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What's For Dinner at Shanghai's Ultraviolet

Shanghai's newest, buzziest restaurant is the high-concept **Ultraviolet**—Chef Paul Pairet's 15-years-in-the-making meal experience where each course is paired not only with a special beverage but with a certain sound, scent, and interior design.



SCOTT WRIGHT OF LIMELIGHT STUDIO



"Imagination is a magnifier that transforms appetite into desire," explains Paul Pairet, one of the most notable mainland China-based chefs, of where he got the inspiration for Ultraviolet 15 years ago.

Instead relying solely on food to develop diners' imaginations Ultraviolet is as much a part of the meal as each bite of the 20-course avant-garde cuisine that comes out of its kitchen. Pairet's new 10-seat restaurant employs a slew of technology including 56 speakers, seven high-resolution projectors and four dry smell projectors to choreograph a complete sensory experience. Think: new wall patterns, lighting, scents and even air pressure with each course.

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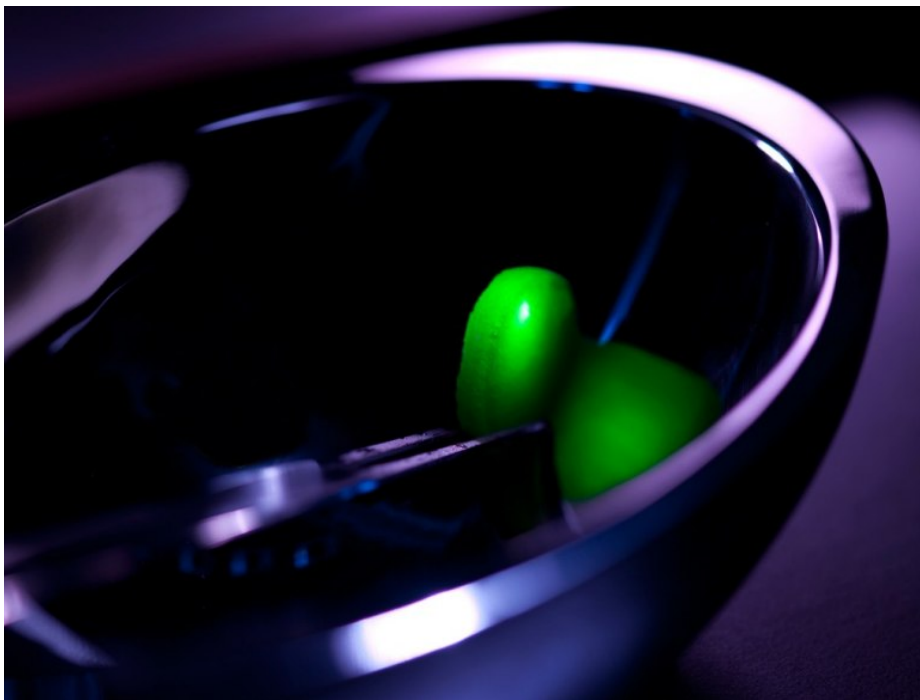
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FIRST COURSE

The name: Ostie

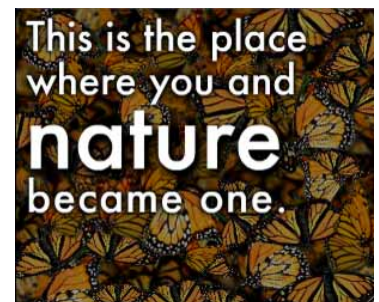
What it is: An apple juice and wasabi sorbet, which is frozen and then cut into shape of an ostie (wafer).

The visual: Lit candles and swinging church bells

The music: "Hell's Bells" by AC/DC

The scent: "Church," a tailored-made scent by Mane

"I wanted the first course of the current set menu to be a perfect palate cleanser for all senses. It awakens you with a classic heavy rock 'n' roll beat; the air is filled with 'Church', a holy scent that makes you feel like you're in an enthronization to a sect—a sect of cuisine."



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The name: Can't Quit

What it is: Foie gras cigarette with cabbage "ash"

The visual: A giant cigarette consuming itself, a reference to original Marlboro cowboy ads

The music: The theme music from "Once Upon a Time in the West" by Ennio Morricone

The scent: None, because the scent of the dish is so strong

The beverage: A light, sweet sherry to enhance the dish's fruity crust

"The original idea was to encase soft foie gras mousse in fruit crystal; to have the smooth, creamy interior stand in contrast to the crispy fruity exterior. I like to play with contrasts of taste and texture.

I got the inspiration to link the dish with the western film genre environment from the old Marlboro cowboy adverts, and you can't get a more classic score than Ennio Morricone's; his music revolutionized the way music was used in westerns."


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The name: Truffle Burnt Soup Bread

The dish: Cigar smoke, burnt bread, meunier sauce and truffles

The visual: Foggy woods

The music: "Carnivale," solo piano piece by Gonzales

The scent: "Forest", tailored-made scent by Mane

The beverage: Chardonnay 2009, Francis Coppola, Monterey County, California

"For years I dipped bread in meunier sauce for a quick bite when I was hungry in the kitchen. Couldn't be simpler. It took me a long time to realize that I could make a nice dish out of it, but I've served variations of [the dish] since 2006.

