

LVTETIA

RIVE GAUCHE, PARIS



BRASSERIE
LUTETIA





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Gérald Passedat takes the helm at the Brasserie Lutetia

When the flagship hotel of the Rive gauche – with its undulating, wave-like façade – met the Mediterranean chef and master of seafood, it was always going to be the utmost in style and sophistication: the Brasserie Lutetia is re-establishing its old-world charm and dropping anchor in Paris to offer a unique, maritime-inspired Mediterranean experience. With its two floors being restored and architectural inspiration drawn from its early days, the Brasserie Lutetia is being reborn and bringing a heartbeat back to the most Rive gauche of grand hotels.



The Lutetia and Gérald Passedat's Le Petit Nice: an obvious match

Two hundred-year-old establishments twinning in age and prowess

The first grand hotel of the Parisian Rive gauche opened its doors in 1910, with its wave-like façade bearing testament to the popularity of organic architecture at the time. It took the Romans' name for Paris, as well as their motto for the city – “fluctuat nec mergitur”, or “she is tossed by the waves but doesn't sink” – like a ship proudly moored on the riverbank. A relic from the golden age of jazz, existentialism, and the great artistic, literary and philosophical movements of the century, today it is reborn, proudly unique.

To reach the Mediterranean from the Seine, it's simply a matter of following another river and dropping down through the Rhône Valley to Marseille. It was there in 1917 that Gérald Passedat's grandfather decided to set himself up at the water's edge, in a magnificent villa that he renamed “Le Petit Nice”. Just off the coast, the Frioul archipelago, the Château d'If and Gaby Island add to the magic of the surroundings, evoking images of the French Riviera and making the villa a highly attractive destination for legendary painters, poets and actors such as Jules Supervielle, Jeanne Moreau, Fernandel, Henri Salvador and Gene Hackman to come and unwind.

These two hundred-year-old establishments are full of soul, laden with stories both small and great, and located in unique passing places where they inspire travellers and artists alike. The Lutetia, a delicate balance of Art Nouveau and Art Deco, sits on the corner of two streets; home for Le Petit Nice is the gateway to the Mediterranean, where

the villa offers a little haven of peace at the heart of the cosmopolitan city of Marseille. Both share a keen sense of hospitality and sophistication, without succumbing to vulgar or ostentatious luxury.

With these two establishments sharing such similar values, and having both become staple meeting places for personages in literature, art, fashion, politics and cinema in Paris and Marseille respectively, one day their paths were destined to cross...

Gérald Passedat: a chef inspired by art

As the 3rd generation to take the helm at Le Petit Nice, a hundred-year-old institution in Marseille, Gérald Passedat has remained loyal to the spirit of the family-run restaurant, with the excellence of its food rivalled only by its hospitality. He has also overseen Marseille's Mucem restaurants since 2013. Heir to a dynasty of chefs for which art has always been of central importance (his grandmother was a soprano and muse for Louis Lumière and his father an opera singer), his fondness for contemporary art, music and literature have always helped him to feel at ease on the city's left bank, where he loves the area's “natural elegance and discretion”. Eclectic and passionate, and equally as enamoured with classical music as with rock, he will be writing the Lutetia a new chapter in a never-ending story, packed with hedonism, sophistication and creativity.



A Brasserie re-establishing its old-world charm

In order to restore the legendary décor, delicately balanced on the cusp between Art Nouveau and Art Deco, and bring it into the 21st century, Jean-Michel Wilmotte has unearthed what was buried and reinvented what no longer existed. It was a meticulously careful job requiring the utmost attention to detail: “With this fabled place, it was all about restoring the décor of the past by projecting it into the 21st century”. It is for this reason that the Brasserie, which can accommodate up to 180 diners, has “regained its original double-height ceilings, making it extremely spacious once again”, and the dark eucalyptus wood and marble décor exposed. The Brasserie fits perfectly with the maritime theme which Wilmotte has wove through the entire hotel: *“1910 was the age of luxury transatlantic ocean liners: the idea here is to evoke the atmosphere aboard the grand yachts of old with the varnished wood along all the walkways, similar to the passageways in a boat...”*

With a patio having been created right at the heart of the building, the Brasserie also offers a bright and peaceful open-air space in its idyllic terrace; a haven of peace that is hard to find elsewhere in the French capital. With its entrance sitting at the corner of two streets, playing on the light and shade of its different floors and internal and external spaces, this is an authentic brasserie at its core – vibrant, hearty and sophisticated – that has been reinterpreted for the modern age.

