

March 2017

On the Rocas Roca兄弟: 三人行必有我師

Kate Whitehead

Follow this and additional works at: <http://repository.vtc.edu.hk/ive-hosts-ambrosia>



Part of the [Food and Beverage Management Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Whitehead, Kate (2017) "On the Rocas Roca兄弟: 三人行必有我師," *AMBROSIA 客道: The Magazine of The International Culinary Institute*, 14-21.

Available at: <http://repository.vtc.edu.hk/ive-hosts-ambrosia/vol3/iss1/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Hotel, Service & Tourism Studies at VTC Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *AMBROSIA 客道: The Magazine of The International Culinary Institute* by an authorized editor of VTC Institutional Repository. For more information, please contact csyip@vtc.edu.hk.



Each a master in his own way, but all with creativity in their DNA, three Spanish brothers boast their greatness in cooking, wine stewarding and dessert making. 西班牙Roca三兄弟各有專長，他們的基因蘊含創意天賦，在烹飪、品酒及製作甜點方面各擅勝場。 **By Kate Whitehead**

On the Rocas

Roca 兄弟：
三人行必有我師

Every day, Joan Roca and his younger brothers, Josep and Jordi, eat lunch at their parents' restaurant, Can Roca, in the picturesque city of Girona in northern Spain. It's a tradition they have indulged in since they were children, and the fact that they now run what has been called "the world's best restaurant" hasn't stopped them from continuing the ritual – and recognising their parents' profound influence. "We learned everything from them, above all the values of generosity, hospitality, teamwork and the desire to make people happy, which in the end is what matters," says Joan, executive chef at the Roca brothers' celebrated restaurant, El Celler de Can Roca, which is also in Girona.

Growing up in the family restaurant, Joan began helping out in the kitchen when he was just eight years old, and learned to cook from his mother and grandmother. Later, he toyed with the idea of becoming an architect, but the draw of the culinary world was too strong, and he went to Girona Culinary Arts School instead. Josep went to the same school, and there the brothers learned about a cuisine that was less traditional and more academic, quite unlike the Can Roca food they were used to.

"Nouvelle cuisine" was just taking off internationally, and Joan and Josep visited some of the finest culinary establishments leading the movement. It was at Maison Pic restaurant in Valence, halfway between Lyon and Avignon in France, that they discovered their passion. They were determined to start their own restaurant, and in August 1986 opened El Celler in the property next door to their parents' eatery. It was a time when a modern, nonconformist approach to cuisine was all the rage, and the brothers immediately embraced the trend. They have been fiercely committed to exploring unconventional styles ever since.

Joan took control of the kitchen, while Josep proved a natural in the dining room and today is the sommelier. Jordi was only eight at the time, but he followed

每天中午，Joan Roca都會和弟弟Josep及Jordi到父母在景色優美的西班牙北部小城吉羅納開設的Can Roca餐廳一起用膳，即使三兄弟經營的餐廳El Celler de Can Roca早已榮膺「世界最佳餐廳」，這個始於小時候的習慣，至今未變。他們認為父母對他們有深遠影響，在El Celler de Can Roca餐廳擔任行政總廚的Joan說：「我們從父母身上學到很多，尤其是慷慨待人、熱情款客和團隊精神；而最重要的是希望我們所做的事情能讓人開心快樂。」

Joan在家族經營的餐廳成長，年僅八歲已經在廚房幫忙，從母親和祖母那兒學會烹調手藝。本來他打算成為建築師，但是美食世界的吸引力太大了，他選擇入讀吉羅納廚藝學校。弟弟Josep也就讀同一間學府，兄弟倆在該處學會了沒那麼傳統、但是更有理論基礎的烹調方法，與他們熟悉的Can Roca美食風格不盡相同。

當「新派菜」潮流在國際間剛剛冒起時，Joan和Josep拜訪了數家掀起這股熱潮的權威高級餐廳，最後在法國瓦朗斯（里昂與亞維維之間）的Maison Pic感受到對餐飲的滿腔熱誠及決定開設餐廳。1986年8月，兄弟倆在父母餐廳的隔壁開設El Celler，採用新派的烹調方法，全情投入研創美食新風格。

Joan擔任主廚重任，Josep則擅長在餐廳打點一切，如今更成為了餐廳的品酒師。餐廳開業時僅得八歲的Jordi，長大後追隨兩位兄長的步伐，入讀廚藝學校，並且在1999年加入El Celler。最初Jordi對投身飲食行業有點猶豫，直到遇上來自威爾斯的糕點師Damian Allsop，Allsop向Jordi傳授製作糕點的竅門，還燃起他對創製甜點藝術的熱情。

EDGAR TAPAN



☞ The three of us have made our passion into our profession... we really like to be creative, it's in our DNA
我們三人把滿腔熱誠灌注到事業中，喜歡創意……這是與生俱來的基因 ☞



in his brothers' footsteps, going to culinary school and then joining them at El Celler in 1999. Jordi initially struggled to find his calling in the restaurant until he met Welsh pastry chef Damian Allsop, who taught him the tricks of his trade and inspired a passion for highly creative dessert art.

