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YOUR INSIDE GUIDE TO BARCELONA AND BEYOND ~ FOOD, CULTURE & GOOD LIVING

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## DISFRUTAR MICHELIN-STARRED RESTAURANT (BARCELONA) ~ CREATIVE CATALAN CUISINE

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Progressive, refreshing and extraordinarily creative, *Disfrutar* ('Enjoy' in Spanish) is a Michelin-starred restaurant in Barcelona owned and run by Mateu Casañas, Oriol Castro and Eduard Xatruch, three chefs who met and trained at the world famous El Bulli.



*Me getting lost in the 31-course menu at the Michelin-starred Disfrutar Restaurant in Barcelona.*

**W**e actually walked straight past the entrance when trying to find it. From the outside, this revered restaurant looks more like a small cafe than a Michelin starred restaurant.

### The Vibe

As you move through the bar area and walk past the open kitchen, which features ceramics and brickwork inspired by the Ninot food market located across the street, a vast, bright space opens up, with plants and white washed walls hinting at the beauty of the nearby Costa Brava, which is where the chefs first found success with their restaurant, Compartir.



*The decor is inspired by the Ninot food market located across the street from the restaurant.*

A huge team of chefs, I'd guess at least fifteen of them, were constantly visible in the kitchen, with head honcho Oriol Castro overseeing the service on my particular visit.

It's a wonderful thing, this openness, and you can't help but feel part of the process, the process of creating mind-bogglingly inventive dishes that surprise and delight with every bite.

## The Food & Wine

We enjoyed the 31-dish tasting menu (that's not at typo!) paired with a wine pairing menu that featured particularly interesting wines – every single sip was an introduction to something new. Some were so bizarre that I wouldn't have even known they were wines if I'd have been blindfolded.



*Rose petals with gin and lychee at Disfrutar.*

I won't list each and every dish that we ate as neither you nor I have time for that, but let me give you an idea by talking of masterpieces such as rose petals with lychee and droplets of gin — you eat the lychee and gently suck the beads of gin from the fleshy rose petals — followed by tender walnuts and ratafia, a bold and herbaceous Catalan liquor.



(<http://expediablog.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Walnuts-and-ratafia-liquor-at-Disfrutar.jpg>)Walnuts and ratafia liquor at Disfrutar.

Each mouthful is a voyage of discovery, a constant melange of new flavours and textures. It was like being at Willy Wonka's factory.

And whilst flavours such as the 'Langoustine al ajillo' with black garlic and parsley foam, and smoked Idiazábal cheese biscuits with apple juice hint at the chefs' Spanish heritage, other delights such as the 'Dashi Yuba' with edamame, oysters and soy sauce wine pairing (you literally sip the artisanal soy sauce from a glass with each mouthful) and Moroccan-style pigeon demonstrate just how versatile these cooks really are.



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*Moroccan-style pigeon.*

## And the most stand out dish of the meal...

The whisky tartare, which requires you rub a fine, 16-year-old Scotch whisky into your hands so that you can sense the subtle aroma as you use your fingers to nibble on an amber-coated hazelnut with vanilla ice-cream.

Decadence defined.



*Amber and hazelnut and there's 16-year-old Irish whisky on my hands.*



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## Verdict

The restaurant itself is fresh and bright, and a friendly (but extremely professional) service style creates a relatively relaxed ambience. It's very much about the food... and the wine, of course. I can't quite express how impressed I was with the level of detail and creativity that was displayed in each dish (and wine glass). Every mouthful was a delightful surprise.

If you're looking for an authentic Michelin-starred dining experience in Barcelona but also want a taste of Catalan cuisine, Disfrutar is the perfect choice.

## Make it Happen

Set menus range from €105 per person to €145 per person. I'd definitely recommend paying for the wine pairing menu, which is either 6 or 9 glasses. I can't remember how many I had, which leads me to believe it was 9.

**Address:** [Carrer Villarroel, 163, Barcelona](#)

[08036](https://www.google.es/maps/place/Disfrutar/@41.3877627,2.1510103,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x12a4a285bbc62c4d0xcd8a70d67beb3993!8m2!08036) (<https://www.google.es/maps/place/Disfrutar/@41.3877627,2.1510103,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x12a4a285bbc62c4d0xcd8a70d67beb3993!8m2!08036>) to see on Google Maps)

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