

# Distinctively Oriental

Menu captures the flavor  
of the Far East in a unique  
Oriental format.

*Continued* ►

*Continued* ►

Distinctively Oriental 0614

# Distinctively Oriental

Take-home menu captures the flavor of the Far East in a unique Oriental format

Delicious, savory, mouth-watering Chinese cuisine—that's what the business-lunch crowd gets at *A Taste of the Orient*, a small, family-owned restaurant inside a neighborhood shopping mall.

But you'd never know that by looking at their menu (right), a plain, pink leftover from the Ming Dynasty (14th-century

English period). It's so nondescript!

*A Taste of the Orient* needs a menu that's as beautiful as its food is tasty and that conveys its distinctive, Chinese culture. It needs a menu that will be posted on the office bulletin board, not hidden in the bottom drawer. Let's make one.



<b>Appetizers</b>	
Fried Won Ton	2.95
Egg Roll(s)	2.25
Paper Wrapped Chicken(8)	4.25
Fried Chicken Wings(10)	4.25
Pot Stickers(8)	4.25
Fried Prawns(8)	4.95
Fried Calamari	5.95
Chinese Chicken Salad	4.25

<b>Pork</b>	
Sweet & Sour Pork	5.95
Garlic Pork with Vegetables	5.95
Sa-tay Pork	5.95
Teriyaki Pork	5.95
B.B.Q. Pork Bean Curd	5.95

<b>Poultry</b>	
Broccoli Chicken	5.25
Almond Chicken	5.25
Cashew Chicken	5.25
*Szechwan Chicken	5.25
Kung Pao Chicken	5.25
Hunza Chicken	5.95
Curry Chicken	5.95
Sweet & Sour Chicken	5.95
Lemon Chicken	5.95
Sesame Chicken	5.95
Teriyaki Chicken	5.95
Garlic Chicken	5.95

<b>Soup</b>	
Soup of the Day	1.50
Egg Flower Soup	4.25
Chicken Noodle Soup	4.25
Beef Noodle Soup	4.25
Won Ton Noodle Soup	4.25
Won Ton Soup	4.25
Combination Won Ton	4.25
"Hot & Sour Soup"	5.25

<b>Combination Plates</b>	
Soup of the Day	\$5.25
Paper Wrapped Chicken	
Broccoli Beef	
Chow Mein or Fried Rice #2	\$6.25
Soup of the Day	
Fried Prawns	
Sweet & Sour Chicken	
Chow Mein or Fried Rice	

<b>Beef</b>	
Broccoli Beef	5.95
*Mongolian Beef	5.95
*Szechuan Beef	5.95
Kung Pao Beef	5.95
Hunza Beef	6.95
Soup with Oyster Sauce	5.95
Ginger Beef	5.95
Pepper Beef(w/ Black Bean)	5.95

<b>Chow Mein</b>	
Vegetarian Chow Mein	4.25
Chicken Chow Mein	4.25
B.B.Q. Pork Chow Mein	4.25
Beef Chow Mein	5.25
Shrimp Chow Mein	5.25
Combination Chow Mein	5.25

## Before (above)

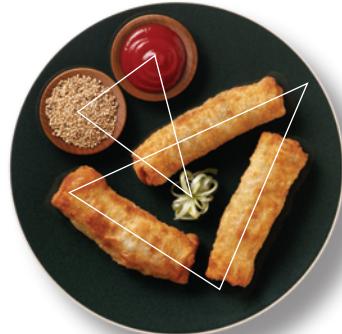
Just the facts, ma'am. The data's all here, but delete the bowl, and there's not one visual clue to let us know this sheet is about Chinese cuisine. A take-out menu needs the diner's eyes to do what his nose can't—lure him back to the restaurant. That requires beauty.



## It's not designed at all

The ink's on the paper, all right, but the page is not designed; it's just filled in. The designer left his visual tools of scale, contrast and depth at home!

**(Right) The outside panel has a focal point (the bowl), and it's in the right place (the center), but it's too small—*too much like everything else*—to have an impact. The name's in a good place, too, surrounded by (mainly) open space, which makes it easy to read, but it's so nondescript it has no voice. Name, location, phone number and hours are all needed to *do business*, but unlike what the chef prepares, none of it has been artfully presented.**



### Outside spread

**Family Specials**  
(for 2-3 people)

**CANTONESE SPECIAL**  
Soup of the Day  
Egg Rolls  
Broccoli Beef  
Teriyaki Chicken  
B.B.Q. Pork Fried Rice \$14.95

**MANDARIN SPECIAL**  
Soup of the Day  
Fried Prawns  
Mongolian Beef  
Sa-tay Chicken  
B.B.Q. Pork Chow Mein \$15.95

**HOUSE SPECIAL**  
Soup of the Day  
Paper Wrapped Chicken  
Cashew Prawn  
Sesame Chicken  
Shrimp Chow Mein \$16.95

**Special Rice Plates**  
\$4.25

1. Sa-tay Chicken or Pork
2. Teriyaki Chicken
3. Sweet & Sour Chicken or Pork
4. \*Kung Pao Chicken
5. \*Szechwan Beef
6. \*Mongolian Beef
7. \*Curry Chicken
8. Broccoli Beef
9. Sesame Chicken
10. Lemon Chicken
11. Cashew Chicken
12. Garlic Chicken
13. Hunan Chicken
14. Vegetable Deluxe

**Entree w/Shrimp \$5.25**

15. Cashew Shrimp
16. \*Kung Pao Shrimp
17. \*Szechwan Shrimp
18. \*Curry Shrimp
19. Shrimp w/ Black Bean Sauce
20. Shrimp w/Lobster Sauce

\*Hot and Spicy

**A Taste of the ORIENT**

Dine in /Take out  
922-1818  
3315 Northgate Blvd. #8  
SACRAMENTO  
(K-MART CENTER)  
Corner of Northgate & San Juan

**BUSINESS HOURS:**  
Mon.-Sat. 11:00-9:00  
Closed Sunday

Catering Available

### Inside spread

**Appetizers**

Fried Won Ton	2.95
Egg Roll(4)	4.25
Paper Wrapped Chicken(8)	4.25
Fried Chicken Wings(10)	4.25
Pot Stickers(8)	4.95
Fried Prawns(8)	4.95
Fried Calamari	5.95
Chinese Chicken Salad	4.25

**Soup**

Soup of the Day	1.50
Egg Flower Soup	4.25
Chicken Noodle Soup	4.25
Beef Noodle Soup	4.25
Hunans Noodle Soup	4.25
Won Ton Soup	4.25
Combination Won Ton	5.25
*Hot & Sour Soup	5.25

**Combination Plates**

#1 \$5.25	
Soup of the Day	
Paper Wrapped Chicken	
Broccoli Beef	
*Mongolian Beef	
*Szechwan Beef	
*Human Beef	
#2 \$6.25	
Soup of the Day	
Fried Prawns	
Sweet & Sour Chicken	
Chow Mein or Fried Rice	

**Beef**

Broccoli Beef	5.95
*Mongolian Beef	5.95
*Szechwan Beef	5.95
*Human Beef	6.95
Beef w/Oyster Sauce	5.95
Ginger Beef	5.95
Pepper Beef(w/ Black Bean)	5.95

**Pork**

Sweet & Sour Pork	5.95
Garlic Pork(with Vegetables)	5.95
Prawn in Black Bean Sauce	6.95
Sweet & Sour Prawn	6.95
*Curry Prawn(or Calamari)	6.95
*Kung Pao Prawn(or Calamari)	6.95
*Szechwan Prawn	6.95
Vegetable with Prawn	6.95

**Poultry**

Broccoli Chicken	5.25
Almond Chicken	5.25
Cashew Chicken	5.25
*Szechuan Chicken	5.25
*Kung Pao Chicken	5.25
*Human Chicken	5.95
*Curry Chicken	5.95
Sweet & Sour Chicken	5.95
Lemon Chicken	5.95
Sesame Chicken	5.95
Teriyaki Chicken	5.95
Garlic Chicken	5.95

**Seafood**

Cashew Prawn	6.95
Prawn w/ Oyster Sauce	6.95
Prawn in Black Bean Sauce	6.95
Sweet & Sour Prawn	6.95
*Curry Prawn(or Calamari)	6.95
*Kung Pao Prawn(or Calamari)	6.95
*Szechwan Prawn	6.95
Vegetable with Prawn	6.95

**Vegetables**

Vegetable Deluxe	5.25
*Szechuan Bean Curd	5.25
Braised Bean Curd	5.95

**Fried Rice**

Vegetarian Fried Rice	4.25
Chicken Fried Rice	4.25
B.B.Q. Pork Fried Rice	4.25
Beef Fried Rice	4.25
Shrimp Fried Rice	5.25
Combination Fried Rice	5.25

**Chow Mein**

Vegetable Chow Mein	4.25
Chicken Chow Mein	4.25
B.B.Q. Pork Chow Mein	4.25
Beef Chow Mein	4.25
Shrimp Chow Mein	5.25
Combination Chow Mein	5.25

\*Hot and Spicy

### Accidental design

Good design is intentional. At left, three circles and three rectangles have been arranged in two triangles around a focal point centered in the large circle (the platter). That's design, and it's attractive. Above, the center panel is typographically different from the other two—a normal visual device—but for no apparent reason. That's accidental, and it's unattractive.

