

# CARRIER

THE PAPER

08

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YOUR CURATED GUIDE TO MEANINGFUL LUXURY EXPERIENCES

## A SLICE OF ISLAND LIFE

*Foodventures in Barbados*

From local fish shacks  
to clifftop restaurants

## TASTING HISTORY

*Past and present in Asia*

Ingredients and influences  
from an aromatic continent

## BEYOND THE BARBECUE

*On a bespoke gourmet voyage*

The freshest flavours in  
South Africa's most fertile pockets

## RELAX, REFUEL, RESTART

*Unlock secrets to living well*

Health and happiness  
through cultural remedies





## Our World for Families

*Playful places, joyous spaces and ever-surprising possibilities*

We've learned that the earlier children catch the travel bug, the deeper their passion will grow, whether for wandering the world or for something they experience along the way. So, it's best to do it right, to show them a world of wonder, of warmth, of all the out-of-the-ordinary encounters to be had, and the potential they have in themselves as they grow.

Discover Our World for Families; a collection of our most beloved destinations and their loveliest lodgings that keep families at the forefront of their thoughts.

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CARRIER

# Welcome to CARRIER, *The Paper*

The late chef and documentarian Anthony Bourdain once said: "Food is everything we are. It's an extension of nationalist feeling, ethnic feeling, your personal history, your province, your region, your tribe, your grandma." In this way, to try food in another country is about more than just eating; it's about tasting new emotions, behaviours and ways of life.

While some come to the Caribbean for coral sands, its cuisine is equally enthralling, Barbados' colonial past is evident in the island's melting pot of flavours, which are being revitalised by boutique restaurants (p.10). In Asia, too, history and gastronomy collide at grand theatrical feasts and private meals, where turmeric slow-roasted duck and bubbling vats of noodle soup bring the soul of this continent to life (p.14).

The talent of great cooks can take us beyond the everyday. In Greece, breathe in the aromas of grilled octopus wafting from a family-run taverna (p.18) or uncover secret supper clubs and experimental fine dining during a gourmet voyage in South Africa (p.22). At Atlantis The Royal in Dubai, watch as plates are put together like works of art in its 17 restaurants - eight of which are helmed by celebrity chefs (p.26).

Just when you think you know a place, one dish can serve up extraordinary possibilities. Learn from those who have pioneered the use of organic and locally-sourced ingredients to boost your health and happiness (p.24), and for those with an appetite for the unexpected, discover where to find one-of-a-kind adventures in places you'd never think to look (p.20).

Food, culture and people are inseparably intertwined. One mouthful is just the start.

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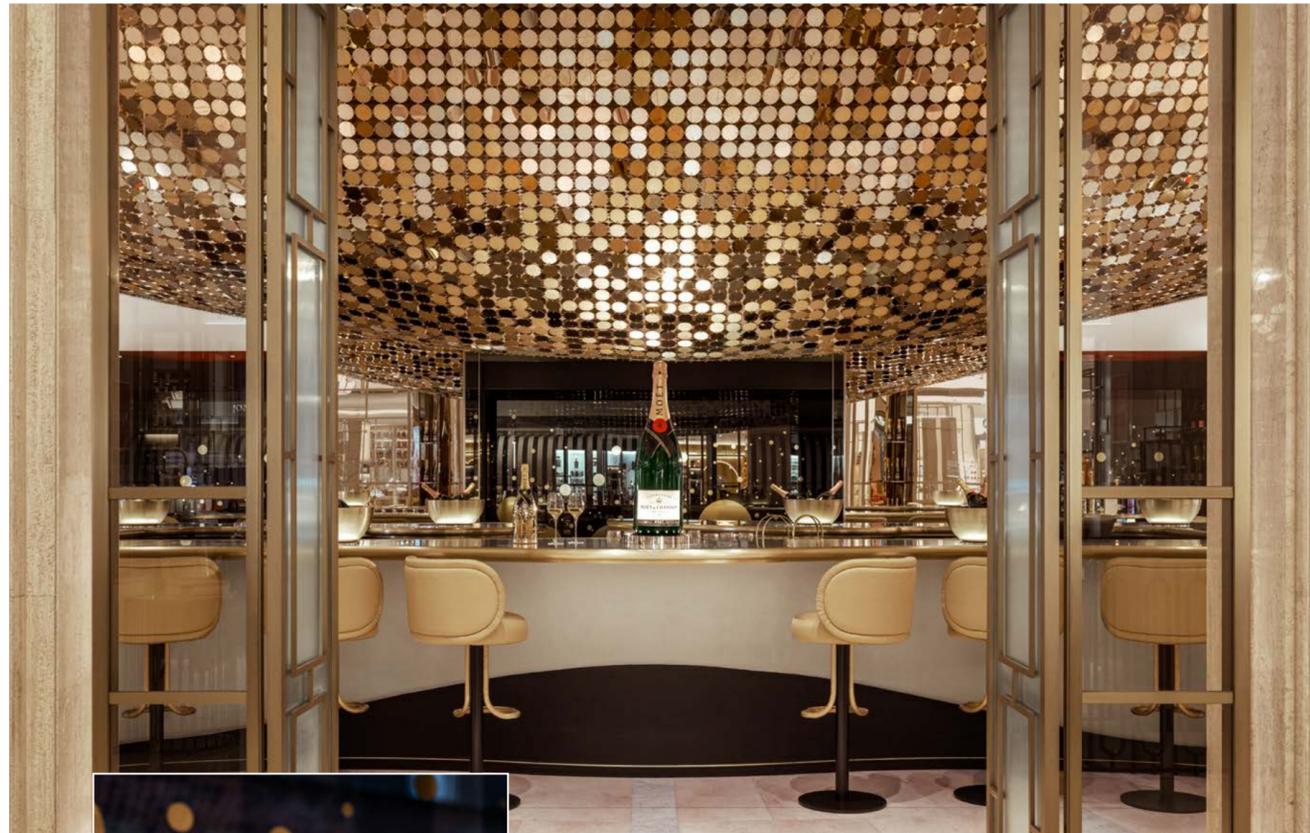
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# Luxury selection

WHAT TO LOVE AND WHERE TO BE RIGHT NOW



## The Champagne

### RAISE A TOAST

The pop of a cork always brings that familiar feel of joy. The chance to celebrate a birthday, perhaps, or a wedding. Or maybe just standing under the shimmering chandelier in the Moët & Chandon Champagne Bar in Harrods is celebration enough. It might take time to select your favourite tippie from Moët & Chandon's largest standalone bar in Europe, but you'll never be disappointed with your chosen sip. The Sgroppino Royale cocktail with rhubarb, champagne and apple sorbet is a good place to start before you savour some delectable food pairings, such as burrata toasts with kimchee and black sesame.

Open 12pm-9pm daily, Moët & Chandon Champagne Bar, Harrods, 87-135 Brompton Road, SW1X 7XL [harrods.com](http://harrods.com)



## The Art

### AS NATURE INTENDED

Amongst its old Lucombe oaks and grand cedars, Kew Gardens is showcasing *The Art of Food*, an exhibition dedicated to still life and plant portraiture. The works of art hail from the Shirley Sherwood Collection, the largest body of contemporary botanical art in the world. Shirley, a British botanist, has personally collected over 1,000 paintings by more than 300 contemporary botanical artists from 36 countries. Among the ones exhibiting at Kew include Phansakdi Chakkaphak, Brigid Edwards and Alvaro E. X. Nunes who have brought to life the exquisite beauty of the food we eat. A ticket also includes access to the gardens, where you can see nature's rich bounty with your own eyes.

