



Elena and Juan Mari Arzak. Below: Restaurante Arzak's lobster sea and garden dish



BEST CLASSIC RESTAURANTS

# Restaurante Arzak

For decades, culinary connoisseurs have traveled to San Sebastián to experience the legendary dishes at this pioneer of Spanish gastronomy

**A**rzak was my first three-Michelin-star dining experience, back when I visited San Sebastián in 2001. Since then, I have been reliably dazzled by the creations of Juan Mari Arzak and his daughter Elena. On my first visit, the chef surprised me with his most famous dish: From the Egg to the Chicken, a perfectly poached egg with a golden exterior, bursting with flavors of truffle and chicken broth. Through the years, the Arzak Egg has seen multiple iterations, including the Red Space Egg, coated with a piquillo pepper film and cereal, with crispy pigs' trotters.

A founder of the innovative Basque cuisine in the mid '70s, Juan Mari transformed Spanish gastronomy, paving the way for the likes of El Bulli's Ferran Adrià. Elena

represents the fourth generation in the family's legacy, which began with a tavern run by Juan Mari's grandparents, in 1897. His mother converted the tavern into an upscale restaurant, and in the 1970s it began to garner awards; in 1989, Arzak received its third Michelin star.

Today, the Arzaks continue to surprise: Moringa and prawn *gyoza* dumplings are served inside a mattress coil, and *merluza en salsa verde* comes under a dome of seaweed and puffed rice. The grand finale is the big chocolate truffle, filled with chocolate mousse and crunchy cocoa breadcrumbs and served with a warm chocolate orange liqueur sauce.

The Arzak way, says Elena, is not to innovate for its own sake, but to inspire "culinary happiness." —TERRY ZARIKIAN  
[arzak.es](http://arzak.es)

## MORE PRIZED CLASSICS

Trendy eateries come and go, but these restaurants maintain a consistent excellence that always draws a discerning clientele

### Le Bernardin, New York City

One bite of the fresh scallop cooked with bone marrow and calamansi butter emulsion is all it takes to fall in love with Eric Ripert and Maguy Le Coze's institution.  
[le-bernardin.com](http://le-bernardin.com)

### Joe's Stone Crab, Miami Beach, FL

For 104 years, faithful fans have flocked to this family-owned restaurant to enjoy not only the namesake delicacy, but also buttery hash browns and the best fried chicken in town.  
[joesstonecrab.com](http://joesstonecrab.com)

### Latin Grill, Santiago, Chile

Known for his use of strictly Chilean ingredients to create simple and contemporary cuisine, chef Luis Cruzat has been highly praised for his exquisite fare and a monthly collaboration with the nation's popular wineries.  
[latingrill.cl](http://latingrill.cl)

### Savoy Grill, London

Surrounded by art deco chandeliers and burnished mirrors, patrons enjoy succulent meats from the top-tier Jospé grill, executive chef Owen Sullivan's preferred method for preparing steaks.  
[gordonramsayrestaurants.com](http://gordonramsayrestaurants.com)