### Boxes everywhere

Boxes corral the many kinds of dishes. This makes sense organizationally, but the pencil-thin lines have no beauty and are unnecessary, too; the open space alone is sufficient to create separation between sections. Random margin widths disrupt any possible visual rhythm.



## Look. Read. Learn.

Begin the redesign by researching what *Chinese* looks like. Actually do the work. Don't rely on your memory, or you'll end up using clichés like fortune cookies and chopsticks.

### The world of China

**Don't dream up images—you'll get better results (more easily, too) if you look them up!** Research books, magazines and online photo sources. Visit Chinese restaurants. **What to watch for?** Pay attention to physical attributes like shapes, colors, textures; sensual qualities like sound, smell, touch; and hidden intangibles, especially of history, culture and tradition.



**Mask** Ancient, heroic, religious, theatrical, colorful, multi-textured

**Restaurant** Neutral colors, spot lighting, intricate woodwork



**Fortune cookie** "Moon cakes" predate Ming Dynasty; sweet, happy, circular, tan



**Bamboo**  
Natural, elegant, cool, spare

**Wok** Colorful, hot, fresh, round, aromatic

**Characters** Ancient, wet brush, calligraphic, fluid, painstaking, distinctively Oriental

**Colors** Red, gold leaf

**Screen** Fine furniture, inlaid, historic, story-telling, seen in the restaurant



## Start with format and background

Two images can anchor the design—the folding screen because it resembles the folded sheet, and the bamboo plant, which will make a graceful, *placid* background.



Screens are usually decorated with landscapes, plants and figures and typically have three or four panels. Conveniently enough, the two-fold menu has three panels.



### Crop the image

Like the story on a folding screen, crop the image to span the page and fit its proportions. Note how it's balanced—about half image, half background.

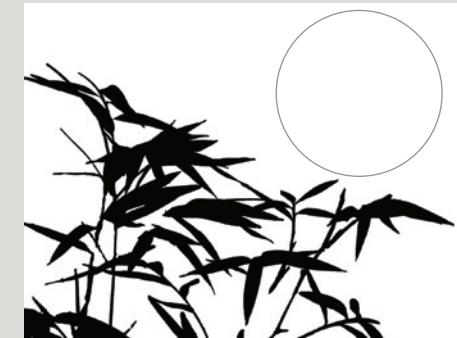


With the image in place, it's time to turn the background into a beautiful canvas on which to paint our words.



## Create a silhouette

To create the illusion of a shadow cast against the screen—or visible through the screen—first separate the bamboo from its background.



What we're about to do is reduce the full-color photo to solid black & white with no grays. For an organic image like this one with a distinct silhouette and where precision is not vital, Photoshop's Threshold slider is ideal.

### Open the image

Change its mode to Grayscale (Image>Mode>Grayscale).

### Set the threshold

Select Image>Adjustments>Threshold, check Preview, and move the Threshold slider. Everything above the threshold is white, and everything below is black. Adjust for greatest clarity, then click OK.

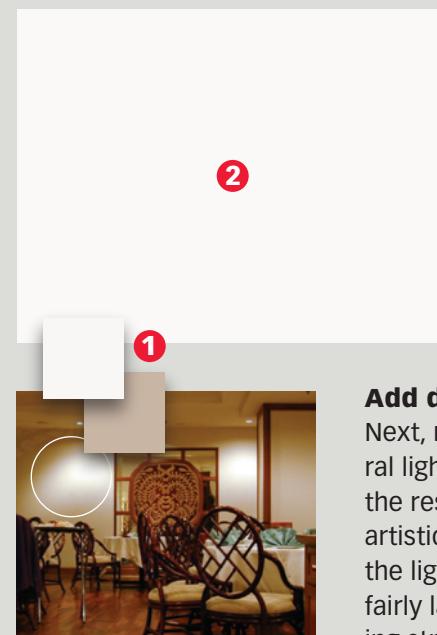
### Invert and clean up

Invert black and white by selecting Image>Adjustments>Invert. Erase any leftover spots and unwanted parts. If necessary, use the Brush tool to paint and redefine some parts. Save a copy (or a layer) of this image to use later.



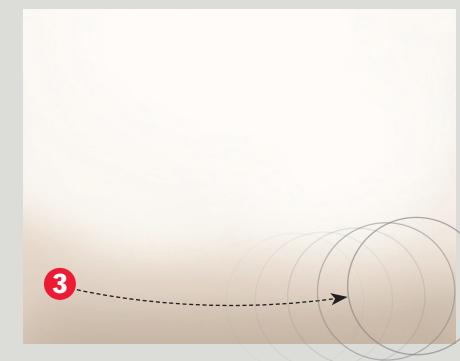
### Blur and lighten

Return the image to CMYK Mode (Image>Mode>CMYK). To soften, select Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, and enter a Radius amount. What you want is a soft but still-distinct silhouette, which in this case was 10 pixels. Lighten the result by lowering the opacity to about 10%.



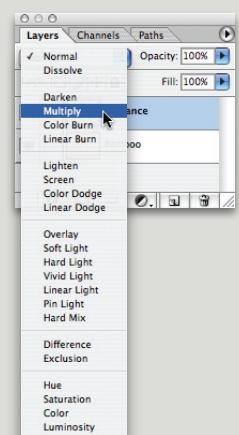
### Add depth and radiance

Next, mimic the dark and light qualities of natural light. First, sample a light and dark color from the restaurant (1). (This "color connection" is an artistic tie-in.) Create a new layer, and fill it with the light color (2). With the darker color and a fairly large, soft brush, make a smooth, sweeping stroke across the page (3).



### Combine

Set the new layer's blending mode to Multiply, which allows the bamboo layer beneath to show through. The result is a convincing illusion of bamboo seen through a paper screen.





## Add bamboo to the foreground

With the shadow and lighting established, give the page more depth by adding black bamboo, which yields a beautiful foreground-background effect.



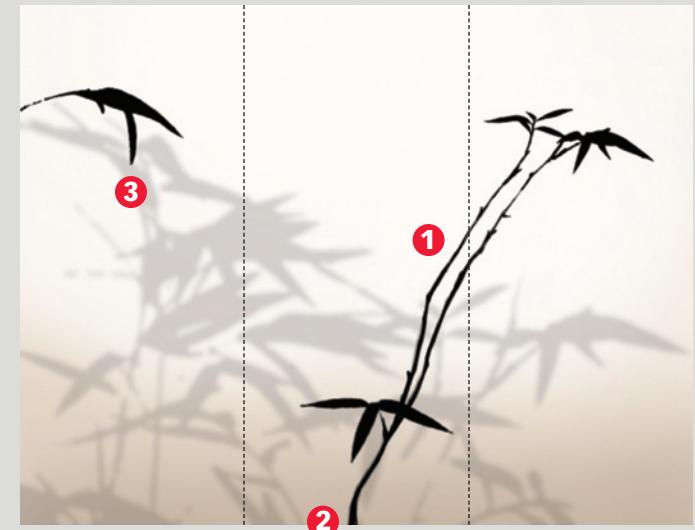
### Isolate

Retrieve the saved black & white copy, move its layer to the top, and set its blending mode to Multiply. With the Brush and Eraser tools, isolate a few bamboo leaves.



