

# Lux-cious



**F**OR the well-heeled gourmand, a cornucopia of wondrous and exciting dining options is ready to be served. Both in Singapore and abroad, a mind-boggling menu of culinary delights and experiences await. Some of them are so sought after that the restaurants are reserved months ahead.

Here is a tasting platter of the luxuriously luscious possibilities.

In Singapore, Restaurant Andre is the only restaurant to make it on The Diners Club World's 50 Best Restaurants list. Last year, it climbed up 14 rungs to number 32.

French-trained Taiwan-born chef Andre Chiang tells *Wealth*: "Restaurant Andre has been among the World's 50 best restaurants and best restaurant in Singapore since its opening in 2010. I always believed that Singapore deserved to have a signature restaurant on the world map, highlighting the uniqueness of where we are and who we are."

Chef Chiang decided on his so-called Octaphilosophy when he started his own restaurant. "Octaphilosophy's eight elements are pure, salt, south, texture, artisan, memory, terroir and unique because not only freshest ingredients can trigger creation. These are the eight essential elements that are continuously giving me a different perspective whenever I look at an ingredient."

Currently, the restaurant only offers degustation menus, and this is unlikely to change.

"I don't think there will be an *a la carte* menu in the future. The freshest ingredients need to be enjoyed immediately so our dishes change very frequently. Therefore, I think an *a la carte* concept is not suitable for our operation," says chef Chiang.

**RESTAURANT ANDRE**  
(Above and right) Chef Chiang decided on his so-called Octaphilosophy when he started his own restaurant



**CÉLAVI**  
(Right) The US\$2 million dining experience includes a 2.08 carat fancy vivid blue diamond ring

PHOTOS: RESTAURANT ANDRE



# dining

A tasting platter of the luxuriously luscious possibilities for the well-heeled gourmand

BY RAHITA ELIAS

It has two lunch menus – a five-course S\$198++ and an eight course S\$350++ – served on Wednesdays and Fridays only. The dinner menu, consisting of between 15 and 20 dishes, costs S\$350++. You will need to make a deposit of at least S\$50 to secure your reservation.

Russia's World Diamonds Group and Cé La Vi Singapore are serving up a literally sparkling menu. Costing US\$2 million per couple, the eight-hour experience begins with a 45-minute scenic helicopter ride over Singapore, followed by a chauffeured Rolls-Royce drive and then a luxury private cruise.

The duo are whisked off to Cé La Vi's 57th floor eyrie for an 18-course modern Asian degustation menu, including fresh oysters, caviar, *foie gras* and Mishima sirloin. These decadent dishes will be washed down with 44- and 55-year-old vintage wines. Topping the evening are a 2.08 carat fancy vivid blue diamond ring and a fireworks display. The blue diamond ring has been named after and endorsed by celebrity Jane Seymour who was in Singapore last year.

"This US\$2 million dining experience, done jointly with our esteemed partner, World of Diamond Group, is the zenith of all experiences," declares David Sarner, Cé La Vi's chief executive officer.

Even if you have money to burn, this experience is only available to "a qualified individual" at the discretion of Cé La Vi and World of Diamonds.

Over in Japan, there is certainly no shortage of Michelin-starred restaurants. A total of 227 restaurants garnered at least one star. A couple also made it to The World's 50 Best Restaurants list. Three-star Ryugin is also ranked 31st in the World's 50 Best

Restaurants, while two-star Narisama is eighth.

The World's 50 Best Restaurant says of Ryugin: "It's hard to say what a typical dish is when the menu changes daily, but what is consistent is freshness – dishes are decided each morning depending on what is available at the markets.

"Among what you might find are bamboo shoots and wild herbs in spring, sweetfish in summer and the wild mushrooms of autumn. Signature dishes include A Message from the Coast of Japan, and Sanuki Wagyu Beef and Matsutake Mushrooms in Toban Sukiyaki."

On Narisama, it says: "Almost all the ingredients used at Narisawa are Japanese, and the chef visits all the producers and liaises directly with them. The menu comprises sustainable ingredients that are faithful to the environment and the seasons so a dinner at Narisawa is a journey in Japanese seasonality and culture."

Many high-end restaurants in Japan, including Ryugin, do not accept overseas reservations directly. Reservations will have to be done via your hotel. Narisawa does offer online reservation for diners from abroad. The reservation system opens for each month at 11am on the first business day of the previous month. For a table in May, you will be able to make a reservation from the first work day of April.

Cancellation policies are strict. Ryugin charges 20,000 yen (S\$250) including tax for same-day cancellations. It charges the same amount per absent guest if fewer than the confirmed number turn up.

Topping the World's 50 Best Restaurant 2016 is Osteria Francescana in

Italy. Unlike many top restaurants, it offers an *a la carte* as well as two tasting menus. As at end-January, the restaurant is fully booked until end-April. Reservations for May will begin on Feb 1 at 10am.

The World's 50 Best Restaurants says: "Chef-owner Massimo Bottura is renowned for his twists on traditional Italian culinary ingredients – his Five Ages of Parmigiano Reggiano sees the region's famed cheese served in forms and textures most diners will never have previously experienced."

Another world-class restaurant is Noma from Copenhagen. However, you will likely have to wait till it reopens in Denmark in the second half of the year. The two-Michelin star restaurant is packing its bags at the end of February and heading to Tulum, Mexico.

You can forget about trying to sneak in before it moves as the restaurant is already fully booked. Its Mexican pop-up is also fully booked for its seven weeks there, starting from April 12. If you do get on the waiting list, the Noma Mexico menu package will cost US\$750 including tax.

After that, Noma will return home. However, a company spokesman tells *Wealth* the reopening date has not been confirmed. He adds that Noma will open at a new location but declines to say where.

Clearly, a dining experience like this is highly sought after. If you have the money then make sure you make your reservations as soon as you can. **W**



PHOTOS: CELA VI



PHOTOS: NOMA

**NOMA**  
(Left and above) The two-Michelin star restaurant's Mexican pop-up is fully booked for its seven weeks there, starting from April 12