

Culinary theatre of 2019: our primo pick for Barcelona

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What is the ultimate theatre and art experience? The experience you can eat!! On our recent trip to Barcelona, we splurged by partaking in a 23 course sensory dining experience. Ok, I know what you're thinking... how on earth can you eat 23 courses in one setting? Some courses were one or two bites, and each course was paced in a comfortable manner. Our three hour meal flew by just as if we were watching a highly-trained Broadway play. If you're a real food nerd like me, you have heard of place called El Bulli. The chefs at Disfrutar used to work at El Bulli (once ranked #1 restaurant in the world). El Bulli has now closed its doors, but lucky for us, some of its chefs opened Disfrutar! In a city filled with top-notch restaurants, Disfrutar has been [ranked #18](#) in the world!

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Diners enter the famous tunnel and venture through it before they enter the lovely dining room. The chefs are front and center, and the executive chef shakes your hand as you go by. No longer are the chefs behind the scenes because here they are the stars of this show.





As you emerge from the tunnel, you will enter an airy and bright dining room.



Let the show begin!

Course 1

Frozen passion fruit ladyfinger with rum



You are instructed to eat this course quickly! Don't be fooled! What looks like a solid lady finger is, in fact is a frozen amuse bouche (designed to awaken your palate). Trompe l'oeil means to fool the eye, and we experienced many culinary tricks in this meal. It fools the eye, but touches the heart.

Course 2 & 3

The beet that comes out of the land

Lychee and roses with gin



When the server brings this particular bowl to your table, the “beets” are covered. As the server dramatically swirls the bowl around, the beets are revealed! The flavor is reminiscent of beets, but they are light, airy, and have other flavor profiles as well.



A perfect white raspberry is laid on top of rose petals misted with dew. Inside the raspberry is a frozen concoction with gin. This creation is several notches above the typical scoop of sorbet used by so many as a palate cleanser.

Course 4

Savory walnut candy with mango, tonka beans, and whisky



Each guest is presented with a beautiful wooden box. When you open this work of art, you feel as though you are unwrapping a gift on Christmas!



The walnut candy was innovative and mysterious, and both of us are astonished by the perfectly ripe mango. My husband questions what the chefs did to the mango to achieve this level of taste. I believe it's just a

result in finding the highest quality produce on the market.

Course 4

Smoked Instant apple cider



The apple cider process starts table-side when the server adds smoke and lets the cider steep while we enjoyed another course.



The cider is ready and our glasses are filled with the aroma of smoked wood chips! The cider is poured into these smoke filled glasses.



Course 5

Idiazabal cheese Mille-feuille



My favorite course was this savory Mille-feuille. The cheese was SO SCRUMPTIOUS, and we enjoyed it with this innovative and smoke-filled drink!

Course 6

Disfrutar's Gilda



A colorful plate filled with various flavor profiles! The chefs fooled us into thinking that there was a real green olive on the plate. Have you heard of the famous “green olive” from El Bulli that is filled with olive oil? This “olive” was the new and improved version since it convinced us that it was truly an olive. When I bit down on the crunchy coating, my whole mouth filled with the best tasting olive oil.

Course 7

Gazpacho sandwich with vinegar garnish



Grilled cheese in this fine dining establishment?? What seems to be a humble grilled cheese, is a complex cold gazpacho! We were fooled by yet another culinary trick.



Course 8

Crispy egg yolk with mushrooms and warm gelatin



Eat the crispy egg yolk first to uncover the umami rich mushroom bottom!

Course 9

Deconstructed Ceviche



I love everything from the pottery with the circle pattern to the actual food which continues the circular pattern in this work of art.

Course 10 & 11

Razor clams with seaweed in salt



The server brings out a plate mounded with salt. As he carefully removes the salt, beautiful razor clams are revealed!





Course 12

Our macaroni carbonara



Long tubes of pasta are actually made of gelatin and are clear. Sauce is added with a whipping siphon, which makes it thick, foamy and creamy. Several components of the carbonara were new to us, but when you taste it's reminiscent of classic carbonara.



Course 13 & 14

Tomato “polvoron” and arbequina Caviaroli

Liquid salad





These tomato wafers had the best tomato taste we've ever eaten and were the perfect accompaniment to the liquid salad.

Course 15 & 16

Langoustine in "suquet"

"Suquet" Cappuccino



This dish is an incredible effort that combines the flavors of the sea. The “cappuccino” is actually another sauce for the langoustine!

