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Left: the art-filled La Colombe d'Or. Right: Machu Picchu and (inset) the Belmond Andean Explorer in Peru. Below: Goan fish curry



Scenes from the reborn Pastis restaurant in the Meatpacking District, New York



that Keith McNally [the restaurant's founder] has always been brilliant at is ambience, creating rooms that people want to spend their evening in and that look, not spectacular, but really inviting.

**Pastis is like an embrace.**

Exactly. And now it's a bigger embrace than it used to be because it's a bigger space.

Now let's go to a completely different part of the world, because that's another part that I can claim as half of my birth heritage: Machu Picchu!

I went to Peru last October for a literary festival in Arequipa, and after that I travelled to Machu Picchu.

**I took my mom there about four years ago.**

Oh, how nice! Well, when you get to the railway station at the bottom of the mountains you have to take this bus ride up to the top. We stayed at the Belmond Sanctuary Lodge, and the restaurant there is in one of the most amazing locations on Earth. It has a lot of local delicacies too – Sacred Valley mushrooms and a very creamy, delicious cheese called Oxapampa. I'm a big cheese addict, so I always remember the cheese.

**Me too. I would like to hear about Rome, and where you go there.**

There are two or three places I really love. One of them is Trattoria al Moro, which is run by the Romagnoli family.

It's in a tiny little alley very near the Trevi Fountain, but far from the tourist crowds. It was Fellini's favourite restaurant, and he used to go there all the time. In fact, he was so fond of it that he cast the previous owner, Mario Romagnoli, to play the character of Trimalcione in his film *Satyricon*.

**That's so cool. If you're going to be in one movie, that's the kind of director you want to work with.**

Exactly. And the food there is amazing. The first time I went, a friend recommended I should have their house spaghetti, which is like their version of a carbonara. It's just the most unbelievably delicious thing you could eat. It's the same in Paris – I always go to just a couple of places.

**Have you ever dined at La Colombe d'Or in Saint-Paul de Vence?**

Yes, a few times. The history of La Colombe d'Or is so remarkable. It is absolutely crammed with paintings by Chagall, Matisse, Léger... Sitting out in that sunny courtyard, or wandering through the restaurant looking at the art, is pretty extraordinary.

**I would really love to go to Mumbai.**

We should make a plan and go. There are some really great seafood places because it's a huge port. One of the older established seafood restaurants is called Trishna. It has an amazing Goan fish curry, and there's a butter garlic crab which is to die for. Japan and Vietnam, those are the places I'd really like to go to.

**You should plan your next book tour around food you want to eat. I'm going to just do the Salman Rushdie food tour and make a little list and plan.**

Well [laughs], I want the Helena Christensen list as well. OK, that will be next month [laughs].

## NOVELTY BITES: LONDON'S NEW SPOTS TO KNOW



### ALLEGRA, E20

Taking its cue from Noma, this design-led destination – with superb views from the new 42-storey Stratford building near the Olympic park – is true farm-to-table. Ex-Chiltern Firehouse chef Patrick Powell sources produce from Kent, and herbs from the seventh-floor terrace outside. [Allegra-restaurant.com](http://Allegra-restaurant.com)



### THE BETTERMENT, W1

Jason Atherton returns in style to Grosvenor Square, where the Michelin-starred chef launched his career at Maze in 2005. An open kitchen will turn out lobster and hogget roasted over embers, plus elaborate side plates. [Thebettermentmayfair.com](http://Thebettermentmayfair.com)

### FOLIE, W1

Annabel's former head chef Christophe Marleix brings the sizzle of a 1960s and '70s bistro that Bardot would have loved to Soho's Golden Square in November. Expect a range of Riviera classics, from bouillabaisse to tarte tropézienne, with pastis to spare. [Folie.london](http://Folie.london)