

# GASTRONOMY

observer



January 2021



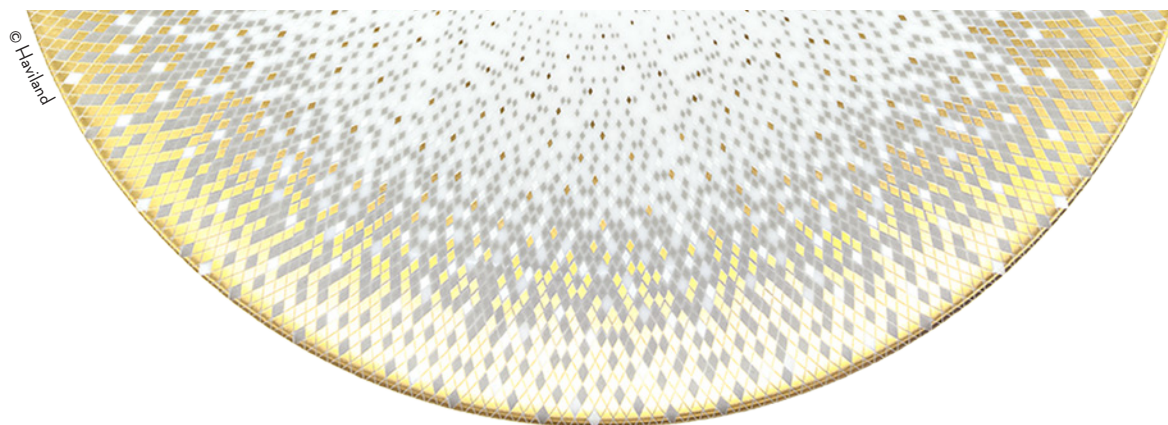
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# foreword

The original purpose of *Gastronomy Observer* was to explore the world of hospitality through its structural evolution and through its innovations. We wanted to investigate where trends are born, and how they travel. Spread over 200 countries, La Liste's 25,000 restaurants provide a significant information base for answering these questions. La Liste's algorithm, which determines our Top 1000 rankings, feeds on the ratings assigned by the guides as well as the information gleaned by our teams from the press, blogs and social networks. Each new restaurant is integrated after a meticulous process of collecting information, content and testimonials. This helps to identify innovations, concepts and new approaches in a sector that is constantly evolving. With this inexhaustible source of data collected on five continents, *Gastronomy Observer* began to take shape.

Times have changed. Our first thoughts of course go to the tens of thousands of restaurateurs who are pushing through this painful pandemic without any certainty about the future. Aware of the tragic upheavals of 2020, we have chosen to adapt our annual awards ceremony, at which we usually reveal our latest rankings. Restaurants

have suffered terribly, and still find themselves subject to frequent but irregular closures by their governments. Because of this we will publish an update of La Liste 2020, taking into account meteoric rises and those which have closed for good, but we don't want to consider another full ranking until the end of 2021. This "transitional" Liste 2021 will still function as a comprehensive tool for food lovers, who we hope will soon be back enjoying their favorite restaurants and discovering new ones.

The *Gastronomy Observer* has also changed its approach: rather than identifying trends across a sector in great difficulty, we felt it salient to collect and analyze as much information as possible about the effects of the pandemic on the hospitality industry. This comprehensive overview brings together a historical study of past pandemics, an overview of the various measures adopted by current governments, a collection of interviews, and a reflection on the main structural trends caused or reinforced by the COVID-19 crisis.

At the global level, several aspirations are becoming more widespread. The demand for good products, often organic, traceable, seasonal



and from a short supply chain is everywhere. A strong appetite for traditional cuisine, whether regional or bourgeois, also seems to be popular with many consumers, who have cooked at home more during lockdown. In the face of the crisis, a large number of restaurateurs have adapted what they do by exploring new dishes, menus, sales, distribution and delivery methods. Others have changed their relationships with suppliers, partners and customers, and undertaken major new training programmes. We wanted to reward the iconic initiatives of these new global trends.

By replicating the working method of La Liste, we try to apply a panoramic, international and comprehensive vision to the restaurant industry. The new trends highlighted by the media or social networks have been identified, cross-referenced and verified by our team in charge of the La Liste database. We hope that this first publication of *Gastronomy Observer* will establish a realistic diagnosis of the situation we are experiencing now, and which we'll live with throughout 2021.

Philippe FAURE,  
Founder & CEO

Hélène PIETRINI,  
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# introduction

An unprecedented crisis is eddying in the world of hospitality. As a victim of the pandemic and successive periods of lockdown, this vast sector is being forced to switch between lengthy official closures and half-hearted opening periods. Deprived of events, conferences, meetings, business travelers, and tourists, and faced with the loss of many suppliers, layoffs of highly qualified staff, loss of turnover, and, in some countries, the absence of financial aid, an entire ecosystem is collapsing in plain sight.

Will the Covid-19 pandemic sound the death knell for independent restaurants, or will it act as a trend accelerator? Is this the end of an era, or a mere parenthesis in the history of gastronomy? Can we say, like restaurateur Mark Canlis about the city of

Seattle, that the world no longer needs fine dining? Will chefs be saved by creativity and technical expertise, or should we expect new demands from customers? Even if we don't have full answers at this stage, it's time to ask the right questions. One thing that has been clear from the start is that faced with this pandemic, restaurateurs aren't on a level playing field. Their survival depends largely on their governments, their customer base, and their ability to adapt.

Our report aims to measure the scale of this crisis at the global level. Many of the consequences across the entire sector are already quantifiable, thanks to the vast amount of data, studies, surveys and statistics produced since the beginning of the pandemic.

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Dominique Crenn



Mauro Colagreco and his team



Yotam Ottolenghi



Carlo Cracco



Adeline Grattard ©The Social Food



Edgar Nunez



Pía León and Virgilio Martínez



Éric Ripert



Alexandre Couillon and his team



Anne-Sophie Pic



Bruno Verjus

# PART 1

## SOARING COSTS AND INEQUALITIES THROUGHOUT THE INDUSTRY



**impact**

**stigma**

**inequality**







# The vital statistics

The figures speak for themselves: colossal losses for hospitality across the world

- According to the US National Restaurant Association, sales at “eating and drinking places” were down nearly 240 billion USD from expected levels between March and November<sup>1</sup>.
- In the UK an estimated 660,000 jobs have been lost in the hospitality sector. The head of UK Hospitality, Kate Nicholls, told the BBC that the industry had been on track to generate one-in-six new jobs in 2020, but instead around 20% of 3.2 million jobs have disappeared<sup>2</sup>. According to the website *Big Hospitality*, 30 billion pounds were lost in Q2 alone, because of the first lockdown<sup>3</sup>. Until the end of 2020, Britain was operating along a ‘tier’ system in which many hospitality businesses remained open. A huge number of these, including hotels and all types of restaurants, received the news they must close as they were preparing their New Year’s Eve and Day services. On Monday 4 January prime minister Boris Johnson announced a third major lockdown, closing all but essential food shops for a minimum of six weeks but likely longer, following new strains of the virus and a steep hike in infections. Delivery of food and alcohol is still permitted, but pubs and bars can no longer serve alcohol from the door.
- France begins the year with a shortfall of 32 billion euros, which is a decrease in turnover of 52% compared to the previous year. The second lockdown led to a 92% loss in restaurant turnover for at least a month<sup>4</sup>. The consultancy firm Food Service Vision estimates that the out-of-home consumption sector, which also includes work canteens and non-supermarkets, will have lost 27.3 billion euros between January and November 2020, reported the French business newspaper *Les Echos*<sup>5</sup>.
- In Spain, it is estimated that the hospitality sector will have lost 17 billion euros over the course of 2020<sup>6</sup>.
- In Germany, the loss of turnover is estimated at 17.4 billion euros between March and July 2020<sup>7</sup>.
- In India, restaurant losses were estimated at one trillion rupees (11 billion euros) at the start of July 2020<sup>8</sup>.
- In Russia, the tourism industry’s total losses from the pandemic are estimated at 1.5 trillion rubles, or 19.4 billion USD, according to an October 2020 statement from the president of the Russian travel industry union (PCT), Andrei IGNATIEV<sup>9</sup>. This sum accounts for losses in the hotel and catering industries.

01. <https://restaurant.org/research/economy/indicators/restaurant-sales>

02. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-54972940>

03. <https://www.bighospitality.co.uk/Article/2020/07/28/Coronavirus-lockdown-leads-to-30bn-in-lost-revenue-across-hospitality-sector-during-second-quarter-of-2020>

04. BASINI, Bruno, *Restauration : une entreprise sur deux pourrait disparaître à cause du Covid-19*, Le JDD, 07/11/2020 <https://www.capital.fr/entreprises-marches/un-restaurant-sur-deux-pourrait-definitivement-fermer-a-cause-de-la-crise-1385361>

05. BRIARD, Clotilde, *Restauration : la lourde addition des confinements*, Les Échos, 16/12/2020 <https://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/tourisme-transport/restauration-la-lourde-addition-des-confinements-1274390>

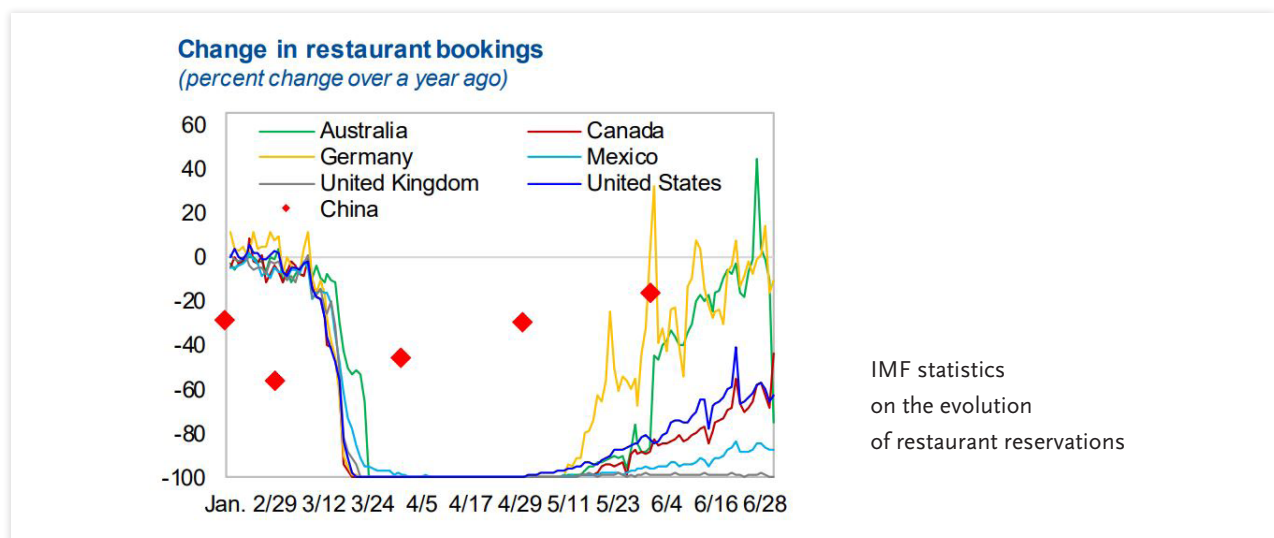
06. AGUILAR, Jorge, *La restauración perderá en 2020 17.000 millones de euros y 400.000 empleos*, ABC, 10/08/2020 [https://www.abc.es/economia/abci-restauracion-perdera-2020-17000-millones-euros-y-400000-empleos-202010081238\\_noticia.html](https://www.abc.es/economia/abci-restauracion-perdera-2020-17000-millones-euros-y-400000-empleos-202010081238_noticia.html)

07. Chiffres DEHOGA - [https://www.dehoga-bundesverband.de/presse-news/pressemitteilungen/detail/news/dehoga-pm-2027-dehoga-zieht-corona-zwischenbilanz-gastgewerbe-weiterhin-in-grosser-not/?tx\\_news\\_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx\\_news\\_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=156d8a2867f2531e4f2dee3ff3476ec6](https://www.dehoga-bundesverband.de/presse-news/pressemitteilungen/detail/news/dehoga-pm-2027-dehoga-zieht-corona-zwischenbilanz-gastgewerbe-weiterhin-in-grosser-not/?tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=156d8a2867f2531e4f2dee3ff3476ec6)

08. Dibyendu Mondal, *Pandemic leaves restaurants bleeding*, Sunday Guardian, 04/07/2020 <https://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/pandemic-leaves-restaurants-bleeding>

09. Потери туриндустрии из-за пандемии оцениваются в 1,5 трлн рублей, TASS, 02/10/2020, <https://tass.ru/ekonomika/9612859>





The list of permanently closed restaurants is too long to print. The well-known or iconic places have not been spared. In France, we've lost La Grande Maison in Bordeaux and Antoine, Sylvestre and L'Abeille at The Shangri-La in Paris. Gill in Rouen closed in December. Saquana in Honfleur changed concept. Le Moulin de Lourmarin and La Bastide de Capelongue have been sold by chef Edouard Loubet.

In the UK, The Ledbury, The Greenhouse, Indian Accent and Siren at The Goring have closed in London. James Sommerin in Penarth and Wilks in Bristol have also closed their doors. L'Enclume's Simon Rogan has closed his Marylebone restaurant Roganic but is calling it a "relocation". Michel Roux Jr has called time on Roux at Parliament Square.

In Germany, Schwarzenstein in Geisenheim and Oscars in Hinterzarten will remain closed.

In Italy, Marta in Cucina in Reggio Emilia and Perbellini in Isola Rizza will not return.

In Spain, three well-known restaurants in Madrid have all closed: Punto MX, with its creative Mexican cuisine, the 99 KO Sushi Bar, and the Zalacaín, one of the capital's great historic restaurants.

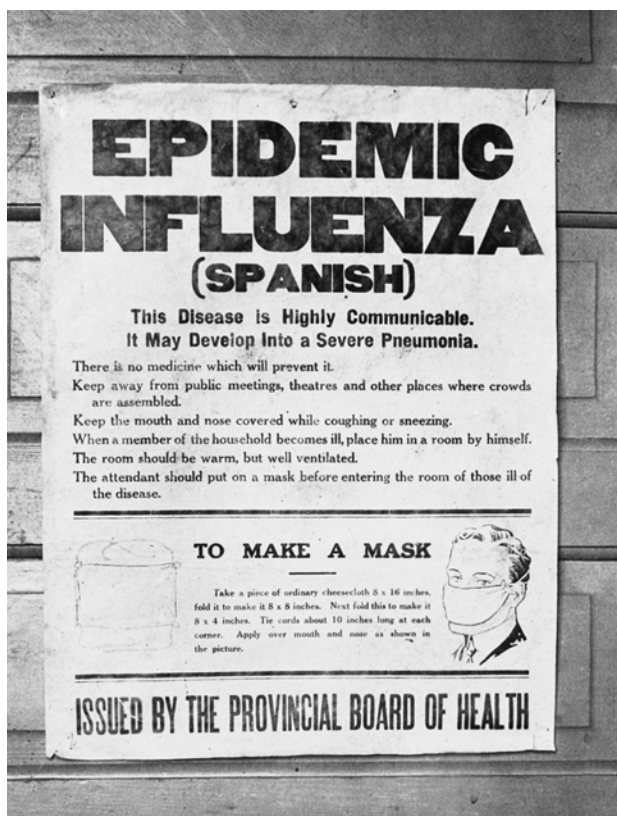
The Netherlands has lost Amsterdam's Moshik restaurant. In Copenhagen, Denmark, neither Relae nor Manfreds by Christian Puglisi will return in their current form.

In Hong Kong, the high-profile closures are Rech by Alain Ducasse and Pierre at the Mandarin Oriental. In Tokyo, Inua, Bistro Marx and Heinz Beck. In Singapore, it's Vianney Massot.

The United States has been particularly hard hit with closures which include Aureole, Thomas Keller's TAK Room, Gotham Bar and Grill and Momofuku Nishi in New York, Momofuku DC in Washington, Trois Mec, Auburn, Somni and The Bazaar in Los Angeles, and Nico in San Francisco. Blackbird in Chicago, McCrady's in Charleston, Five Sixty By Wolfgang Puck in Dallas, and Threadgill's in Austin have all had their last service.

In August 2020, chef Dan Barber announced that his Blue Hill at Stone Barns restaurant in Pocantico Hills, NY, and Blue Hill in Greenwich Village, Manhattan would radically change concept and become a "diversity-focused chefs in residence" concept<sup>10</sup>. In late September 2020, The Restaurant at Meadowood in Napa Valley was destroyed in a fire.

10. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/17/dining/blue-hill-chef-in-residence-program.html>



## Restaurant shutdown: a world first?

There is no precedent for the global hospitality lockdown. Even during past wars and pandemics, restaurants remained open.

In 1918, the pandemic known as the Spanish flu led to local restrictions and a drop in consumer confidence. On October 24, 1918 the *Oakland Tribune* in California's Bay Area ran with the headline "Bars, Café in Dark; Patrons are missing". The board of health in Charleston, South Carolina, then ordered the closure of all places where people could gather, including restaurants and cafés. This

closure of restaurants was presented as a "flu lid", as the newspapers called it at the time<sup>11</sup>. In Cleveland, restaurants were ordered to stop serving at 8pm. This measure backfired against City Hall, as restaurant owners quickly set up sandwich stalls on the sidewalks to feed night workers, who had nowhere else to eat. The crowds gathered around these stands were essentially new infection zones<sup>12</sup>.

In 1918 Cleveland was a major port and a center of innovation in the heart of the Great Lakes region. It was the sixth largest city in the country and had

11. Hanna RASKIN, *Spanish Flu might offer clue to what coronavirus holds for downtown Charleston restaurants*, *The Post and Courier*, 09/03/2020, [https://www.postandcourier.com/food/spanish-flu-might-offer-clue-to-what-coronavirus-holds-for-downtown-charleston-restaurants/article\\_69a88060-5d9b-11ea-b8f8-f39a590d23fc.html](https://www.postandcourier.com/food/spanish-flu-might-offer-clue-to-what-coronavirus-holds-for-downtown-charleston-restaurants/article_69a88060-5d9b-11ea-b8f8-f39a590d23fc.html)

12. Hanna RASKIN, *Spanish Flu might offer clue to what coronavirus holds for downtown Charleston restaurants*, *The Post and Courier*, 09/03/2020, [https://www.postandcourier.com/food/spanish-flu-might-offer-clue-to-what-coronavirus-holds-for-downtown-charleston-restaurants/article\\_69a88060-5d9b-11ea-b8f8-f39a590d23fc.html](https://www.postandcourier.com/food/spanish-flu-might-offer-clue-to-what-coronavirus-holds-for-downtown-charleston-restaurants/article_69a88060-5d9b-11ea-b8f8-f39a590d23fc.html)



double its current population. At the beginning of the 20th century, the restaurants were essential to feed the many new city dwellers, who lived in one-room studios or boarding houses<sup>13</sup>. Restaurants were not places of gastronomic pleasure, much less a creative chef's theater. They were more like a public service, and essential to the survival of the general public. "Eat dinner at Home. The restaurants will be open, but the city health authorities insist that only people who have no other way of getting their meals today, patronize them," read the *Miami Herald* on October 13, 1918. This is why restaurants in the United States continued to serve urban workers during the 1918 pandemic.

In the UK, pubs and restaurants remained open during the same pandemic. Historian James Neal points out they were already subject to restricted opening hours due to the war. Before World War I, a British pub might open for 16 hours a day, and even

19 hours a day in London. In 1918, these hours were limited to two and a half hours for lunch service, and three in the evening<sup>14</sup>.

On October 14, 1918, the Parisian newspaper *Excelsior* published the following editorial: "The wisdom of the higher authorities is impenetrable. Their reasoning differs profoundly from ours, and their logic is not that of ordinary mortals. Ordinary mortals have just had fresh proof of this today. An illness spreads terror...the flu - since it must be called by its name - is currently preoccupying the Academy of Medicine and our City Council. As always, there is talk of closing theaters and cinemas, which will pay for subways, streetcars, restaurants, shops, schools, offices and the hundred other dumping grounds for human tissue where infection is inevitable. It's an old tradition. Let's stand our ground" <sup>15</sup>. Schools in France did then remain closed after the summer holidays<sup>16</sup>.

13. Rebecca SPANG, *Why Did So Many Restaurants Stay Open During the 1918 Pandemic?*, Literary Hub, 27/05/2020, <https://lithub.com/why-did-so-many-restaurants-stay-open-during-the-1918-pandemic/>

14. Emily HAWKINS, *Lessons to be learned from the past*, Morning Advertiser, 05/05/2020 <https://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk/Article/2020/05/05/How-did-we-cope-in-the-past>

15. EMILE, *Bloc-Notes*, Excelsior, 14/10/2018, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k4605708h/f4.item.r=restaurant.zoom>

16. Camille LESTIENNE, *Comment la grippe espagnole a gâché la rentrée scolaire en 1918*, Le Figaro, 01/09/2020, <https://www.lefigaro.fr/histoire/archives/comment-la-grippe-espagnole-a-gache-la-rentree-scolaire-en-1918-20200901>



## Stigma for restaurants despite hygiene measures

Scores of governments have chosen to close restaurants. In the eyes of the general public, each and every dining venue has been associated with the disease itself, with the creation of clusters and with its uncontrollable spread. However, their real role in this pandemic is difficult to quantify at this point. Several studies blame the restaurants. The first concerns cases of infections in a Hot Pot restaurant in Guangzhou<sup>17</sup>.

For the average Westerner, it is not easy to imagine such a restaurant, which has no conventional kitchen and where customers plunge pieces of meat, seafood and vegetables into pots of boiling water. Deeply rooted in Chinese culture, Hot Pots are nevertheless restaurants like any other and enjoy great popularity among all social classes. In the study, the restaurant in question is described as “an air-conditioned five-storey building with no windows. The dining room on the third floor covers 145 m<sup>2</sup>; each floor has its own air conditioner. The distance between each table is about one meter.” Ten out of the 83 diners fell ill.

17. Lu, J., Gu, J., Li, K., Xu, C., Su, W., Lai, Z...Yang, Z. (2020). COVID-19 Outbreak Associated with Air Conditioning in Restaurant, Guangzhou, China, 2020. *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, 26 (7), 1628-1631. <https://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid2607.200764>.



The second study took place in the United States. Researchers found that “adults with positive SARS-CoV-2 test results were approximately twice as likely to have reported eating out than those with negative SARS-CoV-2 test results”<sup>18</sup>. But the authors themselves outline five possible limitations in their work. “It should be noted that the question assessing restaurant meals did not distinguish between inside and outside. What’s more, the question of going to a bar or café did not distinguish between places or of service delivery methods, which could represent different exposures. Third, the adults in the study were from one of eleven participating healthcare facilities and may not be representative of the population of the United States. Fourth, participants were aware of their SARS-CoV-2 test results, which could have influenced their responses.”

The working paper of a British study from October 2020 identifies a strong correlation between the number of customers affiliated with the *Eat Out to Help Out* scheme and Covid-19 clusters<sup>19</sup>. Based on data from the cell phones of 98 million people, an American study from November 10,

2020 places restaurants within a fairly large list of places at risk. “On average, in metropolitan areas, full-service restaurants, gyms, hotels, cafés, church organizations and limited-service restaurants produced the largest predicted increases in infections when reopened. Reopening full-service restaurants was associated with a particularly high risk: in the Chicago metro area, we predicted an additional 596,000 infections (95% CI, 434,000 to 686,000) by the end of May, more than triple that of the POI with the next highest risk”<sup>20</sup>.

In South Korea, a recent study analyzing cases in one restaurant suggests that the virus, under certain air circulation conditions, travels further than 1.8m and can infect others in just five minutes<sup>21</sup>.

It seems logical that restaurants are increasingly responsible for spreading the virus when society as a whole is restricting other activities. As a result, restaurants have been forced to introduce significant safety measures and will, along with bars and clubs, be among the businesses that remain closed for the longest period.

18. Fisher KA, Tenforde MW, Feldstein LR, et al. *Community and Close Contact Exposures Associated with COVID-19 Among Symptomatic Adults ≥18 Years in 11 Outpatient Health Care Facilities* — United States, July 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1258–1264. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6936a5>

19. FETHER, THIEMO, *Subsidizing the spread of Covid 19: Evidence from the UK's Eat-Out-to-Help-Out scheme*, Cage Working Paper N° 517

20. CHANG, S., PIERSON, E., KOH, P.W. et al. *Mobility network models of COVID-19 explain inequities and inform reopening*. Nature (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-020-2923-3>

21. Kwon KS, Park JI, Park YJ, Jung DM, Ryu KW, Lee JH. *Evidence of Long-Distance Droplet Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 by Direct Air Flow in a Restaurant in Korea*. J Korean Med Sci. 2020 Nov;35(46):e415. <https://doi.org/10.3346/jkms.2020.35.e415>



## STIGMA IN ASIAN RESTAURANTS

Since the start of the pandemic, Asian restaurants, and Chinese restaurants in particular, have been victims of stigma. Many potential customers, especially in English-speaking countries, hold China responsible for the current health situation, pretending not to know that the restaurateur or local Asian communities have nothing to do with the how the pandemic has developed around the globe <sup>22, 23, 24</sup>.

