

# Tamarind Tree to Master More Than Spring Rolls, Debut New Cuisine

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*Photo caption: Left: Tam Nguyen. Photo credit: [onlyinseattle.org](#) Right: Braised meat. Photo credit: Tamarind Tree.*

Seattle's International District (ID) will soon be celebrating Asian food, fun, and community. The ID Spring Roll Party happens on April 25th at the Georgetown Ballroom, and many local restaurants are gearing up to offer some special treats for the festivities.

One restaurant that will be participating in the ID Spring Roll is the Tamarind Tree on South Jackson Street.

"Our customers at the ID Spring Roll event love a lot of authentic Vietnamese foods, especially street foods," says Tamarind Tree owner Tam Nguyen.

The Tamarind Tree will be serving six different dishes during the VIP reception and nine dishes during the general reception.

"Some of these are dishes that are not on our regular menu," Nguyen says, "such as beef pate chaude topped with handmade aioli, baked shrimp mousse baguette, watercress beef garlic salad, braised coconut and pork with jasmine rice, and our famous lemongrass beef baguette."

But the ID Spring Roll wouldn't be complete without Tamarind Tree's popular

spring rolls.

“Our Tamarind Tree rolls are known in town because of the freshness of the ingredients,” says Nguyen. “But the most important ingredient is the mini eggroll shell inside the roll, which gives guests a layer of textures for enjoyment. We are the first to present fresh rolls with open ends and in an upright position, which shows fresh lettuce at each end.”



Spring Rolls @ Tamarind Tree

The Nguyen family has decades of experience offering signature cuisine in Seattle: Pho Van opened in the late 1980s, followed by Tamarind Tree in 2004 and Long Provincial in 2008. In each of these ventures, the Nguyens have dealt with numerous challenges, including city and state regulations, the creation of unique dining environments and training service staff at each new restaurant.

Nguyen says that overcoming these challenges taught his family how to work together to accomplish goals. He says these mutual efforts have brought “our family members closer, respectful to and appreciated by each other.”

Beyond their family itself, the Nguyens are interested in connecting with the larger community and sharing their success with others.

“Our businesses provides opportunities for people wanting to thrive in the kitchen or in the front of the house, including providing staff benefits (medical insurance and 401K), improving the dining experience at our establishmentsn and working closely with our staff to bring their skills up to the level of the mainstream industry,” Nguyen says.

Then, those who have gained skills can engage in entrepreneurial activities of their own.

“Some of our ex-employees have opened their own restaurants using our techniques of cooking and presentation,” Nguyen says. “These successful restaurant owners have created more jobs for our community and provided additional dining places.”

Tam Nguyen himself is interested in pursuing further business ventures, as well. “My dream is to create a night market,” he says, “where the patrons can visit an indoor market that offers household needs, ready-to-eat foods cooked right on the spot, local handmade products, and hopefully, a place where small businesses can incubate for the future.”

But for now, Nguyen and the Tamarind Tree are looking forward to sharing Vietnamese cuisine at the ID Spring Roll.

The ID Spring Roll will be hosted by the Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda) on April 25, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Georgetown Ballroom, 5623 Airport Way S., Seattle. Learn more at [idspringroll.org](http://idspringroll.org).