With light and shade interspersing around its wooden, bronze and marble fixtures, the Brasserie Lutetia sits right at the heart of the hotel and the city, and at the forefront of its time: just like in the days when artists used to leave token paintings or sculptures in the hotel, now Jean Le Gac has been invited to tell the story of the last 100 years on the columns throughout the space, inviting Samuel Becket, Sonia Rykiel, Josephine Baker, Arman, Cesar, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and James Joyce once more to the table. The spirit of the literary and artistic quarter of Saint-Germain-des-Prés is in the air once again at the Brasserie!

A decidedly Mediterranean Brasserie

Brasserie-style cuisine traditionally tends to feature fish and seafood dishes quite prominently, which is something that Michelin-starred Marseille chef Gérald Passedat is particularly fond of – they have become something of his trademark. Seafood – fish, crustaceans, cephalopods, shellfish and even seaweed – is therefore set to take centre stage in this scene overlooking the Seine. But for the menu at his first location in Paris, where people will be able to experience his food for the first time, the chef wanted “*to take a fun yet humble approach to redefining brasserie cuisine*”: as in the South of France, sharing and abundance will be the watchwords, with different ingredients and iconic dishes taking pride of place. “*The Lutetia has always been a place that people returned to, and became regulars. Similarly, I really want the Brasserie to be an open establishment, which is not intimidating and that, in time, has a lot of loyal patrons.*” A vibrant and hearty brasserie, full of good food and a fabulous atmosphere, which sets the stage for experiencing the cuisine of Gérald Passedat, whose ship has finally come into Paris. Just to be clear: this will not be a second Le Petit Nice, but rather a highly personal interpretation of a traditional brasserie:

“The Brasserie Lutetia is a new exercise for me, a little bit like a writer who switches from writing novels to plays. But my signature, my style and even most of my suppliers will nonetheless remain unchanged.”



Seafood taking centre stage

There will be classics, of course – but reworked. Parmentiers? Yes, with octopus. Quenelles? Made of shellfish, naturally, accompanied by a Nantua sauce...of red kuri squash! These classic dishes have had something of the sea breathed playfully into them, creating a menu which exudes freshness and vibrancy: this is heart-and-soul cooking. The menu will also feature signature Provençal fish dishes such as aioli, whole stuffed fish cut into steaks and bream flambéed with pastis, not forgetting the traditional bouillabaisse served at dinner. Weever, scorpion fish, sea bass or monkfish, cuttlefish and plenty of others depending on the catch and the season will flavour the rich saffron-infused stock, offered at two services with rouille, croutons and potatoes as tradition dictates. Most of the fish will be sourced from the Mediterranean Sea, mainly from the Port de Sète, with the rest from Brittany depending on the weather, the catch, and the seasons.

A wide variety of seafood will also make for some happy diners, particularly the wide range of carefully-selected oysters: from Tarbouriech oysters from the Etang de Thau, Belon Flats and cupped Cancale oysters, all the way to the Fines and Spéciales de Claire oysters from Marennes-Oléron, oyster lovers will be spoilt for choice.

Chic sea bar

Inspired by the Grand Central Oyster Bar in New York and Japanese kaiseki counters, where diners are seated so close to the chef that speedy service and fresh food is guaranteed, the sea bar is reinventing chic snacking and making seafood the star of the show. Mediterranean tartare with almond oil and pepperwood, hot stone-cooked langoustines, Tarbouriech Spéciale oysters with a zingy aloe vera, cucumber and horseradish sauce... with cutting-edge dishes and interesting flavour combinations which will also be offered as starters in the Brasserie, the sea bar is a visual treat for one or two to enjoy at the counter, and a way to experience Gérald Passedat's cuisine in just 30 minutes.

