

WORLD'S BEST RESTAURANTS

2021

METİN AR



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RESTAURANTS
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METİN AR

This book is dedicated to
MY DEAR DAUGHTER ESRA AR

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INTRODUCTION

I had been posting my restaurant reviews to a blog named www.metinar.com/travel . I decided to convert the content into a book to publish it with Amazon in both print and kindle formats. As I update the book continuously, readers will always have the opportunity to peruse the latest current version. There are about 200 restaurant recommendations in it. All positive ones from over 30 cities in 5 continents. If I don't like a restaurant I don't write about it. So the restaurants in the book are selected amongst many more visited. They include a wide range from street food to pizza shops to 3 star fine dining spots. The reasons behind each and every recommendation are given with tips about the place.

Metin Ar



MY TOP 20 RESTAURANTS

After deliberations among more than 1000 jury members, San Pellegrino has come up with the 120 best restaurants in the world. The list is formed by jury members who each rank their 10 favorite eateries in order of preference, ultimately producing a list of 120. I can't keep myself to just 10 restaurants, so let me note my top 20 out of their 120 best list, albeit in alphabetical order, rather than order of my preference. They have decided to exclude the previous years' top restaurants from the competition and put these all in a "best of the best" list forever. So my 20 favorite restaurants include some of their "best of the best". The numbers next to the restaurant names below show the ranking. If there is no number, it means the restaurant is one of the "best of the best".

ARZAK (San Sebastian/ Spain) 53

Paquita Arzak established Arzak in the 1960s, eventually bringing her son Juan Mari Arzak on board to work in the kitchen. Now 70, Juan Mari runs the show today, along with his daughter. Arzak got its first Michelin star in 1974, its second in 1978 and its third in 1989, making it the first three-star restaurant in Spain. When Ferran Adria became famous 10 years

ago, everybody lined up to criticize him for serving 30 to 40 portions. Juan Mari, however, called up Ferran and asked to see what he was doing. After observing Ferran's work, Juan Mari said he had learned a lot from El Bulli's master and duly invited him to come to San Sebastian. Soon, the two gastronomic titans became close friends, traveling to different places around the world together and trying different food. Their close friendship notwithstanding, they have different styles and tastes. Arzak has two gastronomical menus, both of which mainly have meat – perhaps too much meat – instead of fish. I managed to get half portions for each of the courses, which allowed me to try 10 portions that actually amounted to two starters, a main course and a dessert. Now normally, restaurants with three Michelin stars don't allow you to mix and match like this, as they see it as beyond them, but Arzak isn't so snooty as to not offer such an option to its diners.

ATELIER CRENN (San Francisco/USA) 35

San Francisco's best restaurant is Atelier Crenn. They serve just 20 people, but a full 10 people are in the kitchen cooking! And when you add in the wait staff and people behind the bar, there's a restaurant employee for every customer. Atelier Crenn, which has three Michelin stars, is located on the left side of an apartment building's entrance. Bar Crenn occupies the other side of the entrance. On the bar side of things, the menu is restricted to wine and champagne; they do offer small

plates of food as well, mind you; although it's wider than the wine and champagne on offer at the adjacent restaurant. Atelier Crenn is the abode of the French-born Dominique Crenn, who became an inspiration to women chefs everywhere after becoming the first and, so far, only woman, to acquire three Michelin stars in the United States — a fantastic achievement in a male-dominated environment. After beginning her career in San Francisco in 1988, Crenn opted to open Atelier Crenn in 2011. In no time at all, she earned herself a Michelin star, along with a second one in short order. In 2018, Crenn grabbed another Michelin star — only to be hit by breast cancer soon thereafter. It goes without saying that I wish Crenn, who is currently focusing on her treatment, the speediest of recoveries. As for the restaurant, the system that Crenn has instituted at the restaurant and bar works like such clockwork that even if she's not there, things still come off without a hitch.

ATTICA (Melbourne/Australia) 84

It's well-nigh impossible to find a seat at this Australian restaurant, which is among the cream of the crop near the top of the world's top 50 list. In the end, we managed, although it wasn't under the most ideal of circumstances: We had to be there at 6 p.m. — not my most preferred time — and out by 8:30 p.m. Attica has a set menu for all; the only possible alteration is to choose fish if you don't eat meat. Nonetheless, we reckoned that it would be impossible to come all the way to Melbourne

and not go to Attica. The prices truly are astronomical, but the food was out of this world. It was the best meal I had in Melbourne. We had a 12-course menu, 10 of which we really enjoyed. I had no complaints because I opted to go meat-free, although my guests did not. Ultimately, that meant that they had to dine out on fried ant (probably for the first and last time), which is consumed a lot in Australia. If you're not interested in ingesting delicacies like this, it's a good idea to say so.

