



THE ROUX  
SCHOLARSHIP

CALIFORNIA  
JOURNAL 2016

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Roux family, judges and scholars would like to thank all of their colleagues, friends and suppliers. This trip and journal would not have been possible without their support and hard work.

- ◆ Our wonderful hosts, whose exceptional hospitality was an inspiration. In particular chefs Thomas Keller and Corey Lee and their highly professional teams. Their support for our trip proved as spectacular as their food.
- ◆ Our loyal, valued sponsors and preferred partners.
- ◆ Lee Whitlock and Gina Curtis for organising the trip with hundreds of phone calls and emails across inconvenient timezones.
- ◆ Chandos Elletson, our talented, official film maker and photographer.
- ◆ Roux Scholar Andrew Jones, our talented, unofficial photographer.
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- ◆ Aaron Keefer, culinary gardener for The French Laundry.
- ◆ California Wine Tours [californiawinetours.com](http://californiawinetours.com)
- ◆ Virgin Atlantic [virginatlantic.com](http://virginatlantic.com)
- ◆ Birgitt Vaughan, Sonoma County Tourism PR Manager [sonomacounty.com](http://sonomacounty.com)
- ◆ Le Marais Bakery & Bistro [lemaraisbakery.com](http://lemaraisbakery.com)

Our chosen hotels, whose friendly rates and hospitality were much appreciated:

- ◆ InterContinental Hotel, San Francisco [intercontinentalsanfrancisco.com](http://intercontinentalsanfrancisco.com)
- ◆ Courtyard by Marriott Santa Rosa hotel [marriott.co.uk](http://marriott.co.uk)
- ◆ Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Preserve Spa [marriott.co.uk](http://marriott.co.uk)





“THIS MIGHT JUST BE the best trip yet – it has everything,” some scholars exclaimed as we set off for San Francisco and Napa Valley. Having been involved in The Roux Scholarship for more than 15 years, I have joined the scholars on most biannual tours, including Tuscany in 2006, Dubai in 2008 and New York in 2014. Last November, as co-Chairman, I accompanied the troupe to California, one of the top culinary destinations in the world, for a five-day gastronomic adventure.

We could not have chosen a more fascinating, beautiful place; the inspiration for so many iconic chefs, writers, artists and films. We blazed a trail through a knockout yet brutally packed itinerary, shaped with the help of our friends and three-star Michelin chefs Thomas Keller and Corey Lee. Here, we urge you to join us on our multi-sensory journey through San Francisco and Napa Valley's contrasting yet extraordinary worlds, sampling the food, markets, wine and restaurants. We visited many great establishments, from modern masterpieces In Situ and SingleThread Farm to the iconic French Laundry to Buena Vista Café in downtown San Francisco, where Irish coffees were invented.

Perhaps more than ever before, we returned to our teams transfigured. Our culinary lives have been transformed through experiencing such amazing hospitality, jaw-dropping innovation and even challenges to what we thought we understood or knew about already. Once again, this trip restored the innocence and fascination that set us on our paths to become chefs in the first place and the fact that there is so much more to learn.

But more than anything, this tour defines, exemplifies and celebrates the Scholarship. It's not only the lifelong, irrepressible friendships, both old and new, but the integrity, support and inspiration of the Roux family, scholars, sponsors, partners and hosts without whom these tours and the Scholarship itself would not exist. Above all, such a trip reignites the pride and passion with which we hold these principles so dearly and the daily witness we try to give them as ambassadors for our trade and as chefs in our kitchens.

So dive in and join us – the fun starts here...

**Alain Roux**  
Chairman



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## THE ROUX SCHOLARSHIP



[rouxscholarship.co.uk](http://rouxscholarship.co.uk)

To win the Roux Scholarship is to claim the Oscar, BAFTA and Golden Globe of cookery all at once. The first door that opens is to your three-star Michelin restaurant of choice, anywhere in the world, to spend three months training and cooking with your dream chef. Even more incredible is to realise you are now part of the extended legendary Roux family, a member of an elite club of British chefs, a sparkling new recruit of the vibrant legacy that is the Roux Scholarship. As Andrew Fairlie, our Head Scholar, says, “Having a direct line to Michel and Albert Roux has been a tremendous help to me. It never ceases to amaze me how winning the Scholarship can help a young chef move forward.” What’s more, each winner is able to join fellow scholars on our incredible biannual educational trips, such as the latest adventure in California.

Founded in 1983 by me and my brother Albert (*both above*), the Roux Scholarship has enabled a generation of British chefs to train in the greatest restaurants in the world. Not only has it become the industry’s most acclaimed chef competition in the UK – with many of our scholars going on to win Michelin stars themselves – it ranks among the most prestigious in the world.

With their respective fathers stepping back from judging in 2015 to become patrons, my son, Alain, and nephew, Michel Jr, now steer the competition as chairmen, leading our elite team of judges (*see right*) that includes Brian Turner and James Martin, as well as previous winners. With up to 100 young chefs entering the competition each year, it’s true to say that many thousands of British chefs have been inspired by the experience of competing. It really is a career-changing opportunity for an ambitious chef.

**Michel Roux, OBE**  
Patron

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## J U D G E S

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Alain Roux,  
Chairman



André Garrett, MCA  
*2002 Roux Scholar*



Andrew Fairlie,  
Head Scholar



Brian Turner, CBE,  
Vice Chairman



David Nicholls  
*Group Director, The Mandarin  
Oriental Hotel Group*



James Martin  
*Chef, TV presenter and author*



Michel Roux Jr,  
Chairman



Sat Bains  
*1999 Roux Scholar*



Simon Hulstone  
*2003 Roux Scholar*





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## Educational trips: SCHOLARS IN CALIFORNIA

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EVERY TWO YEARS, the Roux family takes a group of scholars on a culinary trip of a lifetime. Each tour is thrillingly bespoke. In Japan 2012, the group prepared a banquet for 120 invited guests at a gala dinner held at Hotel Peninsula in Tokyo that raised over £100,000 for the Tsunami fund. And in New York 2014, they were treated to dinner in the private dining room at Per Se, prepared and served by three-star Michelin legends Thomas Keller, Daniel Boulud and Jean-Georges Vongerichten.

