Beyond Bubble Tea: Mother Pearl Launches Wellness Hub Central with Plant-Based Innovation & All-Day Social Space

Founded in 2020 by Po Chen, redefining bubble tea with zero-calorie natural sweeteners, premium plant-based milks and house-crafted vegan pearls.



Mother Pearl

CALIFORNIA, CA, UNITED STATES, September 20, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Hong Kong's plant-based beverage brand expands Central flagship into two-level venue, pairing refined sugar-free drinks with a zero added refined sugar cocktail programme and in-house pearl production

Mother Pearl, the Hong Kong plant-based-forward beverage and hospitality company founded in 2020 by former New York art director Po Chen, has officially expanded its Central flagship at 24 D'Aguilar Street into a two-level destination branded Wellness Hub Central. The venue combines a ground-floor grab-and-go counter serving plant-based drinks, coffee and light food with a first-floor (upper level) zero-added-refined-sugar cocktail bar that uses natural sweeteners in place of refined sugar.

The two floors operate on distinct schedules to serve different dayparts. The ground-floor light-food and takeaway counter opens from 09:00 to 22:00 Monday to Thursday, 09:00 to 01:00 on Friday, 11:00 to 01:00 on Saturday, and 11:00 to 22:00 on Sunday and public holidays. After 22:00 on Friday and Saturday, only gin and tonic and gin soda are served. The first-floor bar opens from 12:00 to midnight Monday to Thursday, 12:00 to 01:00 on Friday, 14:00 to 01:00 on Saturday, and 14:00 to 22:00 on Sunday and public holidays. The venue's interior concept, named Silent Restraint, adopts a deliberately restrained design language that sets it apart from

the bustling commercial atmosphere of the surrounding Lan Kwai Fong district.

Key facts at a glance

Company: Mother Pearl, founded in 2020 by Po Chen; headquartered and operating exclusively in Hong Kong, with 0% export ratio

Flagship venue: Two levels at 24 D'Aguilar Street, Central, comprising a ground-floor Grab & Go counter and a first-floor bar

Stated annual capacity: 160,000 cups of beverages

In-house production workshop: 186 m², supplying the company's own outlets only

Team: 20 employees, including a four-person research and development team

Beverage calorie range: 42–101 kcal per 100 ml, compared to 150–250 kcal per 100 ml for traditional bubble tea (third-party comparison)

An all-day venue for sober socialising

The Central site is the brand's second-generation flagship, and the physical manifestation of its positioning as an all-day social wellness hospitality brand, rather than a conventional bubble tea shop. Its two levels are designed to serve different states of mind rather than separate product lines: the ground floor caters to daytime routines with plant-based bubble teas, coffee, gelato and light refreshments, while the first floor hosts low- to high-ABV botanical cocktails, mocktails and clean wine, with non-alcoholic versions available for selected cocktails.

According to the brand, the layout gives guests full control over their own sensory state — fully sober or gently relaxed — within a single building, a concept it frames as sober socialising.

Formulation: no pre-mixed powders, no refined sugar

Mother Pearl's product philosophy is built on rejecting pre-mixed synthetic powders and syrups. Its signature tapioca pearls and drink components are produced in the company's own central kitchen, then delivered fresh to its outlets, using low-GI natural sweeteners such as allulose and monk fruit sugar.

This refined sugar-free, low-GI formulation approach has also been independently profiled by Green Queen Media.

At product level, this translates to a significantly lower calorie profile compared to conventional bubble tea. Third-party data from HTNXT places Mother Pearl's beverage range at 42–101 kcal per 100 ml, versus roughly 150–250 kcal per 100 ml for traditional bubble tea. Highlights from the menu include:

Cheeky Collagen: osmanthus oolong drink with peach gum, snow swallow, charcoal pearls and osmanthus syrup, 62 kcal per 100 ml

Berry Bright: strawberry and blue spirulina drink with oat milk and detox charcoal pearls, 83 kcal per 100 ml

Golden Giggle: 46 kcal per 100 ml

Golden Citrus Oolong: 52 kcal per 100 ml

Over the Rainbow: 42 kcal per 100 ml

The Imposter Coca: 100 kcal per 100 ml

The Salty Floral: 56 kcal per 100 ml

Nut & Smoke: 101 kcal per 100 ml

Taro & Co: oat milk and taro mash drink with charcoal tapioca pearls, 84 kcal per 100 ml

The brand also offers a separate line of bottled herbal blends under its Pure Tea range, sweetened with monk fruit sugar:

Brighten Skin Bottle Tea (Hibiscus, Rose Petals & Hawthorn Blend)

Mind Calming Bottle Tea (Osmanthus, Butterfly Pea Flower, Lavender & Chrysanthemum Blend)

Organ Healer Bottle Tea(Longan, Fried Barley, Roasted Black Bean & Poria Blend)

Each bottle is priced at HK$34, or HK$149 for a set of five mixable blends. Packaged in small glass bottles with plastic caps, the line supports a circular
programme: customers who return washed empty bottles receive 10% off their next purchase.

Zero added refined sugar cocktail programme

The first-floor bar extends the brand's formulation principles into evening hospitality. Mother

Pearl has built its cocktail list around a zero added refined sugar programme; according to industry research, conventional cocktails typically contain 15 to 40 grams of added sugar per serve, making the absence of refined added sugar a core formulation principle rather than a dietary compromise.