### Separate

Note that as big as the shadow is, its light value and soft edges make it recede. Create a forward dimension by moving black leaves to the center of each panel. The contrasts of edge (hard and soft) and overlapping elements (dark, medium, light) results in real depth.



### Connect

Get artistic! With the Brush tool, create your own bamboo plant by connecting the leaves (1) and adding a stem (2) that anchors plant to page. Then add another leaf (3) to serve as a downward pointer to the list of menu items that will eventually go beneath it.



## Create a focal icon

The original bowl is a good, simple icon for the restaurant; it suggests eating, chopsticks say Chinese, and steam says hot and fresh. A stamplike effect makes it bolder and even more Chinese.



**In Chinese brush paintings, a stamp, which is typically red, is often used as a signature. Its imagery can be evoked by turning the bowl into a stamp.**

A rubber stamp begins as a fairly sharp image that degrades as it unevenly hits the paper and more as the ink soaks in. Time can further wear it down. The result is a rich, interesting texture. Here's how to mimic that in Photoshop.



### 1) Create the image

The original image can come from almost any source (ours was a scan), so *in some way* get it into a Photoshop file—Resolution 300 ppi, Color Mode RGB Color, Background Contents Transparent—turn it into a selection, and knock it out of a shape you've drawn. You want the results to resemble the image above.



### 2) Roughen the edges

Set the Foreground and Background colors to red and white, respectively. Go to Filter>Sketch>Torn Edges, and for this size and resolution enter the following: Image Balance: 25; Smoothness: 1; Contrast: 15. Click OK.



### 3) Sharpen, then dab

In Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask, apply the following settings: Amount: 100; Radius: 25; Threshold: 0. Click OK. Next, with white as the Foreground color, select the Spatter brush (here, number 39). Using various brush sizes and opacities, click-dab to soften and basically mess up the edges.



## Select a display type

Nothing evokes China as readily as its unique, calligraphic characters, which on the menu must be conveyed with Western-style type. In general, you'll see wet brush, dry brush and artificial styles. Dry-brush font *Ruach* in this case is best.

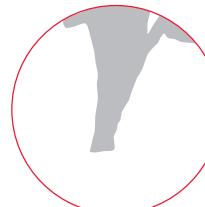


### Reference character

Once you've found a style that you like, note how it's drawn.

Pay attention to its edges, stroke ends, thick-to-thinness and general slant or direction, then look for similarities in Western typestyles.

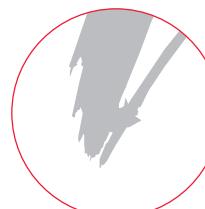
### Wet brush



### Visigoth Regular

- Fat, slow strokes
- Fairly upright
- Soaked into the surface
- Visible paper texture

### Dry brush



### Ruach Plain

- Fast, light strokes
- Clean edges and rough ends
- Closest to handwritten
- Most like the sample

### Artificial



### Choc ICG Regular

- No brush marks
- No bleeding
- Clean edges and ends
- Poster-like



## Select a complementary text typeface

For the small type used for listings, look first for clarity and then for a complementary line or shape. Clarity usually requires “open” letterforms and little detail.

### *Appetizers*

Fried Won Ton

Egg Rolls (4)

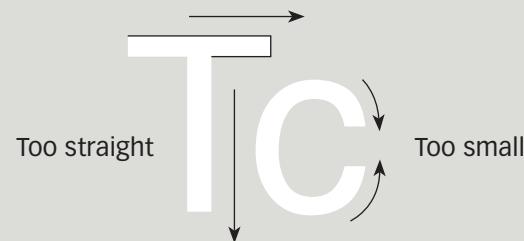
Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)

Fried Chicken Wings (10)

Pot-Stickers (8)

#### Sans-serif Helvetica

Although popular, Helvetica is not especially clear at small sizes, because its small apertures tend to close up. And its straight lines are too rigid to complement free-flowing Ruach.



### *Appetizers*

Fried Won Ton

Egg Rolls (4)

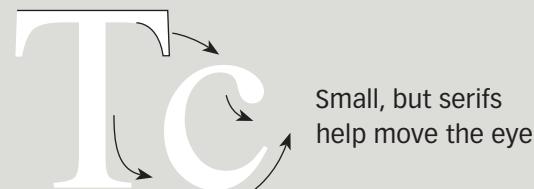
Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)

Fried Chicken Wings (10)

Pot-Stickers (8)

#### Roman serif Times Roman

Roman serif faces are more refined and generally easier to read, because serifs help move the eye from letter to letter, but they're full of tiny detail and stylistically very different from Ruach.



### *Appetizers*

Fried Won Ton

Egg Rolls (4)

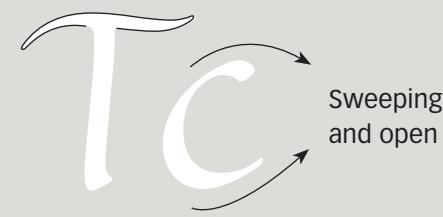
Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)

Fried Chicken Wings (10)

Pot-Stickers (8)

#### Calligraphic Sanvito

Simple lines, BIG counters, BIG apertures and a sweeping stroke yield both clarity and calligraphic style without the brush details. Sanvito is a good complement to Ruach.





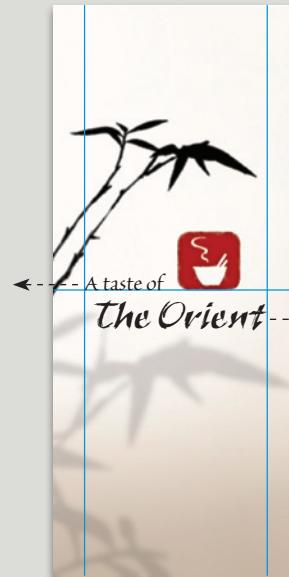
## Complement image and layout

With the bamboo already on the page, create a relationship between image, type and layout by mimicking its spiky visual qualities.

(Left) Analyze the bamboo based on line and direction. Note that its leaves and stems point in different directions—horizontal, diagonal, vertical—which creates a lot of movement and tension. This action can be mimicked in the layout.



**Place the seal**  
What size should the seal be? Generally speaking, work with what's in front of you. Here, the bamboo is governing the design, so give the seal similar mass, and place it directly beneath the downward-pointing "umbrella" about mid-page.



**Place the business name**  
The bamboo leaves have both size and directional differences. Mimic this with two type sizes and staggered placement, which moves the eye similarly and puts tension into the layout.



**Place the contact information**  
Since this is a take-home menu, the phone number needs to be prominent; here, its size and right offset make it stand out. Remaining information aligned with the seal establishes continuity yet retains the staggered movement.

Aligned with seal for continuity



## Organize the menu items

All those boxes on the original menu are unnecessary; the white space alone is sufficient to separate the sections beautifully. Simple tab indents identify columnar elements and mimic the bamboo, too.

**Visual relationships**

Above, the headline x-height determines the text size. Below, its overall height governs section spacing.

<i>Family Specials</i>	
Cantonese Family Special	14.95
Soup of the Day	
Egg Rolls	
Broccoli Beef	
Teriyaki Chicken	
B.B.Q. Pork Fried Rice	
Mandarin Family Special	15.95
Soup of the Day	
Fried Prawns	



**Tab indents** rather than flush-left alignment yield text blocks that have staggered edges similar to the bamboo and cover layout.



## Repeat inside

What's good for the outside is good for the inside. Create continuity easily by repeating the background, margins, column guides and type treatment inside.