Until 5 March 2023, £15, *The Art of Food*, Kew Gardens, TW9 3AF [kew.org](http://kew.org)

## The Interiors

### PLATE IT UP

Dispel thoughts of cloudy skies, rain and cold nights this winter. Maison Margaux can help you inject rainbows of colour into your home through brilliantly bright tablescapes. With every plate, saucer and napkin, you can feel the jauntiness of summer radiating through your home. Feel the rays of the Sicilian sun with plates painted in lemons, the nautical cheer of striped blue and white tablecloths or the floral haze of spring with pink side plates. They're a beauty to behold and to share.

POA, Maison Margaux [maisonmargauxltd.com](http://maisonmargauxltd.com)



## The Bag

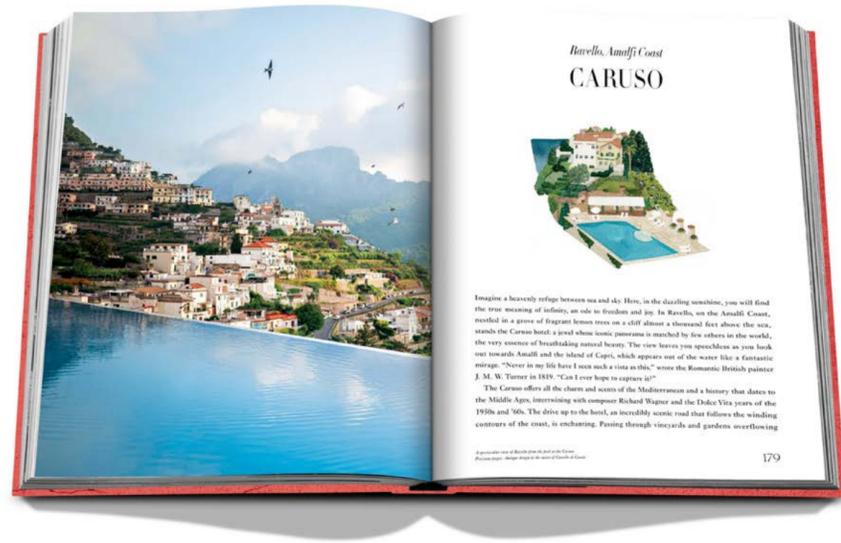
### SUPERSTORE STARDOM

Making the everyday extraordinary is what Anya Hindmarch does best. The new collection of her Cornflakes woven totes, Heinz Beans cross-body bags and Diet Coke charms may look like household names, but the intricate stitching oozes couture finesse. Put a swing in your step and add them to the top of your shopping list.

[anyahindmarch.com](http://anyahindmarch.com)

Heinz Baked Beans crossbody bag in recycled felt, £350  
Cornflakes small tote in recycled felt, £475



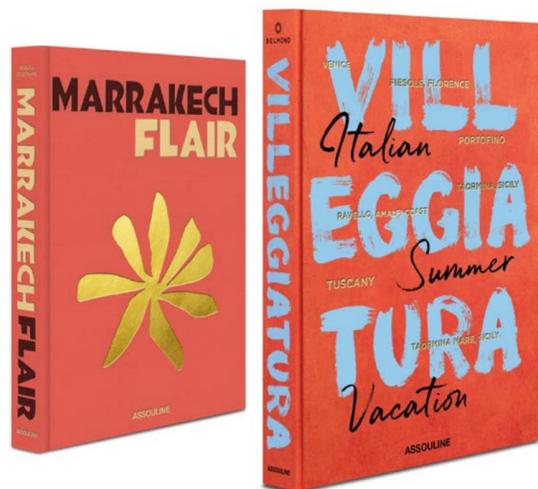


The Book

TRAVEL TOMES

There are travel books and then there are Assouline's travel books. The doyen of luxury literature, style and elegance, Assouline has become synonymous with high culture and good taste. So if there's ever a time you need to find the perfect present or read up properly about a new destination, you know who to turn to. Step into Sardinia's exclusive glamour in *Costa: Smeralda*, party with celebrities and hear untold stories in *St Barths: Freedom* or live la dolce vita in *Villeggiatura: Italian Summer Vacation*, journeying with Belmond on a train you'll never want to get off.

Assouline, from €95  
assouline.com



The Insider

FANTASY DINNERS

Who would you invite to your dream dinner party? Because we can send out the invitations. Our concierge team highlight the dream dinners they can make a reality.



LIFE ON BROADWAY

What does it take to be Roxy in *Chicago* or Simba in *The Lion King*? Ask the cast of your favourite Broadway shows at a private meet, greet and dinner in the heart of bustling New York. From show tunes to theatrical staging, delve into the excitement and thrill of life on stage.

A TRIBUTE TO NELSON MANDELA

Christo Brand used to be a prison guard, responsible for guarding the inspirational Nelson Mandela. In an unlikely turn, he embarked on a lifelong friendship with this prisoner-turned-president. Listen on as Brand and his wife Estelle regale their heart-breaking and heart-warming personal stories over lunch at their home in South Africa.

BEHIND THE SCENES IN BANGKOK

Bill Bensley is the architect and mastermind behind the design of more than 200 hotels in over 40 countries – not only that, he also hosts a fabulous dinner. Alongside his partner Jirachai Rengthong, he delivers characterful insights into sustainability and design, while you can tuck into Thai delicacies in their extraordinary Bangkok oasis, Baan Botanica.

TRAVEL UPDATES

The News Flash

Green air travel and music-inspired stays are changing the ways we relax

1 THE SPICE OF LIFE

*SafiraBlu* is not just a resort, it's an entire ecosystem. Every thought has gone into the design of this boutique retreat, which opened in September 2022, to ensure that you can live peacefully alongside Zanzibar's abundant nature. New to Carrier, these private one and two-bed villas rest peacefully on the edge of the sea amongst verdant greenery, with generous space to treat as your own home. Wander through the rich tapestry of plants, flowers and trees that bloom everywhere to the Drunken Monkey beach bar, home to old world cuisine and flavours that reawaken Zanzibar's moniker of Spice Island.

2 HIGH NOTES IN NEW YORK

Think you know New York? Think again. Since spring 2022, *Hard Rock Hotel New York* is turning up the volume on entertainment in this melting-pot city of musical talent. Be welcomed into a suite by a playlist curated to your tastes or indulge in momentary superstardom with a strum on your very own Fender guitar. If you can bear to be parted from your room, take to the 34th floor for drinks at rooftop bar RT60 in the heart of Times Square. Surrounded by music memorabilia, sink cocktails to the beat of new DJs – a new soundtrack to your memories in the making.

3 MOUNTAIN RETREAT REIMAGINED

Due to open early 2023, *Six Senses Crans-Montana* is elevating champagne skiing to a grand cru. The authentic wooden feel of a Swiss chalet has been elegantly reimaged into contemporary interiors across 46 terrace rooms and one- and two-bed suites. Bespoke furniture in muted tones and cloud-comfy beds make it feel like you're stepping straight into a magazine. Depart from the usual Alpine cheese platters for lighter, inspiring hot pots at the Japanese-influenced *Byakko* restaurant. It'd be hard to remember you're here to ski, were it not for the Ski Concierge who will serve you warming drinks in the piste-side lounge or wave you off for a private lesson.

