



In  
**CONVERSATION**  
with...



**WISDOM  
FROM THE WORLD'S  
GREATEST CHEFS,  
WINEMAKERS AND  
HOSPITALITY  
MASTERS**



Q&A WITH  
**ALFRED MOISAN**

# Paul Pairet

**FOUNDER AND CHEF, ULTRA VIOLET, MR & MRS BUND,  
CAFÉ POLUX, SHANGHAI, CHINA  
3 MICHELIN STARS (ULTRA VIOLET)**

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*If you were to die and come back as an ingredient, what would it be?  
And why?*

A pinch of salt... to exhaust anything; a crack of pepper to lift the salt; a squeeze of Lemon to zing it all

*You take one year off to go travelling around the world to discover new cuisines? What is your itinerary of 2-3 countries and why?*

Northern Europe (Denmark...) or South America (Chile or any country) because I never went there and they have driven the New World Cuisine. In any case, having travelled quite a lot professionally, it is always very interesting to dig into any food culture- there is a lot to learn anywhere.

*What is the best advice you've been given that has helped you along the way?*

Believe in what you cook if you want anyone to believe in it.

*Who are the four people you'd dream about having dinner with?  
And why?*

Antonin Careme; Auguste Escoffier; Alain Chapel; Alain Ducasse. The 4 'A's ('les quatre as' en Français, the four aces in English). For the obvious reason that they are or have been geniuses of their time, and meeting them together is impossible—hence a dream. And yes sometimes, I think about things that are not related to cooking... sometimes.

*What was your most memorable meal as a customer in another restaurant than your own? And why?*

There has been quite a few striking meals: from my first 'fine dining' experience at 'La Tour d'Argent', Robuchon in the 80's; my first real Chinese meal in Hong Kong Shangri La in the early 90's to El Bulli in late 90's... or Asador Etxebarri not so long ago... and quite a few fantastic contemporary chefs and places.

But if I had only one to extract, I would probably remember the first restaurant where I invited my young girlfriend of the time and paid with my own money that I made over the summer Job. I was so proud! I was 15, it was in Marseille in the infamous 'L'Entrecote' where we had: a Rib Eye (Entrecote) with its 'secret sauce' and a simple lettuce... What else ?

*Is there something nobody knows about you / your restaurant?  
Or something people don't realise?*

Probably... and nobody knows because I won't tell ;-)

*If you were not a chef / restaurateur, what profession would you like to have learnt?*

I certainly love architecture... and on a similar line, I could love to design aesthetic and useful objects...

*You are given (unlimited) funds to acquire a vineyard of your choice?  
Which one would you buy and why?*

Probably a nice vineyard close to Perpignan—which is my native place and where they are now doing some great structured wines.

*If you could have one superpower, what would it be?*

Superman in a Kryptonite free world where I would not have to wear a mask and apply for a visa to end up in quarantine (where I am writing those lines by the way)

*What is your most unusual food / wine combination that you would recommend?*

A Rosé de Provence 'Piscine' (with a nice cube of ice) on a Tuna Sashimi. Rosé are too often under-rated. Or on another level... the same Rosé on the beautiful 'Blanquette de Veau' from my mum: I tried, it is a terrible clash but you need to experience the worst to understand the best.

*What is the biggest myth about famous chefs / restaurants?*

The morning market with a basket shaking and with the suppliers all in one spot: this is mostly TV stuff

*Do you have a funny anecdote about a meal / dish that went wrong?*

Rarely. Because I do not improvise for customers. But I remember the first meal I cooked for Mr Ducasse in the Café Mosaic in Paris. We wanted to do it so well; but for a reason that still escape me, a piece of broken plastic box came back from the Tubular Cucumber that he took as a starter... what a shame. He never complained and invited me for a coffee a few days after.

*How do you relax outside of cooking?*

I go to restaurants

*What advice would you have for your 21-year-old self?*

Stay put... growing older is not as good as you think.

*How would like to be remembered?*

As the chef who did Ultraviolet