### Outside spread

### Inside spread

Appetizers	Pork	Seafood
Fried Won Ton	Sweet & Sour Pork	Cashew
Egg Rolls (4)	Garlic Pork (with vegetables)	Prawn with lobster sauce
Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)	Sa-tay Pork	Prawn with black bean sauce
Fried Chicken Wings (10)	Teriyaki Pork	Sweet & Sour Prawn
Pot Stickers (8)	B.B.Q. Pork Bean Curd	Curry Prawn (or calamari) *
Fried Prawns (8)		Kung Pao Prawn (or calamari) *
Fried Calamari		Szechwan Prawn *
Chinese Chicken Salad		Vegetable with Prawn
Soup	Pork	Vegetables
Soup of the Day	2.95	Cashew Chicken
Egg Flower Soup	4.25	Szechwan Chicken *
Chicken Noodle Soup	4.25	Kung Pao Chicken *
Beef Noodle Soup	4.25	Hunan Chicken *
Won Ton Noodle Soup	4.25	Curry Chicken *
Won Ton Soup	4.25	Sweet & Sour Chicken
Combination Won Ton	5.25	Sa-tay Chicken
Hot & Sour Soup *	5.25	Lemon Chicken
		Sesame Chicken
		Teriyaki Chicken
		Beef Fried Rice
		Shrimp Fried Rice
		Combination Fried Rice
Combination Plates	Beef	Chow Mein
Combination Plate #1	5.25	Broccoli Beef
Soup of the Day		Mongolian Beef *
Paper-wrapped Chicken		Szechuan Beef *
Broccoli Beef		Kung Pao Beef *
Chow Mein or Fried Rice		Hunan Beef *
		Beef with Oyster Sauce
		Ginger Beef
		Pepper Beef (with black bean)
		* Hot & Spicy

**Repeat the background** Use the same background image inside as outside, but to make space for the menu items delete the foreground silhouettes. Carry over margins, guides and type treatment. Note that the bamboo shadow is reversed to create the illusion of transparent rice paper.



## Color unifies the elements

It's time to add color. Our eyes connect similarities—*this like that*. Color the headlines to match the seal already on the cover. The contrast of gold adds depth and spices up the hot palette.

**Family Specials (2-3 people)**

Cantonese Family Special 14.95  
Soup of the Day  
Egg Rolls  
Broccoli Beef  
Teriyaki Chicken  
BB.Q. Pork Fried Rice

Mandarin Family Special 15.95  
Soup of the Day  
Fried Prawns  
Mongolian Beef  
Sa-tay Chicken  
BB.Q. Pork Chow Mein

House Family Special 16.95  
Soup of the Day  
Paper-wrapped Chicken  
Cashew Prawn  
Sesame Chicken  
Shrimp Chow Mein

**Special Rice Plates**  
(Entree without shrimp 4.25)  
1. Sa-tay Chicken or Pork  
2. Teriyaki Chicken or Pork  
3. Sweet & Sour Chicken or Pork  
4. Kung Pao Chicken  
5. Szechwan Beef  
6. Mongolian Beef \*  
7. Curry Chicken \*  
8. Broccoli Beef  
9. Sesame Chicken  
10. Lemon Chicken  
11. Cashew Chicken  
12. Garlic Chicken  
13. Honey Chicken  
14. Vegetable Orange \*  
(Entree with shrimp 5.25)  
15. Cashew Shrimp  
16. Kung Pao Shrimp  
17. Szechwan Shrimp \*  
18. Curry Shrimp  
19. Shrimp with black bean sauce  
20. Shrimp with lobster sauce

**Soup**  
Soup of the Day 1.50  
Egg Flower Soup 4.25  
Chicken Noodle Soup 4.25  
Beef Noodle Soup 4.25  
Won Ton Noodle Soup 4.25  
Won Ton Soup 4.25  
Combination Won Ton 5.25  
Hot & Sour Soup \* 5.25

**Combination Plates**  
Combination Plate #1 5.25  
Soup of the Day  
Paper-wrapped Chicken  
Broccoli Beef  
Chow Mein or Fried Rice

Combination Plate #2 6.25  
Soup of the Day  
Fried Prawns  
Sweet & Sour Chicken  
Chow Mein or Fried Rice

**916.922.1818**

3315 Northgate Blvd. #8, Sacramento  
Corner of Northgate & San Juan  
Open M-Sat. from 11-9, closed Sunday  
Dine-In • Take-Out • Catering

<b>Appetizers</b>	<b>Pork</b>	<b>Seafood</b>
Fried Won Ton 2.95 Egg Rolls (4) 4.25 Paper-wrapped Chicken (8) 4.25 Fried Chicken Wings (10) 4.25 Pot Stickers (8) 4.95 Fried Prawns (8) 4.95 Fried Calamari 5.95 Chinese Chicken Salad 4.25	Sweet & Sour Pork 5.95 Garlic Pork (with vegetables) 5.95 Sa-tay Pork 5.95 Teriyaki Pork 5.95 BB.Q. Pork Bean Curd 5.95	Cashew 6.95 Prawn with lobster sauce 6.95 Prawn with black bean sauce 6.95 Sweet & Sour Prawn 6.95 Curry Prawn (or calamari) * 6.95 Kung Pao Prawn (or calamari) * 6.95 Szechwan Prawn * 6.95 Vegetable with Prawn 6.95
<b>Poultry</b>	<b>Vegetables</b>	
Broccoli Chicken 5.25 Almond Chicken 5.25	Steakhouse Chicken * 5.25 Szechwan Chicken * 5.25 Kung Pao Chicken * 5.25 Hunan Chicken * 5.95 Curry Chicken * 5.95 Sweet & Sour Chicken 5.95 Sa-tay Chicken 5.95 Lemon Chicken 5.95 Sesame Chicken 5.95 Teriyaki Chicken 5.95 Garlic Chicken 5.95	Vegetable Deluxe 5.25 Szechwan Bean Curd * 5.25 Braised Bean Curd 5.95
<b>Combination Plates</b>	<b>Fried Rice</b>	
Combination Plate #1 5.25 Soup of the Day Paper-wrapped Chicken Broccoli Beef Chow Mein or Fried Rice	Beef* 5.95 Mongolian Beef * 5.95 Szechwan Beef * 5.95 Kung Pao Beef * 5.95 Human Beef * 6.95 Beef with Oyster Sauce 5.95 Ginger Beef 5.95 Pepper Beef (with black bean) 5.95	Vegetarian Chow Mein 4.25 Chicken Chow Mein 4.25 BB.Q. Pork Chow Mein 4.25 Beef Chow Mein 4.25 Shrimp Chow Mein 5.25 Combination Chow Mein 5.25

\* Hot & Spicy

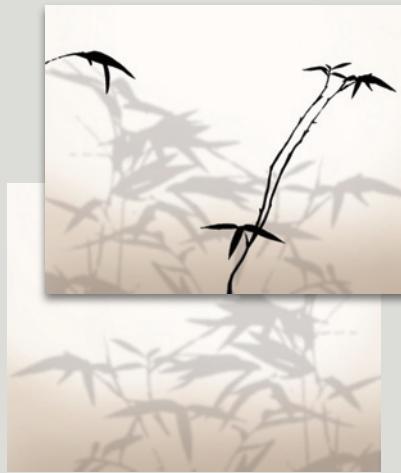
**Phone number** in gold distinguishes it from the food categories and adds another level of depth.

Remember to work with your visual research; don't pull design decisions from a hat. Note here the gold color is from a research image (page 4).



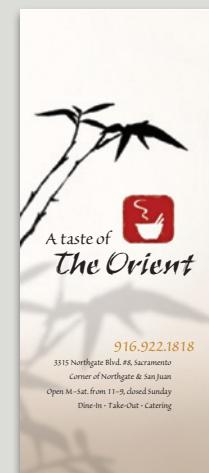
## Prices are subject to change

The beauty of this simple menu is that the background—which bleeds—can be commercially printed in large quantities, then *A Taste of the Orient* can update items as needed and print fresh copies on a desktop printer.



Pre-printed shells . . .

. . . items updated, printed . . .



