

FOOD & WINE[®]

THE
TRAVEL
ISSUE

GLOBAL TASTEMAKERS

2024'S TOP CULINARY TRAVEL DESTINATIONS P. 85

THE SMOKY FIG,
A COCKTAIL INFUSED
WITH OOLONG TEA AND
WHISKEY, AT MAYBE
SAMMY IN SYDNEY
P. 20

26 RECIPES
CELEBRATING
A WORLD OF
FLAVOR

P. 14

22 BEST
SPARKLING
WINES FOR
SPRING

P. 61

MAY 2024

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FOOD & WINE

GLOBAL TASTEMAKERS 2024

Our second annual awards celebrate the best culinary travel experiences in the world.

Produced by Sean Flynn, Melanie Hansche, and Stacey Leasca

THIS YEAR IS ALREADY SHAPING UP to be a delicious one for food-minded travelers. There's been a burst of creativity and innovation in dining scenes across the globe, from tourism hot spots to under-the-radar destinations. Plus, airlines, hotels, and cruise ships have significantly upped their culinary offerings.

The results of our 2024 Global Taster Awards, as voted on by food and travel writers from across the globe and ranked by our expert judging panel (see "Methodology," p. 101), celebrate the flavors and culinary experiences that draw us to a destination.

Whether it's a life-affirming meal that defines a trip or a cocktail that evokes a taste of place with every sip, each of our winners represents a passionate yet thoughtful approach to cuisine and a sense of joy and hospitality that's deeply rooted in culture and community. We hope the results surprise and inspire you and give you the delicious reason you've been waiting for to book your next trip. ■

BEST INTERNATIONAL CITY
FOR FOOD & DRINK

TOKYO

GLOBAL
TASTEMAKERS
2024

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF SUSHI SAITO

• Widely regarded as one of Japan's top sushi chefs, Takashi Saito now has a location inside Tokyo's new Azabudai Hills mall: Sushi Saito, a 12-seat restaurant with an omakase menu.





From street food like grilled squid (bottom) to Le Pristine's pasta with seafood and 'nduja made in Hokkaido (middle), the food and drink scene in Tokyo is diverse.



PHOTOGRAPHY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): ANDREW FAULK; CLAUDE BEAUDEMOULIN/HANS LUCAS/REDUX; ANDREW FAULK (2); LUTZ JAEKEL/LAIF/REDUX; CHANTAL ARNTS

Rooted in the past but constantly evolving, the dynamic culinary scene in Tokyo makes it our top city in the world for food. By Yukari Sakamoto

TOKYO IS A CITY OVERFLOWING WITH *omotenashi*, a term that describes a selfless, sincere, and meticulous form of hospitality with roots in Japan's tea ceremony. You can see *omotenashi* come to life in many of the city's restaurants; it's one of the magical qualities that have long made Tokyo a world-class culinary destination.

You can experience it through the work of artisans, known as *shokunin*, who specialize in one kind of food, such as sushi, soba, unagi, tempura, or sukiyaki. You'll also find *omotenashi* in many of the city's restaurants that have been in business for more than 100 years, such as **Isehiro**, whose second-generation owner has been grilling yakitori over charcoal for decades in the basement of the Dai-ichi Hotel. These historic restaurants even go by their own name—*shinise*. But while the city's culinary traditions are firmly anchored in the past, Tokyo's food scene is constantly evolving and innovating toward the future; it's a combination that makes it an unparalleled destination for hungry travelers.

The newly opened Azabudai Hills mall—a complex of more than nine million square feet—has dozens of exciting restaurants and cafés, including **Florilège**, a French-inspired restaurant that focuses on plant-based dishes, and **Sushi Saito**, the new outpost from chef Takashi Saito, whose sushi is regarded by many as the best in the world. Hotel restaurants tempt diners with celebrated European chefs like Guillaume Bracaval at Michelin-starred **Est** in the Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi, serving French cuisine with Japanese ingredients, and Sergio Herman of **Le Pristine Tokyo** at Hotel Toranomon Hills, bringing Italian cuisine with Dutch terroir to Japan. Tokyo now

also competes on the world stage for incredible pizza, with pizzaiolos like Yuki Motokura at **Pizza Marumo** in Ebisu and Daniele Cason at **The Pizza Bar on 38th** at the Mandarin Oriental both honing their craft, serving pizza with high water concentration in the dough for lighter crusts.

