



Restaurant Iris – Norway

An Utterly True and Honest Review

This review is an in depth look into the experience at Iris. If you plan on experiencing it for yourself and DO NOT want any spoilers, then you can read the quick review below but do not go past the alert. Otherwise, if you don't think you'll ever visit Iris nor care if the surprise is ruined, then I encourage you to read on.

As we were planning our trip to Norway, I began looking at food experiences because I love food. We try to do a food tour or at least a food experience in each country we go to. Now, I don't recall how I stumbled upon Iris, but somehow, I did. It was probably just by Googling "food in Norway" and it popped up. As I was reading reviews and articles about Iris, I became more and more interested in trying this unique dining experience. Although not a single review mentioned anything negative, nor did they mention if they left hungry or not. Two concerns.

Iris is a one Michelin starred restaurant located in what they call a "floating art installation" named the Salmon Eye. You take a boat to and from this floating restaurant and they only serve up to 24 people on the days they are open. They have two departure times, each with a group of 12. So, this is a very intimate dining experience. This was concerning especially if we didn't like the food... and were also going to be murdered. If you haven't seen the movie "The Menu," I suggest you do. It's a good movie about a fancy little restaurant on an isolated island where the head chef likes to serve persnickety food with a side of twisted justice. Sound a little familiar?

I can happily say, I was not murdered. Iris was an interesting experience. It was fun and quirky, but the food was also good. My mom and Aunt Debbie didn't like all the dishes, but Ana and I enjoyed most of them. I also opted us for the non-alcoholic beverage pairing. Since my mom and I aren't wine drinkers and Aunt Debbie is particular about what wine she likes, there's no reason to do the wine option. I also figured that we would get drinks specifically made to pair with the dishes rather than just the restaurant finding a wine. I can say those who opted for the wine option left drunker than they arrived. However, I was very happy with my choice of non-alcoholic pairing. Overall, I didn't leave hungry, nor did I leave full.

Do I think it was worth the price? That is hard to say. If I compare the quantity to my \$35 all you can eat Korean barbecue in Aurora, then no, it was definitely not worth the price for the amount of food we got. In terms of quality, it was absolutely high-quality food, but I don't have enough of an advanced palate to say that the fancy roll is better than a roll from Texas Roadhouse. However, it is not fair to compare Iris rolls to Texas Roadhouse rolls because Texas Roadhouse rolls are unmatched. Whether Iris was worth the price compared to like restaurants, I can't say. I have never eaten at a Michelin star restaurant before so I don't know what comparable portions or quality would be. I was concerned we would leave hungry and that we would be given less than bite sized dishes, like the size of a Whopper chocolate. I'm just glad we were given enough of each dish to truly taste it and didn't leave hungry either. I do think the experience was great, and if you are able to afford it, I recommend going. Although, if you do not like seafood, this isn't the place for you. It was good food, good views, unique, and even fun. In terms of customer service, Iris was one of the best. Just keep in mind, even though I wasn't murdered, doesn't mean you won't be. So go at your own risk.

Spoiler Alert!

Ahead is the full commentary about the experience with pictures and details about the food. There is also a semi-spoiler for the movie The Menu. If you want to be surprised, stop reading now. If you want to know, proceed.

“Our location guides every step we take at Iris, and we want our guests to experience the fjord, the mountains, and the ever-changing elements in the same all-encompassing way that we do every day. Here, we have the great privilege of bringing our guests to the ingredients, instead of the other way around.

The experience at Iris is, quite literally, a journey. It starts with a boat trip from the picturesque town of Rosendal, with a pit stop and welcoming snack at chef Anika Madsen's boathouse on the island of Snilstveitøy. Via the jetty of the floating art installation Salmon Eye, the evening kicks off with a multisensory underwater experience, to culminate in the dining room where stunning views of the fjord and mountain ranges create the backdrop for our set tasting menu.

At the end of the evening, another boat ride awaits, taking the guests back to familiar shores in Rosendal.

For us, this is Expedition Dining.” – Restaurant Iris

Now I don't know about you, but as I read the explanation from their website, I read each sentence in a more stuck-up manner I could envision just to set the stage. Everything I read just made this restaurant sound more and more pretentious, but that might be partially attributed to me reading it in a pretentious way. Although, them having “the great privilege” to take us on this “journey” is a little extra, like ugh come on. I had my judgements but wanted to learn more. I continued reading:

“The menu at Iris reads like a story. A story about the challenges and threats to the global food system, but also with ideas and suggestions for future innovations, that can help bring us closer to solving them. The set menu revolves around the ocean and the mountains around us.”

Ok, gross. I just want to eat.

All the magazine reviews and articles I read about Iris praised it for being sustainable as well. A few excerpts from Time's review of Iris: “...considered the world's first CarbonNeutral-certified salmon producer” and “...the Salmon Eye, which is aimed at educating visitors about sustainable seafood practices” and the tasting menu “incorporates sensory storytelling about the origins of indigenous ingredients collected from local farmers and fishermen and explains how each dish better serves the planet.” First of all, we didn't even have any salmon. Second, as I read these reviews and articles about Iris, I thought “Oh god, what is this? We're gonna be lectured about food and cow farts AND we're gonna pay a pretty penny for it?!” Naturally, I booked the reservation and paid the deposit. We were set to eat at Iris on October 16, 2024.

