



## MA BICHE, A FUNNY NAME...

Pascalou and I wanted to call our little pots-and-pans joint «Ma Poule». Because «Ma Poule» grabs ya !!! So we wrote up our business plan and our budgets with that name. The graphic artist put together a graphic : Ma Poule ... And Pascal even had a plate made up with an imprint of a chicken's claw. Just one thing, dude, you gotta make sure nobody's trademarked that name, Sausage-brain !!! O great disarray !!! A contemporary tragedy on rue Veron... The name «Ma Poule» was already taken, sealed up, trademarked, locked up. Crap !!! The concept, the impulse was screwed !!!

So we said, no big deal, we'll just call ourselves « Mon Cochon » That's not bad, eh? «Mon Cochon», that's got a ring to it!!! - For a debut restaurant, it's borderline, Pascal said. It's reductionist. - OK, I said. So - « Mon lapin » ! « Mon Lapin » ! - too common. It's Bugs Bunny revisited. - « Ma caille »? Ho-hum and homely!!! In short, we sent thousands of text messages with bleepin' idiotic names like «the little hens of Paris» - too goofy - or «Le 12», too stupid, or «Le 18», even more stupid on the mountain of idiots. People are going to think it's a barracks and they'll come to a fireman's ball. Great, Vive la France !

Or «The Flat», Woo-hoo!!!... That's good «The Flat», why not «The Shoe Box»... To sum up : we were excelling in superior stupidity... We digitally punched out text messages, texts, texts, a mountain of texts, a spiral of texts, a motorway of texts ... even my wife had suspicions about me - Sergio, what are you doing, do you know what time it is ? I'm knackered, stop now, that's enough ! - Ok, ok, ok !! It's true, 5 a.m. to send a text to your sleeping buddy that says : I've got it ! I found the sacred name ! I have it on the tip of my tongue, I've got it, it'll be called, hell, it'll be called... Crap I forgot... Good one !!! It's in the box.

In short, we dug *Ma Biche* from the start. Then Pascal had to do his mourning over «Ma Poule». Two shrink sessions. It wasn't enough, so we wrote a letter to the guy who trademarked it long before... Dear Sir, yadda-yadda-yadda ... his response was clear and concise : Noooo !!!

The name «Ma Poule» belonged to him, it's his, it's written in French law. So don't touch *Ma Biche* !!! OK !!!

## RESTAURANT

# MA BICHE

Press kit - 2014

*A peasant in your plate, you'll be feelin' great.*

*“We do not inherit the land of our ancestors, we lend it to our children.”* ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

## The winning games

*When were runts, kids, tykes, or snout-nosed youngsters that people liked, we would dig games, so why not do one :*

### WHOSE QUOTATIONS ARE THESE? LINK THE PHRASE TO ITS AUTHOR.

- “Between a bad cook and an woman who poisons you, the only difference is the intention”
- “A dessert without cheese is a beautiful woman who's missing an eye”
- “Wine is the milk of old people”
- “London ... bad food, worse weather, Mary fucking Poppins”
- “Stupidity is when intelligence relaxes”
- “Work is indeed an illness because there's occupational medicine !”
- Coluche
- Desproges
- Brillat Savarin
- Platon
- Guy Ritchie
- Serge Gainsbourg

**MA BICHE**

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# AN IMAGINARY, BUT ALL TOO REAL, INTERVIEW.

A BIT OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE ...

Hello Mr. Restaurant Owner. What's cookin' at La Biche?

This is Grandma's kitchen - with a make-over. You'll say, "made over, yeah, I've heard that before ... I know the tune: French hipsters try their hand at being grannies." Well, no! This is made over like your older sister who doesn't even exist might, or your Aunt Claudette, or your cousin Martha, your grandfather Albert and his rice pudding ... touched up with experience taken from your trips to Ethiopia or Thailand, with a pinch of spices, input from your friends \_ with or without Michelin stars \_ and a dab of Julius Caesar, Napoleon and Louis XV and all that jazz. But mostly, Grandma's touch.

That's because a grandmother's cooking has love and good produce as ingredients. So we thought: "Cool, dude" ... we're heading off to get our produce from farmers... But not just any farmers, ones who respect nature, the environment, share a love of the earth, their products, their animals. *Ma Biche* is about love of grandmothers in muddy peasant boots.

Boils down to this: Certified organic produce and sustainable agriculture - or nothing at all!!!

So here's an interview that takes off like a drag race!

Peasants, is a bit derogatory, so you say?

So here's an interview that takes off like a drag race!

'Peasants,' is a bit derogatory, so you say? When I was a kid, being called a peasant was the worst insult there was. Today, everybody would like their own plot of land, wine and label. After having denigrated the earth, they want to embrace it. Today, being a peasant is top-notch. You just have to go see Ludo, my goat-herding friend, who milks by hand. He's from Auvergne \_ the real deal. He cares for his livestock the homeopathic way and has an osteopath for his nannies. Once he told me, "a peasant is a man of the country." I like this definition.

It's true that from this point of view, the word peasant is quite nice!

So are you going to get your goods from peasants, as you say?

*Ma Biche*, is straight from the producer. For two years, at our own rhythm, we've roamed about to meet peasant friends. We ask them questions, we eat with them, we film them; they explain things to us, we taste, we learn, we pass it on to you. It's a long story ... The star for us is the peasant, his product, his "terroir". What interests us is small-scale, family-style French agriculture. "Little is pretty," as the English say...

