



## Global Gourmet

Every fancied yourself as a master of haute cuisine? Sharpen your skills at one these feted cooking schools...

### **JEAN GEORGE'S CULINARY MASTER COURSE**

*Trump International Hotel & Tower, New York*

Just two people are permitted to have two-on-two time (one hour, to be precise) with the Michelin-starred Jean-Georges Vongerichten and his executive pastry chef Johnny Luzzini, at a price tag of \$9,000. The class takes place inside Vongerichten's famed Jean-Georges restaurant, one of only five NYC eateries to hold three Michelin-stars, and is a worth-every-dollar hour for seasoned gourmands – though Vongerichten has it that “the course is for any guest who loves food, no matter what their skill level.”

The lesson itself is very hands-on and the choice of what to cook is yours – recipes can be plucked from the kitchens of each of Jean George's New York restaurants: Matsugen (Japanese), JoJo (Mediterranean), ABC Kitchen (organic and local), Spice Market (Asian), Perry Street (New American) and Jean-George (French). The most impressive dish you'll master? “Most of them,” smiles Vongerichten, “but the one that sticks out in my mind is my tuna tartar dish. Students always love it and the techniques taught can be used in many variations. People are often amazed by the how much flavour can come from cooking a vegetable a certain way.”

While an hour is hardly a strain on the senses, your \$9,000 also allows you to make the most of the Trump International Hotel & Tower – three nights in an Executive Park Suite,

breakfast at Nougatine, a three-course meal at Jean George's (plus a bottle), and signed copies of the cookery books you'll need to do it all again at home – or perhaps just pass on to your private chef... [trumpintl.com](http://trumpintl.com)

### **PEGGY MARKEL'S CULINARY ADVENTURES**

*Jnane Tamsna, Marrakech*

Eating your way through Morocco on Peggy Markel's culinary tour is a quest that marries authentic techniques, tools and ingredients with an inspiring setting. “Jnane Tamsna [a private Palmeraie guesthouse, just outside Marrakech] is designed with brilliant, bohemian-chic interiors by Meryanne Loum Martin, a well-respected French designer,” tells Markel. “The surrounding gardens are organic and its local gardeners use the traditional vernacular style of irrigation, growing not only food for the estate, but herbs, citrus, and olive trees for oil.”

The scheduled nine-day trip won't see you confined to the, albeit chic, Jnane Tamsna, though – there are a further two food-inspired sites to venture to: “One is a Berber Kasbah in the mountains that sits right under Mount Toubkal, the highest in the Atlas range,” says Markel, “while the other is on a deserted beach, south of Essaouira. In these three settings, you can experience traditional Marakchi cooking, Berber-style mountain cooking, and fish from the coast.”

Back at base, a Moroccan, Muslim and Berber cultural influence sears through each class – time-honoured

1. Christophe Martin, head chef at L'Andana.
2. L'Andana, Italy.
3. Moroccan dishes from Peggy Markel's culinary course.
4. Nobu's cheesecake.
5. Raymond Blanc (far right) and Mark Peregrine at Le Manoir.

## GASTRONOMY

'bellows' will have your arms pumping air onto the hot coals of a brazier oven during tagine workshops – and the produce of all that effort will be served (as every daily meal is) in North African pottery, atop a courtyard-set table and savoured along with other just-taught recipes, like warka-topped pigeon pie. [peggymarkel.com](http://peggymarkel.com)

### RAYMOND BLANC COOKERY SCHOOL

*Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons, Oxford*

Chef Mark Peregrine heads the school at large here – a man tutored to faultless form by Raymond Blanc himself. And it's a school, set in the heart of picture-perfect English countryside (lavender fields, a huge organic garden a rabbit would die for, and sprawling red-brick manor house),

– and that's before you get your hands on the grounds: "you'll be invited to Le Manoir's remarkable organic herb and vegetable gardens to see how our chefs and gardeners work hand-in-hand to produce the very best varieties for the menu," notes Blanc. [lemanoir.com](http://lemanoir.com)

### NOBU COOKING CLASS

*Atlantis, The Palm, Dubai*

Chef Nobu Matsuhisa was one of the first to latch on to what is now the latest of-the-minute trend in gastronomy – Peruvian cuisine – fused heavily, of course, with refined Japanese fare. At his stylish Dubai-based branch of Nobu, his chef de cuisine Hervé Courtot heads bespoke classes to a handful of attendants.

