





People Like You

Newcomer Common People aims to bring the café culture of Melbourne to Jakarta.

PHOTOS DISSY EKAPRAMUDITA

Walking the streets of Kemang looking for food can be somewhat difficult, as you stare down at what used to be a footpath and dodge motorbikes mounting the curb. But the culinary rewards are great, as Kemang's café culture continues to blossom.

Common People, a new café prominently situated at the entrance to Jalan Kemang Raya, is the latest addition to the landscape and promises to be one of the most rewarding destinations.

Taking notes mostly from Melbourne eateries, Common People offers comfort food, trendy décor and a relaxed atmosphere.

Just by taking a quick look around the restaurant it is easy to see that owners Fanny Setyaprawiro and Hendry Johanes have put a lot of thought and effort into the decor.

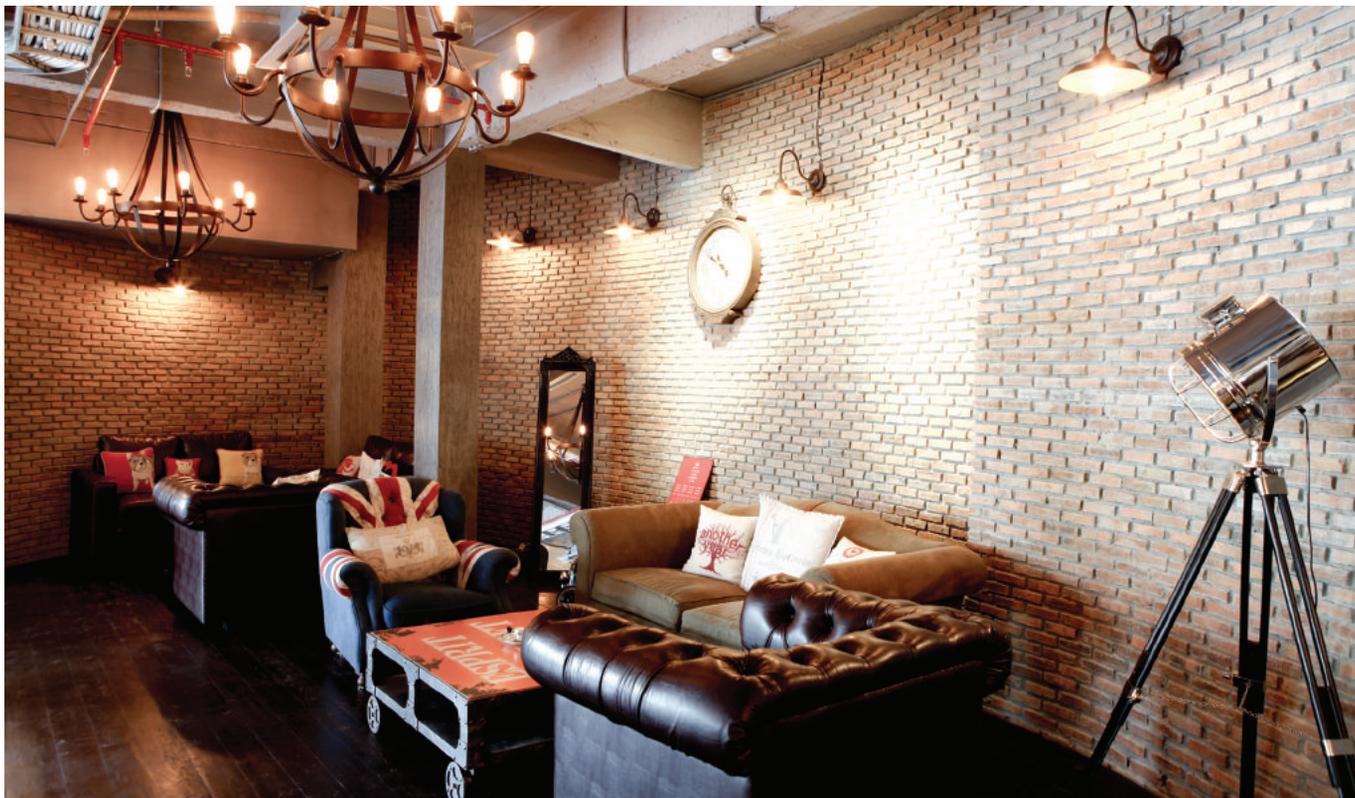
The most eye-catching feature is the plant wall next to the bar. It houses real plants and from afar gives the illusion that they grow horizontally. Apart from this, the entire restaurant is scattered with cute and nifty adornments such as typewriters, dolls and glass ornaments from around the world.

"We both like traveling so much and when we travel we collect lots of ornaments and displays, so we try to put many of those things here," Fanny said.

"Some of them are from Europe, but mainly from Australia. Some people ask me if they can have or buy them! But I can't [sell them] because they're from my travels and I even had to hand carry some of them back to Jakarta."

The restaurant's mismatched furniture from India, Thailand and Indonesia looks like the living room of someone who's just moved out of home for the first time, but somehow the mix of styles manages not to clash and gives a homey feeling.

"We want to create a place where people can hang out, where there are no different segments," Fanny



said. “We don’t want to be high society or too intimidating. We want everyone to come here and relax. So we have lots of sofas and lounges.”

