

2 MINUTES WITH The Pink Pineapple team

The Pink Pineapple bakery is a Tawa institution, having been established more than 30 years ago. Quoting from the April 2014 edition of this newsletter, at the time they moved into their current premises:

“Several of the previous owners have been Cambodian and the new owners are no exception They learned their trade in New Zealand and then decided to own their own business. The owners like Tawa and say it’s a good place to do business.”



L to R: Sandapsrei Sok, Samnang Chea, Seng Hour Lim, Vannak Chea, Puthy Bundith Samath

There are five in the team and they all live in Tawa. Seng Hour Lim, a baker, is the boss. Samnang Chea is front-of-house. This interview was conducted primarily with Puthy Bundith Samath, the other baker, and to a lesser degree with Vannak Chea who is also front-of-house. The other member of staff is Sandapsrei Sok who cooks the chicken.

Where were you born? We were all born and grew up in Phnom Penh, the biggest city in Cambodia.

Why did you come to New Zealand? Samnang and Vannak’s middle sister originally came to study here. We heard that New Zealanders are nice people. Sandapsrei came here in 1997, Vannak in 2008, and the rest of us in 2011.

What about family connections?

Seng Hour Lim is married to Samnang Chea and they have three children, two at Tawa College and one at Redwood School. Puthy Bundith Samath is married to Vannak Chea who is Samnang Chea’s sister. Sandapsrei Sok is affectionately known as ‘aunty’.

When did you get into the bakery business?

Our first involvement in bakery work was here in Tawa. In 2012 we took over The Pink Pineapple from the previous owners who were family members. In early 2014 we moved to our present site from a little further north on the Main Road.

What are your interests and hobbies?

Our lives revolve around the bakery to a large extent. We start work at 4.30am and finish around 4.30pm.

In the evenings we listen to music and watch TV. Saturday night is when we spend time with family. We like walking around the city and window shopping.

Puthy enjoys football (soccer) generally, and watches the All Blacks on the TV.

What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?

Taupo, Rotorua, Hamilton and Auckland. We haven’t been to the South Island yet! We would like to go to Queenstown some time. Puthy would possibly like to go to the USA in the future.

What about overseas holidays?

Each year we go to Cambodia for three weeks just before Christmas and stay with family in “the homeland”. Our shop is closed during that time. Occasionally we visit Australia where we also have family.

(Compiled May 2018)