

Travelgastronomist: Breaking Bread With Michelin Stars

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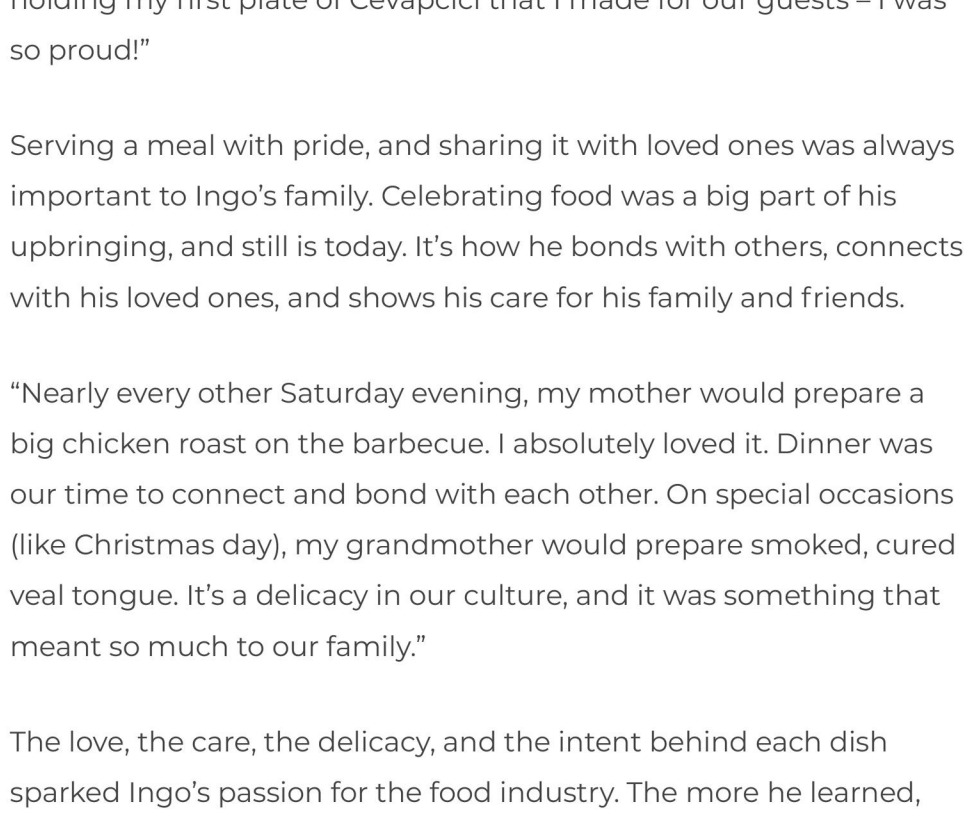
A picture may be worth a thousand words, but a meal is worth an everlasting memory. The impact a meal can have on your mind, spirit, and body is incredible. There's nothing quite like breaking bread with someone you love or someone you're meeting for the first time. Ingo ("Travelgastronomist") has certainly had his fair share of "breaking bread" with chefs and loved ones from across the globe. Each bite allows him the opportunity to step into someone else's shoes, experience a part of their life, and gain a new perspective of the world and its hidden treasures.

The Magical Formula We Call "A Recipe"

Ingo has dined at the best-of-the-best restaurants from far and wide. It's safe to say that this man loves to eat, but more so, he's intrigued by the depth and science of food and flavour. As a young boy, Ingo was fascinated by the techniques, recipes, and "magical formulas" that could produce such delicious plates of food. In his mind, every recipe was an opportunity to create something truly special.

"When I was young, I would spend hours watching my grandmothers and mother cook in the kitchen. I was fascinated by how they would create their meals. When I turned 6 years old, I was entering primary school – so, my mother got me a gift to celebrate. The gift was a cook book full of recipes designed to feed just one person. Of course, I was so excited – so I immediately ran over to the store to buy ingredients. Now, I have more than 250 cookbooks – but this was the first one. And yes, I still have it in my library, haha!"

Ingo was over-the-moon when he received his first cookbook. The thought of a book filled with recipes and new ideas was exciting, and with a kitchen full of knowledgeable home cooks, he knew that he'd be successful.



Ingo's First Cookbook

Gaining Confidence In The Kitchen

Ingo's mother and grandmothers were *really good* cooks – and his favourite hobby was to watch them at work. Most days, he'd find himself in the kitchen chopping onions or helping prepare whatever they were making that night. As he grew older and began to gain confidence in the kitchen, he played a bigger role in preparing the family meal.

