

Din Tai Fung chefs to show off skills for Taiwan

MOFA hopes 'soft power' campaign will help establish nation's identity in international arena

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has decided to use local delicacies to create greater recognition for Taiwan as part of a "soft power" campaign to differentiate the country from China.

It will hold Taiwanese cuisine festivals in England and France next week, featuring the dumplings of Din Tai Fung, one of the country's few restaurants that has achieved international acclaim.

"We believe this is a great way to introduce Taiwanese culture to foreigners and we very much appreciate Din Tai Fung restaurant's participation in the upcoming festivals," Foreign Minister James Huang (黃志芳) said in introducing the European events yesterday at a luncheon held at the MOFA.

The agency invited local and foreign guests to yesterday's gathering, including Michael Reilly, director general of the British Trade and Cultural Office in Taipei, and Jean-Claude Poimboeuf, director of the French Institute in Taipei, for a taste of the restaurant's delicacies that will be presented to their countrymen next week.

Huang said the festival would be an excellent conclusion to a year-long cultural diplomacy campaign promoted by the ministry to use "soft power" to evade Chinese obstruction in the international

arena.

As part of the campaign, Taipei's First Girls Senior High School Honor Guard & Drum Corps participated in the 2007 Edinburgh Military Tattoo in August and local black metal band ChthoniC toured the United States from September to November to promote Taiwan's United Nations bid.

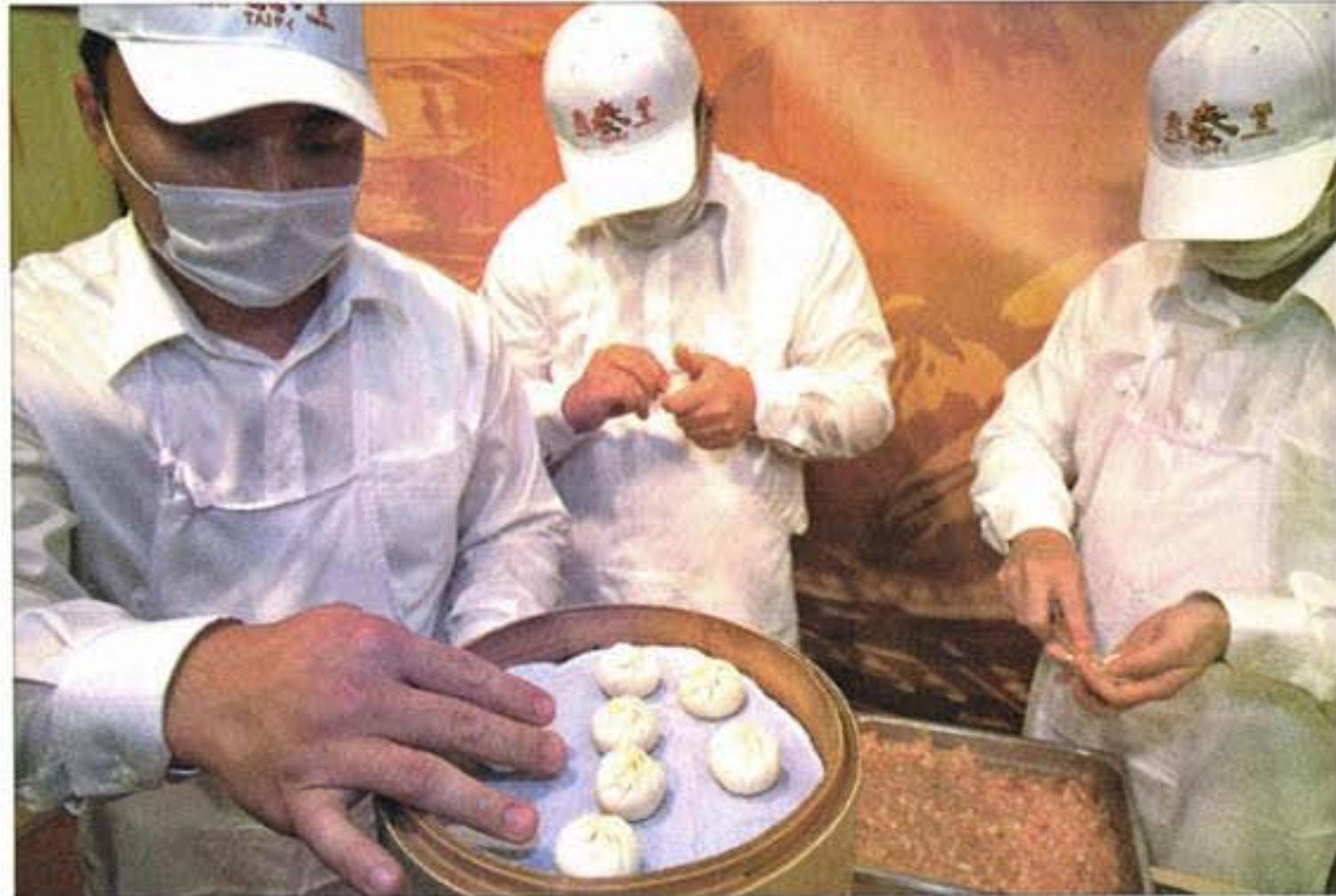
"The chefs of my restaurant will make the best of this opportunity to promote Taiwanese cuisine and culture to Europeans," said Yang Ping-yi, the 80-year-old founder of the restaurant, who also attended the luncheon as a special guest.

Chefs demonstrated yesterday the exact methods they used to make the world-famous steamed dumplings, from kneading the dough and making the filling, to shaping the dumplings and placing them in bamboo steamers to be cooked.

A group of 17 chefs and waiters from the restaurant will fly to London on Saturday to prepare for the coming festival held in the Evergreen Airlines Building in London next Monday.

They will then head to Paris, France for two more events to be held on Wednesday and Friday, according to the ministry.

Taiwan's overseas representative offices have invited British and French politicians, celebrities, media and food critics to



Din Tai Fung chefs make the restaurant's famous steamed pork dumplings during a news conference in Taipei. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is launching a campaign to bring the famous restaurant's chefs to UK and France in December to promote Taiwan.

join the events.

Din Tai Fung was founded in 1958 by Wang and has gained global fame with its small, delicate, steamed dumplings.

It has not only become a benchmark for Taiwanese cuisine but also a hot tourist site for tens of thousands foreign and local tourists every year.

The restaurant has a total of 36 branches around the globe including in Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Indonesia and the United States.