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UP FOR DISCUSSION

Would Somebody Please Take Julia Child to Dinner?

She's Risen From the Grave, She's In L.A., and She's Hungry. But Now She Needs To Find the Right Place to Eat.



JOSH LURIE Bestia



Trois Mec

Our place



DAVID LAWRENCE



steak, sometimes, and decent chili, maybe. Haute cuisine was not our forte. But we've gotten a lot better over the years, with thousands of good restaurants and dozens that are world-class. This may have happened without the late Julia Child-American chef, author, and television star-but her influence certainly didn't hurt. Good food, she taught Americans, isn't just for the French. Born in Pasadena, Child lived much ALL LIVE of her life outside of California · THINKING · before finally coming to her senses and returning to the pleasant UCLA

Los Angeles used to be a place that offered decent

climes of the state of her birth, settling in Montecito. Child got to experience the improved cuisine of her home state, but, even since her 2004 death, much has changed. What would Julia like? In advance of the Zócalo/UCLA event "The State of L.A.'s Plate," we asked several L.A. food authorities the following question: If Julia Child were to rise from her grave to enjoy one terrific meal in L.A., where would you send her?

JOSH LURIE

Bestia



she'd almost certainly be craving human flesh. But for the purposes of this article, I'll entertain the premise that America's most beloved culinary ambassador would still enjoy an expertly roasted chicken, a butter-basted fish, or possibly a dozen pristine oysters. When thinking about where to send Julia, I'd suggest an experience unique to L.A. Sure, Koreatown has great Korean food; the San Gabriel Valley contains tremendous Chinese dining

options; and the South Bay has its share of Japanese gems, but what all three neighborhoods

If I've learned anything from The Walking Dead, it's that if Julia Child rose from the grave,

really deliver are reliable interpretations of other countries' cuisines. Instead, I'd suggest a restaurant that in multiple ways reflects modern Los Angeles dining: Bestia. Bestia, a downtown Arts District restaurant from chefs Ori Menashe and Genevieve Gergis, resides in an emerging neighborhood, touts an industrial chic setting, and draws a steady stream of fashionable diners. The food's more or less Italian, but progressive international flourishes distinguish Bestia from other, more classic Italian restaurants in Los Angeles like Sotto and Osteria Mozza. Menashe and crew practice nose-to-tail butchery, and they know just what to do with the different parts, leading to deluxe charcuterie and inspired preparations of

creative comfort at almost every turn. Hopefully Julia would appreciate Bestia's ingenuity-and

Josh Lurie founded Food GPS in 2005. Since then, his Los Angeles-based website has remained dedicated to pinpointing the highest quality, best-tasting food and drink, regardless of price or cuisine, and sharing stories of people behind the flavor.

cuts like tongue and heart. Gergis delivers seasonal, refined desserts. Ultimately, there's

the seriousness with which it also takes wine and cocktails.

CATHY CHAPLIN Good Girl Dinette



We'd dive into chicken curry pot pie, bánh mì, and black pepper pork confit while discussing the French influences found in Vietnamese cuisine. Chef Diep Tran, a Francophile through and through, would chime in with a few ideas on the topic and dazzle us with her perfect French, all while making us feel right at home. Seasonal fruit hand pies, incredibly flaky and delicate, would be dessert. Julia appreciates a buttery crust.

I would send her to Good Girl Dinette in Highland Park and insist on coming along for the ride.

and photography have appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Saveur, National Geographic, and Condé Nast. Her first book, The Food Lovers' Guide to Los Angeles, will be published by Globe Pequot Press in December 2013.

Cathy Chaplin documents all things delicious on GastronomyBlog.com. Her writing

Trois Mec

ZACH BROOKS

Super Rica, the crowd-pleasing but polarizing Santa Barbara taqueria whose lines she permanently lengthened over 15 years ago. But then I thought about how much more fun it would be to take her to Trois Mec, a French restaurant from three of L.A.'s most talented and creative chefs: Ludo Lefebvre, Jon Shook, and Vinny Dotolo. I wonder what the woman who practically introduced French cuisine to America would make of

My first instinct for Julia was to help her find a better favorite Mexican restaurant than La

a Frenchman like Ludo, whose style of cooking often has more in common with surrealist painting than anything you'd find in one of Child's cookbooks. What would she think of this new-style French bistro that draws its inspiration from today's Paris but is still quintessentially L.A., hidden in a strip mall beneath the glow of an old pizza parlor sign? This is a place where they greet you Japanese-style and the best seats in the house are at the bar. And then of course there's the blaring music. I think she would love the French hip-hop.

chef about music or a musician about food. His writing has been published in The New York Times, Los Angeles magazine, and Food & Wine magazine, who named him one of their "40 Big Thinkers 40 & Under" in 2010.

New Rock podcast, in which he and Chuck P (from KCRW and iTunes Radio) talk to a

Zach Brooks is the founder of Midtown Lunch and host of the weekly Food is the

Our place

DAVID LAWRENCE

The first restaurant Chef Rose and I ever haunted was the Blue Talon in Williamsburg, Virginia.



In the morning, it offered cappuccinos and croissants with house-made blackberry jam and Amish butter. The New York Times was always waiting, displayed by section. At night, traditional French cuisine like lamb sweetbreads was accompanied by a true bartender's bar and a sommelier's wine list. We practically lived there. In the middle of it all, always on mute, always running, whether the restaurant was open or

closed, was the television series The French Chef, with Julia Child. It glowed out at us like a

saint, blessing the place with the warmth only a great chef can bring to a room. The Danish have a word for that warmth: hygge. It means, roughly, "a warm friendly coziness-the feeling of sitting around a fire eating and drinking with good friends." When Chef Rose and I started Red Bread, our organic kitchen and eGrocer, it was in part inspired by Julia Child, who said, "How can a nation be great when its bread tastes like

Kleenex?" She was part of the unique spirit of the U.S. State Department. (Rosie worked for the State Department in Greece and began learning to cook in France. My grandfather worked at

Julia believed a good meal hinged upon good bread, and she loved butter, something we've never been shy about being big fans of ourselves.

- French onion soup topped with crusty, day-old baguette and Le Gruyère d'Alpage - Market-fresh salad of arugula and pears with walnuts and a lemon vinaigrette

Here's our menu for Zombie Julia, served with humility and thanks:

- Thick-cut Mangalitsa pork chops (seared in raw butter) in a pickled apricot reduction on a bed of roasted butternut squash and braised beet greens

- Paris apple cake with raw crème anglaise and a single-origin, pour-over coffee, served black

bring whole, natural, and artisanal food to the Westside of Los Angeles. Five percent of all sales are donated to the L.A. Food Bank.

EDITOR: T.A. FRANK. *PHOTO COURTESY OF REUTERS.

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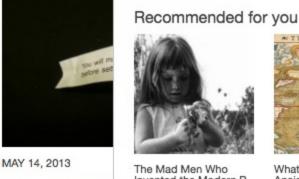
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David Lawrence and his wife, Chef Rose, founded Red Bread in January of 2012 to

the U.S. embassy in Paris.)