



TEXT Marie Tossier
PHOTO Xavier Pellicer

XAVIER PELLICER

A SECOND CAREER IN FULL BLOOM

He's the chef of his own restaurant, 'Xavier Pellicer · Healthy Kitchen', which he opened in the centre of Barcelona in 2018. A refined, yet simple and friendly vegetarian restaurant. Just like this exceptional chef.

Before branching out on his own, Xavier Pellicer was a chef at 3-star Michelin restaurant 'Can Fabes', in the heart of Catalonia. But the talented chef felt somehow unfulfilled in his career. A sense of fulfilment that he now seems to have found through the creation of his own restaurant 'Xavier Pellicer · Healthy Kitchen' in Barcelona in 2018.

Just a stone's throw from Gaudi's iconic 'Casa Milà', the Franco-Spanish chef prepares sensational vegetarian dishes using natural, locally sourced products and ingredients. His establishment was even voted 'Best Restaurant in the World' in 2018 and 2019 by 'We're Smart® Green Guide', and still retains its 5-radish rating, a firm mark of the quality of its green cuisine.

Biodynamics at the centre of a culinary renaissance

Xavier Pellicer's passion for plants dates back to 2012. His 'Can Fabes' partner, famous Spanish chef Santi Santamaria, had just died suddenly of a heart attack, and after months of reflecting on the 'what next', he decided to study biodynamics, "to learn all about the vital energy that lies in each and every vegetable." He also decided to train in Ayurvedic nutrition, an Indian method. "I have a unique connection with India. I've already been there twice, but feel like I need to go back again soon," says the man who now feels good in his own skin, revealing that before this change in his nutritional lifestyle, he weighed "more than 110 kilos".

Going it solo

It was after this voyage into the vegetarian world that Xavier Pellicer embarked on what he calls his "second career", teaming up with partners to open a vegetarian restaurant, 'Céleri', in Barcelona in 2015. In 2017, the Céleri adventure came to an end, with the chef deciding to go it solo. Well, not exactly solo... Like many chefs, Xavier Pellicer is joined in his venture by his wife Merce Carbonell. 'Xavier Pellicer · Healthy Kitchen' opened its doors on 23 April 2018.

The chef sources the ingredients for his vegetarian creations from local producers in and around Barcelona. He works with many, but most regularly with Joan Salicrú and Jaume Torras from 'Soulblim'. "I also work with seasonal workers, like mushroom and truffle hunters," he adds. Depending on the season and weather and drawing on biodynamic methods, Xavier Pellicer offers a menu that adapts to the produce of the land.

Preserve the taste of the product

His favourite vegetable? "I'm going to say cauliflower, because it's our signature dish: cauliflower emulsion with olive oil," says Xavier Pellicer after much deliberation.

He also has some sound advice for cooks wanting to get the most out of their vegetables: "Don't try to transform the vegetable too much, to transform the taste of it. Use all the flavours, all the minerality, the leaves, the flowers, the fruit. The best dishes convey the good taste of a product."



XAVIER PELLICER

C/ de Provença, 310 — 08037 Barcelona/Spain
Tel. +34 / 935 25 90 02

xavierpellicer.com



GRILLED AUBERGINE COCONUT, GRANOLA, SAGE & KALAMATA

Serves 4 25 minutes 50 minutes

- › 2 organic white aubergines
 - › 80 g lactose-free coconut yoghurt
 - › 5 g chopped fresh sage leaves
 - › 5 g vegetable gelatine powder
 - › Kalamata olive powder
 - › A few sage stalks
 - › Extra virgin olive oil
 - › Chive oil
 - › Sea salt
- For the granola**
- › 30 g pine nuts
 - › 30 g pistachios
 - › 30 g sunflower seeds
 - › 30 g pumpkin seeds
 - › 50 g gluten-free rolled oats
 - › 5 g sea salt
 - › 10 g organic brown sugar
 - › 1 g ground black pepper
 - › 1 g ground cumin
 - › 40–50 ml mineral water
- For the lemon gel**
- › 75 g lemon juice
 - › 25 g mineral water
 - › 1.5 g agar-agar

- 1 Roast the aubergines over hot coals on the grill or in the oven (with grill function). Peel them and put them on a perforated tray to extract the aubergine syrup. Boil the syrup with the vegetable gelatine. Cut the aubergine flesh into pieces and dip them in the syrup to obtain shiny aubergine “candies”.
- 2 Mix the coconut yoghurt with the sage, Kalamata powder, salt and olive oil. Set aside.
- 3 Boil the lemon juice, water and agar-agar and leave to cool. Mix using a blender. The result will be a clear lemon gel.
- 4 For the granola: Mix all the ingredients together, place on a baking tray and dry in the oven at 180°C for 10–12 minutes. Leave to cool and break into small pieces.
- 5 Pour 2–3 tablespoons of the yoghurt mixture onto a plate. Place two pieces of aubergine on top. Using a small spoon, place a few small bubbles of lemon gel on the aubergines and the sauce. Add a few drops of chive oil on top and garnish with the granola and sage stalks.