Beyond restaurant walls, the food markets of Tokyo are truly mind-boggling. Department stores shelter vast epicurean food halls known as *depachika*, which overwhelm with their bountiful arrays of bento boxes, sashimi trays, and seasonal-fruit cakes; some, like **Takashimaya** and **Mitsukoshi**, have rooftop gardens for impromptu picnics. Even the 89-year-old **Tsukiji Outer Market** has evolved; today, the wholesale fish market almost feels like an American-style state fair, selling small bites like tamagoyaki on a stick or octopus flattened and grilled to a thin cracker.

Coffee shop culture is growing rapidly and can range from retro-cool *kissaten*, like **Hamanoya Parlour** in Nihonbashi serving Kona coffee with tamago sandos or toast, to hip third-wave coffee shops like **Koffee Mameya Kakeru**, which delights with flights of coffee cocktails served by baristas in white coats. Tokyo is also legendary for its breakfasts, whether it's handmade udon noodles with tempura slurped by office workers at countless stalls throughout the city or an onigiri rice ball from 7-Eleven. (The Japanese stores are universally recognized as having some of the best convenience-store food on the planet.)

A few things have changed since the pandemic. Casual restaurants have moved to taking orders via tablet or using QR codes. But some things haven't changed at all. It is still possible to eat well in Tokyo on any budget. Service is exceptional, and because of different wages, lifestyles, and living conditions, there is no need to tip. This makes Tokyo incredibly accessible for food lovers of all persuasions, and it's one of my favorite things about this city: It always has something for everyone. ■

Yukari Sakamoto is a chef and sommelier who runs bespoke food tours in Tokyo. Find her at foodsaketokyo.com.

BEST INTERNATIONAL CITIES FOR FOOD & DRINK

Japan dominates the list in 2024 with two cities in the top 10.

1. Tokyo
2. Istanbul
3. Mexico City
4. Paris
5. Lima, Peru
6. Rome
7. Singapore
8. Copenhagen
9. Osaka, Japan
10. Madrid

+ PLUS ONE
Montreal

Plus Ones are additional picks from our expert panel we don't want our readers to miss.

BEST INTERNATIONAL HOTELS FOR FOOD

These hotels big and small across the world offer some of the most exceptional dining experiences.

1. **The Lodhi**, New Delhi
2. **Royal Mansour**, Marrakech, Morocco
3. **Hôtel Plaza Athénée**, Paris
4. **Delaire Graff Estate**, Stellenbosch, South Africa
5. **Adare Manor**, Adare, Ireland
6. **Hoshinoya**, Tokyo
7. **Brae**, Birregurra, Australia
8. **Heckfield Place**, Heckfield, England
9. **Schloss Schauenstein**, Fürstenu, Switzerland
10. **Rosewood São Paulo**

+ PLUS ONE
Raffles London at The OWO



PHOTOGRAPHY: BEN PIPE

BEST INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT

GLOBAL TASTEMAKERS 2024

MÉRITO

Mérito, our survey's top-ranked international restaurant, is a love letter to Lima, Peru.

By Nicholas Gill

WHILE MUCH OF PERU'S cuisine tends to coalesce around geography and ancestral traditions, Lima is something of an outlier, absorbing everything that crosses its path and spinning it back out, reimagined. Take, for example, the knife techniques Japanese Peruvian cooks used to transform ceviche in the 1970s. Or the ingredients like yacón, a semi-tropical tuber, and camu camu, a very tart Amazonian berry, from the highlands and jungles that arrived with migrants fleeing violence in the 1980s and '90s and that can be seen today throughout the city, from the skewered beef hearts cooked on sidewalk grills to inimitable fine-dining temples. Lima's raw imagination and constant transformation are what continue to make the city one of the world's great gastronomic destinations. More than a million Venezuelans have fled to Lima over the past decade, putting Harina P.A.N. on grocery shelves and opening areperas across the city. What lasting influence will come of this remains to be seen, but let's hope it's something like Mérito.