Last year, 11 scholars, including Andrew Fairlie, the first ever winner of the Roux Scholarship, joined Michel Roux, Alain Roux and Brian Turner on a gastronomic tour of California.

The five-day itinerary began in San Francisco, with visits to a selection of the region's finest restaurants and tourist attractions. The best artisan bakeries, cafés and late-night bars were also on the menu, followed by wine tasting at some of the top vineyards in Napa Valley.

Enjoy a taster of this amazing educational trip over the following pages with diary entries and photo journals from the scholars.



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“These unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime trips are carefully curated to provide the definitive trip in a short timeframe, to inspire and broaden the scholars’ experience, further shared upon our return with our respective teams. My father and I return greatly inspired from witnessing each scholars’ achievements and talents.”

**Alain Roux**



“Having been involved for more than 30 years in the Scholarship, the quality of the chefs coming through just keeps getting stronger, which is itself testament to the profound impact it has had and continues to have on the industry.”

**Andrew Fairlie**

“San Francisco and Napa Valley proved an easy choice since Californian cuisine is so creative. Inspirational chefs Thomas Keller and Corey Lee helped us put together an incredible itinerary sampling the best cultural and culinary experiences for our scholars.”

**Michel Roux, OBE**



As well as sampling some of the best Californian cuisine, the scholars also took in the sights and sounds of San Francisco and the surrounding area. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left:** iconic cable cars; downtown San Francisco; the Oakland Bay Bridge. **This page:** the beautiful Copain Winery and stunning vineyards in Healdsburg, Sonoma County; Alcatraz.





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## Scholars in California: THE PARTICIPANTS

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**Michel Roux,  
OBE, Patron**

*Global ambassador of the  
Waterside Inn, Bray, Berkshire*



**Alain Roux,  
Chairman**

*Chef-patron of the Waterside  
Inn, Bray, Berkshire*



**Brian Turner, CBE,  
Vice Chairman**

*President of the Royal  
Academy of Culinary Arts  
and celebrity chef*



**Andrew Fairlie,  
Head Scholar**

*1984 Roux Scholar and chef-  
patron of Restaurant Andrew  
Fairlie, Gleneagles, Perthshire*



**Steve Drake**

*2001 Roux Scholar and  
chef-proprietor of Sorrel,  
Dorking, Surrey*



**Sat Bains**

*1999 Roux Scholar and chef-  
patron of Restaurant Sat Bains  
with Rooms, Nottingham*



**André Garrett, MCA**

*2002 Roux Scholar and  
executive head chef at Cliveden  
House, Taplow, Berkshire*



**Matthew Tomkinson**

*2005 Roux Scholar and head chef at the Montagu Arms, Beaulieu, Hampshire*



**Adam Smith**

*2012 Roux Scholar and executive chef at Coworth Park, Ascot, Berkshire*



**Andrew Jones**

*2004 Roux Scholar and executive chef at Chamberlain's, London*



**James Carberry**

*1992 Roux Scholar and lecturer in Culinary Arts at the School of Tourism and Food, Dublin*



**Simon Hulstone**

*2003 Roux Scholar and chef-proprietor of the Elephant, Torquay, Devon*



**Jonathan Harrison**

*1993 Roux Scholar and chef-patron of the Sandpiper Inn, Leyburn, Wensleydale*



**Tom Barnes**

*2014 Roux Scholar and head chef at L'Enclume, Cartmel, Cumbria*



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## Dinner at SAISON

178 Townsend Street,  
San Francisco

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10th NOVEMBER 2016

[saisonsf.com](http://saisonsf.com)

STEVE DRAKE

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WE HAD ONLY just arrived in San Francisco and our first meal out was at the three-Michelin-starred Saison restaurant by chef Joshua Skenes, in the Mission district. First impressions really set the bar high for what was to come, with a huge open kitchen and hundreds of persimmons hanging from the ceiling – the setting was cool, exciting and original.

The open kitchen was the same size as the dining room space and seated 18 covers. The room was big, with plenty of space for the chefs to work in. Harry Guy, the 2016 Roux Scholar, had chosen Saison for his stage and had one week left to go.

A feature of the food at Saison is that it's mostly cooked either directly or indirectly on wood and coals in a delicate, refined way, giving it a unique style.

We had 13 dishes – all highly original, complex in texture, flavour and yet subtle. The standout dish was 'Liquid toast' – sourdough was toasted on one side and the other side was dipped in a mixture of egg yolk, soy sauce and beurre noisette, then served with sea urchin. It was an incredible dish of soft, rum baba-like texture with a crunchy top, and the powerful, yet perfectly balanced addition of the sea urchin was quite

magical. It was a masterclass in flavour, texture and temperature.

Service was, as you would expect, very knowledgeable, polished and friendly. I would say it's at the top end of three-star prices at \$398 per head for the set menu.

The beautiful persimmons, which played their part all night, were used in the final course in the form of traditional hoshigaki (or dried persimmon) served with tea, completing the menu.

For me this was a stunning meal, an inspirational space to sit – and no doubt to work in – and it has certainly inspired me ahead of my next project.





**Top left:** chef Joshua Skene's masterpiece dish of sea urchin on 'liquid toast'. Saison, which began as a pop-up serving ultra seasonal produce, was awarded three Michelin stars in 2014. **Left:** 2016 Roux Scholar Harry Guy (with Michel Roux), is currently training at Saison under Joshua (pictured bottom right). "Saison has a very distinct cooking style that isn't being done in the UK," he says. "I love Joshua's vision on getting as close to nature and sourcing the absolute best without compromise. It has been the most incredible experience. To be part of it every day really has been brilliant."