4 PINNACLE OF PRIVACY

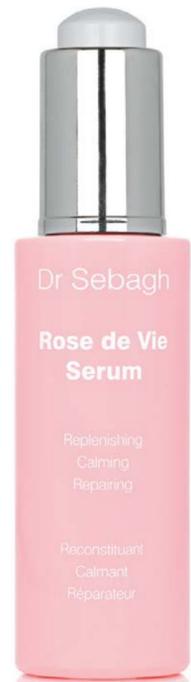
The gentle breeze overhead rustling the palm trees. The quiet clink of ice in a rum punch. You can customise the barefoot luxury at *Moskito Island*, one of the most exclusive private islands in the world, to your own beat. The Village, which sleeps 18, is the fourth estate to be opened on the atoll. Set across 125 acres of lush vegetation in the heart of the British Virgin Islands, it's easy to retune to a new way of life here. Knock about with friends on the tennis court, relax into warm evenings in the bright and breezy interiors, eat what you wish courtesy of the private chef, or explore the unspoiled reefs beyond the shore.

5 FLY TO CLOUD NINE

Relaxing and unwinding just reached new heights – literally – as *Virgin Atlantic* reveals the new Airbus A330neo to Boston. Unparalleled comfort and space have been designed into a new Retreat Suite. Spread out on the fully-flat bed for a good night's rest or dine, chat and play games with friends and family across two private rooms. There are also 30 new Upper Class suites, with a door for extra privacy, mood lighting, a 17.3" touchscreen TV and a mirror so you can get runway ready. Even better, all of these state-of-the-art upgrades are part of Virgin's commitment to be the greenest fleet in the sky, which has already seen a 20 per cent reduction in fleet carbon emissions.



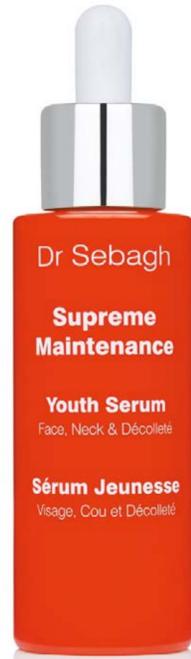
# Make it personal.



**The Moisturiser**



**The Hydrator**



**The Anti-Ager**



**The Brightener**

Your skin's needs are unique and always changing. The world-renowned beauty trailblazer, Dr Jean-Louis Sebagh pioneered the concept of mixing different, powerful serums to create a personalised daily ritual that perfectly meets your skin's needs. Potent and award-winning, Dr Sebagh's iconic serums—including the trio of super-serums featured here—can all be used alone or combined, for agelessly radiant results.

Moisturising is essential to restore the skin barrier, protect against environmental aggressors, seal in hydration and keep skin plump. Deeply moisturise and soothe your skin using **Rose de Vie Serum**, with antioxidant and nourishing rosehip oil, blended with the hydrating, hyaluronic acid-rich **Serum Repair**, which instantly leaves skin looking and feeling plumped, firmer and tighter.

Add a trouble-shooting, 'Ageing-Maintenance' hero to the mix with a few drops of **Supreme Maintenance Youth Serum**. It boasts 95% active ingredients, more than any other skin care product, including the 'youth molecule' Resveratrol, three anti-aging peptides, a mineral radiance booster and an anti-pollution film.

Power-up your serum blend even more with a little **Pure Vitamin C Powder Cream**. This patented, highly concentrated and stabilised powder-to-cream formula can be mixed with any serum to brighten the skin, prevent pigmentation and bring back its glow.

Available in-store and at [drsebagh.com](http://drsebagh.com)

**Dr Sebagh**

LIFE LESSONS WITH

## Gertrud Schneider



Gertrud Schneider is no ordinary hotel owner and manager. She is the visionary behind Kristiania Lech, a boutique hotel that is designed around Gertrud's eclectic appetite for antiques, art and unusual ideas. The hotel was first built as a guest house by her father Othmar Schneider, Austria's first alpine Olympic champion, but with her infectious passion, Gertrud encourages visitors to embrace so much more than just winter sports.

**How do you bring to life the rich history of Kristiania Lech?**

We are a little bit of an eccentric and eclectic hotel. How we started is quite different to other hotels. My father was Austria's first male Olympic champion and Kristiania Lech was originally designed as a private house to welcome his friends for ski adventures and parties. It was – and still is – full of personality, like a private club with a sense of place. But he was not a hotelier. He married my mother, who came from a family of collectors. That's why you can see a distinct and curated sense of style. Our 29 suites are individually decorated and full of antiques, original pieces of art and travel memories. What you see around you isn't made up for guests, it's what I grew up with.

**What defines a luxury experience for you?**

I compare big luxury hotels to brands like Gucci, Prada or Hermès. However, experiencing luxury at Kristiania Lech is like finding a boutique tailor on a side street of Milan, where you get custom-made suits. The kind of place you only find with an insider tip. This harks back to the beginning of the 20th century, when it was all about slow travel; people wanted to take time to immerse into a new culture. I feel like this has been lost, and we want to bring that back.

When I grew up, I didn't really like the hotel business. Selling beds and food was not enough for me, but I was told that with small hotels you can do more than that. You can be eccentric. Staying at Kristiania Lech is like staying at a relative's house but with impeccable service. We curate an effortless combination of all things traditional, contemporary, historical, local and familiar. There's a real feeling of belonging.



**How do you encourage people to explore their appetite for new experiences?**

We are constantly developing new ideas. For example, next summer, we are creating a summer community, where people will apply for a room at a reduced rate in exchange for their skills. For example, we might invite a yogi to give back to the community by offering yoga two times a week. Or a wine specialist, sleep expert or a gardener, who can teach us about gardening and host a lecture. This encourages people, not only to learn, but to get more involved with our community and meet like-minded people.

**How does food play an integral part in how people travel?**

Personally, I hate it when breakfast ends at 10am on holiday! You want to sleep in! Running to breakfast is a thing of the past at Kristiania Lech. We give people endless options and choices. You can have crêpes Suzette at 3.30pm in the afternoon, an Arabian raki in the great outdoors, or listen to one of our Reading Butlers narrate Ernest Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast* as you sip champagne. It's all about finding out what guests actually want.

**And, of course, there must be endless opportunities to ski at Kristiania?**

Everything that I've talked about goes beyond the skiing and mountain experience. But we are centred in Lech, Austria's largest ski area with more than 300km of groomed slopes. There are around 88 ski lifts and all the chair lifts have heated seats. We also have an armada of ski guides, as well as ski touring, ice skating, paragliding – whatever you think about winter you'll find it here in the Alberg mountains. And in the summer, there's hiking around crystal-clear lakes and waterfalls. It really is like *The Sound of Music*. The landscape gives your heart a faster beat.

**How do you think travel enriches people's lives?**

When people are not at home, they are open to new ideas. A hotel is like a sacred space, where you bring locals and travellers together. It's bigger than travel. It's about living and experiencing. Sometimes you have to leave your home to be open to a new place and a new rhythm. It broadens your outlook for the future.



# A slice of *island life*

From road-side fish shacks to refined cliff-top restaurants, Barbados serves up a seriously impressive food scene. If a foodventure is on the menu, these are the places you need to know about.

*Words: Lauren Romano*

There's no better way to experience a new culture than through its cuisine. Whether you're a seasoned epicurean or not, if you want to really get under the skin of a destination, go through your stomach.

It's said that you can trace the history of a country through what's on its plate. In Barbados, the island's colonial past is as evident in its sprawling plantation houses as its food – a melting pot of flavours peppered with West Indian, African and European influences. Take the must-try national dish – flying fish and cou cou (cornmeal infused with okra) – which nods to the African traditions of many Bajans.

For centuries Barbados was the epicentre of the global sugar trade. While sugar cane is still rooted in the food heritage here – it is the birthplace of rum, after all – the island has turned to the mindset of eating what you grow and catch. For the island's glut of eating establishments, this means provenance holds sway, which is great news for when you set off on a culinary escapade.

