

## SNEAK PEEK

Aziamendi 88

Until Oct 31

For the first time in KL's dining scene, KLites are given a chance to sample the offerings from a three Michelin-starred chef without leaving KL. Chef Eneko Atxa of Azurmendi in Bilbao, Spain and Aziamendi in Iniala Phuket is in town for a pop-up restaurant in Mandarin Oriental's Mandarin Grill. For 88 days, to be exact.

Known for his cutting edge yet informed Basque culinary skills and revolutionary molecular gastronomy techniques, Chef Eneko Atxa was awarded his third Michelin star when he was 35 years old (the youngest in Spain so far).

The Aziamendi 88 experience begins with a 'picnic' in the VIP room, transformed into a garden complete with trimmed bushes, wooden benches and softly flickering candles. After having bite-size anchovy cream mille-feuille, mojito bon bons and caviar on corn toast from a wicker basket, you will be led to a table where a bonsai tree sits in the middle. The bonsai acts as a prop on which appetisers such as cherry tomatoes were suspended and pieces of edible 'tree bark' (fried sunchoke skin with sea salt) were placed. The picnic and bonsai tree theatrics are part of the experience from Azurmendi (Chef Atxa's restaurant in Bilbao), where guests are invited to explore the eco-friendly greenhouse garden before the meal.

Following Iniala's philosophy of combining art, gastronomy, design and philanthropy, Lim Wei Ling of Wei-Ling Gallery has curated the collection of works on display at Aziamendi 88, available for purchase during the dinner.

Here are four standout dishes to look out for. **Joyce Koh**

► Azurmendi's signature **Truffled Egg**, an easy favourite where part of the egg yolk is drained and hot truffle broth carefully injected into the yolk, cooking the raw yolk inside out. A shot of pure truffle-infused pleasure, if you will.



▲ **Foie Gras Ashes from the Grill** is an ingenious dish with foie gras mousse piled atop a slice of airy toast, studded with tiny ixora blooms, and served on a thick piece of wood. Towels are laid on the table before the dish is presented as this is a rather messy dish to eat (tip: lean forward and eat with your hands instead of bringing the foie gras on toast to you – this will prevent the precious mousse from falling off). Messy, yes, but the creamy smoky sweetness of the foie gras in this particular texture scores a point for molecular gastronomy.



▲ For dessert, there's **Strawberries and Roses**, a quenelle of strawberry sorbet sandwiched between a thin layer of rose marshmallow and strawberry foam. The delicate foam elevates the dish brilliantly, bringing a light and almost effervescent texture to the dessert.

**Aziamendi 88** Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur City Centre (03 2280 8888/www.aziamendi88.com). Lunch, five-course, RM198; eight-course, RM438. Dinner, eight-course, RM438; 12-course, RM598.

▲ **Squid Noodles with its own Crunchy Juice**, made of squid finely cut into noodle-like strips, is served with a minimal amount of pickled onions and extravagantly rich squid consommé. On the side, there's a teaspoonful of sweet ruby red roe and, as a pleasant surprise, squid juice contained within a thin shell (the crunchy juice). This particular dish is beautifully paired with a crisp and sweet Yamagata Masamune saké junmai, bringing out the flavours of the sea.

# Triple treat AT SENJA

Three exceptional chefs present an exquisite gastronomic experience this September and October



## Chef Dany Angove

★ Sep 9-12

This celebrity chef from the Gold Plate award-winning Leeuwin Restaurant is set to entice you for four days with a combination of fine food and wine. With an impressive list of celebrity customers that includes the likes of Bob Geldof, Jerry Hall and Brian Ferry, Chef Dany is used to pleasing customers with only

the best. His most recent accolade was garnering The Daily Meal.com's 4th Best Winery Restaurant in the World award. With a multitude of appearances in magazines and television programmes as well as his string of victories in various culinary competitions, there is certainly something to be said about Chef Dany. So, come and taste what the fuss is all about.



Two-course set lunch, RM120; three-course set lunch, RM160; four-course set dinner (without wine), RM260; four-course set dinner (with wine), RM380.

The restaurant's new Chef De Cuisine, **Emiliano Di Stefano**, is concocting a new menu that will be unveiled soon. With more than 18 years of culinary experience, this native of Turin has served in many celebrated restaurants the world over. With strong Mediterranean and Western influences, he is set to bring the restaurant to yummy Italian basics. Expect him to knock out Italian classics, from hearty pastas, mouth-watering pizzas and fresh bread baked from a wood-burning oven.

As capable as he is, Senja is sparing no cost for the ultimate culinary adventure. For a limited time in September and October, he will be joined by two other illustrious chefs, **Chef Dany Angove** and **Chef Yuichi Kamimura**, who will be bringing their unique expertise to jazz up the restaurant's culinary offerings.

## Chef Yuichi Kamimura

★ Oct 21-24

As a protégé of world-renowned Chef Tetsuya Wakuda, Chef Yuichi is used to the bar being set incredibly high for him. With expertise combining Japanese flavours with a French twist, Chef Yuichi's one-Michelin-star French diner KAMIMURA in Niseko, Japan has been making waves the world over. A sojourn to the US as a youth to get out of the kitchen life of his family's restaurant ultimately landed him in

Australia as the protégé of a famous chef. Expect only the most interesting culinary experimentation from this food artist.



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