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Cruise and walking tour  
FISHERMAN'S WHARF  
AND ALCATRAZ

San Francisco Bay

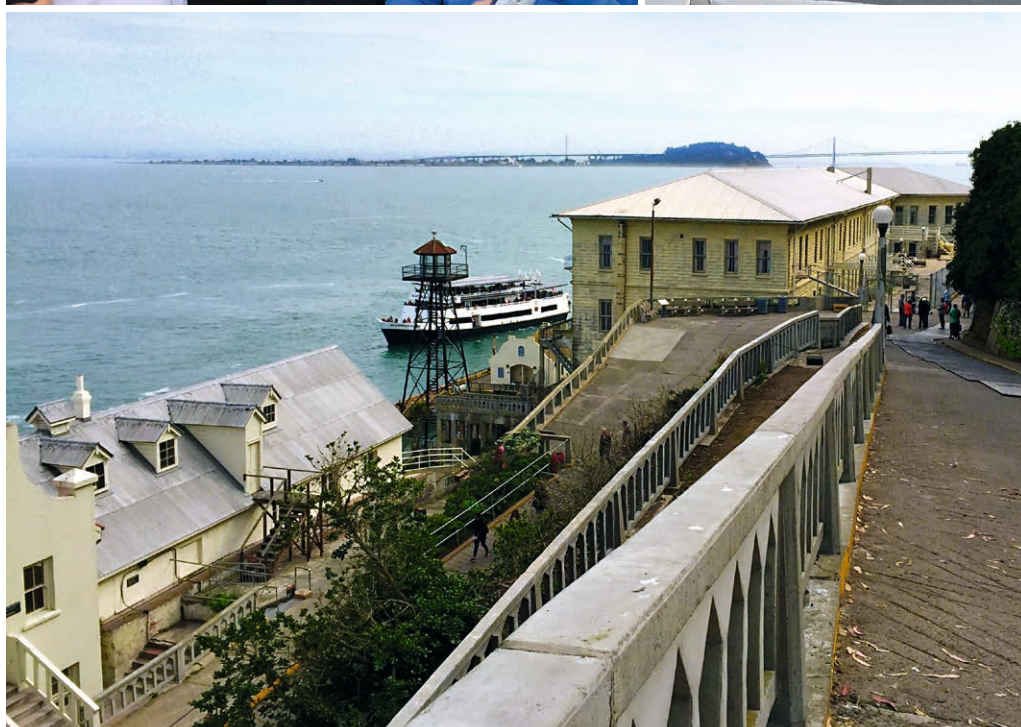
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11th NOVEMBER 2016

[alcatrazcruises.com](http://alcatrazcruises.com)







The scholars visited Fisherman's Wharf and Alcatraz, two of San Francisco's most popular attractions. They took the ferry from Fisherman's Wharf – a historic waterfront with numerous restaurants, shops, hotels and the famous sea lions on Pier 39 – to Alcatraz, where they toured the prison that used to house some of America's most notorious criminals, such as Al Capone.

**More information:**  
[fishermanswharf.org](http://fishermanswharf.org)  
[visitcalifornia.com](http://visitcalifornia.com)



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Lunch at  
**BUENA VISTA CAFE**

2765 Hyde Street,  
San Francisco

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11th NOVEMBER 2016

[thebuenavista.com](http://thebuenavista.com)

BRIAN TURNER

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WE ALL SLEPT well on our first night in San Francisco and on waking we were surprised to see the glorious sunshine of San Francisco Bay. With the sun in our faces, we started the day just like regular tourists on a visit to The Rock, better known as Alcatraz. This is an island in the heart of the bay, that has been used as a fort, a lighthouse and a prison. By the time we left, it was surrounded by fog.

Next, we moved to one of San Francisco's iconic cafés, the Buena Vista, on the waterfront. The place was humming, and I'm not sure how they kept our tables free, but thanks to Bob and Jack, two of the owners, we sat and were regaled by the stories of this wonderful café.

The Buena Vista is credited with bringing Irish coffee to America, and having experienced one before lunch I can understand why – it was delicious! The crab specials were equally memorable, although the season was really yet to start.

From the café we could see the world-famous trams clanging their way up the hill, but being youngsters we walked and took taxis to the Blue Bottle Coffee HQ, where we took part in a great coffee tasting.

We moved on to the Berkeley district to check out The Cultured Pickle Shop where we learnt about one of the current crazes of California – soured vegetables (and their fascinating fermentation processes).

It was now early evening and we were starting to flag, but we were heading just around the corner to another iconic Californian restaurant, Chez Panisse. For 40 years, I have admired and even worshipped the work of the great Alice Waters and her energy in getting chefs to think and cook with local, seasonal produce and to create marriages of simple, pure flavours. As we neared the restaurant, with its well-lit frontage, it looked so welcoming we couldn't wait to go in. However, in life some things don't always work out and I'm afraid we all felt the same; the least said the better. Perhaps on another visit it will fulfil my dreams. Sadly, not this time.





**Left:** an illustration of Buena Vista, said to be the birthplace of the Irish coffee. **Above:** a selfie with owner Bob and chef José (both next to Michel), and the famous trams in the background. Any Powell & Hyde Street cable car going towards Fisherman's Wharf will take you to the corner of Hyde and Beach Street, where the café is located.

**More information:**  
[sfcablecar.com](http://sfcablecar.com)





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Coffee tasting  
**BLUE BOTTLE COFFEE**

300 Webster Street,  
Oakland

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11th NOVEMBER 2016

[bluebottlecoffee.com](http://bluebottlecoffee.com)



**Left:** tasting some of the incredible coffees at Blue Bottle Coffee. The company works directly with farmers around the world to source the most sustainable coffees, which are then roasted for optimum flavour and served at peak deliciousness. Coffee is only sold within 48 hours out of the roaster.