"When relatives came to our house for dinner, I would put myself in the role of the chef. I started with simple dishes. The first dish I cooked was a Cevapcici – it's similar to a spicy meatloaf. It was something I loved to cook for our relatives. I still have a photo of me holding my first plate of Cevapcici that I made for our guests – I was so proud!"

Serving a meal with pride, and sharing it with loved ones was always important to Ingo's family. Celebrating food was a big part of his upbringing, and still is today. It's how he bonds with others, connects with his loved ones, and shows his care for his family and friends.

"Nearly every other Saturday evening, my mother would prepare a big chicken roast on the barbecue. I absolutely loved it. Dinner was our time to connect and bond with each other. On special occasions (like Christmas day), my grandmother would prepare smoked, cured veal tongue. It's a delicacy in our culture, and it was something that meant so much to our family."

The love, the care, the delicacy, and the intent behind each dish sparked Ingo's passion for the food industry. The more he learned, the less he realized he knew – and, the more he wanted to discover the secrets of exquisite cuisine!

Michelin Stars Lit Up His Path...

When he was 16 years old, Ingo began to watch a few cooking shows on TV. There weren't too many out there, but there was one about Michelin-starred chefs. Ingo watched as talented chefs mastered the most intricate techniques, played with colours, and developed flavours. He was fascinated. So, it didn't take long for him to add a few more books to his library of recipes and convince his parents to take him to his first Michelin-starred restaurant.

"It was... it was... wow! The 2 Michelin-starred restaurant "Speisemeisterei" in Stuttgart, Germany, was amazing – the taste, the aroma, the look of the food – every dish was something so special."

Ingo had fallen in love... Throughout university, he saved as much money as he could to afford travelling and dining at Michelin-starred restaurants. The more he tasted, the more he was curious to try another course. The possibilities were endless, and there were so many more culinary masterpieces to discover.

Becoming "Travelgastronomist"

Shortly after university, Ingo landed a job as a management consultant. His job required quite a bit of travel, so he had the opportunity to tour Europe on a regular basis. One of his colleagues was also interested in food and dining – so, with their hungry bellies, they made it a mission to eat as much as they could.

"My colleague and I travelled often for work. Whenever we would travel to a new city or country, we would always pick a spot to eat together. We loved trying new foods and experiencing the cuisine that each region and country had to offer."

At first, Ingo's love for food and dining was simply a hobby – nothing more, nothing less. But, soon enough, his drool-worthy instagram account caught the attention of many foodies and chefs across the globe.

"I would post about each restaurant that I visited. When the chefs saw that I was going to visit their restaurant that night, they would sometimes come and visit my table when I was dining. It was interesting to speak with them and ask questions about their culinary experiences."

Ingo wanted "Travelgastronomist" to be different from other food blogs. He didn't want to simply post pictures of pretty food (though he's pretty successful at that too...). Instead, he wanted to share the information that he learned from Michelin-starred chefs. So, he began to interview the chefs at each restaurant he would visit – talking about their culinary expertise, dishes, and what was being served on the table that night.

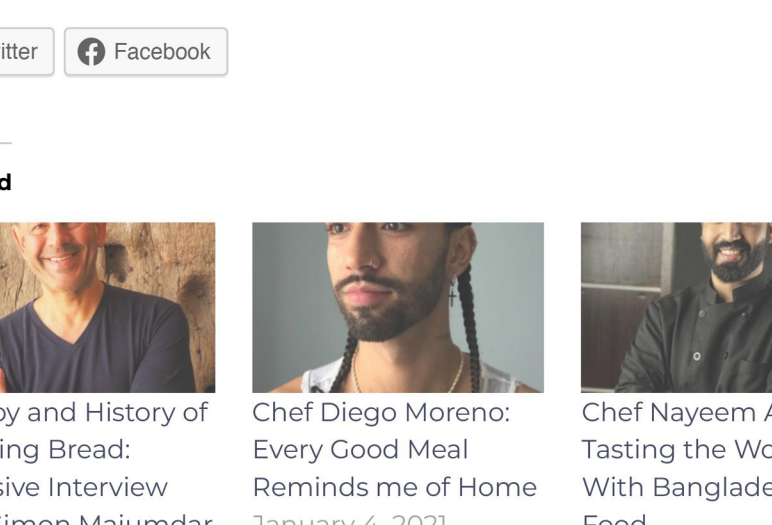
Peeking Behind The Scenes Of The Worlds Best Kitchens

Interview after interview, Ingo realized that the food industry was so diverse and artistic, and the people were incredibly generous and humble. He was impressed with the industry more than ever before. Not just because of the food – but because of the passion and the stories behind each plate.

