



## Culture & Luxury

# A Promise of Greatness at ‘Mâche’

In Paris’s 10th, a young team cooks with audacity, charm—and a wink to the future.

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arrondissement—where canals meet curry houses, and late-night wine bars hum with low-stakes philosophy—a discreet gem is taking shape. Quietly. Confidently. Deliciously.

“Mâche,” of course, means to chew in French. It is also a tender salad leaf, modest and bright. The name is less a pun than a thesis: this is a place that asks you to engage, to taste attentively, to savor not just what is on the plate but what might yet be.

The room sets the tone. Conceived by Charles du Pouget, the décor nods to the irreverent geometry of the Memphis Milano movement—playful lines, unexpected color, a refusal to take itself too seriously even as it takes design very seriously indeed. It is the kind of space that invites curiosity without demanding reverence.

And then there is the welcome. Jean greets with the rare blend of polish and ease that cannot be taught, only practiced naturally. The servers follow suit: attentive, smiling, never intrusive, genuinely kind. In a dining culture that can sometimes mistake stiffness for sophistication, this warmth feels almost radical.

The kitchen, led by Chef Michaël, is where the ambition sharpens. The format—a procession of lovely plates in a discovery menu—might suggest familiarity. The execution does not. Each dish lands with intent, sometimes whispering, sometimes insisting, but always speaking in a clear voice.

A puffed pastry arrives first, airy as a thought, anchored by pumpkin seed sabayon and the deep, molasses murmur of black garlic. Then a croustade of braised red cabbage, lifted by elderberry and sharpened with horseradish—earthy, tart, and just unruly enough. Chicken skin, crisped to a near-translucent crackle, carries tarama and langoustine in a composition that feels both indulgent and precise.

The sea and garden intertwine with increasing confidence. Cuttlefish meets broccoli, mint, and pistachio in a dish that is at once green and marine, fresh and nutty. Beets—inevitable, perhaps, but here reborn—are paired

with hibiscus, almond, sumac, and chili, a balance of sweetness, acidity, and heat that resists cliché. A Tokyo turnip, delicately structured around ghomseh sabzi, black lime, and endive juice, hints at a kitchen unafraid of crossing borders so long as it knows why.

The mains arrive not as declarations but as arguments. Line-caught gumard, paired with a vegetarian chili, langoustine, and peanuts, is a study in contrast that somehow resolves. A taco—yes, a taco—filled with celeriac, banana, and liver mole, manages to be playful without slipping into gimmickry. And then duck: rich, assured, framed by onion, a turnip-pepper stuffing, blackberry, and beet. It is here that the kitchen’s potential feels most fully realized.

Cheese and dessert refuse to coast. Mont d’Or with apple, walnut vinegar, and yeast is both rustic and cerebral. Squash with marigold, mandarin, and calamansi is bright without becoming shrill. Chocolate, paired with morel mushroom, Jerusalem artichoke, and hazelnut, walks a tightrope between forest floor and pâtisserie—and does not fall.

By the time sugar glass arrives, perfumed with ginger and cumin, followed by shortbread with cranberry and yogurt, one senses a kitchen not merely experimenting but learning, adjusting, growing in real time.

The wine list mirrors this spirit. A Muscat La Belle Verte 2023 opens with aromatic generosity; a Viognier Question d’Équilibre 2024 lives up to its name; a Languedoc La Vacque 2023—a delicious red—grounds the meal with quiet confidence. A Juraçon from Domaine de Souch lends a honeyed lift before the evening closes on a striking note: an Absinthe de Pontarlier, La Fée Jaune, aged in vin jaune barrels—an ending that lingers, as all good endings should.

Dining here, one cannot help but feel a peculiar, almost parental pride—*la fierté d’un parent devant les premiers pas de son enfant* (the pride of a parent watching their child’s first steps). There is something forming at Mâche, something not yet fixed but already compelling. The edges are not always smoothed, nor should they be. This is a restaurant in motion, a team discovering its own voice with each service.

It is, in short, a must-try. Not because it has arrived, but because it is arriving. And in a city devoted to the perfected, there is something thrilling about witnessing the becoming.

Mâche  
61 rue de Chabrol, Paris 10  
[www.mache.restaurant](http://www.mache.restaurant)