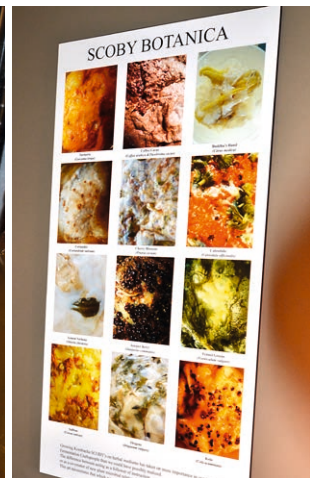


# THE CULTURED PICKLE SHOP

800 Bancroft Way,  
Suite 105, Berkeley

11th NOVEMBER 2016

[culturedpickleshop.com](http://culturedpickleshop.com)



Visit the tasting area of The Cultured Pickle Shop and try delicious varieties of soured vegetables – from sauerkraut and kimchi, to seasonal speciality pickles and kombucha tea. This fascinating shop produces thousands of pounds of locally grown organic, soured vegetables every week.





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Dinner at  
**CHEZ PANISSE**

1517 Shattuck Avenue,  
Berkeley

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11th NOVEMBER 2016

[chezpanisse.com](http://chezpanisse.com)



Since it opened in 1971, Chez Panisse has been a huge influence on Californian cuisine. In fact, its executive chef, founder and owner, Alice Waters, is credited with launching the farm-to-fork approach and has been a champion of local, organic and seasonal produce for more than four decades.



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Oyster tasting  
**HOG ISLAND OYSTER CO**

1 Ferry Building, The Embarcadero,  
San Francisco

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12th NOVEMBER 2016

[hogislandoysters.com](http://hogislandoysters.com)



The Hog Island Oyster Co hand-raises exceptional quality, sustainable shellfish in the cool, clean waters of Tomales Bay, on the coast of Northern California. You can try oysters at the oyster bars in San Fran and Napa. They also have a stall at the Ferry Plaza Farmers' Market ([tap here](#) or turn over for more details).





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# FERRY PLAZA FARMERS' MARKET

1 Ferry Building,  
San Francisco

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12th NOVEMBER 2016

[ferrybuildingmarketplace.com](http://ferrybuildingmarketplace.com)

ANDREW JONES

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WE VISITED THE farmers' market on a Saturday morning and, with over 150 stalls of the finest produce from the local area, the place was bustling. The first thing to strike me was the sunflowers, all very Van Gogh with

their huge bunches and one of my favourite flowers! A good farmers' market is like a sweet shop for chefs – we could spend all day looking at products and talking to farmers who had as much passion for growing

and bringing their produce to market as we do about cooking it. Here they have a great scheme with over 300 restaurants involved where they provide carts for the chefs and free parking. If only we had this in London...







The Ferry Plaza Farmers' Market is held every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday in the historic Ferry Building. It is renowned for the quality and diversity of its fresh farm products and artisan foods, and is regarded as one of the top farmers' markets in America. Nearly 40,000 shoppers visit each week, alongside some of San Francisco's best-known chefs.

**More information:**  
[cuesa.org](http://cuesa.org)



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## Lunch at IN SITU

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art,  
151 Third Street, San Francisco

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12th NOVEMBER 2016

[insitu.sfmoma.org](http://insitu.sfmoma.org)

SIMON HULSTONE

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SATURDAY LUNCH WAS the first of two amazing Corey Lee meals we would have on this trip. Our first was at the unique In Situ restaurant based in San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA). What made this experience so unique was that every dish on the menu had been donated by some of the world's best chefs with their full approval.

We started lunch with an intense, silky smooth caramelised carrot soup, topped with curried coconut foam – a recipe from Nathan Myhrvold from the cookbook *Modernist Cuisine: The Art and Science of Cooking*. A few more snacks were presented including one from the Clove Club's, Isaac McHale. Buttermilk-fried chicken

and pine – a dish that I have eaten at the Clove Club – was executed perfectly. Isaac would be proud.

To follow was what would be one of the highlights of the trip: Richard Ekkebus' sea urchin with cauliflower puree, lobster jelly, caviar and gold leaf. A masterclass in luxury, skill and refinement, it was fantastic. We all agreed this was a standout dish and it was probably the most photographed of our tour. Richard sent us messages of thanks for the comments on his food, which was a great touch. His dish was in good hands and made us want to travel to Hong Kong to try it at his two-Michelin-starred restaurant, Amber, at the Landmark Mandarin Oriental.

Corey's team treated every dish they reproduced with the utmost respect, and the chefs who created them should be delighted they were being served just as they had visualised.

Further dishes followed from Thomas Keller, Virgilio Martinez and even Massimo Botturas' famous "Oops I dropped the lemon tart". Finally came a show stopper from Albert Adrià of Tickets in Barcelona. We were presented with what looked like rind-washed cheese with biscuits but turned out to be an amazing cheesecake with hazelnut cookies. It was a great finish to an amazing meal, which made us very excited to see what Corey had up his sleeve for this evening's meal at Benu.





In Situ is an exhibition restaurant housed in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, which offers a menu of innovative dishes by chefs and restaurants from around the world. All dishes are accurately represented and include a hotdog from James Knappett and Sandia Chang of London's Bubbledogs and a chicken liver muesli from our very own Roux Scholar Sat Bains, plus Isaac McHale's buttermilk-fried chicken, pictured top right, and Richard Ekkebus' standout sea urchin masterpiece, above left



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## Dinner at B E N U

22 Hawthorne Street,  
San Francisco

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12th NOVEMBER 2016

[benusf.com](http://benusf.com)

### SAT BAINS

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BENU IS a three-Michelin-starred restaurant in San Francisco run by chef-owner Corey Lee. It serves modern American cuisine with an Asian leaning, using Corey's Korean heritage as influences. The space is ultra minimal with beautiful focal points, great artwork and a window showcasing hanging soya beans for their own soy sauce. We were seated in the private dining room, but there was no pomp or ceremony, just a confident air of perfect hospitality. Master sommelier Yoon Ha was our host for the evening and led his team, in delivering discreet, professional and informative service.

The menu started with ten small delicacies, all bite-sized or two

mouthfuls, which were served at a rapid pace, every two to three minutes. I thought this was brilliant as it got us all excited. The flavours were exceptional and textures played a crucial part in the meal.

The menu proper followed next with eight dishes, the highlights of which were lobster coral xiao long bao, one of Corey's signatures, which explodes in the mouth.