BLUE HILL (New York/USA) 28

Blue Hill is about 50 minutes out of town by cab in Stone Barns at a ranch that was, interestingly, built by Rockefeller. Here, they grow all kinds of organic vegetables and raise pigs, chicken and small cows. I don't generally deign to eat eggs, but I definitely did here. Everything looks good, smells nice and tastes even better, probably because of the fodder they use. All the meals, apart from the fish, are prepared with the freshest of ingredients that are produced right on the farm. Blue Hill's chef, Dan Barber, has been in charge of the kitchen since day one. You can enjoy a dinner at Blue Hill six days a week, while there is also an additional lunch service on Saturdays and Sundays. This being the United States, dinner begins as early as 5:30 p.m., so I recommend you make a reservation for as early in the evening as possible. More than that, try and go an hour early, because it's a lot of fun to spend time both in the town and the farm. And don't be tardy about planning

your trip to Blue Hill either: Reservations are a big problem at the restaurant, but if you send an email at least five or six weeks in advance and are flexible about time, you'll get results. A spacious and calm place with 10-meter-high ceilings, Blue Hill can host 50 people. Thankfully, the tables are spread out from one another, allowing you to chat comfortably. Blue Hill also has a splendid wine menu, which has offerings from all over the world at a good price. At your typical fine restaurant, the wines are priced at a wholesale price multiplied by around four; at Blue Hill, however, they only multiply this price by two, even though it's a top restaurant. More than that, you can order wines by the glass, giving you the opportunity to taste a different wine for every dish if you plan to try five or six different things. On top of that, all the waiters at Blue Hill are very knowledgeable about food and wine. And while most New York restaurants typically have a high circulation in terms of waiters, almost all of Blue Hill's wait staff have been there since the opening. Barber was selected as the best chef in New York by an independent jury a couple of years ago, while Time also declared him one of the 100 most influential people in the USA. Barber might be influential, but the farmers he sources his food from are even more influential – at least in terms for what makes it onto his menu. "I don't decide what to cook that day, farmers do. I form my menus according to the products farmers pick and I shape personal menus in line with our guests' requests."

DINNER (London/England) 83

Heston Blumenthal launched Dinner By Heston inside the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in London. The system at Dinner by Heston is different than that of the Fat Duck, as Blumenthal continues to serve a 17-course menu at his first location. For Dinner By Heston, it appears that he has employed his own right-hand person, Ashley Palmer, as executive chef. About 10-12 chefs cook in a tiny glass room that resembles an aquarium; it might make the cooks feel like they're in a fishbowl, but it allows you to watch your food being prepared. Another great thing is that all of the dishes here are drawn from the cuisine of Medieval England. The menu includes the history of the dish, as well as further elaborate information about how it was cooked. Dinner By Heston has a simpler menu compared to the Fat Duck, but the beauty of this place is that it is open every single day, including Sundays. What's more, it has a great view of Hyde Park

DISFRUTAR (Barcelona/Spain) 9

Disfrutar is a restaurant belonging to three young, former employees of El Bulli: Mateu Casañas, Oriol Castro and Eduard Xatruch. The trio earned their first Michelin star in no time at all, but arrogance is nowhere to be seen when you take a look at the restaurant. Disfrutar has three different menus with 12, 18 and 25 courses. More than that, the staff can all rapidly shift gears from meat to fish. There are options to dine at

either the table or at the bar, but I'm one of those who prefers the latter so that I'm able to watch as the meals are prepared and even chat with the chefs at times. I generally find the bar section quite interactive and fun but, of course, it depends on the restaurant. In my opinion, Disfrutar reflects the Ferran Adria School better than any of its rivals. Unsurprisingly, Disfrutar is always full, so I'd advise you to make a reservation ahead of time – even a couple of months ahead of time. Nevertheless, you might have luck if you try and book for lunchtime. Disfrutar separates the evening service into two sessions. The first service begins at around 7 p.m., while the second commences at around 9.30 p.m. But given that this is night-owl Spain, the second service typically draws more people – meaning that if you're more of an early bird, you might not have that many problems booking reservations for 7 p.m.

EL CELLER DE CAN ROCA (Girona/ Spain)

A place with three Michelin stars, Can Roca is located about an hour northeast of Barcelona in beautiful Girona. Can Roca serves up classic fare. It's also a fraternal affair: Joan Roca is the chef, Joseph Roca is the sommelier and Jordi Roca, the youngest brother, is the pastry chef. The restaurant, which has a capacity for about 60 or 70 people, is in a very nice and modern building with pleasing architecture. They have an option for an à la carte menu, but I would suggest trying the 12-portion menu, which is accompanied by very suitable and