



**THE SPICE HUNTER**  
Jean-Georges  
Vongerichten grazes  
at a food hall in  
Bangkok, Thailand.



“It Tastes  
Better  
If It’s Still  
Squirming”

(and other lessons learned  
riding shotgun through Asia’s  
culinary hot zones with chef  
Jean-Georges Vongerichten)

By Trevor Thieme  
Photographs by Tony Law

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The streets of Old Bangkok glisten with rain, giving the narrow Portuguese-built trader lanes a clean, freshly showered appearance.

For a moment, the city seems content to enjoy the calm. Men linger in doorways to smoke cigarettes. Women peer through blinds before emerging on stoops. And intermittent beams of noonday sun cast random spotlights on noodle carts, spice stalls, and, briefly, a Frenchman holding two fistfuls of aniseed to his nose.

He looks enraptured, as if seeking transcendence through scent.

“Smell this!” he says, his slight French accent adding flavor to his words as he immerses my snout in the star-shaped spice. I inhale deeply, allowing the aniseed’s licorice-drenched bouquet to overpower the sweeter scents of turmeric, galangal, and cumin that drift up from nearby sacks. “You can buy these ingredients in New York,” explains chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten, dropping the aniseed and digging into a bushel of cardamom, “but they might as well be different



**STREET SCENTS**  
One of Vongerichten's favorite Thai dishes: steamed fish balls

spices. Honestly, can you smell how fragrant these are?” It’s the olfactory equivalent of experiencing music live versus listening to it on your iPod:

The smells are bolder, crisper, louder. As the cardamom’s gingerlike aroma penetrates my skull, I understand why the excitable chef once bought 80 pounds of Szechuan peppercorn and smuggled it from Shanghai to Manhattan: Between Asia and the United States, the depth and variety of Eastern flavors often get lost in translation.

I’m still brushing the cardamom’s auburn-colored dust from my face when Vongerichten calls from the sidewalk. “Come on!” he yells over a throng of shorter Thai shoppers, causing them

to turn their heads all at once. Vongerichten has always been one to stop and smell the spices, but today he’s on a mission: Just four blocks separate him from what is rumored to be the best bowl of *tom yum* in Thailand, and the thought of the fragrant lemongrass soup—a dish that, 28 years ago, inspired him to branch out from his French training to explore a new world of Asian ingredients—has added an impatient spring to his step.

It’s our second day in Thailand, and for Vongerichten, it’s the culmination of a five-nation tour through the wildest markets and finest restaurants in Asia. Arguably the most respected chef in the United States, Vongerichten is also one of the few to achieve the ultimate culinary trifecta: the praise of critics, the admiration of peers, and the bounty

## GOURMET GUY SKILLS

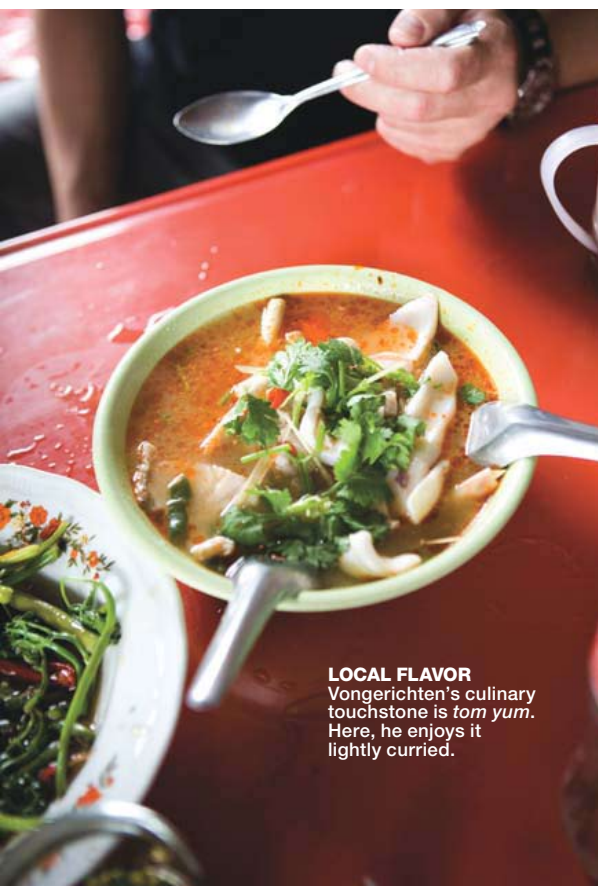
Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten distills 30 years of experience into six moves that any guy can master

