

COPENHAGEN EXCLUSIVE

DANISH JEWELRY COMES OUT OF THE CLOSET

From modesty to a different kind of honesty

THE NEW ROYAL PLAYHOUSE

An architectural gem along Copenhagen's waterfront

NORTHERN LIGHT

Designing light for a country kept in the dark



THE PAUSTIAN EXPERIENCE

Molecular gastronomy and Scandinavian design





The Paustian Experience

The Ultimate in Gastronomy, Design & Architecture

By Laura Stadler-Jensen

Photographer: Jan Grarup

When you go to a restaurant you normally look forward to having an experience that involves a decent meal, pleasing ambiance and perhaps even a good wine selection. When you go to a shop, you expect to browse items for sale. Nowadays, restaurants are becoming more than just a place to eat and shops are more than a place to purchase wares. They are fusing becoming galleries where the aesthetics, atmosphere and every last detail give a little something extra to experience.



Paustian is one of these institutions. Yet, it's different from all the rest. Danish architect Jørn Utzon, famed for the Sydney Opera House, designed the enormous complex on Copenhagen's waterfront. It features a three story airy showroom with countless collections of world class design. It also houses a Michelin rising star restaurant that is making waves due to its classically-rooted avant-garde cuisine where the only thing you can expect is the unexpected.

Utzon Shines Through

The Paustian building itself unites time, humanity and creativity. The sales and exhibition center proudly stands on the edge of the harbor with tall finger-like white columns and ceiling to floor windows connected by raw geometrical archways originally inspired by Danish beech forests. It was a family project for Jørn Utzon who collaborated with his two sons, Jan and Kim, to create the complex, which now includes an adjacent office building and yacht club. Jørn Utzon's daughter, Lin, also crafted some of the interior decoration in the Paustian buildings noted by ceramic cool blue tiles lining the wooden staircases in the showroom.

The House of Furniture

For the past 30 years, Paustian has set the agenda for interiors in Danish homes and enterprises. The amazing 3,000 square meters showroom offers one of Denmark's largest selections of high quality furniture, carpets, lighting and accessories from Scandinavia and the rest of the world. It is home to its own Paustian furniture collection designed by well known Danish architects and designers

such as 2R Rasmussen & Rolff, Christian Flindt, Førsom & Hiort-Lorenzen, Asger Soelberg and Paul André Leroy.

The Paustian house also features furniture from Finnish Artek and Swiss Vitra and Ruckstuhl, for which Paustian is the sole importer, and includes collections designed by world famous designers and architects including Verner Panton, Charles and Ray Eams and Alvar Aalto. Visitors get a total sense of all of the pieces displayed with some in a mix of old and new such as the elegant 1955 George Nelson Coconut Chair paired with a modern sofa from Vitra. Shoppers can place orders for delivery anywhere in the world.

Smoke and Mirrors

"The combination of all of the elements that embody Paustian is mentally important, says Bo Bech, owner of Bo Bech at Restaurant Paustian, located just next door in the same building as the Paustian showroom. Impressions from every angle set the scene for a memorable experience. From the colorful abstract Tal R and John Kørner painting covering the back wall to the Eames Chairs and hanging suspension Moooi lamps that look like spider webbed snow balls, the environment projects a level of humor and unpretentious sophistication.



Bo Bech is considered the leading innovator in molecular gastronomy in Denmark, a type of scientific approach to cooking involving pairing unlikely ingredients using unconventional techniques to create new forms and textures. It's a term coined by French chemist and cook Hervé This and is used to describe the cooking styles at top restaurants including el Bulli in Spain and Grant Achatz in the U.S.

"A restaurant is many things," Bo says. While most restaurants are driven by their set menu, "I wanted to create a place where you could come any day of the week and have just a single course," says Bo. Patrons can also choose from several other menu options including a two to five course lunch menu, a surprise "Alchemist" menu and a vegetarian "Chlorophyll" menu.

The surprise "Alchemist" menu is the most adventurous and changes every day. According to Bech, "It's a way to remove expectations and keep the element of suspense going throughout the course of the meal." When guests order the Alchemist menu they are asked if there are any particular ingredients they don't prefer and the magic begins. "The strength of the place is the wide spectrum that we cover," says Bo. "It's like going to Formula One, you don't know what's going to happen next and that's what makes it exciting," he says.





Bo draws upon his experience working with top restaurants including three-star Michelin restaurants Arpegé Alain Passard and Lucas Carton Alain Senderens in Paris, and Restaurant Marco Pierre White, as well as two-star restaurant Le Gavroche Michel Roux in London to create his own unique approach to the business. "It is very personal. For example, the special one of a kind custom crafted plates by Anne Tophøj and the custom made silver napkin rings are unique to us. We aim to hit perfection in everything we touch," Bo says.

For Bo Bech at Restaurant Paustian, it's just as much about what is there as it is about what's not there. Special details such as these are what make the restaurant a place to discover. If you're looking to experience the latest in culinary trends, the best in design and world-class architecture, Paustian is the place.

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Buttermilk bread with licorice

5 g yeast
2.5 dl buttermilk
2.5 dl water
20 g salt
1/2 dl grape seed oil
800 g wheat flour
1 tablespoon licorice powder

Knead all the ingredients – except the salt – for about 10 minutes until the dough is firm and taut. This process causes the buns to be tougher and more airy. At the end, add the salt and knead the dough for another 2 to 3 minutes. Now let the dough rest for about 24 hours, before you roll it out on a floured table to a suitable thickness. Brush the surface clean of excess flour. Sprinkle about 1 tablespoon of licorice powder over the bread and, in the same second, brush it away again. Cut the buns into the desired sizes and bake them in a pre-heated oven at 180 degrees for about 6 minutes.