



September 2019

Game On 野味！惹味？

Anna Cummins

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



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

Recommended Citation

Cummins, Anna (2019) "Game On 野味！惹味？," *AMBROSIA 客道 : The Magazine of The International Culinary Institute*: , 46-51.

Available at: <https://repository.vtc.edu.hk/ive-hosts-ambrosia/vol8/iss1/17>

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 wchu@vtc.edu.hk.

Demand for wild game and exotic meat – from venison, pheasant and quail, to elk, kangaroo and even squirrel – is soaring. With leading restaurants around the world offering increasingly inventive takes on “alternative” meats, we talk to the chefs who are taking a walk on the wild side. 由比較為人熟悉的鹿肉、野雞肉和鵪鶉肉，到駝鹿、袋鼠甚至松鼠肉，市場對野味肉和罕見肉類的需求正在飆升，世界各地大型餐廳也漸漸勇於採用「另類」肉類。有見及此，我們訪問了三位與野味同行的大廚，一起探討這股風潮。 **By Anna Cummins**

Game on 野味！惹味？

In 2016, Atlanta-based fast-food chain Arby's introduced a limited-edition venison steak sandwich, prepared sous-vide and topped with juniper-berry sauce. “While we’re not afraid to take risks, the venison sandwich is probably the biggest stretch for us yet,” then-chief marketing officer Rob Lynch admitted during the launch.

This trepidation speaks to the deeply ingrained perceptions people hold about the meats we ‘should’ eat.

The overwhelming majority of meat consumed globally comprises poultry (around 34 per cent), pork (around 35 per cent) and beef and buffalo (around 22 per cent). But throughout evolutionary history, humans as hunter-gatherers have eaten the wild animals available to us in our native habitat. It was only in the 20th century, amid the introduction of intensive agriculture, that meat production became increasingly industrialised, and our meat options became homogenised.

Arby's venison burger was well received – customers queued out the door, and initial stocks sold out in hours. While game meats like venison have long been popular in certain high-end restaurants, the launch of such an item on the menu of a fast-food chain restaurant is indicative of the growing consumer shift away from the traditional trio of proteins.

2016年，阿特蘭大連鎖快餐店Arby's推出限量版的低溫烹調杜松果醬汁鹿肉扒三文治。當時的市場推廣主任Rob Lynch曾說：「雖然我們敢於冒險，但恐怕鹿肉三文治大概是我們最大膽的嘗試了。」

話裡的戰戰兢兢反映了一般人對「應該」吃什麼肉根深柢固的觀念。

現時，全球最多人食用的肉類主要是家禽肉（34%）、豬肉（35%），以及佔22%的牛肉和水牛肉。然而在歷史的進程當中，人類曾以狩獵為生，捕食原居地可以找到的各種野生動物。直到20世紀引入密集式的農業耕作模式後，肉類生產才變得越來越工業化，我們的肉類選擇也變成大同小異。

Arby's的鹿肉三文治相當受歡迎，購買的人龍排到店外，第一批產品在推出數小時後迅速售罄。其實，像鹿肉這些野味肉在某些高級餐廳一直大受歡迎，連鎖快餐店推出這類產品只說明了越來越多顧客願意嘗試三種傳統選擇以外的肉類。

在英國，鹿肉的銷量也在急升。根據消費趨勢研究公司Kantar的資料顯示，鹿肉的銷量在2014年大升三倍多。大型超級市場Sainsbury's在2016年的鹿肉種類也增加一倍，現時已有鹿肉漢堡、慢煮鹿肉燉鍋及鹿肉腸等。鹿肉是天然的蛋白質來源，肉質精瘦但礦物豐富而味道濃郁，非常適合用來代替其他紅肉。

人們重新對野生和傳統上較少人食用的肉類產生興趣，餐廳是主要的推動力之一。Sainsbury's主切肉員Julien Pursglove解釋：「現今的顧客比較勇於嘗試，並



Co-founder and executive chef Michael Hunter of Antler in Toronto barbecuing venison
多倫多餐廳Antler的創辦人之一兼行政總廚 Michael Hunter正在烤鹿

In the UK, sales of venison are also soaring – in 2014 alone, they spiked by 412 per cent, according to consumer-insights company Kantar. Leading supermarket Sainsbury’s doubled its venison range in 2016: it now offers products such as venison burgers, a slow-cook venison casserole and venison sausages. The meat is a naturally lean protein that is rich in minerals and full of flavour making it a great alternative to other red meats.