<i>A Taste of the Orient</i>	
<i>Appetizers</i>	
Fried Won Ton	2.95
Egg Rolls (4)	2.25
Paper-wrapped chicken (8)	4.25
Fried Chicken Wings (10)	4.25
Pot Stickers (8)	4.25
Fried Prawns (8)	4.95
Fried Calamari	4.95
Chinese chicken salad	5.95
2.25	4.25
<i>Soups</i>	
Soup of the Day	1.50
Egg Flower Soup	4.25
Chicken Noodle Soup	4.25
Beef Noodle Soup	4.25
Won Ton Noodle Soup	4.25
Won Ton Soup	4.25
Combination Won Ton	5.25
Hot & Sour Soup *	5.25
2.25	5.25
<i>Pork</i>	
Broccoli Chicken	5.95
Almond Chicken	5.95
Cashew Chicken	5.95
Szechwan Chicken *	5.25
Kung Pao Chicken *	5.25
Hunan Chicken *	5.95
Curry Chicken *	5.95
Sa tay chicken	5.95
Lemon chicken	5.95
Sesame chicken	5.95
Teriyaki chicken	5.95
Garlic chicken	5.95
5.25	5.95
<i>Poultry</i>	
Broccoli Duck	5.25
Almond Duck	5.25
Cashew Duck	5.25
Szechwan Duck *	5.25
Kung Pao Duck *	5.25
Hunan Duck *	5.95
Curry Duck *	5.95
Sa tay duck	5.95
Lemon Duck	5.95
Sesame Duck	5.95
Teriyaki Duck	5.95
Garlic Duck	5.95
5.25	5.95
<i>Seafood</i>	
Codfilet	6.95
Prawns with Lobster sauce	6.95
Prawns with black bean sauce	6.95
Shrimp & Scallion Prawn	6.95
Curry Prawn (or calamari) *	6.95
Kung Pao Prawn (or calamari) *	6.95
Szechuan Prawn *	6.95
Vegetable with Prawn	6.95
5.25	6.95
<i>Vegetables</i>	
Vegetable Deluxe	5.25
Szechuan Bean Curd *	5.25
Braised Bean Curd	5.25
5.25	5.25
<i>Fried Rice</i>	
Vegetarian Fried Rice	4.25
Chicken Fried Rice	4.25
BB&Q Pork Fried Rice	4.25
Beef Fried Rice	4.25
Shrimp Fried Rice	5.25
Combination Fried Rice	5.25
4.25	5.25
<i>Chow Mein</i>	
Broccoli Beef	5.95
Vegetarian Chow Mein	4.25
Chicken Chow Mein	4.25
BB&Q Pork Chow Mein	4.25
Beef Chow Mein	5.25
Shrimp Chow Mein	5.25
Pepper Beef (with black bean)	5.25
5.25	5.25
* Hot & Spicy	

. . . and folded for presentation.



## By the way . . .

As an option, a heavy frame around each panel looks *a lot* like a folding screen.



With the addition of the black frame, each panel becomes its own separate zone, a result similar to the original menu in which each category was boxed in. But unlike the unattractive original, several elements tie the zones together:

- 1) The black silhouette spans two panels
- 2) The bamboo shadow spans all three panels
- 3) The red color repeats throughout.

An accordion fold like the screen would have been artistically truer, but the content of the menu wouldn't permit it.



## Article resources

**1b** *Family Specials* (2-3 people)

Cantonese Family Special	14.95
Soup of the Day	
Egg Rolls	
Beef Wellington	
Teriyaki Chicken	
B.B.Q. Pork Fried Rice	

**2d** *Mandarin Family Special*

Soup of the Day	15.95
Fried Prawns	
Mongolian Beef	
Sa-tay Chicken	
B.B.Q. Pork Chow Mein	

**1b** *House Family Special*

Soup of the Day	16.95
Paper-wrapped Chicken	
Cashew Prawn	
Sesame Chicken	
Shrimp Chow Mein	

**2d** *Special Rice Plates*

(Entree without shrimp \$12.95)

1. Satay Chicken or Pork
2. Teriyaki Chicken or Pork
3. Sweet & Sour Chicken
4. Kung Pao Chicken
5. Szechuan Beef\*
6. Mongolian Beef\*
7. Curry Chicken\*
8. Orange Beef\*
9. Sesame Chicken
10. Lemon Chicken
11. Cashew Chicken
12. Garlic Chicken
13. Hunan Chicken
14. Vegetable Deluxe\*
15. Shrimp with shrimp \$12.95
16. Cashew Shrimp
17. Kung Pao Shrimp
18. Szechuan Shrimp\*
19. Curry Shrimp
20. Shrimp with black bean sauce
21. Shrimp with lobster sauce

**3** *3315 Northgate Blvd. #8 Sacramento*

**4** *Corner of Northgate & San Juan*

**5** *Open M-Sat, from 11-9, closed Sunday*

**6** *Dine-In - Take-Out - Catering*

**1a** *A taste of the Orient*

**2a** *916.922.1818*

**2b** *3315 Northgate Blvd. #8 Sacramento*

**2c** *Corner of Northgate & San Juan*

### Typefaces

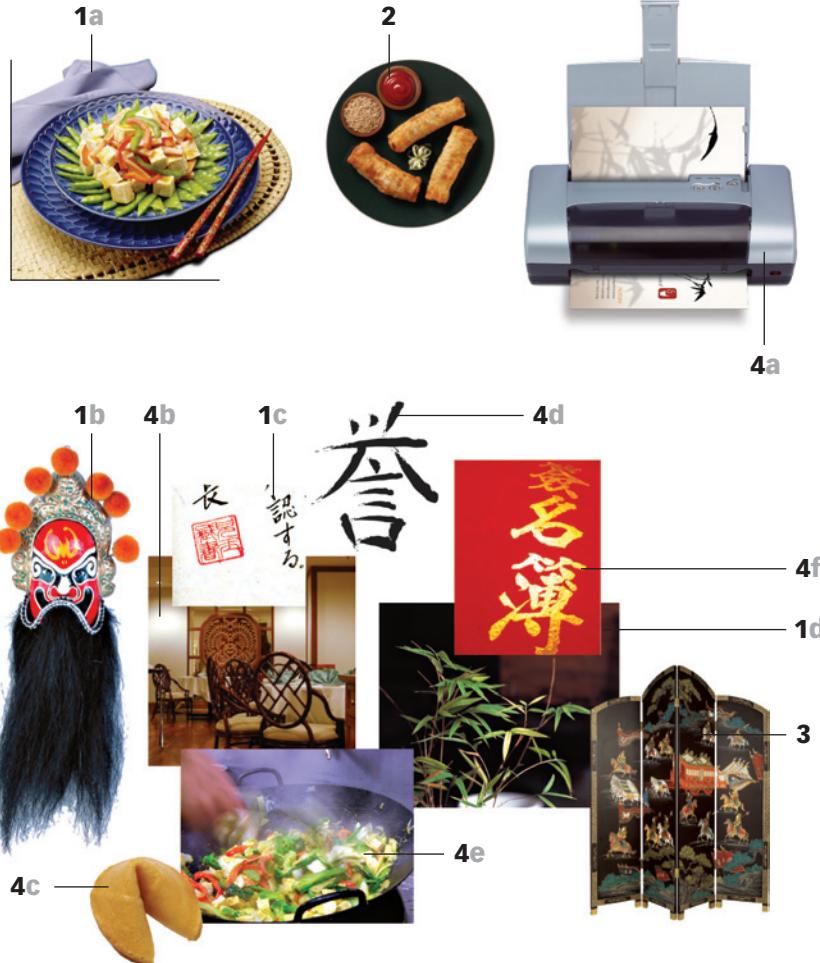
- 1 (a-b)** [Ruach Plain](#) | a) 43 pt, b) 16 pt
- 2 (a-d)** [Sanvito MM](#) | a) 27 pt, b) 24 pt, c) 13/13 pt, d) 13/15.6 pt

### Colors

- 3** C0 M90 Y80 K25
- 4** C0 M40 Y90 K15
- 5** C22 M26 Y34 K0
- 6** C2 M3 Y4 K0



## Article resources



### Images

1 (a-d) Photos.com | [a](#) [b](#) [c](#) [d](#)

2 Photodisc/Veer.com

3 Stockbyte/Veer.com

4 (a-f) istockphoto.com | [a](#) [b](#) [c](#) [d](#)  
[e](#) [f](#)



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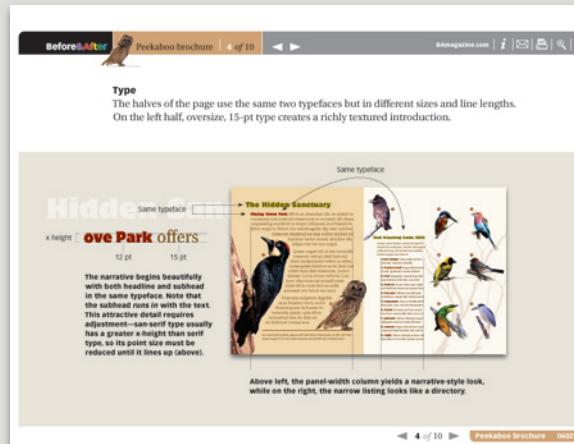
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### For presentation format