The brothers had each found their niche, together forming the foundations for El Celler's huge success. The restaurant won its first Michelin star in 1995, its second in 2002 and a third in 2009. It took the top spot on the San Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants list in 2013 and 2015. One of the dishes that made it famous is Iberian Suckling Pig with Pepper Sauce and Garlic and Quince Terrine, and if you want to try it you would be best advised to book now – the waiting list for a table is about 11 months long. "The three of us have made our passion into our profession," says 52-year-old Joan. "We are all fairly non-conformist and really like to be creative. It's in our DNA. If one of us has an idea and wants to initiate a project, he must convince the other two before we will do it."

After 30 years of working together, the brothers know each other inside out, and the process of creating new dishes is a dialogue. "We live in the restaurant and spend a lot of hours together," says Joan. "We are constantly chatting about ideas, and the team has been growing. It's no longer just chefs and waitresses – in the team we also have botanical scientists, industrial engineers and agricultural engineers. These specialists help generate new ideas."

Take the botanical scientists, who have developed a catalogue of 400 plants, herbs and flowers growing within a 50-kilometre radius of Girona. Some were ingredients already used in dishes, but many were not, and this process of discovery excites Joan. It's not just about rediscovering plants and herbs, but finding new ones and creating new dishes and flavours. "Our grandmother lived on a mountain and knew about 30 or 40 herbs used in the kitchen," says Joan. "Our mother lived in the city, and so she used 15 to 20 herbs, so you see some knowledge has already been lost. We are discovering common ingredients and also finding new ones."

The creative DNA that Joan speaks of is strong in the youngest brother, 38-year-old Jordi. He is passionate about pushing boundaries in the world of sumptuous desserts and pastries. "I love to invent new things



Opposite, clockwise from top: El Celler in Girona; Joan preparing plates for the Roca 'n Roll tour in partnership with Spanish bank BBVA; chefs prepare for a day's work
This page: Jordi with his parents, Josep Roca and Montserrat Fontané in the kitchen of Can Roca
對頁上圖起順時針：位於吉羅納的El Celler；在西班牙銀行BBVA舉辦的Roca 'n Roll巡迴之旅中，Joan正在忙於準備菜式；廚師們正在籌劃一天的工作
本頁：Jordi與父親Josep Roca及母親Montserrat Fontané在Can Roca餐廳的廚房中合照

Roca兄弟在飲食界各有所長，三人攜手合作令El Celler聲名大噪。El Celler在1995年首次獲頒米芝蓮一星榮譽，2002年獲二星，2009年取得最高榮譽的三星；2013年及2015年亦分別獲選為「San Pellegrino世界50間最佳餐廳」的首位。El Celler的其中一道著名菜式，是伊比利亞乳豬配香蒜胡椒汁及木梨凍批。要品嚐這道名菜，現在就要去預訂，因為預約需時大概11個月。今年52歲的Joan說：「我們三兄弟把滿腔熱誠灌注到事業中。喜歡創意，不受傳統約束，這是與生俱來的基因。假如我們其中一人有甚麼新意念，必須說服其餘兩人，大家才會一起去實行。」

30年來三人一起工作，彼此互相了解，創作菜式的過程是不斷溝通。Joan說：「我們都住在餐廳裡，有很多時間一起討論。整個團隊現正不斷壯大，不單有廚師和侍應，還有植物學家、工業工程師和農業工程師。這些專家有助激發很多新意念。」

以植物學家為例，他們替吉羅納方圓50公里範圍內的400種植物、香草和花朵編制目錄。這些香草植物中，有些已經入饌，但更多從未用過，這個發現令Joan非常興奮，因為既可重新認識一些植物和香草，還可以創製更多菜式。他說：「祖母住在山上，她烹調的香草大約有30至40種；母親住在城市，她常用的卻只有15至20種，那表示有一些已經被遺忘了。我們希望重新發掘一些常用食材，而更希望的是找到新材料。」