### Cook Seasonally

“Fine restaurants adjust their menus to the season. If you follow their lead, you’ll always cook with the freshest, most flavorful ingredients. Tomatoes, for example, should never be served past September—they’re a summertime fruit. Same goes for corn. Serve asparagus in the spring, squash in the fall, and exotic fruits like pineapples and kiwis year-round, as they’re imported from temperate climates. Go to [localharvest.org](http://localharvest.org) to find out what’s in season.”



**IN HOT PURSUIT**  
Vongerichten explores the trader lanes of Old Bangkok in search of new dishes.



**LOCAL FLAVOR**  
Vongerichten's culinary touchstone is *tom yum*. Here, he enjoys it lightly curried.

## “I HAD AN EPIPHANY WHILE EATING A BOWL OF TOM YUM AT A STREET STALL.”

of commercial success. Indeed, no other chef in history has won the James Beard Foundation's Outstanding Chef and Best New Restaurant awards in the same year. “He’s hugely impactful,” says chef Mario Batali, whose sentiment is shared by three-star Michelin chef Eric Ripert of New York’s Le Bernardin restaurant. “Ours is an ego-driven industry,” says Ripert, “and Jean-Georges transcends that pettiness. He’s an icon that every chef admires.”

Since Vongerichten arrived in New York in 1986, he has defined himself by blending French technique with Asian flavors, almost single-handedly spawning the concept of fusion cuisine that has become a fixture at foodie bistros serving “new American” fare. But if you’re smart, you’ll avoid the term in his presence. “Back in the 1980s,

when fusion started to take off, critics took to calling it ‘confusion cooking;’” says the 50-year-old chef. “A lot of cooks were just throwing Asian and Western flavors together because it was cool. They didn’t understand the art of doing it properly.”

Vongerichten did, however, and New Yorkers loved him for it. When he opened his first restaurant, JoJo, in 1991, they discovered a menu rich with exotic flavors: crab with mango and cumin crisps, chicken with green olives and chickpea fries, and a tuna spring roll with soybean coulis. “I mean, the guy started putting licorice in dishes before anyone realized how brilliant that could be,” says Mark Bittman, best-selling author of *How to Cook Everything*. “It’s not an exaggeration to say that fusion was a joke before Jean-Georges

### GOURMET GUY SKILLS

#### *Know Your Salts*

“Cook with kosher salt—its coarse grains facilitate precise seasoning—and season prepared food with *fleur de sel* [gourmet sea salt], which adds a delicious crunchiness that both enhances the flavor and amplifies the texture of foods from ginger-glazed salmon to caramel ice cream. Start with a pinch and work your way up.”

came along, and then, quite quickly, it became an art. He set the pace for how to take flavors from one cuisine and infuse them into another.”

Twenty-eight years, 17 restaurants, and six Michelin stars later, Vongerichten is not resting on his toque. The married father of three spends six nights a week wearing his chef's hat in the kitchens of his various restaurants and continues to push the frontier of fusion with regular trips to China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, and beyond. He then returns, Marco Polo-style, with fists (and sometimes suitcases) full of new ingredients to transform the menus at his restaurants Jean Georges, Vong, and the aptly named Spice Market. This year, however, his annual pilgrimage serves double duty: Not only is he looking to inspire the next evolution in Pan-Asian cooking, he's also scouting locales for his expanding international restaurant empire. Topping that prospective list is the 2008 Olympic Sports Complex in Beijing, where I met Vongerichten five days earlier.