A standout serve, Empress Wu, is a gin-based cocktail combining five-spice syrup, Green Chartreuse, Luxardo Maraschino liqueur, pineapple juice and Angostura orange bitters, with an option to add pearl powder, which is known for its skin-beautifying benefits and was traditionally used by Empress Wu herself to maintain her radiant beauty. It is priced at HK$286, or HK$333 with pearl powder.

The wider menu draws on traditional Chinese botanical ingredients including pearl powder and aged tangerine peel, and most signature cocktails have an alcohol-free counterpart. The bar's current selection was developed over six months of internal experimentation, and comprises 10 cocktails and mocktails.

In-house production & food safety assurance

Behind the two-level venue sits a 186 m² internal production workshop. The facility is not a contract manufacturing operation and does not serve external wholesale customers; it exclusively supplies Mother Pearl's own outlets. Herbs and other botanical raw materials are sourced directly, and an in-house research and development kitchen produces the signature pearls and drink components.

The brand reports an annual production capacity of 160,000 cups of beverages, supported by a team of 20 employees, four of whom work in research and development. The capacity structure is oriented towards hospitality quality rather than industrial output — a positioning that explains why the workshop does not pursue third-party volume manufacturing.

On food safety and compliance, the brand's in-house food safety team holds a Food Hygiene Manager Certificate (G-47252-2025-B-P) issued by the Hong Kong Management Association on 11 November 2025, covering food hygiene management, food safety supervision and risk control for food service, catering, retail and processing operations. The team also holds a Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Intermediate (Level 3) certificate (22138-HCC1-I-CRMINV056899-0136), issued on the same date, covering HACCP implementation and hazard analysis. Both certifications align with Hong Kong's Cap. 132 and Cap. 612 regulatory framework, with the CIEH qualification also aligned to Codex Alimentarius HACCP guidelines.

B2B co-creation and hospitality services

The Wellness Hub Central also functions as a reference build for the brand's B2B services. Mother Pearl offers cross-brand co-creation, in-house independent R&D and bespoke hospitality

space design, with customisation available across herbal drink formulas, interior space aesthetics, brand co-branding campaigns and plant-based-forward food menus. At product level, customisation covers tea bases, add-ons, Japanese-style froth and packaging design, alongside beverage R&D, custom drink service and in-store operation support.

The brand has previously delivered cross-brand collaborations with Berluti, The Murray Hotel and luxury beauty company Dior.

Membership & community: Bubbles of Curiosity

Instead of a conventional points or discount scheme, Mother Pearl operates a membership programme called Bubbles of Curiosity. Members receive cross-brand offers, nutrition-focused exploration content, member-exclusive discounts, access to community events and guidance on sustainable living practices. For partner brands, the programme is positioned as a pathway to health and sustainability credentials, B2B collaboration terms and joint research and development opportunities.

Founder's Statement

"Since we founded Mother Pearl, our vision has always extended far beyond a single cup of bubble tea," said Po Chen, Founder of Mother Pearl. "We set out to reimagine what a beverage brand can be — a companion that helps people build personalised food and lifestyle rituals, without compromising on taste or experience. This expanded flagship is our most complete expression of that vision yet: a space where you can grab a mindful daytime drink, then stay for a relaxed evening social, all with the same commitment to transparent, refined sugar-free formulation. We don't shout about sustainability; we build it into every decision, from swapping dairy for oat milk to handcrafting every pearl in our own workshop."

Industry context: shifting drinking habits in Hong Kong

Hong Kong's functional beverage category sits within the broader nutraceuticals market. Grand View Research values the overall market — which includes functional beverages — at US$3.67 billion in 2024, and projects it will reach US$6.56 billion by 2033, with functional beverages accounting for 47.9% of the total in 2024.

A survey cited in the same report, conducted by CUHK and the Hong Kong Health Food Association, estimates that around 62.9% of Hong Kong adults — roughly 3.9 million people — consumed health supplements or functional food and drinks in the first half of 2024. Regionally, ADM's industry trend report puts the Asia-Pacific functional beverage market at US$98.53 billion in 2024, rising to US$146.99 billion by 2029.

Operators in the segment, including beverage outlets and bars, operate within Hong Kong's food safety regulatory framework, principally Cap. 132 (Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance) and Cap. 612 (Food Safety Ordinance). This regulatory consistency matters for the all-day venue model, as a single location serving both high-volume daytime drinks and evening cocktails must meet the same hygiene and supervision standards across both dayparts.

Market impact & outlook

The split-level format extends a single lease across two revenue-generating dayparts: a 09:00-to-22:00 daytime counter business and a bar operation running to midnight or later. For a beverage brand, this structure widens the revenue window of a single site and connects the brand with two distinct customer occasions — a weekday lunchtime drink run and an evening social visit — without the cost of a second location.

The model also raises operational standards. The same venue must maintain consistent hygiene, supervision and service quality across both daytime retail and evening hospitality modes, which is where the brand's HACCP and food hygiene management certifications act as core operational foundations.

Looking ahead, Mother Pearl will focus on refining the dual-daypart operating model at its Central flagship, expanding the zero added refined sugar cocktail menu beyond its current 10-drink selection, and responding to growing consumer demand for lower-sugar, functional beverages in Hong Kong. With its production base built to protect consistency across its home market, the brand will continue to expand its B2B co-creation and hospitality service offerings, while evaluating opportunities to roll out the Wellness Hub format across other locations in Hong Kong.

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