



*By Robert Shoffner
Szechuan Gallery
Thyges Chausson*

Special Section on
YEAR OF THE BEAR
the Soviets in Washington

The Greening of Rince Geogage's
How David Stockman Sold His Soul

WASHINGTONIAN

The Fifty Annual Cheap Eats Adward
By Robert Shoffner and David Dorsen

THE FIFTY VERY BEST BARGAIN RESTAURANTS

Where You Can Eat Well Without
Spending a Lot of Money
Photographs by Tom Wolff

Fifty Best at a Glance

RESTAURANT	CUISINE
Los Amigos (1905 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria; 549-7008)	Tex-Mex
Athenian Corner (801 King St., Alexandria; 836-0148)	Greek
Bangkok Gourmet (523 South 23rd. St., Arlington; 521-1305)	Thai
Bethesda Crab House (4958 Bethesda Ave., Bethesda; 652-9754)	Seafood
El Rancho (6785 Wilson Blvd., Falls Church; 533-8100)	Tex-Mex
Red Sea (2463 18th St., NW; 483-5000)	Ethiopian
Slam Inn (11407 Amherst Ave., Wheaton; 942-0075)	Thai
Szechuan Gallery (617 H St., NW) Chinese	
Thchibana (4050 Lee Hwy., Arlington; 528-1122)	Japanese
Thai Taste (2606 Connecticut Ave., NW; 387-8876)	Thai
Thai Taste-Georgetown (3287 1/2 M St., NW; 965-7988)	Thai
Vietnam-Georgetown (1500 S. Joyce St., Arlington; 521-3706)	Vietnamese
Woo Lee Oak (1500 S. Joyce St., Arlington; 521-3706)	Koren

Cheap Eats award winners marked with a star (*) also received The Washingtonian's Very Best Restaurant award in January 1986.

Szechuan Gallery. Although it's the only restaurant in the metropolitan area currently offering Taiwanese specialties, the six-month-old Szechuan Gallery persists in hiding its best dishes from its non-Chinese clientele. A new comer is presented with an unremarkable list of Szechuan and Hunan standards—the likes of orange beef, twice-cooked pork, scallops with garlic sauce, and "Viceroy Tso's Chicken" - which, in our experience, have been oily and under-spiced. The Taiwanese menu, which is offered only to Occidental diners who know of its existence and request it, is the sole reason that Szechuan Gallery appears on this list of award-winners, and management should henceforth make sure every diner is given a change to order from it. Not only are these dishes refreshing novelties in the local Chinese repertory, but the kitchen cooks them with a spirit that is missing from its Szechuan-Hunan offerings.

Among the reasons we look forward to future visits to Szechuan Gallery are tiny cold clams in soy-sauce-and-garlic marinade; slices of cold beef tongue galzed with a dark-brown, sweet salty sauce; "Salty Duck," served with an assertive m iso paste and chili dip, vermicelli-thin rice noodles s tir-fried with dried shrimp and slivers of pork, and one of the very best dishes recently sampled on the local Chinese circuit, shrimp with "salty cabbage," which is the Chinese counterpart to sauerkraut and emphasizes the natural sweetness of the shrimp. **Szechuan Gallery.** Which is staffed with the nicest waitresses this side of China Inn, for bringing the fascinating regional cuisine of Taiwan to Chintown; Szechuan Gallery, 617 H Street, Northwest; 898-1527. Open Sunday through Thursday 11 AM to 3 AM, Friday and Saturday 11 to 4 Am. AE, MC, V.