Course 17

Multi spherical tatin of corn and foie

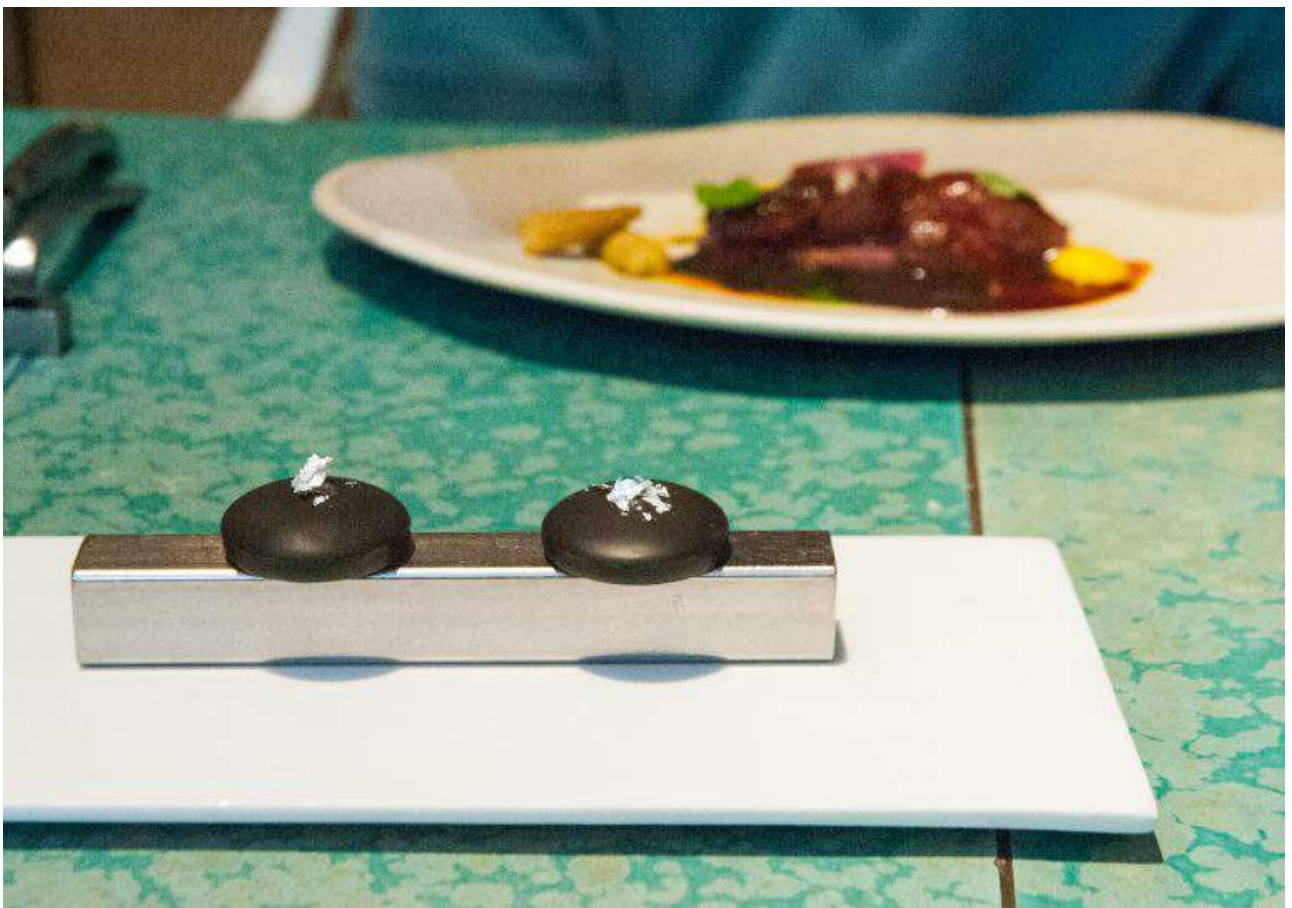


It's too pretty to eat! A super thin cracker on the bottom, creamy foie gras in the middle, and handmade spheres of corn puree held together by gelatin were impressive parts of this artistic dish!

Course 18 & 19

Pibil Squab

Squab and foie gras bonbon



Any guesses what squab is? It's a more elegant way of saying pigeon. Yup, I said pigeon, which isn't in my regular dining rotation at home. However, in the hands of a masterful chef, everything tastes superb.

Course 20

Pandan



Ready to traverse to the sweet side of life? This dish reminds me why I love to travel because I'm always inspired to go home and try new flavors in my dishes. This was my first taste of pandan in a dessert, and I was a big fan! Pandan is a leaf that is used commonly in southeast Asia (usually used to add aroma and flavor to rice).

Course 21

Cheesecake cornet



Isn't this the sweetest little dessert? I love everything about it from the dainty container to the tiny ice cream cones. Bite into the ice cream, and you realize it's different from any cone you've had before. Sorbet is on the top, creamy cheesecake filling is in the middle, and the cone is made from freeze dried fruit and sugar. Yum— can I have another?

Course 22

Chocolate peppers, oil and salt



Frozen chocolate mousse is frozen into the shape of a pepper and then dipped into coconut oil to make a very realistic pepper. I was scratching my head trying to figure out how the pastry chef pulled off this dish.

Course 22 & 23

“Tarta al whisky”

Cocoa and mint cotton





You know that you're not in a typical dining establishment when they have to explain in great detail what you should and shouldn't eat! Most of this cotton plant was not meant to be eaten, but two areas of the cotton were mint cotton candy dusted with cocoa. The chef did such a magnificent job with this illusion!

Are you full yet? Has your palate been satisfied? Has your curiosity been aroused? Thank you for sharing this experience with us. Disfrutar— where the chefs are artists, creativity is abundant and food is not as it appears.