Joan提及的創意遺傳基因，在現年38歲的三弟Jordi身上最明顯。Jordi熱衷在甜品和糕點尋求突破，他說：「我花全部時間去研究和創作。我們的雪糕店Rocambolesc由我和太太打理，兩位哥哥讓我自由發揮，把各種瘋狂意念付諸實行。」

Ours is a three-way partnership in which three interconnected worlds collaborate
我們三兄弟合作·把三個相關的世界串聯在一起



and spend all my time researching and creating,” Jordi says. “We have an ice-cream parlour, Rocambolesc, which my wife and I manage. My brothers give me free rein there and allow me to put my crazy ideas into practice.”

When Jordi speaks of creativity, he means it, and he has made a name for himself with his unique desserts inspired by perfumes. This he does by reproducing the perfume as flavours, and the first perfume he translated into a dessert was Eternity by Calvin Klein. First he separated the natural ingredients that make the perfume. Then, with the aid of perfume experts, he matched those fruit and herbal ingredients to produce a dish that tastes like the scent.

In the case of Eternity, it includes vanilla, orange blossoms, bergamot and maple syrup, which hint at the different elements of the perfume’s fragrance. Jordi has also transformed dozens of other perfumes, such as Hypnotic Poison by Dior and Trésor by Lancôme, but apparently Chanel No. 5 is impossible to transform into a palatable dessert. The project came full circle when he was asked by a perfumer to create a perfume based on one of his desserts, the Lemon Cloud. “Last year I travelled to Turkey and discovered a world of fragrances, which are those which I have been working with most recently,” says Jordi.

The Roca brothers recognise that an excellent meal would not be complete without wine, and sommelier Josep says Joan and Jordi not only let him poke his nose into the kitchen, but sometimes even let him include ingredients in their recipes to make them more compatible with a particular wine. “Ours is a three-way partnership in which three interconnected worlds collaborate: sweet foods, salty foods and beverages,” says Josep, 50. “The art of a sommelier is an intuitive one. One must ensure that the senses work together, and be able to understand the characteristics of a particular wine and what it is attempting to express.”

In 2007, El Celler moved from its original spot to one just up the road – still close enough to have lunch at their parents’ restaurant. But for the last three years they have forgone lunch at Can Roca over the summer



說到創新，Jordi在這方面十分認真，他以香水為創作靈感的甜品，新穎獨特，獲得一致讚賞。他根據香氣的氣味創造甜品的味道，第一次用來做成甜品的香氣是 Calvin Klein的Eternity。首先他分析香水的天然成分，然後在香水專家的協助下，找出相配的水果和香草作材料，再製成味道類似的甜點。

以Eternity為例，甜品所用的材料包括雲呢拿、橙花、佛手柑和楓糖漿，突顯了香氣的不同元素。Jordi也曾按另外數十種香氣的氣味來製作甜品，比如Dior的Hypnotic Poison、Lancôme的Trésor；不過，明顯地Chanel No. 5的香味很難模仿，難以製成甜品。而有趣的是，事情有時候會反過來進行，有一次一位香水商邀請 Jordi以其中一款甜品Lemon Cloud為藍本創作香水。Jordi說：「去年我到土耳其旅遊，發現那兒是一個瀰漫著各種香氣的國度，最近我便一直在研究土耳其的香氣和香料。」

Roca兄弟深深明白到再好的佳餚必須有優質美酒相配，要不然會大打折扣。身為品酒師的Josep說，Joan和Jordi不僅讓他參與廚房事務，有時更會讓他把某些食材加進食譜中，令菜式與某種特定的葡萄酒更加配合。現年50歲的Josep說：「我們三兄弟合作把三個相關的世界，包括甜點、美食和佳釀串聯在一起。品酒的藝術全憑直覺，必須使不同味道相互協調，也要了解某種酒的特性，知道如何突顯質感和香味。」

2007年，El Celler由原來的地點遷往同一條路上的另一端，由於依然在父母餐館的附近，所以兄弟們可以如常跟父母一起午餐。不過，在過去三年的夏季，他們因為到訪世界各地而暫停這個習慣。Joan說：「我們收到很多在世界各地開設餐廳的邀請，但我們不想這樣做，所以決定在夏天關閉餐廳五個星期，帶著整個團隊展開環球旅程。」

Opposite, clockwise from top: Jordi demonstrates how to make a dessert; the exquisite Massa Mare dessert; the interior of El Celler