[Print: \(Specify pages 1–20\)](#)



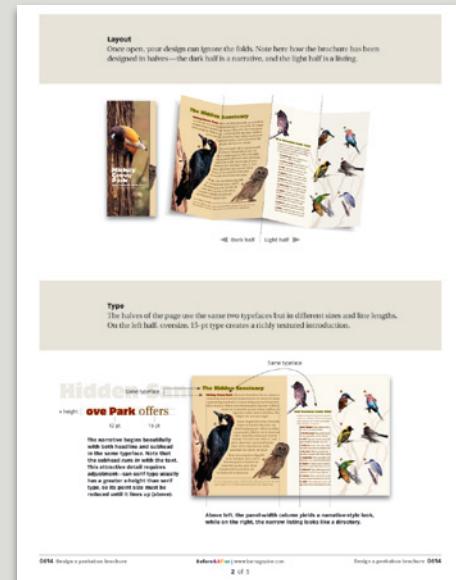
**Print**  
Format: Landscape  
Page Size: Fit to Page



**Save**  
Presentation format or  
Paper-saver format

### For paper-saver format

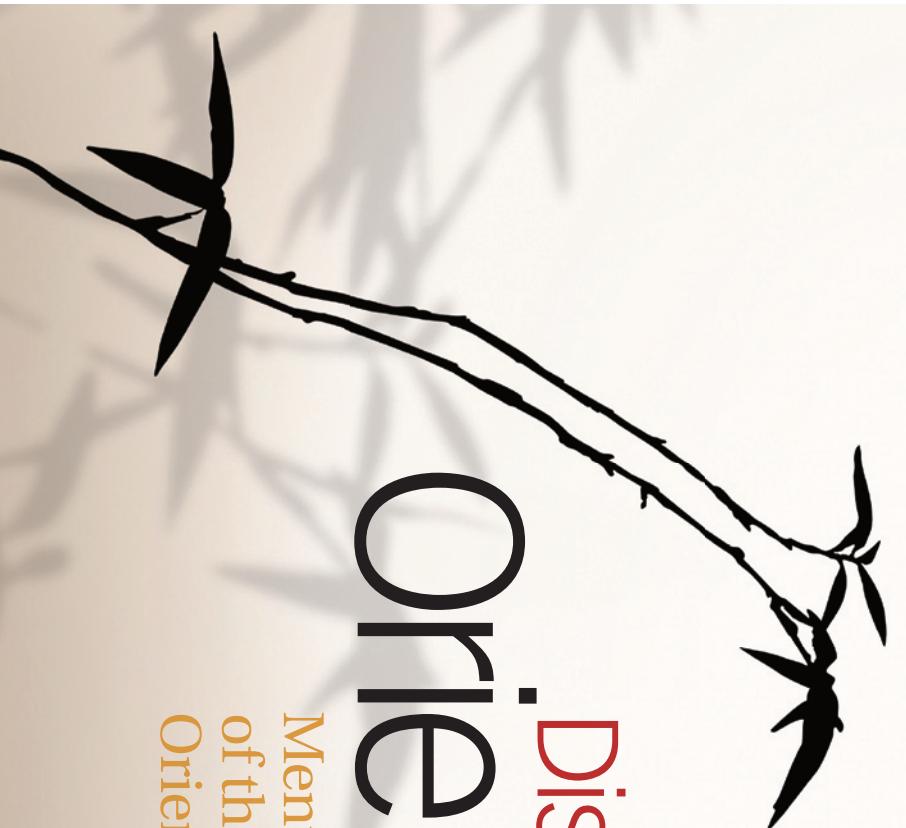
[Print: \(Specify pages 22–31\)](#)



# Oriental Distinctively

Menu captures the flavor  
of the Far East in a unique  
Oriental format. *Continued* ▶

*Continued* ▼



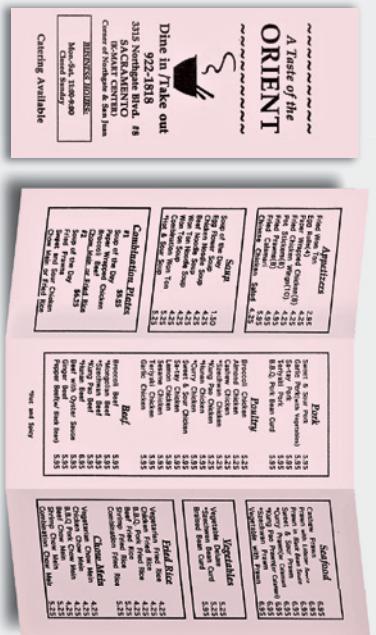
Delicious, savory, mouth-watering Chinese cuisine—that's what the business-lunch crowd gets at *A Taste of the Orient*, a small, family-owned restaurant inside a neighborhood shopping mall. But you'd never know that by looking at their menu (right), a plain, pink leftover from the Ming Dynasty (14th-century English period). It's so nondescript!

A Taste of the Orient needs a

menu that's as beautiful as its food is tasty and that conveys its distinctive Chinese culture. It needs a menu that will be posted on the office bulletin board, not hidden in the bottom drawer. Let's make one.

**Before** (above)  
Just the facts, ma'am. The data's all here, but delete the bowl, and there's not one visual clue to let us know this sheet is about Chinese cuisine. A take-out menu needs the diner's eyes to do what his nose can't—lure him back to the restaurant. That requires beauty.

Just the facts, ma'am. The data's all here, but delete the bow!, and there's not one visual clue to let us know this sheet is about Chinese cuisine. A take-out menu needs the diner's eyesight to do what his nose can't—lure him back to the restaurant. That requires beauty.

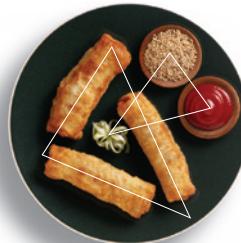


It's hot designed at all

The inks on the paper; all right, but the page is not designed; it's just filled in. The designer left his visual tools of scale, contrast and depth at home!<sup>1</sup>

卷之三

Outside spread



(right) The outside panel has a focal point (the bowl), and it's in the right place (the center). but it's too small—*too much like everything else*—to have an impact. The name's in a good place, too, surrounded by (mainly) open space, which makes it easy to read, but it's so nondescript it has no voice. Name, location, phone number and hours are all needed to *do business*, but unlike what the chef prepares, none of it has been artfully presented.

Inside spread



## Accidental design

**Accidental design** Good design is intentional. At left, three circles and three rectangles have been arranged in two triangles around a focal point centered in the large circle (the platter). That's design, and it's attractive. Above, the center panel is typographically different from the other two—a normal visual device—but for no apparent reason. That's accidental, and it's unattractive.

**Look. Read. Learn.**

Begin the redesign by researching what *Chinese* looks like. Actually do the work. Don't rely on your memory, or you'll end up using clichés like fortune cookies and chopsticks.

The world of China

Don't dream up images — you'll get better results (more easily, too) if you *look* them up! Research books, magazines and online photo sources. Visit Chinese restaurants. What to watch for? Pay attention to physical attributes like shapes, colors, textures, sensual qualities like sound, smell, touch; and hidden intangibles, especially of history, culture and tradition.



**Characters** Ancient, wet brush, calligraphic, fluid, painstaking, distinctively Oriental

**Q5.** Visit Chinese restaurants.  
**What to watch for?** Pay attention to physical attributes like shapes, colors, textures; sensual qualities like sound, smell, touch, and hidden intangibles, especially of history, culture and tradition.

**Mask** Ancient, heroic, religious, theatrical, colorful, multi-textured

**Fortune cookie** "Moon cakes" predate Ming Dynasty.

**ok** Colorful, hot, free

**Screen** Fine furniture, inlaid historic, story-telling, seen in the restaurant

**Bamboo**  
Natural, elegant,  
cool, spare

A vertical scroll painting (kakejiku) depicting a landscape scene. The artwork is rendered in a traditional Japanese style, featuring a large, gnarled tree with dense foliage on the left side. In the center, there is a rocky outcrop or a small hill. On the right, a small, simple building with a tiled roof is nestled among trees. The background shows distant mountains and a clear sky. The entire scene is framed by a dark border.