So there will be mixed-race cows like the Salers or Aubrac, farm-raised pork, chicken whose bones are so hard you break your teeth eating them... Cheeses that will make you cry, little wines that will brighten your evening ... For that matter, you can see the short video clips on our site: [www.mabiche-restaurant.com](http://www.mabiche-restaurant.com) where the peasant speaks up to tell about his work.

OK, I'm getting a sense of the concept ...

Concept!? You've got a screw loose - you and your 'Concept!' Nearly rhymes with non-sense! So you meet your buddy Seb, with his elbow on the zinc-plated bar at 8 a.m. He's having a coffee at Le Village on rue des Abbesses. So you know, Seb is half-artsy, half-dangerous:

- Hey dude, you alright? So how's your restaurant coming? Hey, by the way, you didn't tell me: what's the gimmick?

- What do you mean by that?

- Yeah, you know, the gimmick, the concept?

- Ah yes, the concept. There isn't one!

- What do you mean there isn't one?

There's no concept? So it's not a restaurant?

- Well, yeah it is.

- What do you mean, 'Well, yeah'? Did you not sleep last night? You're joking, there's always a concept. Life is made up of concepts, everything's conceptualized these days. You know what I say? Even your wife is a concept.

- Yeah, maybe you're right. So the concept is this: A straight-from-the-producer restaurant with grannies in their slippers roaming the 8 sq. meter kitchen.

- Well there you go, my man! You've got your concept. At *Ma Biche* we run with the peasants. It's the authenticity of the country, the healthy, the balanced, and pleasure ...

*The intergalactic relationship with the cosmos. It's the link between man and his environment. You've got your concept. Chuck in some old-time vinyl records and all Paris will come pouring into your place...*

And yadda-yadda-yadda, and it's 9:30. I'll spare you the episode of Seb saying «... and your PR? What's your PR?»

So, I think I've gotten your concept joke. When it comes to supply, it's straight from the land. What about the cuisine?

We offer up a bourgeois kitchen. Like Madame de Saintonge - light.

You mean traditional French cooking?

Sort of, and especially with good products. And by 'good' I mean those that are good for your health and the environment. Not grown or fattened up with crap. *Ma Biche* is simple, healthy and natural cooking. Balanced yet enjoyable. And we follow the seasons. It's not easy.

There are compromises. Freedom comes through constraint.

Compromises?

Compromises, constraints, we've handed off those issues off to our uncle-a big-time glutton who's a nutritionist and keeps to a strict line. He works on dietary behavior, and helps us balance our menu. To know what we need to know for the proper functioning of our body.

And what did your grandmothers cook?

Lots of marinated fish, bourride fish soups, quail with cherries, good beef or a good link sausage, cakes of cheese, home-made sorbets ... and so the *Ma Biche* menu isn't more than three or four starters, main courses and desserts \_ with boards of cheeses and dry sausages. ■



## How did "Ma Biche" get started?

For years, your buddy Pascalou and you wondered:

« So we're going to put together this restaurant!!! » It's a bit of a recurring joke. In fact, it's a bit on a par with « Hey, how's it going? »...

Or: « You ok? »... Totally moronic!!!

And there were these memories ... when you were 6 or 7, your father, a restaurant owner, put you in the kitchen and made you skin the beef tongues with the throat. Classy!!!

He'd give you the piece, and you'd get your bag. You'd put in your swimsuit with two or three cockerels and join up with your buddies at the Butte aux Cailles pool for a picnic outside. We shouted, splashed, made a ruckus, we were the kings of the world. I think that's the oldest memory I have as an apprentice cook.

That's maybe why, ever since I was little, I've wanted to start up a pots-and-pans place. The dream of a kid; Since then, I hauled my butt here and there through restaurants, cafes ... (7 years in Porquerolles, too hard, 2 years in Bonifacio, hard) in the mountains abroad and in Paris with Pascal.

And then I went on to other things... I devoted the last 10 years to filming the world of peasants.

**So, Pascal, we're doing this restaurant!!!** Fifteen years earlier, it wouldn't have lasted 15 seconds. Today it's hot as fire. Our pots are sweating, laughing, the oven is coughing and purring like a cat in the sun.



## WHERE IS MA BICHE ?

It's on the backside of Abbesses on rue Veron, No. 12. We could've called it «Le Cul des Abbesses» \_ not bad, eh?!!! And then with thought with the hood's history of sex and gangsters, we'd be better off avoiding the morality police and all that.

But why do it here, and not there? Why? Well, it's because we're attached to this neighborhood: We have lived here almost forever; Pascal has worked here for more than 10 years...

And then the 15<sup>th</sup>, we like it, but we don't know anybody... the 15<sup>th</sup> is too dangerous.



## LES ABESSES, HAS A RING TO IT, SERGIO SAYS...

Sometimes you wonder what you're doing here. If it's the principle of causality, or a succession of accidents, or maybe both ... in any case, there's no two ways about it... And then ... and then, one day your grandfather Albert from Poitiers tells you: "The 18th has a resonance for our family: Your father was married in the 18th, your great-grandmother lived on rue des Abbesses \_ as a laundress \_ and you my boy were born on rue des Martyrs. Today you live at Marche St. Pierre! Funny, huh?" We're all drawn to Montmartre like in the Bermuda Triangle \_ damned to stay in this neighborhood and spin our wheels.