This page: the three brothers enjoy some hard-earned downtime

對頁上圖起順時針：Jordi示範如何製作甜品；別出心裁的甜點Massa Mare；El Celler的室內佈置
本頁：三兄弟難得有空餘的時間，可以輕鬆作樂



Because of our visits to Hong Kong, we learned about steaming. We didn't use steaming before, but we love it for fish
在這趟香港之旅，我們學會了蒸煮方法，並以此烹調鮮魚



to head off on grand global adventures. "We get a lot of requests to open restaurants around the world," says Joan. "We don't want to do that, so we do a world tour instead. We close down the restaurant for five weeks and the team moves around the world."

In 2016, the Roca 'n Roll Tour, in partnership with Spanish bank BBVA, brought a pop-up version of their restaurant to London, Hong Kong, Phoenix, San Francisco and Santiago de Chile, with the team recreating a special El Celler dinner in each city for some very lucky guests. However, it was not just about offering the magic of an El Celler menu to an international audience, but also a chance to give back. The brothers believe strongly that vocational and professional education and training is critical for chefs, and they seized the opportunity to share their know-how.

"Training has always been very important for us," says Joan. "We have always had close ties with the university [Girona Culinary Arts School] and we continue to work with chefs and future chefs and sommeliers. At the school, I learned that passion and attitude are as important as knowledge."

The Roca brothers were in Hong Kong in August 2016, and not only offered master classes in cooking and wine at the International Culinary Institute, but also an opportunity for internships for two Vocational Training Council students to go to El Celler in Spain and learn from the masters on their home turf. Joan is a big believer in sharing his expertise and supporting young chefs where he can, and offers this advice to the upcoming stars in the culinary world: "The most important thing is to be passionate about what you do and try to improve. It is also important to work responsibly, to be aware of the impact that gastronomy can have in our society, and to use the knowledge to good advantage."



And the students aren't the only ones learning – the brothers gained much from the experience themselves, developing new skills and returning with fresh ideas for the El Celler menu. "Because of our visits to Hong Kong, we learned about steaming," Joan says. "We didn't use steaming before, but we love it for fish. And also the roasting technique used for duck and making the skin crunchy. That is something else we are using in our own kitchen now."

2016年，三兄弟在與西班牙銀行BBVA舉辦的Roca'n Roll Tour巡迴之旅中，把El Celler帶到倫敦、香港、美國鳳凰城、三藩市和智利聖地牙哥等地。團隊到訪每一個城市時，會為當地賓客炮製特色晚宴。Roca三兄弟不單向各地嘉賓展示El Celler菜式的魔力，更借這個機會回饋業界。三兄弟堅信職業專才教育對廚師非常重要，所以他們把握機會與有志成為廚師的年輕人分享其餐飲知識和心得。

Joan說：「培訓對我們來說一直很重要。我們長期與大學（吉羅納廚藝學校）保持緊密聯繫，而且也不斷與大廚、未來的廚師和品酒師合作。在校的時候，我學會了積極和良好的態度跟知識同樣重要。」Roca三兄弟在去年8月到訪香港期間，不單在國際廚藝學院舉行廚藝示範及葡萄酒工作坊，還為兩名職業訓練局學生提供前往西班牙El Celler餐廳實習的機會，讓年輕人可以在這幾位大師的家鄉實地學習他們的手藝。Joan十分支持知識分享，也盡力幫助年輕廚師，他對這些美食世界的明日之星有以下忠告：「最重要的是，要對你所做的工作充滿熱誠，並且不斷努力改進。同樣重要的是，你要以負責任的態度工作，了解廚藝能為社會帶來的影響，然後善用你自己的知識作出貢獻。」

事實上，能夠學習到新事物的又豈只是學生們？三兄弟在巡迴過程中也獲益良多，他們認識了新的烹調技巧，為El Celler的餐單帶來了新意念。Joan說：「在這趟香港之旅，我們學會了蒸煮方法，並以此烹調鮮魚。還有令烤鴨皮更加香脆的技術，我們廚房現在也使用這些烹調方法。」

Opposite, from top: Josep on tour in Chile; Joan and Jordi pictured with students after a demonstration at the International Culinary Institute
This page: a team of chefs hard at work in El Celler's kitchen

對頁上圖起：Josep在智利的菜市場；Joan及Jordi在國際廚藝學院進行示範後，與學生合照
本頁：El Celler的廚師們正在廚房中忙碌地工作