

113-year-old shop still selling 4,000 kinds of biscuits

By **Reena Sekaran @ FMT Lifestyle** - August 20, 2020 7:00 AM

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Xin Kwong Sang Woh Enterprise has been operating for the past 113 years.

KAJANG: It's a blast from the past – those delicious crumble-in-your-mouth biscuits with the sweet, creamy centres that you chomped on as a kid, either hiding in your room to devour it all yourself or sharing it with friends during recess time at school.

While many of these biscuits are hard to come by today as modern day bakeries have nudged them aside, there is still one shop in Malaysia doing a brisk trade selling these traditional treats.

Right in the heart of Kajang lies Xin Kwong Sang Woh Enterprise, a well-loved shop selling over 4,000 varieties of biscuits and snacks from yesteryear.

You can't possibly miss this store, one quick glance from the corridor reveals hundreds of tins, literally stacked from floor to ceiling, filled with biscuits of every taste, texture, colour and shape.

Sitting behind the shop's counter is a fragile-looking man. He's clearly too old to be weighing biscuits and filling them into jars but his mind is still active as he quietly does the accounts and occasionally smiles at the excited customers streaming in.

After all, this store has been his home since his birth.

He is 90-year-old Siew Pak Chong, the second-generation owner of this historical landmark.



90-year-old Siew Pak Chong inherited the shop from his father and is operating the business to this day.

However, this store is even older than its owner.

Founded by Pak Chong's father in 1907, the store looks as old as its age although there is something decidedly magical about it, like time stood still here.

There is no modern-style décor in this shop, no bright lights, no air-conditioning. In fact, there is barely enough room between the stacks of biscuit tins and shelves for one person to stand in as every conceivable space has been put to good use.



Be prepared to marvel at the thousands of biscuits sold at Xin Kwong Sang Woh Enterprise in Kajang.

Back in 1907, Xin Kwong Sang Woh Enterprise was a grocery store serving the needs of its residents. It wasn't big on biscuits and sweets then until the decision to change the store's concept some years later.

Today, the store is taken care of by Pak Chong's son, 52-year-old Siew Chee Kien and his wife Tan Bee Kien, 42.

According to Bee Kien, despite the Movement Control Order when the shop had to close because of the Covid-19 outbreak in the country, business is brisk once again as clients have been bombarding her with orders.

You can't help but notice the endless stream of Chinese, Indian and Malay customers who are familiar with the owners, making conversation and exchanging jokes as they purchase their favourite biscuits.

Bee Kien is constantly on her feet, scooting from one corner of the shop to another, weighing out the biscuits, recommending new varieties and filling in fresh stock into the empty tins.

The only time she gets a breather is when it rains, even then she is busy eyeing the biscuit tins to ensure each is filled to the brim.

When speaking to FMT, Bee Kien showed off a little of her Tamil, saying that her job has even given her the advantage to learn an extra language from her customers.

As small and humble as Xin Kwong Sang Woh Enterprise is, you can't help but marvel at the variety of their stock.



This store sells more than 4,000 varieties of biscuits and sweets.

From the colourful, enticing ice gems to nostalgic yellow Apollo wafers, Haw Flakes to Roti Kok, and crispy buttered toast with a generous coating of sugar that goes well with a steaming cup of coffee – yes, the list goes on and on and on.

The store's regulars often come in with a list of requests and leave with bags full of yummy treats.



You can find nostalgic treats like Haw Flakes and addictive sunflower seeds here.

"I don't need to try the biscuits anymore, point me a biscuit and I can tell you how it tastes," says a clearly experienced Bee Kien.

If you have the time, take a trip to this little gem in Kajang and no doubt you will feel like a child again standing amongst the many biscuits of your childhood.



Fizzy Kola sweets and sour candy are truly favourite treats from the past.

Xin Kwong Sang Woh Enterprise

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