Venezuelan chef Juan Luis Martínez arrived in the city to cook at Central in 2014. There, he worked with potatoes and high-altitude pseudograins such as

quinoa and amaranth that flowed to the restaurant from the Amazon and Andes, allowing him to see the overlaps in the great landscapes that connect Peru and Venezuela. In 2018, after developing close relationships with producers around Peru, he opened Mérito in a narrow, two-level space a couple of streets away. Eschewing the formality of fine dining, yet not quite a bistro either, it quickly gained a dedicated following.

Alongside his Peruvian interior designer partner, Michelle Sikic, Martínez is quietly transforming architecturally rich storefronts into accessible hot spots where the influences are wide-ranging. Aside from Mérito, the duo has opened Demo, a bakery, and Clon, a sort of "Mérito lite," with a playful menu where the ceviche has guasacaca (a spiced avocado sauce) and arepas are stuffed with fish battered in a tempura made with loche, a northern Peruvian squash. Each space vibes with the eclectic roots of the bohemian Barranco neighborhood, emphasizing features like original adobe walls and hand-painted tiles.

Trying to pigeonhole what Martínez is doing with Mérito doesn't quite work. Calling it fusion seems limiting. The restaurant is personal, if anything. Some dishes on the menu feel more Venezuelan, like glazed pork belly served with arepas, but they are hardly hidebound by nostalgia. Then out comes a dish that's 100% Peruvian: raw razor clams from Pacific waters and cushuro, spheres of blue-green algae from mountain lakes. But what to make of a dish of Andean tubers like the waxy oca or parsniplike arracacha, spun into noodles or laminated into wide sheets, that combines ingredients rooted in both countries yet has nothing to do with either? That's just Martínez, spinning his own thread within Lima's culinary tapestry. ■

Chef Juan Luis Martínez in the doorway of his Lima restaurant Mérito, voted the best international restaurant.

BEST INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANTS

Each of the winning restaurants on this list celebrates culture and cuisine while centering hospitality and deliciousness.

1. **Mérito**, Lima, Peru
2. **Petermen**, Sydney
3. **SodaBottle OpenerWala**, Mumbai
4. **Cucina Villana**, Ruvo di Puglia, Italy
5. **Soil**, Athens
6. **Celele**, Cartagena, Colombia
7. **La Cocina de Humo**, Oaxaca, Mexico
8. **Indigo**, Arequipa, Peru
9. **Cultiva**, Nairobi, Kenya
10. **Emazulwini Restaurant**, Cape Town

+ PLUS ONE

Dill, Reykjavík, Iceland

"A night out at Dill is a delightfully welcoming crash course in Icelandic culture. The first lesson is delivered in the ambiance, which will only expand your definition of hygge. The second lesson: an unwavering national support of the farmers who raise the sheep and grow vegetables in the historically stubborn soil." —Erika Owen, food and travel writer

MERCATO DI TESTACCIO

Mercato di Testaccio in Rome embodies the democratic spirit of the world's food markets.

By Stacey Leasca

IT'S NOT EVEN 11 A.M., yet here I am, in the back of the line that snakes around a corner, getting pushed into a produce stand and nearly knocking over a tower of lettuce, all in the name of scoring a good lunch. Luckily, the queue moves faster than expected, past more veggies and a store that specializes in socks. Finally, I reach my destination: **CasaManco**, a small pizza stall, perhaps five feet long, in the **Mercato di Testaccio** in the outskirts of Rome. **Campo de' Fiori** may be one of Rome's oldest markets, but Testaccio represents the new guard in innovative neighborhood markets, embracing old and new food traditions and serving as an incubator for spots like CasaManco. Tiny but mighty, the stall is owned by Andrea Salabè and Paola Manco, a married couple who left their jobs as architects to become pizza makers in their mid-50s and now sell more than 60 pies a day.

I snag the last stool (of which there are only a handful) and watch as the woman next to me orders her fourth, or perhaps fifth, slice. "This is the best pizza I've ever had," she exclaims mid-bite, the cheese still steaming as she speaks. She isn't wrong. After ordering a slice of Margherita, I then move on to the pear and Gorgonzola. Then the zucchini and stracchino. In between each, I hear a new

Mercato di Testaccio is a progressive market with baked goods, fresh produce, and a transcendental pizza experience at CasaManco.



