

Chef acclaimed by Gordon Ramsay secures new role

Chop Chop owner serves up award-winning recipes to Bield's Midlothian tenants

The founder and chef of one of Scotland's most popular Chinese restaurants is now cooking up a storm for elderly tenants.

Jian Wang 61, who previously owned the successful Chop Chop restaurants and was praised by TV chef Gordon Ramsay for making the best dumplings he had ever tasted, has taken up the role of as a Casual Cook at [Bield](#)'s Whitehill Lodge in Dalkeith.

Jian, who was a finalist on Gordon Ramsay's TV show the F Word, was forced to close her three branches in Edinburgh and Glasgow in 2020 due to the impact of Covid-19.

After moving to Scotland from North East China in 1997, Jian vowed to incorporate the region's impressive food into all of her ventures – including their world-famous dumplings. Tenants at Whitehill Lodge have been quick to praise the various delicacies on offer since Jian's arrival.

She said: "Taking up the role as a Casual Cook last November was a really easy decision for me as I love working with older people and helping to put a smile on their faces with nutritious food.

"As we age things can quickly change, but one thing that doesn't is our ability to taste. This gives me the drive to put my all into every dish and ensure all of the meals I provide have been tailored to the tenants' preferences.

“For example, I wanted to incorporate the much-loved dumplings from Chop Chop into the menu at Bield. Instead of making these fried, I made them boiled so it is softer and easier for tenants to enjoy.”

Some of the tenants’ favourite dishes include sweet ribs, dumplings and chicken curry – with Jian encouraging feedback after every sitting.

Before joining the development, Jian had never cooked anything other than Chinese food. Luckily the development’s Manager, Yvonne Boyle, has been on hand to share advice and recipes with Jian. Jian’s son has also translated recipes such as mince pies, shepherd’s pie and pork chops into Mandarin to allow her to follow them easily.

Jian has also been hosting taster sessions to ensure a variety of Scottish, European and Chinese dishes are available for tenants.

She added: “It has been great to learn these new recipes and I have fallen in love with the different cuisines – I’ve even started making them at home and inserting my own twist with different spices. My family keep asking me to make the dishes again and again.”

Whitehill Lodge is one of Bield’s Retirement Housing with Meals developments which provides two home-cooked meals per day.

Yvonne Boyle, Development Manager at Bield said: “Jian is a breath of fresh air to have in the development and her talent is remarkable.

“Tenants love her food and the feedback is always brilliant. Jian puts her heart into everything she does and has spent time getting to know each tenant to understand what they like and dislike.

“We are so lucky to have Jian with us at Whitehill Lodge and look forward to every meal she makes.”

In addition to Jian’s cooking talents, she is also a keen violinist. She graduated from a popular music academy in North East China in 1984 with a degree in Music and has played in several orchestras over the years.

Before Chop Chop closed its doors after 15 years, during which time it was the favourite venue of a number of celebrity chefs, it received accolades including being a finalist in the Scottish Restaurant Awards. It was also one of the few Chinese restaurants in the UK to hold an AA Rosette.

Jian continues to run a successful food business – Chop Chop Frozen – which has been operating for over 24 years and employs 50 staff. The business supplies dumplings and other Chinese-style delicacies to 50 Chinese supermarkets across the country as well as other restaurants and large supermarkets including Lidl and Aldi.

Bield is a registered charity dedicated to providing flexible and high-quality housing solutions and support for older people. Bield Housing and Care has around 180 developments across Scotland.

<https://www.bield.co.uk/>



Jian Wang