

oriol castro, eduard xatruch & mateu casañas



In a recent interview, Ferran Adrià wondered what some of the authentically creative restaurants around at the moment are: meaning those that are setting trends and are working to find new expressive and technical ways of cooking. Of course, we did not reveal any names, but in our opinion, the restaurant Disfrutar in Barcelona could very well be considered one of the most outstanding centers of culinary creativity that exist around the world. Captained by Oriol Castro, Eduard Xatruch and Mateu Casañas (three former executive chefs at elBulli), this restaurant has a fixed eye on the unexplored. Thanks to this, these three chefs have been able to take the OC'OO, a domestic machine from Korea, and glimpse into a new world of gastronomic possibilities, including pastry.



The OC'OO ways

In the basement under the restaurant, there is not only the winery and the production kitchen of Disfrutar, but there is also a special area dedicated to creativity and to archiving books, recipes, and tableware. It is in this area that we met with one of the members of the team researching the available bibliography, only in Korean, about the OC'OO machine, a tool that has entered the restaurant with a great force. Oriol Castro explains that the first machine was a gift from the Korean company Sempio Foods. 'We received it three years ago. We had a Korean employee and he used it, but when he left we stopped using the machine. In addition, everything coincided with the start-up of the restaurant. After two years we started working with it again. We were shocked by the results that we were able to obtain. From there, we started to do tests with many different products: vegetables, fruits...' They did all of this work without any kind of references. 'It has to be said that there are other great chefs in the country who also had this machine. We were not the first ones to use it, but we may be the ones who have worked with it the most by investigating in all of the potential it can have.'

The machine, which is widely implemented in Korean homes, allows you to combine pressure cooking with low temperature cooking. All of this with stable parameters and remaining very controlled, without letting the steam escape that is usually generated while cooking. It has no less than 14 programs, and each of them can reach from fermenting, to confit, macerations, stews, legumes, soups, reductions, or steam baths. As Oriol Castro explains, 'until now we have primarily focused on a couple of programs, which we call 'Aged Egg' and 'caramelization', but each program gives us a wide range of possibilities. Now we are in the process of learning about each function, understanding what it does and how it works, in order to evolve.'

Because Oriol, Eduard and Mateu are not satisfied by only obtaining excellent results, they want to go further and deepen the causes that have led them there. As they explained, the OC'OO works with pressure and with temperature: 'the machine can reach anywhere from 40°C to 95°C more or less, although due to pressure, this temperature can rise slightly.'

Another one of the culinary possibilities that the machine has to offer comes from the liquids that the ingredients give off. And, as the chefs pointed out, in the absence of evaporation, a very interesting juice extraction is created.

Oriol Castro also pointed out the healthy virtues of the OC'OO, one of the reasons why this machine is widely used in South Korea. Among these virtues, the possibility of not adding fat or the fact that Maillard reaction is avoided.

Encouraged by the potential of the OC'OO, the Disfrutar team (special mentions to the executive chef Nil Dulcet), are also running tests that will transcend what is properly haute cuisine, thinking about the implementation of the appliance in domestic reality: 'You have to explore what can be done. For now, what we are doing is learning, breaking down, and acquiring knowledge. But the advantages for the day to day use of this machine in the home are evident. You can leave anything cooking under control and at a low temperature.' In fact, that is precisely what they do at Disfrutar, programming the machines so that throughout the night the processes are being performed.



Vanilla/celery with gorgonzola, walnut and green apple

After 24 hours in the OC'OO using the 'Aged Egg' program, it is possible to transform the celery both visually and gustatorily. Then the black celery is dehydrated so as to obtain a product which visually resembles vanilla very much. This dish, which works as a revisited Waldorf salad, is completed with clarified apple juice, a whipped gorgonzola cream, an apple sorbet, cocoa-flavored gel and shelled soft walnuts.

For 10 people

'Extra soft' almonds

200 g Marcona almond, raw and shelled
400 g water

Place the almonds and water in the OC'OO machine without the strainer and run the 'Aged Egg' program for 7 hours. Once the program has finished, with the help of a spoon transfer the almonds to a different container being very careful so that they don't break. Damp the almonds with two tablespoons of the cooking water to prevent them from drying out and store in the refrigerator. Reserve the remaining cooking water for the vinaigrette.

Almond vinaigrette

260 g 'extra soft' almond cooking water
12 g sherry vinegar
14 g virgin roasted almond oil
2.4 g salt

Mix all the ingredients, readjust the amount salt and acid if needed and reserve in the refrigerator.