22. [www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/how-help-struggling-asian-american-communities-amid-coronavirus-pandemic-n1178516](http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/how-help-struggling-asian-american-communities-amid-coronavirus-pandemic-n1178516)

23. [www.france24.com/en/20200205-coronavirus-fear-and-stigma-in-paris-s-chinatown](http://www.france24.com/en/20200205-coronavirus-fear-and-stigma-in-paris-s-chinatown)

24. [www.scmp.com/news/world/europe/article/3051409/coronavirus-how-chinatowns-milan-london-are-coping-fallout](http://www.scmp.com/news/world/europe/article/3051409/coronavirus-how-chinatowns-milan-london-are-coping-fallout)





# Economic inequities across different countries

## VARIATIONS IN SUPPORT UNRELATED TO A COUNTRY'S SIZE OR GASTRONOMIC REPUTATION

The fate of restaurants seems strongly linked to government support. Some restaurant owners are receiving financial aid or benefit from programs encouraging diners to return to restaurants, others are not. In most industrialized countries, hospitality is receiving a combination of traditional aid measures of the sort used during previous crises: some unemployment benefit for employees, a deferral of business rates and loan repayments and, in some cases, subsidies and a reduction in VAT.

In Europe, the unequal access to aid quickly put any semblance of harmony between the states to bed. These inequalities concern not only the aid, but also the red tape surrounding it. During the first lockdown, Swiss banks granted loans in less than 48 hours. In August 2020, the British government paid part of the customer's bill with the *Eat Out to Help Out* initiative. From the first week of the second lockdown, the German state reimbursed restaurant owners with 75% of their weekly turnover from the previous year. This aid is likely to change the gastronomic landscape in the long term. Those offered the most help - in terms of funding, but also how it is distributed - will have a head start. Here are a few examples:



## SPOTLIGHT ON GOVERNMENT AID, COUNTRY BY COUNTRY



### France

To benefit from support, companies must have lost 80% of turnover during the lockdown period. There are several measures on offer including partial unemployment benefit, a fund offering up to 10,000 euros for companies with fewer than 20 employees and a turnover of under 2 million euros, and exemption from employer contributions between March and June 2020. Rents and fees owed to the authorities by microbusinesses and SMEs for the use of public land have been written off while businesses are closed<sup>25</sup>.

### United Kingdom

At the start of the pandemic, the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund was set up to support businesses in this sector and offered one-off payments of £10,000 or £25,000 to business owners, depending on the value of the business property. Chancellor Rishi Sunak offered a furlough scheme to employers which paid 80% of earnings up to £2,000 per month. In January 2021, new grants were made available in this area, offering up to £9,000 to help businesses survive until the spring.



The *Eat Out to Help Out* scheme offered a 50% discount on food or non-alcoholic drinks, up to a limit of £10 per customer every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from August 3 to 31<sup>26</sup>. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), 100 meals were subsidized costing the British state over £522 million. The average discount per meal ranged from £5.17 to £6.36. 84,700 restaurants, bars, pubs, canteens, and cafés participated.

25. <https://www.economie.gouv.fr/mesures-soutien-restaurants-cafes-hotels-entreprises-tourisme>

26. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-a-discount-with-the-eat-out-to-help-out-scheme>



## Switzerland

During the first wave, Switzerland made it possible for small entrepreneurs to quickly obtain five-year state-guaranteed loans at zero interest<sup>27</sup>. At the time many restaurateurs and traders testified to the speed and responsiveness of the banks, with loans being granted between three and 48 hours after an online application. A few months later in November, Gastrosuisse, the union for hoteliers and restaurateurs, requested more support<sup>28</sup>.

In **Spain** the relevant ministries are preparing a range of new measures which include exemptions from social contributions as well as the opportunity to renegotiate leases. The Ministry of the Economy is proposing an extension of the grace period and the repayment period of loans guaranteed by the state-owned bank Instituto de Crédito Oficial<sup>29</sup>.

In **Italy** new aid packages, staggered according to turnover, were announced in October<sup>30</sup>. Businesses with a turnover of up to 400,000 euros can claim 5,173 euros. With 1 million euros this rises to 13,920 euros, to a high of 25,000 euros for places turning over up to 5 million euros. For bars, the payout will average 2,941 euros.

In **Germany**, after a temporary reduction in VAT from 19% to 16% (7% to 5% for the reduced rate

which includes food), from July to the end of 2020, the second lockdown in November 2020 brought with it the *außerordentliche Wirtschaftshilfe*, which translates as “extraordinary economic aid”. For each new week of lockdown, restaurateurs can request a reimbursement of 75% of their weekly turnover from November 2019, up to a maximum claim of one million euros<sup>31</sup>. This measure has attracted some criticism because it allows restaurateurs to make a profit without incurring any costs from suppliers.

In the **United States**, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES), backed by the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Main Street Lending Program are the main forms of aid offered. CARES is a 2.2 trillion USD stimulus project signed on March 27, 2020. It was created to provide financial assistance to individuals and businesses in the face of substantial losses caused by COVID-19 and includes 300 billion USD in individual payments of 1,200 USD and 260 billion USD in increased unemployment benefits. PPP defers credit repayment deadlines to help small businesses. The Main Street Lending Program is a low-rate loan program managed by the Federal Reserve<sup>32</sup>. 60% of small businesses applied for financing, but only 5% received assistance<sup>33</sup>.

27. Alexandra SCHWARZ-GOERLICH, John REVILL, *Schnelle Corona-Hilfe in der Schweiz, Geduldsprobe in Österreich*, Reuters, 24/04/2020 - <https://www.reuters.com/article/corona-sterreich-schweiz-wirtschaft-idDEKCN2260MI>

28. <https://www.gastrosuisse.ch/fileadmin/oeffentliche-dateien/medien-gastrosuisse/news/2020/gastrosuisse-medienmitteilung-inakzeptabel-bundesrat-will-gastgewerbe-opfern-04112020.pdf>

29. Hugo GUTIERREZ, *El Gobierno prepara un plan especial de ayudas para bares y restaurantes*, El País, 11/11/2020 <https://elpais.com/economia/2020-11-11/el-gobierno-prepara-un-plan-especial-de-ayudas-para-bares-y-restaurantes.html>

30. Gianni TROVATI, *Ristori: ai bar aiuto medio da 2.941 euro, 5.173 euro per i ristorante*, Il Sole 24 Ore, 28/10/2020 <https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/ristori-bar-aiuto-medio-2941-euro-5173-euro-i-ristoranti-AD7v5Zy>

31. <https://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Content/DE/Pressemitteilungen/Finanzpolitik/2020/10/2020-11-05-PM-ausserordentliche-wirtschaftshilfe-november.html>

32. <https://pos.toasttab.com/blog/on-the-line/restaurant-relief>

33. <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-major-banks-really-decided-which-businesses-got-stimulus-money-2020-4?IR=T>

On December 28, 2020, Trump signed a 900 billion USD Covid relief bill at the eleventh hour after arguing it should offer more help to Americans via direct payments to most US citizens of 2,000 USD, not the 600 USD in the bill. Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi described the 600 USD as a “downpayment” and called on Trump to get congressional Republicans behind the higher figure. As well as direct payments, the bill will benefit restaurants in a number of ways, including more access to PPP, tax deductions, employee retention tax credits, and easier access to loan guarantees. Business meals will be 100% deductible for 2021 and 2022. The Restaurants Act was presented to Congress in June and aims to provide an additional 120 billion USD to help struggling restaurants. Unlike CARES, it would prioritize restaurants with annual revenues of less than 1.5 million USD and those owned by women, minorities, and veterans. It wasn’t included in the December relief plan but it’s possible this could change given future Vice President Kamala Harris co-sponsored the Restaurants Act in the Senate.

While they wait for this package to be implemented, many organizations and fundraisers are supporting restaurant owners. An initiative from Austin, Texas, is notable. The city council is in the process of designating certain iconic culinary, musical and artistic products and spaces, and earmarking them for financial help from a fund raised by hotel tax<sup>34</sup>. But it isn’t clear how the restaurants will be selected, and what will become of the others, those considered less worthy of preservation.

In **Japan** the government has adopted several packages of emergency measures to fight the economic impact of Covid-19. The first was in April, for a total of 117.1 trillion yen (20.9% of GDP in 2019). In June, a second project for the same value was announced offering a variety of measures linked to health, business support, domestic aid and local government, and increasing the ceiling of the Covid-19 reserve fund. Aid for businesses includes bank loans and rent subsidies. On December 8, 2020, a new relief package worth 73.6 trillion yen (13.1% of GDP in 2019) was announced to cover living expenses and livelihoods. This funding is also intended to promote structural change and positive trade cycles for the post-Corona era.

The *Go to Travel* campaign, a subsidy to encourage domestic travel, was suspended from Friday December 18 in Tokyo and across the country from December 28 to January 11, 2021.

In **China**, the IMF estimates 4.8 trillion RMB (4.7% of GDP) of fiscal measures, but the total number is probably higher. Highlights include increased spending on disease prevention and control and medical supplies, unemployment insurance (plus extending it to migrant workers), tax breaks and exemption from social security contributions, as well as more public investment. The government has also taken steps to provide financial assistance to households, businesses and regions affected by repayment difficulties. These steps include encouraging lending to SMES, even those not guaranteed by local banks, extending deferrals on loan repayments until the end of March 2021,

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34. <https://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=352043>

Source: IMF



easing the size restriction for online loans and other credit support measures for eligible SMEs and households.

In **Thailand**, the cabinet has approved a budget of 9.6% of GDP or 1.5 trillion THB which includes healthcare, support for workers, farmers and entrepreneurs affected by Covid-19 (which includes paying 5,000 THB per month per person for three months to about 14 million non-farm workers outside the social security system, and to 10 million farmers); support for individuals and businesses through loans and tax breaks, lower water and electricity bills and social security contributions; measures to support local tourism with 22 billion THB in tourist subsidies and 100 billion THB in loans to SMES in the sector, with good terms. From July 15 to the end of October, there was also a tourism grant under the *We Travel Together* scheme which covered up to 40% of some travel costs for up to five million domestic tourists. 4.65 million people signed up. *The Bangkok Post* has reported that fraudsters are trying to take advantage of this program<sup>35</sup>.

In **Bolivia**, companies in the tourism, hotel and catering, manufacturing, construction, agriculture and forestry, commerce, transport, storage and communications sectors are benefiting from the *Fondo de reactivación (FORE)* or “rehabilitation fund” which is worth 12,000 million Bs (Bolivian bolivianos), or 1,740 million USD.

**Brunei** has granted businesses in the tourism, hospitality, events, restaurant, café and aviation sectors a six-month deferral for repaying their loans.

**Bulgaria** has reduced the VAT on catering from 20% to 9%. This also applies to the publishing industry and manufacturers of baby food. Since July 1, 2020 the state has paid a monthly subsidy of 290 BGN (Bulgarian leva), or 175.5 USD for each job preserved in the tourism, hotel and transport sectors, with an overall budget of 40 million BGN. The average monthly salary in Bulgaria is 3,539 BGN, or 2,142 USD<sup>36</sup>. The measures were only to last for a six-month period.

35. <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/2035351/fraud-charges-taint-travel-scheme>

36. Average Salary Survey, <https://www.averagesalarysurvey.com/bulgaria#:~:text=Average%20salary%20in%20Bulgaria%20is,how%20much%20to%20pay%20employees.>



**Mali** has put in place a series of economic measures aimed at improving the liquidity of companies in difficulty, including a fund to support SMEs and a tax deferral for hotels, restaurants and transport.

Among the measures taken by the **Republic of Malta** are an extension of tax deferrals estimated at 200 million euros or 1.5% of GDP, the extension of wage subsidies, subsidies on rents and electricity bills, vouchers redeemable in bars, restaurants, hotels and retail outlets, fuel price cuts, a tax refund for workers, and additional subsidies and grants to support businesses.

## A MIXED RESPONSE FROM RESTAURANTS

The classic chef-patrons who follow the model established in the era of *nouvelle cuisine* will have to settle the high price of the pandemic themselves, though their fate will largely depend on the mechanisms specific to each country.

In the United States, the Independent Restaurant Coalition estimates that 85% of independent restaurants are under threat<sup>37</sup>. Rents and running costs continue, especially in city centres, even when restaurants are closed. Few landlords and owners have agreed to reduce rents, though there are some exceptions. For example, in Germany the real estate group ECE is offering a 50% reduction in rent during the second lockdown and for future lockdowns<sup>38</sup>.

In Rome, the owner of the restaurant Clothilde was able to claim a 60% rent reduction during the first lockdown through the courts<sup>39</sup>. In the US, rent payment is usually subject to negotiations or lawsuits, which a tenant has a chance of winning if the contract has a *force majeure* clause<sup>40</sup>. As everywhere, these are case-by-case solutions, not options for an entire industry. Some states have tried to control rents. In Switzerland, a new bill proposes tenants pay only 40% of their rent during any closure caused by the crisis<sup>41</sup>.

In Spain, the government has imposed a 50% reduction in rents during lockdown “if the restaurant belongs to a real estate group with at least ten properties in urban areas”<sup>42 43</sup>. In the UK restaurants have been shielded from eviction until the end of March 2021, but with the third lockdown there remain few ways for them to “trade their way out of danger” as UK Hospitality had hoped.

Independent restaurant owners everywhere fear that the pandemic will strengthen large chains, in other words the huge fast-food groups.

Chefs employed by international hotel groups appear to be immune from the pandemic. These groups are reluctant to put an end to the contracts of their iconic chefs or the best players in the kitchen. When their wealthy clients return, they will expect the same quality of service as before.

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37. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chrisfurnari/2020/06/16/report-without-federal-aid-85-of-independent-restaurants-could-permanently-close/?sh=7447680b404e>

38. <https://www.ece.com/de/presse/einzelansicht/2-lockdown-ece-entlastet-haendler>

39. <https://www.gamberorosso.it/notizie/il-ristorante-non-riesce-a-pagare-laffitto-il-tribunale-impone-la-riduzione-del-canone-il-caso-di-clotilde-a-roma/>

40. <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/restaurant-group-gets-a-break-on-its-66520/>

41. <https://www.24heures.ch/nouveau-debat-sur-les-loyers-commerciaux-au-national-793697627033>

42. <https://elpais.com/economia/2020-12-22/el-gobierno-aprueba-rebajas-del-alquiler-e-incentivos-fiscales-para-bares-y-comercios-golpeados-por-la-crisis-del-coronavirus.html>

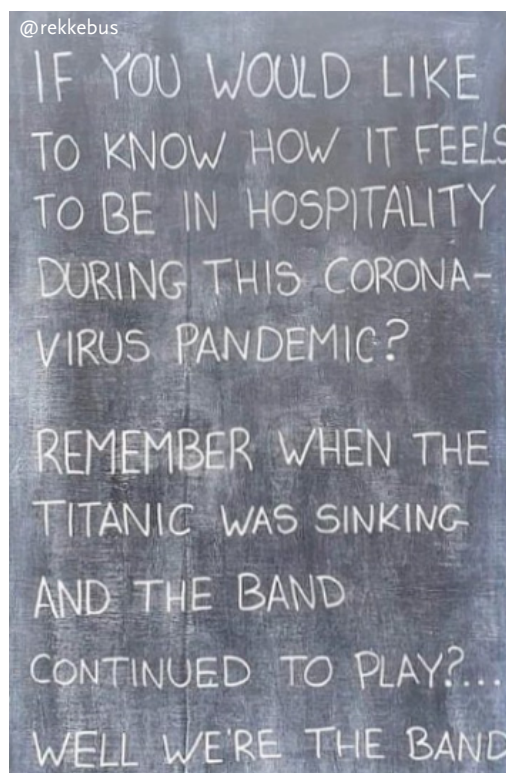
43. <https://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20201020/484199502757/alquiler-generalitat-cataluna-comercio-bares-restaurant-rebaja-decreto.html>

However executive or consultant chefs, including some very big names in gastronomy, are feeling the effects of the pandemic because many of their contracts have been partially canceled.

But the costs of running a restaurant in any global city are sky-high and margins do not cover months of lost revenue, even for the most established names. Repeated closures and re-openings are also expensive. At the beginning of December, following one month of lockdown, London restaurants were permitted to reopen for Christmas. Two weeks later they were ordered to close again.

The explosion in fast casual dining over the past fifteen years is certain to see some casualties. This sector is made up of young and experimental chefs who don't have the overheads that go with fine dining, but nor do they have access to as much credit. In Hackney, east London, Pidgin, a popular local restaurant, launched a GoFundMe page when it was unable to access government support, raising over sixty thousand pounds in a week <sup>44</sup>.

Vanity restaurants financed by an owner from industry or the financial sector, rather than the chef or customer base, often exist to serve the glory and social prestige of their investor. In the current climate these investors know that owning a high-end establishment may be less rewarding than it once was. For now, they are trying to weather the pandemic by cutting down the workforce and opening hours.



44. <https://www.bighospitality.co.uk/Article/2020/12/15/Hackney-restaurant-Pidgin-launches-crowdfund-on-GoFundMe>



Éric Guérin





## Mental strain and low morale

“My restaurant has been my life for 20 years. Does the world need it anymore?” asked Gabrielle Hamilton, the chef-patron of New York’s Prune in the *New York Times* on April 23, 2020<sup>45</sup>. This confession illustrates the desperation of an entire profession in the face of the pandemic, a collapse in turnover, and the unstable administration. “On the night before I laid off all 30 of my employees, I dreamed that my two children had perished, buried alive in dirt, while I dug in the wrong place, just five feet from where they were actually smothered. I turned and spotted the royal blue heel of my youngest’s socked foot poking out of the black soil only after it was too late.”

45. Gabrielle HAMILTON, *My Restaurant Was My Life for 20 Years. Does the World Need It Anymore?*, New York Times, 23/04/2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/23/magazine/closing-prune-restaurant-covid.html>

A month before Hamilton, the self-taught Russian entrepreneur Anastasia Tatulova, owner of fifty cafés, published an open letter in the Russian edition of *Forbes*. “We are facing a fatal crisis. Perhaps the biggest and most terrible in the history of our country since the 1917 revolution. Today, myself and others like me are making decisions not about the survival of the business, but about how we can get our mortgaged homes out of the banks. How not to go to jail in bankruptcy. How to avoid a situation in which our heirs will owe Sberbank their entire lives for the development loans we took out several years ago, and which we are simply unable to repay”<sup>46</sup>.

At the moment we don't have reliable studies on the impact of the pandemic, of lockdowns and other curfews on the wellbeing of chefs and restaurateurs. But experts are starting to look at the wellbeing of the general population.

According to a team of Spanish researchers: “The majority of those polled felt that the Covid-19 crisis had a huge impact on their daily lives, which includes changes in their daily routines and the cancelation of important activities. About 36%

of participants reported a moderate to severe psychological impact, 25% showed mild to severe anxiety levels, 41% reported depressive symptoms, and 41% felt stressed. Women, young people and those who have lost their jobs during the health crisis exhibited the strongest negative psychological symptoms. What worried the Spaniards most was the probability of suffering an economic crisis due to the pandemic”<sup>47</sup>.

In an American study, “40.9% of those surveyed reported a mental or behavioral health problem, including those who reported symptoms of anxiety disorders or depressive disorders (30.9%), those with symptoms of PTSD linked to Covid-19 (26.3%), those declaring to have started or increased their consumption of substances to cope with the stress or emotions linked to Covid-19 (13.3%), and those admitting to have seriously considered suicide during the previous 30 days (10.7%)”<sup>48</sup>.

Canadian researchers expect an increase in suicides to result from the crisis and show a correlation with the unemployment rate. A one percentage point increase in unemployment is associated with a 1% increase in suicides<sup>49</sup>.

46. Анастасия ТАТУЛОВА, «Нам осталось несколько недель»: как коронавирус убивает малый бизнес в России”, *Forbes*, 23/03/2020, <https://www.forbes.ru/karera-i-svoy-biznes/395715-nam-ostalos-neskolko-nedel-kak-koronavirus-ubivaet-maly-biznes-v-rossii>

47. RODRÍGUEZ-REY Rocío, GARRIDO-HERNANSAIZ Helena, COLLADO Silvia, *Psychological Impact and Associated Factors During the Initial Stage of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Among the General Population in Spain*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11/2020, p.1540, [www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01540](http://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01540)

48. Czeisler MÉ, Lane RI, Petrosky E, et al. *Mental Health, Substance Use, and Suicidal Ideation During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, June 24–30, 2020*. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020;69:1049–1057. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6932a1>external icon.

49. McIntyre RS, Lee Y. *Projected increases in suicide in Canada as a consequence of COVID-19*. *Psychiatry Res.* 2020 Aug;290:113104. doi: 10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113104. Epub 2020 May 19. PMID: 32460184; PMCID: PMC7236718.

In October 2020, 2,153 people committed suicide in Japan. Covid-19 claimed 2,087 lives during the same month<sup>50</sup>.

The increase in suicides concerns both rich and developing countries<sup>51</sup>. A Brazilian study warns against “the next pandemic created by the consequences of Covid-19 on mental health: the emergence of mental disorders in vulnerable people is guaranteed. The most common disorders seen after a catastrophe are major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety disorders; increases in alcohol and drug use are also observed. To call this stress catastrophic stress is not hyperbole. It is catastrophic because the impact of Covid-19 on mental health will be due to at least five different effects of the pandemic, each of which is expected independently to have profound effects on mental health. This suggests that the consequences in terms of mental health will be greater than those observed after other disasters”<sup>52</sup>.

In France, an IFOP study for the Jean Jaurès Foundation concluded that 20% of those surveyed have already seriously considered committing suicide, as have 25% of artisan traders and 27% of the unemployed and business owners<sup>53</sup>.



@l\_ami\_jean



Gabrielle Hamilton



@bjornfrantzen

50. <https://www.npa.go.jp/safetylife/seianki/jisatsu/R02/202010sokuhouti.pdf>

51. Mamun MA, Ullah I. COVID-19 suicides in Pakistan, dying off not COVID-19 fear but poverty? - The forthcoming economic challenges for a developing country. *Brain Behav Immun*. 2020 Jul;87:163-166. doi: 10.1016/j.bbi.2020.05.028. Epub 2020 May 11. PMID: 32407859; PMCID: PMC7212955.

52. MARI, Jair de Jesus and OQUENDO, Maria A.. *Mental health consequences of COVID-19: the next global pandemic*. *Trends Psychiatry Psychother*. [online]. 2020, vol.42, n.3 [cited 2020-11-14], pp.219-220. [www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2237-60892020000300219&lng=en&nrm=iso](http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2237-60892020000300219&lng=en&nrm=iso)  
Epub Aug 21, 2020. ISSN 2238-0019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/2237-6089-2020-0081>

53. <https://www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/117599-Rapport.pdf>



# The impact on all players in the food chain



The closure of restaurants is causing considerable damage to suppliers: farmers, cheesemakers, butchers and fishmongers are as affected as vintners, brewers, spirit distillers and producers of soft drinks, as well as micro businesses such as small ceramicists who work for restaurants.

According to alcohol market forecasters IWSR, wine sales are expected to decline by 13% worldwide in 2020<sup>54</sup>. French wine exports plunged by 18% in value between January and August, according to a study by the government agency France AgriMer, while Champagne recorded a decline of 28%<sup>55</sup>.

AB Inbev, one of the largest brewers on the planet, has made public its collapse in earnings. “Net profit attributable to equity holders of AB InBev was 921 million USD in 2Q2020, compared to 2,319 million USD in 2Q2019”<sup>56</sup>.

Once again, the pandemic is deepening pre-existing inequalities. The vast majority of small independent winegrowers are not distributed in supermarkets, and count restaurants among their most important customers. The same goes for natural wines and craft beers, which are heavily dependent on bars and restaurants.

To date, it is difficult to quantify the extent of these losses. In the United States, estimates show that direct-to-consumer markets, as well as spaces such as farmers’ markets, account for more than 12 billion USD in revenue for small producers<sup>57</sup>.

