

yeobo,*darling*



Chefs **Michael** and **Meichih Kim**, who, with the acclaim given to Michelin-starred Maum and street fare-inspired Bǎo Bèi, proved that they can dazzle in both the fine dining and casual categories, have opened a concept that sits somewhere in between: the upscale casual **Yeobo, Darling**. The restaurant debuted at **827 Santa Cruz Ave.** in downtown Menlo Park on June 13, 2025.

Yeobo, Darling is an amalgam of the chefs' backgrounds, highlighting Michael's Korean and Meichih's Taiwanese roots, while expressing the duality of being Asian American. Fitting a restaurant operated by a husband-and-wife team, the Korean word *yeobo* is a term of endearment generally reserved for spouses, meaning honey or sweetheart. The name also reflects a desire to honor the past while embracing the present, as the term *yeobo* sounds like something one's parents or grandparents would say, bringing a warm nostalgic quality to the concept.

Yeobo, Darling offers a concise à la carte menu meant to bring a feeling of abundance to the table. The menu includes a selection of individual bites plus a variety of small plates and entrées suitable for sharing.

BAR MOOD, one of [Asia's 50 Best Bars](#), developed the restaurant's non-alcoholic and low-ABV cocktail program, drawing heavily on high-elevation teas from Taiwan. Master Sommelier [Kyungmoon Kim](#) curated a robust selection of fine wines and sool—a term that includes multiple types of alcoholic beverage, like soju, cheongju, and makgeolli—which he imports from Korea.

The design team at LA's [Preen](#) created a rich, minimal interior softened with warm blush tones. A 4-seat bar offers a cozy space for a drink, while a 10-seat private dining room, separated with a curtain, can be an intimate setting for larger parties or serve as an extension of the main dining room.



Yeobo, Darling's menu is structured around the idea of a shared meal with many plates on the table, inspired by the tradition of serving main courses with a wide variety of side dishes, called *banchan*, in Korea.

Here, the meal starts with individual bites, like **beef tartare tartlets** with smoked radish and kohlrabi or **chicken liver mousse** with pineapple and cilantro in a rice wafer.

The small plates include the **scallion croissant**, made with a scallion-studded laminated dough and served with a savory *rou song* butter. The **chilled somyun** is also a highlight, in which wheat noodles made with perilla seeds are dressed with perilla oil and a pine nut milk that's been aerated to give it a bit more texture. Taiwanese *lu rou*, a minced pork gravy flavored with soy, is served in a lasagne format with chrysanthemum pasta sheets, béchamel sauce, and cheese.

Shareable large dishes include **scallop** with black bean and cauliflower and **crispy anchovy rice**. Some of the mains, specifically the **pork collar** and **kalbi**, are served with banchan, an assortment of seasonal accompaniments that will include housemade white or spicy red kimchi. A more recent addition is the **sweet and sour tilefish**, a dish that reimages Tangsuyuk, a sweet, sour, and crispy pork that is beloved in both Korea and China.

For dessert, the chefs offer a **milk soft cream** topped with seasonal fruit. They also serve slices of their signature **Karat Cake®**, a carrot cake topped with cream cheese mousse and gold flakes.





BAR MOOD, a driver of craft cocktail culture in Taiwan since opening in 2017 and one of **Asia's 50 Best Bars** since 2019, has crafted a non-alcoholic and low-ABV cocktail program for Yeobo, Darling. Chef Meichih Kim first visited the bar a few summers ago, and was impressed with how the team was able to create refined drinks that spotlighted the natural ingredients of Taiwan. When it came time to find a bar consultant for this new restaurant, she thus reached out to owner and seasoned bartender Nick Wu.

Nick Wu believes that beverages need to play a supporting role in a restaurant, so his main priority was to ensure that each drink was crafted to complement the menu. Stylistically, his cocktails mirror the approachable nature of the food, bringing dimension to the dining experience without being fussy or overcomplicated. He has built a sense of ease into these drinks.

Korean soju is the base spirit across the menu, and each cocktail includes tea in some form. Nick Wu grew up with family in the tea industry – initially his grandparents, who have since passed the business to his uncle – giving him both an appreciation of and access to some of the highest quality teas in Taiwan.

The lower alcohol content of the drinks makes the subtle flavors of the tea much more impactful. The **Yuzu Smash** brings together Korean yuzu purée, fresh mint, and a housemade syrup made with thrice-infused Jasmine tea from Nantou County, Taiwan. This tea is made in the traditional method of infusing unfermented green tea with the aromas of fresh jasmine flowers, picked when their fragrance is at its peak around 7:00pm. After allowing the tea to dry and roasting it, this infusion process is repeated two more times with fresh batches of jasmine, giving the tea a natural and balanced floral fragrance.

Taiwan's high-mountain growing regions offer relatively cool climates, with dramatic temperature fluctuations between night and day. This is a good environment for teas to not only grow, but also ferment, making the final product rich and fragrant with minimal

not only grow, but also ferment, making the final product rich and fragrant with minimal bitterness and a long finish. One such tea is the Jinxuan Oolong from the Alishan mountain region, grown at an altitude of 1,600m. One of the most iconic high-mountain teas of Taiwan, this tea will bring its signature light and creamy aroma to the **Natural Oasis**. When combined with lemongrass and soju, this cocktail takes on an elegant flavor profile.