While you may feel like you'd rather be sat, chopsticks poised, on

garden to indulge in your handiwork, with a glass of something cold, naturally. [atlantisthepalm.com](http://atlantisthepalm.com)

### ALAIN DUCASSE COOKING COURSE

*L'Andana, Tuscany*

Alain Ducasse's only Italy-based restaurant serves up (unsurprisingly for this part of the world) a romantic setting in which to let your creative juices flow. Which seems to have been Ducasse's utmost desire when opening L'Andana; home to La Trattoria Toscana – the site of his classes. "The Mediterranean!" exclaims Ducasse, when pushed on his choice of setting: "I have endlessly taken in its scents, its sun, its colours and warmth, its generosity, its products. Its diversity has fascinated me, its wealth has

*'In its [L'Andana's] Michelin-starred kitchen you'll rustle up dishes in what was the granary of Duke Leopold II'*

with a mindboggling array of lessons.

"You do need an acquired skill to attempt most styles of cooking, but many are a lot more simple than you may expect," notes Blanc. "Each of the courses is hands-on and you will be shown how to create exciting dishes with the maximum of ease, from using a filleting knife on the Fish and Shellfish Course, to selecting the best flour for a variety of breads on the Bread Making course." Dedicated foodie-followers of Blanc should opt for Mammam Blanc, a class in which you'll recreate simple fare that the Michelin-star veteran was raised on – among them, Bouillabaisse. Or, wait for the sporadic scheduling of La Cuisine Moderne et la Nutrition, the only class taught by Blanc which will run on strictly limited dates this year.

If your current culinary skill set extends merely to domestic appliances, having free reign of Le Manoir's two Michelin-starred restaurant will move things up a notch

the dining side of the sushi bar (with super-slick surrounds and a cage-like enclosed lounge area, it's certainly a tempting thought), the three-hour session that follows is a rewarding lesson in mastering Nobu's most acclaimed delicacies – among them, signature yellowtail sashimi with jalapenos. The class commences at said sushi bar, narrated by a brief history of sushi and sashimi. If the light-to-the-touch tempura tops your list of favoured Nobu bites, though, you can try your hand at making it, with fresh shrimp, asparagus and mushroom fillings at your fingertips.

Unusually for a Japanese eatery, Nobu's dessert – cheesecake – is equally revered (little wonder; it melts in the mouth) and Courtot shares the secret behind the lip-licking blend of baked cream cheeses, sour cream and vanilla bourbon from Madagascar.

Come the end of the class you can maneuver dining-side and take a pew in the restaurant's new Japanese

inebriated me, its often-arid rigour has seduced me."

Arrive via its long, cypress-lined driveway and you can understand the man's enthusiasm: the building itself – apricot-hued, shamelessly Italian and shaded by olive groves – was formerly a Medici Villa used by Grand Duke Leopold II and his court for the summer. "May there exist a better place for starting to cook?" asks Ducasse. He has a point.

In its Michelin-starred kitchen you'll rustle up dishes in what was once the granary of Duke Leopold II (vast windows overlook ripe vineyards and exposed brickwork and beams create a cosy feel). "You will be able to learn how to make two typically Tuscan dishes, which you can enjoy with paired wines," muses Ducasse. "In this way you discover the region according to the sense of taste, acquire specific skills and begin to approach a professional cooking technique." [andana.it](http://andana.it)



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