fulfilling the physical need of food and health, but is a journey of cultural and aesthetic feast. However, for those who do not understand the type of art that Da Dong tries to illustrate and present, it is just food with pretty presentation patterns. When it is negatively perceived, it can be “cold food with small portion”, and “presumptuously presented”.

If we describe the creations of dishes in Da Dong in three levels – taste, visual presentation, and artistic conception, and try to match with the diners’ perception, it can be illustrated by Figure 6 below. The percentage of effort in artistic conception creation does not match with the diners’ capability to appreciate. In other words, the market now still focuses largely on the taste and pretty presentation of the dishes.

Figure 6: A comparison of Da Dong’s offering and diners’ perception
In addition, the perceptions between native Chinese and foreign customers are rather different. Comparatively, the native Chinese are more appreciative of the artistic conception food, while the foreign customers focus mainly on the Beijing Duck and other Chinese traditional food. This is due to a lack of knowledge on Chinese culture, history, literature, and Chinese traditional art. This is again in line with prior researchers’ argument that whether the customers are able to appreciate the food offering depends on the customers themselves to a large extent (e.g. Tivadar and Luthar, 2005). While it is not possible to change the customers, it is recommended that different marketing strategy could be applied to cater for different market segments.

Another issue derived from the diners’ comments is about the conflicting images between Da Dong as a specialized restaurant for Beijing Duck and Da Dong as a top notch restaurant with artistic conception creation. It seems that the image of Da Dong as a restaurant for Beijing Duck has been deeply rooted in many customers’ mind, whether they are foreigners or native Chinese. The deep rootedness of the duck image has come into conflict with Da Dong’s artistic conception creation. The latter has become a less significant supplement to the restaurant, instead of a unique selling point. In other words, the impact of its artistic conception food is far less than their foundational dishes such as the roast duck. This again has much to do with their branding and marketing strategies. Instead of differentiating its food offering in different restaurants, the company has mixed them together. Therefore, it is advisable that the company create different brands for different food offering, catering for different target markets.

CONCLUSION

The study attempted to understand the rationales behind the creations of artistic conception food of Da Dong as well as the diners’ perceptions. Content analyses on the textual and photographic data collected from multiple sources led to some interesting findings including motives behind the unique design and creation of this cuisine as well as the strategic efforts of the company. The stories behind the creation of each signature
dish, and stories of the founder – Da Dong, are some of the highlights. A close examination of the diners’ perceptions led to an understanding that integrating art into food creation may lead to enhanced dining experience. However, the level of art creation in Da Dong has gone far ahead of time and is beyond the mass market’s capability of appreciation. Different marketing strategy is therefore highly recommended.

To address the “so what” question, firstly, Da Dong Artistic Conception Food has proved that Chinese food can also be presented in an artistic manner without compromising any of its merits. The initiative of upgrading the customers’ dining experience by engaging more senses and emotions is applauded. When people’s consumption demand comes to the stage of “experience”, people not only pursue nutrition, taste, but also an overall dining experience. Therefore, making Chinese food artistic is invariably one of the future trends in food industry in China. On the other hand, jumping to the “experience” stage too early might miss the main market and make the development or expansion of the company difficult. Da Dong has gone one step ahead of time. This is probably why it is not easy for the company to expand for the time being, although its food and service has been much complimented with various awards.

In order to generate more precise and practical recommendations, future research may consider further investigation of the topic in a quantitative manner. For example, surveying the diners’ behavior might enable cluster analysis to understand different types of diners so as to propose more detailed marketing strategies for Da Dong, and possibly any other restaurants that adopt similar strategies.
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