#### OCEAN TO TABLE, FARM TO FORK

Good food is as nourishing for the body as it is the mind. Understanding where produce comes from can forge greater respect for the people involved in the process – and the environment.

If you want to connect with your surroundings, pay a visit to *PEG Farm and Nature Reserve* – where holistic and biodynamic practices restore soil damaged by sugar cane production. Founder and Barbados native Paul Bourne believes the health of the landscape is inextricably linked to that of its inhabitants – you'll be encouraged to immerse yourself in the beauty of the land, both physically and mentally.

Don't pass the opportunity to sample the fruits of the farm's labour at the on-site café, where the locally grown and reared produce makes its way onto the plate (the chicken and papaya salad with tarragon marinated tomatoes is a gratifying indulgence). The sweeping views of undulating, biodynamic hills that roll down to high-five the horizon only add to the spiritually uplifting experience. The surroundings you'll find yourself in aren't just a source of innovative farm-to-table meals, but a place of inspiration and healing.

For food that is as much a feast for the soul as the stomach, *The Fish Pot* on the northwest of the island is a reason in itself to visit Barbados. Founded almost two decades ago by husband and wife Andrew and Patricia Warden, it sits on the water's edge in a 17th century fort.

The rhythmic ebb and flow of the waves provides the sound-track, while uninterrupted sea views come courtesy of the covered terrace's picture windows, where you might just spot the local fishermen hauling in the catch of the day – food really doesn't come much fresher than that.

Simplicity and honesty underscore the menu – and the setting – making it easy to switch off and be present in the moment and your surroundings. Certainly, the sights and sounds give *The Fish Pot* a laid-back, unhurried tempo, one that invites you to take your time, breathe in the ocean air and savour every mouthful of fresh-as-can-



*Good food is as nourishing for the body as it is the mind. Understanding where produce comes from can forge greater respect for the people involved in the process – and the environment.*

be market fish. Platefuls of flying fish are followed by spicy lobster risotto and washed down with the tropical ripeness of a Chalk Hill Chardonnay. For the grand finale, a glass of Mount Gay rum provides the perfect after-meal ritual and a taste of Barbadian heritage.

#### RAISING THE CULINARY STAKES

The combination of postcard-worthy vistas and plentiful local produce might be the reason Barbados has become a culinary stomping ground for acclaimed international chefs, many with a constellation of Michelin stars to their name.

Take *The Cliff*. The legendary St. James restaurant often credited with putting the island on the international epicurean map, reopened in the autumn with a new look and a new culinary director, Matt Worswick (former executive head chef at Gordon Ramsey's Savoy Grill) at the helm.

As recipes for success go, *The Cliff* has it all: Dramatic clifftop location? Tick. Atmospheric torchlit dining? Tick. Artfully presented dishes that look (almost) too good to eat? Tick, tick, tick.

But what sets the establishment apart – and has earned it a reputation that precedes itself – is its commitment to taking simple, homegrown produce and transforming it into dishes that intrigue and surprise. Innovation and imagination collide in once-in-a-lifetime flavour combinations that tingle the tastebuds. Like local Mount Gay rum-soaked savarin accompanied by mango and coconut and lime sorbet, or barbecued carabineros prawns and spiced crab with

bois boudran sauce. These are Bajan tastes with an elevated twist. If you're after a taste of something a little closer to home, however, Worswick also oversees the equally memorable Italian-inspired *QP Bistro*, found next door.

Meanwhile, *The Cliff*'s former executive chef Paul Owens has struck out with his own eponymous eatery, *Paul Owens At The Beach House*, which has garnered a loyal following since opening last year. The tasting menu offers a comprehensive tour of the island's freshest and most exciting produce, from tuna tartare with wasabi yoghurt to tandoori spiced salmon with pickled cucumber, mango salsa and coriander vinaigrette, as well as mahi mahi with creamed potatoes. The passion the chefs have for their craft is infectious and takes the dining experience far beyond the ordinary, where every meal overflows with enthusiasm.

This type of fine dining might be a million miles away from the fuss-free fish cutters (pillowy salt bread sandwiches stuffed with fried blue marlin and seasoned with local spices) served at the beach, but they're both examples of what can be achieved with a pinch of imagination and the best possible local ingredients.

No matter how you choose to experience the local cuisine, dining in Barbados is a form of cultural immersion. Particularly if you find yourself at one of the island's many weekend fish fries – the liveliest being at Oistins fish market where catches are served with traditional macaroni pie, coleslaw and plantain, and a side order of calypso beats. The crowd is around 80 per cent Bajan, so it's one of the best spots to feel like a local.

Certainly, there's nothing like sharing a meal with someone to find common ground. Not that it takes much to break the ice with warm and inclusive-spirited Bajans, especially if you're shooting the breeze with a rum in hand (the variety of the island's restaurants pales in comparison to the brightly coloured rum shacks – there are some 1,500 to choose from).

While some come to Barbados just for its coral sands, its cuisine most certainly sets it apart from other beach destinations. But if you ignore the island outside your hotel gates, you're really missing out. Once you tuck into the flavours and stories of these shores, they will stay with you long after your last bite.

*The combination of postcard-worthy vistas and plentiful local produce might be the reason Barbados has become a culinary stomping ground for acclaimed international chefs, many with a constellation of Michelin stars to their name.*



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# Tasting *history*

Grand, theatrical feasts can resurrect the pomp and ceremony of vast historical empires while private meals can unlock a door into a quiet, spiritual way of life. So many of Asia's rich cultures and traditions find their clearest manifestation in their cuisine. Ingredients and influences from across the world have been developed by generations of everyday people offering new memories to those who experience them afresh. A truly nourishing journey into the soul of this continent is incomplete without entering wholeheartedly into fascinating, varied – and, most importantly, delicious – dishes.

*Words: David Taylor*

## **BANGKOK'S BUBBLING FOOD MARKET**

Bright red lanterns rocking in the wind overhead. Street sellers working frantically in the warm evening heat. A passer-by biting into a crisp Yaowarat toast smothered in Thai pumpkin custard. One of the world's favourite cuisines is at its most authentic, vibrant and experimental on the streets of Bangkok. The capital's street food centre, Yaowarat, is a joyous assault on the senses, and an adventure through its narrow market lanes is an exercise in vibrancy and freneticism. Daniel Fraser, TV host and Thai culture expert, knows the narrow alleys like the back of his hand. Accompany him to places you won't see in any travel guide, catching glimpses of dishes you'll scarcely believe. Bubbling vats of guay jub noodle soup (with a side of crispy pork belly) and grills of fresh fish, mussel, prawn and crab will keep you entertained into the early hours of the morning.



An adventure through its narrow market lanes is an exercise in vibrancy and freneticism.





### BREAKING BREAD WITH BHUTAN'S HOLY MEN

In central Bhutan lies Khotokha. Unlike the 70% of Bhutan covered in dense, lush forest, this vast, sacred valley, in the enigmatic country's Wangdue Phodrang district, is a wide wetland, home to black-necked cranes on their winter migration from Tibet. A stop here, in one of the valley's monasteries, offers both a fascinating insight into monastic life and otherworldly views of this secretive, serene part of Asia. It's a true and rare privilege to share time with the monks of Khotokha: the meals they prepare, bless and serve are at once deeply comforting and utterly extraordinary. Share dishes such as Gondo Datsi (egg curry with spices and spring onions), Puta (a central Bhutanese favourite made of noodles, spices and Sichuan pepper) and Aema Kan Ezay (Bhutanese red chilli salad with cottage cheese).