54. [www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/conso-distribution/vin-la-crise-sanitaire-pesera-bien-plus-lourd-que-la-crise-financiere-de-2008-1220666](http://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/conso-distribution/vin-la-crise-sanitaire-pesera-bien-plus-lourd-que-la-crise-financiere-de-2008-1220666)

55. [www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/conso-distribution/chute-historique-des-exportations-de-vins-francais-1258687](http://www.lesechos.fr/industrie-services/conso-distribution/chute-historique-des-exportations-de-vins-francais-1258687)

56. [www.ab-inbev.com/content/dam/abinbev/news-media/press-releases/2020/07/AB%20InBev\\_2Q20%20Press%20Release%20-%20FINAL%20EN.pdf](http://www.ab-inbev.com/content/dam/abinbev/news-media/press-releases/2020/07/AB%20InBev_2Q20%20Press%20Release%20-%20FINAL%20EN.pdf)

57. [www.chlpi.org/actions-for-congress-and-usda-to-support-local-and-regional-food-systems-during-covid-19/](http://www.chlpi.org/actions-for-congress-and-usda-to-support-local-and-regional-food-systems-during-covid-19/)



Farmers who have bet on sustainable development, organic products, and high-end restaurants are particularly affected by the pandemic. The more specialized the supplier, the greater their troubles. During a roundtable discussion at the White House, French Laundry chef Thomas Keller reported on the case of the farmer who produces his butter. “I want to talk about a small farm in Orwell, Vermont - a small farmer named Diane St. Clair, who is by herself with her husband. This is a woman who has eight cows, who gets up every morning, seven days a week, to milk her cows, let them out to pasture, begin to make her butter, bring her cows back at four or five o’clock, milk them again, and put them to bed - every day. I am the sole source of her

revenue. She’s not able to sell her butter anywhere else, so she’s not making butter today”<sup>58</sup>.

Many of these farmers are now turning to specialized start-ups to put them in contact with an urban audience. The financial impact of this new clientele on farmers is not yet quantifiable, but it does exist. In France, *pourdebon.com* recorded growth of + 1400% in March 2020<sup>59</sup>. In the UK, vegbox schemes and online grocers such as Riverford, Farmdrop and Natoora are transporting the best produce from small producers direct to doorsteps around the country. A campaign to save Britain’s farmhouse cheese producers, a small and thriving industry dependent on restaurant trade, was led by Jamie Oliver and Neal’s Yard Dairy who encouraged consumers to “Save British Cheese” by buying boxes direct from the dairy.

Over the past two decades, an entire ecosystem has developed around high-end catering: specialist decorators and designers, ceramicists, cutlers and even professional kitchen manufacturers. Their work is strongly impacted, though it remains difficult to quantify their losses.

Wholesale markets have been impacted in a range of ways by the pandemic. Rungis International, a showroom for the very best food France has to offer, has seen extreme contrasts depending on the sector. There were periods of euphoria from the glut of food purchases in local shops, but also

58. Remarks by President Trump in a Roundtable with Restaurant Executives and Industry Leaders, [www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-roundtable-restaurant-executives-industry-leaders/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-roundtable-restaurant-executives-industry-leaders/)

59. <https://business.lesechos.fr/entrepreneurs/actu/0602979987755-pourdebon-se-mobilise-pour-gerer-l-emballage-des-commandes-336151.php>



phases of sluggishness for companies dependent on commercial catering, hotels, florists and shops and markets affected by official closures.

Even though the differences from sector to sector were sometimes significant, market operators generally showed extreme resilience; all of them bounced back after the first lockdown.”

This macroeconomic resilience of Rungis is linked to the dynamism of the fruit and vegetable sector, which accounts for 70% of minimum volumes, and which has seen sustained demand from retailers since the beginning of the year. Two-thirds of companies in the fruit and vegetable sector recorded increases in activity between January and October 2019 and 2020.

It is also explained by the responsiveness of the market, which has been able to reinvent itself and find new opportunities. As a result, 70% of the companies in the Rungis Market experienced equal or higher activity at the beginning of the year, compared to 2019.

Small wholesalers do not hold press conferences, and do not publish quarterly reports. They talk to chefs and restaurateurs. John Sinpoli, a restaurateur from Toronto, reports their dismay: “My suppliers called me and said, “If more than 30% of you go bankrupt, we’re done. We can’t absorb all the debts. You guys owe us too much money. We can’t write that off”<sup>60</sup>.

60. Corey Mintz, *Is Dining out dead ?*, The Walrus, 21.8.20 <https://thewalrus.ca/is-dining-out-dead> We will meet to eat again, Good Food Guide, 5.20 <https://www.thegoodfoodguide.co.uk/get-inspired/news/well-meet-to-eat-again>



## THREE QUESTIONS FOR STÉPHANE LAYANI,

**CEO of SEMMARIS, operator of  
Rungis International Market, the  
world's largest wholesale market**



### **How has Semmaris assisted its wholesalers during the pandemic?**

As a critical operator, Rungis International Market safeguards the food supply of 18 million French consumers. Our actions have been rolled out in various ways. From the start of the epidemic we put in place all the necessary measures to ensure we could maintain operations, for both goods and people. Hygiene measures have been strengthened throughout the duration of the crisis. We have also taken financial measures and Semmaris has set up a solidarity fund of 4 million euros to help companies in difficulty. I am proud to be able to announce that as a result of this measure, the Market has so far not recorded the liquidation of a single business. Beyond financial considerations, we have managed problems one by one on a daily basis and in direct contact with the government, allowing stock to be disposed of, maintaining traditional market trading, and ensuring the best working conditions.

### **Do you see any changes and major trends for Rungis?**

We have seen something that I would call a "return to basics". Consumers are more likely to turn to quality, seasonal, French or local products. Solidarity, but also "positive patriotism", are important values in these circumstances. We have asked consumers to continue buying from their shops and restaurants via "take-out" and "delivery".

### **What are your plans for 2021?**

Rungis will accelerate its digitization. E-commerce accounted for 2% of B2B and 9% of B2C, up 50% and 25% respectively. Companies will therefore develop e-commerce sites and digital supply applications, with "marketplaces" (Veepee, Deliveroo, etc.) and serve "pure player" customers, i.e. customers who sell only on the Internet (e.g. Quitoque, Greenweez, Epicery and others). Some of these "pure players" are now also entering the Market. I'm thinking of Califrais, a startup from our incubator, Fraîche Family or Beaugrain.

Within the Market, our priorities are customer experience, improving the quality of life at work and our environmental policy. The latter should become a real driver of the transition to sustainable food, aiming for carbon neutrality and increasing the role of leveraging the socio-economic development of the territory.

In terms of the pandemic, we will of course continue the strategies put in place in 2020. Health and safety remains a priority for our employees, our partners and our customers. Financial support is also a priority, because solidarity is a long-term proposal. That's why I've renewed the 4 million euro solidarity fund for 2021. Finally, we're going to maintain our investment program for the Market, so we can look forward to the end of the crisis.



# Guides, rankings, and culinary events: canceled

In May 2020, the *British Good Food Guide* sent a message to its readers. “We’ll meet (to eat) again,” it promised. “As it approaches its 70th birthday, *The Good Food Guide* wants more than ever to shine a light on the incredible food scene in the UK and the Channel Islands. Over the past few weeks, however, it has become clear that a print edition would not be able to do this fairly or accurately. The editors have therefore taken the difficult decision not to publish the 2021 guide in September”<sup>61</sup>.

In Australia, another *Good Food Guide*, not affiliated with its British counterpart, has removed the ratings for 2020. Instead of rankings, the group will publish a magazine celebrating 200 restaurants<sup>62</sup>.

The *50 Best* rankings have been canceled, as have all large and small events and most culinary competitions, from Taste festivals to the international hospitality expo Sirha, from France’s *Cuillère d’Or* to San Francisco’s Fancy Food Show, from the *GQ Russia* Gala, which rewards the most recent and interesting Russian restaurants, to

the new Indian guide *Culinary Culture*, which was scheduled to launch in autumn 2020<sup>63</sup>.

While canceling events is expected given our “new normal”, guides aren’t in quite the same position. Although the first lockdown was followed by a publishing hiatus, most resumed publication in October and November and held virtual awards ceremonies. In some countries, it’s astonishing how food guide inspectors have managed to reward restaurants which have been closed or limited to takeaway sales for months. In Brazil, for example, the *Michelin Guide* awarded two stars to Alex Atala’s restaurant, which according to its Instagram account had been closed for seven months. New two-star entry Ryo Gastronomia alternated periods of closure with sushi boxes to click & collect.

At *La Liste*, we have decided not to settle for a mere update of our last edition. We wish, through our special awards, to put the spotlight on the major trends within the restaurant industry which have been reinforced or revealed by the Covid crisis.

61. *We will meet to eat again*, Good Food Guide, 5.20  
<https://www.thegoodfoodguide.co.uk/get-inspired/news/we-will-meet-to-eat-again>

62. Ardyn BERNOTH, Look out for the Good Food Guide 20, 29.6.20 <https://www.goodfood.com.au/eat-out/news/x-20200619-h1ov8s>

63. <https://www.finedininglovers.com/article/new-rival-guide-india>



## PART 2

CHANGE,  
RESILIENCE  
AND NEW IDEAS:  
TURNING  
POINT OR THE  
BIRTH OF A  
MOVEMENT?

community spirit

resilience

conflict







# Fresh paint, fresh approach

## DESTINATION DINING IS AT A STANDSTILL AND RESTAURANTS NEED TO GET CLOSER TO THEIR LOCAL CUSTOMER BASE

Often located in unusual places, the “destination restaurant” has an experiential or conceptual gastronomic promise. To sit there and taste the chef’s “vision”, wealthy clientele must cross faraway lands, board planes and sleep at hotels.

This particular niche of high-end gastronomy would not survive without constant publicity. It must maintain an ongoing “buzz” to remain in the spotlight and relies above all on appearing in guides and on Netflix shows, along with the attention of social media influencers and building up audiences on Facebook and Instagram.

If international tourism and business travel does not resume, will these establishments have a future? Local clientele, long neglected by these chefs, may not come. To convince them, it will probably be necessary to change the approach, give up the tasting menus and with them the ritual of telling the story of each dish to validate the chef’s creativity.

This is the case for Gaggan Anand in Bangkok, whose clientele disappeared overnight. Before the pandemic, 80% of his tables were occupied by foreigners. A new approach became necessary when Thailand chose to impose a two-week quarantine on visitors. Anand reduced prices by 40%, offering a fifty dollar menu and shortening his “Chef’s Table Experience” to 90 minutes, because, he says, “The locals have less patience. It attracted<sup>1</sup> people who thought we were inaccessible.” Currently Gaggan offers dishes between 7 and 20 euros.

In order to attract Danish customers, René Redzepi of Noma temporarily transformed his restaurant into a wine and burger bar. The idea was a success and led to Popl, a permanent burger joint.

Other chefs have opted for more conventional offerings, such as the Cuatromanos Burger by Paco Roncero and Ramon Freixa<sup>2</sup> for Uber Eats. Freixa had already lent his name to McDonald’s campaigns in Spain in 2016 and China in 2017.



01. Sheila Marikar, The fed-up Chef, New York Times, 22.10.2020

02. <https://www.ubereats.com/es-en/madrid/food-delivery/cuatromanos-burger-by-paco-roncero-y-ramon-freixa/ReOOUcdSQi-WcVM21znYZg>

Tekuna Gachechiladze, from the Georgian restaurant Cafe Littera in Tbilisi, introduced simplified and less expensive menus to attract local diners. “This year has shown me that the press, tourists and journalists are certainly very important, but so are our fellow citizens. [It is important] to please them, because if you only position yourself for foreign customers and tourists, you will be empty. You have to do something for your own people,”<sup>3</sup> she told a food news site.

The critic Ignacio Medina made the same observation in an interview with the Peruvian daily *La Repubblica* in May 2020. “We were living a lie and the time has come to look it in the face. Lima’s luxury restaurants are no longer welcoming the tourists who accounted for 97% of their turnover, so they will have to work for locals. And how are they going to do it? Will they keep rates close to 200 USD in a shrinking market? Virgilio Martinez, chef-patron of Central in Lima, told me, ‘It’s clearly a bubble and the day it bursts, it’s going to be bad. Historically, restaurants have appeared along with the middle classes. In Peru, we are in the process of creating the first middle class[...]. But during this process, tourism has helped to transform the kitchen into a mirage. We must find options for the average consumer’”<sup>4</sup>.

Chef Victor Liong from the restaurant Lee Ho Fok in Melbourne, Australia has taken a completely different approach. Known for his fusion-influenced “Chinese New Style” cooking, the spirit of his establishment was seen as casual: a drink at the bar, a snack, a meal...a variety of options according to the customer’s needs. Faced with the

pandemic, Liong has reassessed his concept by creating a tasting menu starting at 160 USD per person, therefore becoming less accessible than before. Liong says: “The mechanics of a tasting menu guarantee an income that we can plan for[...]. I never wanted to create this sort of restaurant, but I feel that the previous model wasn’t a winning model.”

Liong’s opinion is shared by many chefs. The single menu is gradually becoming established in the high-end market. The work and purchasing can be planned in advance, and it’s easier to manage with fewer employees.

## CHANGES IN EATING HABITS

“I’ve stir-fried Sichuan-style cumin lamb, made slow-roasted pernil asado, fired up pots of oil for a farmers’-market fritto misto; I spent the summer juicing limes and slicing fish for a nonstop parade of tart, light-as-air ceviches; I’ve made hundreds of dishes for hundreds of meals. And I am so bored. I am so tired. In theory, I love to cook. But I am so, so sick of cooking”<sup>5</sup>.

That’s food writer Helen Rosner writing in *The New Yorker*. Tejal Rao, the *New York Times* critic, also complains: “I don’t think I’m supposed to admit this here in the Food section, but when I think about cooking, I’m filled with dread”<sup>6</sup>. These two “professional eaters” were probably used to seeing cooking as a fun activity rather than a daily necessity. Everyone has cooked at home during the lockdowns, some with pleasure, others with some annoyance. It appears that Americans are

03. <https://www.finedininglovers.com/article/tekuna-gachechiladze-georgia>

04. Emilio CAMACHO, Ignacio MEDINA: *En el negocio de los restaurantes hemos vivido una mentira y ahora es el momento de afrontarla*, La República, 24/05/2020, <https://larepublica.pe/domingo/2020/05/24/coronavirus-en-peru-ignacio-medina-analiza-la-situacion-de-la-cocina-peruana-frente-a-la-covid-19/>

05. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/kitchen-notes/the-joylessness-of-cooking>

06. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/10/dining/burnout-thanksgiving-holiday-cooking.html>



tired of cooking at home and are now buying more readymade food. Sales of meal kits and prepared foods are on the rise, as well as take-out and restaurant delivery orders. For prepared foods, there was an increase of 1.6% compared to the same period last year. This might not seem a high figure at first glance, but it takes into account the reduced demand from restaurants, hospitals and schools<sup>7</sup>.

In Europe, things seem more complicated. According to some Italian researchers, “The lockdown seems to have influenced the ability to control the relationship with food. Isolation, lack of stimuli, boredom and changing food routines had effects on 86% of respondents who reported that they

were unable to sufficiently control their diet. We could suppose that there was a variation of caloric intake of each meal due to the quantity and the quality of food consumed daily in the quarantine period, and a major number of highly elaborated homemade foods and of superior caloric content.”<sup>8</sup>

“The perception of weight gain was observed in 48.6% of the population; 3.3% of smokers decided to quit[...], the population group aged 18 to 30 was more likely to be on the Mediterranean diet than the younger and older; 15% of respondents turned to organic products or bought directly from farmers and market gardeners, particularly in northern and central Italy, where BMI values were lower”<sup>9</sup>.

07. <https://qz.com/1934611/tyson-foods-earnings-show-how-tired-americans-are-of-cooking/>

08. DI RENZO L., GUALTIERI P., CINELLI G., BIGIONI G., SOLDATI L., ATTINA A., BIANCO F.F., CAPARELLO G., CAMODECA V., CARRANO E., et al. *Psychological Aspects and Eating Habits during COVID-19 Home Confinement: Results of EHLC-COVID-19 Italian Online Survey*. *Nutrients*. 2020;12:2152. doi: 10.3390/nu12072152.

09. DI RENZO, L., GUALTIERI, P., PIVARI, F. et al. *Eating habits and lifestyle changes during COVID-19 lockdown: an Italian survey*. *J Transl Med* 18, 229 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12967-020-02399-5>  
<https://translational-medicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12967-020-02399-5>



These same researchers also advise against industrial food: “We know that there are no foods or natural remedies that can prevent COVID-19 infections; nevertheless, an anti-inflammatory diet could be useful to strengthen the immune system and contrast inflammatory cascade and oxidative stress. Butler et al. suggested that the type of diet can influence both the host’s response and the pathogen’s virulence. In particular, there could be a correlation between the consumption of highly palatable foods, like ultra-processed ones, and an impairment of the temporal coordination of the innate and adaptive immunity. Such impairment has been shown to increase the probability of infection by COVID-19, as well as of a more severe clinical case”<sup>10</sup>.

A Polish study concludes “The percentage of people snacking between meals increased by 5.1% during lockdown. Eggs, potatoes, sweets, canned meat and alcohol were consumed more frequently, but it was the opposite with fast food products, instant soups and energy drinks. A significant decrease in consumption of the following products was observed: baked goods, red meat, fast food, instant soups, sugary drinks and energy drinks. Conversely, the number of daily servings of sweets and canned meat has increased considerably”<sup>11</sup>.

According to IFOP, the French gained an average of 2.5 kilograms during the first lockdown period<sup>12</sup>.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND LOCKDOWN

At the start, Instagram cuisine could be summed up in the art of *plating*, the display of visually spectacular dishes, which often looked much better than they tasted. The chefs know all about this. One example is Switzerland’s Didier de Courten, who told RTS in 2020: “It doesn’t make any sense. To win a third star, the cooking becomes all about the visuals. I call it ‘Instagram cuisine’. All that matters is how it looks. We work with tweezers for plating and even with magnifying glasses. But it’s us, the chefs, who are doing this. We’re completely crazy”<sup>13</sup>.

For many weeks, chefs’ direct relationship with their customers disappeared, giving way to cooking classes, tutorials and recipes on Instagram. Their followers, who once sat waiting for elaborately constructed creations, might now make a bowl of pasta while watching the chef. In times of crisis, the audience is looking for simple advice, and all of it *live*!

Massimo Bottura’s Instagram has hundreds of thousands of followers thanks to his series *Kitchen Quarantine*. Loved by media across the world, his social media style has been covered in *The New Yorker*, *Vogue*, *GQ*, *Fine Dining Lovers*, *Bon Appetit*, *La Repubblica*, *Thai Tatler* and even New Zealand’s *Trade and Enterprise*, among many others<sup>14</sup>.

10. DI RENZO L., GUALTIERI P., CINELLI G., BIGIONI G., SOLDATI L., ATTINA A., BIANCO F.F., CAPARELLO G., CAMODECA V., CARRANO E., et al. *Psychological Aspects and Eating Habits during COVID-19 Home Confinement: Results of EHLC-COVID-19 Italian Online Survey*. *Nutrients*. 2020;12:2152. doi: 10.3390/nu12072152.

11. BŁASZCZYK-BĘBENEK E., JAGIELSKI P., BOLESŁAWSKA I., JAGIELSKA A., NITSCH-OSUCH A., KAWALEC P. *Nutrition Behaviors in Polish Adults before and during COVID-19 Lockdown*. *Nutrients*. 2020 Oct 10;12(10):3084. doi: 10.3390/nu12103084. PMID: 33050404; PMCID: PMC7601522.

12. [www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/analyse\\_ifop\\_Darwin\\_FK\\_2020\\_05.06.pdf](http://www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/analyse_ifop_Darwin_FK_2020_05.06.pdf)

13. RTS, “La troisième étoile? Une cuisine d’Instagram”, concède Didier de Courten  
<https://www.rts.ch/info/regions/valais/11424969-la-troisieme-etoile-une-cuisine-dinstagram-concede-didier-de-courten.html>

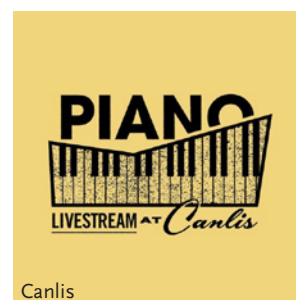
14. <https://www.nzte.govt.nz/blog/new-zealand-kitchen-quarantine-by-massimo-bottura>

In Seattle, the restaurant Canlis, one of the city's prestigious addresses, seems to be undergoing a transformation into a small media production company. After opening a drive-in burger joint, a bagel shed, a home delivery service, a bingo night, a drive-in cinema and a crab shack, the Canlis brothers have created their "Canlis Community College" offering six weeks of online courses. Among them are cooking and sommelier classes but also sessions on the history and culture of Seattle, for which the registration fee is 25 USD.

In France, Cyril Lignac, who has 2.5 million followers, and Simone Zanoni delight the spectators with tutorials and recipes. Both share relatively simple and affordable cooking content. Christophe Hays, chef of La Maison d'à Côté in Montlivaut, also posts tutorials on Instagram and Facebook, which can be followed while cooking with ingredients delivered in his weekly boxes.



Canlis



Canlis

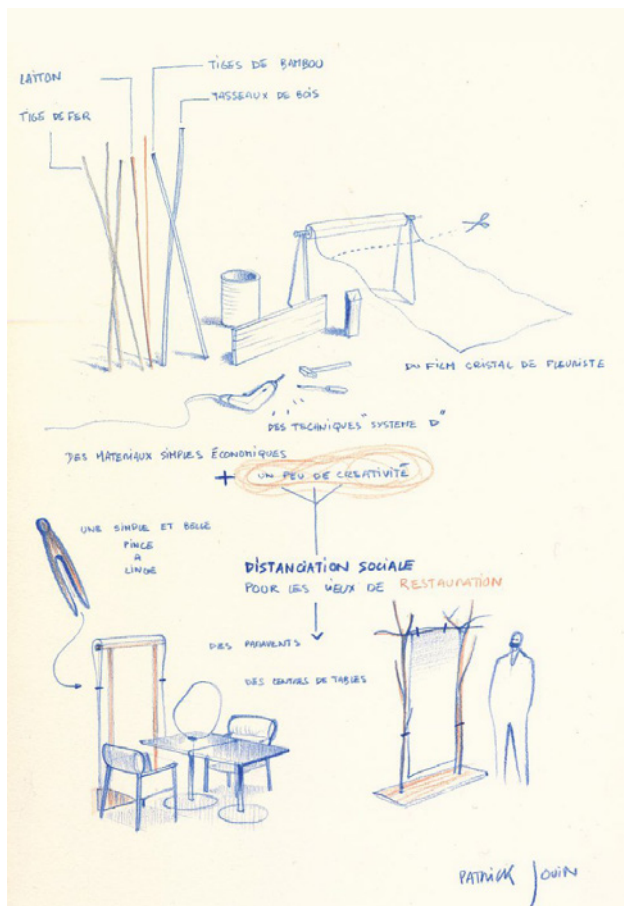


Charlie, Alexa, Massimo &amp; Lara Bottura

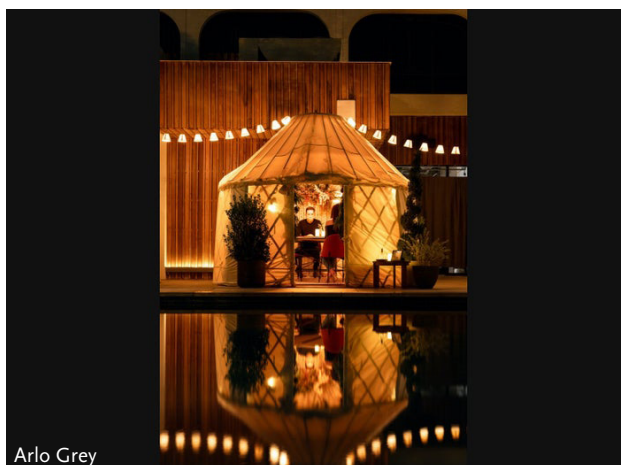


Simone &amp; Greta Zanoni





Alain Ducasse et Patrick Jouin





# Reopening with new models and concepts

Since the beginning of the pandemic, restaurateurs have faced many challenges and these have been mostly announced at the last minute. The cycle of lockdown, re-opening and then being forced to close again has demanded an immense capacity to adapt under pressure. Covid “safe” hygiene regulations are constantly being revised according to sometimes contradictory recommendations.

## EFFORTS TO CREATE SAFE RESTAURANTS

Among the measures advocated during the first months of the pandemic, plexiglass barriers appeared to be a solution to keep customers separate while protecting them. It quickly became apparent that these were insufficient, because if air circulates, so does the virus.

Alain Ducasse was among the first to try to design a “safe” restaurant. With Patrick Jouin, his long-time designer, and a team of medical experts, their airflow system transforms the almost 100-year-old bistro Allard in Paris<sup>15</sup>. Two vents are fixed to each table, the first sucking the ambient air and the second renewing the air, as well as HEPA filters blocking any particle above 0.3 micron<sup>16</sup>. Glass barriers protect customers from their neighbours. A similar device was designed for schools by Frank Helleis of the Max Planck Institute in Mainz, Germany<sup>17</sup>.