The beef rib was another high point. The beef was served carved and perfectly cooked with a selection of garnishes and condiments such as crudités, water kimchi, cabbage kimchi, cucumber kimchi, ramp and soy that gave brilliant contrasts of hot, cold and texture.

This meal was without doubt the finest of the trip for me. Many of the others were world-class but this stood out for technical skill and flavour. The balance of the menu was incredible and it blew us away.

The last time I had a meal this good was 17 years ago at elBulli, and this was on par. I've been lucky enough to travel and eat at some of the best restaurants in the world and this experience is one of my favourites. I came here previously in 2010, and it was brilliant then but now it's on another level. I would rate this as one of the top five restaurants in the world right now.

Thank you, Corey and team Benu. You took us to school!

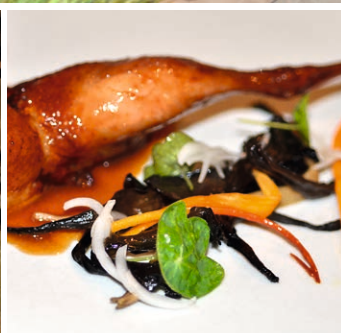




**Top left:** Michel, Alain Brian and the scholars with chef-owner Corey Lee (centre with Michel) and his talented team.

**Left:** These black pots contain fermentations such as carrots or garlic scapes. **Clockwise from below right:** a selection of Benu's exceptional food, including Corey's signature lobster coral xiao long bao; sea cucumber with shrimp, fermented pepper and pea leaves; steamed bun with truffle butter; and smoked quail with lilies, black trumpet and nasturtium.

**Bottom:** the Roux gang dressed for dinner.





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## Lunch at S H E D

25 North Street,  
Healdsburg

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13th NOVEMBER 2016

[healdsburgshed.com](http://healdsburgshed.com)

TOM BARNES

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DOUG LIPTON AND Cindy Daniels opened Shed three-and-a-half-years ago, with the idea of showcasing the produce of local artisan suppliers. Everything stocked in the shop is from various farms, all within a 10-mile radius, including Shed's own farm, HomeFarm. The ethos Doug and Cindy go by is "good farming, good cooking, good eating".

Downstairs, there's a shop selling local fresh produce as well as grains, olive oils and preserves. There's also a takeaway larder, which sells many different salads and pâtés, which are prepared on site. They have America's first fermentation bar and sell home-made kombucha on tap, as well as house-made shrubs (an old-fashioned refresher made from vinegars, fresh herbs and seasonal

fruit). They even have their own milling room, where they mill homegrown corn for polenta and corn flour.

We were seated upstairs in the private event space, and treated to a delicious three-course lunch by chef Perry Hoffman, who, at 23, was the youngest chef in the US to win a Michelin star. His grandparents owned The French Laundry until they sold it to Thomas Keller in 1994.

Dining with us was Sebastian Pochan, the winemaker for Front Porch Farms, who provided us with the accompanying wines for the meal. His farm produces 1,200 cases a year, and are sold across the bay area.

First course was a dish of California yellow tail tuna with mandarins, Malabar spinach and amethyst radish. It was a beautifully balanced,

very fresh dish with the bitterness of the radish and the spinach going with the sweetness of the mandarins.

The main course was a perfect roast chicken, served family style, with chestnut cabbage, persimmon and brassicas. The chicken was moist with an amazing flavour, and the dish was finished off beautifully with a parfait of chicken liver.

The final course was a lovely selection of local cheeses, made by Soyoung Scanlan at Andante Dairy in nearby Petaluma. She names all her cheeses after musical expressions. My favourite was 'Figaro', a very soft and tangy goats' cheese, wrapped in a fig leaf. The cheese was served with a pear and brandy marmalade and amazing sourdough bread from artisan bakery MH Bread and Butter.





**Left:** the group were joined by Sebastien Pochan (fourth from left), head winemaker at nearby Front Porch Farm, and Shed's executive chef Perry Hoffman (next to Michel), who is the youngest chef in the US to win a Michelin star





Shed is a farm, shop, café, coffee house and fermentation bar that firmly believes in responsible farming and ingredient-driven cooking with lots of flavour. The Roux Scholars enjoyed tender roast chicken, top left, a selection of locally produced cheeses, top right, and yellow tail tuna with sweet mandarins, above left, at the café, which has an open kitchen, wood-burning oven and daily-changing menus that are inspired by what's in season and reflect the company's commitment to local farmers and producers.







Tour of the  
**BODEGA BAY  
OYSTER COMPANY**

12830 Valley Ford Road, Petaluma

13th NOVEMBER 2016

[bodegabayoyster.com](http://bodegabayoyster.com)



Martin Strain, below right, has sold oysters, clams and mussels at local restaurants and farmers' markets for more than 25 years. He is the founder of the Bodega Bay Oyster Company and strives to bring the freshest, tastiest shellfish to market, using sustainable farming methods.





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Dinner at  
SINGLETHREAD FARM

131 North Street,  
Healdsburg

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13TH NOVEMBER 2016

[singlethreadfarms.com](http://singlethreadfarms.com)

JONATHAN HARRISON

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SINGLETHREAD IN SONOMA

County hadn't officially opened when we visited, but we were treated to a sneak preview. Owners Kyle and Katina Connaughton (chef and farmer) run this high-end development on the site of an old post office that was previously burnt down. Spread over three floors, the top floor hosts a roof terrace with spectacular views and also has a garden where microgreens, herbs and fruit trees are grown. The second floor harbours five luxury guest rooms, while the ground floor is home to a large,

open-plan kitchen and dining room with Japanese decor, giving a luxurious, contemporary feel. The restaurant's ethos is 'omotenashi', the Japanese style of hospitality that anticipates guests' every need.

