

# Ginger Beef eateries a local success story

BY DAVID PARKER, FOR THE CALGARY HERALD MARCH 8, 2012

Presented By:



Co-owners of the Ginger Beef Bistro House, James Leung, left, and his brother Stanley, pose for a photo in front of the restaurant's newly renovated kitchen while staff prepare dim sum in Calgary.

**Photograph by:** Chantelle Kolesnik, Calgary Herald

Drivers passing by the Brentwood Village Mall lately have seen many changes already to make way for the four towers of the new University City condo development.

Jamesons Pub was demolished and rebuilt on the parking lot, but other retailers at the north end of the shopping centre had to close down before the wrecking crews came on the scene.

One of those was the Ginger Beef Chinese restaurant, which was an original in that part of the centre. It was opened in 1985 by brothers James, Stanley and Daniel Leung. They had emigrated from Hong Kong in the late 1970s to Manville, 200 kilometres east of Edmonton, where they opened a small restaurant. After two years, they relocated to Calgary and, in 1983, opened Oriental Palace in Parkdale Crescent.

The restaurant is still there, but the brothers sold it to open Ginger Beef, which blossomed into one of the most popular Chinese restaurants in the northwest.

Faced with a problem in relocating, their landlords found a spot in the enclosed mall area near Safeway, but the space is only 1,400 square feet. It does have a full kitchen and still handles takeout and delivery, but there is room for only 20 seats inside the dining area, plus another 20 out in the mall.

James Leung went on the hunt for a bigger space and was excited to discover an empty, free-standing former restaurant in a great location on Country Hills Boulevard. He leased the 5,500 square foot building, which is located in front of the Studio 16 movie theatre, gutted it and redesigned it with a kitchen that takes up 40 per cent of the area.

Leung is proud of what he claims to be the first open kitchen in a Chinese restaurant - fitted out with new equipment - where there is a large space for main-course cooking and a special area for his popular dim sum. Ginger Beef Bistro House boasts 22 kitchen staff. Dim sum is labour intensive, with its pieceby-piece hand work. His wonderful Shanghai-style noodles are also handmade.

The new restaurant seats 180 patrons, with a patio on the south side during summer months. There is plenty of parking available in the centre, which draws shoppers to its Home Depot, Canadian Tire, Sobeys, movie theatre and other retailers and services.

Besides the restaurants in Country Hills and Brentwood, the company has five kitchens for takeout/delivery at locations around the city and a 220-seat restaurant in Willow Park Village.

The trio of brothers have also diversified their business with the Ginger Beef Choice federally inspected manufacturing plant in southeast Calgary, where a staff of 40 is kept busy preparing pre-cooked, ready-to-eat meals that are distributed to stores from Vancouver to Ontario. And chances are the ginger beef you buy in the deli in your grocery store came from the same facility.

The Leungs have been in business for nearly 30 years in this city and are a real success story.

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March 16 is the date fixed for the 16th Annual Immigrants of Distinction Awards, which are to be held this year at the Westin Calgary Hotel.

It is also the 35th year of community service by Immigrant Services Calgary and more than 600 people are expected to attend the gala celebration along with Lieutenant-governor Don Ethel, Alberta Premier Alison Redford and Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi.

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On Friday, CEO Lawrence Braul and the board of directors of Trinity Place Foundation will welcome Redford and MP Lee Richardson to the grand opening of Glenway Gate.

The housing development offering 17 market and 25 affordable rental units for seniors is located along Richmond Road S.W. in the community of Glamorgan.

Trinity Place Foundation is a charitable non-profit organization established in 1974 to respond to the need for subsidized housing for seniors and is now the largest provider of self-contained seniors housing in the city.

David Parker appears Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Read his columns at [CalgaryHerald.com/Business](http://CalgaryHerald.com/Business). He can be reached at 403-830-4622 or e-mail [info@DavidParker.ca](mailto:info@DavidParker.ca)

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