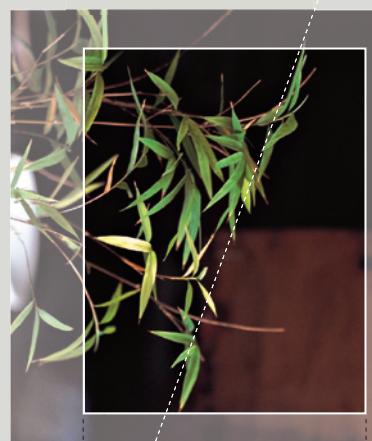
0614 Distinctively Oriental

## Start with format and background

Two images can anchor the design—the folding screen because it resembles the folded sheet, and the bamboo plant, which will make a graceful, *placid* background.



Screens are usually decorated with landscapes, plants and figures and typically have three or four panels. Conveniently enough, the two-fold menu has three panels.

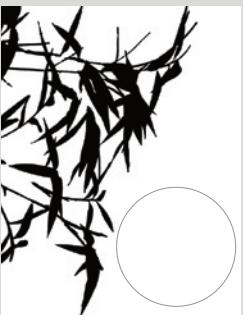


With the image in place, it's time to turn the background into a beautiful canvas on which to paint our words.



## Create a silhouette

To create the illusion of a shadow cast against the screen—or visible through the screen—first separate the bamboo from its background.



What we're about to do is reduce the full-color photo to solid black & white with no grays. For an organic image like this one with a distinct silhouette and where precision is not vital, Photoshop's Threshold slider is ideal.

**Open the image**  
Change its mode to Grayscale  
(Image>Mode>Grayscale),

### Set the threshold

Select Image>Adjustments>Threshold, check Preview, and move the Threshold slider. Everything above the threshold is white, and everything below is black. Adjust for greatest clarity, then click OK.

Photoshop's Threshold slider is ideal.

### Invert and clean up

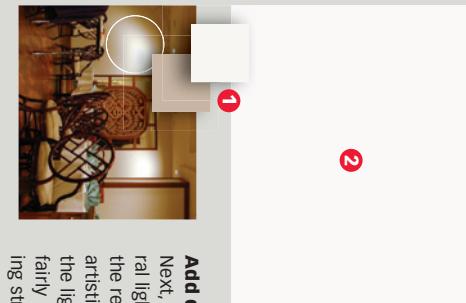
Invert black and white by selecting Image>Adjustments>Invert. Erase any leftover spots and unwanted parts. If necessary, use the Brush tool to paint and redefine some parts. Save a copy (or a layer) of this image to use later.

## Create the illusion of natural light

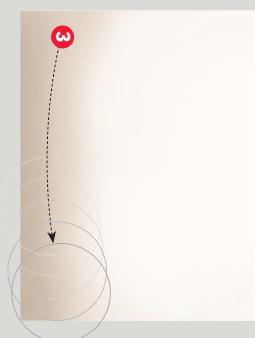
Turn the black silhouette into a soft shadow by blurring and lightening. Then paint depth and radiance onto the whole page.



**Blur and lighten**  
Return the image to CMYK Mode (Image->Mode->CMYK). To soften, select Filter->Blur>Gaussian Blur, and enter a Radius amount. What you want is a soft but still distinct silhouette, which in this case was 10 pixels. Lighten the result by lowering the opacity to about 10%.



**Add depth and radiance**  
Next, mimic the dark and light qualities of natural light. First, sample a light and dark color from the restaurant (#1). (This "color connection" is an artistic tie-in.) Create a new layer, and fill it with the light color (#2). With the darker color and a fairly large, soft brush, make a smooth, sweeping stroke across the page (#3).



**Combine**  
Set the new layer's blending mode to Multiply, which allows the bamboo layer beneath to show through. The result is a convincing illusion of bamboo seen through a paper screen.



## Add bamboo to the foreground

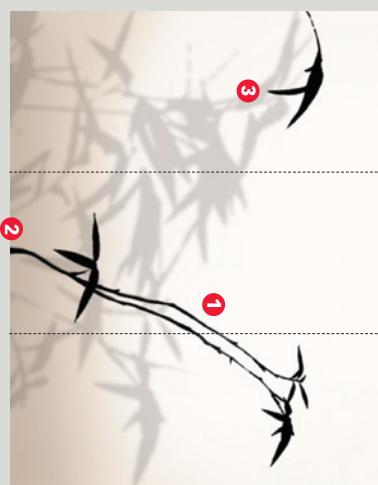
With the shadow and lighting established, give the page more depth by adding black bamboo, which yields a beautiful foreground-background effect.



**Isolate**  
Retrieve the saved black & white copy, move its layer to the top, and set its blending mode to Multiply with the Brush and Eraser tools, isolate a few bamboo leaves.



**Separate**  
Note that as big as the shadow is, its light value and soft edges make it recede. Create a forward dimension by moving black leaves to the center of each panel: The contrasts of edge (hard and soft) and overlapping elements (dark, medium, light) results in real depth.

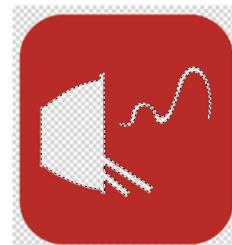
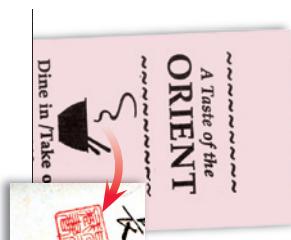


**Connect**  
Get artistic! With the Brush tool, create your own bamboo plant by connecting the leaves (#1) and adding a stem (#2) that anchors plant to page. Then add another leaf (#3) to serve as a downward pointer to the list of menu items that will eventually go beneath it.



## Create a focal icon

The original bowl is a good, simple icon for the restaurant; it suggests eating, chopsticks say Chinese, and steam says hot and fresh. A stamplike effect makes it bolder and even more Chinese.



Click...  
...dab...

In Chinese brush paintings, a stamp, which is typically red, is often used as a signature. Its imagery can be evoked by turning the bowl into a stamp.

A rubber stamp begins as a fairly sharp image that degrades as it unevenly hits the paper and more as the ink soaks in. Time can further wear it down. The result is a rich, interesting texture. Here's how to mimic that in Photoshop.

### 1) Create the image

The original image can come from almost any source (ours was a scan), so in some way get it into a Photoshop file—Resolution 300 ppi, Color Mode RGB Color, Background Contents Transparent—turn it into a selection, and knock it out of a shape you've drawn.

You want the results to resemble the image above.

### 2) Roughen the edges

Set the Foreground and Background colors to red and white, respectively. Go to Filter->Sketch->Torn Edges, and for this size and resolution enter the following: Image Balance: 25; Smoothness: 1; Contrast: 15. Click OK.

Then enter the following: Image Balance: 25; Smoothness: 1; Contrast: 15. Click OK.

### 3) Sharpen, then dab

In Filter->Sharpen->Unsharp Mask, apply the following settings: Amount: 100; Radius: 25; Threshold: 0. Click OK. Next,

with white as the Foreground color, select the Spatter brush (here, number 39). Using various brush sizes and opacities, click-dab to soften and basically mess up the edges.



## Select a display type

Nothing evokes China as readily as its unique, calligraphic characters, which on the menu must be conveyed with Western-style type. In general, you'll see wet brush, dry brush and artificial styles. Dry-brush font *Ruach* in this case is best.

### Reference character

Once you've found a style that you like, note how it's drawn. Pay attention to its edges, stroke ends, thick-to-thinness and general slant or direction, then look for similarities in Western typestyles.

**Wet brush**  
*Orient*

**Dry brush**  
*Orient*

**Visigoth Regular**  
*Orient*

**Choc ICG Regular**  
*Orient*

## Select a complementary text typeface

For the small type used for listings, look first for clarity and then for a complementary line or shape. Clarity usually requires “open” letterforms and little detail.

### Appetizers

- Fried Won Ton
- Egg Rolls (4)
- Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)
- Fried Chicken Wings (10)
- Pot-Stickers (8)

### Appetizers

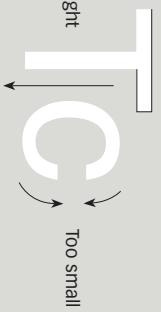
- Fried Won Ton
- Egg Rolls (4)
- Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)
- Fried Chicken Wings (10)
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### Appetizers

- Fried Won Ton
- Egg Rolls (4)
- Paper-wrapped Chicken (8)
- Fried Chicken Wings (10)
- Pot-Stickers (8)

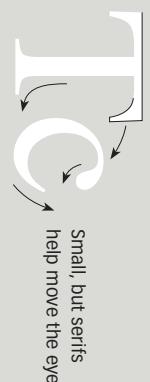
### Sans-serif Helvetica

Although popular, Helvetica is not especially clear at small sizes, because its small apertures tend to close up. And its straight lines are too rigid to complement free-flowing Ruach.