The 11-course tasting menu with guest-customised wine pairing consists of mainly Californian cuisine with Eastern influences. This is shaped by the Connaughton's farm-to-table approach, the farm being located on five acres of historic San Lorenzo ranch. It supplies the restaurant with fruit, vegetables,

herbs and flowers, as well as honey, eggs and olive oil. My favourite dish of the night was the frozen fromage blanc, tonka bean, amaranth and poached quince, served with Novy Oley Late Harvest Viognier.

The restaurant was professional with creative and informed staff adhering to Kyle's innovative and inventive cooking style. The incredible flora and fauna was sourced by Katina and made the experience even more distinctive, allowing their commitment to this project to shine through.





Singlethread's 11-course tasting menu included: Spanish mackerel, top left; chestnut sable with saikyo miso, apple butter and shaved white truffle, middle right; 'Autumn in Sonoma', bottom left, a selection of oysters, shrimp, wild flowers and herbs; and cured foie gras with hickory nut and persimmon, bottom right.

**Middle left:** Kyle and Katina Connaughton with Michel and Alain.







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Tour of the  
**COPAIN WINERY**

7800 Eastside Road,  
Healdsburg

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14th NOVEMBER 2016

[copainwines.com](http://copainwines.com)

Overlooking the picturesque Russian River Valley sits the Copain Winery with glorious views of the surrounding vineyards. This boutique winery offers informative yet informal tastings of its acclaimed pinot noir, syrah and chardonnay wines, crafted by founder and master winemaker Wells Guthrie.







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Cocktail reception  
**AUBERGE DU SOLEIL**

180 Rutherford Hill Road,  
Rutherford, Napa Valley

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14th NOVEMBER 2016

[aubergedusoleil.aubergeresorts.com](http://aubergedusoleil.aubergeresorts.com)



The Auberge du Soleil is a spectacular hillside resort with sweeping views of Napa Valley. This grand hotel has 50 private mansions, an award-winning spa and a Michelin-starred restaurant, where executive chef Robert Curry combines French classics with the best local ingredients to create unique dishes.



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Dinner at  
**THE FRENCH LAUNDRY**

6640 Washington Street,  
Yountville

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14th NOVEMBER 2016

[thomaskeller.com/tfl](http://thomaskeller.com/tfl)

ANDRÉ GARRETT

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THIS EVENING WAS a real treat and one we were all looking forward to. First we had pre-dinner drinks and canapés at the Auberge de Soleil, a Relais & Châteaux property high up in the hills at St Helena. The view from the terrace was breathtaking and a great start to the evening. We were lucky to try some very special beers by a local winemaker in Napa who is also brewing under the name Mad Fritz. We sampled four beers each, paired with a small canapé. My favourites were a wheat-style beer served with a lobster and avocado taco, and a dark beer paired with foie gras and cocoa nibs.

Suitably refreshed, we were off to The French Laundry, Thomas Keller's famous restaurant in Yountville, Napa Valley. The team greeted us warmly and cut a magnum of Laurent-Perrier

Rosé with a saber for us – a real show that got the night off to a great start.

We were seated upstairs in the dining room for a tasting menu of 12 courses with matching wines. We sampled some of the established classics from Keller's repertoire, along with some newer seasonal dishes. Highlights included white truffle 'vichyssoise' champignon de Paris and Kendall Farm's crème fraîche; 'Oysters and pearls', a 'sabayon' of pearl tapioca with Island Creek oysters and Royal Kaluga caviar; and 'Navarin de légumes de jardin' – gnocchi à la Parisienne, garden carrots, winter radishes, pea shoots and red wine mushroom bouillon.

The menu and dining experience was a tour de force in cooking technique, seasonality and ingredient choice. The service was opulent,

attentive and highly knowledgeable about every technique and ingredient. I was last here nine years ago and it was great to see dishes that are still on the menu and still as tasty and as relevant today. Alongside these were newer and seasonally led dishes, notably the navarin of vegetables, picked that morning from The French Laundry farm, with memorable flavours and lightness.

The French Laundry has been operating since 1978. Keller bought it in 1994 and it has grown to deliver 80 covers per night (five nights a week) and up to 60 for lunch (three times a week) from 60 seats. We cannot forget what Keller has done for the restaurant scene in California and it was a treat to see the team still evolving and setting the standards that we all wish to achieve.





**Top right:** the brand-new kitchen at The French Laundry. Thomas Keller is the only American-born chef to have two three-Michelin-starred restaurants. **Middle, clockwise from far left:** signature dish 'Oysters and pearls'; 'Navarin de légumes de jardin'; broccoli and barley porridge with bantam hen egg; poached meringue with toasted oats and persimmons; white truffle 'vichyssoise'; the egg dish with white truffle. **Bottom left:** Alain and Michel were pleased to meet up with ex-Waterside Inn chef Philip Kearsey (in apron), who now works at The French Laundry. **Bottom right:** the building dates back to 1900.



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Bike ride  
THE NAPA VALLEY  
VINE TRAIL

3259 California Boulevard, Napa

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15th NOVEMBER 2016

[napavalleybiketours.com](http://napavalleybiketours.com)

JAMES CARBERRY

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OUR ITINERARY IS always jam packed and today was no exception. After breakfast, we walked from our hotel to the bike shop to get set up with helmets, water, maps and, of course, our mode of transport. The weather was just perfect, with no wind and a light covering of cloud, and everybody was looking forward to getting out for a leisurely cycle in such a beautiful location.

To pedal through this area, which has the finest vineyards in North America and is straddled by the Napa hills on each side, was a treat for the soul. This is the first time we

have done this and it was a welcome break from using a coach or train. We covered about nine miles on a flat, purpose-built smooth cycle track, which was easy going for all of us. Moving along at a leisurely pace as our tyres crunched over the fallen oak leaves that littered the path was peaceful and extremely enjoyable.

In what seemed like no time we arrived at the picture-postcard town of Yountville and stopped at The French Laundry Culinary Garden ([tap here](#) or turn over to read more).

As we dropped off our bikes, we popped into Bouchon, Thomas

Keller's French bistro, just a few steps from the iconic French Laundry. We were met with genuine hospitality.