"Every chef is so passionate about their job. I haven't met a chef without goals, visions, or motivations. Chefs truly do LIVE for their job – they don't have a separate "life" and "job" – it's all one."

The passion that each chef demonstrates is translated through their food and flavours. The heart and soul they put into their job transforms into imaginative, innovative dishes that are sure to WOW any guest.

"Chefs are so creative, and they can find a million ways to innovate new dishes. They'll get inspiration from everywhere – the market, the river, the street, their homes, or their childhood. Then, they'll take that inspiration and turn it into something so special that becomes a memorable experience for someone else. I find it so interesting when a chef deconstructs and reconstructs a dish from their childhood. On one hand, you're transported back to your childhood days... But, on the other hand, you're experiencing something so high-end, intricate, and delicate that it really makes you say WOW."



How To Make An Unforgettable Meal

Creating an outstanding dish must first start with heart, soul, and an idea. But, to make a true masterpiece, you must be able to take that vision and bring that experience to reality. As a chef, you have to consider everything – from the appearance, to the aroma, to the flavour, to the colours... It's not just about the food – it's everything together that makes a special experience.

"I always love it when all of the flavours are present: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, and umami. Then, you have to consider the textures: crunchy, crispy, creamy, and soft. Next, it's about incorporating different temperatures – having something cool, and something warm and hot. Lastly, of course, you must consider the appearance – the colours and the arrangement of components on the plate. The best dishes I've ever had focus on those four components – that's when the flavours can truly sing."

Composing A Dish And Creating A Memory

Fine dining may seem quite different from comfort food – but, in reality, they all start from the same place. Often dishes begin with a memory – whether it be fine dining or comfort food. The difference, however, is in the composition.

"I love the composure of fine dining dishes. It's an explosion of flavours in your mouth. When you take a bite with a bit of each flavour, texture and temperature – it's just the best moment you can have. Sure, I love a good barbecued chicken but, for me, visiting Michelin-starred restaurants is similar to visiting an Opera rather than listening to music on your phone. It's a whole experience. You're there for the whole night, you taste different flavours through various courses, you can appreciate food and beverage pairings, you hear about the stories behind the food and drink, and you get to spend time with others around the table. It's not just about the food – it's about the service, atmosphere, and storytelling."

Ingo's love for trying new things, experiencing incredible cuisines, and speaking with some of the best chefs of the world is inspiring. Not only is his perspective of food admirable, but his curiosity and eagerness to discover more is something I hope inspires others.

Food is art. It's an experience. Enjoy every bite, savour the moment, and always be eager to try something new.

Thank You To "Travelgastronomist"!

Thank you to Ingo for taking the time to speak with me! I love your story and perspective of food. I cannot wait to come to Europe when the pandemic is resolved to dine at a Michelin-starred restaurant and have that experience for myself! Your kindness, passion, and curiosity is amazing – and I know you will inspire so many others to explore the world of culinary arts.

If you're not following him already, head on over to Ingo's instagram (@travelgastronomist) [HERE](#) and blog [HERE](#) to stay up-to-date on his culinary adventures.

Before I let Ingo get back to tasting more menus, I had to ask a few of my favourite quickfire questions!

Quickfire Questions!

What Is Your Favorite Food Memory?

"When I was young, I went to a Chinese restaurant close to my town with family and friends. It was the first time I ate Asian food. I ordered a dish with black soybeans and Sichuan shrimp. It was something I never experienced ever before – the flavours were absolutely incredible."

"The first time I ate seafood pasta was at an Italian restaurant. I had "Spaghetti Vongole". I can still smell the aromas and taste the flavours... It was THAT good."

"My family and I would take vacations around the middle of Europe quite often. We went to the Netherlands and I ordered one of their specialties – a raw and fermented herring. It's called "Matjes" – you eat it plain with onions and cucumbers or in sandwich rolls. It's a really unique taste – and it's bursting with umami flavour."

What Does Food Mean To You?

"Food and dining is important because it is a part of our culture. Technically, we have to eat every day... But, to me it's a part of your culture and identity. Food is so much more than the technical part of food – it's something that connects you to your own culture, other cultures, and other people."

Craving More?

Check out my interview with food writer (and, one of my all-time biggest inspirations) Simon Majumdar!

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