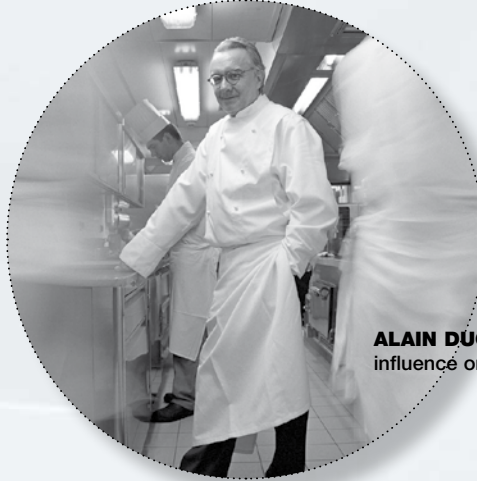


# THE MENU



**ALAIN DUCASSE** has a global influence on culinary trends

When  
Alain Ducasse and  
Pierre Gagnaire combine  
their formidable culinary talents it  
is an event not to be missed. We  
brought the two legendary French  
chefs together to collaborate  
exclusively on our unique  
Centurion Menu



**PIERRE GAGNAIRE** has extended the boundaries of French cuisine

### PARIS. HOW TO CHOOSE? HEPBURN OR MONROE?

Porsche or Ferrari? Here in the City of Light, lucky diners can select between Alain Ducasse and Pierre Gagnaire for two completely different versions of the meal of a lifetime. Normally, the choice would be a tricky one, a matter of mood and taste, but this time it's easy; the two legendary chefs have collaborated to create one mouthwatering menu exclusively for Centurion Magazine.

The pair have opted for three emblematic and truly French products, chosen, as Gagnaire says, "to create a single theme". For their collaboration, Ducasse had the honour of selecting the products at the heart of the menu: appetizers with truffles (*bien sûr!*), main courses using vin jaune – a dry 'yellow wine' from the Jura made from savagnin grapes – and desserts featuring quince.

The combined résumé for the two chefs reads like a laundry list of some of the best restaurants around the world. Gagnaire, based in Paris where he runs his eponymous Michelin three-star restaurant at the Hôtel Balzac and the fish-centric Gaya, also runs high-end restaurants in London, Hong Kong and Tokyo. Most recently, he opened the Hôtel de Charme les Airelles in Courchevel, France and the Reflets par Pierre Gagnaire in Dubai.

Along with what he calls his high-end 'signature' restaurants in Paris, Monaco and Tokyo, Alain Ducasse runs other restaurants in Hong Kong, Mauritius, Saint Tropez, New York and Las Vegas. Add to this the November 2007 opening of Alain Ducasse at the Dorchester in London and the January opening of Adour in the St Regis hotel in New York, and the total is well over twenty. Perhaps the most interesting news, however, was the January reopening of Le Jules Verne in the Eiffel Tower, now under the auspices of Ducasse and his team.

When discussing this menu, Ducasse plunges directly into his produce choices and in the end, it's the people who supply his produce that he counts on the most. "A great product is never something from an industrial group. It's the work of individuals," he says. "Without them as a base, you can't do anything."

"You might find truffles elsewhere in the world," he adds, returning to his home country, "but they are perfectly integrated in the

spirit of French cuisine." Looking like a brightly-coloured ingot, his Bresse chicken with black truffle and foie gras jelly is a modern combination of three classic French ingredients. "Vin jaune is uncommon," he says, referring to the wine's intense aromas that can range from minerals to nuts and honey. "It's something very specific and very French. It makes a unique sauce that reduces very well and you can add a little bit more at the end to make it shine."

"Quince has a very particular flavour and I love the unique taste, but you've got to give it a 'boost'," he adds, borrowing the last word from English. "There are fruits and vegetables which don't have 'talent' on their own, but it's a great accessory." His boost comes in a tart with grapefruit and a caramel tea cream.