There we enjoyed kimchi oysters mignonette, oeufs mimosa and divine crispy pigs' ears with maple-scented aioli, washed down with a wonderful glass of chardonnay from Flowers Vineyards on the Sonoma Coast.

The level of professionalism was outstanding, both front and back of house. It's also an understatement to say that this is a beautiful part of the world and a must-go place to learn about great dining, great wine and flawless hospitality.





*Above:* the scholars and judges on their bikes, ready for their leisurely cycle along the beautiful Napa Valley vine trail, from Napa to Yountville. They took a well-earned pitstop at Bouchon, pictured far left, Thomas Keller's bistro, just down the road from The French Laundry. The charming restaurant serves authentic French fare that showcases the finest seasonal produce available each day.



**More information:**  
[thomaskeller.com/bouchonyountville](http://thomaskeller.com/bouchonyountville)







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# FRENCH LAUNDRY CULINARY GARDEN

Washington Street,  
Yountville

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15th NOVEMBER 2016

[thomaskeller.com/tfl](http://thomaskeller.com/tfl)

JAMES CARBERRY

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This three-acre, green space supplies the restaurants in the area owned by Thomas Keller. The garden was originally much smaller and tended in the early days by the chefs from The French Laundry.

Passionate head gardener Aaron Keefer now oversees it and, with

his team, grows the most amazing organic produce. He explained how he keeps the soil fertile with black guano and chicken manure. He says that when the soil is teeming with natural microorganisms they impart the best flavour possible to the herbs and vegetables. I can testify to that,

having tasted the fruits of his labour the night before at our very special dinner at The French Laundry.

Keefer has a magic touch for growing magnificent ingredients and is a fountain of knowledge. It was a privilege to spend time with him and gain his perspective.



The French Laundry Garden is located directly across the street from the restaurant. The three-acre site is a gardener's paradise, with rows and rows of tenderly cared for produce. **Left:** Aaron Keefer, culinary gardener for The French Laundry, talks to the scholars about growing and harvesting, and ensuring the best quality possible.









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## Lunch at REDD WOOD

6755 Washington Street,  
Yountville

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15th NOVEMBER 2016

[redd-wood.com](http://redd-wood.com)

ADAM SMITH

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REDD WOOD IS a casual restaurant in Yountville run by chef Richard Reddington. We were seated in a private room, with a floor-to-ceiling window looking out onto a courtyard and one wall decorated with signed menus, magazine and newspaper clippings (*far right*). I immediately noticed one of Marco Pierre White; the classic black-and-white photo of him smoking a cigarette.

The style of food and service was very relaxed, with dishes served family style down the middle of the table. To start we were served a selection of home-made terrines and local charcuterie, with breadsticks and some toasted bread.

Next up were a couple of simple but very well executed salads – the first a take on a classic Caesar, with romaine lettuce, white anchovies, lemon, garlic and croutons – a demonstration of how the simple things in life are often the best.

To follow this we had roasted octopus, Brussels sprouts, frisée, argula and gribiche. This was particularly tasty; the octopus was tender and beautifully cooked and seasoned – so good, in fact, that a little more of it would have been very welcome!

For the main course we had a wood-fired pizza with cheese, tomato and fresh white truffle,

alongside two pasta dishes; one a simple spaghetti with tomato sauce and the other an earl grey fettuccine with braised duck, root vegetables and apple. The pizza and the tomato pasta were simple but effective and the fettuccine was almost a take on a Waldorf.

At Redd Wood they definitely saved the best till last. To finish we were given a beautiful cannoli; simple vanilla cream wrapped in crisp pastry – just perfect.

All in all, it was a simple, relaxed lunch, with friendly service. There was a busy vibe in the main restaurant, which seems to be a popular destination for locals.





Richard Reddington's second restaurant in Napa (the first being his Michelin-starred Redd) is a laid-back affair, serving Italian-inspired dishes made with locally sourced ingredients. The menu consists of simple but effective salads, including a twist on a classic Caesar, with anchovies piled on top of romaine lettuce, bottom right, and truffle gnocci, bottom middle, plus wood-fired pizzas, bottom left, and house pastas. It is relaxed yet stylish, with a stunning courtyard surrounded by citrus trees.





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Dinner at  
**THE RESTAURANT  
AT MEADOWOOD**

900 Meadowood Lane, St Helena

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15th NOVEMBER 2016

[therestaurantatmeadowood.com](http://therestaurantatmeadowood.com)

MATTHEW TOMKINSON

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OUR LAST DINNER of the trip was at The Restaurant at Meadowood. Chef Christopher Kostow has created a modern American restaurant amid a sprawling resort in St Helena; his ethos is one of relationships and partnerships and the idea of being “caretakers of a collective vision”.

Having made our way past the twinkling lights of the forest approach we were welcomed into a lounge that reminded me of a hunting lodge, wooden-built with roaring fires and high ceilings. We were served champagne, then went through for dinner. The table was simply laid with a piece of stone and a foraged flower to indicate a connection with the land.

The initial courses were a steady stream of ‘snacks’: a Jerusalem

artichoke beignet wrapped in its crisped skin, a piece of lion’s mane mushroom dipped in brown butter and some freshly dug pinto potatoes with honey and sorrel vinegar. The next two were fish based; a miyagi oyster with a mignonette of fermented kohlrabi juice and then a combination of fresh water eel and beef tongue with a semillon grape sabayon that had been smoked over cabernet sauvignon barrel staves.

To follow was a pumpernickel and rye bread dough wrapped around a poached King Richard leek and then steamed. It was served with butter that had been scented with caraway and had shaved dried albacore tuna over it. As we finished this, a cauliflower custard with crushed

cauliflower, Trojan sterling caviar and a sabayon of olive oil was presented on top of cauliflower leaves.

Next was my favourite of the night: sunflower pasta ‘bon bons’ with a spot prawn filling, thinly sliced raw matsutake mushrooms and a rich, buttery sauce – delicious. Course nine was a unique plate of lightly cured and gently poached local fresh halibut, with half a small grilled and fermented summer squash wrapped in cloth, for us to squeeze over.