## BEIJING:

### THE ART OF INDULGENCE

“Life is like great food—it's all about balance,” says Vongerichten, dropping the first of many mantras I'll hear during our trip. “That's what I love about Asian cuisines. Everything is taken into account—textures, colors, aromas, flavors, shapes. And yet, when you get right down to the ingredients, less is still more. The food is simple, pure, delicious.”

We're sitting at a round oak table at Made in China, Vongerichten's favorite restaurant in Beijing, with two of his top chefs and two of his business partners. They've all done several Asian tours with the man they call “Chef,” or “JG,” and they work together like a culinary Special Ops unit, dissecting dishes into their essential components and reinventing them for Vongerichten's restaurants in America. For them, eating is both business and pleasure, and the goal of each meal is to sample as many new flavor combinations as possible.

It's unlike any restaurant experience I've ever had: The chef adheres to a strict one-of-everything policy, and a procession of waiters delivers a near endless array of dishes: cabbage and sliced-pear salad, honey-soaked lettuce, shrimp boiled in green tea, grilled grouper drizzled in chili oil, and the house specialty, crackling Beijing duck with papery-thin pancakes and sauce made from sweet beans and sesame oil. As we indulge our appetites, the chefs photograph each dish and brainstorm ways to improve and adjust them for American taste buds.

“Take this chili-poached sea bass,” says

Vongerichten, gesturing toward the dish on our table. “We might turn it into grilled cod drizzled with fragrant chili oil. And instead of these fried squid balls, we might fold crab meat into a squid mousse and serve it as a tempura fritter with a sweet chili glaze.” (Visit Spice Market today and you'll find that both dishes have been added to the menu.)

“You know what I love most about Asian food though?” asks Vongerichten, smiling. “You

never feel heavy after eating it. I didn't know you could feel that way until I left France.”

His smile is a nod to his training in classic French technique. Born and raised on the outskirts of Strasbourg, France, Vongerichten left his family coal business at the age of 16 to pursue his passion: cooking. Under the guidance of three-star Michelin chef Paul Haerberlin at Auberge de l'III, Vongerichten mastered the skinning, plucking,

## “LIFE IS LIKE GREAT FOOD—IT'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE.”



**A STREET CART NAMED DESIRE**  
A cook wraps up a spicy-sweet serving of crispy Bangkok chicken.

### GOURMET GUY SKILLS

#### Prepare for Battle

“We have a saying in French: *Mise en place*. It translates loosely to ‘Measure, wash, chop, slice, dice, and assemble all of your ingredients in individual bowls before you begin to cook.’ In so doing, you'll be able to add the perfect ingredient at the perfect time, which can make the difference between, say, a transcendent coconut galangal curry and a mediocre Thai soup.”



**THE CHEF AND HIS MUSE**  
Vongerichten inspects bushels of chilis in Guangzhou.

boning, trussing, barding, braising, poaching, roasting, and broiling that forms the backbone of French technique. He also learned how to turn everything from boar to lark into pâtés and timbales, using liberal amounts of butter, cream, and reduced beef stock to season his dishes. But it wasn't until he won a position at the Oriental Hotel in Bangkok that he found his true culinary muses: chilis, citrus, ginger, and fresh herbs. "I had an epiphany while eating a bowl of tom yum at a street stall," says Vongerichten. "It was so light and so different from anything else I had ever eaten. I couldn't get over how the cook balanced chili, lime, shrimp, and lemongrass so perfectly."