The item on the Ultraviolet menu is the original version of truffle meunier bread—the dish at its best. Premium cigar smoke is infused and captured inside of an elegant glass dome, surrounding the nearly burnt bread, which has a three-millimeter crust on one side. The other side of the bread is softened by soaking in a meunier sauce mixed with soy sauce, hazelnut butter and lemon; it's all topped by truffle slices.

I created visuals and sound to go with the dish's earthy, 'mushroom-y' taste. The room is greyish and smoky to invoke a foggy forest."

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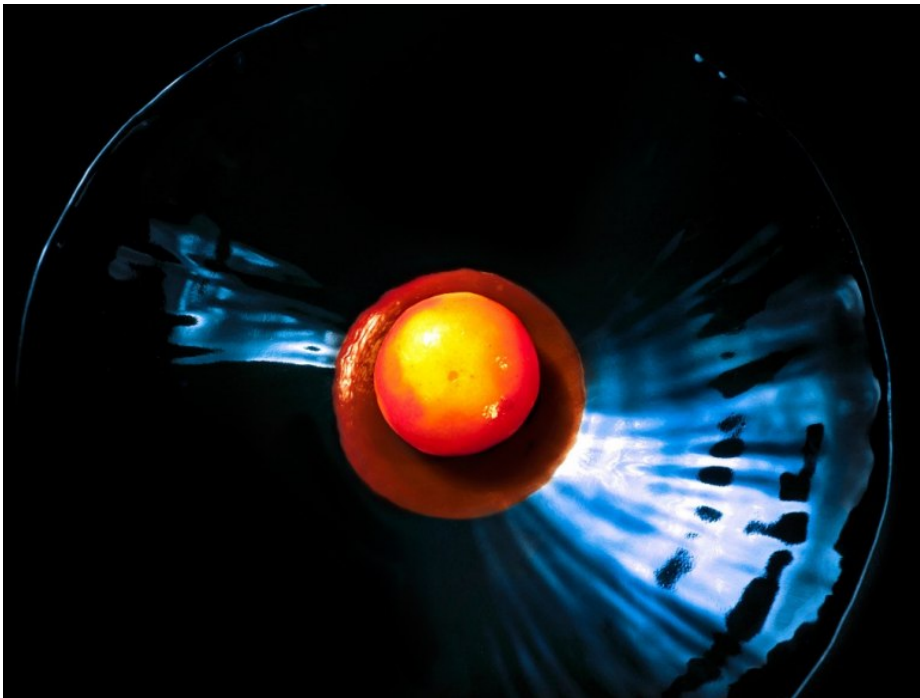
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The name: Mandarine Mandarine

The dish: Mandarin orange, orange sorbet and Chantilly cream

The visual: Lots of mandarins

The music: Mandarin/Chinese melodies

The scent: Mandarin orange

The beverage: Mint tea

"The original Orange a l'orange was an attempt to magnify the concept of a simple orange tart. To do this I strengthened the tart's flavor through texture and temperature—adding citrus segments, sorbet and Chantilly cream—and presented the dessert in its own candied skin, adding shape. It was essentially a whole orange in an orange!

Mandarine Mandarine is the micro version of this dish, a tribute to the Chinese fruit, the fruit of the Mandarin people, in French.

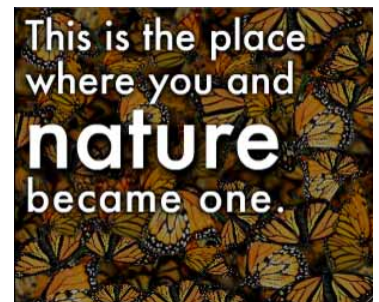
During Chinese New Year, mandarin oranges are considered traditional symbols of abundance and good fortune, hence the abundance of mandarins in this course: in the visuals on walls, in the scent in the air and in the Mandarin (Chinese) music playing in the background. The scenario around diners makes Mandarin Mandarine an intense magnification of the original dish."

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The name: Hibernatus Gummies

The dish: Gummy bears, Evian water, Lapsang Souchong syrup and Coca-Cola

The visual: The Race of Gummies. You pick your favourite colour gummy bear for dessert, and then watch it race fellow diners' picks 360 degrees around the room.

The music: Super Mario Brothers theme song

The beverage: "Evian-Gummies". Evian water colored and flavored by your bear of choice; you will be able to see the processed bear suspended in the bottle.

"This is a dish about iconic, non-gastronomically-correct-yet-fascinating artificial flavors. For a lot of people the Haribo gummy bear is an iconic but artificial food. Here the bears are 'hibernating' in a lime and crystalized Lapsang Souchong syrup between mountains made of Coca-Cola, the ultimate artificial taste.

Taking the gummy bears from the plate to racing on the walls is the transposition of this edible artificial world into another type of artificial world: the video game universe. The Mario Brothers music reinforces the concept."

Ultraviolet, Shanghai, China, set menus start at RMB 2,000, +86 21 6142 5198; bookings through www.uvbypp.cc/bookings

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