Speaking with both chefs, I get the sense that whether they are in Paris, Hong Kong, the US or elsewhere, Ducasse and Gagnaire are ambassadors for French cuisine, yet Ducasse always defers to the product. Were they to make the menu on another continent, the dishes would be completely different. "First, we look to see what's around us," says Ducasse. "We try to import as little as possible. In the US we import nothing. The sea bass (thought of here as a French staple) are caught on long lines off of New York."

"The French system is more based on the *savoir faire* of how to deal with flavour," he says, making a direct reference to the French flair for sauces and an indirect one to his poached-roasted red emperor (a white-fleshed snapper found primarily near Australia), mashed and crispy black Congo potatoes and vin jaune sauce. "With a code and a feeling, there's alchemy."

Then Ducasse spices things up a little: "Italian food has a more specific taste," he says, grinning with the knowledge that the comment would raise the hackles of his French colleagues if he didn't explain. "The real 'French touch,'" he adds proudly, "is method, professionalism, rigour and organisation."

For Gagnaire's part in the diplomatic process, he uses a similar alchemy to remind the French ►

(and the rest of the world) what makes their cuisine great. “We’re in a country that’s wondering about itself,” he says, referencing everything from politics and social issues to food and wine. “I want to show that we still know how to do it.”

His secret to rejuvenating *l’art de vivre*? Do what you love. “Do it honestly and with energy,” he says. Wherever he is or whatever he’s working with, Gagnaire has a clear vision of how this should come together. “My style is joyous, immediate and tries to tell a story. I want to make people dream and bring them somewhere they don’t know.”

This becomes clear even before the Centurion menu is set and Gagnaire begins brainstorming for his recipes, reeling off some of his favourite products like oysters, game and cauliflower with a childlike enthusiasm. It almost seems like he pulls certain combinations out of thin air, but listening to him, he’s clearly reaching into his soul. I ask about the combination of haddock and truffles, artichoke and celery root that he’s proposed and he replies with a quick “Why not? It’s not logic. It’s my personal taste.”

Perhaps the most interesting and challenging part of the story Gagnaire is trying to tell with the Centurion menu is what he calls his “Liebig”. Named after a 19th century German scientist, a Liebig is one of the fruits of Gagnaire’s monthly collaboration with French molecular gastronomist Hervé This, who describes it as a “physically gelled emulsion” based on nothing but oil, water and gelatin.

“The taste?” asks This on Gagnaire’s website, “It’s clearly pathetic if it’s just water and a neutral oil, but if the ‘water’ is a lobster bisque, and the oil and olive oil marinated with ginger and orange? Mmm! That could be good.” Inspired by his friend, Gagnaire proposes a Liebig made with vin jaune served with grilled scallops, salsify and Jerusalem artichokes. Mmm, indeed.

“People like Ducasse and me, it’s up to us to show these good things,” concludes Gagnaire. It seems to be working. “In Asia, they are very interested in *l’art de vivre*. Particularly the French style.” I swear that even over the phone, I could hear him crack a smile.

Joe Ray

ALAIN DUCASSE – STARTER

## BRESSE CHICKEN IN A BLACK TRUFFLE AND FOIE GRAS JELLY

### INGREDIENTS

3 Bresse chicken breasts  
3 Bresse chicken drumsticks  
1 lobe duck foie gras, 500 g  
75g black truffles cut into strips 3 mm thick  
1 ½ tablespoons truffle juice  
2 teaspoons Barolo vinegar  
70g chicken fat  
50g pickles, julienned  
40g black truffle, julienned  
50g shallots, chopped  
150ml chicken jelly  
2 ¾ tablespoons truffle juice vinaigrette  
2 tablespoons chicken juice  
Fleur de sel

### CHICKEN BREASTS

- Skin the breasts. Remove the nerves from the foie gras and form 3 identical sausages with plastic wrap. Marinate the breasts and the foie gras with the truffle juice, fleur de sel and freshly ground pepper. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.
- Line a square mould, 17 cm per side, with cling wrap and fill, alternating layers of chicken, foie gras and truffles.
- Cover the mould with plastic, then vacuum seal (seal 6, pressure 2.8). Cook in 59°C (138°F) water until the central temperature reaches 58°C (136°F). When cooked, cool on ice for 24 hours.

### CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS

- Remove the nerves from the drumsticks. Prick with the tip of a knife, brush with the melted chicken fat, and vacuum seal (seal 6, pressure 2.8). Cook in 60°C (140°F) water for 2 hours. Chill on ice and separate the upper and lower halves.
- Roast the lower drumsticks skin-side down in some olive oil. Caramelize them in a trickle of Barolo vinegar and slice into matchstick-size pieces. Skin the upper drumstick, and cut into slices.
- Mince the skin finely, mix with the julienned black truffle, julienned pickles and the minced shallots. Season with truffle juice vinaigrette, chicken juice and freshly ground pepper.
- Arrange the slices of upper drumsticks in the bottom of large Versailles cups. Top with the julienned garnish and coat with the chicken jelly. Finish with 2 sticks of meat from the lower drumsticks.

### GARNISH

50g baby spinach  
21 sliced shallots  
250g cleaned chanterelle mushrooms  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 tablespoons truffle juice  
20g truffles, minced  
2 tablespoons seasoning olive oil

- Mix the lemon and truffle juices, the minced truffle and 1 ½ tablespoons of olive oil. Add the chanterelle mushrooms and marinate.
- Wash the baby spinach. Season with a dash of olive oil, add the shallot slices and mix well.

### PRESENTATION

- Cut the pressed chicken into 2cm slices, and dress on large plates.
- Place a small bouquet of baby spinach on each plate. Arrange the marinated chanterelles and sauce with a trickle of chicken juice.
- Dress with some truffle juice vinaigrette. Serve the Versailles cups separately with toasted brown bread.



*“Truffles are perfectly integrated into the spirit of French cuisine”*

ALAIN DUCASSE

*“Vin jaune makes a very unique sauce”*  
ALAIN DUCASSE



ALAIN DUCASSE – MAIN COURSE

**POACHED/ROASTED RED EMPEROR,  
MASHED AND CRISPY BLACK CONGO POTATOES,  
VIN JAUNE/VEGETABLE SAUCE****INGREDIENTS**

*160g fillet of red emperor*  
*300g black Congo potatoes*  
*50g clarified butter*

- Peel the potatoes and cut the longest into thin slices
- Cover a baking tray with a baking sheet and brush on the melted clarified butter. Place on the potatoes so they are slightly overlapping on the paper. Brush them with clarified butter, season with salt and put another piece of paper on top.
- Cook in the oven at 140°C (285°F) for 35 minutes. Potatoes should be crispy.
- Cut the rest of the potatoes into 5cm pieces and cook in water with some olive oil, salt, garlic and long pepper.
- When the potatoes are cooked, remove them from the water, crush with a fork and season with some olive oil.
- Serve on the side mixed with the crispy potatoes.

**VIN JAUNE SAUCE**

*10g brunoise of carrot*  
*10g brunoise of celery*  
*10g brunoise of yellow zucchini*  
*1g brunoise of green zucchini*  
*100ml vegetable stock*  
*100ml chicken stock*  
*300ml vin jaune*  
*20g butter*  
*Salt*

- Cook the brunoise of zucchini in salted boiling water for 2 minutes and cool in ice water. Preserve.
- Sweet the brunoise of carrot and celery with the butter, deglaze with the vin jaune and reduce.
- Add the chicken and vegetable stock and reduce. Add some butter to thicken.
- Add the rest of the garnish and season with salt.

**PRESENTATION:**

Put the sauce on the plate and add the fish on top.  
Serve the mashed and crispy potatoes on the side.

ALAIN DUCASSE – DESSERT

## QUINCE, TEA AND BITTER GRAPEFRUIT TART

### CARAMEL TEA CREAM

100g sugar  
1 vanilla bean  
200g cream  
380ml milk  
20g Earl Grey tea  
90g egg yolk  
50g sugar  
40g pastry cream flour  
200g butter

- Cook the sugar and the vanilla bean until it caramelises, then pour the warm cream slowly inside.
- Boil the milk, add the tea, cover and let infuse for 5 minutes. Strain it, add some more milk to return to the original amount (380ml) and pour this milk/tea in the caramel cream.
- Mix the yolks with the other part of sugar, add the pastry cream flour, mix with the first mixture (caramel, cream, milk, tea) and bring it to boil for 1 minute.
- Allow to cool until at about 40°C (105°F) and then add the butter, blend it with the hand blender and store in the fridge.