Plans for the café began in March 2012, and the venue just opened in December. Fanny and her husband Hendry, who is also the chef, researched ideas and concepts mainly from Australia and Singapore.

The couple’s aim was to recreate the relaxed café culture they found abroad and make it available to everyone in Jakarta.

“With the name Common People, we want to cater to everyone, not just a small portion of the market,” Fanny said. “We want people to feel at home and be comfortable while they’re hanging out with their friends.”

The restaurant’s large menu offers a fusion of Asian and Western dishes, from appetizers to mains and desserts.

A bite to eat

Just looking at the cute mixed-font menu for the “Small Bites” on offer is enough to make anyone want to make a meal of the lot.

For a slightly spicy hit, the steamed clams have enough kick and just the right amount of saltiness for a starter. However, the pork belly roll-ups are a bit too salty, as the salty meat is only made saltier by a Vietnamese sauce.

“I really like how in Australia there is a lot of Asian food and that is why we decided on a fusion menu of Western and Asian food. For example, the clams and the pork belly are both Asian, but the tostaditos are Mexican,” Fanny said.

The tostaditos contain a generous portion of crab meat, which is flavored with basil and lime and paired with creamy avocado and a crispy tortilla to bring a contrasting texture to the dish.

To satisfy a cheese craving,

the jalapeno cheddar croquette is the answer. The breadcrumbs and creamy cheddar are perfectly balanced. The crunchy school prawns are also a hit, with the right mix of lemon, salt and fresh, crisp prawns.

The main course

Sticking with the Western side, the restaurant's chorizo pizza mixes the characteristics of Spanish chorizo with the spiciness of Indonesian food, with parmesan and mozzarella cheese added.

For a filling meal, the People's Burger is the way to go. The tall, hearty burger's juicy patty is made from Australian beef and topped with mushrooms, tomatoes, a house spread, a nest-like parmesan crisp and homemade potato chips on the side.

Sticking with Australian beef, the Steak Rib-Eye Diane is made to the patron's order preference. The medium-rare steak was cooked perfectly and served with green peppercorn and anchovy sauce.

"While I was in Australia I really noticed all the fresh and quality produce that was used in all the

dishes and I really want to try to mimic the same quality as best as I can," Fanny said.

Straying toward the French side is the duck leg confit and spiced duck breast. Although the duck leg was slightly on the dry side, the breast was juicy and topped with a sweet sauce, arugula and some sweet potato cubes.

Washing it down

The restaurant's substantial drinks menu offers everything from shakes to coffee, cocktails and juices. The blended basil, mango and strawberry juice is refreshing, not overly sweet, and comes with cute mango pieces on a stick.

Contrary to its name, the lychee sourtini only has a very slight hint of lychee and is more bitter than sweet and has a hibiscus foam.

Due to her love for Italian coffee, Fanny imports Vergnano coffee from Italy. The nutty Irish coffee has a bitter kick but is countered by sweet whipped cream and almonds.

But the most exciting coffee here is the butterscotch caramel coffee. At first it may taste just like any other coffee, but once the

THE BUZZ ON COMMON PEOPLE



Recommended dishes/drinks

Butterscotch Caramel Coffee, Jalapeno Cheddar Croquette, People's Burger, Molten Chocolate Fondant



Prices

Drinks: Rp 22,000 to Rp 110,000
Starters: Rp 40,000 to Rp 55,000
Mains: Rp 55,000 to Rp 160,000
Desserts: Rp 15,000 to Rp 85,000



Address

Jl. Kemang Raya No. 2, Plaza Bisnis Kemang I, GF
Tel: 021 718 1843, www.commonpeople.co.id
Twitter: @commonpeopleJKT



Open

Sunday to Thursday 8 am to 12 am
Friday and Saturday 8 am to 2 am





salted caramel hits the palate it takes the drink to a whole new level. Somehow the salt, sugar and bitterness of the beverage work well together and nothing overpowers.

The sweet stuff

Similar to the rest of the menu, Common People's dessert menu draws from all over the world with cakes, ice cream, rum and fruit.

Chocolate addicts will enjoy the molten chocolate fondant which is warm, moist and will satisfy any chocolate craving.

Brownie fans may be a little disappointed by the brownie topped with coffee cheese cake, though, as there is so much cake, the brownie is almost forgotten.

Meanwhile, the chocolate hazelnut banana layered cake strikes a more even balance. Even though it looks overly chocolatey it is not rich and hits a nice combination of flavors with the banana cake and nuts.

For a less sweet dessert, the rum baba, originally from France, is a

rum-soaked muffin, if you're into soaked muffins. Rum lovers will enjoy this and the berries and ice-cream are a nice fresh addition.

With so much of the inspiration coming from Australia, Common People has not forgotten to include an Aussie favorite — pavlova. The sweet meringue is topped with a refreshing yet sour sorbet, strawberries, kiwis, star fruit and passion fruit.

If you can't decide which of the mouth-watering desserts to try, the Common Platter may be the way to go. It features a selection of the sweets, all in a cute miniature size. Included in the platter is the creamy green apple panna cotta with a sugar and butter crumble that leaves you wanting more.

Still in its very early stages, Common People is not the most amazing place — at least, not yet. It has great potential to become one of Kemang's top eateries as shown by its menu, service and relaxed atmosphere. **Jassmy Goh**