There were so many uncertainties for Iris. I was concerned about how good the food would be, if we would have enough, were we going to die? I was fully prepared to be disappointed as I did not have faith that these pompous Scandinavians knew flavor. If the joke is that white people don't know how to season food, then Scandinavians are the whitest of

white, and even other white people agree that European whites are the worst offenders. Did I think this dining experience was going to be anywhere near worth it? No, no I did not, but still I was willing to pay to try it.

Fast forward to October 16, 2024. We are arriving in Rosendal from Bergen. We see our hotel on the shore. It's beautiful with easy access to the port for our restaurant experience that afternoon. I have beef with this hotel, but that is another story unrelated to the restaurant. The hotel was simple, but nice. There were only eight guests, four being us and two couples, one from the US and one from France (je deteste les francais, but they were fine). The hotel reminded me of the Stanley, which added to the suspense of MURDER!



At 12:30 we made our way from our rooms to leave the hotel and catch our boat. My mom forgot her Dramamine, so she sent Ana back up two steep flights of stairs to their room to find it. We sat on the porch enjoying the nice weather while we waited. Naturally, my mom found her Dramamine in her purse after Ana spent about 10 minutes looking for it. Then she tried to take it before Ana came back and saw, but her old arthritic hands couldn't get the bottle open in the cool Norwegian air. Ana had just stepped out to the porch as she was popping the pills into her mouth. Ana just looked in disbelief. We then went down the stairs, crossed the street, and walked about 20 yards to the dock.

We were warmly welcomed by the boating staff with the other couples right behind us. They equipped us with these weird little life vest things that had a strap to buckle between our legs. I guess the strap was so the life vest didn't float away if you were flailing around with your arms straight up when drowning. Two other couples showed up within the next 10 minutes, one from the US who we didn't talk to at all, and the other couple was from Latvia but lived in Bergen for 15 years. Our captain's name was Tobias.

As we took our seats on the electric boat, there was very relaxing music playing. How an electric boat works is beyond me because one, it's a boat, it goes in the water, one bad wave and it short circuits; two, it's Norway, batteries freeze when it's cold out; and three, electric boats are like electric cars, stupid. Who wants the Prius of the sea? The music was like a cross between classical orchestra and spa music. There was also a tablet on the back of the head rests playing soothing? but weird geometric waves... it was just a screen saver. I tapped the screen, the tablet was not functional, no registration at all... BUT THE AMBIANCE! One guy said "So, who's gonna order the burger?" For those of you who have seen The Menu, you know why this was important. For those of you who haven't, then you would be cooked. IYKYK. All in all, yes, we all joked about how we were on our way to be murdered and how excited we were! At least our last meal was going to be good (hopefully).





As we made our way through the waterway, there was a sign that said, “low speed no mooring.” Well, it actually said “lav fart ingen fortoyning” to which I said to Ana “fart-ing.” She was less amused. We arrived at “The Boathouse” about 7 minutes after departure. This is on a small private island where the chef and her husband live. As we disembarked, there were about four people waiting for us. They took our life vests and guided us to the boathouse. They were very attentive to take our jackets and seat us. This is when we met the chef’s husband (I cannot recall his name. I could Google it, but he’s not that important) and Chef Anika. She was preparing our first dish that were in little bowls, but I couldn’t quite see what it was. Ana and I were very excited to begin eating. Mom and Aunt Debbie were indifferent. The chef’s husband introduced them, the island, the boathouse, and our first drink and courses. Chef and her husband lived in Denmark before deciding to move to a very small town in Norway and start their own restaurant. The chef’s husband told us only 7 people lived on the island year-round; sounds equally nice as it does boring. There is not a single thing to do nearby. What these people do on the days they don’t work is unknown to me. I guess they have to go to Bergen to have any form of a social life. I think they just drink to pass time otherwise.

Anyway, from the boathouse you can see the Salmon Eye. The boathouse itself was very nice. It was restored to fit the chic aesthetic of the frou-frou Michelin restaurant, but they did emphasize that the framing and woodwork was original just gussied up a bit. Our table setting was very cozy looking but still had that underlying feeling of pretentiousness – the perfect balance to make us comfortable and sophisticated before the slaughter began.







We began our dining experience with a hot towel. I love getting a hot towel. They are so warm and cozy. I do not know the “proper” way to use a hot towel, but I just hold it between my hands still folded but unrolled then drape it over my hands to feel the warmth then wipe them off. I probably embrace the hot towel longer than I’m supposed to. Anyway, we kicked off our palates with a local cider, small batch, “sustainable.” We had the option between alcoholic cider or the non-alcoholic which was included for each guest regardless of drink pairing status. Ana sheepishly asked if she could have the alcohol version. Why she asked, I have no idea, we didn’t care one lick. We got the alcoholic cider except my mom who got the non-alcoholic. It was a very nice cider, 10/10 would recommend Edel Metode Tradisjonell. We sat near the Latvian couple which is how we learned they were Latvian and how they lived in Bergen. Aunt Debbie asked if this type of thing was something they do often and their reaction seemed just like how we would have reacted to that question; that, no, this is not typical and only a once in a lifetime thing. Then they made a comment about how expensive it was as well.