Vongerichten's early introduction to Asian cuisines also put health and nutrition—what he refers to as "lightness"—front and center in his cooking. Indeed, he realized 28 years ago what science is now starting to prove: A traditional Asian diet (i.e., one rich in vegetables, grains, and lean meats) can help prolong life and prevent many of the diseases exacerbated by a high-fat, carbohydrate-rich

Western diet. "It's no mystery why Asians enjoy such low rates of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and other chronic illnesses," says Steven Jonas, MD, coauthor of *30 Secrets of the World's Healthiest Cuisines*. "They use meat as a condiment, something to flavor food instead of as a dish unto itself."

Perhaps a similar observation is what inspired one of Vongerichten's other mantras: You look how you cook. "Back in the States, I see people my own age with all sorts of health problems," says Vongerichten, who looks younger and healthier than most men 10 years his junior. "That's another reason I prepare food the way I do. I want people to feel great when they eat."

## GUANGZHOU:

### FOOD AS MEDICINE

The Chinese like to say that the citizens of Guangzhou, a bustling port city that's a three-hour hop from Beijing, will eat anything with legs that

isn't a piece of furniture, anything with wings that isn't an airplane, and anything that swims that isn't a submarine. "And damn if it isn't true," says Vongerichten as we gather for lunch at Hong Mian, one of the city's top restaurants. Before us sits an assortment of delicacies that would test even the most stoic *Fear Factor* contestant: fried chicken feet, boiled ox tongue, tripe soup, sea cucumber in brown sauce, and stewed innards from an indistinguishable assortment of sea creatures. "It's good to introduce people to new tastes, but it's also important not to take them too far out of their comfort zones," says Vongerichten, squirming in his seat. "It's safe to say that I'm out of mine."

Blessed by rich soil and a year-round growing season, the chefs here rely on farm-fresh produce and straight-from-the-dock seafood, using soy, rice wine, and a minimum of spices to tease out the organic flavors in food. Critics decry the resulting fare as too simple. Fans laud its clarity of tastes and its blend of color, fragrance, and presentation. Either way, the uninitiated Western palate—even

### GOURMET GUY SKILLS

#### *Practice "Live" Cooking*

"No, not Guangzhou style. The longer a perishable food sits on a shelf—or a truck, or a boat—the more flavor it loses, so always try to cook with ingredients that were picked or caught that very day. The easiest way to do this is to frequent your local farmer's market and fishmonger. A good rule is that anything fresh from the sea should smell sweet, not fishy."

one as accomplished as Vongerichten's—is often shocked by the freshness of the ingredients, which can be found squirming and squealing in cages, buckets, and tanks for diners to select themselves.

“I once ate water-rat curry in Bangkok,” says Vongerichten, pushing a foul-smelling bowl of fish and mango soup toward the center of the table, “and during a trip to Singapore, I had a traditional doctor prescribe a supper of fried ants, turtle jelly, and scorpion pancakes. But this is pushing it.”

The chef has also eaten stir-fried fallopian tubes in Seoul, Korea, and live baby squid in Japan. But for all his talk of culinary discovery, he still has a way to go before he embraces exotic fare in the way of, say, Anthony Bourdain. Not that I blame him—the flavors (metallic, bitter, briny) and textures (mealy, gelatinous, crunchy) are hard to stomach. By the time dessert arrives, the only foods eaten off my plate are the boiled peanuts and a few bites of bitter *choi sam* (Chinese broccoli dressed with oyster sauce). “I’m adventurous,” says Vongerichten, “but life is short. I’d rather concentrate on delicious. There’s nothing for me here.”

Noting our disappointment—and determined to turn it around—Hong Mian’s head chef offers to give us a tour of the city’s markets. First stop: Guangzhou’s largest seafood bazaar. Wet and rank, it’s a dystopian Atlantis of water tanks in which sea snakes, jellyfish, and river eels slither above blood clams, sea urchins, and an assortment of

So it would seem at Xing Ping. Deer penises sit in jars next to sacks of jasmine rice. Freeze-dried geckos rest atop barrels of cumin. And so packed is each stall with cardamom, galangal, aniseed, black and white peppers, and ginger that the air is dense with their dust. But perhaps the most outstanding aspect of the market is the vendors’ eagerness to share their herbal knowledge with anyone willing to listen.