PHOTOGRAPHY: SUSAN WRIGHT (3)

person proclaim in a mix of languages that this slice, no, that slice, is the best. Four slices in, I add to the chorus: This was, without question, the best pizza I've ever had. Then I have a fifth slice, just to be sure.

There's magic in the food markets of the world. Where else can you have great food with no barrier to entry? No "it list" crowd, and no reservations required? Markets welcome all comers. They represent their communities, giving visitors a small taste of everything a place has to offer and giving locals an all-important third space to gather. And increasingly, they are a place where chefs can take risks, exploring new tastes and techniques as well as new concepts.

In the very back corner of **Marché des Enfants Rouges** in Paris, a market dating back to the 17th century, you can belly up to the counter at **Les Enfants du Marché**, owned by Michael Grosman with Shunta Suzuki as the chef de cuisine. The stall's pedigree could intimidate you, but upon arrival, it's clear there is no pretense here—just delicious rotating dishes that focus on the sea, like mussels in a Gorgonzola-cream sauce, a hearty cabbage and skate salad, and grilled octopus soaked in chimichurri. (And don't bother ordering a glass from their extensive list of natural wines—they'll pick and pair one for you.)

At all of our Best Markets for Food & Drink, you'll find dreamers like Manco and Salabè and chefs like Suzuki creating masterpieces in tiny 10-by-10-foot kitchens. And nobody gets top billing. You'll spot business suits next to fanny packs, raucous families next to social media influencers. It's first come, first served, democratized dining at its finest. Just make sure to make room for the next visitor—and perhaps order that sixth slice of pizza to go. ■

BEST MARKETS FOR FOOD & DRINK

Some of the world's best restaurants are to be found in markets, no reservations required.

1. **La Boqueria**, Barcelona
2. **Tsukiji Outer Market**, Tokyo
3. **Borough Market**, London
4. **La Merced Market**, Mexico City
5. **Nishiki Market**, Kyoto, Japan
6. **English Market**, Cork, Ireland
7. **Jemaa el-Fnaa**, Marrakech, Morocco
8. **Marché des Enfants Rouges**, Paris
9. **Lau Pa Sat**, Singapore
10. **Campo de' Fiori**, Rome

+ PLUS ONE
Mercato di Testaccio, Rome

"Testaccio represents the new guard in innovative neighborhood markets, embracing old and new food traditions and serving as an incubator for emerging businesses."
—Stacey Leasca, *Food & Wine* senior travel and news editor and writer



PHOTOGRAPHY (THIS PAGE), AUBRIE PICK (OPPOSITE); COURTESY OF ANAJAK THAI

BEST U.S. RESTAURANT

ANAJAK THAI

GLOBAL TASTEMAKERS 2024

Innovation, love, and a family legacy are at the heart of Anajak Thai, America's best restaurant.

By Khushbu Shah

IT'S A NIPPY TUESDAY IN LOS ANGELES, but even so, there is a line down the sidewalk in front of Anajak Thai. Guests are waiting to check in for tables at Thai Taco Tuesday (TTT), a weekly series owner and 2022 F&W Best New Chef Justin Pichetrungsi runs out of the alley of the restaurant, where he fuses Thai, Mexican, and global cooking. The heat lamp-lined alley is packed with enthusiastic diners, and a hip-hop playlist competes with the din of the crowd. Justin's mom, Rattikorn, shakes her head with a reluctant acceptance. "I'm not too crazy about this music—we used to play classical music at the restaurant."

Justin rolls his eyes with the kind of respectful annoyance that comes when you're constantly blurring the lines between business and family. Minutes before, they were arguing about the grilled chicken wings Justin is thinking of putting on the menu. "The flavor isn't as good as your dad's version," says Rattikorn, but Justin is trying to figure out a version that makes sense for Anajak in its present form: one that pays homage to his father's flavors, but with upgraded ingredients. It's a common conversation between Justin and his parents ever since he took over the restaurant in 2019 after his father, Ricky, who opened Anajak in 1981, had a stroke. It's in this tension between old and new, legacy and innovation, that you can find the magic of Anajak; it's the ingredient that separates it from the hundreds of other Thai restaurants in the greater Los Angeles area.



