

Pro

The Professional

Hearth and Alinea restaurants provided two of the best meals of my life, bar none.

But which should the ambitious emulate? Well, which is better: a tuxedo or a summer linen suit? It depends on what type of evening you have planned, of course. The same is true with food.

Alinea offers a near-transcendental experience. It was one of the most surreal evenings imaginable. Everyone should go there at least once, budget allowing, and it will blow your mind. But would I go there five days a week? No. It would defeat the magic, make me immune to the wonder. In NYC, however, I could easily have dinner at Hearth three or four nights a week for the rest of my life.

Alinea does not aspire to be Hearth, and Hearth does not aspire to be Alinea. So forget about either/or. Forget about Michelin stars and the like. The real question is: what makes someone a true “professional” in any field? In other words, what do the best have in common? To answer this, **PRO is split into three sections:**

“Classics”—First, we’ll cover timeless dishes that embody near-universal principles. These are the must-haves you’re missing. It’s also time for the training wheels to come off. There is no more separation of prep and pickup, as you will need to learn to read (and mentally reformat) “standard” recipes after you graduate from this book.

“Avant-Garde”—Second, we’ll push the envelope on everything. I mean EVERYTHING. This is a creative rite of passage.

“DragonForce Chaconne”—Last, we have the grand finale . . . a near-impossible recipe. Don’t miss it. It’s a monster.



A TALE OF TWO CITIES: NEW YORK

“Bite your teeth into the ass of life.”

—PASCAL, *BIG NIGHT*

“It’s really assy, right?”

“Grassy?” I asked.

“No . . . assy,” Marco repeated loudly, over the bustle of the bar.

It was true. The red wine that Paul Grieco, Marco’s partner and master sommelier, had handed me smelled just like a barn. The hints of wet horse ass were unmistakable. This excited me for three reasons: the Chinon (Bernard Baudry, 2010, Loire Valley) was the best cabernet franc I’d ever had; I’d finally found a wine descriptor I could understand; and I’m very fond of ass in general.

Marco Canora is co-owner and executive chef of the James Beard Award–nominated *Hearth*, where we now stood, just inside the entrance. He’s also executive chef and partner of *Terroir Wine Bar*. Prior to striking out on his own, he held various positions at *Gramercy Tavern* and the famed *Cibreo* in Florence, Italy. He was Tom Colicchio’s right-hand man as original chef of *Craft* restaurant, which won a James Beard Award for Best New Restaurant during his tenure.

By the end of the evening, I concluded what many others had: *Hearth* is the most underrated restaurant in all of New York City.¹

THE MANTRA

“Cooking is not hard. Cooking is *not* hard.”

Marco repeated this five times during our evening together. “I feel like I’ve pulled the wool over everyone’s eyes as a ‘successful chef in New York City.’ Anyone could do this.”

“C’mon,” I said as I pointed to my vegetable salad, which was ethereal and juicy (not an adjective I use for salads), easily one of the best salads of my life.



He laughed and waved a hand dismissively. “People say, ‘Oh, my God! This is amazing!’ Just dress it while the vegetables are warm—it all soaks in. Pour the oil on after the red wine vinegar, and add salt and pepper. Anyone could do this.”

¹ This is saying a lot in a city with 24,000 restaurants.

Oil *after* the vinegar? Why?

Marco explained, “If you put the oil on first, it deflects the vinegar into the bottom of the dish, where it pools.”

JAPANESE TUSCANS: WHEN SIMPLICITY WORKS

Two hours into my meal (I ordered everything on the menu), I asked to see Marco’s knife collection. I’d heard about it through the grapevine.

Nearly all of his blades are Japanese, which led us to a discussion of Korin Trading Co. (his favorite knife shop) and Japanese cuisine.

“The Tuscans and the Japanese are dead similar: seasonality, a ‘less is more’ mentality, simplicity, letting ingredients speak for themselves, and, of course, they’re both umami focused. The Tuscans use tomato paste, anchovies, Parmesan; the Japanese use soy and dashi.”