It was the consensus that “yeah it is unnecessarily expensive, but we’re here anyway, so that must mean something.” The guy actually worked for the cider company, and they were telling us that it truly is a high-quality cider. It was nice knowing at least somewhat average people felt Iris wasn’t trying to cheap out on us and was being truthful about quality.



As we ate, I kept notes of what it was we were eating and drinking. I wanted to write a true and honest review of the whole experience so others would know what was on the up and up, assuming I survived that is. So, each course is described by what I took away from the verbal presentation (typed) and what the restaurant provided for the description (picture).

Course #1

This dish was called Slave to Nature. The chef's husband gave us an explanation of where the ingredients were sourced from and some background to Norway's gardening practices. I don't recall anything said about that. I didn't really care where my food came from or how it was prepared. I just wanted to know what was in it and that it made its way to my stomach. I was very hungry at this point.



Ingredients: yellow squash, sugar snaps, baby lettuce, summer cabbage, gooseberry juice, and chili

Now when I say chili, keep in mind this is Norway. Nothing is spicy, not even food designated as spicy is spicy. Ana and I got spicy mussels the day before at a restaurant in Bergen, but it wasn't even spicier than a bell pepper. As we all know, a bell pepper isn't spicy.

We were instructed to eat the contents of the bowl first then drink the juice. We were pleasantly surprised. The whole table audibly made happy surprised huffs. In all honesty, I was expecting the dish to taste like dirt. It did not taste like dirt; it was sweet and slightly tart with a hint of citrus. This dish set the expectation that we were going to have good food. First course was a thumbs up.

SLAVE TO NATURE PT. 1

*Sugar snap peas, zucchini & beans from Astrid,
elderflower oil and gooseberry bullion*

This dish is a tribute to all the small scale farmers along the Norwegian coast. With some of the harshest weather conditions anywhere, these farmers are in many ways «slaves to nature». Being on nature's mercy makes it a difficult job to grow the same varieties consistently making seasons short and varied. On the other hand, when everything is right, there are few things better.

Course #2

This dish was also part of the Slave to Nature series. The chef's husband explained that this dish was made from a root vegetable that is hated by those familiar with it. Common in the Scandinavian/Baltic regions for stews, it was always bitter and gross. He said it was an homage to their childhood dishes, but that they wanted to make sure it was flavorful and actually tasted good. Now I don't know why they had to go and diss their mommas like that, but they did. When he named the ingredients, I had no idea what this dude was saying. My brain was trying so hard to figure out the words he was speaking because it was familiar but not quite there. When the chef's husband said "celeriac" it sounded like he was saying celery with extra syllables while having a stroke with a mouth full of marbles. The Latvians made a face and shook their heads in disgust, agreeing that celeriac is indeed one of the most hated vegetables used in cooking. Our food was served on a rock. Yes, you read that right, a rock. Just a raw rocky rock.



Ingredients: celeriac with lovich sauce (or what I thought the sauce was spelled based on his pronunciation)

I had no idea what celeriac was. I was very confused by the word celeriac. My brain was not processing the word celeriac. Then the Latvians clarified "celery." I have now looked up celeriac, and it is celery, but it's celery root. It is not the green part that really doesn't have much taste but at the same time tastes like sweet earthy water that we eat over here. It's the big round root part that the green grows out of that I can only assume tastes like sour bitter dirt since the Europeans made faces and emphasized it was hated and disgusting. The kebabs, however, were wonderfully delicious. The sauce was fantastic, and the celeriac was tender with a nice smokey grill flavor.

SLAVE TO NATURE PT. 2

Celeriac kebab & lovage emulsion

In the challenging Nordic climate, few vegetables can withstand the cold and dampness (it rains 50-60% of the time). Celeriac is one of the exceptions, making it a key ingredient in Nordic cooking. Despite its rough appearance, celeriac has a distinctive earthy flavor that, when cooked, becomes sweet and savory. This dish honors celeriac's ability to thrive in harsh conditions and its important place in our cuisine.

I have no clue what lovage is, even after looking it up. My summary is it's an herb that medieval peasants used in soup and heretics used as love potions.