"When I came into the business, there was \$4,000 in the bank account," recalls Justin. "It was very hard to pay the bills. And when I looked at this place, I understood that it was slightly broken, but a diamond in the rough. There's a lot of arthritis here. But with that comes a beautiful sense of muscle memory."

Justin set about creating new systems and implementing a number of changes, many of which his parents struggled to understand at first. The restaurant went from a staff of six to a team of 44. He introduced TTT and an omakase menu and expanded the wine program to include hundreds of bottles. He also set about reworking the menu, trimming down the number of dishes, reducing the sweetness in many plates (his mom still pushes back on this: "Americans like things sweet!"), and focusing more on aesthetics. "He will take out his tweezers and move the edible flower this way and that way," says Rattikorn, gently mocking his movements.

"I didn't want [Justin] to change much," says Rattikorn. "I don't want him to change his dad's recipes. We have to keep his legacy." Though they may not always realize it, they both share the same goal. For Justin, honoring and preserving his father's cooking sits at the heart of his approach. "I always say that no one's better than dad, and no one's better than nature. So I just try to follow the balance of flavors that dad has, but then paired with the best ingredients that I can find."

It's an approach that has served Justin and Anajak well. At just 37 years old, he has won basically every award in the culinary space: In 2022, he was crowned both a F&W Best New Chef and *L.A. Times* Restaurant of the Year, and in 2023, he won the James Beard Award for Best Chef: California. Anajak is now one of the toughest reservations in town.

Ricky and Rattikorn are the first to point out the improvements Justin has made. "We are very proud of him," says Ricky. "He does it all with his heart, with all the effort he can, and he makes it amazing," says Rattikorn, before turning to Justin to tell him to cover his ears, adding, with a laugh, "I don't want you to get a big head." ■

• Chef Justin Pichetrungsi with his extensive wine cellar (opposite) and in an old family photo (left) with his parents and sister.

BEST U.S. RESTAURANTS

These spots are worth traveling for in 2024.

1. **Anajak Thai**, L.A.
2. **Aragosta at Goose Cove**, Deer Isle, Maine
3. **Semma**, NYC
4. **Birdie's**, Austin
5. **Kasama**, Chicago
6. **Damian**, Los Angeles
7. **Chubby Fish**, Charleston
8. **Daru**, Washington, D.C.
9. **Bell's**, Los Alamos, California
10. **Kann**, Portland, Oregon

+ PLUS ONE

Yellow, Washington, D.C.

"A playful Levantine café from Palestinian American chef Michael Rafidi, who also leads D.C.'s Michelin-starred Albi. Yellow marries Middle Eastern flavors with French pastry techniques, and the resulting confections left me plastering my nose to the pastry case in despair, knowing I'd never find a way to try them all." —Sarah Khan, travel writer

BEST U.S. BARS

This list is full of incentives to book a ticket to New York City.

1. **Superbuono**, NYC
2. **Katana Kitten**, NYC
3. **Double Chicken Please**, NYC
4. **Allegory**, Washington, D.C.
5. **Café La Trova**, Miami
6. **Jewel of the South**, New Orleans
7. **Chez Zou**, NYC
8. **Martiny's**, NYC
9. **Kumiko**, Chicago
10. **La Factoría**, San Juan, Puerto Rico

+ PLUS ONE

Watertrade, Austin

SILVERSEA CRUISES

GLOBAL TASTEMAKERS 2024

Silversea celebrates food culture and cuisine like no other cruise line.

By Janice Wald Henderson

AS A CRUISE JOURNALIST who has eaten her way around seven continents by ship for decades, I easily enjoy more than 175 meals a year at sea. I still remember the old days—aka the late 1990s—when the plates presented on board had little in common with the ships’ itineraries. (Mexican food in the Med, anyone?) Back then, sustainability efforts, the centering of local ingredients, celebrity chef affiliations, and shore excursions to farms, markets, and wineries were nonexistent. How times have changed. Now, shipboard cuisine can rival the best on land. Cruise lines seek to outdo each other, continually raising the bar in the process.

