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Ultraviolet: Multisensory Dining in Shanghai



Truffle burnt soup bread

Scott Wright

Paul Pairet has been lauded for his witty takes on bistro classics at Mr. & Mrs. Bund in Shanghai, but he has been wanting to create a restaurant where he controls the ambiance — from lighting to scents — for each dish. Ultraviolet is his attempt, though it has nearly driven him insane: The restaurant is more than a year late to open, and investors have sunk \$2.5 million into the tricked-out kitchen and dining room (which seats a mere 10).

The buzz surrounding the restaurant has been building ever since Mr. Pairet hosted his old mentor, Alain Ducasse, in November. “He was quite enthusiastic and has been promoting us,” Mr. Pairet says. “Now, the reality starts.”

The Food: The French chef was first noticed while helming Café Mosaic in Paris in the 1990s before moving to Shanghai to open Jade on 36 at the Shangri-La in 2005. At Ultraviolet, the menu will change frequently, but the first menu will include his cucumber lollipop covered with peanuts, inspired by the Indonesian salad *gado-gado*. He plans to serve this with an image of Bali masks projected on the walls as well as Balinese music.

Another dish will be “truffle burnt soup bread” — one side dipped in soy-butter sauce, the other grilled and topped with truffles. It will arrive under a glass dome filled with cigar smoke, accompanied by a tree projection and forest scents.

Each dish will be paired with a beverage, though not always wine. For example, a dessert of gummy-bear candies comes with gummy-flavored Evian water.

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The Setting: The all-white dining room is the canvas for Mr. Pairet's multimedia project: He has installed seven projectors, a sound system and scent diffusers so that diners who order, say, his fish and chips, will hear rainfall and see the British flag. A staff of 25 cooks and servers work at the restaurant.

Our Tip: With only 10 seats each night, Mr. Pairet's boite is likely to book up early, and reservations are a must. Expect to become acquainted with your fellow diners: Not only is dinner served at a communal table, all of you will be chauffeured to the

restaurant (whose location for now is a secret) from Mr. & Mrs. Bund.

Ultraviolet is taking bookings at its website, uvbypp.cc. Dinner costs 2,000 RMB (about \$315).

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