### Roman serif Times Roman

Roman serif faces are more refined and generally easier to read, because serifs help move the eye from letter to letter, but they’re full of tiny detail and stylistically very different from Ruach.



### Calligraphic Sanvito

Simple lines, BIG counters, BIG apertures and a sweeping stroke yield both clarity and calligraphic style without the brush details. Sanvito is a good complement to Ruach.

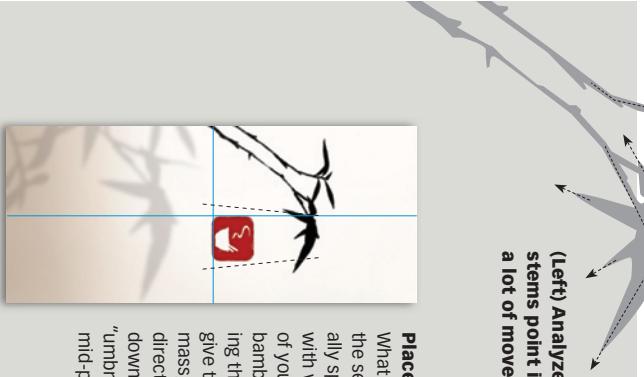


**complement, image and layout**  
With the bamboo already on the page, create a relationship between image, type and layout by mimicking its spiky visual qualities.

(Left) Analyze the bamboo based on line and direction. Note that its leaves and stems point in different directions—horizontal, diagonal, vertical—which creates a lot of movement and tension. This action can be mimicked in the layout.

#### Place the seal

What size should the seal be? Generally speaking, work with what’s in front of you. Here, the bamboo is governing the design, so give the seal similar mass, and place it directly beneath the downward-pointing “umbrella” about mid-page.



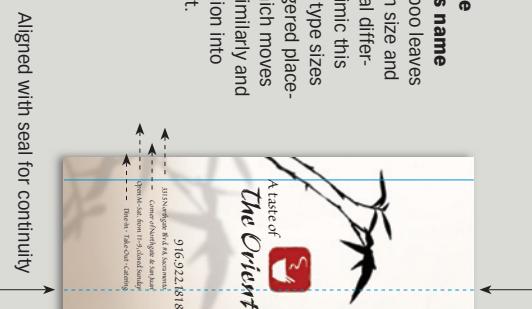
#### Place the business name

The bamboo leaves have both size and directional differences. Mimic this with two type sizes and staggered placement, which moves the eye similarly and puts tension into the layout.



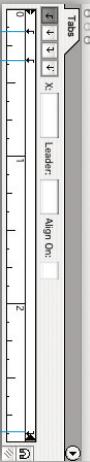
#### Place the contact information

Since this is a take-home menu, the phone number needs to be prominent; here, its size and right offset make it stand out. Remaining information aligned with the seal establishes continuity yet retains the staggered movement.



## Organize the menu items

All those boxes on the original menu are unnecessary; the white space alone is sufficient to separate the sections beautifully. Simple tab indents identify columnar elements and mimic the bamboo, too.



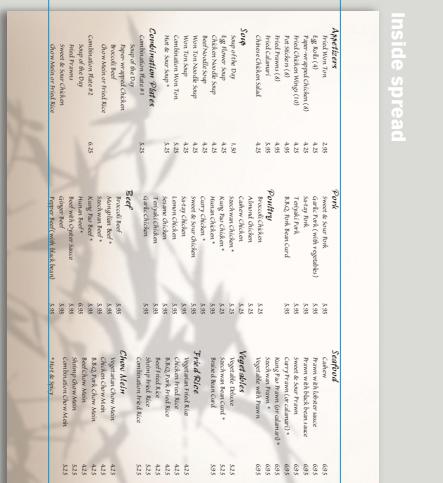
<b>Family Specials</b>	<b>Juicy Specials (2-5 people)</b>
Cantonese Family Special	
Soup of the Day	
Egg Rolls	
Broccoli Beef	
Teriyaki Chicken	
	14.95



**Tab indents** rather than flush-left alignment yield text blocks that have staggered edges similar to the bamboo and cover layout.

**Repeat inside**

What's good for the outside is good for the inside. Create continuity easily by repeating the background, margins, column guides and type treatment inside.



**Repeat the background** Use the same background image inside as outside, but to make space for the menu items delete the foreground silhouettes. Carry over margins, guides and type treatment. Note that the bamboo shadow is reversed to create the illusion of transparency.

0614 Distinctively Oriental

**Color unifies the elements**  
It's time to add color. Our eyes connect similarities—*this like that*. Color the headlines to match the seal already on the cover. The contrast of gold adds depth and spices up the hot palette.



**Phone number** in gold  
distinguishes it from the food  
categories and adds another  
level of depth.

Remember to work with your visual research; don't pull design decisions  
from a hat. Note here the gold color is from a research image (page 4).

**Prices are subject to change**  
The beauty of this simple menu is that the background—which bleeds—can  
be commercially printed in large quantities, then *A Taste of the Orient* can update  
items as needed and print fresh copies on a desktop printer.

Pre-printed shells . . .

. . . items updated, printed . . .

. . . and folded for presentation.



## By the way . . .

As an option, a heavy frame around each panel looks *a lot* like a folding screen.

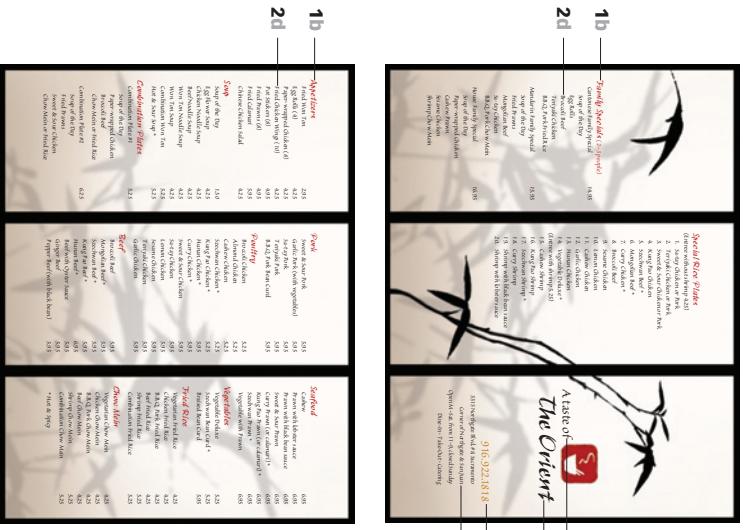


## Article resources

With the addition of the black frame, each panel becomes its own separate zone, a result similar to the original menu in which each category was boxed in. But unlike the unattractive original, several elements tie the zones together:

- 1) The black silhouette spans two panels.
- 2) The bamboo shadow spans all three panels.
- 3) The red color repeats throughout.

An accordian fold like the screen would have been artistically true, but the content of the menu wouldn't permit it.



3	4	5	6
<b>1 (a-b)</b> <u>Ruach Plain</u>   a) 43 pt, b) 16 pt	<b>2 (a-d)</b> <u>Santivito MM</u>   a) 27 pt, b) 24 pt, c) 13/13 pt, d) 13/15.6 pt		

Colors
3 C0 M90 Y80 K25
4 C0 M40 Y90 K15
5 C22 M26 Y34 K0
6 C2 M3 Y4 K0

**Typefaces**

**1 (a-b)** Ruach Plain | a) 43 pt, b) 16 pt  
**2 (a-d)** Santivito MM | a) 27 pt, b) 24 pt, c) 13/13 pt, d) 13/15.6 pt

## Article resources



### Images

1 (a-d) Photos.com | [a](#) [b](#) [c](#) [d](#)

2 Photodisc/Veer.com

3 Stockbyte/Veer.com

4 (a-f) istockphoto.com | [a](#) [b](#) [c](#) [d](#) [e](#) [f](#)

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