Yet, despite compelling competition, Silversea handily topped the list this year, winning recognition for its food and beverage programs that evolve with each new ship class and deliver meaningful, innovative food experiences onboard and ashore. Silversea is the only cruise line with a food anthropologist on the payroll (London-based Ilaria Edoardi), ensuring that culinary shore excursions, menus, dish descriptions, and ingredients are true to the cultures they come from on each global journey.

Sure, some of those experiences are fancy. White-gloved butlers present complimentary caviar with accoutrements to all passengers whenever they want—a rarity, even for luxury lines, and lobster

•
Silver Nova’s S.A.L.T. Lab test kitchen (top) is home to cooking classes by day and a chef’s table by night. A salad of lobster and caviar at La Dame (right), Silversea’s fine-dining French restaurant.



PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF SILVERSEA (2)

and prime rib are everyday ship fare. Yet, it’s the novel S.A.L.T. (an acronym for Sea and Land Taste) program that propels Silversea to the head of the fleet. The program comes to life multiple ways: through carefully curated shore excursions, an onboard test kitchen, lectures, a bar, and an entire restaurant devoted to the itinerary where the ship sails, celebrating a region’s ingredients and cuisine.

A deeper connection to place is top of mind for S.A.L.T. Kitchen’s chefs, forged through painstakingly prepared local dishes like the Colombian sudado de pollo, softly stewed bone-in chicken legs, served in Cartagena on my recent two-week South American sailing. In the S.A.L.T. Lab (the ship’s test kitchen and cooking school), enthusiastic culinary instructors who share impressive knowledge of the area’s culinary heritage keep hands-on classes full. Nearly every passenger visits S.A.L.T. Bar, curious to sip cocktails that use local spirits and ingredients. But to my mind, it’s the S.A.L.T. Experiences shore excursions that rivet the most. Where else can you join fellow devotees to cook with Italy’s best pizzaiolo; learn organic farming secrets in Paros, Greece; or score impossible reservations at some of the world’s best restaurants, like France’s Mirazur?

Most of all, I cannot forget the newly launched Chef’s Table tasting menu experience inside the beautifully airy S.A.L.T. Lab. We sat, wide-eyed, in a semi-circle tossing critiques and questions back and forth with our Venezuelan chef, learning about ingredients like salpíeta (an Ecuadorian condiment of ground toasted corn and peanuts) and tucupí (fermented yuca liquid) as he transformed them into small bites of elegance and grace. It wasn’t the ocean or the Chilean wines poured that made us feel like toppling from our chairs, but rather the wonder of it all. ■

BEST CRUISES FOR FOOD & DRINK

This list takes into account onboard offerings, restaurants, bar programs, creativity, innovation, and the quality of culinary shore excursions.

1. Silversea Cruises
2. Crystal Cruises
3. Oceania Cruises
4. Seabourn Cruise Line
5. Hurtigruten
6. Regent Seven Seas Cruises
7. Windstar Cruises
8. Viking Cruises
9. Virgin Voyages
10. AmaWaterways

+ PLUS ONE
Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection

BEST AIRLINES FOR FOOD & DRINK

These airlines are continually pushing to make their culinary offerings soar.

1. Emirates
2. Turkish Airlines
3. Singapore Airlines
4. Cathay Pacific
5. Qatar Airways
6. Air France
7. Korean Air
8. All Nippon Airways
9. Etihad Airways
10. Delta Air Lines

+ PLUS ONE
La Compagnie

BEST AIRPORTS FOR FOOD & DRINK

Some of the best food courts and restaurants are to be found in these airports.

1. Singapore Changi Airport
2. Narita International Airport, Japan
3. Dubai International Airport
4. Heathrow Airport, London
5. Istanbul Airport
6. Amsterdam Airport Schiphol
7. John F. Kennedy International Airport, NYC
8. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport
9. San Francisco International Airport
10. Vancouver International Airport

+ PLUS ONE
Munich International Airport

“The gateway to Germany’s south and much of Europe, Munich Airport is home to its own brewery, a Michelin-starred restaurant, and a covered outdoor Christmas market, serving Bavarian specialties like bratwurst and glühwein.”
—Melanie Hansche, Food & Wine deputy editor



PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE CONNAUGHT BAR

London's Connaught Bar has transformed the city's storied cocktail scene.