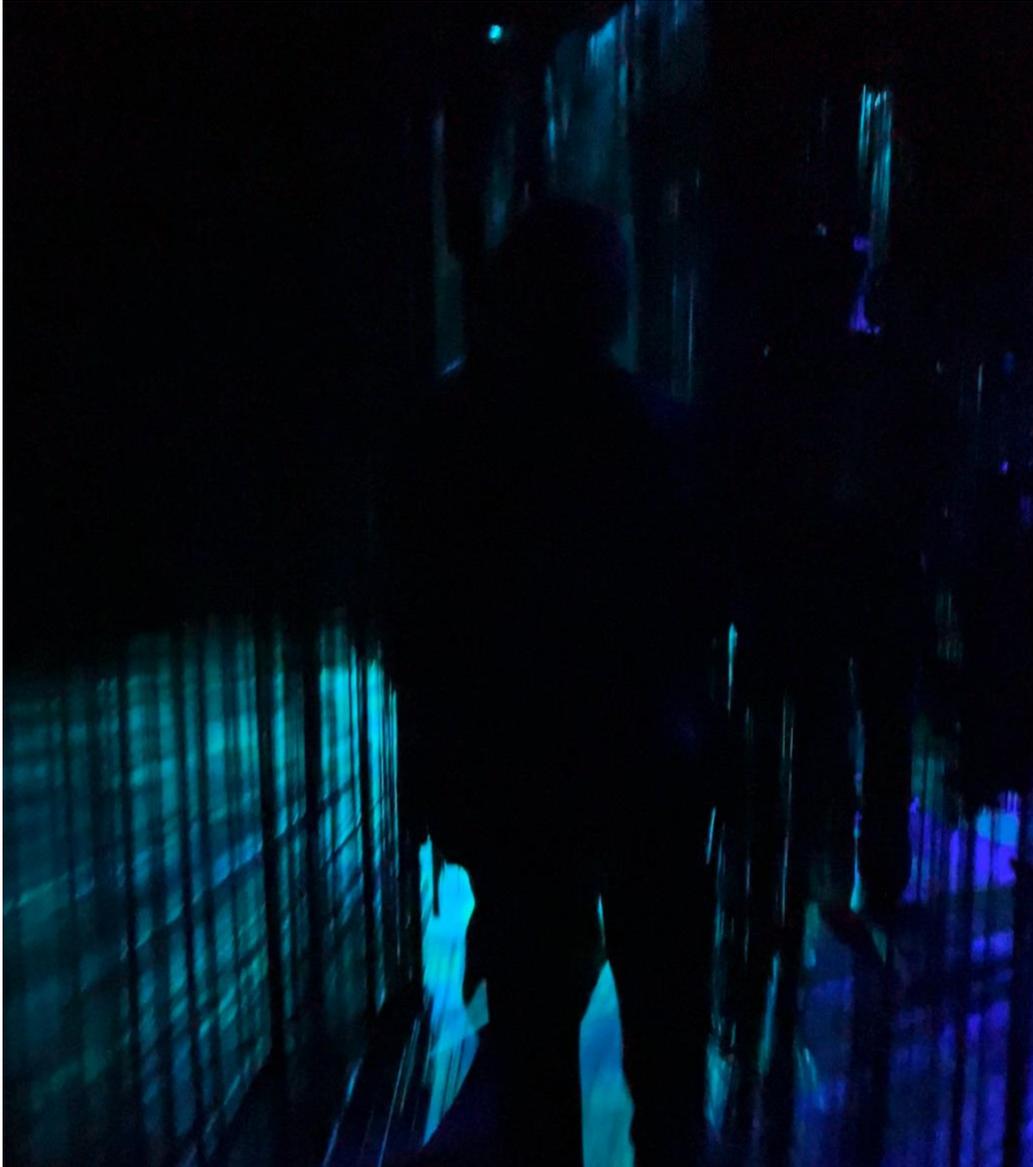
Once we finished our food, it was time to make our way to the Salmon Eye. The Salmon Eye is a very interesting building. Iris calls it an art installation; I just call it a floating circle. It's built to represent a salmon eye from an aerial view. The metal is layered like scales on the exterior. As we pulled up to the building, a group of people came out to welcome us. They were in a very uniform, intimidating, uneasy, murderous formation. I'm not sure if anyone thought this, but at the same time I know we were all thinking it, "this is it, this is the beginning of the end, we are definitely getting murdered."





I mean look at them, just standing there, menacingly.

The welcome spiel was typical. It was just a general welcome with a quick overview of what they are doing, that they are happy to have us, and thanking us for joining them on this culinary journey. As you can probably tell by now, I did not listen very well. Now, we enter the Salmon Eye. We walked into immediate darkness and down a flight of stairs that followed the curve of the Salmon Eye into more darkness. This wasn't just your average everyday darkness; this was advanced darkness. There were workers who took our coats and bags (in the very dark darkness) as we walked into another shadowy dark room. This room had strings hanging from the ceiling forming a sort of maze with a soft blue and green shimmering light to resemble being under water. "Oh, the murder, it was a coming." It was going to be like shooting fish in a barrel. We were trapped.



They had us stewing in the darkness for a few minutes. It did feel like we were moving, granted we were in a floating metal ball, and the lighting enhanced the feeling of movement. They were trying to disorient us so we couldn't run away. We were all looking around, taking it all in, feeling excited and curious. The string curtains opened to reveal a large screen. Thus began the short movie about sustainability and global food epidemic and how the efforts of the restaurant aim to be better. It was more National Geographic-esque. There was a calm narration, with calming music and visuals, while still emphasizing the seriousness of the problems they believed were happening. I do not remember a single word that was said during the video. I only focused on the pictures of nature, the ocean, and sea life. There is also a chance my mind just wandered to complete nothingness. The film ended with jellyfish and two individuals walking out with trays of our next course.



Course #3

Course #3 was a version of chips and dip. This was our first interactive dish. Our previous courses were just eating, but for this course we were involved in the foraging of our own food. We had to pluck our chips from the ceiling. The bowls our dip was in were very nice. They were very heavy but had little sea critters in them that illuminated under the black light. If I could've brought that bowl home, I would have. It was a cool bowl. I want that bowl.



Ingredients: The chip was a seaweed chip, and the dip was lightly salty but creamy and smooth. I wrote down no description of the ingredients because that bowl was *heavy*. I had to put my chip in my mouth for me to take a picture of the dip because I didn't trust that the bowl part of the bowl was wide enough to keep my chip from falling on the floor. I also realized I need to work on my arm strength.