Southward-bound

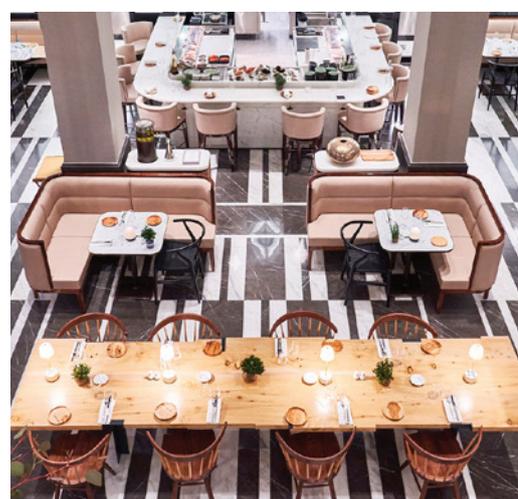
Alongside these flavours singing decidedly of the sea, other Southern specialities will also be finding their way into this subtle blend of tradition and creativity. Pistou soup, veal cannelloni, chickpea panisse, einkorn wheat, Camargue red rice... Parisians and foodies visiting the capital city are sure to enjoy feasting on a myriad of childhood dishes, all made with high-quality, traditional Provençal ingredients. The same

approach has been taken to sweet treats, which are just as delicious savoured as a snack or a dessert: syrupy fruit from Passedat's childhood, mille-feuilles and traditional cakes will all receive a Southern twist, not to mention the treat tin filled with Provençal biscuits. Navettes, crisp macarons, sablés, almond and marzipan croquets with a wonderful orange blossom and bitter almond aroma will make it difficult to resist sinking further into fantasies of the South...

Wine, of course

Olive oil, wheat and vines are all symbolic of the Mediterranean food culture. Vines are everywhere at the Lutetia... which was built upon the remnants of the Abbaye-aux-Bois gardens, where the monks used to grow their grapes. That's why the banisters are decorated with angels, trellis work and bunches of grapes, smoothly embracing wine as a central component of the Lutetia's identity. The eclectic menu features over 40 different wines, taking guests on a tour of the South of France – where else! – by way of Burgundy, showcasing a selection of organic wines, and proffering perfect pairings for Gérald Passedat's signature dishes.





Photos available upon request

Information

Brasserie Lutetia
45 boulevard Raspail
Paris 6ème – France

Opening hours

From Monday to Sunday, from 12pm to midnight (last order at 10:45pm)
Breakfast will be available from end of February, from 7.45am

Contact

Tel: +33 (0)1 49 54 46 92

Email: brasserie@hotellutetia.com

Details and bookings on hotellutetia.com

Marine Servat-Moscovici

Attachée de presse

Tel : +33 (0)1 49 54 46 24

Email : marine.servat@hotellutetia.com

Agence SHORTCUT RP

Catherine Bienvenu

Tel: +33 (0)1 53 58 99 50

Email: c.bienvenu@shortcut.fr

Alexandra Teyssier d'Orfeuill

Tel: +33 (0)1 53 58 99 16

Email: a.teyssier@shortcut.fr

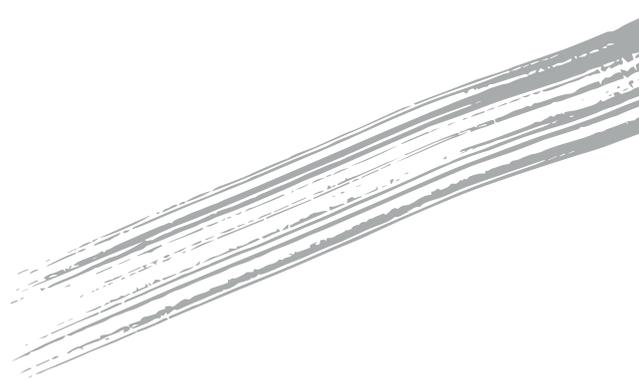


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45 boulevard Raspail, 75006, Paris, France

Tel: +33 (0)1 49 54 46 00



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