### DELHI'S IRREPRESSIBLE CULINARY TAPESTRY

There aren't many cities whose food is more reflective of their past than Delhi, from the extravagant and rich cuisines of the 17th century Mughals to the revelatory tandoori ovens of the partition's Punjabi refugees. Uncover these myriad influences through the smells and flavours of centuries and empires that surround you down every backstreet, on every rickshaw ride and through every curried dish. Following the knowledgeable footsteps of a local guide you can chronicle this chaotic mix of Delhi's history through the most iconic delicacies – all in one day. Succulent eastern kebabs are narrated with stories of Old Delhi's Jama Masjid; delectable southern chaat reignites New Delhi's poignant India Gate; and the real Indian 'desi' is brought to life with warm chai and the customs of drinking it.



### SINGAPORE'S HYBRID TASTES

Stepping inside local resident Alvin Yapp's home in Singapore is like walking into Aladdin's cave, with treasures and stories piled high. Alvin has transformed his house into a museum dedicated to the Peranakan culture, a group descended from the first Chinese settlers in Southeast Asia. Peranakan food is a heady hybrid of tastes and ingredients, influenced by ancient Chinese, Malay, Indonesian, Thai and Eurasian cooking styles. Dive into this rich heritage with a plate of indigo blue Bunga Telang (butterfly blue peas), make Bah Zhang dumplings under Alvin's expert guidance and explore the nearby multicoloured Peranakan shophouses – all punctuated with Alvin's stories of growing up here.



### THE BEST BÁNH MÌ IN VIETNAM

Any visit to old-meets-new, east-meets-west Hanoi needs to take in its bustling food scene with cultural influences as far-reaching as China and Europe. The epitome of this cultural mix is found in the food staple bánh mì. Inspired by the French, it is made up of a soft, airy baguette with a thin, crisp crust packed full with everything from shredded pork and pickled carrot to lemongrass and grilled beef. To find the best bánh mì in Vietnam (read: the world) you need to see through the eyes of someone whose passion is Vietnamese cooking in all its forms. Dynamic writing duo Van Cong Tu (author of blog Vietnamese God) and Mark Lowerson (writer of Stickyrice) will guide you through Hanoi's street stalls and fine dining establishments, skipping the queues to eat authentic sticky rice dumplings and taking in the architectural and cultural backstory of the city.

### DINE LIKE ANCIENT ROYALTY IN INDONESIA

The ancient Javanese Majahapit kingdom ruled in Southeast Asia for almost 250 years, leaving behind an indelible influence on the region, from pendopo pavilions to a rich culinary catalogue. King Hayam Wuruk, widely seen as the greatest of the Majahapit rulers, regularly took royal expeditions with his entourage around his vast empire, enjoying the local treats offered to them by residents of his kingdom's coastal villages. Capture a taste of this lost imperial life through a theatrical dinner that tells his tale in full theatrical pomp, depicting the regal procession in lavish reality and laying on Majahapit Palace-era foods fit for the king himself. The feast reflects the coast's rich bounty, from grilled lobster in kaffir lime and lemongrass butter, to 12-spiced slow-roasted duck in coconut and turmeric, and Balinese minced fish satay.



### HANDS-ON CAMBODIAN CUISINE WITH CHEF NAK

The traditions and food of the ancient Khmer are experiencing a rebirth in Cambodia, thanks to dedicated advocates like the passionate – and brilliant – chef Rotanak Ros. Travelling to Chef Nak's stunning traditional wooden Khmer house means sailing the Mekong river, past houseboats and islands until reaching her riverside paradise. Known as the defender of Cambodian cuisine, she and others have worked for 20 years to recover Cambodia's cultural soul from its turbulent past. Get hands-on with this special cuisine, learning of its past and the country's history through bartering at the local market and creating dishes like crispy golden fish with sweet and sour dip, pleah sach ko (lime and prahok-cured beef salad), and indulgent coconut cream bananas and tapioca. Play your part in saving Cambodian cuisine, one dish at a time.





## Infinite possibilities

Booking a table. Researching where to go. Finding something for all the family. Aren't these the tasks you try to escape when you go away? Instead, explore the true value of Greek cooking at family-run tavernas and Ikos' Michelin-inspired restaurants, where each meal is an effortless discovery.

Words: Francesca Lee-Rogers

From ancient Greece to the modern day, the way food is prepared, eaten and served throughout the Aegean and Ionian seas goes beyond the pleasure of a single meal – it's a way of life. Take olive oil for example. Not only has it been used to dress salads and cook fish, it's also become the fuel in lanterns to help people see and the main ingredient in hand soaps to soothe skin. It shows that given the right environment, people who have the freedom to explore a boundless appetite, uncover a lot more – an ethos that is ever-present at *Ikos*. To really understand the value of Greek cooking and reap the rewards, they encourage you to dig a little deeper, without limits, through a sumptuous reinvention of an all-inclusive culinary scene created by Michelin-starred chefs.

This food philosophy takes you on a gastronomic journey from mainland Greece at Ikos Oceania and Olivia, to Ikos Odisia and Dassia on Corfu, across to Ikos Aria on the island of Kos, spanning all the way to Andalucía in Spain. Every resort has at least five restaurants to choose from, so no mouth goes wanting,

and behind each one is a world-class trained chef and master in a specific cuisine. You could be a gym bunny looking for a lean, egg white-only breakfast, a family crying out for an array of pic'n'mix style plates at a Mediterranean buffet or couples looking to swoon over tagliatelle with duck ragout and the unmistakable waft of warm truffle. You'll find it all here.

An alfresco lunch in the sea-front pavilion of Ouzo restaurant (one that features in all of the resorts) is perfumed by a sea breeze that floats up straight from the water. Sunlight slips through the white wooden slats of the canopy above, as you're encouraged to sink into a menu that champions local fare. The menu is created by Michelin-starred chef Lefteris Lazarou, who is known for his knack of bringing forgotten produce back to people's attention. Every mouthful hints at old traditions, exudes bountiful flavours, and has unique contemporary twists. In fact, it feels like you are island hopping as you savour dishes from all over Greece.

There's the fish soup with saffron from Kozani that trickles down the throat like a calming elixir. The spiral-shaped cheese pie from Skopelos with wafer thin



CHEF LEFTERIS LAZAROU  
OUZO RESTAURANT



CHEF ETTORE BOTRINI  
KERKYRA RESTAURANT

pastry that melts on the tongue, served with a rich peperonata of stewed peppers, onions and tomatoes. And then there's the moussaka, which captures the essence of hearty and wholesome Greek cooking, traditionally served from one dish to feed a family.

Heroing local food doesn't just expand palates, it also preserves cultural identity. Ikos Dassia in Corfu, where Michelin-starred chef Ettore Botrini was born and bred, is a shining example. Heading up Kerkyra restaurant, he serves up a staple from the neighbourhood, chicken pastisada, a signature dish of the island. It is considered Corfu's traditional Sunday dinner and ignites the same feelings of nostalgia, warmth and comfort.

If you think that's where the gastronomic journey ends, you're wrong. Continue testing your tastebuds

beyond the resort's walls with the complementary Ikos Dine Out experience. Find yourself perched at a table on the stone steps of an old windmill, reaching for forkfuls of grilled octopus, as the gentle twinkle of lights from boats glisten in the surrounding bay below. Or take a gentle stroll through a local village to a family-run taverna and be welcomed with a glass of Athiri white wine and a spread of lovingly homemade mezze. The gentle hum of a husband-and-wife team cheerily turning to family recipes in the kitchen is an uplifting sound.

These aren't the only chapters to the Ikos cookbook either. The resorts are planning new openings across Mallorca, the Algarve and Crete, so you can continue your unfettered taste exploration.