Another fish course followed, with a meaty fillet of Sacramento Delta sturgeon that had been lightly grilled with kimchi, chestnuts, Hudson Valley foie gras and scorched cabbage.

Unusually, a cold course came next in the form of a chicken and whelk





This three-Michelin-starred restaurant offers a one-of-a-kind tasting menu by acclaimed chef Christopher Kostow (next to Michel), who curates his ingredients from local sources.

**Top left:** the decor is stylish and elegant, matching that of the luxurious Meadowood hotel it adjoins.

**Top right:** the 'candle' of creamy aged cows' milk cheese.

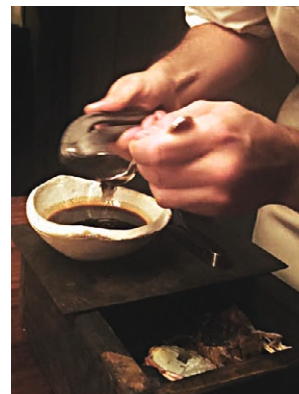
terrine with lovage oil, turnips, lemon and horseradish. It had some of the cooking broth and fat from the chicken, which made it very moist. The gentle acidity of this dish acted as a cleanser for the beautifully rich smoked Japanese Wagyu that came next, poached in its own fat and served from a smoking presentation box with onion soubise, beef jus, black garlic and shallots.

After we had finished, the waiting staff replaced the almost burned-down candles with two much bigger ones. This seemed odd but then they cut the top off the candles to reveal a creamy aged cows' milk cheese core that had been mixed with black truffle. This was served with local honey and grilled porridge bread.

The final courses now turned sweet, with a sharp dish of yogurt, fresh olive oil, hibiscus and quince to refresh us, then a more decadent parsnip tart with caramelised whey, white truffle ice cream and freshly shaved truffle.

Lastly, Meadowood's take on mignardises – cherries dipped in chocolate, frangipane 'stones', two-week-old persimmons from the chef's garden and 'whisky for breakfast' – aged maple syrup with brown butter infused bourbon.

This was an incredible meal that really delivered its intention of giving us a taste of the region; it was satisfying but balanced enough to keep us excited course by course. What a way to end an amazing week!





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Wine tasting  
**COLGIN WINERY  
AND CELLARS**

St Helena

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15th NOVEMBER 2016

[colgincellars.com](http://colgincellars.com)

Founded by Ann Colgin and releasing its first vintage in 1992, Colgin Cellars has rapidly established a stellar reputation as one of the finest producers in the Napa Valley. Specialising in stunning cabernet sauvignon blends, the cellar mainly sells to private clients and direct to discerning restaurants in small batches. "This pristine winery isn't usually open to the public, so we felt very privileged to be allowed access," says Roux Scholar Andrew Jones. "We tasted three wines: a 2012 Tychson Hill, which was my favourite and their rarest, with only 350 cases made, and the 2006 and 2012 IX Estate Red, both of which were delightful."







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Lunch at  
**TARTINE MANUFACTORY**

595 Alabama Street,  
San Francisco

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16th NOVEMBER 2016

[tartinemanufactory.com](http://tartinemanufactory.com)



Tartine Manufactory is a very hip, very popular bakery and restaurant. An extension of the world-famous Tartine Bakery, founded by husband and wife Chad Robertson and Elisabeth Prueitt 15 years ago, it has a bread oven in the centre, coffee and ice cream counters and a dedicated pastry room.





## NOTES OF THANKS

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**"It's always a true pleasure to be in such great company and not only did all the amazing places we visit inspire me but also the company."**

Adam Smith

"Michel, Alain, I wanted to say a big thank you for the trip of a lifetime, and also for what you have done for us and the Scholarship. This truly is the best group of chefs to be with. My team has not stopped asking me what we did, ate and experienced on the trip, and this brings a big feeling of pride that they are engaged in what we are doing. I will always be pushed on when I think of what we tasted and saw in San Francisco and Napa Valley as well as all of the other trips – they will stay with me for a lifetime."

André Garrett, MCA

**"If we never did another trip I would be satisfied with what we've done – it has changed our lives in our kitchens and our teams' lives, so thank you all for making the trip amazing as usual."**

Sat Bains

"A once-in-a-lifetime trip – I'm truly blown away by the whole experience. It's a week I will look back on for years to come. I'm still trying to process all the moments. Going back through the menus and photos with my chefs reminded me of just how much we got to see and do in such a short time."

Matthew Tomkinson

**"Thank you to everyone for making the West Coast trip the most fantastic, life-changing adventure it was. Thank you, Michel, for being the Godfather. We saw again the awe in which the world's chefs and others have when around you – and some a little fear! Brian, Alain and Andrew, thank you for your constant support. As a group it's phenomenal that we have access to the industry's best for advice."**

Steve Drake

"So many things to think about, what a wonderful trip! Hope your memories of the trip are the same as mine: fantastic and they will last a lifetime!"

Brian Turner, CBE

**"The week away was fantastic in every single way, with all the amazingly good food, wonderful wine and convivial hosts. We received genuine hospitality, which is surely a rare thing these days. From a learning and educational point of view, what better way to study but at the pinnacle of what is hip and happening in your field of expertise accompanied by the best students in the game? The trip was an inspiration of gastronomy and I am very grateful to have shared it with each and every one of you."**

James Carberry

"To be able to visit such amazing places with you all is something I will never forget. The trip gave me amazing memories that will last forever, and I really do appreciate how lucky I am to have been given the opportunity to take part in something so very special. Winning the Roux Scholarship is the biggest highlight of my career, and I am so grateful for everything it has done for me."

Tom Barnes





To watch a video of the scholars and judges on tour  
in California, click on the ‘play’ button below.





“To give in life is to take, and for over 30 years having given my time to our scholars, I have been greatly rewarded simply by seeing them blossom and grow in confidence and achievement. I am constantly inspired, surprised and blessed. Thanks a million to my scholars.”

Michel Roux, OBE

