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art of craft



new perspectives on scandinavian design

What does the word ‘craft’ mean to you? Maybe it evokes memories of when you dabbled with a new hobby, like crochet or painting ceramics. Or perhaps you refer to the dictionary definition – a level of skill or experience, especially in relation to making objects – but consider that a thing firmly rooted in the past.

In a world that has become dominated by mass production and the disposable, it’s easy to forget that there are artisans and creatives out there producing and curating items – but also places and spaces – that still inspire awe and that will stand the test of time.

In our third issue of Schön! **alive**, we wanted to explore the concept of craftsmanship in its many forms, from those evolving from centuries of tradition to those emerging from recent innovations.

At OMEGA, we learn why a watch is not just a watch because, for an athlete like Jutta Leerdam, a millionth of a second could decide an Olympic outcome. At Montblanc, we discover why a pen is not just a pen, and the experimentation behind every Meisterstück (or masterpiece). Meanwhile, at Marshall, we lean into the rock and roll legacy and engineering expertise that is enabling a new generation of recording artists.

Celebrated perfumer Francis Kurkdjian explains why creating fragrance is as much about intuition as science. We delve into the Dior archives to discover how Christian Dior’s legacy has – and continues to be – conserved for those that follow, from Azzedine Alaïa to Jonathan Anderson and beyond. Meanwhile, Dior Maison’s Artistic Director Cordelia de Castellane builds on a Rothschild legacy to design The Paris Society’s first country retreat.

As you contemplate your next escape, perhaps consider destinations that deliver not only sunshine and sundowners, but also those that offer a bespoke experience informed by integrity and roots that run deep. From the vines at the award-winning Abadía de Retuerta in Spain, to those in Portugal’s Douro Valley, we show you less-travelled pit stops on your wine route.

One of the few remaining Maestros del Ron Cubano takes us behind the scenes at Havana Club. For those who choose to abstain, we showcase Michelin-starred restaurants such as noma with non-alcoholic pairings on a par with any wine list. Chef Endo Kazutoshi explains why, when it comes to omakase, one must always “listen to the rice” because beauty is not always in the fancy flourishes presented on the plate. In The Menu, we take your culinary skills to the next level: the recipes are crafted by top-level chefs from The Peninsula Hotels and take inspiration from French haute cuisine to Thai traditions.

But craft need not be tied to heritage alone. At Potato Head Bali, minimalism and modernity meet mindfulness and comfort. Coral Gardeners, meanwhile, is restoring reefs across the globe using a combination of community action, social media strategy and pioneering technology. Lunaz turns the concept of the classic car on its head by transforming collectables of the past into future-proofed vehicles, and Fondation Cartier talks us through its new, more urban and inclusive location.

Our team has covered many miles to discover unrivalled expertise and exquisite craftsmanship. It’s a journey that I hope will inspire you as much as it has inspired us. Creativity comes in many forms, but learning from the past while looking to the future seems to us like a formula that is built to last and hard to beat.

Huma
Huma Humayun.
editorial director

with love
Raoul

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MUUTO

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the secret guide to everything beautiful

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an equal pairing

Meet the masters curating alcohol alternatives in fine dining.

Food is a conversation between the plate and the palate. In this dynamic, another entity sometimes comes into play: the beverage pairing, which has long been dominated by wine. Yet, in the modern theatre of fine dining, a silent revolution has been brewing. The world's most pioneering restaurants are moving beyond raw juices and sugary soft drinks to treat the non-alcoholic pairing with the same rigour, creativity and complexity once reserved for vintage Bordeaux. Three pairings masters have been forging a path for soft pairings to become an integral part of the luxury dining experience and are thus creating a new, equal-standing category.

words. **Sandy Aziz** interview with Emer Landgraf. **Raegan Rubin**

Purple carrot, apple + applewood.
Ingredients used in one of Zén's layered,
fermentation-led non-alcoholic pairings
photography. Pol Divina





Aaron Jacobson.
Director of Beverages and Operations
Zén, Singapore
images. Courtesy of Zén

At Zén – the three-Michelin-star Singapore outpost of the Frantzén group, known for its Nordic sensibility filtered through Asian ingredients – the pursuit of flavour is inseparable from the pursuit of technique. Unsurprisingly, it’s regarded as one of Asia’s most meticulous fine-dining experiences, blending Scandinavian precision with Japanese influences.

Under Aaron Jacobson, Director of Beverages and Operations in Singapore, Zén’s soft pairings approach is built on complex, layered fermentation. For Jacobson, success in this arena requires “lots of work, focus, dedication and time”. His philosophy shapes the non-alcoholic offering to be about “creativity, not trends”. In fact, he shares, “I try to stay in a vacuum and keep my ideas based on my experience of products and places in the real world. This keeps our programme original.”

When Jacobson took over the programme roughly five years ago, it was a creative challenge to replace “raw fruit juices packed with sugar” with a health-conscious alternative for the Singaporean audience. This pursuit led to experiments in fermentation that, through relentless trial and error, became “endemic to Zén”. Now, the main difficulties are

related to the types of ingredients used: onion, rice, buckwheat, yoghurt, whey or ginger. These are what Jacobson describes as challenging ingredients and flavours. However, he shares, “We have figured out how to efficiently ferment almost all substrates [we’ve] worked with.”

