

How a Michelin-starred Hong Kong chef gave his daughter a gift that keeps on giving

Chef Vicky Cheng and his wife decide to do something different for their child's first birthday: they are raising money for Hong Kong's undernourished children by giving donors Japanese white strawberry jam

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Intagra image of Vicky Cheng of VEA and his daughter. Cheng is fundraising for malnourished children in Hong Kong in collaboration with Chicken Soup Foundation. [18APRIL2017 DINER'S DIARY] CREDIT: instagram #@chefvickycheng

The chef of the Michelin-starred VEA is celebrating his daughter's first birthday with social consciousness in mind.

Vicky Cheng and his wife Polly thought instead of showering their daughter Elizabeth with gifts, they felt she should give to those less fortunate.

They are raising money for the Elizabeth Nutrition Fund in collaboration with the Chicken Soup Foundation, a local charity started in 2013 that helps more than 1,100 underprivileged children in the city. For every donation of a minimum of HK\$600, Cheng will give donors a jar of Japanese white strawberry jam with premium bird's nest in it.



Cheng is fundraising for malnourished children in Hong Kong in collaboration with Chicken Soup Foundation.

The HK\$600 is enough for three months worth of fruit for a malnourished child, HK\$1,200 for six months, HK\$2,400 for a year.

“My dad, who is no longer with us, would always give to others whether he had the resources or not,” explains Cheng. “I got that personality trait from him, and my wife is also very generous. I felt that with the skill set that I have to generate money would make sense.”

They researched some charities and decided to collaborate with Chicken Soup Foundation that is run by a friend of his, Edward Man. The specific programme is Chicken Congee Foundation that is geared towards children zero to six years old, in Elizabeth's age range.

“It’s important for kids to have enough nutrients and resources at that age because that is when they are growing the most,” Cheng says.

Another reason for choosing to help children is that Elizabeth was born on April 2, Children’s Day and Cheng and his wife hope that for the next 18 years and hopefully more, that their daughter will continue to give to other children when she is older.

“We wanted to make something special for our daughter, something she could share for the rest of her life. We want to teach her that her gift is to give to other kids.”



Cheng’s strawberry & bird’s nest jam.

To help entice people to donate, Cheng created a jam made of prized Japanese white strawberries that retail at US\$10 per piece with premium bird’s nest donated from Cheng’s family.

“For the charity we wanted to provide something that wouldn’t spoil quickly and could use my skills, so we decided on jam, which is also in line with the charity providing fruits and Elizabeth likes to eat strawberries.”

He and his wife made 300 jars, and so far more than 100 have been sold. “We hope this continues to get bigger so that we can help more people.”

Source:

<https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/food-drink/article/2088459/how-michelin-starred-hong-kong-chef-gave-his-daughter-gift>