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Not your ordinary museum

By CHEN PELF YEEN, The Star

UNLIKE most museums where artefacts displayed are not sold to patrons, one café at Jonker Walk is doing the opposite where visitors can drink, dine and even purchase displayed items .

Called Jonker88 Cafe Museum, the eatery is the first of its kind in the country. The café museum operates from a 18th Century Dutch era home that offers not only local traditional delicacies but sells antiques and curios on display.

Café museum owner Jason Yoong, 39 said he stumbled upon the idea a decade ago when he decided to merge his passion for local food and antiques at his premises.



Antique: The 180-year old lantern is seen hanging at the second dining area.

“I believe in preserving our culture, particularly with regard to our heritage through traditional food and initially entered the business in the early 1990s,” he said.

“Being also passionate about Malacca’s rich history and antiques, I decided to merge both and opened the museum café at a 200 year-old building along Jonker Street,” he said when met here.



Curious: Two men are seen looking at the chinese calligraphy on the wall.

Besides offering Baba-Nyonya and *Assam laksa*, shaved ice or ABC and his trademark *cendol* made from *gula melaka* and coconut milk, the café offers Chinaware from different dynasties, ancient coins, antique fans, a pair of 180-year old Chinese lanterns and various household curios from yesteryears.

Jason, who also helps out at the Maritime Archaeology Museum (MAM) nearby, said that the concept for his café museum is well received by patrons and tourists who are attracted to its unique ambience.



Wide choice: There is a variety of antiques sold in the one and only café museum in Malacca.

“We wanted to create something different and innovative so that patrons are able to know more about the history of some of the excavated artefacts and antiques when they are dining at the café,” said Yoong who runs the shop together with his 37-year-old wife Wong Poh Chin.

He said that the museum café was also in line with the state government’s effort to promote Malacca as an open living museum where visitors are able to experience the state’s rich history up close.



Mouth-watering: Patrons enjoying their baba-nyonya laksa and the trademarked cendol.

He said the latest items to go on sale are old bank notes from countries all over the world, which cost between RM5 and RM300 depending on its rarity and age.

Yoong also added that the main reason for selling bank notes was to educate the younger generation on the history of money.