Jacobson describes creating a pairing as seeing “flavours as colours” and “building these beverages as layers in a song or perfume”. His deep familiarity with the Frantzén kitchen allows him to understand each dish’s complexity and to “build a structure around chords and layers that will reflect the layers of intensity in the dish”. And actually, fermentation, in this context, is crucial according to Jacobson because it’s “the best way to build depth and complexity in a non-alcoholic beverage as intense as the food”. This dedication has fundamentally shifted the restaurant’s dynamics, with Zén now reportedly selling an equal number of non-alcoholic and traditional pairings – a testament both to the programme’s reputation and to changing consumer habits.

Zén
41 Bukit Pasoh Rd, Singapore
restaurantzen.com



Red rice, apple + orange.
Components of a non-alcoholic pairing at Zén
photography. Pol Divina



Apple, butter + muscat grape.
An exploration of texture and aroma in a non-alcoholic pairing
photography. Pol Divina



Ava Mees List.
Head Sommelier
noma, Indre By, Denmark
image. Courtesy of noma

Often cited as one of the most influential restaurants of the century, Copenhagen's noma continues to shape global culinary innovation. The three-Michelin-star restaurant has helped rewrite the rules of modern cuisine through foraging, fermentation and hyper-seasonal creativity – and now its non-alcoholic pairings feel as essential to its identity as the food itself.

The development of the juice pairing involves a highly collaborative effort that often brings together most departments in the restaurant. Since their introduction around 2012, the pairings have evolved from simple recipes to incorporate fermentation, kombucha, savoury ingredients and tea, staying true to the brand's nature-embedded DNA.

Head Sommelier Ava Mees List treats the non-alcoholic pairing creation process like “art directing” rather than physical creation. “I talk to different departments – the test kitchen and the fermentation lab – and we speak about ideas we’ve had throughout the year,” she shares. She also initially tastes the 18-course menu and then divides it into small sections and outlines the desired “flavours, colours, profiles, textures...

Thinking about the rhythm of the menu and the pairing, about what the dish needs – for example, more aromatics, umami or tannins.” Ultimately, List’s outline is given to the tea section and the test kitchen to create their own trials, and it frequently involves consulting the fermentation lab. “There are often times when someone comes up with a wildcard: then, we have several more tastings when considering the pairing and make any required adjustments,” she says.

When testing the pairings, the teams keep several key elements in mind: lightness, not too much sugar (all Brix is measured) and not too much caffeine. Leveraging global techniques, beverages incorporate ingredients like amazake and fermented herbs. This dedication to detail and complexity elevates the pairing from a mere alternative to a true complement to noma’s groundbreaking cuisine.

noma
Refshalevej 96, Indre By, Denmark
noma.dk



Non-alcoholic beverages being developed in noma’s test kitchen and fermentation lab.
image. Courtesy of noma



noma's dining room in Copenhagen.
image. Courtesy of noma



Emer Landgraf.
Head Sommelier
The Clove Club, London
photography. Anton Rodriguez

In London, The Clove Club is a two-Michelin-star standard-bearer for modern British cooking and quiet innovation. It has taken a more focused, but equally radical, approach by offering a full tea pairing – a shift initiated by chef-patron Isaac McHale.

Head Sommelier Emer Landgraf works closely with the kitchen, tasting new dishes and finding wines and teas to complement them. She applies a similar methodology to both wine and tea, often looking for unexpected connections. While a wild garlic pasta dish might conventionally be paired with a white wine, she finds “a really light red wine works really well.” Similarly, when the obvious pairing might be a light green tea, she will opt for a Hojicha (a dark roasted green tea) or an Assam.

Ultimately, the aim of the pairing is to bring out the delicacy of the tea, which complements the subtle flavours that run through McHale’s menu. Unlike wine, where you can easily detect the notes, Landgraf explains that “with tea, you need to concentrate a little bit more.” This is also to ensure that the teas are accompanying the dishes with certain textures and flavours.

Landgraf initially found the idea of a full tea pairing “a bit boring compared to wine”, but quickly developed a deep-seated passion for it. “I started to realise that there are so many amazing stories to tell about the families at the tea farms,” she shares, highlighting the significance of The Clove Club’s relationship with the supplier Postcard Teas, whose owner visits the families and shares their stories. She even admits that sometimes there is even more to tell than with wine.

From Zén’s scientific depth to The Clove Club’s storytelling through tea and noma’s collaborative artistry, these Michelin-starred establishments are proving that the soft pairing is no compromise – it deserves as much appreciation as a wine pairing and is intoxicating in its own right.

The Clove Club
Shoreditch Town Hall, 380 Old St, London
thecloveclub.com

Soft Pairing at The Clove Club.
photography. Anton Rodriguez



Amiru for Schön! 49
wearing Louis Vuitton

photography. Julius Bohlin
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