### GRAPEFRUIT SORBET

700ml water  
800g sugar  
300g dry glucose  
2800ml grapefruit juice  
5 grapefruit zests

- Zest and juice the grapefruits, boil the water with the sugar and dry glucose into a syrup. Allow to cool, then mix with the juice and zest.
- Pour the mix into an ice cream machine.

### GRAPEFRUIT MARMELADE

500g grapefruit segments  
150g grapefruit slices  
1 vanilla bean  
150g sugar

- Slowly cook all the ingredients in a covered pot.
- When the majority of the slices is cooked, remove the lid and cook until the marmalade becomes thicker and a little darker.

### POACHED QUINCE

1000ml water  
800g sugar  
150ml lemon juice  
1 quince

- Peel, core and seed the quince and slice it into 12 pieces.
- Boil the water and sugar and pour the quince inside. Once tender, remove half of the quince. The other half will continue to cook slowly to get more colour. Store in the fridge.

### QUINCE PASTE

1000g water,  
800g sugar,  
150g lemon juice  
1000g quince peel

- Core and seed the quince, then slice into pieces.
- Add to the sugar and water and cook slowly until the syrup is mostly evaporated.
- Blend with a hand blender and pour into a mould. Allow to cool and then cut into a brunoise.

### COCONUT SABLE DOUGH

400g butter  
80g egg yolks  
150g sugar  
5g salt  
75g shaved coconut  
75g almond flour  
300g flour

- Mix all the ingredients at room temperature, then cool in the fridge.
- Roll it to a 3mm thickness (in between 2 papers). Line a 9cm tart ring with the dough. With the remaining dough, cut out circles 8cm in diameter – this is for the tops of the tarts.
- Bake everything at 150°C (300°F).

### FINISHING THE DISH

- Brush the round tart tops with a mix of 50% cocoa butter and 50% melted white chocolate.
- Spread a 4mm-thick coating of the caramel tea cream onto the dough, then gently add the poached quince in thin slices, alternating the colours. Sprinkle some brunoise of quince paste onto the centre.
- Line the tart itself with a 5mm-thick coating of caramel tea cream, sprinkle with quince paste and then spread on grapefruit marmalade.
- Put the round tops with the slices of quince on top of the tarts, glaze with some left over quince syrup and sprinkle with the coconut. Place a scoop of sorbet on the centre of the tart.



*"Without [great produce], you can't do anything"*  
ALAIN DUCASSE



“Why not? It’s not logic. It’s my personal taste”

PIERRE GAGNAIRE

PIERRE GAGNAIRE – STARTER

**HADDOCK PETALS WITH CELERY ROOT, MACO ARTICHOKE AND BLACK TRUFFLES**

**INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PEOPLE**

*1kg of fresh haddock filet  
1 cooked artichoke heart, still slightly crunchy  
200g of cuttlefish fat, cut into 1cm cubes  
50g of minced truffles  
180g celery root  
2 teaspoons liquorice powder*

*Butter, olive oil, white port, balsamic white vinegar, spring water, lemon juice, fresh cream*

- Cut the haddock into thin ‘petals’ and place on a sheet of parchment paper with melted butter brushed on top. (Approximately 60g of haddock per petal),
- Cut the celery root into 1cm cubes and cook in a heavy saucepan with 100g butter, which has come to a foam. Cook for 5 minutes, occasionally adding a tablespoon or two of port to keep the butter from darkening. Season lightly with salt. Add the cuttlefish fat and truffle. Bake for 2 minutes again at 250°C (480°F). Let stand.
- Cut the artichoke hearts into small cubes, then add to the other ingredients. Add 2 tablespoons of port and balsamic.
- Sprinkle the haddock petals with a dash of olive oil and a few tablespoons of spring water with a touch of lemon. Place on the oven plate of a cold oven. Sprinkle a few tablespoons of lemon spring water and olive oil. Bake at 250°C (480°F) for 40 seconds. Keep the liquid that remains and make into a sauce with 25g fresh butter and 10ml of fresh cream.