Restaurants are a main driving force behind the resurgence of interest in wild and less-traditional meats. “Customers are more adventurous and looking for something healthy, so new products, particularly proteins, tend to be popular,” master butcher at Sainsbury’s, Julien Pursglove, told the *Telegraph* in 2016. “Venison is appearing a lot more on restaurant menus across the country, and trends like this normally filter through to home consumption.”

London restaurant Native, a zero-waste establishment that serves foraged and locally sourced produce, rare breed and game meats, is a perfect example. It hit national UK headlines earlier this year after introducing a slow-cooked grey squirrel ragu.

“The reaction to our squirrel dish was great,” says Native’s head chef and co-founder Ivan Tisdall-Downes. “We use squirrel as it is effectively waste meat; it’s being culled by gamekeepers and park rangers regardless. It is a lot more ethical and lived a much better life than most of the chicken consumed in the country.”

Native serves light-hearted takes on familiar dishes, such as Wood Pigeon Kebab, Southern Fried Rabbit and Squirrel Pasties. “I believe game meat has a bad rep because of the super strong flavour it develops when hung for a while or because of its difficulty,” says Tisdall-Downes. “With the right education, it becomes a lot less intimidating.”

Native gets much of its produce from farms close to London. “We keep a skeleton structure to our menu for the week or month and chop and change different cuts of meat, foraged vegetables or fish depending on what we get hold of,” Tisdall-Downes says. “It keeps the chefs switched on and excited, and gets us using different cooking techniques for different types of meat.”



Along with the leaner nutrient profile of game, and environmental benefit of reducing transport emissions, turning to local produce has a bonus effect of inviting fresh reflection on a nation’s culinary identity. “I think Native has been of interest to people because of the exciting ingredients we use, but also because there is a distinct lack of British food in Britain,” says Tisdall-Downes. “We have adopted food from other cultures extremely well, but England specifically has lost its food identity.”

It’s a premise that Antler, a restaurant in downtown Toronto serving regional Canadian ingredients, seasonal and wild foods, relates to. “Canada doesn’t really have a food identity, unless you’re talking about indigenous cuisine,” muses Michael Hunter, Antler’s co-founder and executive chef. “Living off the land a couple hundred years ago, [game] is what we would be eating; deer and elk and duck and rabbit. This is what I think Canadian cuisine is.”

Typical entrées at Antler include spice ash-crusted rack of deer; and pappardelle with braised rabbit, buttered leeks and verjus apricot preserve. Due to health legislation, hunted game can’t currently be sold in Canada or the US, so only farmed game is plated there.

Hunter, who grew up on a horse farm, is a lifelong outdoor enthusiast. “[Wild foods] are gaining popularity,” he says. “We were probably one of the first restaurants in the downtown core to only offer game meat – bison and wild boar and rabbits and pheasants, instead of chicken, pork or beef. It was pretty non-existent before.”

Of course, not every game restaurant serves native animals. Orlando Ramos is executive chef at New Jersey restaurant Clydz, known for its exotic meats that are sourced from dedicated game farms in the US.

