

My Last Supper Food

Elena Arzak's final meal

Basque super-chef Elena Arzak would enjoy a sumptuous modernist supper at the family restaurant in San Sebastián



I'd want my last meal at our restaurant in San Sebastián - I love travelling, but that is where I am truly at home.

In a quiet corner of the kitchen there is a marble table, which I love. It's where I always sit when I finish working. Next to it are two paintings that are very special to me: one by Eduardo Chillida and another by Andrés Nagel.

I wouldn't want a tablecloth - I like feeling the cool marble under my hand. On the table, we always have a vase with flowers, which change with the seasons, and above it hangs a brightly coloured very modern light fitting.

I'd want my father Juan Mari to prepare the meal for me. Our cuisine encompasses the Basque spirit and the avant garde. You can discern all the true Basque flavours: parsley, garlic in olive oil, red pepper. We don't like coriander, we use lavender sparingly and only ever in combination with other things ... And our food always tastes of now: we use the latest technologies and scientific techniques to evolve.

To start with, I'd have the space egg - a fried egg with a veil of red pepper, pig trotters, mushrooms and three different sauces: green parsley and spinach, smoked red pepper and annatto, and yellow turmeric.

Next I'd have our scorpionfish pudding in a kataifi nest followed by hake with salsa verde, a typically Basque dish. Simple and sophisticated. There'd also be lots of vegetables: petits pois, asparagus, kale, lots of greens, each prepared separately and cooked just right, with olive oil.

To drink I would first have a rioja with the space egg, and then with the fish I'd want a Basque white: a txakoli. It is made on the coast, where the salinity of the environment gives it a particular flavour. It is excellent with fish and seafood. To finish, a Vega Sicilia.

For the cheese course, I would want some Colston Basset stilton, which I've loved since I came to London in the 1980s, and a latxa sheep's milk cheese, idiazabal. But I wouldn't want any wine with that.

I love dark chocolate, so I'd have our big chocolate truffle, which combines candyfloss with carob, cacao and chocolate. We'd have that with a muscatel, either a Chivite or an MR.

My family would be with me - my children Matteo (eight) and Nora (10). My parents would be there too. And then all our staff, our suppliers, who are also our family - if they wanted to join us, they would be welcome.

I love music, but I don't like too much noise. In this instance, I think the music would suffer, as everyone would be talking so much! The meal would go on for ages. We'd have tea - I particularly love white tea - and coffee and talk long into the night.

Scorpionfish pudding with kataifi

Serves 4

For the fish pudding

- 1/2 kg raw scorpionfish, without the head
1 leek
1 carrot
8 eggs
250ml double cream
250ml tomato sauce
Butter
A handful of breadcrumbs
Salt and black pepper

For the kataifi

- 100g kataifi
Olive oil, for frying

For the vinaigrette

- 50ml olive oil
2 tsp soy sauce
3 tsp sherry vinegar
Juice of 1/2 orange
20g black sesame seeds
Chopped parsley
Salt

1 To make the mousse: boil the scorpionfish with the leek, carrot and some salt to taste. When it is cooked through, remove the skin and debone it. Break down and shred the fish. Set aside.

2 In another bowl, beat the eggs until fluffy. Immediately add the cream, tomato sauce and the fish. Add pepper to taste.

3 Butter a rectangular loaf pan (1 1/2 litre capacity). Coat it with breadcrumbs. Pour the egg mixture into the pan. Cook in a bain marie - a larger, water-filled pan - in the oven at 220C/425F/gas mark 7 for 1 1/2 hours. Let it cool. Remove from the mould and slice into small, narrow rectangular pieces.

4 Place each rectangle of fish pudding on a long cocktail stick. Wrap in kataifi and fry in a frying pan in abundant oil till the outside is crispy. Drain well.

5 For the vinaigrette, mix all of the ingredients except the sesame seeds. Whisk until slightly thickened. Then add the sesame seeds.

6 Place the kataifi parcels on serving plates and drizzle with the sesame vinaigrette.

Elena Arzak is the joint head chef, with her father Juan Mari Arzak, of the three Michelin-starred restaurant Arzak in San Sebastián, and of the Michelin-starred Ametsa with Arzak Instruction restaurant in London.

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