By Sean Flynn

FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS, London has been at the apex of drink culture. At the turn of the 19th century, the city was a hotbed for cocktail creativity; some of the first iterations of much-loved libations such as the White Lady and the Hanky Panky were crafted by the city's bartenders. Establishments like the American Bar at the famed Savoy Hotel pushed the boundaries when it opened in 1893. The publication of the bar's first cocktail book in 1930, which included 750 original recipes from legendary barman Harry Craddock, further solidified the city as a destination for cocktail enthusiasts. In recent years, newer hotel bars have expanded upon that distinction, chief among them our top-ranked international hotel bar, the Connaught Bar.

Lively conversations reverberate through the Connaught Bar as members of the bar team bounce from table to table, greeting guests and walking them through the menu. The scene feels as though it has played out countless times since the bar's namesake hotel opened more than a century ago, but in fact, the Connaught Bar only served its first drink in 2008. That's exactly how the team intended it; it's a venue that seamlessly blends old and new, honoring the historic bars that came before it, while taking an innovative approach to cocktails.

• **The Connaught Bar's martini service is next-level. They offer a martini trolley and mix the cocktail tableside according to your specifications.**

BEST INTERNATIONAL HOTEL BARS

These bars represent the very best that hotel properties across the globe have to offer.

1. **The Connaught Bar, The Connaught, London**
2. **Zapote Bar, Rosewood Mayakoba, Playa del Carmen, Mexico**
3. **BKK Social Club, Four Seasons, Bangkok**
4. **Side Hustle, NoMad, London**
5. **Le Bar Long, Le Royal Monceau, Paris**
6. **Scarves Bar, Rosewood London**
7. **1824 Bar, The Shelbourne, Dublin**
8. **The Bar, Royal Mansour, Marrakech, Morocco**
9. **Argo, Four Seasons, Hong Kong**
10. **Jigger & Pony, Amara Singapore**

+ PLUS ONE

Elsa's Bar, The Fife Arms, Braemar, Scotland

BEST INTERNATIONAL BARS

1. **Bar Benfiddich, Tokyo**
2. **Panda & Sons, Edinburgh**
3. **Little Red Door, Paris**
4. **Maybe Sammy, Sydney**
5. **Alquímico, Cartagena, Colombia**
6. **Himkok, Oslo**
7. **Handshake Speakeasy, Mexico City**
8. **Atlas, Singapore**
9. **Sips, Barcelona**
10. **La Sala de Laura, Bogotá, Colombia**

+ PLUS ONE

Baba au Rum, Athens



BEST INTERNATIONAL HOTEL BAR

THE CONNAUGHT BAR

The bar program, overseen by mixologist Ago Perrone, offers one of the most unique experiences around. Upon entering the Connaught Bar, guests are greeted with a welcome cocktail: a small amuse-bouche that introduces visitors to the tastes and talent they're about to experience. A martini trolley makes the rounds, bringing bartenders' artistry tableside. Every drink on the menu highlights the best ingredients. The Bloody Mary, for example, includes both tomatoes and lemons from Italy and nutmeg from Morocco, and it's topped with a light celery foam—a significant departure from the traditional concoction of tomato juice and vodka.

The Connaught Bar has also sparked a revolution among London's hotel bars, and over the past decade, others have followed its lead. **Scarves Bar**, which opened in 2013 as the anchor cocktail bar for the Rosewood London hotel, replicates the design of turn-of-the-century gentlemen's clubs, with velvet banquette seating and a central fireplace surrounded by grand bookshelves. The old-school vibes are paired with a future-facing menu that offers out-of-the-box combinations, like pandan with Macallan 12-year in their Crescent City cocktail, and blanco tequila with roasted pineapple and white chocolate in their Happy Mistake. And when The Langham hotel opened **Artesian** in 2007, the bar became an instant favorite amongst cocktail aficionados for its use of eco-friendly "futureproof" ingredients such as dried crickets, kombu, and amaranth. **Side Hustle** opened in a former police station in 2021 that is now the NoMad hotel. Downstairs, the former holding cells have been transformed into an Art Nouveau-inspired speakeasy, and their cocktail menu highlights Latin American flavors through a new lens in cocktails like the Sergeant Pepper, which blends cachaça, tequila, green peppers, coriander, jalapeños, and pineapple.