Marco studied both together as a result. “You should try nepitella, a type of mint with hints of oregano flavor. But for beef cheeks, you should visit the NoHo Japanese butcher.”

In mid-sentence, he heard something through the chaos—perhaps the crackling of duck skin getting overcooked or the crunch of a dull knife on vegetables—and disappeared around the pass to tune the orchestra. Not unlike fine music, fine dining needs to be unerringly consistent. “Yes, Chef!” yelled a member of his brigade, responding to orders. “Yes, sir!” shouted another as flames licked at her sleeves. One of the line cooks confirmed that the olive oil poach, a tub of olive oil inside a larger heated tub of water, was still at exactly 140°F. Black steel pans clanged everywhere.

Marco calmly plated another perfect dish, and his tiny team proceeded to serve 160 people in the next 90 minutes.

As things wound down around 2 a.m., I polished off my never-ending glass of wine. Over what Marco later referred to as “The 4-Hour Dinner,” we had demolished a small bodega full of bottles. The entire affair had started at 8:30 p.m., so it was technically the 5½-hour dinner.

I spent all of that time marveling at Marco’s attention to detail.

Making perfect roast chicken might *seem* simple. Simple like a diagram of a Michael Jordan free throw. But easy? Hitting 100 out of 100 foul shots in competition? Making 50 perfect chickens in a night? That’s another story. Marco saw me furrowing my brow and repeated yet again, “It’s not hard, and it’s delicious, and you’ll trick all of your friends into thinking you’re an amazing chef.”



CSI Marco preparing his whole roasted red snapper.



THE CLASSICS

“I had to spend countless hours, above and beyond the basic time, to try and perfect the fundamentals.”

—JULIUS “DR. J” ERVING, 11-TIME NBA ALL-STAR

In modern break dancing, feats of strength called “power moves” are all the rage. Sadly, aspiring pros sometimes let Olympic gymnastics *replace* rhythm. It ceases to be dancing, and their careers are a flash in the pan. In contrast, the best of the best, those who win competitions like Red Bull BC One, master the fundamentals—footwork matched to music—and *complement* rhythm with jaw-dropping acrobatics.

In the world of cooking, Marco is in the latter category.

Before going avant-garde, we need to get your fundamentals up to snuff. If you can make Vietnamese venison burgers, for God’s sake, you can’t be left slack-jawed when someone asks you about roasted chicken. Moreover, if you’re a hydrocolloid one-trick pony, your cooking will have no soul.

There are certain dishes and techniques no self-respecting cook should be without. In defining these “classics,” I deferred to a cadre of incredible chefs, starting with Marco. Our goal is not to be exhaustive (for that, refer to books like *La Varenne Pratique*), but rather to fill *a few* important gaps in your repertoire.

To that end, we’ll start where thousands of dishes start: *soffritto*.

Hearth

First Course

SUMMER LETTUCES AND VEGETABLES
Celery, Radish, String Beans, Cherry Tomatoes, Cucumber
Red Wine Vinaigrette 12

WARM VEGETABLE SALAD
Beans, Summer Squash, Red Onions, Cauliflower, Potato 12

ARUGULA AND FENNEL SALAD
White Anchovies, Bread Crumbs, Pickled Capelin Onions 13

BEST SALAD
Greek Yogurt, Sunflower Sprouts and Seeds, Herbs 13

SUMMER TOMATO SALAD
Serrano Peppers, Beans, Celery 15

PHILADELPHIA BURRATA
Marinated Market Vegetables 15

CHILLED ZUCCHINI SOUP
Basil, Parmesan, Pine Nuts 12

GRILLED OCTOPUS
Fresh Carolina Beans, Saffron-Garlic, Kalechios, Basil 16

GRILLED QUAIL
Fava, Cucumber, Red Onions, Quail Egg, Tomato 15

Put Yourself in Our Hands

Seven Course Taste of the Menu 78

We don't believe in the separation
of the menu into first and second courses.