The chip was crispy and fragile but not fishy. Some seaweed chips can be very seaweedy, but these weren't oceany at all and had a touch of saltiness with maintaining a hint of classic seaweed flavor. The dip was good. It was light, creamy, and smooth with a bit of saltiness as well. The salt wasn't overpowering but a perfect balance. I made sure to scrape as much of dip onto my chip to not leave any behind. I did what I could without licking the bowl. I had to maintain some decorum.

500 METERS

Blue mussel, beach crab and rock weed.

An edible manifestation of the vision behind Salmon Eye. 70 % of the Earth's surface is covered by water, but only 2 % of our calorie intake comes from the ocean. If we commit ourselves, what can we source within a radius of only 500 meters? This dish contains some of the resources we have at the tip of our fingers at Iris. Here turned into a mousse made of blue mussels, beach crab broken gel and crispy sea weed.

It was now time for a bathroom break. The bathroom was fancy with fancy amenities. They used actual individual hand towels to dry our hands. The soap was a pleasant clean citrus scent. There was also a little jar with a small wooden spoon in a substance that looked somewhat like Crisco. It was either a moisturizing cream or a solid perfume. I had no clue what it was exactly, but I took a small amount and put it on the back of my hand, I think it was mandarin scented. It felt very waxy. It did not easily rub into my skin. I regretted my decision to do that.

We made our way upstairs to another circular room with a projection of the sea floor on the floor with the lady holding a tray of our fourth course.



Course #4

Cone of Plenty was our fourth course. Clearly, I didn't care where my food came from as I don't recall much of what was said about the logistics of the food only what was in the food. Our presenter talked about the locations of where the ingredients of the meal were sourced and how they were all from local farmers and suppliers, pretty much the same that has been said throughout. A map of the locations was projected on to the floor after we grabbed our cones from the tray.



Ingredients: leaves in a wafer paper thing with some kind of emulsion at the bottom of the cone

We were told to try to eat the cone in one bite to get all the flavors. It was a decent sized cone. I wasn't sure that I could shove the cone in my mouth for one bite, but I successfully did. I for sure thought this cone was going to taste like dirt. This looked like it had the leaves that make a garden salad taste like dirt. Those leaves can ruin a whole salad experience. This was not that. The Cone of Plenty didn't have much flavor to it. It was crispy and leafy (in a good way) and fresh with the emulsion adding a light creaminess. It was good, but nothing exciting about it.

CONE OF PLENTY

Crispy cone, herbs and citrus emulsion

This is our reversed host gift to you in the form of a small bouquet of crispy aromatic herbs from the Island. The "flowers" are presented in a crispy cone with a sorrel vinaigrette and citrus emulsion.

We made our way to the main dining area. This is the third floor of the Salmon Eye. As we walked up this very steep ramp, the kitchen came into view. Why fancy restaurants always have the kitchen on display, I don't know. It's nice for the guests to see the process, but I would hate to be a chef in a fishbowl... or a salmon bowl. Each reservation got paired with a waiter to be led to our table. We waited at the top of the ramp near a very tall cabinet of wine. It had a ladder, as fancy places do. The main dining area was very nice. We had a wonderful view of the fjord and the waterfall over Rosendal. Our little waitress lady swiftly went away and came back with a small block and said, "for your back." She placed the wooden stool on the ground. My mom and I realized she said, "for your bag," not back. I apparently was too slow putting my napkin on my lap, so she did it for me as well.

They poured our water as we waited for our fifth course to be prepared. A small drop of water was spilled on the table. We did not even notice until a waiter came by with a napkin neatly and tightly folded in his hand, with a quick flick of his wrist wiped that drop of water right up. We just paused, stared at the spot where the water droplet once sat, and chuckled. We were stunned and amused. Iris did not tolerate any mess or setting out of place. Everything must be pristine. THIS was the elite service of a Michelin restaurant.

Drink Pairing #1

Our first add-on non-alcoholic drink pairing was a kombucha called Moonbrew. If you have ever had kombucha, then you know it is gross and vinegary. If you haven't had kombucha,

it's a fermented hippie drink made from fruit. Most kombucha I've had was gross, like taking a shot of straight apple cider vinegar. Some people do that because they enjoy misery, I guess. This kombucha, however, was very good. It was not vinegary nor bitter. It was nice and sweet with a fruity sourness. Again, Iris loves emphasizing local suppliers, small batch practices, and sustainable production. Notice anything about the logo of this drink?



Iris description of ingredients: sparkling nectarine and elderflower

The waiters began bringing our fifth course. They all lined up behind us with our dishes, waited until each was ready to serve our food at the exact same time, in the exact same manner, perfectly centered on our charger plates.

Course #5

Coat of Arms was a beautifully presented dish. The crust was in the shape of a shield or classic coat of arms. Again, why this was called Coat of Arms or what the inspiration was, I have no idea. Those explanations were in one ear and out the other. It was like when the teacher at the end of class drones on and all you're doing is watching the clock ready to head out the door once the bell rings. I was looking at the food, just nodding my head as if I was taking in every word, maybe even subconsciously glancing at the waiter with a quick smile, waiting for the words to stop so I could begin chowing down.



