

Pudong Shangri-La, Shanghai
Communications

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Paul Pairet at Jade on 36



Last week a friend came over from London for a week with his girlfriend, to visit me of course, but also to celebrate his birthday somewhere a bit different from the **White Horse in Brixton**.

He wasn't disappointed, not least because we went to the Shangri-La's fine dining effort, **Jade on 36**, for his birthday blow-out.

Now hotel dining in Shanghai is often tarred with the same brush as hotel dining is all around the world. There are lots of eat and drink all you can Champagne brunches (good value, but not exactly discerning) and "Global-village-world-food-stations" where cuisines from everywhere from Kerala to Kentucky are shoe-horned into a menu.

But at the **Shangri-La** they have managed to create a restaurant that means business, both in terms of those looking to impress their guests (a view across the financial centre Pudong or back to the West and the Bund) and those who come looking for serious food.

Even better is that for the latter they have done this not by securing the signature of a **Gordon Ramsay** or a Joel Robuchon, but a relatively unknown French chef called Paul Pairet.

Pairet comes from Montpellier but first came to Asia in the early nineties. Now in his early forties, he has built a strong reputation in Shanghai for an innovative approach to flavours and the odd madcap piece of presentation.

The menu consists just of tasting selections, four in total but with each of the four available in four-, six- or eight-course versions. I had a kind of sardine parfait with pain epice (actually the weakest of what was to come); then sashimi presented on long, bendy metal stalks (resembling those goggle eyes we used to wear as kids); an incredible dish which simply topped toasted brioche with truffle and a foamy version of beurre meuniere; a giant prawn steamed for 45 minutes in a kilner jar (which it is also served in) with lemongrass and orange juice; a beef rib cut right back so three inches of the meat remained in the middle of a totally clean bone and then roasted and served with a eggy pureed potato; and then wonderful puddings.

Now Pairet uses lots of foams and all those agents and chemical tricks beloved of the new school of kitchen wizardry. But his menus are also simple, and show off one idea per dish.

But how good is each of those single ideas? The foaming beurre meuniere on bread and steamed prawn dish were both creations that made me put down my knife and fork in the hope that I could drag out the act of eating each mouthful for a lifetime.

Anyway, I really share all this because it also made me wonder about Asia and **Michelin** stars.

I know this is like those hypothetical debates seven year olds have about whether **He-Man** would beat **Spiderman** ("yes", by the way) but if Michelin did ever spread the New York experiment further around the world and came to China, on current standards I reckon Jade on 36 could be worth two stars.

And I'm not sure there are any others who could match that in Shanghai, in a hotel or otherwise.

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[Dinner in the Land of Oz](#)

May 30th, 2007

I have just eaten the most fabulous dinner ever.

French **chef Paul Pairet**, celebrity chef of Shanghai, conjures his magic at **Jade on 36** in the Shangri la Hotel, known for its spectacular view of the modern version of OZ, Shanghai. www.shangri-la.com/shanghai/pudongshangrila/restaurants/en/index.aspx

I am quite happy as you can see, because I have officially given up dieting! I have also given up private trainers at 50 euros a pop (\$65.00). Why? Because in whatever years I have left, I just want to eat everything that I did not eat for the last 45 years. My dieting epiphany came during dinner at Jade on 36 in Pudong, China. (For those of who do not know where Pudong is, it's actually part of Shanghai, but sits across the river.)

Perfection. I am a restaurant recluse, living in fear of what horrible next night I might have at my own expense, as often in my home town of Manhattan, the service leaves a lot to be desired. Tables are stacked on top of each other, noise is unbearable, and you need an encyclopedia to understand the ridiculous descriptions on the menu. That's if you can get in. Soon, the menu will tell us where the pots and pans were made, and what time the chickens laid their eggs. Pre-dawn eggs certainly would certainly warrant a \$25.00 price tag, don't you think?

But then I went to Jade on 36 and realized I am not crazy - this is what great dining should be like. It should be an experience that is fondly remembered. The staff is so sweet and beautiful that you want to hire them as your own personal assistants. Each delicious plate delicious unique, and so very creative, and begs to be photographed..... all amazing. And Chef Paul is so cute! *Oh la la*. Every course is prepared like a dessert and the desserts, which have always been my favorite, are prepared like nothing you ever imagined.

XXX

Beverly

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Restaurants

Best for a splurge

Jade on 36

36th Floor, Tower Two, Pudong
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Shanghai
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[Website](#)



For great river views and even better food, try this restaurant on the 36th floor of the [Pudong Shangri-La](#) hotel. Paul Pairet, the chef, triumphs with the most unexpected combinations. Our sardine pâté with raisin bread crisp was followed by a *foie gras* lollipop coated in crunchy caramel, with hot-spiced tea and champagne foam. A beef consommé arrived with caviar on ice and a giant shrimp steamed in a jar with lemongrass, citrus fruit and vanilla. Sounds improbable? It worked beautifully.

Desserts were the stuff of science fiction: a red-berry spherical macaroon served with an orange sugar straw, and Coca-Cola noodles spilling over an apple sorbet with a sprinkling of mini raspberries. Tasting menus are offered in four, six or eight courses, costing between 400 and 888 yuan (\$52 and \$115). Fine dining is rarely this much fun.