Other methods include filtering air to a near-medical standard and the use of Far-UVC lights in the kitchen and dining room. A team of researchers at Columbia University in the United States concluded that germicidal ultraviolet light, usually at 254 nm, is effective in limiting the spread of the

15. <https://www.leparisien.fr/paris-75/alain-ducasse-invente-le-barrage-anti-covid-dans-l-un-de-ses-restaurants-parisiens-11-06-2020-8334045.php>

16. <https://www.parismatch.com/Vivre/Gastronomie/Allard-revolutionne-son-systeme-d-aeration-1692230>

17. <https://www.mpg.de/15989774/corona-lueftung-anlage-fragen>



virus, but can also pose a danger when applied directly to the skin or eyes. On the other hand, a remote source of UVC light (207-222 nm) effectively kills pathogens without harming exposed human tissue<sup>18</sup>. UVC lights are used in restaurants such as Ittoryu Gozu<sup>19</sup> and Atelier Crenn in San Francisco<sup>20</sup>.

Another approach, this one resolutely low-tech, is to provide an isolated space for the diners. In Amsterdam, for example, plant-based restaurant Mediamatic Eten set up mini greenhouses for customers to sit in<sup>21</sup>. In New York, Daniel Boulud erected small tents in front of his restaurant on East 65th Street. During the winter, he serves warming dishes like tartiflette and truffle soup. American Express has also put up yurt villages in front of selected restaurants in 13 US cities. Arlo Grey in Austin, Bywater American Bistro in New Orleans, Canlis in Seattle, The Charter Oak in Napa Valley, Crown Shy and Fairfax in Manhattan, The Grey in Savannah, Swift and Sons in Chicago, Zahav in Philadelphia, etc.<sup>22</sup>. Such efforts cost between 1800 to 2500 USD per week for the restaurateurs<sup>23</sup>. Experts recommend using these yurts within households, but there should still be air conditioning in case someone from outside the household is present<sup>24</sup>.

18. BUONANNO, M., WELCH, D., SHURYAK, I. *et al.* Far-UVC light (222 nm) efficiently and safely inactivates airborne human coronaviruses. *Sci Rep* 10, 10285 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-67211-2>

19. <https://hospitalitytech.com/ittoryu-gozu-launch-uv-irradiation-sanitizing-system-dining-room>

20. <https://www.ateliercrenn.com/safety/>

21. <https://mediamatic.stager.nl/Serres%20S%C3%A9par%C3%A9es/tickets>

22. <https://about.americanexpress.com/all-news/news-details/2020/American-Express-and-Resy-Introduce-New-At-Home-and-Outdoor-Dining-Experiences-for-Card-Members/default.aspx>

23. WERNAU, Julie, *Should I Eat in an Igloo? How to Navigate Restaurants' Outside Dining This Winter*, Wall Street Journal, 21.11.20

24. *idem*.

## FLEXIBILITY AND PIVOTING

Restaurateurs have experimented with many different solutions to try to compensate for closures and to cover their fixed costs.

Globally, takeaway shops were permitted to open during lockdown and deliveries could continue. With varying success and in different ways, many chefs have tried to keep their business going by exploring the takeaway route. Others have radically transformed their offerings by replacing their usual dishes with burgers or sushi.

In Asia, the major delivery groups have introduced several new concepts. The Meituan Group, for example, used self-driving vehicles in Beijing to deliver meals to contactless docking stations. The same company supplies cardboard containers that customers use as droplet shields when eating in the workplace. In Shanghai, Ele.me used a fleet of drones to deliver to people in quarantine<sup>25</sup>.

Overall, the restaurant industry has explored the following options:

- Delivery, direct or in partnership with Deliveroo, Uber Eats, Grub Hub or Meituan. The restaurant ships its dishes in a catchment area defined by distance and delivery time, usually between ten and thirty minutes.
- The Drive-In, more widespread in rural areas, whereas takeaway or click and collect are more urban, for this the customer collects freshly cooked food and takes it home or to their workplace.
- The meal kit or DIY kit: containing raw produce,

chosen by the chef but not cooked. In the United States, the online market Goldbelly offers both chefs' dishes and their "finish at home" meal kits. Among the most original is a goat shoulder for six from Stephanie Izard's Girl & The Goat in Chicago<sup>26</sup>. In New York, the Korean Steakhouse Cote sells its famous Ribeye Steaks (169 USD for two with pickled Daikon<sup>27</sup>). Thomas Keller sells lamb meat direct from shepherd Keith Martin's farm<sup>28</sup>. In the UK, new businesses such as Dishpatch and Restokit are delivering meal kits from desirable chefs including Angela Hartnett, José Pizarro and Nieves Barragán around the country, alleviating restaurants from the stress of orders, technology, packing and delivery.

- The home chef: private dining jobs soared during lockdown. Even the very famous chefs such as Christophe Bacqué cooked their signature dishes in private homes.
- The fine produce market: whose principle is to connect producers, often local and high quality, with the restaurant's clientele. Within days of the first lockdown, Tomos Parry converted his London restaurant Brat into a "farm, grill and wine shop". Amandine Chaignot has turned her Pouliche restaurant into a farmers' market. During the second lockdown, the Moorcock Inn in West Yorkshire in the UK sold beautiful ceramics, artisan beers, natural wines, cheeses, Christmas puddings, sourdough breads, milk, butter, cold-smoked brook trout, homemade bacon and freshly roasted coffee from Darkwoods.
- Fast food, which many chefs are using to sell more affordable meals, from sushi to burgers,

25. Jane CAI, Holly CHIK, *Coronavirus: How China's army of food delivery drivers helped keep country going during outbreak*, South China Morning Post 07/04/2020 - <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3078749/coronavirus-how-chinas-army-food-delivery-drivers-helped-keep>

26. <https://www.goldbelly.com/girl-and-the-goat/goat-shoulder-kit-for-6>

27. <https://www.goldbelly.com/cote-korean-steakhouse/dry-aged-ribeyes?ref=merchant>

28. <https://www.goldbelly.com/pure-bred-lamb-by-chef-thomas-keller>





Food Truck Michel par AM



L'Étage par Olivier Belin



Paul Pairet



Mamma Bains par Sat Bains



Date by Tate



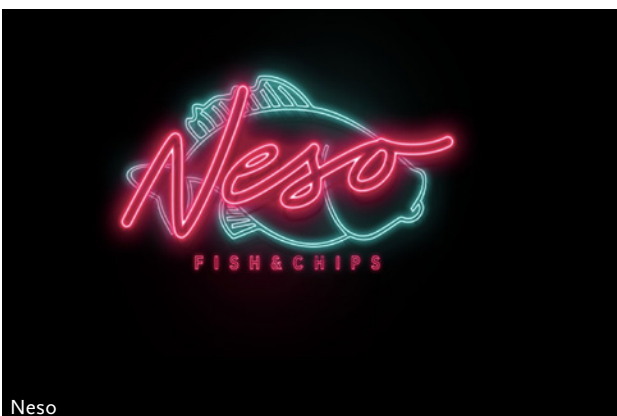
Hiša Franko



Frog by Adam Handling



Christophe Bacqué



Neso



Masa Sushi ©Gary He

or even operating a food truck, as René Redzepi in Copenhagen and Alexandre Mazzia in Copenhagen both have.

- Ancillary trade: depending on local regulations, restaurants have turned into bakeries or outlets selling farm products. Others have offered products from their suppliers of crockery, ceramicists or glassmakers.
- Merchandising and derivatives: some restaurants are selling T-shirts, hats, mugs or tote bags bearing their logos<sup>29</sup>.

The delivery and takeaway market has evolved into something quite impressive and unexpected. Among the French restaurants, some have bet everything on quality, like Villa Madie in Cassis or La Table d'Olivier Nasti in Kayersberg. Olivier Nasti, for example did a remarkable chicken liver cake with crayfish and truffle sauce. Leg of lamb, candied lemon, eggplant caviar and polenta are now available at his "Drive-In". Bresse chicken with vin jaune and veal shank casserole are available for delivery, along with wine. His restaurant in Kayersberg, as well as L'Auberge Frankenbourg, also in Alsace, have reached neighbouring towns by setting up outlets in other shops and restaurants. This works well logistically, but also technically as the food can be finished to order on site. In Paris, Mathieu Pacaud of Apicius was the first to offer high-quality delivery for good customers. Akrame Benallal also rallied quickly to create "Akrame at home".

In Singapore, chef Julien Royer's Odette restaurant served classic French dishes: *paté en croute*, Bresse chicken in vin jaune with rice and truffle, followed

by a blancmange or yuzu tart. In Los Angeles, the n/naka restaurant had a 65 USD menu with smoked yellowtail, raw scallop, lobster with shishito peppers, cured pork belly, baek kimchi, silken tofu, almond cake and panna cotta with sake.

In the UK, chef Adam Handling and his delivery department "Hame" have developed a solid reputation in a short time. His menu «Who are you trying to impress?» includes sourdough bread, butter, wagyu tartare and caviar, his signature dish Lobster wagyu, beef Wellington, mashed potatoes, green vegetables, roasted carrots, tarte tatin, Tunworth truffled cheese and a bottle of house English sparkling wine (305 pounds)<sup>30</sup>. Hame was among the winners of the BBC Good Food's best meal kits test with a score of 10/10<sup>31</sup>.



29. To see: <https://london.eater.com/21399037/best-london-restaurant-merch-t-shirt-tote-bag>  
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/can-t-shirt-sales-save-americas-restaurants-11585663442>  
<https://www.esquire.com/uk/style/fashion/a31899321/restaurant-t-shirts-bao-st-john-merchandise-vintage/>  
<https://www.broadsheet.com.au/national/fashion/article/these-new-artist-designed-attica-tees-are-now-available-buy>

30. <https://www.adamhandling.co.uk/hame/>

31. <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/review/best-restaurant-meal-kits>





When it came to Christmas and New Year, the delivery menus of well-known chefs such as Simon Rogan of L'Enclume, Jason Atherton of Pollen Street Social, Chris and Jeff Galvin and Lisa Goodwin-Allen of Northcote Manor sold out in advance. In January 2021, Clare Smyth announced «Core at Home», a £175- a head meal kit.

Some of the most expensive kits are Masa's Sushi Boxes in New York, which cost up to 800 USD<sup>33</sup>, or the cheesesteak at Barclay Prime restaurant in Philadelphia. Available for 130 USD, this cheesesteak of wagyu fillet, foie gras, onions and truffle cheese cream is served in a golden box and comes with half a bottle of champagne<sup>34</sup>.

In Spain, David “Dabiz” Munoz, the chef of the DiverXO restaurant, bet on delivery from the first lockdown. Since then, he has developed a small “fast casual” empire, first under the GoXO brand in Madrid and then Barcelona. After cooking live on Instagram and doubling his number of followers to nearly 1.2 million, he finds energy and creativity for his home delivery in partnership with food delivery app Glovo. Its “Mumbai” lasagne is all the rage and the kitchen of its second streetXo restaurant is not big enough to satisfy demand, neither is that of the hotel which is home to his high-end restaurant. And since December, his food truck has been parked in front of the department store El Corte Inglés in Madrid, attracting crowds after his fusion hotdogs<sup>32</sup>. Of all the Spanish chefs doing delivery, he seems to be doing it best.

As supermarkets and food shops have remained open, some chefs have been tempted down this avenue. That's why Guy Savoy, four-time winner of La Liste, transformed his Parisian restaurant Chiberta into a shop and delicatessen offering wines, champagnes, desserts, cheeses, oysters, caviar, its iconic truffled artichoke soup, *Champvallion lamb*, *blanquette de veau*, and roast chicken *Culoiseau* with root vegetables in truffle sauce.

But delivery is not a universal solution. Chefs have little experience of remote sales as their menus are usually consumed to order and on site. Even if some of them are doing well, thanks in part to the image of the “gastronomic dream” they embody, they clash with the traditional players in the sector such as pizza and burgers as well as delicatessens and independent food shops, themselves heavily

32. See, for example: <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/cata-mayor/restaurantes/20201103/goxo-david-munoz-barcelona-delivery-comida-domicilio-8187000>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=la1A1PZJ1RI>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-bGmlsMc8c>, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_GIRIFnUfNo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GIRIFnUfNo);

33. <https://www.exploretock.com/masa>

34. Annie GASPARGO, *Diners Want More Meals to Go During Coronavirus. Chefs Are Feeling Boxed In*, Wall Street Journal, 09/10/2020, [www.wsj.com/articles/diners-want-more-meals-to-go-during-coronavirus-chefs-are-feeling-boxed-in-11602259217](https://www.wsj.com/articles/diners-want-more-meals-to-go-during-coronavirus-chefs-are-feeling-boxed-in-11602259217).



affected by the Covid-19 crisis. To date, many reputable restaurants are struggling to achieve the high standards of traditional delis which have prepared meals to be eaten at home for decades.

But the meal kit stands apart from grocers, butchers, fishmongers, and other online platforms, because the client already believes in it as a professional proposition. How can a chef add value? In Werfen, Austria, the Obauer brothers have found a solution which genuinely adds value, and they are cooking online with their customers by video conference<sup>35</sup>. In the UK, Jeff Galvin makes a video tutorial to go with each «La Chapelle at Home» delivery.

In general, the prices of takeaways or drive-in are lower than the price the customer is willing to pay at the restaurant.

### PACKAGING LEARNS FROM THE LUXURY MARKET

While European chefs were studying the possibilities of takeaways, North American chefs, already more *au fait* with delivery because of the *doggy bag* tradition, were working to redesign their packaging. In New York, Garry Kanfer of Kissaki, an omakase restaurant, says he spent at least 70,000 USD on packaging. Before the pandemic, customers were ordering sushi and nigiri menus from 140 USD to 180 USD. His new challenge was to find the best way of packing the fish. Kanfer, who says he's been inspired by the packaging of shoes and luxury bags, has been remarkably successful with media coverage: his new boxes are mentioned in *Forbes*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Post*, *Eater* and *Fox*<sup>36</sup>.

### NEW DELIVERY METHODS

Anyone who has ordered food online knows the problems. The simplest dishes can arrive in a deplorable state. Let's start with French fries. Locked in their bag as if in a sauna, they arrive soft, cooked for a second time by the inevitable steam. For years, multinationals have been working to solve this problem<sup>37</sup>. In Idaho, Lamb Weston's food scientists recommend using a paste that mixes several starchy foods - potatoes and rice - to keep the fries crisp. Other companies such as Novolex are banking on new packaging designed to avoid this sauna effect<sup>38</sup>. The specific case of French fries is revealing: a world remains to be explored to improve the quality of deliveries.

35. <https://www.sn.at/salzburg/wirtschaft/wie-spitzenkoch-rudi-obauer-unsere-kueche-zum-forum-fuer-geniesser-macht-96718408>

36. *Ibid.*

37. Rachel Adams, *Soggy in 5 Minutes. This Company Wants to Keep It Crispy for 60*, New York Times, 29/06/2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/29/business/french-fries-delivery.html>

38. <https://thespoon.tech/new-food-containers-promise-to-keep-french-fries-warm-and-crispy/>



Manu Buffara



Daniel Boulud



Les chefs avec les soignants



Daniel Humm



Christophe Hay



Guillaume Gomez

# Is political activism at the heart of the solution?

## THE EARLY PUSH TO ACTIVISM

The first lockdown gave rise to unprecedented community campaigns. We saw solidarity with chefs, but also across society, and especially for health professionals. Guillaume Gomez, head chef at the Elysée Palace, and journalist Stephane Méjanès launched “Chefs for Caregivers”. Other initiatives quickly emerged, including “Let’s eat, caregivers” (launched by LVMH from an idea by chef Arnaud Donckele<sup>39</sup>). Julien Dumas, Manon Fleury, Laurent Pichareaux have all cooked for hospitals, and Patrick Gauthier put himself at the service of the healthcare staff of the Sens Hospital Centre, to name but a few.

In Italy, chefs Carlo Cracco and Enrico Cerea have cooked for hospitals in Milan and Bergamo. In the United Kingdom, chefs in the capital got together

39. [www.lvmh.fr/actualites-documents/actualites/a-table-les-soignants-les-chefs-francais-invitent-le-personnel-hospitalier-au-restaurant-pour-les-remercier-de-leur-engagement-pendant-la-crise/](http://www.lvmh.fr/actualites-documents/actualites/a-table-les-soignants-les-chefs-francais-invitent-le-personnel-hospitalier-au-restaurant-pour-les-remercier-de-leur-engagement-pendant-la-crise/)

to feed frontline medical staff under the banner FeedNHS which delivered over 5,000 meals a day during the first lockdown. In Bristol Josh Eggleton of the Pony and Trap has led a movement to feed the homeless and most vulnerable restaurant quality meals via the Cheers Drive charity. In Wales, chef James Sommerin delivered food to NHS staff<sup>40</sup>. Unfortunately, he had to close his restaurant soon after. When the British government announced it would not provide meals for vulnerable children during school holidays, the footballer Marcus Rashford led a campaign to feed them and thousands of cafés, chip shops, and high-end restaurants offered to feed children for free. In Spain, chef José Antonio Campoviejo of the restaurant El Corral del Indianu in Asturias has fed many families in need<sup>41</sup>.

In Germany, Chef Maximilian Strohe from Berlin's Tulus Lotrek brought together 100 chefs to feed doctors, nurses, retail workers and firefighters. In New York, in just six weeks, the World Central

Kitchen from Bloomberg Philanthropies and chef José Andrés served more than one million meals to 30,000 healthcare employees. The initiative was funded by a 6 million USD donation from Michael Bloomberg. More than 30 restaurants, caterers and food trucks were paid to serve meals to doctors, nurses, police officers, janitors, and service personnel<sup>42</sup>.

Also in New York, the chefs Eric Ripert and Daniel Humm cooked for the homeless. Daniel Boulud and SL Green, Manhattan's largest office owner, launched Food1st, a non-profit foundation that delivers thousands of meals a day to first responders and medical staff, as well as to elderly people and families who are food insecure.

It's impossible to mention all the examples of this type of generosity and support across the world. In every country, vast numbers of chefs offered their services to hospitals spontaneously - without informing the press.



Les chefs avec les soignants

40. [www.walesonline.co.uk/whats-on/food-drink-news/nhs-coronavirus-feed-health-sommerin-18100236](http://www.walesonline.co.uk/whats-on/food-drink-news/nhs-coronavirus-feed-health-sommerin-18100236)

41. [fusionasturias.com/otras-secciones/iniciativas/jose-antonio-campoviejo-nunca-su-estrella-brillo-tanto.htm](http://fusionasturias.com/otras-secciones/iniciativas/jose-antonio-campoviejo-nunca-su-estrella-brillo-tanto.htm)

42. <https://www.bloomberg.org/press/releases/bloomberg-philanthropies-and-world-central-kitchen-have-served-over-one-million-meals-to-frontline-workers-at-16-public-hospitals-in-new-york-city-caring-for-covid-19-patients/>



# Donate Now to the Food and Beverage Industry Relief Fund

JamesBeard  
Foundation

## SOLIDARITY AMONG CHEFS

All over the world, restaurants have approached their most loyal customers and other food lovers to help them through the crisis financially. Some have sold vouchers, auctioned prestigious bottles, or organized live chats with their customers. These initiatives are sometimes independent, such as the New York restaurant Atomix and its sister bar Atoboy which created the Atomix and Atoboy Restaurant Fund. Elsewhere there are collective efforts such as United We Dine in Hong Kong, bringing together media and industry professionals to encourage diners to return to restaurants through a variety of incentives and bonuses.

In order to survive during periods of closure, and be able to refund reservations in advance and retain staff, restaurants everywhere have also devised initiatives to survive and find cash flow, such as selling gift cards or T-shirts, or holding auctions. For example, chef David Kinch's Californian restaurant Manresa sold the most valuable bottles from his cellar to Manresa regulars and rare wine collectors<sup>43</sup>.

In Europe, part of the cellar of Enoteca Pinchiorri was sold by a Swiss auction house<sup>44</sup>. For restaurateurs

who had invested in rare wines, the auction, usually anonymous and in Asia, was a way to strengthen their cash flow<sup>45</sup>.

In New York, two public relations professionals are behind "Dining Bonds", inspired by bonds issued during the war which can be bought at a discount to spend later. On March 30, the James Beard Foundation was the first to cancel its annual awards to launch the James Beard's Food and Beverage Industry Relief Fund. A total of 4.7 million USD was raised, including 1 million USD from San Pellegrino as Founding Donor, and distributed as grants of 15,000 USD. This is part of a larger, ongoing program called "Open for Good".

In the face of the health crisis, some large groups, for whom restaurants and food shops are often important customers, have transferred their marketing and advertising budgets to lend support. San Pellegrino launched its movement *#SoutenezLesRestaurants*, a concrete recovery plan to help restaurants financially and to shape the future of the sector together. Deliveroo's partners in the UK received free goods. In Italy, restaurants have benefited from the delivery of free water. The

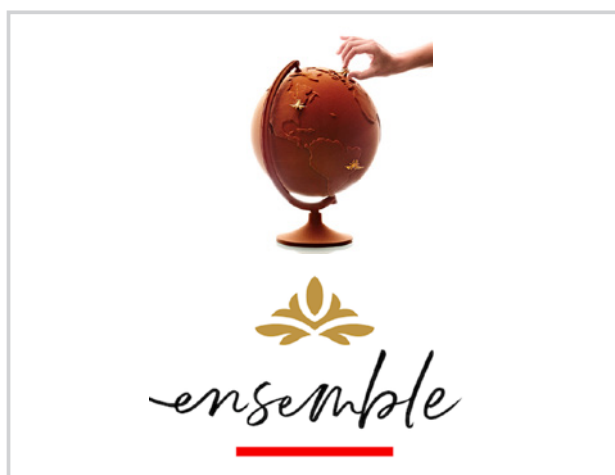
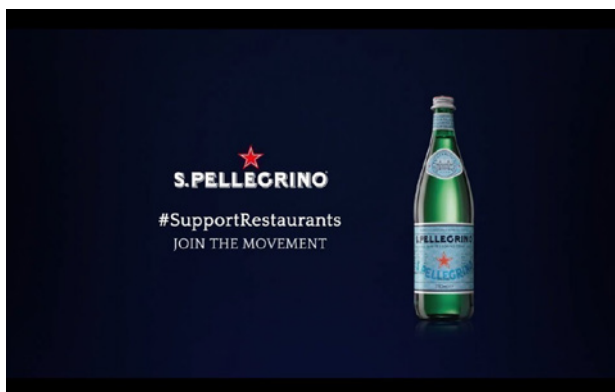
43. <https://robbreport.com/food-drink/wine/to-get-through-lockdown-a-michelin-starred-in-san-francisco-restaurant-sells-rare-bottles-of-wine-2910249/>

44. <https://www.bagherawines.com/wp-content/uploads/Bagherawines-Announcing-Kingdoms-2020-09-17-PR1-ENG.pdf>

45. For example: <https://www.christies.com/about-us/press-archive/details?PressReleaseID=8909&lid=1>

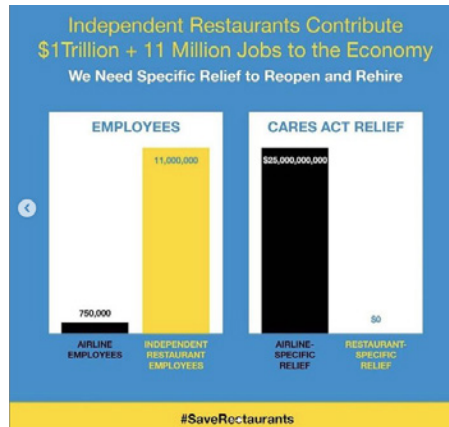
Italian brand has partnered with *The World's 50 Best for Recovery* "Eat Out Restaurant Relief Fund" in South Africa, "J'aime mon bistro" in France, and Le Fooding's "Plats de Résistance" home delivery campaigns. "J'aime mon bistro" has sold 1.6 million euros worth of vouchers. A great number of organizations have been brought together to pull this off, including distributors, manufacturers and start-ups, specialists in out-of-home consumption such as France Boissons, Moët Hennessy Diageo, Heineken, Asahi, Minuty, Nespresso, and Lavazza among others. Another example is Valrhona who enlisted pastry chefs and chocolatiers to launch, in April 2020, a solidarity card for craftsmen that now has more than 4,000 registrations worldwide. Chefs were able to source professional ingredients through an online sales site "*valrhona-ensemble*" by organizing a click and collect with local artisans. The competition *#jesoutiensmonartisan* has encouraged the French to buy direct by offering the chance to win gourmet gifts put together by chefs and pastry chefs like Yann Brys, Guillaume Sanchez, Nicolas Paciello and Frédéric Bau<sup>46</sup>.