Ingredients: tomato, mahogany, herbs, and sauce

Now, I don't recall the context of the mahogany, I just remember that the guy mentioned mahogany. Because Iris relied on their employees to explain the dishes from memory, each explanation was a little different depending on the waiter presenting it. This made for a truly unique experience, but it also meant that some ingredients may have been left out of descriptions, or maybe some were added, or the explanation of the chef's inspiration may have been summarized a bit too much. If it were me, I could not remember numerous descriptions of 10+ different courses. To add to the complexity, each dish varied slightly

throughout the year depending on what ingredients were available during the season. Remember, Iris wanted us to connect with the “ever-changing elements,” so their menu is set, but the specific ingredients rely on what grew that week. I couldn’t even remember the descriptions as they were told in real time. This would be a terrible game of telephone for me to play.

COAT OF ARMS

Crispy croustade, edible flowers, and salted mahogany clam

An edible tribute to the local produce from our beautiful municipality of Kvinnherad, defined by its narrow fjords, wild waterfalls, and the third-biggest glacier in Norway. Under the crispy tuile, topped with edible flowers, there is an herb-emulsion and salted mahogany clam.

Coat of Arms was good. The crust was perfectly crunchy with the crisp freshness of the flowers and the airiness of the herb sauce with the *mahogany* clam adding a kiss of the ocean. Listen to me... I’m turning into one of them.

We were pretty satisfied with the taste of our food so far. We were ready for more food. Little did we know it was time for a refill on our water. Our water wasn’t empty, but only half gone. I guess it is not acceptable to have a less-than half full glass. These waiters were like ninjas. Before you knew it, an arm was there, over your shoulder, pouring water into your glass. The looming presence of a very attentive individual was intimidating. Maybe it was just us low class people that felt uneasy when our needs were immediately tended to, but we’ve never had servants. This treatment is unheard of in our tax bracket. Maybe it was intentionally done to make sure we were on guard; a small reminder that we are in a floating sphere, in the middle of the sea, with nowhere to go, no one to ask for help, with the opportunity and ease to incapacitate us at any moment.

Course #6

Again, we see the waiters line up, carrying our next dish, patiently waiting for them to synchronously set down our food and begin their presentation. Next Level Neighbors was gorgeous like the other dishes, our final “appetizer” course. This was in dedication to highlight the ingredients provided by local neighbors to Iris.



Ingredients: A blini with cow's milk, crème fraîche, shrimp, black currant leaves, black currant oil, and caviar either from Belgium or something Belgium related

Of the amuse bouches and appetizers we've had so far, this was our favorite. It had a perfectly balanced crispy and soft blini. The shrimp was fresh, and the caviar added the needed saltiness. I think this was the first time I've had real caviar. I was very excited to have caviar. I am not sure what black currant leaves or oil taste like on their own, so I can't say how much flavor they added to the dish. Currant is a fruit that makes a delicious filling for macarons, but that is the only way I've had it as a feature flavor that I'm aware of. I am always amused by menus that list crème fraîche as an ingredient. All it is, is sour cream, but it's less "sour" sour cream, so I get why they can't just call it sour cream because it is sour cream sans the sour, so it's crème fraîche. You just never know if a restaurant is trying to be sophisticated by calling regular sour cream "crème fraîche" as many places in Vegas try to do or if it is actually crème fraîche. This was crème fraîche.

NEXT-LEVEL NEIGHBOURS

Raw milk blinis, black currant leaves and raw shrimps.

A shout-out to our amazing neighbours. Crispy blinis made from fermented porridge and raw milk from Lars Johan in Rosendal. Topped with blackcurrant leaves, Gastro Unika caviar, raw shrimps and wild flowers from Snilstveitøy.

The restaurant ingredients say this was raw shrimp. I thought it was cooked shrimp because it was pink, but I see now it was still translucent. I also learned raw shrimp can be pink. I guess that makes sense, but I never gave it any thought, and most raw shrimp you buy at the store is gray. It also lists Gastro Unika caviar. Because it mentions nothing about Belgium, I had to find out why I thought Belgium was mentioned. I searched Gastro Unika caviar. Per the Gastro Unika caviar website, "GASTROunika Caviar is produced at two beautiful sustainable farms in Europe – where the sturgeons live in a lake in the mountains (Caviar Elegance) and pools of spring water in the forest (Royal Belgian Caviar)." There it was, the Belgium reference, and that word sustainable again. We were fancy enough to have the forest spring water caviar, the ROYAL caviar. *impressed oohs and ahhs*

Drink Pairing #2

Our second drink pairing was called Skog. We were told that it was created to taste like you are hiking through the Norwegian woods in the Spring. I enjoyed Skog, but I also enjoy floral flavored sweets and drinks. Mom, Aunt Debbie, and Ana were not huge fans of Skog. It did have prominent floral notes, but still had a sweetness and bubbiness that added a slight tang. It did make me imagine what walking through a flower meadow in the Norwegian forest would taste like.



Iris description of ingredients: fermented infusion with pine and birch leaves

We were about to start our first course in the second grouping of foods, the main dishes, the hearty dishes, the entrées. I don't know if this is actually how these dishes were grouped, but this is what makes sense to me: light faire and appetizers, mains, and desserts. Our waiters came by to set our utensils. This was a very particular process, as was everything else. We had the silverware rest and a fork and knife perfectly aligned at just the right angle in relation to our plate. The waitress knocked my fork slightly out of alignment when setting the knife, but she sure as hell made sure she set it back in its proper place.

