

WORLD CUP WALLCHART

that's

SHANGHAI

SHANGHAI'S

22

Sexiest

热榜

PEOPLE

400 820 that's
Advertising Hotline

城市漫步上海英文版 6 月份
ISSN 1672-8033
9 771672 803046



"I want to control [the atmosphere] and play with it the same way that I play with the presentation on the plate."

Ultra ambitious

Paul Pairet pushes the edge of the dining spectrum with Ultra Violet

Talking to Paul Pairet you can't help but wonder if he's playing a game of verbal three-card monte with you. It's as if he's deliberately filling your head with nonsense and absurdity just to direct your attention away from what he's really doing. But, eventually, his nonsense and absurdity somehow become reality. And he always manages to pull it off. When we sat down with him in 2008 to learn about his plans for Mr & Mrs Bund, he talked about it as if it were a minor side project, a mere distraction to an even greater undertaking that was 10 years in the making. It was so ridiculous, so fanciful, so seemingly impossible that we just wrote it off as a pipe dream. Well, it's actually going to happen this fall and it's called Ultra Violet.

It's a heady, high concept: A sparsely decorated dining room – in a restaurant wasteland off of Suzhou Creek, no less – housing a single table with only 10 seats. The menu is just part of it. Pairet seeks to create a full-on sensory experience.

"Atmosphere in a restaurant influences the way you eat and how it tastes, so I want to control it and play with it the same way that I play with the presentation on the plate," he says.

To this end, sights, scents and sounds will all be choreographed to enhance each course. There will be light effects. The walls will act as screens for various projected images and diners' seats will be fitted with speakers and fragrance dispersion devices.

"If we serve a fish in the context of a surrounding sea, the smell of the sea and just a little breeze, it will taste better," says Pairet.

This isn't some half-baked gimmick – Pairet is serious. His partnership with Givaudan, one of the leading flavor and fragrance producers in the world, gives the project added credibility. Pairet will have access to the company's entire catalog of scents.

Still, it's not an experience that can be easily explained. Or perhaps Pairet would prefer not to. When we asked him to walk us through a typical dinner he just drew us a graph axis and plotted dots on it according to how many bites would be required to finish each dish.

"When I was at Jade [on 36], I was surprisingly limited with what I could do. If I wanted to just put a beautiful scallop on a plate with some olive oil and sea salt, I

really couldn't do it. It didn't fit the context of the menu. But with a 20-course dinner, I can serve everything I like in one meal."

And, he explains, Ultra Violet won't all be bells and whistles. "Food will still be the focus. Not every course will need all of the theatrics. Some will be elaborate enough on their own. We'll just turn on the lights and pretend it's a normal restaurant for a few minutes."

It's incredibly ambitious and insanely extravagant and Pairet is under no illusion that it will definitely deliver financial returns.

"We expect this to be a money loser," he says. "But not everything is justified directly in economic terms."

On the surface, it may seem like a counterintuitive business plan. But only if you're thinking in the short term. VOL Limited, Pairet's parent company, already has two cash cows – Mr & Mrs Bund and Bar Rouge. Ultra Violet will be their show pony. It'll be as much a publicity stunt as a restaurant. But more importantly, it's an investment for that time in the future when the Michelin man pays a visit to Shanghai. // Ultra Violet is slated to open in

September. Visit www.urbanatomy.com for updates.

follow us on
twitter

FOOD & DRINK

Features

News

Interviews

Food Reviews

Bar Reviews

2009 Awards

Cook it

Ultra ambitious



Features

Thursday, 17 June 2010 10:06

Written by Justin Fischer

Paul Pairet pushes the edge of the dining spectrum with Ultra Violet

Talking to Paul Pairet you can't help but wonder if he's playing a game of verbal three-card monte with you. It's as if he's deliberately filling your head

with nonsense and absurdity just to direct your attention away from what he's really doing. But, eventually, his nonsense and absurdity somehow become reality. And he always manages to pull it off. When we sat down with him in 2008 to learn about his plans for *Mr & Mrs Bund*, he talked about it as if it were a minor side project, a mere distraction to an even greater undertaking that was 10 years in the making. It was so ridiculous, so fanciful, so seemingly impossible that we just wrote it off as a pipe dream. Well, it's actually going to happen this fall and it's called Ultra Violet.

It's a heady, high concept: A sparsely decorated dining room – in a restaurant wasteland off of Suzhou Creek, no less – housing a single table with only 10 seats. The menu is just part of it. Pairet seeks to create a full-on sensory experience.

"Atmosphere in a restaurant influences the way you eat and how it tastes, so I want to control it and play with it the same way that I play with the presentation on the plate," he says.

To this end, sights, scents and sounds will all be choreographed to enhance each course. There will be light effects. The walls will act as screens for various projected images and diners' seats will be fitted with speakers and fragrance dispersion devices.

"If we serve a fish in the context of a surrounding sea, the smell of the sea and just a little breeze, it will taste better," says Pairet.

This isn't some half-baked gimmick – Pairet is serious. His partnership with Givaudan, one of the leading flavor and fragrance producers in the world, gives the project added credibility. Pairet will have access to the company's entire catalog of scents.

Still, it's not an experience that can be easily explained. Or perhaps Pairet would prefer not to. When we asked him to walk us through a typical dinner he just drew us a graph axis and plotted dots on it according to how many bites would be required to finish each dish.

"When I was at Jade [on 36], I was surprisingly limited with what I could do. If I wanted to just put a beautiful scallop on a plate with some olive oil and sea salt, I really couldn't do it. It didn't fit the context of the menu. But with a 20-course dinner, I can serve everything I like in one meal."

And, he explains, Ultra Violet won't all be bells and whistles. "Food will still be the focus. Not every course will need all of the theatrics. Some will be elaborate enough on their own. We'll just turn on the lights and pretend it's a normal restaurant for a few minutes."

It's incredibly ambitious and insanely extravagant and Pairet is under no illusion that it will definitely deliver financial returns.

"We expect this to be a money loser," he says. "But not everything is justified directly in economic terms."

On the surface, it may seem like a counter-intuitive business plan. But only if you're thinking in the short term. VOL Limited, Pairet's parent company, already has two cash cows – *Mr & Mrs Bund* and *Bar Rouge*. Ultra Violet will be their show pony. It'll be as much a publicity stunt as a restaurant. But more importantly, it's an investment for that time in the future when the Michelin man pays a visit to Shanghai. *Ultra Violet is slated to open in September. Check back for updates.*



Email this



Bookmark

URBANATOMY.COM

Shanghai's number 1 podcast

Listen here



2010 EXPO

URBANATOMY.COM
Daily Expo updates right hereWORLD CUP
FOOTBEERFREE flow beer
All you can eat
Prizes

RELATED CONTENT



Chalet Suisse

This new concept from the owners of Napa Wine Bar & Kitchen could have easily been m ... [more »](#)



Constellation 3

With each successive branch they open, it seems that Bar Constellation are renovating ... [more »](#)



Downstairs

David Laris is trying to promote his new restaurant to Shanghai diners with the envir ... [more »](#)



Editor's Pick: Brunch on Jade on 36

Okay, so it doesn't have dancing acrobats and a live string quartet. But if you've ... [more »](#)

THAT'S SHANGHAI!

The Latest issue

View that's Shanghai just how you like it!
[E-magazine](#)

NEW
ISSUE