The chefs will also offer a rotating selection of non-caffeinated options, made with ingredients such as barley, corn, omija berries from Korea, and roselle, a type of hibiscus, from Taiwan.

WINE AND SOOL PROGRAM

Master Sommelier **Kyungmoon Kim** has curated a collection of fine wines and alcoholic beverages imported from Korea through his company **KMS Imports**.

Yeobo, Darling offers around 100 wines by the bottle, sourcing from regions around the world as well as wineries local to California. The selections are food friendly, with a particular emphasis on complementing the spice and richness of certain dishes with acidity and/or a touch of residual sugar. There are around 10 wines available by the glass, spanning sparkling, white, and red, and priced at \$14-28.

Kim has an impressive background in wine, having spearheaded the beverage program at JUNGSIK in Seoul, and later at their second location in NYC, where he helped the restaurant receive two Michelin stars. He then left to join the wine team at the Modern, which soon also earned two Michelin stars, as well as a Wine Spectator Grand Award. Kim was appointed to the Court of Master Sommeliers in 2016.

It was around then that he realized that the United States market was lacking in refined beverages from Korea, and in efforts to correct this, he started his own company, KMS Imports. He now imports over twenty different types of sool — a term that includes multiple types of alcoholic beverage, like soju, cheongju, and makgeolli — from Korea.

A selection of these beverages are available at Yeobo, Darling, and the team is thrilled to be able to introduce many guests to artisanal sool. The **White Lotus** makgeolli from Shinpyeong Brewery, operating in Korea since 1933, offers a delicately floral and slightly nutty flavor profile. For those interested in sampling a high quality soju, the Han company's **Seoul Night** double distilled plum wine, made from golden maesil, will be a smooth, clean, and aromatic option. (Yeobo, Darling does not have a liquor license, so the sool offerings will be lower ABV.)

DESIGN STATEMENT

Just as yeobo, a term of endearment meaning darling, carries a sense of rounded softness, the restaurant, designed by LA's **Preen**, reflects a natural elegance defined by curved lines and minimalist design. The color palette is understated and graceful, composed of neutral beige tones.

Upon arriving, guests will see the host stand, enveloped within a rich oxblood leather. Behind the curtain, the dining room comes into view, warm and welcoming. Lanterns float overhead at the center of the room, while camel-hued ultrasuede banquets line both walls. The atmosphere is at once intimate and social, with curtains offering a sense of seclusion to each section while mirrored accents create moments of casual connection among guests. A curated playlist of upbeat music keeps the space feeling lively. A private dining area, which seats ten, is on the far side of the room, enclosed with soft textiles.

The warm colors are met with precise details. Custom trays designed to hold flatware adorn each table. Sommelier tools are kept in an armoire accented with mother of pearl. The open kitchen places the chefs and their work in full view, reinforcing a sense of transparency and craft. Topped with richly veined rose and charcoal stone, and faced with champagne bird's-eye maple, the four-seat bar offers a final distinct dining experience.



CHEFS MICHAEL AND MEICHIH KIM



Chefs Michael and Meichih Kim are a husband-and-wife chef duo who have presented an imaginative take on Korean and Taiwanese flavors through their concepts Maum, Bǎo Bèi, and now Yeobo, Darling.

Michael grew up in Koreatown, Los Angeles and spent summers in Korea, where he watched his grandmother make ingredients like gochujang and blood sausage by hand before preparing elaborate family feasts. Back home in LA, early morning visits to the seafood market sparked an interest in both cooking and fishing, a passion that he enjoys to this day.

Meichih was born in Tokyo to Taiwanese parents and raised in Orange County, where her mother's home cooking, an intuitive blend of Taiwanese and Japanese flavors, formed the backbone of her palate. It wasn't until college, when she began recreating those childhood dishes out of homesickness, that she discovered her passion for cooking.

Though they came to the kitchen from different paths – Michael from hospitality studies and early work at LA's Michelin-starred Ortolan, and Meichih from an economics degree at UCLA and a stint in finance – both eventually found their way to culinary school. Michael completed his studies at the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, also working at REDD, and Meichih attended Le Cordon Bleu in Pasadena, with a coveted externship at Per Se in New York, which turned into working as a commis and chef de partie.

Their paths first crossed in Los Angeles, at Tom Colicchio's Craft, in 2007. Together, they moved to the Bay Area, where Michael joined the Michelin-starred team at SPQR and Meichih worked as chef tournant at RN74 and later as chef de partie at Benu.

Michael and Meichih met Brian Koo in 2015, and the trio began conceptualizing Maum, which opened in Palo Alto in the summer of 2018. Maum was the Bay Area's first Korean fine-dining restaurant. It opened to widespread acclaim and received a Michelin star in 2019.

FACT SHEET

Name	Yeobo, Darling
Opening Date	June 13, 2025
Address	827 Santa Cruz Ave. Menlo Park, CA 94025
Hours	Tuesday-Thursday 5:00-9:00pm Friday-Saturday 5:00-9:30pm
Phone	(650) 665-7799
Executive Chef/Owners	Meichih and Michael Kim
Wine Consultant	<u>Kyungmoon Kim</u>
Bar Consultant	<u>BAR MOOD</u>
Seats	54 indoors, including a 4-seat bar and 10-seat PDR
Interior Design	<u>Preen</u>
Website	<u>www.yeobodarling.com</u>
Instagram	<u>@yeobodarlingrestaurant</u>
Reservations	<u>OpenTable</u>