In the UK, the charity Hospitality Action has asked restaurants to sell "invisible chips" and other non-existent menu items online, so customers can donate easily, with Heston Blumenthal showing people how to prepare these so-called chips at home<sup>47</sup>.



46. [inter.valrhona.com/fr/article-culture-chocolat/soutenez-les-professionnels-de-la-gastronomie-avec-map-la-carte-solidaire](https://inter.valrhona.com/fr/article-culture-chocolat/soutenez-les-professionnels-de-la-gastronomie-avec-map-la-carte-solidaire)

47. <https://www.creativereview.co.uk/invisible-chips-hospitality-industry-covid/>





## LOBBYING POLITICIANS AND INSURERS

Some restaurateurs have been received by their heads of state. Will Guidara of Welcome Hospitality - and Thomas Keller - The French Laundry, Per Se - participated in the round table held by President Trump. In France, Hélène Darroze, Michel Sarran, Philippe Etchebest, Alain Ducasse and Guy Savoy were among the guests at a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron<sup>48</sup>.

These events are often well publicized but the chefs are invited more as celebrities than strategists. The real work is done by the union reps and trade bodies.

Some leaders seem to overestimate the influence political leaders have over the big insurers. Examples of political intervention in this area are rare. In an isolated case, the Bavarian Finance Ministry has imposed an agreement between insurers to compensate for the operating losses of bakers, restaurateurs or hotels closed due to pandemic<sup>49</sup>. Emergency aid in place by the state and regions has already reduced the damage by about 70%, insurers have committed to half of the remaining 30% and to cover 10-15% of operating losses over a 30-day period. No leader took part in this negotiation.

In Europe, as in the United States, most policy holders refuse to compensate restaurateurs. Complaints are getting worse. Famous chefs like

Raymond Blanc in the UK<sup>50</sup> or Thomas Keller in the United States<sup>51</sup> find themselves in the same situation as groups or small family restaurants. Both parties, the restaurant owners and the insurance companies, say it's about survival<sup>52</sup>.

A few have access to a lump sum, but the final decision will depend on each country. Policy holders will experience a very different fate depending on where they are. It's unlikely many of them will get a decision as favorable as the owner of the Augustinerkeller in Munich, where the court ordered his insurer to pay him more than one million euros<sup>53</sup>.

In France, on 22 May 2020, a Paris court ruled that the restaurant owner Stephane Manigold should be compensated for the loss of business at Le Bistrot d'à Côté Flaubert over a period of two months. A settlement was reached before to the insurer's appeal, but its value is unknown. Although a number of settlements have been reached, anger is mounting and the restaurateurs feel like they've been paying premiums for years for no reason<sup>54</sup>.

Across Europe, insurers have been taken to court by restaurateurs. Although some outcomes have been made public, it is still too early to know all the court decisions.

48. [www.lci.fr/emploi/coronavirus-helene-darroze-michel-sarran-philippe-etchebest-comment-les-tops-chefs-sont-devenus-les-porte-drapeaux-du-secteur-de-la-restauration-2151916.html](http://www.lci.fr/emploi/coronavirus-helene-darroze-michel-sarran-philippe-etchebest-comment-les-tops-chefs-sont-devenus-les-porte-drapeaux-du-secteur-de-la-restauration-2151916.html)

49. [www.lesechos.fr/finance-marches/banque-assurances/pertes-d-exploitation-allianz-indemnisera-en-partie-les-hotels-bavarois-1194468](http://www.lesechos.fr/finance-marches/banque-assurances/pertes-d-exploitation-allianz-indemnisera-en-partie-les-hotels-bavarois-1194468)

50. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/raymond-blanc-blanked-by-insurer-hiscox-r6vblhpkw>

51. <https://www.insurancebusinessmag.com/us/news/hospitality/chef-thomas-keller-sues-insurer-over-coronavirus-business-interruption-claims-218397.aspx>

52. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/voraciously/wp/2020/05/19/restaurants-are-suing-insurance-companies-over-unpaid-claims-and-both-sides-say-their-survival-is-at-stake/>

53. <https://www.abendzeitung-muenchen.de/muenchen/corona-klage-augustinerkeller-wirt-gewinnt-gegen-versicherung-art-673140>

54. <https://www.argusdelassurance.com/les-assureurs/compagnies/pertes-d-exploitation-axa-et-le-restaurateur-stephane-manigold-trouvent-un-accord.166931>

## ANGER AND PROTESTS

On October 20, 2020, several French chefs and restaurateurs sent an open letter to the head of state. “Mr President, behind our economy, behind the numbers, lives are at stake. Those of our families, our teams, our suppliers. Five weeks later, in *Le Figaro*, the tone rose a notch. “Mr President of the Republic, do not underestimate our rising anger, or that we will be able to contain it for much longer. Behind us are all the sectors that make a living from our business, farmers, fishermen, winemakers, florists, laundry businesses, and many others<sup>55</sup>.

Two days after his French colleagues, the Italian chef Massimo Bottura sent an open letter to Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte calling for evening opening until at least 11pm, cash grants taking into account everyone’s turnover, partial unemployment benefit for employees until the stabilization of European tourism, a tax write off and a lowering of the VAT rate to 4% for the following year<sup>56</sup>. Conte replied in early November, refusing to lower VAT.

Anger is mounting, but while the chefs share their dismay in the press, are they ready to take to the streets? For now, the protests in the sector are peaceful. On April 17 in Dresden, and later in 74 other German cities, there were peaceful and unusual demonstrations: 1000 empty chairs filled the Altmarkt Square. Highly symbolic, these non-violent installations have managed to draw public attention to the crisis overwhelming restaurants, hotels and everyone in the events business.

There have also been symbolic protests in Italy. In April, restaurateurs handed over keys to their

establishments to the municipal authorities<sup>57</sup>. In October, tablecloths and cutlery were erected on the streets of Rome<sup>58</sup>. In France, demonstrations took place in Marseille<sup>59</sup> and Paris<sup>60</sup>. In the UK, HospoDemo has led protests in central London locations, inviting participants to bang pots and pans before writing to their MPs demanding a meaningful bailout for the industry. Seat at the Table, led by hotelier Robin Hutson and supported by chefs Paul Ainsworth, Angela Hartnett and Tom Kerridge, among thousands of others, launched a campaign to appoint a Minister for Hospitality. This was debated in the House of Commons on Monday January 11, 2021, though a supporting HospoDemo protest in Parliament Square was cancelled due to the British lockdown.

From Gianfranco Vissani in Italy to Philippe Etchebest and Stéphane Jégo in France, chefs and restaurateurs from all over the world are speaking on social media, or in the media, to ask for more help. The many reasons for their unhappiness have much in common. These include:

- A lack of dialogue with the authorities;
  - The refusal of insurers to compensate their customers;
  - Delays in the implementation of promised measures, or administrative delays;
- And, above all other considerations,
- Lack of a clear strategy for exiting the crisis.

In the absence of concrete answers and firm commitments, new demonstrations, perhaps violent, are to be feared.

55. <https://www.lefigaro.fr/vox/societe/monsieur-le-president-au-nom-de-tous-les-restaurateurs-silencieux-et-a-bout-20201126>

56. Massimo BOTTURA, *Ecco le mie 5 idee per salvare i ristoranti italiani*, Corriere dell Sera, 25/10/2020, [https://www.corriere.it/cook/news/20\\_ottobre\\_26/massimo-bottura-ecco-mie-5-idee-salvare-ristoranti-italiani-b987139c-17b0-11eb-a554-aa444d891737.shtml?refresh\\_ce](https://www.corriere.it/cook/news/20_ottobre_26/massimo-bottura-ecco-mie-5-idee-salvare-ristoranti-italiani-b987139c-17b0-11eb-a554-aa444d891737.shtml?refresh_ce)

57. [www.repubblica.it/sapori/2020/04/27/news/28\\_aprile\\_flash\\_mob\\_risorgiamo\\_italia-254833919/](http://www.repubblica.it/sapori/2020/04/27/news/28_aprile_flash_mob_risorgiamo_italia-254833919/)

58. [www.euronews.com/2020/10/28/shop-and-restaurant-owners-in-italy-protest-coronavirus-restrictions](http://www.euronews.com/2020/10/28/shop-and-restaurant-owners-in-italy-protest-coronavirus-restrictions)

59. [www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-france-marseille-idUSL5N2GM1H1](http://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-france-marseille-idUSL5N2GM1H1)

60. [uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-restaurants/restaurant-owners-protest-in-paris-over-fears-of-covid-shutdown-idUSKBN26N1Z](http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-restaurants/restaurant-owners-protest-in-paris-over-fears-of-covid-shutdown-idUSKBN26N1Z)





# Fundamental conflicts over a model deep in crisis



Couverture du numéro M Le Monde du 14 novembre 2020

As the pandemic shakes up the entire culinary landscape, older, deeper, sometimes hidden or silenced crises are breaking cover.

## CHEFS AND #METOO

The #MeToo movement which began in the United States has spread across the world. Both awareness and the courage to speak out is becoming more and more common in the world of gastronomy. The Swede Stefano Catenacci, 54, chef to Sweden's royal court as well the prestigious Operakällaren in Stockholm, was recently accused of harassing 12 women, according to the newspaper *ETC*<sup>61</sup>. A week after the article was published, Catenacci left the Operakällaren restaurant and officially denied the charges. "I want to make it clear that the accusations I abused female employees are not true. I strongly dispute these alleged events. They did not happen," he wrote in a letter to the paper *Dagens Nyheter*.

In the United States, "#MeToo in the kitchen" made quick work of some big names, such as chef Mario Batali who left the group he co-founded. Another iconic restaurant name, Ken Friedman of The Spotted Pig in New York, has agreed to pay 240,000 USD to 11 victims. Negotiated by the New York Attorney General's Office, the agreement also provides compensation of 20% of the restaurant's profits paid to victims over ten years<sup>62</sup>.

61. Så sextrakasserar kungakocken unga kvinnor på Operakällaren, *ETC*, 2.11.20

62. Nikita RICHARDSON, *Every Chef and Restaurant Owner Accused of Sexual Misconduct in the #MeToo Era*, Grub Street, 14/03/2019, <https://www.grubstreet.com/2018/10/how-chefs-and-restaurant-owners-are-faring-post-metoo.html>

While such trials are common in the United States, they remain very rare in continental Europe. In France, the media finally joined the conversation in 2020 with investigations published in *Le Monde*<sup>63</sup> and *Libération*<sup>64</sup>, and on the website *Mediapart*<sup>65</sup>.

But even today, in the absence of trials and formal charges, a genuine #MeToo for restaurants has been slow to emerge in France. Victims don't want to name their attackers. *Mediapart* and *Libération* published their exposés on condition of anonymity. And when victims choose to go public, as in *Le Monde*, the names of those harassing them is left out. This suggests a mistrust of the judicial system. Not to mention the pervasive fear of the consequences speaking out may have on their careers. But if a certain "well-known film producer" had not been named, the #MeToo movement might not have got off the ground in the United States<sup>66</sup>.

In the summer of 2020, there were rumors about a Parisian chef on social media before a specialist website published Taku Sekine's name on suspicion of sexual assault, rape and even that he had fled to Japan, without quoting a single victim or contacting the chef<sup>67</sup>. While an investigation into sexual abuse in the kitchen was underway at *Mediapart*, the chef committed suicide. *Mediapart*'s journalists decided not to publish the evidence they had collected, because they couldn't complete the crucial part of the investigation "during which the person in



Couverture du Libération du 22 novembre 2020



63. Yann BOUCHEZ, Laurent TELO, Elvire VON BARDELEBEN, Marie ALINE et Pierre HARDY, *Sexisme, harcèlement, agressions sexuelles en cuisine : cinq cheffes brisent l'omerta*, [www.lemonde.fr/m-le-mag/article/2020/11/13/sexisme-harcèlement-agressions-sexuelles-en-cuisine-les-cheffes-brisent-l-omerta\\_6059538\\_4500055.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/m-le-mag/article/2020/11/13/sexisme-harcèlement-agressions-sexuelles-en-cuisine-les-cheffes-brisent-l-omerta_6059538_4500055.html)

64. Kim HULLOT-GUIOT et Emilie LAYSTARY, *Violences sexistes et sexuelles : casseroles en cuisine*, [www.libération.fr/france/2020/10/22/violences-sexistes-et-sexuelles-casseroles-en-cuisine\\_1803212](http://www.libération.fr/france/2020/10/22/violences-sexistes-et-sexuelles-casseroles-en-cuisine_1803212)

65. Nora BOUAZZOUNI, Lenaig BREDOUX, #MeToo: dans la gastronomie, l'espoir d'un changement, *Mediapart*, 26.12.20, <https://www.mediapart.fr/journal/france/261220/metoo-dans-la-gastronomie-l-espoir-d-un-changement?onglet=full>

66. «Ce n'est qu'aujourd'hui que les femmes cheffes acceptent majoritairement de témoigner, mais cela uniquement sous anonymat», Nora Bouazzouni dans le Podcast Ecotable #26 Violences en cuisine : où en est-on aujourd'hui ? Décembre 2020

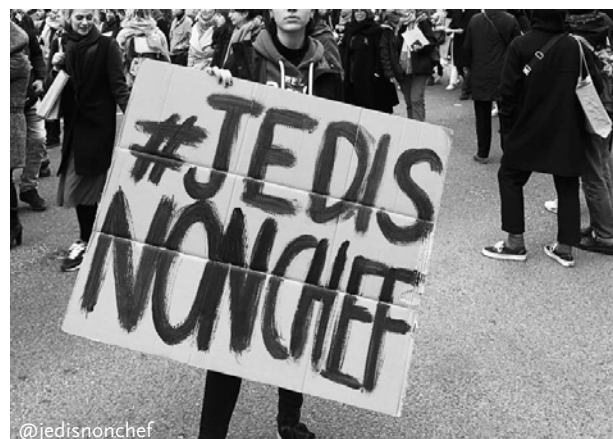
67. [https://www.lemonde.fr/m-styles/article/2020/10/09/atabula-le-site-gastronomique-qui-se-reve-en-zorro-des-cuisines\\_6055503\\_4497319.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/m-styles/article/2020/10/09/atabula-le-site-gastronomique-qui-se-reve-en-zorro-des-cuisines_6055503_4497319.html)

question is required to be able to defend himself, answer, confirm, contradict, deny”<sup>68</sup>.

The Instagram account *@jedisnonchef* – “I said no, chef” - created by Camille Aumont Carnel collects and publishes hundreds of testimonials about violence committed within the profession. They are not limited to professional kitchens and are prevalent across front of house, the pastry section and elsewhere.

The chefs who spoke out are showing their strengths. In Paris, 24-year-old Alexia Duchêne, went from success to success with *Datcha Underground*, then *Wanderlust*, before cooking at *Allard*, a bistro run by female chefs for more than 80 years. After *Martha* and *Fernande Allard*, new owner the *Ducasse* group has stuck with tradition by hiring *Laetitia Rouabah*, *Fanny Herpin* and *Pauline Berghonnier*. *Margot Servoisier* has opened a bakery in *Amiens*. *Marion Goettlé* has opened her *Café Mirabelle* in Paris. *Anissa Ayadi* is a home chef and founder of *Saisoné*, “an incubator for curious chefs and food lovers”. And *Laëtitia Visse* has opened *La Femme du Boucher* in *Marseille*, a “bistronomic” restaurant, far from the demanding kitchens where she felt like she was “surviving a war”<sup>69</sup>.

They’re making their voices, which are often engaged and political, heard. A good example is *Dominique Crenn*, part of the *Black Lives Matter* movement, another aspect of the deep crisis hospitality finds itself in.



68. <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/lenaig-bredoux/blog/300920/gastronomie-propos-dune-enquete-de-mediapart>

69. <https://www.humanite.fr/article-sans-titre-665596>



## BLACK LIVES MATTER UNEARTH'S RACISM IN THE KITCHEN

In an interview with *Food and Wine* magazine, chef Crenn said she had detected inequality and racism in the restaurant industry as soon as she arrived in the United States. “Racism is so predominant and so impregnated in the history of America”<sup>70</sup>.

In an interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, chef Malcolm Hilliard talks about his experiences at Alinea and Sixteen at the Trump Hotel in Chicago. “[At Sixteen] they were intentionally against me because I was the only Black person in the kitchen,” Hilliard said. “It was brought to management’s attention and they simply ignored it... Soon after, Hilliard found his locker broken into and his chef’s coat covered in urine. Shortly after this incident, he found a piece of metal in a mixture of chicken paste that he had prepared. A mistake that led to his dismissal. Hilliard believes he was sabotaged for reporting discrimination”<sup>71</sup>.

As the *New York Times* reports, “White male chefs who already fit neatly into the stereotype of the auteur are overrepresented, praised for a highly specific approach to fine dining, then rewarded with more investment and opportunities to replicate that same approach. So many alternative kinds of food businesses are never considered for awards or investments. They don’t fit into the chef-auteur framework. But for so many, it’s already too late. They’ve been excluded from the narrative, over and over again, to serve the idea of the auteur. They’ve been subject to abuse. They’ve been paid unfairly. Many have dropped out of the business altogether”<sup>72</sup>.



Two employees of Sqirl restaurant in Los Angeles claim to be the uncredited creators of some of Sqirl’s best-known recipes, including those that helped propel the success of a James Beard Award-nominated book. They claim to represent only a sample of a large number of workers, and in particular the BIPOC - Black, Indigenous and People of Color – cooks who were the true masterminds of Sqirl’s kitchen, without ever being recognized for their work.

Beyond the vital debate on the recognition of all professionals in the sector, this approach generates a large number of crucial questions for the future of hospitality. Who do recipes belong to? Do they belong to the chef or to the team? Are they the fruit of a collective, or the exclusive intellectual property of the chef, the only one capable of creation? In the face of controversy, Squirl’s owner, Jessica Koslow, has taken herself out of the running for the best chef award at the James Beard Awards, the most prestigious culinary award in the United States. She also asked to be removed from a jury of the James Beard Foundation.

70. <https://www.foodandwine.com/news/dominique-crenn-memoir-interview>

71. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/dining/ct-food-young-black-chef-restaurant-racism-0821-20200821-yxfere476jg47cths3ftnlepty-story.html>

72. Tejal Rao, *Twilight of the Imperial Chef*, New York Times, 04/08/2020 [www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/dining/chef-restaurant-culture.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/dining/chef-restaurant-culture.html)



## THE END OF ABUSIVE KITCHENS?

Those suffering from poor working conditions and abuse in the kitchen are equally shy to speak out. Perhaps the economic fragility of the sector may encourage victims to speak more freely and encourage the guilty parties to seek advice on how to change.

The *San Francisco Chronicle* interviewed seven people who worked at The Restaurant at Meadowood between 2008 and 2015. These ex-employees describe a tense and pressured environment, for example chef Christopher Kostow would yell at young employees, or throw dishes around the kitchen. Three of them say this is standard behavior in a Michelin-starred kitchen, and therefore justified<sup>73</sup>. Chef Sherman Chan adds: “It’s kind of like having an abusive boyfriend. Deep down, you know it’s not right, but you let it happen anyway.” Chan points out that Kostow “had a temper that resulted in far more demeaning and traumatizing behavior than she’s experienced at other Michelin star restaurants.”

Former fishmonger Ricky Odbert says: “I’ve worked in places where you got yelled at, but I’ve never worked at a place where you were afraid to go into work every single day.” Former pastry chef Boris Portnoy, who claims on his Instagram account that Kostow created a culture of fear at Meadowood, says: “I was complicit. I think if fine dining can’t not be cruel, it doesn’t deserve a place at the table”<sup>74</sup>.

The atmosphere in the kitchen at Meadowood might sound shocking, but reading between the lines of many testimonials from other establishments suggests it is no exception.

In France, both the general and specialist press have been covering the issue since 2015<sup>75</sup>. A major investigation which ran in *Libération* in 2018 reveals “humiliation, intimidation, 80-hour weeks...”<sup>76</sup>, quoting the cook Tim Débite who recounts his misadventures on Youtube<sup>77</sup>. During his first experience in a gourmet restaurant on the Côte d’Azur, Tim Débite was pushed violently against a wall by the sous chef who then shouted and threw a raclette at him.

Yet we rarely see convictions for these cases. In 2018, the chef and a clerk of the Château de la Pioline in Aix-en-Provence were convicted of violence against a minor. The pastry chef was given 120 days to pay a 15 euro fine, his clerk 100 days to pay his fine of 10 euros<sup>78</sup>.

In December 2020, chef Tim Raue of the eponymous Berlin restaurant declared in *Der Spiegel*: “I don’t want to be mean anymore. It’s earned me years of therapy. I had to forget the memories of the best kitchens I grew up in. Hitting, insulting, kicking, it was normal there. Over time, I realized that it wasn’t working. I thought, what would you do if someone told you they were going to cut your feet off, go to your house and eat your sister if you served them another dish like that?”<sup>79</sup>.

73. Janelle BITKER, Justin PHILLIPS, *The Restaurant at Meadowood pushed chefs for brilliance — some say at a human cost*, San Francisco Chronicle, 6.10.20, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/The-Restaurant-at-Meadowood-pushed-chefs-for-15623434.php>

74. *Idem*.

75. [https://www.francetvinfo.fr/culture/cuisine/salaries-maltraites-dans-les-restaurants-le-chef-m-appelait-le-chien-et-aboyait-pour-s-adresser-a-moi\\_746995.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/culture/cuisine/salaries-maltraites-dans-les-restaurants-le-chef-m-appelait-le-chien-et-aboyait-pour-s-adresser-a-moi_746995.html)

76. <https://www.liberation.fr/apps/2018/11/restaurants-face-cachee-etoiles/>

77. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bN1JtTWbQJY>

78. <https://www.laprovence.com/article/faits-divers-justice/4882124/cauchemar-en-cuisine-pour-le-jeune-apprenti.html>

79. <https://www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/tim-raue-ueber-die-corona-krise-ich-habe-in-diesem-jahr-uebelst-gelitten-a-00000000-0002-0001-0000-000174629151>





## IS IT TIME TO START OVER?

It's no coincidence that the echo of these thorny topics amplified during the pandemic. Chefs have been turned into celebrities. There's blanket media coverage of restaurants and of food in general. Gastronomy has left the friendly domain of the cooking pages. The mainstream press is beginning to take an interest in it as a phenomenon, and the outcome isn't always flattering. On the one hand we have consumer-focused journalists interested in the use of additives and unreported industrial flavorings in some high-end establishments, or

"kit cooking" and its sous vide sachets and heat-at-home boxes in restaurants that no longer cook. On the other hand, the press is beginning to investigate the other side of the story: to revelations about abuse in kitchens in France<sup>80</sup> and the United States<sup>81</sup>, they add investigations into inhumane working conditions, such as in Spain<sup>82, 83, 84</sup>, where apprentices are paid 600 euros per month for days of 15 or 16 hours and live crammed into the cellars and annexes of star-studded restaurants<sup>85, 86</sup>.

80. <https://www.liberation.fr/apps/2018/11/restaurants-face-cachee-etoiles/>

81. Nikita RICHARDSON, *Every Chef and Restaurant Owner Accused of Sexual Misconduct in the #MeToo Era*, Grub Street, 14/03/2019, <https://www.grubstreet.com/2018/10/how-chefs-and-restaurateurs-are-faring-post-metoo.html>

82. Maria ZUIL, Rafael MENDEZ, *Esto dicen los laboristas sobre los 'becarios Michelin': "Tenerlos trabajando es ilegal"*, El Confidencial, 3.5.2017, [https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-05-03/becarios-laboral-ilegal-michelin-cocina\\_1376253/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-05-03/becarios-laboral-ilegal-michelin-cocina_1376253/)

83. David BRUNAT, *La miseria de ser becario de Adrià, Muñoz o Berasategui: 16 horas a palos y sin cobrar*, El Confidencial, 24/04/2017, [https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-04-24/los-becarios-de-adria\\_1371187/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-04-24/los-becarios-de-adria_1371187/)  
[https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-04-24/los-becarios-de-adria\\_1371187/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-04-24/los-becarios-de-adria_1371187/)

84. Maria ARAGÓN, *El hilo de Twitter que reflexiona sobre el papel del consumidor ante las polémicas condiciones laborales en la alta cocina*, El Periódico, 25/09/2018, <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/extra/20180924/hilo-twitter-reflexion-sobre-condiciones-laborales-trabajadores-alta-cocina-7051810>

85. David BRUNAT, *El sótano donde Azurmendi (tres estrellas Michelin) hacina a sus becarios*, El Confidencial, 22/09/2018, [https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2018-09-22/azurmendi-michelin-becarios-sotano-maltrato-laboral\\_1618884/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2018-09-22/azurmendi-michelin-becarios-sotano-maltrato-laboral_1618884/)

86. David BRUNAT, *Ángel León tiene dos estrellas Michelin y este 'piso patera' para sus 16 becarios*, El Confidencial, 07/05/2017, [https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-05-07/becarios-michelin-stagiers-angel-leon-aponiente-piso-patera\\_1377591/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2017-05-07/becarios-michelin-stagiers-angel-leon-aponiente-piso-patera_1377591/)

At a time when the majority of governments are trying to save restaurants with taxpayers' money, and when some chefs are demanding more help, sometimes deafeningly, public opinion and senior officials are beginning to question how restaurants operate. Doubt sets in. Do we really have to save the whole profession? In the United States, parts of the press have responded with a resounding "no".

