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Taste the World: Epicurean Travel

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Taste the World Epicurean Travel



Explore epicurean inspirations; from hidden gems to perennial classics, from simple delights to refined pleasures. THE ADDRESS Magazine shares some of their food and travel discoveries to be included on your must-to-do list. Join us on a journey from Hong Kong to Paris to Shanghai.





ULTRAVIOLET by Paul Pairet

Shanghai, China

Ultraviolet is considered by many to be the most avant-garde restaurant in the world. It is also one of the best.

This is where haute cuisine gastronomy is united with multi-sensorial technologies, creating a fully immersive dining spectacle that is simultaneously unconventional, inspirational and enormous fun.

Described as the first gastronomic show in the world, Ultraviolet opened its doors in 2012 after more than 15 years of conceptualisation. It is the brainchild of chef Paul Pairet, whom some critics call a gastronomy genius. He is a winner of the Chef's Choice Award at the 2016 Asia's 50 Best Restaurants Awards. The restaurant received 2 Michelin Stars in 2016, and is ranked amongst the World's 50 Best Restaurants.

Ultraviolet offers some serious haute cuisine in a high-tech private dining room that is furnished with a single table and 10 seats. The meal is staged as a kind of Cirque du Soleil of fine dining. The food is breathtaking and the experience priceless.

This is a visionary cuisine of substance and subtlety, precision and huge artistry with an epic menu designed to engage the five senses. The menu is painstakingly sketched out and rehearsed by Pairet and his team of chefs, servers and producers who activate sounds, scents, lights and videos from a nearby control room. The harmony between the performance and the substance is just perfect.

Meticulously crafted and artfully presented, the 20-course set menu shows dazzling brilliance. Dish after dish displays flawless technique, inspired originality, intricate details and a masterful, intuitive understanding of the interplay and contrasts between flavours, textures and temperatures, all in a playful context.

Dishes may include 'Foie Gras Can't Quit', which is presented as an extraordinary edible "cigarette". Brought in on a shining silver ashtray, it is a thin red fruit crystal double roll or cigarette casing, filled with a foie gras-cognac-port mousse dipped into a red cabbage-vanilla-ginger "ash". It goes with a lightly sweet sherry to enhance the fruity crust.

Another dish might be 'Tomato Pomodoro', which is a cherry tomato in caramel crystal seasoned with tomato reduction, balsamic, basil oil, and kaffir lime leaf, plus strawberry gazpacho with arugula leaves served via a magnifying glass on top of a short drink glass.

One of Pairet's most iconic dishes is the 'Truffle burnt soup bread'. It starts with a slice of toasted bread soaked in a truffled meuniere sauce, then topped with truffle slivers and truffle foam. The dish might sound simple, but it combines crunchy, soft, juicy, airy textures with earthy, complex and explosive flavours. The dish is served with a 2009 Chardonnay – a Francis Coppola production from Monterey County, California.

Each course, served at the same time to all diners, unfolds as a well-orchestrated theatrical performance. The atmosphere is created through lights, sounds, music, aromas and visuals.

Amongst the technologies that make up Ultraviolet's ambience: HD wall and table projectors, dry scent diffusers, infrared cameras, surround sound and a temperature air-blowing turbine. Projections may include crashing ocean waves, ancient trees in fog, a bucolic idyll, an Alpine scene or Indonesian masks.

The evening starts with diners gathering at a preset meeting point, and then being driven through Shanghai's old Hongkou district. Upon arrival at a warehouse on Suzhou Creek, the incredible performance begins.

It is a truly unforgettable showpiece for culinary perfection in an incredibly inspirational setting. Ultraviolet is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Truly extraordinary.

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