# APPETITE FOR THE UNEXPECTED

For all your research and planning, sometimes it's nigh on impossible to discover one-of-a-kind adventures beyond the popular places most people visit. Or is it? Even the most familiar destinations have secrets you've not yet discovered. It's all about knowing where to look...

Words: Marianne Françoise Dick

For some, travelling is about ticking well-known sites off a list – one of the seven wonders of the world or that cocktail bar in the tallest building in their favourite city. For others, travel is about seeking journeys far from the mainstream. Ones that surprise and delight. At its core, this latter exploration is about tasting unfamiliar flavours, unlocking unknown sensory reactions and ultimately finding something off the beaten track. These journeys unearth hard-to-find experiences, and in doing so, transport you to intriguing places that awaken raw emotions, attitudes and ambiances.

One such place where this is made possible is *Finca La Donaira*, an eco-retreat in rural Andalucía where the pace of modern life is slowed down – where everything you think you know about how the world works must be relearned. Touring the local terrain is a transformative experience that connects your body and soul to the landscape in new ways. The retreat is centred around an organic farm, which uses traditional ways of working the land from the earth up. You're invited to delve into this rich honeypot of olive oil, almonds, figs, wine and home-reared wagyu at rustic mealtimes. There's a certain taste and texture of healthy, organic produce that you'll never find on the shelves of a supermarket, no matter how hard you look.

This kinship between humans and nature is evident in the very materials of the resort. Exposed stone walls and warm terracotta celebrate the area's precious and vital resources, while freestanding copper baths, open to the elements, allow you to breathe in every molecule of fresh air. This connection with the outdoors allows the body to slow and sync with the seasons, with classical music concerts beneath the stars and yoga as the sun rises. Meanwhile, unbound freedom is encouraged by the equestrian centre, where you can roam the bucolic Andalusian landscape on one

of 70 Lusitano horses (the oldest breed of saddle horse on the planet). Canter and gallop with these majestic creatures on epic hacks and learn age-old horsemanship skills from Seamus Gaffney, the estate's very own cowboy.

While certain atmospheres can fill us with calm and wonder, others can truly astonish by shaking up our expectations and stirring our curiosity. *Royal River* in Tenerife is a private wonderland of African-inspired influences and design-led thinking, set back from the madding crowds of the shores.

Around every corner, the contemporary architecture reveals new surprises you won't find elsewhere on the island. A lazy river, fringed with verdant foliage, connects the River Villas with out-of-the-box poolscaping. A porcelain giraffe holds a chandelier between its teeth in the fine dining rooftop restaurant, The Top – a hint, perhaps, at the avant-garde display of revolutionary cuisine set against jaw-dropping panoramic views. Away from raucous nightlife, you can mingle with friends among the pink flamingos and tropical flora etched into the wallpaper of the French bistro Flamingo. Golden palm leaves replace ordinary light fixtures, and the 'je ne sais quoi' of French food is epitomised in a menu that includes foie velouté with fig and deer tenderloin soaked in berries and red wine.

As the Royal River takes you down an unsuspecting rabbit hole in a familiar destination, so does *Bisate Lodge* in Rwanda. Six round, thatched villas rest peacefully in 42 hectares of land on the slopes of an eroded volcanic crater, much like little eggs waiting to hatch, each with a view of Mount Bisoke. Gorilla trekking is, of course, the main draw here – it is, after all, where the conservationist Dian Fossey studied gorillas extensively and ferociously campaigned for their protection. In fact, you can hike through the tropical rainforest, up to nearly 3,000 metres, to see Fossey's grave, as well as those of the gorillas she fought so hard to protect.

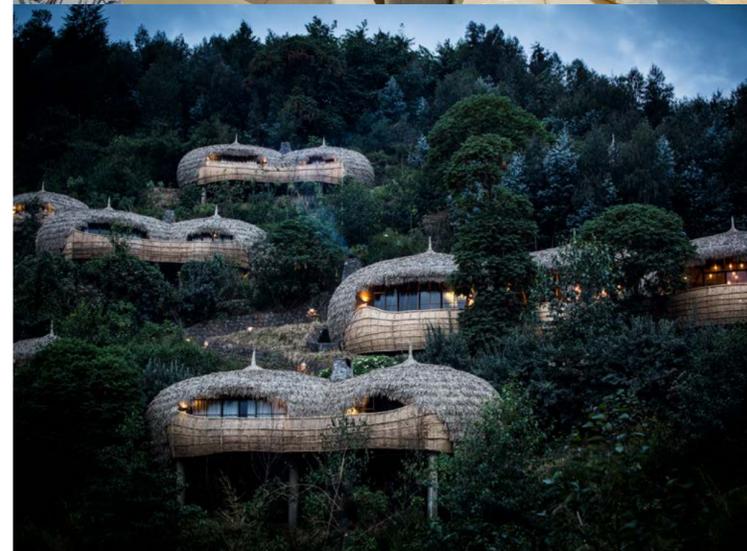
But this fascinating history is only a

small taste of the intrigue and wonder to be found here. Back at camp, Johannesburg-based architect Nick Plewman has ensured that you are wowed by stunning design around every corner. Paired back, muted colours of the villas and communal areas allow the rich, indigenous culture to shine through, with concrete floors, exposed brick walls, tan leather chairs and timber as the backdrop. The accessories provide the detail, each one curated by Rwandan designer Teta Isibo in collaboration with local artisans. Spot traditional 'kitenge' fabrics, recycled green glass bottle chandeliers, and traditional 'ibyansi' milk jugs. With soft, warm lighting, it feels as though you're being enveloped in a natural bubble, shrouded by surrounding wildlife and greenery. You can find the occasional branch sneaking over the wrap-around balconies and hear the calls of monkeys on the horizon.

A soak in one of the large, black oval resin tubs in the bathrooms will leave you feeling soothed. And afterwards, you can snuggle up in an armchair next to a crackling log fire with a drink before dinner. International dishes are mixed with local cuisine, with surprises like 'Kuku Paka', east African chicken with rice, and fresh tilapia fish with mango salad.

Just by staying here you're already contributing to reforestation and biodiversity conservation, as well as supporting the local community. Bisate has planted over 75,000 indigenous trees and you can help to plant more while you're here. See all of the resort's hard work for yourself, and embark on nature trails with an in-house guide, watch for birds, and listen to stories from nearby villagers or the staff, of more than half of whom are local. As the sun sets, you'll return to the floating, peaceful abyss of these comforting cocoons above the treetops.

Experiences such as these satiate a hunger for discovering new places and, instead, open our eyes to the places we already thought we knew.





# Beyond the barbecue

From secret supper clubs to experimental fine dining, transcend stereotypes on a bespoke gourmet voyage to find the freshest flavours in South Africa's most fertile pockets.

Words: Anna Prendergast

South Africa's cuisine is as smoking hot as its world-famous braai, but its best bits are beyond the barbecue-and-biltong clichés. You might often hear the Arabic word, 'Barakat', said in relation to food here, which translates as 'blessing'. Originally, the word referred to the edible blessing of fruit offered after prayer by South African Muslims but has since become slang for 'takeaway'. Barakat embodies the complexity, diversity and sense of community baked, grilled and marinated into South Africa's food, which draws on a fragrant, fascinating mix of Dutch, Indian and Cape Malay ingredients and recipes. Just one taste of it and you'll be wholeheartedly and inextricably linked to it too.