This next course was very exciting. There were multiple components. First, a basket was brought to our table. You could see the foliage poking out of the top. I was intrigued. I wanted to open the basket. I wanted to know what was in it. We waited for the waiters to bring our plates in the synchronized manner they have practiced to a "T".

Course #7

A beautiful plate was delivered with slices of a fish with a thick creamy dollop of stuff and a side of some lettuce with a gelatin sheet thing. The plate was also one of the flattest plates I have ever seen. Et voilà the pièce de résistance (of this course anyway). The basket was opened, revealing four clam shells filled with a sauce. Now, this is where quality in presentation dropped. One of the shells had tipped a little too far and the sauce had spilled. Of course, the waiter assured us a new fresh sauce would be prepared immediately and would be served shortly. I just cannot believe that they couldn't carry four unsecured half shells, full of slippery liquid, nestled on top of uneven slimy seaweed, in an enclosed box they were not allowed to open, 30 feet from the kitchen, perfectly, every time, with no spills, ever. Shame. They should feel complete and utter shame.

This was one of our more involved dishes. We had to pour our own sauce. Again, I have no clue what was even said in the spiel about this dish. I recall nothing. I was so enamored with the opportunity to pour my sauce on my food. I enjoyed this. It was fun and nice change of pace. Coastal Harmony was one of mine and Ana's favorite dishes. My mom and Aunt Debbie did not enjoy it, but they both said they liked "some of it," meaning they liked the sauce, dollop, and lettuce with gel.





Ingredients: raw hand dove scallops, oyster emulsion, lettuce, and lemon verbena gel with a beurre blanc

This dish was impeccable! At that moment, it was my favorite of the evening. The scallops were so fresh, not fishy, not slimy but absolute perfection. The oyster emulsion added another layer of flavor, contributed to the umami (saltiness) of the dish. I read somewhere that Chef Anika is the "Umami Queen." The lettuce with lemon verbena gel was simple but delicious. All the flavors together truly brought a coastal harmony to my tastebuds.

COASTAL HARMONY

Hand dived scallops, oysters and summer salads

Although often considered as a luxury ingredient, oysters and scallops can be farmed with a minimal impact on their surroundings and often contribute positively on the eco system. Especially oyster farming can improve water quality since they have the ability to filter the water they live in, consuming phytoplankton and particulate organic matter, thus reducing the nutrient load and improving water quality. Leveraging the extensive fish farms along our coast, we see a significant opportunity to sustainably cultivate oysters around these areas. This process can help restore the health of aquatic ecosystems while providing a high quality and nutritious ingredient. This dish pair the sweet scallops with local weeds and herbs from Snilstveitøy, and an oyster emulsion that broadens the appeal of this ingredient, making it accessible and enjoyable for a diverse audience.

As the waiter came by to take our silverware and plates, he had trouble picking it up with one hand. As I said before, this was the flattest plate I have ever seen. This was also when I learned and realized that the staff was not allowed to set or lift the plates with two hands. I am not familiar with fancy etiquette, but is this in an official etiquette handbook? I am aware this is something done at expensive restaurants, but is it like a traditional butler rule or something? I

had to fight the urge to just pick up the plate with two hands and hand it to him to help him out, you know, as we do here at home in the poor places. But that is not what people do at these restaurants. You as a guest are supposed to sit back because why would we be bothered with the mundane tasks of the help?

As you can see in my photo, I spilled a small drop of my beurre blanc on my charger plate. When I noticed that I spilled, I knew someone was going to come by and clean that right up. No messes remember? I wanted to film them clean it up, just to show how swift they are. They of course did not come wipe my plate as I was eating, but the next thing I noticed was a clean spotless place setting. I have no idea when this drop of butter was cleaned up. I was there, I assume. I didn't leave the table. Ninjas.

Drink Pairing #3

This was our first crafted drink of the evening. Our waiter told us a story about how he chose the inspiration for this drink. He mentioned that his girlfriend grew up in the area and her favorite mountain is the Witch's Chair. He pointed to a distant peak that had a small notch at the top, I guess resembling a chair. The juice included plum, apples, and local herbs. This drink was one of our favorites. It was served in a beautiful cup and poured from a small clay decanter. We enjoyed this drink so much, when we told our waiter, he got us another decanter to refill our cups with Heksebrugg.



Iris description of ingredients: Hardanger apples, meadowsweet, bourbon pepper, and angelica seeds

Course #8

We were presented a dish with a small fish that looked tempura'd and a dollop of white cream. The "plate" was a block of acrylic with what I think was fish bones and fish food in it. A separate plate with little divots that contained various ingredients was placed in the center of the table. Feeding the Future was supposed to show how we can use different sources of food to be sustainable. Do I recall anything said about it? No.