Vanilla oil

50 g virgin corn oil
1 u vanilla bean

Split the vanilla bean lengthwise and remove all the seed with the help of a paring knife. Place the corn oil together with the vanilla seeds and the vanilla bean in a vacuum bag. Vacuum pack and cook at 60°C for 1 hour. Leave to set at room temperature for 3 hours and refrigerate for 24 hours. Pass through a fine sieve, pressing thoroughly so as to make sure the vanilla seeds pass through it. Transfer the vanilla oil to a squeeze bottle.

Almond milk

100 g Marcona almond, crushed
110 g water

Combine the water and almond and crush with the help of a handheld blender. Allow to set in the refrigerator for 24 hours. After that, crush in a blend until a paste is obtained. Pass this paste through a cheesecloth to obtain a smooth, tasty almond milk.

Almond cream

100 g almond milk
salt
10 g water
0.1 u 2-g gelatin sheets

Melt the gelatin hydrated in the water. Add the almond milk, mix and add the desired salt. Transfer to a Pacojet bowl and freeze. Once frozen, churn and allow to thaw in the refrigerator for 1 hour without breaking its texture.

Garlic oil

100 g extra virgin olive oil
1 u head of garlic

Remove the garlic cloves and smash them unpeeled. Mix the smashed garlic cloves with the oil and confit at 80°C for 3 hours. Strain and reserve.

Other

10 g roasted almond paste
10 u soft Marcona almonds, skinned
5 g virgin bitter almond oil
salt flakes



FINISHING AND SERVING

Heat 5 'extra soft' almonds in a salamander.

Place the 5 hot almonds in a soup bowl and, among them, 1 soft almond.

Emulsify the almond vinaigrette with the help of a handheld blender. Sauce the almonds with two generous spoonfuls of vinaigrette.

Place a spoonful of almond cream on the right of the dish and, opposite, place a little bit of roasted almond paste.

On top of the 'extra soft' almond, place a drop of vanilla oil, on top of two other almonds, place drops of bitter almond oil, and finally on the remaining almond some salt flakes.

Finish by sprinkling the vinaigrette with some drops of garlic oil and serve.



'Extra soft' almonds in vinaigrette



This dessert is based on such a successfully combination as strawberries with whipped cream with the aim to surprise through the texture of the strawberry raisin. As Oriol Castro explains, 'we always try to get a new technique understood on the plate in an easy way.'

For 10 people

Black strawberry raisins

10 u strawberries, large
200 g fondant

Wash the strawberries with water and remove the stem. Place the washed strawberries in the pot of the OC'OO without the strainer attachment and run the 'honey caramelization' program for 6 hours. After the 6 hours, cook for an additional 6 hours. Open the OC'OO and remove the strawberries being very carefully so that they don't break, strain then and place on a dehydrator mat. Dehydrate at 65°C for 4 hours.

Crystalline strawberry juice

800 g strawberries, ripe

Wash the strawberries with water and remove the stem. Liquidize the strawberries and pass the resulting juice through a strainer with some paper towel. Reserve the obtained crystalline strawberry juice in the refrigerator.

Kirsch chantilly

100 g whipping cream
1 g Albuwhip Sosa (albumin powder)
30 g kirsch

Combine the albumin powder and whipping cream and whip. Gradually add the kirsch in very small amounts so that the cream does not collapse and a chantilly texture is obtained. Reserve in the refrigerator.

FINISHING AND PRESENTATION

Place a lukewarm black strawberry raisin on the plate.

Next to it, place a quenelle of 5 g of kirsch chantilly.

In a separate glass, serve 20 g of chilled crystalline strawberry juice.



Black strawberry raisin with kirsch chantilly

This creation shows how powerful a petit four can be.
The aim is to surprise by turning white chocolate into dark one. When it comes to taste, toasted and caramelized notes of a singular character are obtained, which nowadays are very fashionable among the chocolate manufacturers.

For 10 people

‘Transformed’ white chocolate

30 u Ivoire white chocolate chips, 33% cocoa
10 u rectangles of Fata paper, 5x8 cm

Place 3 chocolate chips on top of each paper rectangle, one on top of the other. Wrap as if they were candy, pressing well on the sides. Cook the chocolate wraps in the OC’OO using the ‘Aged Egg’ program for 6 hours. Remove from the machine and reserve.

Other ingredients

30 u Ivoire white chocolate chips, 33% cocoa



FINISHING AND PRESENTATION

Serve the ‘transformed’ chocolate candy at room temperature alongside one chocolate chip of the chocolate initially used to make this dessert.

This way, the customer will notice which transformation the chocolate has undergone.

With the help of some scissors, allow the customer to unwrap and taste the chocolate in several bites.



'Transformed' chocolate