



# JOSEAN MARTÍNEZ ALIJA

## GUGGENHEIM BILBAO RESTAURANT

### REFERENCES...

Under the amazing titanium skin of the Guggenheim Museum, the Canadian architect Frank Gehry designed a gastronomic area with the peculiarities of the galleries within the museum, which takes the name of Guggenheim-Bilbao Restaurant. The Oregon- pine furniture designed by the architect and the enormous window overlooking the prestigious University of Deusto were the starting point of a space to share, excite and charm. A place where dishes would transmit feelings of harmony and simplicity.

It is a multidisciplinary area comprising of an outdoor café, an indoor café (exclusively for visitors to the museum), a set menu restaurant and a gastronomic restaurant.

The cafes were conceived as a first showcase, in order to fulfill the basic needs of the numerous audience that come to visit the exhibitions everyday. At the same time, a luxury restaurant with a capacity for 60 people has been created. Its objective is not only to work the best produce bravely, but also to measure up to the Guggenheim Quality Stamp for a cultural centre with such characteristics.

### WHAT WE DO & HOW WE COOK

Josean Martínez Alija is the leader of an excellent team and the architect of the offering presented daily at the Guggenheim Bilbao Restaurant. Throughout the years, he has followed the dogma of working with perseverance in order to improve his knowledge of cooking and its techniques.

The imaginative chef feeds his philosophy by transmitting and sharing sensations and following some lines of work based on balance, purity and quality: Josean knows that a long path has to be walked to gain knowledge.

The chef chooses purity and seeks out exoticism in every day produce. He is always faithful to seasonal produce and supports several producers related to the slow food movement, quality being its distinguishing element. Raw materials appear in their purest state in all his dishes. They are essential elements for creating any recipe; giving balance to all his dishes. Aromas, flavours, textures and virtues abound.

Josean thinks that cooking is part of excellence. Many dishes are built with fine and intense juices, stocks or distilled liquids, each of which show the experience of the chef, from the moment that he takes the produce into his hands.

Texture is an essential value. Extreme temperatures are discriminated in order to caress palates and feel all the details. Thus, dishes with mild yet marked and sharp flavours and full of aromas are achieved. Dishes in which surprise and provocation are ever present. Josean's objective is simple as well as ambitious. Not easy. He will try to make his clients face the unknown and to be seduced by different offering, so that they enjoy a moment withhout equal.

In short, he tries to awaken all the senses and to provoke an electroshock.

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### JOSEAN'S CAREER....

In 2000, Bixente Arrieta, at the time the museum's head chef, staying faithful to the motto "A craftsman is the one who makes what he already knows, whereas the artist dares to do what he does not know", decided to confide in Josean (with an experience of El Bulli and Lasarte's kitchens) to assume the responsibility of the restaurant, and appointed him Chef de Cuisine.

That year, he achieved the first prize in the VI's Edition of the Spanish Championship for young chefs in High Gastronomy, which took place in the Kursaal COngress Hall in San Sebastian during the "Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía" Cookery Conference.

In 2002, his recipe "Whole roasted duck a la foie gras, with crystallised carrot noodles and makil goxo" was awarded as the most artistic dish of the year.

On 17th November 2003, Rafael García Santos' guide Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía awarded the young team with the award for the best work for their efforts in preserving Parmegiano-Reggiano cheese in dairy usage, praising "the balance between aromas and tastes in the cooking of the milk and its by-products". They also obtained the most beautiful dish prize, for "freshly shaken of the milk and its by-products". They also obtained the most beautiful dish prize, for "freshly shaken milk casein, with frozen strawberry juice crunchy violets".

That same year, the restaurant obtained 16 points out of 20 in the Gault Millau guide.

On October 2005, he received the Pil-Pil prize of the Basque Gastronomy for the best dessert of the last decade with his "Cold bitter-tasting juice with an ice infusion of milk, anises, almond crisp and nutmeg".

From 4 to 12 May 2006, he took part on a conference on Basque cooking at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York, organized by the Basque Government.

On 7th February 2007, the Basque Gastronomic Academy gave him the award for the Best Cook of The Basque Country. From 11 to 14 February 2007, he took part in the Omnivore festival at Le Havre (France), invited by Andreea Petrini. There, he presented a report on "Bases and juices at the kitchen of the Guggenheim restaurant".

On November of the same year, he was named Best cook of the year in the guidebook Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía, by Rafael Garcia Santos, where he obtained 9 points out of 10.

On January 2008, he took part in a charitable dinner at Corvazo, San Cassiaano (Italy), as so as to raise money for bone marrow research. That month, he was invited to Madrid Fusión, where he presented the Parmegiano-Reggiano aromas along with the chefs Quique Dacosta and Sergi Arola.

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On 25th February, Josean Martinez Alija got the Vizcaya Gastronomía-Inversis Banco Award, in its first edition.

From 1st to 7th November he took part in the gastronomy conference called "Mesa Tendencias España-Brasil: La última frontera de la gastronomía" (Spain-Brazil Trend Board: the Last Border of Gastronomy), which took place in Sao Paulo,

On 3rd December, he took place in the "1st Conference on the Organoleptic Quality of Ecological Food" held in Madrid.

On 21st January 2009, he participated in a discussion about the last culinary creations, organized by Madrid Fusion, together with Quique Dacosta, Joan Roca, Andoni Luis Aduriz and Dani García, among others same week, he travelled to Kyoto to participate in a workshop by the master Murata, to learn the bases of Japanese cooking.

On 24th February, he presented alternatives to local gastronomy on the 10th anniversary of the conference in Girona, the "Forum Gastronomic".

In May that year, he came back to Pamplona to collaborate in the conference named "Vive las verduras". (Live vegetables).

On 23rd June, he took part in the Conference on "Administration and Green Purchase and Contracting: We share experiences to learn and advance together", organized by IHOBE, the Basque Public Society of Environmental Management, at the Euskalduna Conference Hall.

In september, after his participation in February of that same year in the congress "Identitá Golose", and because of the presentation of the third edition of the "Italian, European and World haute cuisine's best restaurants guidebook", he is given the prize of Best Foreign International Chef, joining thus remarkable chefs such as René Redzepi from the Noma (Copenhagen) or Pascal Barbot from L'Astrance (París).

On 2nd November, the Guggenheim Bilbao restaurant received the Best Creative Cooking award at the third edition of the awards organized by the cooking critic Carlos Maribona at his blog Salsa de Chiles.

Some days later, on 9th November, Josean gave a workshop on his career and the cooking at the Guggenheim, and cooked nine dishes at the "Lo Mejor de la Gastronomía" (The best of gastronomy) congress in Alicante. In the guidebook named after the congress, the Guggenheim Bilbao restaurant was given 9.25 points and it obtained the 5th position and the 2009's Best Confectioner award.

On 25th November, Josean gave a speech together with Dani García, chef of the Calima restaurant, at the Gastronomika Congress in San Sebastian. The name of the speech was "De la tradición evolutiva a la no memoria" (From evolutive tradition to the lack of memory).

On 31st January 2010 he went back to Milan to take part in the Identita Golose 2010 Conference. He gave a class on the use of olive oil in his cooking and he created a dish based on olive oil, which was given the name "Olive oil, lightly fried vegetables and egg yolk".

In February 2010, he talked about the importance of local products linked to the slow food philosophy. He especially remarked purity, essentiality and health at the Gastronomy Forum in Santiago de Compostela. He said: "At the restaurant of the Guggenheim Bilbao, we work to discover the essence of raw materials again. It is a challenge itself, as well as the way to recover the pleasure for normal things in life".