"The pandemic has exposed the fragility and inequity of the restaurant industry, disproportionately affecting Black people, people of color, restaurant workers and those who keep the food chain running in the nation's factories and farms. Bolstered by the power of the #MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements, workers are speaking up. The model for the industry, as it exists now, has to change," writes Tejal Rao, a *New York Times* columnist<sup>87</sup>. In an interview with *The New Yorker*, chef and artist Tunde Wey presents "the case for letting the restaurant industry die"<sup>88</sup>.

According to food writer Corey Mintz in the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail*: "The issues that bother me are systemic and hard to change: wage theft and abuse of all kinds (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, racial). They are exacerbated by the structure of chef-driven restaurants and the food media that perpetuates it. I never again want to hear about how great a chef is unless it's about how great an employer they are"<sup>89</sup>. Mintz goes one

step further by stating: "It wasn't even that we held these people up as leaders, despite their cruelty. We exalted them as leaders because of their cruelty. The idea that excellence is only achieved through the abuse and exploitation of workers is a corrupt premise. Its time is done"<sup>90</sup>.

In September 2020, the website *Eater.com* published the article "American restaurants are worth saving. Here's how"<sup>91</sup>. These are its key points:

- *First, burn it all down...*
- *... to create a new, fair, inclusive system...*
- *... and a business model that's both ethical and sustainable ...*
- *... which would help change the culture...*
- *... and fix the supply chain ...*
- *... and finally, save the world.*

This program might seem like a very gentle sort of utopia. But it's important to listen to this new generation of chefs and customers and their dream of a fairer, more transparent and locally oriented restaurant industry, which respects the planet. Young professionals will be reluctant to devote themselves to a work environment which features harassment and abuse. Their customers will quickly lose all respect for chefs who proclaim themselves to be artists or philosophers, but whose methods would not be permitted in any other environment.

87. Tejal RAO, *Twilight of the Imperial Chef*, New York Times, 04/08/2020 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/dining/chef-restaurant-culture.html>

88. Helen ROSNER, *The Case for Letting the Restaurant Industry Die*, The Atlantic, 22/05/2020, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-gastronomy/the-case-for-letting-the-restaurant-industry-die>

89. Corey MINTZ, *After the pandemic, let's not rebuild chef culture*, The Globe and Mail, 04/12/2020 <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-after-the-pandemic-is-over-lets-not-rebuild-chef-culture/>

90. *idem*.

91. Eater Staff, *America's Restaurants Are Worth Saving. Here's How*. <https://www.eater.com/21395619/americas-restaurants-are-worth-saving-heres-how>

# PART 3

## HOPES AND DREAMS



# inclusivity



humanity

# reinvention







As we write this report, two very different ways forward seem to be opening up:

The best-case scenario depends on the availability of vaccines, their effectiveness and their acceptance by the public. Ideally this could mean a return of tourism and events from the third quarter of 2021. A slow and gradual recovery, growing more robust as vaccinations progress. We would then hope to see a return to growth and a fall in unemployment.

The worst-case scenario could come about if the efficacy of vaccines varied among demographics, along with logistical problems, side effects or mutations of the virus that affect how the vaccines work. Countries implementing isolation strategies would then be at risk of a long period of uncertainty while waiting for results. It would also cause a sharp rise in unemployment, and an economic crisis threatening social stability. Major social upheaval is to be feared in countries where the general public lacks prospects<sup>1</sup>.

Regardless of the path we find ourselves on, a return to pre COVID-19 norms is not guaranteed. This is the same for the restaurant industry as any other.

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01. To see also: Bord Bia, *Technomic, Irish Food Service Market Insights 2020*, p. 20





## Expected growth and health constraints

In China, new habits linked to fears of the virus are already common in restaurants. Everyone checks to see if they are safe. Has the temperature of customers been properly measured by an infrared thermometer gun? Are waiters and kitchen staff wearing masks and gloves?

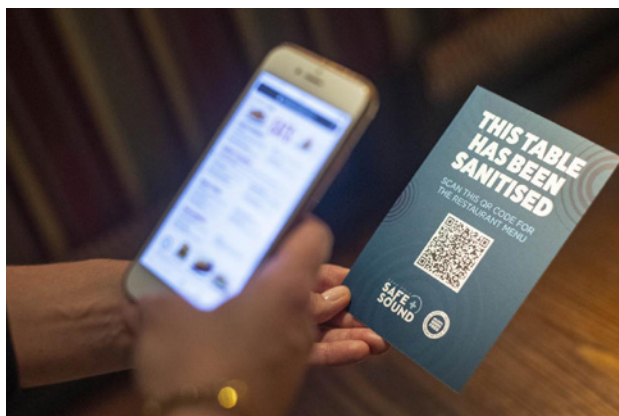
The new health standards, along with fear and mistrust, will no doubt call into question the existence of self-service, the sharing of food, tapas bars, and even places where diners share tables. We might lose cotton tablecloths, as many restaurants will choose smooth and easily cleaned surfaces instead. And as plastic can be disinfected with a few wipes, it will be back, even in the big restaurants, from takeaway boxes to gloves worn during service. In this context, will the bad boy or hipster look of some chefs - whose beards are always poking out

of their masks - still be appropriate? As usual, it's up to the customer to decide.

Critics and bloggers will not only write about food and atmosphere, but also anti-Covid measures and other hygiene benchmarks. Any shortcomings in these areas will almost certainly threaten an establishment's reputation. And with this ongoing attention to disease prevention, it is probable that open kitchens will make the customer feel more comfortable.

### TRACK AND TRACE

This health crisis demands effective ways of communicating with customers. The restaurateur will need to be able to explain the hygiene measures they're taking. Customers will have other questions, about other growing concerns, not only the pandemic. Where is the produce from? Is it organic? Is it locally sourced? They'll want to know whether the beef, pork, chicken and lamb come from farms with high animal-welfare standards, where they have space to roam and a natural diet. Attempting to cheat using additives, industrial flavorings or lower quality products will be risky behavior. In the age of social media, it's easy to get stuck with a bad reputation when a customer feels cheated.



## MORE TECHNOLOGY, LESS HUMAN CONTACT

The world ahead of us will probably be the world of “no”: no contact, no waiting, no cash. Reducing wait times will reduce human contact, as will scanning the menu or QR code, reading it on your mobile phone and paying with a specialized app. These technological solutions already exist, whether on booking sites or a number of apps. Other solutions are being considered, from robotic wait staff to seat selection during booking. The absence of self-service and shared dishes is another part of this drastic reduction in human contact.

## HEALTHY COOKING AND “FREE FROM” DIETS

The search for healthy cooking promises many collaborations between chefs, doctors and nutritionists. Immediately after lockdown for example, Spain saw the doctor and chef Dr Miguel Sanchez Romera, who is best-known for introducing his concept of “neurogastronomy” to Barcelona in the 1990s, return to the spotlight. The cookbook market is a good indicator of trends: books on



nutrition and plant-based dishes sell much better than chefs’ books, which are visually stunning but less practical.

According to Hunter PR’s *Food Study Special Report*, 39% of Americans want to eat more more healthily, although 40% say they want to let go a little bit<sup>2</sup>. According to IFOP, “29% of French people say they will give greater consideration to the impact of their food on the environment since the first lockdown in spring 2020. Unsurprisingly, newer generations are particularly concerned: young people, especially students, say they’ll place more importance on the balance of their post-lockdown diet (42% of students versus 33% in all categories), and the impact of this on the environment (37% of students versus 29% of all categories combined)”<sup>3</sup>.

More and more customers are bringing their allergies and dislikes with them to restaurants. “Clean eating” is already a trend and will become stronger, which will lead to a growing demand for “free-from” menus, which means gluten-free, sugar-free and lactose-free. We will also expect to see “additive-free” and “cruelty-free” claims.

02. Hunter PR, *Food Study Special Report*, [https://www.hunterpr.com/foodstudy\\_coronavirus/](https://www.hunterpr.com/foodstudy_coronavirus/)

03. Ifop study for Darwin Nutrition conducted via the internet from 24 to 27 April 2020 among a sample of 3045 French people aged 18 and over residing in metropolitan France [www.ifop.com/wpcontent/uploads/2020/05/analyse\\_ifop\\_Darwin\\_FK\\_2020\\_05.06.pdf](http://www.ifop.com/wpcontent/uploads/2020/05/analyse_ifop_Darwin_FK_2020_05.06.pdf)



## ADDITIVE-FREE

Food is in fashion right now and chefs are admired and adored. But despite the beauty of sharing a meal, of experiencing its techniques and ingredients, of the history of recipes passed down between generations, and everything else that makes the field so rich, can we ignore some of the habits which undermine all of this? There are a few shady customs which are very rarely exposed to the general public. What sort of a person wants to eat a dish containing E 407, E 412, E 461, or E 473? Would you go out to ingest polyglycerol esters, maltodextrin or the adhesive enzyme transglutaminase, otherwise known as meat glue? Does anyone actually plan on eating flavor enhancers, azoic dyes and laboratory flavorings? Everyone who reads food labels is informed when these substances are present. They are used to manufacture some mass market products designed for maximum shelf-life without losing their color, shape, smell or taste. But over the past twenty years, these creations of food chemists have gone beyond ready meals to the world of catering. And this isn't just in mass catering. Some high-end restaurants, often run by chefs who want to be innovative, use them systematically. They are fond

of these synthetic colors and textures and forget to mention the origin to the customer. The whole operation is built on lies, as wholesalers might sell these substances to chefs as seaweed extracts to give them a semblance of the natural world.

Either way, the end customer is never told they've been used. In the vast majority of countries, there is no law asking restaurants to make public any additives used in their cooking. The composition of chewing gum, required by law, is infinitely more transparent. This is a great time for virtuous food chains and organic, local and authentic products. If we want customers to choose restaurants and place food orders with confidence, we must tell them what they're eating.

## CRUELTY-FREE

Over the past four years, we've seen lots of enthusiasm for meat substitutes. Among them, one product has become the symbol of the genre: the Impossible Burger from the American company Impossible Foods in Redwood, California. It is a plant-based product with a taste and appearance which aims to be as close as possible to meat, including the juices. Impossible Foods shouts



about its environmental record. “Compared to a traditional beef burger, the Impossible Burger uses 96% less land, 87% less water and reduces emissions by 89%.” “Meat” without animal suffering or environmental damage, what could be better?<sup>4</sup>

Enthusiasm for these meat substitutes has hidden their considerable thirst for additives and other substances to achieve a decent result. In the case of the Impossible Burger, this means water, textured wheat protein, coconut oil, potato protein, natural flavorings, 2% or less of leghemoglobin (soy), yeast extract, salt, konjac gum, xanthan gum, soy protein isolate, vitamin E, vitamin C, thiamin (vitamin B1), zinc, niacin, vitamin B6, riboflavin (vitamin B2) and vitamin B12. The artificial burger contains less protein than its beef-based competitor, but more fiber. It also contains much more added salt, or 16% of the recommended daily sodium value for a 113 gram serving.

In 2020, two other new developments in the “clean meat” industry were mostly overshadowed by the pandemic. In Tel Aviv, Israeli startup SuperMeat opened The Chicken, the world’s first restaurant to serve laboratory meat grown from animal cells. At the same time, the “chicken bites” of the Californian startup Eat Just were approved for sale by the Singapore Food Agency. According to Eat Just, its product is extremely environmentally friendly and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 96%. Meat without livestock and slaughterhouses? Not quite: the Eat Just process requires fetal bovine serum<sup>5</sup>.

To date, the flavor of these new meat substitutes appears to be closer to a chicken nugget than a Bresse chicken. If there is a change in consumer habits, it will take decades, largely for cultural



Impossible Foods



The Chicken ©Quique Kierszenbaum

reasons. Both the distrust of substitutes in the West, and the lack of interest in boneless meat across much of the Asian market, are likely to significantly slow the adoption of these new products.

04. <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/planetary-health/impossible-foods>

05. Naima BROWN, *Lab-grown chicken tastes like chicken – but the feeling when eating it is more complicated*, The Guardian 07/12/2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/food/2020/dec/07/lab-grown-chicken-tastes-like-chicken-but-the-feeling-when-eating-it-is-more-complicated>



## New models, diversification and digitization

### THE RESTAURANT AS SHOWROOM, THE CHEF AS BRAND

Conscious of their reputation and the fact the crisis will continue, well-known chefs are hard at work developing and diversifying their business models. In the future, restaurants will be the showroom of a cook's expertise, but you'll be able to taste this expertise almost anywhere: dishes to heat up at work or at home, chocolates and ice cream for breaks and treats, wine selections, vinegars and spices to cook with at home, all available to order online or by phone. These chefs intend to take advantage of the new opportunities created by delivery, but also by the return of home cooking.

The chef will become a brand whose capital lies in our trust. His image will guarantee quality, reassure the customer and maintain his reputation. They will pay more, and possibly more often, to eat dishes with the security of knowing what's in them, that they can be considered "labelled". Restaurants will allow chefs to develop brand identities and even whole concepts beyond the physical space of a kitchen and dining room.

## THE FUTURE OF TAKEAWAY AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF GHOST KITCHENS

The ghost kitchen is a kitchen without a restaurant. For now, they are limited to pizza, burger and bibimbap prep. By focusing on delivery, they generate far less cost and risk than a conventional restaurant. Contrary to traditional cooking, this booming sector requires a whole new approach because everything is determined by the demands of delivery: the dish must arrive at the customer's home intact and at the right temperature, and packaging and transportation issues are invariably part of the business model.

Among the players in this expanding model, CloudKitchens, a startup from Uber co-founder Travis Kalanick, rents space to companies that prepare dishes for delivery. To date, the company has acquired more than forty locations in over twenty cities for more than \$130 million<sup>6</sup>.

Ghost kitchens are here to stay and will be able to count on the support of Uber Eats, Deliveroo, Lieferando, Glovo, DoorDash and Alii. They will move upmarket to broaden their target audience and try to gain market share in traditional restaurants. The Brazilian critic Luiz Horta believes the change will be monumental. "Maintaining the format of restaurants by imposing set distances between tables and limited numbers of customers will not pay. Food has become something you can buy ready-prepared. There is no turning back. The ritual of choosing wine and dishes are traditions

that will die if they do not return soon, because with enough time, any habit will fall out of fashion. Essentially, I think the restaurant as we know it is a thing of the past. Kitchens designed for delivery will survive. We will continue to eat, and the chefs will have to come up with ways to get our attention, but it certainly won't be within the framework of the restaurant any longer<sup>7,8</sup>.

Market research company Euromonitor expects ghost kitchens to generate \$1 trillion in total sales by 2030<sup>9</sup>. Euromonitor is also looking at the possibility of these restaurant-free kitchens following the fast fashion model. Just as Primark or Zara copy the designs of more expensive brands, specialty ghost kitchens could quickly replicate trends and products in relatively high-end restaurants and sell them to huge numbers of customers<sup>10</sup>.

Any delivery requires a courier, but independent restaurants can set up successful delivery businesses without involving Deliveroo. In the UK, for example, Tommy Banks of The Black Swan in Oldstead, North Yorkshire, began delivering meals locally during the first lockdown and now employs 30 full-time staff in his nationwide "Made in Oldstead" business, sending out over 1,000 boxes a week. This means he can now transport his hyper-local ethos around the country, and that includes bottled cocktails infused with his homegrown or foraged flavors.

06. [www.wsj.com/articles/uber-founder-turns-real-estate-mogul-for-ghost-kitchen-startup-11603186200](https://www.wsj.com/articles/uber-founder-turns-real-estate-mogul-for-ghost-kitchen-startup-11603186200)

07. João Paulo Charleaux, *Qual o futuro da alta culinária no pós-pandemia*, Nexo, 17/05/2020 <https://www.nexojornal.com.br/entrevista/2020/05/16/Qual-o-futuro-da-alta-culin%C3%A1ria-no-p%C3%B3s-pandemia>

08. *idem*.

09. [www.restaurantdive.com/news/ghost-kitchens-global-market-euromonitor/581374/](https://www.restaurantdive.com/news/ghost-kitchens-global-market-euromonitor/581374/)

10. [www.euromonitor.com/ghost-kitchens-virtual-restaurants-and-a-delivery-optimized-future/report](https://www.euromonitor.com/ghost-kitchens-virtual-restaurants-and-a-delivery-optimized-future/report)





## THE NEED TO MAKE A SPACE PAY, TO KEEP GOING, TO SIMPLIFY... OR EVEN CHANGE DIRECTION

In times of crisis, keeping a restaurant open only for lunch and dinner can be ruinous. This expensive space could become profitable by serving breakfasts in the morning, coffee and cake in the afternoon, and brunch on weekends. A restaurant can manage more than two services per day. The combination of breakfast, lunch, tea, cakes and snacks, then dinner plus delivery, already exists in Asia, where there's often a dedicated entrance for delivery drivers. In France, Yoann Conte and Alexandre Bourdas explored this approach, as did the famous restaurant La Tour d'Argent<sup>11</sup>.

This optimization could extend to all available space, including terraces, where snacks, drinks or pastries would be served outside of mealtimes. By pushing logic to the extreme, a chef would cook at home and only for delivery. Another example would be that of the nomadic chef, working in private homes or in pop-ups. This concept isn't new: François Massialot (1660-1733) led a whole group

of itinerant cooks. His clientele consisted of noble families and even the king, as the court's chef couldn't satisfy the needs of his courtiers. Anyone who wanted variety on their plate brought in this type of freelance cook. In China today, there are nomadic cooks who might be specialists in specific traditional or regional cuisines, who organize dinners for select guests.

One could also imagine that the Street Food and delivery market could finance a creative or high-end "laboratory" with a very small number of covers, just like the "gourmands' corner" set up by Frédy Girardet in the room adjoining the bistro at the Crissier Town Hall where his father had served meals for 2.8 Swiss francs. There was no question of removing a concept that worked - the bistro - for another that might work. Girardet's career began quickly and he became the "cook of the century" (Gault-Millau) admired by all and honored again in 2020, 23 years after his retirement<sup>12</sup>.

11. Néo-Restauration 28/10/2020 <https://www.neorestauration.com/article/la-tour-d-argent-se-lance-sur-le-petit-dejeuner-dominical,52658>

12. <https://www.htr.ch/story/fredy-girardet-recoit-le-merite-culinaire-suisse-dhonneur-27990.html>

# Laying the foundations for a new kitchen culture

## MORE EQUALITY

In several countries, hospitality is making steps towards equality, even if this movement is still in its infancy. Overall, we're seeing progress, and female chefs in Europe and the US seem to have the wind behind them. It is easier to climb the ladder quickly in some countries more than others. In the United Kingdom, Clare Smyth, Gordon Ramsay's former number two, has enjoyed a rapid ascent to the top of her profession, notably thanks to her restaurant Core, in London, which has been acclaimed by the British press and *The Good Food Guide*. Angela Hartnett, another Ramsay protégée,

is now one of the UK's best-known chefs and owns five restaurants including Murano alongside her broadcast career.

Daniela Soto-Innes, 29, who ran the restaurants Cosme, Atla and Elio in New York, is not only known for her Mexican cuisine, but also for her management methods. "Daniela has built a community around the restaurant by including cooks from all over the world, who can interact with Mexican corn producers just as well as with farmers from New York"<sup>13</sup>. It sets an example, and favors an emphasis on the individual, regardless of their gender, age or origin. "If you ask someone to do something and you don't know how to do it yourself, what kind of leader are you?" she asks<sup>14</sup>. "I don't think it's OK to be working sixteen hours a day like I used to," she says, looking back on the early years of her career. "I don't think it's acceptable to go through all the things you have to go through before you become a chef. I would like to be part of that new generation where people can breathe and have a voice"<sup>15</sup>.

13. <https://www.foodandwine.com/chefs/daniela-soto-innes-cosme>

14. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/10/t-magazine/daniela-soto-innes-cooking-chef.html>

15. idem



Festival culinaire Cheffes! par Ernest



@justcallmechef.co

In the United States, a light has been shone on Mashama Bailey by the James Beard Awards and Netflix. Born in the Bronx and raised in Queens, Bailey<sup>16</sup> learned to cook with her family through her grandmothers, aunts and mother. She trained at the Institute of Culinary Education, did a stage at the Château du Feÿ in Burgundy, then worked at The Oak Room at the Plaza and Aquagrill in New York, before becoming sous chef at Prune, on Manhattan's Lower East Side, under the tutelage of chef Gabrielle Hamilton. "Now my menu draws culinary parallels between the African diaspora, and the Old and the New Worlds. We serve Chicken Country Captain, a traditional Savannah stewed chicken, vegan "collard" greens, which I smoke with pecan wood; and crab beignets." These dishes are served in an art deco Greyhound bus terminal from 1938<sup>17</sup>, meticulously restored to its former glory. Mashama Bailey is also vice chair of the board of directors of the Edna Lewis Foundation, which works to preserve and celebrate the legacy of the chef known for her "southern food", the recipes of the southern United States. The chef residency restaurant "Intersect by Lexus" in New York announced it would reopen in November 2020 under the direction of Mashama Bailey<sup>18</sup>.

In Japan, Natsuko Shoji is working with artist Takashi Murakami to create limited edition cakes. Her micro-restaurant<sup>19</sup>, which could seat only four to six people, was widely praised in the media.

The reputation of Yumi Chiba, sushi chef of Anago no Uotake Sushi in Shizuoka prefecture, has crossed the Pacific thanks to *Eater.com* and CNN. "(<sup>20</sup>Sushi) was once considered to be a man's world," says

16. <https://www.netflix.com/fr-en/title/80007945>

17. <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/features/a34774041/chef-mashama-bailey/>

18. <https://robbreport.com/food-drink/dining/the-grey-mashama-bailey-residency-intersect-nyc-1234579656/>

19. <https://m.facebook.com/urbanartreleases/posts/672614606614636>

20. <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/japan-female-sushi-chef/index.html>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH2m2HZpHQM>



Chiba. “Women were simply not welcome. However, fewer male youths are showing an interest in becoming a sushi chef these days, forcing more establishments to hire women instead. I hope that an increasing number of women will be able to be involved the world of sushi,” she says<sup>21</sup>. Kelly Rangama, a chef from Réunion, now at the Parisian restaurant Le Faham which opened in June 2019, says: “Today, the place of women in the kitchen. But women must always work harder. It’s up to younger generations to reinvent themselves, but it’ll come, the situation evolves and we’re finally accepted,” says Kelly Rangama, a chef from Réunion, now at the Parisian restaurant Le Faham which opened in June 2019<sup>22</sup>.



The situation for women in the kitchen seems to be moving in the right direction, even if real parity will take time. In the United States, 77.6% of head chefs are men<sup>23</sup>. In large restaurants, the rate is probably higher. Women are also paid less, whether they are in the kitchen or front of house<sup>24</sup>.

There’s still much to be done for women from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. For example, on 11 January 2021, the *New York Times* published an article titled “How High-End Restaurants Have Failed Black Female Chefs”. While discrimination in the restaurant world affects both women and all people of color, some say they have experienced the combined effects of racism and sexism. Added to this are the diminishing opportunities while restaurants struggle to survive the effects of the pandemic.

“When the Black Lives Matter movement seized the nation’s attention last year, a number of fine-dining restaurateurs and chefs declared their support for racial justice, and vowed to work harder to diversify their staffs. But many black women say they have yet to see any meaningful change, and even wonder how long the show of good will may last”,<sup>25</sup> writes Korsha Wilson. The article denounces a mixture of racism and sexism, and high-end restaurants are explicitly targeted. The *New York Times* quotes Nina Ichikawa of the Berkeley Food Institute as saying: “More expensive restaurants have greater inequalities, and there are biases that lock people into certain positions”<sup>26</sup>. While waiting for real change, some black chefs have got together to create the Instagram account @justcallmechef.”

21. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2015/07/04/lifestyle/female-chefs-give-sushi-counters-new-lease-life/>

22. ref : Podcast Girls in Food, épisode #12 - Kelly Rangama, cheffe étoilée, Dec 2020

23. <https://datausa.io/profile/soc/chefs-head-cooks>

24. <https://www.epi.org/blog/exposed-and-underpaid-women-still-make-less-than-men-including-in-sectors-especially-affected-by-the-coronavirus/>

25. Wilson, Korsha, How High-end-restaurants have failed black female chefs, *New York Times*, 11.1.21, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/dining/black-women-fine-dining-restaurant-kitchens.html>

26. idem

## THE HUMAN COST

The pre-pandemic years were marked by significant efforts to improve the working environments of chefs, in terms of making professional and family lives more compatible. This is, without a doubt, the outlook of the couple Tatiana and Bertrand Grébault who are the chefs, respectively, of Servan and Septime.

In Oslo, Norway, Esben Holmboe Bang of Maaemo reduced the working time of his employees from five to three days. “I immediately saw the effect of this decision. People were rested, had more energy, and came to work at the beginning of the week with the feeling of wanting to be there,” he says, while pointing out that many new hires were needed, which cut the profits of the business<sup>27</sup>.

In the same vein, chef Ben Shewry of Attica in Melbourne, Australia, gives his employees three days off for a 48-hour week. “Kitchens have always been overflowing with macho bullshit,” he says. “If you worked until one o’clock in the morning and started again at six in the morning, you were the best, the hardest. Changing the mentality proved quite difficult”<sup>28</sup>.

In Denmark, Noma grants staff three months of paid leave after a few years of service at the restaurant<sup>29</sup>. American chef Sean Brock tries to work on concepts that allow the employees of a restaurant to let off steam and recharge. His upcoming restaurant will offer acupuncture and reiki, among other activities<sup>30</sup>.

In Italy, the chefs of the Ambasciatori del Gusto association signed an agreement with Lazio psychologists.<sup>31</sup> In particular, psychologists will assess a team’s stress levels. Chef Dave Beran’s Dialogue Restaurant, an eighteen-seat tasting room in Santa Monica, was partly the result of a reflection on the problems inherent in dining. “Our industry’s biggest problem is lack of respect for the individual,” says Dialogue service director Jeremy Overby. “When you step back and think about how much needs to change to affect the whole industry, it’s tough.” Overby remembers a culture where harassment and abuse were endemic. “Unfortunately, my tools for coping with life’s problems were drinking and drugs,” he says. At Dialogue, the motto was “transparency and candor”. Staff members received profit shares, and every month the team exchanged views on the company’s culture. The aim was to create a workplace that prioritized the health of employees<sup>32</sup>. Dialogue closed during the first months of the pandemic but might resurrect in the form of a pop-up.

“We need a new approach to cooking,” said Slow Food founder Carlo Petrini at a Gastronomic Forum in 2019. “Right now, it’s abusive. Escoffier codified the organization of the kitchen after studying the model of the army: hierarchy, discipline, a commander. It may have worked in the 1900s, but that is no longer the case. Petrini added that “the chef-owners are sadists and the young chefs are masochists. We need to put in place a situation of

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27. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/43ybm/why-this-3-star-restaurant-has-a-3-day-workweek>

28. <https://www.goodfood.com.au/eat-out/news/can-atticas-fourday-work-week-catch-on-20170911-gyeuw6>

29. <https://www.finedininglovers.com/article/noma-offers-sabbatical>

30. <https://www.grubstreet.com/2019/06/can-restaurants-be-fixed-from-the-inside.html>

31. <https://www.ambasciatorideltgusto.it/comunicati-stampa/intesa-adg-ordine-psicologi-lazio/>

32. <https://www.grubstreet.com/2019/06/can-restaurants-be-fixed-from-the-inside.html>

empathy, of mental wellbeing. Get lost, Escoffier Paradigm! Let's build a new paradigm, where the whole team works together"<sup>33</sup>.

In a context where the survival of many restaurants is at stake, these ideas may well end up in the bin. The chefs who practice them will probably not become the role models for the profession they deserve to be. The prospects of reopening will lead to new challenges, such as the need to train new teams, or to develop greater flexibility in the face of new lockdowns. Will we then move towards more outsourced ways of working, focused on the chef and supported by temporary workers? Will the diversification of activities help to stabilize a sustainable wage bill?

Do these initiatives for more humane working environments have a future after the pandemic? It will depend on the customer. If customers are willing to pay the price and make the conscious choice to frequent places that invest in humans, anything is possible. Conversely, if customers are looking for the cheapest meal or the chef most in fashion for his extravagant techniques, this virtuous cycle may break. Yet hope remains. If so many customers now care about animals being treated with dignity, why should it be any different when it comes to human beings?



33. <https://www.lavanguardia.com/ocio/20190311/46977546217/la-gastronomia-saca-su-vertiente-activista-en-dialogos-de-cocina.html>  
<https://www.finedininglovers.com/article/carlo-petrini-says-kitchen-environments-need-change>





## DIVERSITY ACROSS RACE AND CLASS BARRIERS

Many chefs and restaurants work every day to improve social and racial inclusion. In France, this subject is the “workhorse” of Thierry Marx. His *Cuisine Mode d’Emploi(s)* cooking schools are aimed at adults who are out of work, which could be young people without a degree, the unemployed, or people who are retraining<sup>34</sup>. Eleven weeks of training leads to a diploma recognized by the state and the industry. Since 2012, more than 90% of trainees who have taken this course have found employment<sup>35</sup>.

According to Parisian chef Yannick Alléno, the restaurants of tomorrow have to demonstrate

change: “Cultivating difference and not indifference, France must be the catalyst for inclusion just as it is for gastronomy. My fame must serve to make other chefs aware that this is possible.” Yannick Alléno has recruited two young people with disabilities<sup>36</sup>. Also in France, the association Le Récho trains refugees in hospitality roles<sup>37</sup>. In Copenhagen, chef Kamilla Seidler of Lola has a dedicated “sociogastronomic” aspect to her business, which is concerned with «those on the margins of the labor market and who need a helping hand and/or new opportunity to succeed in their working life”<sup>38</sup>.

In the UK, media and specialist websites publish lists of the most inclusive employers. The winners include Sodexo UK and Ireland and the Wagamama restaurants<sup>39 40</sup>. In the United States, they are fast food chains such as Burger King, Pizza Hut or KFC. Their representatives see inclusion as a force for the future of their business. Chequan Lewis, a Harvard Law School graduate and head of equity at Pizza Hut, explains that, “When we start to look at other people’s experiences, which are often very different from our own, we expand the scope of our conversation and expand people’s ability to contribute. [The result is] this explosion of ideas from totally different perspectives, and you solve the problems in a different way<sup>41</sup>.”

Despite these initiatives, migrant workers from hotels and restaurants are more affected by the current crisis than other groups<sup>42</sup>. They are among the first to be made redundant and often cannot

34. [https://www.lemonde.fr/emploi/article/2016/08/19/l-ecole-cuisine-mode-d-emploi-s-renouvelle-la-formation\\_4985181\\_1698637.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/emploi/article/2016/08/19/l-ecole-cuisine-mode-d-emploi-s-renouvelle-la-formation_4985181_1698637.html)

35. <https://www.cuisinemodemplois.com/>

36. [https://www.bfmtv.com/economie/replay-emissions/objectif-raison-d-etre/objectif-raison-d-etre-quelle-est-la-place-de-l-inclusion-chez-nos-restaurateurs-vendredi-16-octobre\\_VN-202010160351.html](https://www.bfmtv.com/economie/replay-emissions/objectif-raison-d-etre/objectif-raison-d-etre-quelle-est-la-place-de-l-inclusion-chez-nos-restaurateurs-vendredi-16-octobre_VN-202010160351.html)

37. <https://www.lerecho.org/>

38. <https://restaurantlola.dk/en/impact-en/>

39. <https://www.retail-week.com/be-inspired/the-diversity-super-league-the-15-most-inclusive-employers/7031716.article?authen=1>

40. <https://www.ft.com/content/cb8978ea-f901-4842-9957-cca0cb3fe7cc>

41. <https://www.nrn.com/workforce/restaurant-chains-said-they-d-build-more-diverse-and-inclusive-workforce-here-s-how-they>

42. For exemple : Singh, Sujaym Singh, Kuldeep, Migrants Workers in Tourism and Hospitality Industry: Effect of COVID-19, 2020/09/27, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344523689\\_Migrants\\_Workers\\_in\\_Tourism\\_and\\_Hospitality\\_Industry\\_Effect\\_of\\_COVID-19](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344523689_Migrants_Workers_in_Tourism_and_Hospitality_Industry_Effect_of_COVID-19)

seek government aid: the multiple bureaucratic processes require employment contracts, balance sheets and tax documents. In Europe, part-time migrants and seasonal tourists are particularly vulnerable to redundancies because of the very nature of their status and contracts, according to European Commission spokeswoman Marta Wieczorek<sup>43</sup>.

In UK and the United States, the mainstream media is no longer shy about publicizing the talent of female chefs or chefs from black or minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. The focus on the best-known chefs seems to be over. Editors and writers are reappraising what it is that makes a great restaurant, and asking whether the avant-garde alchemist is really better than the Turkish chef serving a lip-smacking kebab using great quality meat. Is technique really more important than customer satisfaction?

It's no longer enough to say that somewhere is good just because it appears in a guide. Pete Wells, a feared *New York Times* columnist, wrote about Burmese, Korean, Thai, Filipino, Caribbean and Middle Eastern restaurants between October and December 2020. In the US, diversity is improving in newsrooms: Tejal Rao writes in the *New York Times*, Khushbu Shah is the new restaurant editor at *Food and Wine*, Stephen Satterfield and Melissa Shi are co-founders of *Whetstone*, a quarterly gastronomic magazine.

At the same time, Condé Nast's *Bon Appétit* magazine found itself in the midst of a racial scandal caused by its pay policy, when it emerged that assistant food editor Sohla El-Waylly was not paid

to be in the magazine's popular videos<sup>44</sup>. "I've been pushed in front of video as a display of diversity," she revealed. "In reality, currently only white editors are paid for their video appearances. None of the people of color have been compensated for their appearances." Condé Nast denies this claim<sup>45</sup>.

In December 2020 in the UK, Jimi Famurewa was appointed chief restaurant critic at London's *Evening Standard*, moving into Fay Maschler's position after two years reviewing for *ES Magazine*. Jay Rayner explored Chinese, French, "Afghan-fusion", Korean, Vegan and African restaurants in 2020. All were described with the same care and verve as the restaurants of well-known chefs. But there has been plenty of debate over how white the country's restaurant critics are. "I'm concerned because food critics generally tend to look the same in this country and I'm always worried because some of the food critics' language is not great," Darjeeling Express chef Asma Khan told Emily Maitlis on BBC *Newsnight*. "Because, you know, you find them sneering and mocking people of different cultures, it smacks of racism. So things that are really funny and beautifully written prose, I applaud, but when people are just being mean and pushing down a culture, that's my issue. *The Times* Giles Coren has been criticized for lampooning Chinese people in a review, and the editor of a *Vittles*, a food newsletter dedicated to promoting a more diverse food scene for the UK, claimed that "more pasta restaurants were reviewed in the UK this year than Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Korean, Thai, Japanese East + West African and Caribbean restaurants combined," a comment that caused a stir on Twitter but has since been deleted.

43. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-europe-tourism-tf/migrant-workers-face-cruel-summer-as-covid-19-batters-european-tourism-idUSKBN22R22Y>

44. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/elanagross/2020/08/06/three-bon-appetit-stars-quit-videos-over-racial-discrimination/?sh=5fc8454110f5>

45. <https://nypost.com/2020/06/08/bon-appetit-editor-in-chief-called-to-resign-over-brownface-photo/>



## YOUNG CHEFS: SACRIFICIAL LAMBS OR BEACONS OF FRESH HOPE?

Our future chefs, those under the age of 35, some of them still on the benches of cooking schools, risk losing years of their lives to the pandemic. Cooking schools are adapting as well as they can to the situation. In Paris, Ferrandi has started remote workshops with courses such as “From à la carte to takeaway”. The school also offers cooking demonstrations. Around the world<sup>46</sup>, Le Cordon Bleu is focusing on online courses that deal with cultural topics or hospitality management as well as food journalism<sup>47</sup>.

Several companies wanting to maintain a close relationship with chefs offer their own courses and training programs. For example the Unilever Chefmanship Academy which has courses on topics such as efficiency, cost management and menu planning<sup>48</sup>. Launched in November 2020, the San Pellegrino Academy has announced a platform to promote sustainable development and inclusion

with famous mentors such as Manu Buffara, Clare Smyth, Enrico Bartolini, Mauro Colagreco, Massimo Bottura and Andreas Caminada.

« Chefs too continue to share their knowledge in cooking schools, most of their projects have not been put on hold for now. Alain Ducasse opened a cooking school in Meudon in the outskirts of Paris in November 2020<sup>49</sup>. Thierry Marx has opened another school in Souillac, France<sup>50</sup>. And Niko Romito, well known as the chef of Bulgari Hotels, announced his campus in Castel di Sango in 2021<sup>51</sup>»

Thomas Keller has talked publicly about what's to become of young chefs. “[The pandemic] it's really hurting the younger generation of chefs who are still building their careers. I look at our young staff, and they're all aspirational and it's a big challenge for them to look at their lives now and figure where

46. <https://www.ferrandi-paris.fr/actualites/ferrandi-paris-lance-son-premier-live-cooking-demonstration>

47. <https://www.cordonbleu.edu/online/learning/en>

48. <https://www.unileverfoodsolutions.com.ph/chef-inspiration/chefmanship-academy.html>

49. <https://www.capital.fr/entreprises-marches/alain-ducasse-ouvre-une-ecole-dexcellence-labouissement-dun-reve-de-20-ans-1386112>

50. [https://www.lemonde.fr/campus/article/2020/11/11/alain-ducasse-et-thierry-marx-ouvrent-chacun-une-nouvelle-ecole-de-cuisine\\_6059350\\_4401467.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/campus/article/2020/11/11/alain-ducasse-et-thierry-marx-ouvrent-chacun-une-nouvelle-ecole-de-cuisine_6059350_4401467.html)

51. <https://www.gamberorosso.it/notizie/nasce-a-castel-di-sangro-il-campus-niko-romito-il-futuro-del-cibo-ricerca-e-formazione/>



they're going. You're a chef who's 34 or 35 years old and you have to shut down your restaurants and maybe not reopen them. What's their career path now? What's going to happen to them?"<sup>52</sup>

Unfortunately, layoffs, often massive, have taken place in some countries. In the United States, 372,000 people working in restaurants or bars lost their jobs in December 2020, growing the ranks of 3.9 million unemployed since February 2020<sup>53</sup>. In the UK, the Office for National Statistics found that 297,000 jobs were lost in hospitality between February and November 2020, the highest number in any sector. Chefs are not the only victims, and few experts talk about the front of house staff, sommeliers or maître d's or hosts. Pastry chefs often retrain for jobs in shops, but what about other restaurant skills?

Young chefs are being sacrificed in terms of the "starred restaurant", an expensive establishment often focused on the presentation of dishes. Bank loans for the creation of such institutions will become difficult to obtain, profit margins are tight and the way forward isn't yet clear. The market seems saturated, especially outside the major metropolises. The last twenty years have seen restaurant concepts flourish and a proliferation of the "gourmet" niche, which is necessarily elitist. However, the purchasing power of customers is not increasing as sharply as the number of high-end restaurants.

Outside of this field, the ground seems free to innovate. What's the best way to do takeaway?

How can we adapt the dishes so they arrive in good condition at the customer's home? Can we find synergies between takeaway and the traditional restaurant? How can we implement these new ideas and get them to take hold? How do you improve ghost kitchens but keep them affordable? These are just a few of the current questions.

Some Asian chefs seem to have understood this: pop-ups, online bakeries like Tigerlily from Maxine Ngooi, a former pastry chef at Vianney Massot, and shops specializing in homemade sauces and condiments seem to be flourishing in Singapore. "We live in a different era now," says Christopher Kong, a Seattle-born chef who started the private dining restaurant Dearborn. "You don't necessarily need the big backers that you once did in order to get your name out there. We live in a world where word of mouth is louder than ever with social media, and everyone can find their market and niche. If you know what you want and you are confident that you know how to do it, why not just cut to the chase?"<sup>54</sup> Kong ran Dearborn in his own home, and used to give customers a small gift of wholegrain granola for breakfast after their visit to the restaurant. To earn a living despite the pandemic, the young chef decided to sell these granolas separately. "When we first posted, it took about 30 minutes to sell out. Now it takes less than two minutes sometimes." Despite the pandemic, he's done so well that he's moved into a production kitchen and launched other products. But private dining is at a standstill, "as having strangers in our home would make me uncomfortable in the pandemic"<sup>55</sup>.

52. <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/food-and-drink/pandemic-is-killing-restaurants-says-chef-with-seven-michelin-stars-1.4426867>

53. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>

54. <https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/lifestyle/feature/pandemic-opportunities-for-millennial-chefs>

55. <https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/lifestyle/feature/pandemic-opportunities-for-millennial-chefs>



# A new map

## THE IMPACT OF WORKING FROM HOME ON URBAN RESTAURANTS

The majority of restaurants are located in city centers and before the pandemic served large numbers of office workers looking for a quick lunch or happy hour drink. Even when restaurants can open, the lack of commuters is depriving them of vital customers. No longer going out to eat is also a very severe blow to our community spirit, and will no doubt have psychological and perhaps societal consequences, and even damage other sectors such as fashion. It is too early to know whether all professionals will return to the office. Companies may be tempted to cut their headquarters down to a few show offices and a few meeting rooms.

To compensate for the losses associated with the crisis, these rental savings may be bolstered by wage savings, as future homeworkers will not necessarily be based in the employer's country. An employee of a European company will be able to work from home in India or the Philippines. The future of city restaurants will depend heavily on the evolution of these new professional practices.

## THE RURAL ELEMENT

It is likely that chefs will follow homeworkers to their new homes, opening decent restaurants in the countryside. Although there are still a number of quality out-of-town hotels and small restaurants in many countries, including France, Spain and Italy, some regions don't have any.

These openings will be less expensive than in the city, in particular because of property prices. Workers leaving cities will enjoy the same advantages. In line with this deflationary dynamic, the end-of-meal bill should naturally decrease. In Europe, the average cost at these places would be between 30 and 50 Euros per person for a three-course menu.

Once they're in the country, many chefs will probably opt for a form of restaurant-bar-grocery, as many villages have lost all their shops and restaurants. A bar and restaurant with a limited menu would also offer products, occasionally basics, often higher quality produce and, possibly, a multi-service ancillary activity such as a parcel relay point. As if they were the old village pub or coffee shop, these small establishments will contribute to the rejuvenation of their villages, which will be proud to keep *their* restaurant alive in return.

## CHEFS TURN TO ASIA

Western chefs will of course take an interest in Asia, where many countries have responded to the pandemic effectively. The economic opportunities associated with a wealthy clientele have encouraged many professionals in the sector to study the possibility of setting up a subsidiary there, or even their flagship restaurant. In Singapore, for example, the demand for "Western" chefs is significant, if the job ads are to be believed<sup>56</sup>.

Some make the bitter discovery that fame doesn't always translate across borders, the produce in local markets is often very different to what they're used to, and the public's tastes aren't the same either. But there are many examples of successful gastronomic migration. Didier Corlou in Vietnam, Julien Royer in Singapore, and Guillaume Gaillot in Hong Kong are some remarkable examples, among many others. Other personalities struggle to adapt to their host country, and suddenly leave or go bankrupt.

56. To see for example: <https://www.gumtree.sg/s-food-beverage-jobs/western+chef/page-2/v1c31q0p2>





## THE REINVENTION OF GASTRONOMIC TOURISM

Our economic system cannot do without tourism, which accounts for about 10% of total GDP, although the figures differ according to the study. Since the beginning of the pandemic, tourism has almost stalled. But gastronomic tourism has always struggled for a precise definition. The only certainty is that every tourist must eat. Does that make him a gastronomic tourist? In recent years, many countries have chosen to highlight a star chef as an icon, like a calling card.

One chef's capacity is of course limited, so culinary tourism could now evolve to support more restaurants, more regions and more heritage. Rather than focusing on the *people*, why not focus on *pintxos* bars in the Basque country, on rotisseries in Zaragoza, on Bavarian inns or *trattorias* in regions of Italy? Showcasing local traditions would be sacred fodder for future tourists, locals, farmers, hoteliers, tour operators, and museums, not to mention the communities affected by the crisis. For countries where chefs have not been canonised by

the international media, this strategic bias is within reach, and might even be the only solution to revive gastronomic tourism.

With no expectation of an end to the pandemic, all countries are refining their strategy for supporting tourism, focusing primarily on local tourism, otherwise known as the staycation. New restaurant concepts are being prepared around the world. This is the case of Koks on the Faroe Islands, an institution symbolic of the virtuous constraints of the coming times: to get to this eighteenth century farm where chef Poul Andrias Ziska cooks local produce, you have no choice apart from following a rugged track through untouched countryside.

Regions which are less visited will redouble their efforts to gain a place on the gastronomic tourism scene, which might have a significant but surprising side effect. This is the case in the Chengdu region of the People's Republic of China, which has chosen to showcase traditional Sichuanese gastronomy.

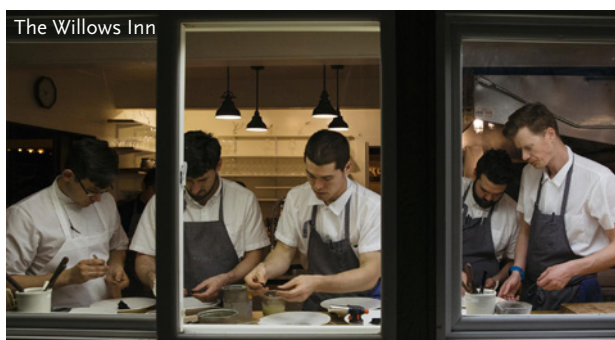
Some destinations not yet affiliated with gastronomic tourism will certainly emerge. Many African countries, for example, have rich cuisines, often untouched by the fusion that can sometimes distort traditions. This is the case for Ethiopian cuisine, which has its character and authenticity intact. On a different note, Angola has long incorporated Portuguese heritage into its home cooking, which has produced a very different result to what we understand by fusion.

Eastern European countries, which are resilient and accustomed to change in times of need, have remarkable gastronomic traditions. In general, high-end restaurants are less sought after than local cooking, which is often excellent.

Russia's considerable size makes the opening of new restaurants far from Moscow and St. Petersburg necessary. Puppenhaus in Novosibirsk or Onegin Dacha in Rostov-on-Don already offer interesting reinterpretations of traditional Russian cuisine. Metropolises will open up to new concepts such as Matilda Shnurova's Bio my Bio, which serves "free-from" cooking, a vision that could be compared to the health-conscious outlook of California.

And what of India, which has a rich and extremely diverse culinary history from one region to another? Its chefs have expertise in using spices which is second to none across the world. Many of their traditional dishes remain unknown to the general Western public.

Not all of these countries will follow the Western model, far from it. In Asia, and particularly in Russia and India, investors show little interest in building the reputation of future star chefs, who may sooner or later leave their empire. The logic seems to lean more towards the creation or even consolidation of regional or national groups.



Matilda Shnurova et Igor Grischevkin







Chef Selassie Atadika, Ghana



Chef Dieuveil Malonga, Rwanda



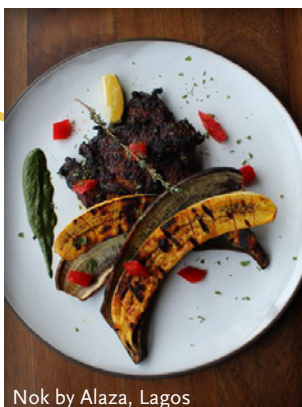
Meza Malonga, Rwanda



## SPOTLIGHT ON AFRICA

Over the past five or six years, many media outlets have been promising a great future for African cuisine, and more specifically for West African cuisine, heralded as THE next global trend<sup>57</sup>. Will African dishes like Ethiopian injera, a thin bread bearing meat stews and vegetables seasoned with spices, conquer our palates? Will we enjoy Watt, a stew of veal, mutton, goat or spiced chicken, accompanied by hard-boiled eggs and hot sauce? Also served in Ethiopia is Shiro, a chickpea or lentil stew with onions, garlic, and ground ginger. Côte d'Ivoire is known for its Garba fried tuna and cassava semolina seasoned with tomatoes, onions, and fresh peppers. Some dishes already have a great international reputation, like the Senegalese Yassa, chicken cooked with mustard and onions, served with rice. Anyone who thinks such dishes unworthy of high-end restaurants should remember that traditional dishes are reclaimed throughout Europe, often as lighter versions, and that the Sühring brothers in Bangkok serve a simple curried sausage in their luxury restaurant.

In London, the African-inspired restaurant Ikoyi is popular with all the UK's leading food critics.