Alongside more traditional game, such as duck breast and wild boar and buffalo meatballs, Ramos cooks up delicacies such as kangaroo loin,



“Game meat has a bad rep ... with the right education, it becomes a lot less intimidating

野味的聲譽不好……只要接受正確的教育，野味就不會那麼嚇人。”

– Ivan Tisdall-Downes

追求健康的食物，因此新產品特別是肉類變得受歡迎。國內供應鹿肉菜式的餐廳大增，這股趨勢自然也慢慢反映在家庭的食物清單上。」

倫敦以零廢物為宗旨的餐廳Native就是好例子，該餐廳採用野生食材、本地農產、野味和罕有肉類烹調佳餚。今年初，他們推出慢煮番茄灰松鼠肉醬，隨即成為英國的頭條新聞。

餐廳總廚兼創辦人之一Ivan Tisdall-Downes表示：「大家對松鼠肉菜式的反應非常大！我們用松鼠肉只是為了避免浪費食物，牠們是獵場看守人和公園巡邏員無論如何都要捕殺的動物。況且牠們活得比國內消耗的大部分雞隻好，吃牠們更符合道德。」

Native對用野味烹調熟悉的菜式，如烤斑鳩肉、炸兔肉和松鼠餡餅等，倒是看得很輕鬆。Tisdall-Downes說：「我知道野味的聲譽不好，因為野味掛起一段時間後肉味會變得太濃，而且很難煮，但只要接受正確的教育，野味就不會那麼嚇人。」

餐廳採用的農產主要來自倫敦附近的農場。Tisdall-Downes補充：「餐廳的菜式大致上一個星期或一個月才換一次，但所用的材料則視乎我們拿到哪些肉類、魚類和野生食材而定。廚師們因此一刻也不能鬆懈，因為不同的肉類要使用不同的烹調方法。」

野味不僅營養豐富、脂肪少，同時也因為無需長途運送而有助減少碳足跡，對環境有益。轉用本土農產的額外好處是激發大家重新審視一個國家的烹調特色，Tisdall-Downes解釋：「我想大家對Native感興趣，固然是因為我們所採用的食材很有趣，但也是因為英國明顯缺乏英式食物。我們很成功地引入其他地方的飲食文化，但英國卻喪失了自己的烹調特色。」

Antler行政總廚兼創辦人之一Michael Hunter也深有同感。餐廳位於多倫多市中心，喜歡採用加拿大本地農產及當季和野生食材烹調佳餚，Hunter若有所思地說：「除了原住民菜式，加拿大沒有自己真正的飲食特色。一、兩百年前，在這片土地上生活的人，必然是以進食野生動物為生，如鹿肉、駝鹿肉、鴨肉和兔肉等，我覺得這些才是加拿大菜的特色。」

Antler典型的主菜選擇包括有烤香料裹鹿架、燜兔肉寬條麵配牛油韭蔥和酸果汁醃杏子等。由於衛生條例所限，狩獵所得的野味肉現時不能在加拿大和美國出售，所以餐廳使用的野味肉其實是由農場提供。

在牧馬場長大的Hunter一直熱愛戶外生活，他說：「野生食物已漸受歡迎。我們大概是市中心第一批只供應野味肉的餐廳，我們採用野牛肉、野豬肉、兔肉和野雞肉代替一般的雞、豬、牛。在我們以前，這樣的餐廳並不存在。」

Opposite page, from left: Kangaroo Loin at Clydz; Native restaurant in London.

This page, from top left: Chef Ivan Tisdall-Downes of Native; his Buttermilk-fried Grouse

對頁左至右：Cyldez的袋鼠腰肉；倫敦的Native餐廳
本頁左至右：Native大廚Ivan Tisdall-Downes；他的白脫牛奶炸松鼠



當然，也不是所有野味餐廳都只供應本土動物的肉。Orlando Ramos是Clydz的行政總廚，這家位於新澤西州的餐廳以提供來自美國指定野味農場的外來野味肉聞名。

他們除了供應比較傳統的野味肉，如鴨胸、野豬肉和水牛肉丸外，也會為客人烹調袋鼠腰肉、烤野牛隔膜肉扒、酥皮包鱈魚肉腸及燜蟒蛇肉意式餃子等佳餚。Ramos說：「我們有一道菜是蟒蛇肉配芝麻菜蘑菇忌廉醬，試過的客人都對這道菜刮目相看，而且他們還可以跟朋友說自己吃過蛇肉。」