The traditional Chinese view of health and nutrition differs substantially from what we’re accustomed to in the West. Instead of talking about food in terms of protein, fiber, complex carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals, the vendors talk about its effect on bodily processes—whether it is warming or cooling, how it supports the functioning of specific organs, whether it directs fluid up or down, and what type of energy it has. “In Chinese medicine, disease results from something being in excess or something being deficient,” says Flaws, “so the goal of a meal is to bring everything back to a state of balance, or to help keep things that way.”

Such a philosophy might sound hokey to Western ears, but each year, Western medicine discovers a scientific basis for an increasing number of Eastern remedies.



**BANANA PEDDLER**  
After touring Guangzhou’s spice and fish markets, Vongerichten trades his walking shoes for a delivery bike.

## “IN ASIA, GOOD HEALTH IS THE FOUNDATION OF COOKING. IT’S PART OF ITS DNA.”

menacing crustaceans. Ever curious, Vongerichten immediately begins asking about the qualities of the various sea creatures, and it isn’t long before his inquiries (and our snapshots) attract an armed escort of policemen, who greet us with batons out—a reminder that censorship is still practiced here. “Nobody should take seafood this seriously,” quips Vongerichten. Fortunately, the seafood market is only a pit stop on our way to the main attraction: Xing Ping, Guangzhou’s spice market.

The concept that “food is medicine and medicine is food” might be most famously attributed to the Greeks—Hippocrates, specifically—but no culture has taken it quite as much to heart as the Chinese. “Most Chinese believe that food and medicine share a common origin,” says Bob Flaws, author of *Tao of Healthy Eating: Dietary Wisdom According to Traditional Chinese Medicine*. “It’s not quite the same as cooking with Prozac, but in Chinese culture there’s no hard and fast line as to what is medicine and what is food.”

This, of course, shouldn’t come as a surprise, considering that 25 percent of modern medicines, including aspirin and statins, are derived from herbs and botanicals. Indeed, the raw material for Tamiflu—one of the few treatments for seasonal flu and a potential weapon against avian flu—comes from the eight-pointed aniseed that’s so dear to Vongerichten’s cooking and so integral to Asian cuisines.

For Vongerichten, however, the medicinal quality of Asian foods is more of a fringe benefit. “I’m more concerned with the depth of tastes they bring to the table,” he explains. “But the idea of food therapy still illustrates the basic difference between Eastern and Western cuisines: In Asia, good health is the foundation of cooking. It’s part of its DNA. In the West, it’s an afterthought.”

If our experience in Guangzhou illustrates anything, however, it’s that some medicine is hard to swallow...or to incorporate into a menu. “Guangzhou isn’t ready for us yet,” says

Vongerichten as we depart our hotel for the airport. “If nothing else, the city will serve as a good contrast to where we’re going next: Bangkok.”

## BANGKOK:

### THE PURSUIT OF FLAVOR

“If I had to choose one dish to eat for the rest of my life, it would be tom yum,” says Vongerichten, timing his words carefully to land between ladlefuls of the steaming soup. Having left the spice stalls of Old Bangkok, we’ve navigated our way through a series of back alleys and meandering side streets to our present location: a scruffy street-corner cafe in an aging Thai-Chinese neighborhood called Suan Phlu.

Most travelers walk right past this ragtag collection of aluminum tables and tattered blue umbrellas, never bothering to wonder what the attractive, raven-haired cook is stirring on her stove. But those who sit down are treated to what might very well be the best bowl of tom yum in Thailand. Hints of kaffir lime, lemongrass, tamarind, and chili peppers blend seamlessly in a

### GOURMET GUY SKILLS

#### Play the Mandolin

“Slicing vegetables perfectly requires one of three things: great knife skills, a lot of time, or a Japanese mandolin. I have one of these rectangular slicing tools—which look like miniature washboards with adjustable blades—in each of my kitchens. There’s no better way to create uniform slices and juliennes for gratins, fries, and salads.”

broth that is as clear as water. In fact, the broth is so delicious that one almost forgets about the tofu dumplings, slices of tender pork, bean sprouts, and fried fish balls that rest at the bottom of the bowl.