## A FAMILY-SIZED FEAST

At the heart of South African cooking is family-style communal dining and handmade food – the kind that you'll want to take home (remember Barakat?). Authentic hospitality is hard to fake, but you'll find it in its purest form when you're welcomed into Nicky Gibbs' home. As she chatters and chops, you'll learn how she turned her house into the Crofters Kitchen, a place where she farms, forages

and finesses her home-grown ingredients. Sink into a warm buzz around one big table, as you and 13 other hungry mouths reach for slices of hot biltong-spiced ostrich rump and bowls of steaming Noordhoek mushroom risotto garnished with garlic blossom. Conversation will never run dry with the inspiring panorama that stretches past the decking outside, from the craggy mountain of Chapman's Peak to the calming basin of Lake Michelle.

**WHERE TO STAY:** Fall head over heels for *Tintswalo Atlantic*, which is carved into the side of the majestic Table Mountain National Park, home to breathtaking hiking trails. Sunset at the overwater restaurant with its soft rays and light spritzes from the sea give new meaning to alfresco dining.



## FROM SUMMIT TO SEABED

A new generation of restaurateurs has been heading to the coastal capital of Cape Town, and with them a renewed respect for native flavours and recipes passed down orally for generations. The heady fragrance of smoked Amasi cheese and curried onions will lead you to Ukutya, a dining concept that puts the party into supper party and celebrates South Africa's indigenous ingredients – such as roast amadumbe (a root vegetable grown in the wetlands) and warm iimbaza (mussels) soup. Fine dining has a fun, more informal spirit here. Settle into front row seats at Salsify's 13-course tasting menu filled with explosions of colour, from grapefruit-cured sashimi with hibiscus pickled radish to poached prawns atop chive gnocchi. There's also Pier Restaurant where the attentive service will treat you as a VIP and theatrical touches, such as dishes cooked table-side and shells opened up to reveal boat-fresh seafood, delight and surprise all the senses at once.

**WHERE TO STAY:** The waterfront *Silo Hotel* is set within iconic Thomas Heatherwick architecture. You'll find it hard to beat the uninterrupted views from the floor-to-ceiling windows on the sixth floor, where chef Veronica Canha-Hibbert runs a fabulous French bistro-style space.



## SIP BACK AND RELAX

Nearby, the Cape Winelands beckon, with grape growers, vine experts and seasoned sommeliers at hand to guide you through some of the finest wine-tasting in the country. It's impossible to resist the passion that flows as freely as the wine at working farms such as La Motte or Leeu Estates, and it seeps into the property's every pore, from its awe-inspiring art collection to its Vastu Shastra architecture. As you become privy to stories that go back centuries, you can't help but feel like you're playing a small part in the history of viticulture and its vitality in the community. Franschoek's vintages are thought to be catching up with Stellenbosch's starrier-eyed wine scene, so don't forget to buy a few bottles to take home, so you can pass on the same stories to others who are keen to learn.



**WHERE TO STAY:** Immerse yourself among the manicured vines at *Leeu Estates*, which is cinematically set between Dassenberg's magnificent sandstone mountains and the glassy Berg river. It's also home to Michelin-tipped La Petite Colombe restaurant, a place of exquisitely dainty dishes.



## DRINK IT ALL IN

Between June and December, feel the anticipation simmering beneath the surface of the Atlantic, as you wait to spot southern right and humpback whales, often with their offspring in tow. Sailing along the eponymous Whale Coast, it's hard to contain the ripples of awe as you watch the spectacle of the 'marine big five' unfold – a once-in-a-lifetime experience and a humbling reminder of our relationship with nature. This proximity to the sea also feeds into an ecosystem in which pinot noir thrives, and you can taste the unique terroir in its red fruit flavours and wood-spiced undertones, all infused by a coastal breeze that refreshes the grapes and injects a light acidity. You'll find one of the best collections in the cellars at Grootbos Private Nature Reserve.

**WHERE TO STAY:** Leave the designated driver at home, or simply find yourself intoxicated by the starlit stroll through *Grootbos Private Nature Reserve's* ancient milkwood forest, where the coo of a Cape-eagle owl will lull you into a deep sleep, and you'll awake to panoramic views over the nature reserve.

# Relax, refuel, restart

Health and happiness; they're what we all seek, but the path to finding them isn't always easy. For centuries, different cultures have been using food to unlock the secret to living well, through local ingredients, diets and remedies. Follow in the footsteps of master practitioners to find the key to a better you.

Words: Ellen Millard

## SUNSHINE STATE OF MIND

A positive outlook comes easy in Los Angeles, where wall-to-wall sunshine inspires a vibrant and active lifestyle. Sink into that easy, breezy mindset with signature macrobiotic dishes set against a calming backdrop of Californian coastline. *M Café* is hailed as an original pioneer, championing the macrobiotic principles of using organic and locally-sourced ingredients for a casual lunch. It was founded by Lee Gross, who has travelled the world, absorbing and adapting the best of local cuisines – he was also Gwyneth Paltrow's personal macrobiotic chef. Cold pressed juices and the grilled ahi tuna burger are firm favourites. Meanwhile, at *Shojin*, the diet gets a fine-dining makeover, with Japanese vegan dishes, such as truffle maitake mushroom tempura and hakusai dumplings served in a bamboo steamer. Equipped with renewed vigour, you'll feel your energy levels spike as you take on the surf or navigate LA's picturesque hiking trails.

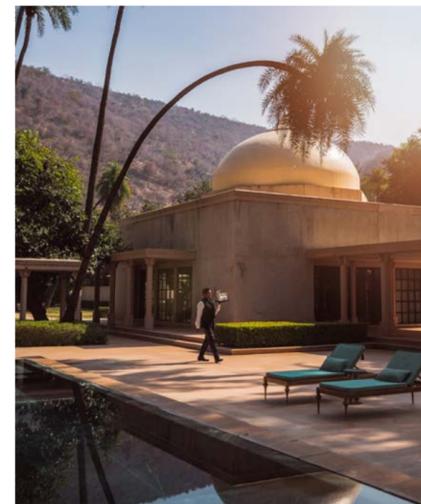


## A MAYAN BALANCING ACT

The ancient Maya used to see 'health' as 'balance', which they achieved through a series of holistic herbal, massage, acupuncture remedies alongside fresh food. Embrace these historical teachings at Mexico's *Chablé Maroma* to find your own equilibrium. Begin with mindfulness through soothing sound baths and restorative stress relief massages before tipping the scale back to focus on your body. You can seek to improve the physical side at restaurant Bu'ul, where traditional tacos and tostados are made with detoxing ingredients: fibre-packed avocado, cholesterol-lowering jalapeño and mineral-rich onions will leave you feeling revitalised from top to toe. Finish with a Oaxacan cacao pot, cooked over coals for a warming – and harmonising – finish.

## HISTORICAL REMEDIES IN INDIA

There's something incredibly soothing about watching one of *Amanbagh's* physicians grinding up organic ingredients from the home-grown apothecary. These remedies play a part in Amanbagh's Wellness Immersion experience, which is like pressing refresh and starting again – your body, renewed, from the inside out. Their restorative methods take cues from India's ancient principles of purification, known as Panchakarma. Cleanse yourself of impurities, tension and emotional clutter as your bespoke itinerary sets out to target the toxicity of any unhealthy patterns at home. A single pause with a herbal tea or a breakfast seasoned with cinnamon and cardamom, will give you moments to marvel at how far you've come – a new you, in every sense.



## ITALY'S SECRET TO A LONGER LIFE

A plant-led diet, reducing dairy and introducing a daily dose of beans – these are all characteristics of the diet followed by the world's five "Blue Zones", where people live longer than anywhere else. Uncover their secrets at Italy's *Borgo Egnazia*, which offers a veritable masterclass in the science-based Blue Zones living. This is not just a retreat; this is about recalibrating to a new way of life. Cook local dishes of stuffed aubergine and broad bean flan, rich in immune-boosting vitamins, minerals and antioxidants and even enjoy an afternoon glass of Puglian wine on the calcar limestone terraces. Learn how to stop eating when you feel 80 per cent full and wake up in the morning knowing your purpose is worth up to an additional seven years of life. This kind of moderation is the key to cultivating the tools that lead to a fuller, happier existence.