Nok by Alaza, Lagos



Its success proves that African ingredients can easily be established in Europe, and that many adapted or reinterpreted recipes delight the most diverse gastronomes<sup>58</sup>. In the US, Dan Barber chose chef Shola Olunloyo as the first to take on the Stone Barns residency, where he'll present "the Hudson Valley through the lens of Nigerian Yoruba foodways"<sup>59</sup>.

The history of cooking is also a story of interbreeding. It starts with the ingredients, then the exchange of techniques, preparations and flavors, as demonstrated by the fusion cuisine of the 1990s. The different cuisines of Asia have been largely merged. Latin American *ceviches* are now everywhere, as are Hawaiian-inspired *poke* bowls, even tacos. Throughout the world, fusion has spread through a wide variety of culinary origins. But Africa is an exception, and still has a huge variety of traditional cuisines, intrinsically

57. To see Particular: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35066284> ; <https://www.sbs.com.au/food/article/2018/02/23/why-you-should-pay-attention-african-food>  
<https://www.wellandgood.com/west-african-food/>  
<https://longevitylive.com/food/unexplored-african-food-trend/>  
<https://www.vogue.fr/lifestyle-en/article/food-diet-trends-2020-vegan-healthy>  
<https://www.foodbusinessnews.net/articles/17178-specialty-food-association-names-top-2021-trends>  
<http://www.veracitymediagroup.com/blog/food-trends-2020>

58. Example: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/apr/06/ikoyi-london-sw1-restaurant-review>  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/food-and-drink/restaurants/michael-deacon-reviews-ikoyi-london-chicken-like-shot-meat/>  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/giles-coren-reviews-ikoyi-london-sw1-sq92bgvpx>  
<https://www.standard.co.uk/reveller/restaurants/ikoyi-west-african-dynamism-not-to-be-missed-a3682181.html>

59. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CJuDMz9noHw/>





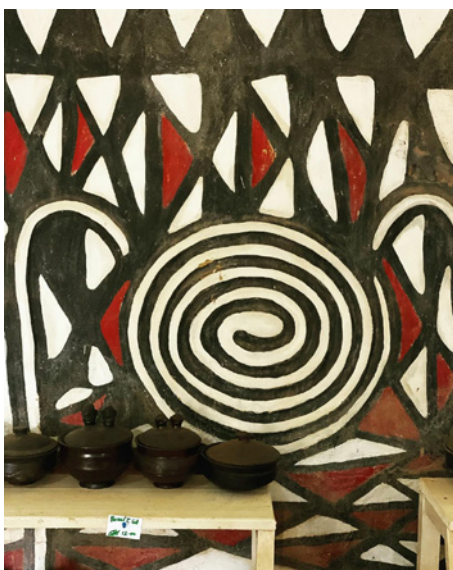
Chef Michael Elegbede, Nigeria



Iya restaurant, Janvier Kouenou, Cameroun



Chef Michael Elegbede, Nigeria



Chef Michael Elegbede, Nigeria





linked to ethnic groups. Such diversity can be found in the infinite selections of ingredients, preparation styles and cooking techniques. Some African ingredients are internationally recognized, but few chefs have adopted them. And those who do sometimes make beautiful discoveries. This was the case for Dr Miguel Sanchez Romera, former chef of the restaurant L'Esguard near Barcelona, who patented Micri, an all-natural and extremely versatile cassava-based texturizer<sup>60</sup>.

Over the past five years, ambitious restaurants have emerged. Among them, Nok by Alara in Lagos, Nigeria; Meza Malonga from Dieuveil Malonga in Kigali, Rwanda; Iya Buea, from January Kouemou, Cameroon. We may be witnessing the rise of the first generation of great African chefs in the Western sense, as shown by the example of Selassie Atadika of the nomadic restaurant Midunu in Ghana. Growing up in the United States, Atadika was a UN employee before becoming a chef. Her dishes are deeply rooted in Ghanaian tradition, and use sorghum, baobab, plantain, goat meat, lemongrass, coriander and chillies. Having become a sort of spokesperson for culinary Africa, Atadika has opened the Midunu Institute, a non-profit organization that educates consumers about health through nutrition and works to raise awareness and share indigenous African traditions and products. Its range of chocolates inspired by Africa launched at the beginning of 2021.

La Liste has sought out and followed these leaders since the beginning, and now has 1149 addresses across the continent of Africa in its database. It's not a huge number, but it's many more than the other guides. Apart from Morocco and South Africa, a country that is becoming a food heavyweight, several countries are beginning to stand out: Kenya, Angola, Egypt, Ghana, the Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and Tanzania.

60. [https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/01/07/gastronotas\\_de\\_capel/1515318654\\_379965.html](https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/01/07/gastronotas_de_capel/1515318654_379965.html)



# The new rules of high-end - towards a humbler, more humane, more connected cuisine

The cuisine of the last twenty years has been built on technical prowess and the ability to innovate. For many chefs, but also for the clients who choose to follow them, it's high time to rethink this approach, and not only because of the pandemic. Until now, most high-end restaurants have followed a model of continuous innovation. "More, more, more" can quickly drift towards frivolity or forced eccentricity, which sometimes makes it impossible to even guess what you're eating. Many well-known chefs have added an intellectual dimension to it with a lot of storytelling. But preparing meals does not carry a message *per se*, and cannot convey concepts as a great novel, film or a work of art might. After all, the components of our diet come down to meat, poultry, fish and plant matter. We can certainly shock or even fascinate by combining worms and foie gras, plastics and fish or food additives and aromas. There are customers who are happy to pay to be pulled out of their comfort zone. But will such edible displays of artistry be relevant after the crisis? Do we actually enjoy food as spectacle or is it merely a symptom of a society desperate for new tricks?



Nadia Sammut ©nmd\_graph

How many dishes has this school of cooking served us, or served diners all over the world? Nouvelle cuisine and post nouvelle cuisine have given us, among other iconic dishes, The Troisgros brothers' *saumon à l'oseille*, Robuchon's *purée*, André Daguin's *magret de canard* and the *mi-cuit de chocolat* from Michel Bras. What's next? Where are the new classics, the dishes to make an era? Technical wizardry is quickly forgotten. It's not enough to create must-eat recipes.

And what if the real pleasure of going out to eat is simply to eat good food? The skill would then lie in customer satisfaction.

This vision is driven by chefs, some of whom are beginning to build true ecosystems. In France, one example is the standout case of Nadia Sammut. Thanks to her expertise in finding the best suppliers, her restaurant Auberge la Feni re in Lourmarin has become a showcase for local produce. Many restaurants are applying these principles: Blue Hill or The Lost Kitchen in the United States, Longjing Manor in China, Evo in Japan, Sosein in Germany, Gut Purbach in Austria, Restaurante Espa a and its herd of oxen in Lugo, Spain. In the United Kingdom there's the rustic Moorcock Inn in Norland, the Pig Hotels, working "farm-to-fork" guesthouse Coombeshead Farm from April Bloomfield, Merlin Labron-Johnson at Osip in Bruton, Somerset, or the very luxurious Lympstone Manor and its vineyard in Devon<sup>61</sup>.

The chefs and owners of this type of place are both heirs to the Farm to Table movement, initiated in California in the 1970s, as well as traditional European farmers whose methods have passed through the centuries - without necessarily opening restaurants. It is a deep grassroots movement that has quickly won over many chefs and clients. The search for a better relationship with humans, and therefore with employees, care for the environment and reducing waste are the building blocks of this way of doing things. Eating well while doing good - to a community, a country, a solidarity project - could easily become a sustainable trend. From this perspective, being rewarded for technical skill will no longer be enough to build a reputation.



61. Nadia SAMMUT. *Construire un monde au go t meilleur*, Actes Sud 2020

LE CIRCUIT COURT  
EST  
LE CHEMIN  
LE PLUS RAPIDE  
POUR CHANGER

@paisan\_officiel

## THE RETURN TO AUTHENTIC LOCAL COOKING

We've been watching this trend for several years, but the Covid-19 pandemic is accelerating its principles: local ingredients, short supply chains, farmhouse products and even organic veg from a neighbour's allotment are in the spotlight. As a guarantee of quality, the customer expects verifiable or even certified provenance. For a chef, having his own farm, livestock, or at least a stake in a producer will bring considerable added value. The food industry will claim it can offer this level of authenticity, but chefs are better able to apply the principles, both in practice and in good faith. Without this, there's the risk that a portion of the customer base will turn its back on this bet on a return to authenticity.

Gilles Goujon has shared details of L'Alternative in Béziers, one of the flagship openings of 2021. "The idea is to have fish, seafood, a river and vegetable garden in organic permaculture and then in the garden [...] I will try to get closer to what was done at my grandparents' house: a vegetable garden and backyard [...] By spring, I would like the vegetables to be our own, because we're going to create our vegetable garden in Béziers. I also have another idea, which is to do aquaponics or fish farming,



Fred Ménager, La Ferme de la Ruchotte

trout for example. You collect water and pass it through a biofilter. And then this water will feed a herb garden [...] the water the trout swims in will grow sorrel, let's say. And when it's ready, we'll make trout with sorrel and the loop will be closed<sup>62</sup>.

## THE SUPERCHEFS OF TOMORROW WILL BE INSPIRING LEADERS

Why and how did chefs become celebrities? The simplistic answer would be to see it as a fashion phenomenon. But cooking fever is real, and it runs deep. It is fuelling the cooking knowhow of the public at large as well as awakening curiosity. It's attracted many customers to top restaurants in search of new experiences. In some cases, food tourism and its publicity drive have fostered the emergence of a small category of superchefs. They have benefited from the new collective passion for cooking, sometimes to the detriment of their less famous colleagues.

In the past, appearing in one or more guides was enough for recognition. The press did the rest. Today, television has changed the game. The winners - and some charismatic contestants - of *Top Chef*, *MasterChef*, *Great British Menu* and other shows for professionals quickly become as

62. <https://www.midilibre.fr/2020/10/11/gilles-goujon-je-veux-un-restaurant-le-plus-proche-possible-de-la-nature-9131258.php>



well if not better known than the veterans relying on guides. The requirements of the celebrity chef have evolved – now they're required to communicate carefully curated perspectives on cooking or society. A typical example of this about-turn can be seen in the Netflix series *Chef's Table*, which is popular for its stunning visuals. For three seasons, David Gelb's team chose to focus on the restaurants of famous chefs. But in the 2019 season the focus turned to the work of Mashama Bailey of The Grey in Savannah, USA, Dario Cecchini of Antica Macelleria in Panzano, Italy, Asma Khan of London's Darjeeling Express and Sean Brock of Husk in Charleston. They are remarkable chefs, and each has their own profile and principles, but they do not belong to the small group we'd traditionally think of as "stars". In 2020, *Chef's Table* went for barbecue specialists and released *Chef's Table BBQ*. So 85-year-old Texan Tootsie Tomantez and Mayan BBQ specialist Rosalia Chay Chuc follow up the internationally-renowned names Magnus Nilsson, Ben Shewry and Alex Atala. It's hard not to admire these men and women while they build fires and wield tongs.

Today's celebrity chef tends to be known for either their personality or their message. This is the case for Massimo Bottura, a Goodwill Ambassador for the UN Environment Programme, and Dominique Crenn, who is particularly active in environmental education and the fight against food waste. In this field chefs are more likely to find themselves giving a presentation such as a TED talk than in a kitchen.

While some chefs enjoy the limelight, there are some restaurateurs who shun it. The first so-called "democratic" restaurant – one without a chef - will open in 2021 in Budapest, Hungary. The owners of Onyx, Anna Niszkacs and Katalin Pinter of the



Gerbeaud Group, a mother-daughter duo, wanted their eleven kitchen employees to be able to work without hierarchical constraints, and to take a vote if there's a disagreement. At least four people will occupy key positions in this future "experiential workshop". Onyx, which has been recognised over and over by guides and media, will no longer be centered around a single person. In November 2020, on the final night of the former Onyx, the furniture was destroyed with a hammer to make way for the new concept. Quite a performance. The restaurateurs will be judged for themselves: do we need a "military order" as Pierre Gagnaire calls it, or can quality be produced day after day in a more democratic way? If their experiment succeeds, Niszkacs and Pinter might become the first "super-restaurateurs" since Jean-Claude Vrinat at Taillevent in Paris<sup>63, 64</sup>.

63. Orsolya Haranghy, *The day the two Michelin-starred Onyx restaurants were smashed with a hammer*, Dining Guide, 29/11/2020, , <https://diningguide.hu/a-nap-amikor-kalapacsal-szetverték-a-két-michelin-csillagos-onyx-ettermet/?sponsor=samsung>

64. [https://next.liberation.fr/food/2020/12/18/je-n-ai-pas-du-tout-envie-d-etre-un-artiste-maudit\\_1809101](https://next.liberation.fr/food/2020/12/18/je-n-ai-pas-du-tout-envie-d-etre-un-artiste-maudit_1809101)

Penelope, Simone, Cesare & Greta Zanoni



## new dining

### HOME COOKING GOES HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH DINING OUT

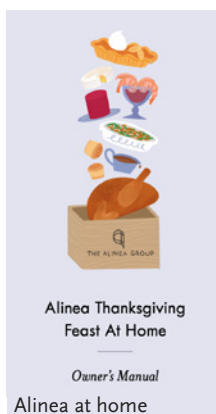
The first lockdown marked the great return of home cooking. Many regular restaurant customers have rediscovered the pleasure of cooking, while remaining mindful of the price and provenance of good produce. And home cooks can make their own decisions about hygiene. This renaissance has also increased interest in cooking shows and lessons. In some countries, such as the United States, parts of the middle class have chosen to invest in home improvements to make being stuck inside more enjoyable. New kitchens have been popular. And on top of enjoyment, cooking at home brings with it the sensation of staying safe, because it cuts down on travel and human contacts.

These improved kitchens call for a range of utensils and products which have added value. Traditionally used by professionals, sous-vide baths and ingredients which have been prepared, peeled, candied or fermented are now sought after by individuals. This phenomenon will be global: according to Hunter PR's *Food Study Special Report*, 54% of Americans are cooking more often than before and 51% want to continue the practice in the long term. According to IFOP, 42% of French people cooked more during the first lockdown. This new revenue stream is up for grabs among chefs, but especially for kitchen and cooking gadget manufacturers<sup>65, 66</sup>.

65. Hunter PR, *Food Study Special Report*, [https://www.hunterpr.com/foodstudy\\_coronavirus/](https://www.hunterpr.com/foodstudy_coronavirus/)

66. Ifop study for Darwin Nutrition conducted via the internet from 24 to 27 April 2020 among a sample of 3045 French people aged 18 and over live in metropolitan France  
[www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/analyse\\_ifop\\_Darwin\\_FK\\_2020\\_05.06.pdf](http://www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/analyse_ifop_Darwin_FK_2020_05.06.pdf)

## THE GREAT RETURN OF TRADITIONAL AND BOURGEOIS COOKING



“As ever in times of great uncertainty, we think about what has proven its worth. Instead of a menu of many dishes, we prefer something that allows us to feast,” says Manfred Kohnke, former editor-in-chief of the *Gault & Millau Germany* guide. “In German restaurants, there are now large, generous cuts or, in the spirit of the times, dishes to share, such as a capon with black truffle under the skin, veal kidneys wrapped in fat, or a stuffed veal breast”<sup>67</sup>. Kohnke mentions a few names: “Jan Hartwig, from the Atelier restaurant at the Bayerischer Hof Hotel in Munich, has recently been serving a Dombé duckling, roasted in the traditional way, on the bone.” The chef confirms this repositioning. “Completely old school”<sup>68</sup>, no sous-vide. For me, it’s real food! Even a trained chimpanzee can cook a pigeon breast in a plastic bag for twelve minutes at 65 degrees at the touch of a button.” Clemens Rambichler, 32, is serving strong, broth-based sauces at Waldhotel Sonnhora. Torsten Michel, from Schwarzwaldstube, has put hare back on the menu, and the foie gras sauce bound with rabbit blood. Even Christian Hümb, the 39-year-old pastry chef at the Dolder Grand in Zurich and pioneer of avant-garde vegetable desserts, has changed his tune and is turning out Black Forest gâteau, *tarte au citron* and *tarte au chocolat*.

As the success of Odette at Home in Singapore shows, the renaissance of great bourgeois cooking is not limited to Western Europe. In Chicago, Alinéa, renowned for its avant-garde cuisine, has maintained business with takeaways such as a \$34.95 beef Wellington with wild mushroom duxelles, red wine sauce, horseradish cream, 50/50 Robuchon mashed potatoes, dark chocolate pudding with vanilla whipped cream, and a hazelnut crumble to top it off.

In France, Gilles Tournadre, the best-known chef of Norman gastronomy, plans to transform his restaurant in January 2021, going for “more conviviality and cooking that smells great and has roots”<sup>69</sup>. In a similar vein, Marc Veyrat has announced the opening of a nostalgic bistro designed to engage all the senses after the lockdown period, featuring truffle soup, *pot-au-feu* or lamb shoulder cooked over the fire. “When it’s over, we’ll need human warmth, to meet up and rediscover each other and our friendships over family recipes. It will be a return to tradition, but with my stamp on it”<sup>70</sup>.

67. Interview 28/10/2020

68. [https://actu.fr/normandie/rouen\\_76540/a-rouen-le-restaurant-etoile-gill-va-fermer-pour-renaitre-sous-une-autre-formule\\_34835530.html](https://actu.fr/normandie/rouen_76540/a-rouen-le-restaurant-etoile-gill-va-fermer-pour-renaitre-sous-une-autre-formule_34835530.html)

69. <https://www.lefigaro.fr/gastronomie/changement-de-ligne-radical-au-grand-vefour-20210108>

70. Interview 27.12.20





## NEW TYPES OF RESTAURANTS

A number of small cliques are beginning to emerge. Gathered into small committees, the members agree to trust each other, even in matters of health and hygiene. Like British clubs, membership implies certain givens, often based on clear social or professional categories. This form of self-selection is already at work in some large companies, especially in the luxury sector. Other chefs have opted for the creation of “business clubs” to offer private spaces and serve meals during confinement. In December 2020, American Express France offered its customers private dinners “with well-known chefs”.

## SMALLER RESTAURANT SPENDS

It is likely that tomorrow’s customers will spend less money in restaurants. This means the average spend, not the few out-of-the-ordinary tables, as the future is uncertain for many regular customers. Wealthy clients, spared or even enriched by the crisis, will keep a low profile. At the same time, large companies will continue to reduce the budgets allocated to their business dinners, gradually aligning themselves with the prices of *bistronomic* restaurants. Eating well will always be important, but showing one’s status by eating the most fashionable chef’s food may become less important.

## THE SOCIAL NETWORK

Every movement generates its own counter-movement. After this period deprived of human contact, customers will seek out the opportunity to meet up and share meals. As soon as the pandemic ends – at least as soon as the anxious atmosphere begins to wane - customers will want to spend the money they’ve saved during the lockdowns, happy, finally, to be able to live again. Imagine something like the roaring twenties which followed the Spanish flu and the First World War. This appetite for life could lead to some years of madness built around a food culture committed to sociability and pleasure. Not everything will go back to “the way it was”, but it is likely that once customers are free to return to restaurants, they’ll opt for good fun over a fermentation workshop.

# conclusion

## FINE-DINING, NEW-DINING ?



Psychologists say it takes us between 18 and 254 days to make or break a habit. During the lockdowns, then, anyone who spends time in restaurants has had time to adopt new habits:<sup>71, 72</sup>

- The habit of cooking at home
- The habit of eating at home
- The habit of eating quickly
- The habit of mixing up mealtimes
- The habit of choosing ingredients with care
- The habit of managing the food budget differently
- The habit of not eating out

Even without this last point, these habits – only some of which will last long-term - are hardly compatible with the model of many high-end restaurants. Built around the chef, this model often depends on a highly individualistic vision of the kitchen. Service, organizing the pass, timing in the dining room and the way the dishes are explained can sometimes give the customer the feeling of

being the pawn in a chef's performance. According to the *New York Times*, «For decades, the chef was a star at the center of the kitchen. In the same way the auteur theory in film frames the director as the author of a movie's creative vision, the chef has been considered entirely responsible for the success of a restaurant. Everyone else – line cooks, servers, dishwashers, even diners – is background, there to support that vision»<sup>73</sup>. »

The *New York Times* is not alone. *Fine Dining Lovers*, who cannot be accused of disliking high-end restaurants, has published a ringing article about the death of the celebrity chef. "Driven back to the kitchen by sheer necessity, our gregarious stage personas are feeling the deep sense of loss after the dogs barked and the caravans moved on. Restaurants that only existed due to tourism were shuttered, and those that were an essential part of their community have continued to thrive as they celebrate the long and meaningful relationship with their customers"<sup>74</sup>.

71. GARDNER B, LALLY P, WARDLE J. *Making health habitual: the psychology of 'habit-formation' and general practice*. Br J Gen Pract. 2012 Dec;62(605):664-6. doi: 10.3399/bjgp12X659466. PMID: 23211256; PMCID: PMC3505409.

72. Philippa Lally, Cornelia H. M. VAN JAARSVELD, Henry W. W. POTT, Jane WARDLE, *How are habits formed: Modelling habit formation in the real world*, European Journal of Social Psychology, No 40, issue 6, pages 998-1009, 16 July 2009 <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.674>

73. Tejal RAO, *Twilight of the Imperial Chef*, New York Times, 04/08/2020 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/dining/chef-restaurant-culture.html>

74. The secret Chef: The Curse of the Celebrity Chef, Finie Dining Lovers, 18.11.20, <https://www.finedininglovers.com/article/secret-chef-celebrity-chefs>

The current crisis highlights another aspect of the auteur theory. Many restaurants have gradually moved away from their obvious customer base and are no longer attracting genuine locals – the doctor, the pharmacist, the shopkeeper. Sometimes this is because of the price, but more often because the menus served are too conceptual and favour a chef's vision over a customer's enjoyment. If high-end restaurants fail to reconnect with their local clientele, they will suffer significant losses in future crises, regardless of their size.

To attract these indispensable customers, it will be necessary to cook *for* them, rather than against other chefs in a kind of self-referential competition within high-end gastronomy.

In an environment less amenable to spending, the arrival of ghost kitchens and the emergence of new competitors are forcing restaurants to reinvent themselves. One of the options is to create high-end restaurants to serve the customer's needs and desires. The chef, our protagonist and in recent years the only one on the stage, will then be able to share his limelight with collaborators, and even with his guests, who will enjoy talking around a table without listening to endless presentations. The smart chef will adapt, simplify, plan and sometimes improvise according to what the customer asks for. This approach should exceed expectations.

Like Hermès, which to this day offers saddles designed for the rider, and Louis Vuitton, whose capacity for customization is world-renowned, or the golden age tailors of Savile Row, tomorrow's

fine dining restaurant will benefit from listening to its customers. Luxury houses have realized that the real high-end is the unique, personalized<sup>75</sup> piece. Anything else, regardless of quality, is mass market. In other words, there's an opportunity here to offer customers a bespoke service instead of the off-the-peg version available to everyone. But at the moment this logic is hard to find in high-end catering, because it is too busy betting on putting on a spectacle.

The personalized and customizable service pays homage to the merits of the traditional role of the innkeeper and is reminiscent of the early aims of the restaurant when it emerged in Paris at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. To be a worthy heir to this long history, tomorrow's restaurant must embrace certain standards, some of which are non-negotiable to us.

- A safe and calm work environment without violence, abuse or harassment
- Greater inclusiveness in the kitchen and front of house, offering genuine career opportunities for women and for young people from all backgrounds and races
- Use of premium products which are local, organic, grown consciously or raised with high welfare standards
- A kitchen free from industrial additives and chemical flavorings

Some restaurants are already applying these criteria with care, talent and success. In the public interest, and to build a bright future for the business, it is high time they are extended to the whole sector.

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# acknowledgements

Moët Hennessy



# contributors

## **Co-founder & Editor-in-chief**

Joerg Zipprick

## **UK Editor**

Sophie Morris

## **Creative Directors**

Ana Sánchez

Anaïs de Gracia

## **Sub-editor**

Édouard Cointreau

## **Project Management**

Julie Millet

## **With the contribution of:**

Ézéchiél Zerah

# contacts

## **Founder & CEO**

Philippe Faure

## **Managing Director**

Hélène Pietrini

## **Co-founder & Editor-in-chief**

Joerg Zipprick

## **International relations**

## **& Marketing Director**

Stéphanie Kim

## **Director in China**

Lucie Liu Yi • 柳怡

## **Digital Director**

Charles Guillot

## **Press contact**

Agence Pascale Venot

Coline Le Houezec

coline@pascalevenot.fr

+33(0)1 53 53 40 50 / +33(0)6 61 20 59 42

## **Visit our website**

[www.laliste.com](http://www.laliste.com)

## **La Liste**

La Tournelle de Béthune

22 quai de Béthune

75004 Paris

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