Ramos已在Clydz工作了19年，他指出：「過去20年，我們發現公眾對野味的接受程度高了，注重健康的人也開始由傳統的粟飼牛肉轉吃更有機的肉類。」

他對野味肉類濃郁而突出的味道讚不絕口，尤其是餐廳的暢銷菜式之一袋鼠腰肉，以及在他口中「脂肪少、更勝牛肉」的羚羊肉。

雖然這些肉類太新奇，很容易讓人卻步，但飼養豬牛供人食用跟牧養蟒蛇或袋鼠作為糧食，本質上其實分別不大，反而是野味肉因為生產規模不可能太大而有其好處。Ramos說：「野味肉比牛肉健康許多，脂肪和膽固醇均低，但含有豐富的鐵和鋅。能夠自由走動和吃草為生的動物，肉質比吃粟米而不太走動的精瘦，對環境的影響也少許多，因為我們只需捕獵牠們，而不像飼養食用動物那樣，必須經過大型肉類食品公司的種種工序。」

不過，Ramos也毫不猶豫地指出：「地球不能沒有這些大型肉類食品製造商。」蟒蛇還不能取代牛肉，但卻可以成為客人的有趣話題。」

喜歡挑戰極限的Ramos目前正在尋找天竺鼠和鬣蜥肉，並且探討以蟋蟀和蚱蜢等昆蟲入饌的可能。他說：「我想我們的客人應該還未能接受這些食物，但昆蟲作為糧食會越來越常見，牠們其實非常美味，但要流行起來還需要更多時間。」

過去十年，大家對野生、本土和環保肉類的興趣激增，以此推測，Ramos同時為客人奉上蟋蟀和袋鼠腰肉的日子應該不遠了。

Opposite page: Skull Charcuterie Board at Antler restaurant

This page, clockwise from top left: Michael Hunter on the lookout for game; at home in the Antler kitchen; his Duck Charcuterie Board

對頁：Antler餐廳的Skull Charcuterie Board
本頁左上圖起順時針：狩獵中的Michael Hunter；在Antler廚房工作中的他；其鴨肉拼盤



grilled bison hanger steak, alligator sausage in a puff pastry 'blanket' and braised python ravioli. "We serve the python with arugula, wild mushrooms and a delicious cream sauce," he says. "When customers try it, they can't believe what a great dish it is. Plus, they get to tell all their friends that they ate snake!"

Ramos started working at Clydz 19 years ago. "We've seen a greater acceptance of game meat and the health-conscious public has moved away from traditionally corn-fed beef and toward more organic sources of protein over the last 20 years," he says.

Ramos enthuses about the rich, bold flavours in the meats he cooks – particularly kangaroo loin, one of the restaurant's best-selling dishes, and antelope, which he describes as "far superior to beef, and lower in fat."

While it would be easy to dismiss such meats as a novelty, there are arguably few reasons why farming a pig or cow to eat is fundamentally different from farming a python or kangaroo to eat. The inherently smaller scale of production for this kind of game has benefits, though. "Typically game meats are much healthier than beef, for example," Ramos says. "Lower in fat and cholesterol and rich in iron and zinc

minerals. An animal that has freedom of movement in its environment, eating grasses rather than corn and kept immobile, produces a leaner meat. The environmental impact is much lower with exotic and game meats since they are hunted rather than processed by huge food animal operations."

However, as Ramos readily points out, "It would be impossible to sustain the planet without these huge animal food producers." Python isn't replacing beef, just yet, but it does make for an interesting dinner conversation.

Ever seeking to push the curve, Ramos is currently looking into a source for guinea pig and iguana and is investigating the possibility of serving insects like crickets and grasshoppers. "I don't think our customers are ready for that just yet," he says. "You will see an increase in insects as a food source – they're incredibly flavourful – but it will take time to catch on."

If the surge in interest in wild, native and environmentally friendly meats throughout the last decade is anything to go by, it likely won't be long until Ramos is serving up crickets alongside his kangaroo loin.