## A DIGESTIVE DETOX IN THAILAND

A robust digestive system is integral to your body's overall wellness, which is why Thailand's *Chiva-Som* has designed a detox programme dedicated solely to gut health. In a one-to-one consultation with an expert nutritionist, you'll discover what your body really does (and doesn't) need, with a bespoke plan to flush out impurities. Surrounded by golden sands and rich jungle, you'll be left feeling rejuvenated thanks to a menu of nutritious, probiotic and fibre-filled dishes, inspired by Thai flavours and made using ingredients grown in the hotel's organic gardens.

# Plates of perfection

Magic comes to life at Dubai's Atlantis The Royal, where artistry, alchemy and ambiance combine to push culinary experiences – and tastebuds – to the next level.

Words: Lauren Romano

The flourish of a gold leaf garnish placed with painstaking precision; the fiery spectacle of chefs flambéing in an open kitchen; the hot glow of a sunset from the 19th-storey window that momentarily distracts you from what's on your plate; the maître d' who welcomes you by name on arrival: the recipe for a memorable meal can encompass many elements.

At Atlantis The Royal's 17 restaurants – eight of which are helmed by celebrity chefs – exceptional food is a given, but it's only the start. That's because dining here goes beyond the everyday. Much like the legend of Atlantis – the utopia civilisation that sunk into the sea without a trace – Atlantis The Royal in Palm Jumeirah is a place where the imagination knows no bounds.

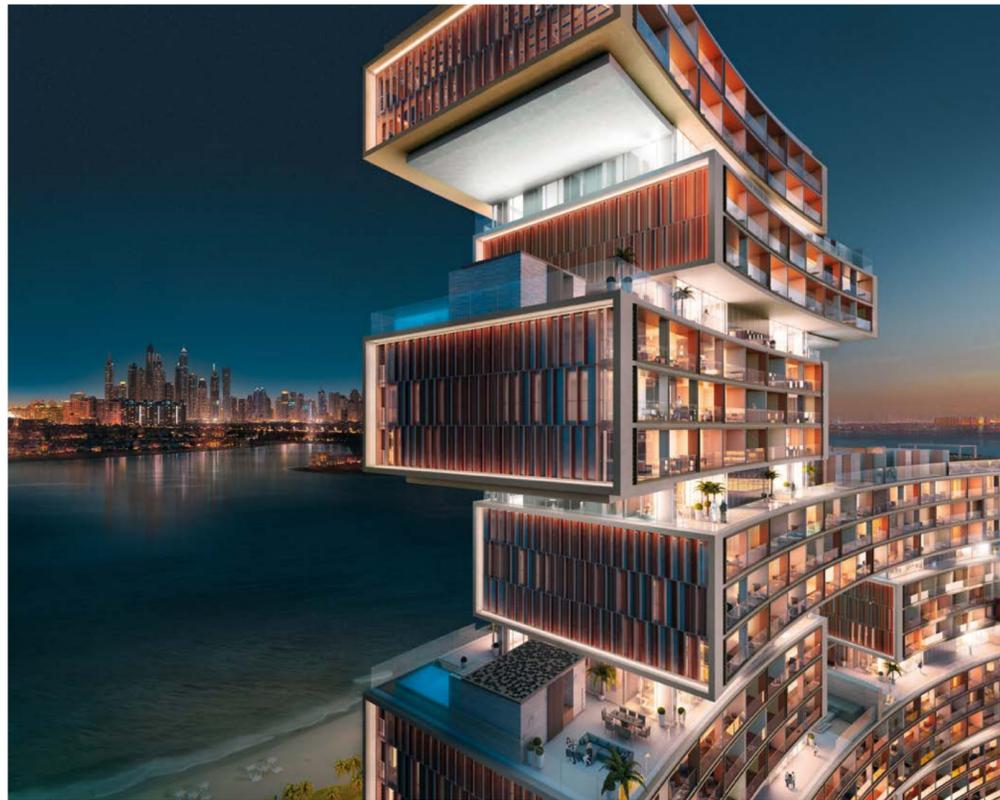
Rising 43 storeys high from the Arabian Sea to meet the sky, the hotel's gravity-defying exterior – blocks symmetrically stacked like a work of art – sets the scene for what awaits inside. Step into the lobby and you'll be greeted by the sight of more than 4,000 jellyfish gliding hypnotically through the world's largest tank.

But untethered creativity is most evident when you sit down to eat. It's no surprise that Atlantis The Royal is where the world's most decorative chefs – culinary alchemists like Heston Blumenthal OBE – come to experiment.

Swap the sunny shores of Dubai for 12th century England at Dinner by Heston Blumenthal. One for the most serious gastronomes, put your senses to the test with trompe-l'oeil creations such as meat fruit, a playful and puzzlingly real-looking mandarin that masquerades as a sphere of chicken liver parfait. Additional theatrics come courtesy of nitrogen ice cream, conjured up tableside in a puff of smoke and served with sugar-coated fennel seeds or apple popping candy.



Clockwise from top left: Meat fruit at Dinner by Heston, Resonance by Heston Blumenthal, Ariana's Persian Kitchen, Atlantis The Royal celebrity chefs, exterior view



*A place to expect the unexpected, Atlantis The Royal might be a creative playground for culinary greats, but it's you that will have the most fun.*

At Estiatorio Milos, by acclaimed chef Costas Spiliadis, wild oysters plucked from the Greek isles and whole fish tartare are artfully arranged over ice at the raw bar. You'll feel unable to resist the conviviality of sharing as you reach for your first taste of the sea. The sprinkle of Aegean rock salt and generous drizzles of olive oil from centuries-old koroneiki trees accentuate the fresh marine flavours. Seafood takes centre stage at La Mar by Gastón Acurio, too, where you'll find yourself transported to Peru with bites of fresh-from-the-sea ceviche and sashimi style tiraditos. These are best enjoyed with a glass of pisco while drinking in the views on the outdoor terrace.

Next up? José Andrés, the only chef to have a two Michelin-star restaurant, four Bib Gourmands and a Nobel Peace Prize. At Jaleo, he has recreated his favourite childhood dishes from his native Spain. Sip on a large glass of summery sangria and watch as hearty paellas are cooked in front of you on an open flame. It's this human touch and secrets from family recipes that have also inspired Persian Kitchen, the debut restaurant from award-winning TV chef and cookbook author Ariana Bundy. Caspian-style filet

kebabs and rose-scented sea bass are studded and jewelled with nuts, fruits and subtle spices, reflecting the palatial and exotic setting, with its ornate Arabian archways and chandeliers.

For something sweet, there's Mich Turner's Little Venice Cake Company, which has baked indulgent creations, layered in icing, for the likes of the late Queen Elizabeth II and (the notoriously hard to please) Gordon Ramsay. Or disappear into a realm of nostalgia, as you're served a pot of Darjeeling, finger sandwiches and scones at The Royal Tearoom. Once again, feel yourself slipping into a place and pace of life that's metaphorically miles away from your surroundings.

If one cuisine isn't enough, you can take a tour of the whole globe in one sitting at Gastronomy, a buffet restaurant, styled on a food market. Watch as the chefs sizzle, shuck and season, while you savour the sights, sounds and scents of the world's most celebrated cuisines being prepared.

A place to expect the unexpected, Atlantis The Royal might be a creative playground for culinary greats, but it's you that will have the most fun.



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