"It's clean...simple...perfect," says Vongerichten. "It represents everything that I try to bring to my own cooking." It's the most relaxed I've seen him during our trip. He has abandoned his one-of-everything policy and is fully engrossed in a 50-cent bowl of tom yum. He eats in relative silence. Pleasure has seduced business.

Just as other great chefs have their signature ingredients or dishes—Mario Batali's beef cheeks, Nobu Matsuhisa's black cod and miso, and Daniel Boulud's paupiette of sea bass—Vongerichten has tom yum. It serves as a wellspring for the chef, connecting him to his past and inspiring his future. Indeed, so important is the soup to Vongerichten's cooking that tom yum (or some variation thereof) appears on nearly all of his menus. At Spice Market, for example, tom yum is enhanced with delicate shrimp dumplings in a light lemongrass broth flavored with *nam pla* (fish sauce) and lime juice. At Jean Georges, it's reinvented with steamed halibut, honshimeji mushrooms, lemon zest, and Thai basil. From one basic dish, Vongerichten imagines an infinite number of incarnations.

Noticing our gusto, the pretty Thai cook brings over a fresh batch of tom yum, giving Vongerichten an excuse to dive into another bowl. But with the sun well past its zenith, it's time to make our way to the last stop on today's tour, a nameless eatery known to locals as Jesus Noodles. "It isn't within walking distance, though, so we'll have to take taxis," says Rob McKeown, our guide and the creative director of Mangkut, a consultancy specializing in Asian cuisine and culture. "Or we could hop in a *tuk tuk*. Let me know when you guys are ready."

Every city has its own unique mode of transportation, and in Bangkok, it's the *tuk tuk*—a noisy three-wheeled open-sided buggy that sits three people comfortably while exposing each to Bangkok's inclement weather and notorious pollution. "A taxi will be fine, thank you, Rob," says Vongerichten, sipping the last of his tom yum.

Twenty minutes later, we're standing outside a hole-in-the-wall eatery across from a convenience store on a road called Nang Linchi off Soi 8, one of Bangkok's major thoroughfares. A life-size portrait of Jesus adorns the back wall, and just inside the door, an old, wrinkled cook flash-fries rice noodles in a medieval-looking wok over a crackling wood fire. Experience guides him as he seasons the noodles with soy, chili, sugar, egg, morning-glory stalks, and slices of chicken or pork. Oil sizzles. Steam bellows. Noodles somersault over open

## JEAN-GEORGES'S SEVEN FAVORITE RESTAURANTS

### The French Laundry

YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA

"Fine dining isn't just about great food, it's also about creating an environment in which diners can lose themselves and forget the outside world. That's why I love Thomas Keller's restaurant. It accomplishes both ideals in the heart of California's wine country."

### Le Bernardin

NEW YORK CITY

"Quite simply the best seafood in Manhattan, and not only because chef Eric Ripert adds an Asian touch to his dishes. Order the sea urchin ravioli or the Chilean turbot in a lemon miso broth. Either one will blow your mind."

### Masa

NEW YORK CITY

"This is the best Japanese food outside of Japan. Chef Masa Takayama imports many of his ingredients—including sushi-graded tuna—directly from the famous Tsukiji market in Tokyo. Don't miss the kobe beef *sukiaki* or the maitake mushroom fried rice with truffles."

### Irma's Southwest Grill

HOUSTON

"Whenever I visit Houston, I always head over to Irma's. Their spicy pork tacos are outstanding."

### Mezzaluna

NEW YORK CITY

"This is where I go when I need a pasta or tiramisu fix. The homemade pasta is prepared fresh twice a day, and the spaghetti pomodoro and the linguine vongole are particularly good."