Dishes to Share

HOUSE-MADE CHARCUTERIE
Cured Duck Breast, Lardo, Hamachi, Limes,
Chicken Liver Paté, Duck Hillside Coppa, Rabbit Ballotine
Finocchio, Pickled Vegetables, Egg Mustard 40

WHOLE ROASTED FISH OF THE DAY
Roasted Potatoes, Fennel, Red Onions 36

**ROASTED FLATTENED
ORGANIC CHICKEN**
Roasted Potatoes Beans 38

20oz DRY-AGED SIRLOIN
Creamed Swiss Chard 45



Summer of Healing Menu September 24th, 2015

Main Course

ROASTED SCOTCHISH SALMON
Fried Potatoes, Pickled Garlic Scape,
Trout Roe, Must 28

ROASTED WILD TILAPIA AND PRAWNS
Caviar, Zucchini, Tomatoes, Tomato 35

**OLIVE OIL POACHED
EAST COAST SWORDFISH**
Smoked Clams, Fennel, Artichokes, Parsley 34

ROASTED HAMPSHIRE PORK CHOP
Swiss Chard Casserole, House-Smoked Bacon, Spring Onions 32

WASHUGUYU BEEF CHEEKS
Grilled Radishes, Dandelion Greens, Turnips, Kale 29

VEAL AND RICOTTA MEATBALLS
House-Made Spaghetti 28

PAPA PAPPARDELLE
Bacon Pork, Tomato Kale 28

CANISTRI ALLA NORMA
San Marzano Tomatoes, Eggplant, Ricotta Salata 28

SAFELY
Auntie Moll's Potatoes 7,
Garden 30,
Hillside Woods 32,
Sunset Greens 30,
Roasted Potatoes Beans 31,
Creamed Swiss Chard 9.

Supporting local farmers
and knowing where our
food comes from has
always been important at
Hearth.

If you would like to learn
more about where we get
our ingredients, turn the
page and have a look.

Chef Marco Costato
Chef de Cuisine George Kadish
Sous Chef Brian Mackey

OUR PURVEYORS

BEEF

"Black Angus" breed, Cowbone Farms, Atkinson City, KS
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

"Wagyu" breed (Black Wagyu and Black Angus Cross), Onyon
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

PORK

"Turner's Cross" and "Onion" breed, Beverly Eggplant, Fox Family Farms,
Shenandoah, VA
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

CHICKEN

"Cobb Cobb" breed, Backholder Farms, Lancaster, PA
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

DUCK

"Musard" breed, Hudson Valley Farms, Hudson Valley, NY
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

RABBIT

Whisper Hill Farms, Warren, NY
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

VEAL

Milk-fed raised veal, Schiller Farms, Lehigh County, PA
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

QUAIL

"Cousins" breed, Gaggasovo Quail Farms, Princeton, NJ
100% vegetarian diet, no animal by-products, no antibiotics, no hormones

VEGETABLES

Wine Hill Farms, Orange County, NY

Lara Farms, Rockaway, NJ

Baldwin Farms, Rockaway, NJ

Barned Tomatoes, Delaware County, NY

Cardona Farms, Milton, NY (Dillon's farmstead)

Capota Pure Organics, Brooksville, NY

Cherry Lane Farms, Candelwood Court, NJ

Eckstein Hill Farms, Berks County, PA

Fansay Free Farms, Chautauque County, NY

Lover Good Farms, Ulster County, NY

Migliorini Farms, Dutchess County, NY

Morgan Sweetberry Farms, Sullivan County, NY

Paffenschmidt Gardens, Orange County, NY

Phillips Farms, Herkules County, NY

Selden Farms, Bergen County, NJ (George's farmstead)

Sycamore Farms, Orange County, NY

The classical backbone
of Hearth restaurant.