While there's no shortage of innovative cocktail bars around the world, the scene in London stands out. Rather than trying to outdo each other with avant-garde creations, the most celebrated establishments are pushing the boundaries of flavor and technique while also making guests feel incredibly welcome and comfortable in rooms that nod to a classic era. The experiences feel quintessentially London-rooted in the past, but always looking to the future. ■



● **Comfy booths at the NoMad hotel's bar, Side Hustle (top). The Poetic Justice cocktail at Scarves Bar (right), and the bar's dramatic whiskey wall (opposite).**

PHOTOGRAPHY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): CRISTIAN BARNETT, COURTESY OF SCARVES BAR AT ROSEWOOD LONDON (2)

METHODOLOGY

We collaborated with more than 180 food and travel journalists across the globe and received votes for their favorite culinary destinations, including restaurants and bars, cities, hotels, airports, airlines, and cruises. We then entrusted those results to an expert panel of judges to rank each category's winners. In many categories, we've included a Plus One, hand-selected by our experts, to shout out more culinary destinations we don't want our readers to miss. See all the winners at [foodandwine.com/globaltastemakers](https://www.foodandwine.com/globaltastemakers).

THE JUDGES

Meet our international panel of food- and drink-obsessed travelers.

Brandon Berkson

The author and travel journalist with a long background in the hospitality industry is the CEO of Hotels Above Par.

Anya von Bremzen

Cookbook author and James Beard Award-winning food and travel writer who spends her time between Istanbul and NYC.

Katie Chang

Food and travel writer contributing to *Food & Wine*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Esquire*, *Vogue*, and more.

Dan Q. Dao

Saigon-based culture and travel writer contributing to *Food & Wine*, *The New York Times*, and *Texas Monthly*.

Kate Dingwall

A working wine professional and writer contributing to *Food & Wine*, *Southern Living*, and *Canada's 100 Best Restaurants*.

Alexis Doctolero

The former vice president at Liquor.com has worked in the spirits and hospitality industry for over a decade.

Nicholas Gill

Food writer and cookbook author who co-wrote *The Latin American Cookbook* with Peruvian chef Virgilio Martinez.

Sarah Greaves-Gabbadon

Caribbean travel expert, TV host, and contributor to brands such as *Food & Wine*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *Canada's Globe and Mail*.

Laura Itzkowitz

Travel and food journalist based in Rome contributing to *Food & Wine*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*.

Brad Japhe

Spirits expert and travel writer contributing to *Food & Wine*, *Travel + Leisure*, *The L.A. Times*, and *Bloomberg*.

Jeff Jenkins

Award-winning travel journalist, National Geographic host, founder of Chubby Diaries, and cofounder of the Black Travel Alliance.

Sarah Khan

Award-winning freelance travel writer who has reported from seven continents for *Food & Wine*, *The New York Times*, *Travel + Leisure*, and more.

Jen Murphy

Based in Colorado and Hawaii, Murphy is a travel writer, academic, and editor contributing to *Food & Wine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Travel + Leisure*.

David Prior

Longtime travel writer and cofounder and CEO of Prior, an experiential travel company.

Corina Quinn

The travel editor and writer was the former managing editor of *Travel + Leisure*.

Janice Wald Henderson

Cookbook author and award-winning cruise and travel journalist contributing to *Food & Wine*, *Travel + Leisure*, *MSN*, and *Yahoo*.

Tyler Zielinski

London-based cocktail and spirits writer and brand consultant contributing to *Food & Wine*, *Liquor.com*, *Fast Company*, and *Bloomberg*.

F&W Editors

Hunter Lewis, editor in chief; **Federico De Cesare Viola**, editor in chief, *Food & Wine Italia*; **Melanie Hansche**, deputy editor; **Sean Flynn**, senior editorial director; **Ashley Day**, associate editorial director; **Stacey Leasca**, senior travel and news editor and writer