### 112 Eatery

MINNEAPOLIS

"I make a habit of heading here after I'm through with work at Chambers Kitchen, my restaurant in the Chambers Hotel. It's a favorite hangout of local chefs, and if you've never dined there, do what I do: Compose a meal of several appetizers, including their amazing gnocchi, one of their simple salads, and lamb *scottadito* with herbed goat's milk yogurt."

### Joe's Stone Crab

MIAMI

"I go here as much for the people watching as I do for the food. Order the jumbo claws with Joe's mustard sauce. Be sure to visit soon though. Stone-crab season only lasts from October to May."

flames. And a smoky-sweet aroma fills the room.

McKeown explains to me that Thai cuisine is known for its balance of five fundamental flavors—spicy, sour, sweet, salty, and bitter—and he orders five variations of *pad si-ew* to demonstrate their flexibility. Each dish differs from the others by a single ingredient—*sen yai* (wide noodles) instead of *sen lek* (thin ones), for example, or chicken instead of pork—but those differences are enough to

create entirely different flavor profiles. Indeed, one noodle dish is served as a soup, entirely sans noodles. "Thailand is the only place in the world where you can order noodle soup without noodles," says McKeown. "Here, it's all about flavor."

I can almost see the wheels turning as Vongerichten and his crew taste the various dishes. An appetizer tasting menu: *pad si-ew* five ways, served in a star-shaped plate with five segments. "I'll let you in on another tip," says McKeown, smiling toward Vongerichten. "*Pad si-ew* is a great hangover food. We should come back tomorrow." There's even brunch potential.

The next morning, however, we make a beeline—hangovers and all—for the Or Tor Kor market, a food bazaar overflowing with fruits, produce, and cooks from every corner of Thailand. Scents of lemon basil, durian, and fingerroot (a relative of ginger) hang heavy in the air, intertwining with aromas from food stalls serving dishes as disparate as *nem* (spicy pork sausages) and *som tam* (green papaya salad with garlic, raw chilis, green beans, tomatoes, peanuts, and dried shrimps). "It's amazing," says Vongerichten, fondling the scaled dark-brown skin of a snake fruit, known locally as *ragam*. "I lived in Bangkok for two years, and I've been coming back for more than 20, and I still discover new ingredients and flavors every time I return."

Even more compelling than the array of regional foods beneath Or Tor Kor's weathered roof, however, is the growing sense of culinary unity they represent. Until about 10 years ago, the food in Bangkok was exceedingly insular, with grilled satays, red curries, and other dishes of Central Thailand dominating the local fare. But just as the city itself has evolved into a cultural melting pot, so too has its cuisine, combining flavors and techniques from throughout the nation. "The same thing is happening with fusion," explains Vongerichten. "Asia is huge, and there is an infinite number of flavor possibilities to discover. In that sense, we're kind of like modern-day explorers, traveling to exotic locales, discovering new treasures, and bringing them back to our restaurants."

So where is the next land of gastronomic opportunity? "Istanbul," he says, his voice tinged with obvious excitement. "We've explored the beginning of the spice road. Now we're going to explore its end." ■

*Accommodations: St. Regis Hotel, Beijing; The Westin Guangzhou; Royal Orchid Sberaton Hotel & Towers, Bangkok (starwoodhotels.com).*

BEST LIFE ONLINE

Discover the four-course menu Jean-Georges Vongerichten created exclusively for Best Life at [BestLifeOnline.com/jeangeorges](http://BestLifeOnline.com/jeangeorges)

#### GOURMET GUY SKILLS

##### Create Signature Cocktails

"Muddle several sprigs of mint with your favorite seasonal fruit—pineapples and mangos are excellent this time of year—in a 12-ounce glass, and then add a jigger of rum, a half jigger of lime juice, two tablespoons of simple syrup, and a dash of bitters. Top it off with club soda and serve. You're guaranteed to get a 'Wow!'"