**PRESENTATION:**

Place the artichoke/celery root mixture in a white shallow dish and place the haddock petals over the top. Pour the sauce over each plate at the table.





PIERRE GAGNAIRE – MAIN COURSE

### LIEBIG WITH VIN JAUNE SAUCE, ROOT VEGETABLES AND GRILLED SCALLOPS

#### INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PEOPLE

250g of Jerusalem artichoke  
 250g of salsify  
 30g of Smyrna raisins  
 12 large scallops (preferably from Santiago to Erquy)  
 150ml vin jaune  
 1 gelatine sheet  
 1 onion  
 2 small, trimmed bouquets garni

Lemon juice, fresh butter, olive oil

- Put the raisins to swell in the yellow wine.
- Cut the onion in half and grill both pieces, face down.
- Clean the salsify the Jerusalem artichokes, then cut into small pieces (about 5cm).
- Cook each separately in salted water, lemon and half of the grilled onion and bouquet garni until soft.

- Soak the gelatine sheet for 30 minutes in cold water, then drain and add to the hot vin jaune and raisins. Spread this mixture into a container surrounded by ice.
- Delicately incorporate 250ml of olive oil while mixing vigorously with a whisk. This method ensures a smooth, delicate and light product.
- Lightly butter the scallops and sear them quickly on a hot grill (10 seconds each side). Season with salt and ground pepper.
- With a wide paintbrush, brush a few strokes of melted butter onto four large white plates. Sprinkle these strokes with liquorice powder.

#### PRESENTATION:

Present vegetables and scallops in a dish.  
 Serve the Liebig in a sauce jug.

PIERRE GAGNAIRE – DESSERT

**CHEESECAKE, GELÉE DE COING ET FEUILLE DE KAKI SÉCHÉE**

**QUINCE JELLY:**

1 piece quince ~ 300g  
 100g sugar  
 300ml water  
 2 sheets of gelatine  
 1 persimmon

- Peel and core the quince, keeping the seeds and peel
- Cut the flesh into 0.5cm cubes
- In a pan, boil water, sugar, peel and seeds. Let infuse for 1 hour, then filter and return to the pan. Cook the quince cubes in the syrup until they are very soft
- Soak gelatine in cold water
- Filter the quince cubes out of the syrup, setting the cubes aside and again returning the syrup to the pan. Dissolve the gelatine in the hot syrup and let cool.

**PIE CRUST:**

100g Tuc biscuits  
 75g butter  
 50g sugar  
 25g flour  
 8ml spring water

- Grind the biscuits with a mixer. Add the butter, cream, sugar, flour and water and mix well to obtain a homogeneous mixture.
- Place between two sheets of baking paper and roll until 5mm thick.

- Let stand for 2 hours in refrigerator.
- Place in 4 bottomless tart moulds, 6cm in diameter
- Bake these 15 for minutes at 150°C (300°F). Allow to cool on a rack

**CHEESE CAKE:**

160g cream cheese  
 80g sugar  
 80g butter  
 100g eggs (whites and yolks mixed)

- Mix the cream, sugar, cream, butter and eggs in a large bowl until smooth.
- Top each pie shell with this cream and bake at 150°C (300°F) for 10 minutes, then let cool on a rack.

**DRIED PERSIMMONS**

- Rinse the persimmon with cold water
- Cut persimmon into 1mm-thick slices -
  - Sprinkle sugar over a non-stick baking dish. Place persimmon slices in the dish and dry in the oven for about 4 hours at 100°C (212°F)
  - Delicately remove the persimmon slices and store them in a sealed box to protect from moisture

**PRESENTATION:**

Mix the quince jelly with the quince cubes. Lay the cheesecake at the centre of four flat plates, spreading the quince jelly around it. Decorate with the persimmon slices.



“My style is joyous and immediate”

PIERRE GAGNAIRE