Ingredients: grasshopper on baby trout, emulsion made with some kind of flakes
Showing Plate: grasshoppers, mushrooms, flakes

The staff assured us that the baby trout did not contain any bones and that we could eat it whole, head to tail was the best strategy. Our waitress said, "Now, don't worry, you don't have to eat what's on this plate" as she gestured to the plate with divots of the raw ingredients. We understood that as "we don't have to eat it, but we can eat it." Aunt Debbie took one of the grasshoppers off the plate, dipped it in her emulsion, and ate it. She said it was crunchy but didn't have much taste. I was about to grab a grasshopper too when our waitress swiftly took the plate away. Mom saw them immediately dump the contents of the plate into the trash. When the dish was being presented to the next table I heard, "This is just a showing plate." Clearly, they didn't want us to eat the grasshoppers and changed the way they said it to the next table. I guess they weren't expecting people to be so willing to eat grasshoppers. My mentality is and will continue to be, we paid for it, we're eating it.



FEEDING THE FUTURE

Mycelium, chlorella algae, insect protein and mountain trout parr

To feed a growing world population we need to come up with new ways of farming – both on land and in the sea. An important topic in all animal food production is the feed. While the feed industry has come a long way in creating vegetable-based feed for carnivorous fish there's still a way to go. In this dish we combine the mountain trout parr with possible feed sources of the future: mycelium, chlorella algae and insect protein. And if we suddenly end up in a situation where the feed is healthy and tasty for humans – couldn't we just eat the feed ourselves?

Course #9

We were given a fork and a spoon and presented a bowl with foam on top. We couldn't see what was under the foam, but there was foam. Weeds of the Sea was course #9. Our waiter said that this was sustainable because the fish is an invasive species to Norwegian waters so there is no concern of overfishing. Sometimes their descriptions felt like they were trying too hard.





Ingredients: invasive species cuttlefish, butter foam, root celery puree, and fava beans

The cuttlefish was cut into thin strands. It reminded me of the shape and texture of udon noodles. I liked the dish. It wasn't my favorite, but I thought it tasted good. Mom and Aunt Debbie hated it. Absolutely hated it. Ana thought it was ok but didn't really like it and was in her bottom three.

WEEDS OF THE SEA

Norwegian cuttlefish, kelp, unripe strawberries and lovage

The global population of squid and cuttlefish has been steadily on the rise since the 1950s, both due to rising temperatures and the fact that many of their predators are on the decline. They have even been referred to as 'weeds of the sea' due to their rapid growth, short lifespans, and ability to adapt to environmental changes more quickly than other marine animals. We have paired the Norwegian cuttlefish tagliatelle with dashi-butter sauce made from kelp, grilled celeriac, unripe strawberries, and lovage.

Drink Pairing #4

Drink number 4 was this red drink served to us from a nitro cannister. It looked like blood. However, I must be a vampire because I enjoyed this drink, not as much as the Heksebrygg, but second place for sure. Sour Berry Juice contained red currant, cherries, cranberries, blueberries, and huckleberry. This drink was actually called Sáwábery which I assume translates to sour berry?



Iris description of ingredients: red berries, corn flower, and black tea

Course #10

Course 10 was our first red meat dish. I was excited for this dish. It was beautifully presented in the shape of a heart. A bloody heart, but a heart. The bloody drink now made sense. Change of Heart was a fun dish. We were told to take our spoon and crack the shell. I actually missed this instruction and just started to stab at it with my fork. We were told that Change of Heart was a sustainable dish because elk don't fart. Well, I interpreted it as elk don't fart, but what they said was more along the lines of "sourcing elk produces less CO₂ than beef." They never did say the word "hunt" though. They said the elk were wild, but they were very careful with their words.



Ingredients: venison tartar, cocoa butter and hibiscus shell, leek emulsion.

Change of Heart was in my top five of favorite dishes. I like elk, I like hibiscus. I thought the flavors went together very well. The shell did not taste like chocolate which was a concern. We all enjoyed Change of Heart. Mom and Aunt Debbie also liked it, even though it was raw meat. They have a hard time getting over the idea that they were eating raw fish and meat. How are they going to survive in Japan?

CHANGE OF HEART

Tartar of venison, grilled leeks, Hanasand tomatoes and sourdough crumble

To meet the challenge of global warming we need to change many of our ways, including the way we eat. At Iris we have made the choice not to use beef, and instead, opt for wild game, birds and greens. Venison have a CO₂ footprint that is significantly lower than beef. In this rendition, we have even skipped the game. Under the bleeding heart, you will find a tartar of raw venison, grilled leeks, and sourdough crumble.

I took a bite of my food then a drink of my Sáwábery, and the food changed the flavor profile of the drink and vice versa. I was impressed because this displayed that significant effort was put into the creation of the drink to enhance the dish. The flavors bounced off each other and slightly changed the taste of each when combined making me recognize the art of food and drink pairings.

After Change of Heart, we were brought a sharper knife. It had a wooden handle with a small blade. We knew our next course was going to be something steak like. I was ready. Our waiter also came by and sprayed our glasses with a small spray bottle.



Drink Pairing #5

After our waiter spritzed our glasses, we were trying to figure out what it was. It was oily, it was yellowish, it looked like olive oil. We were drinking Hunter's Campfire. It contained black currant leaf oil spray and cherries. Our waiter said that this drink was a bit more adventurous and to represent sitting around a warm fire as the Vikings once did post hunt.





Iris description of ingredients: Campfire Stories – lapsang, morel reduction, and cranberries

The name of the drink according to our printout from Iris was called Campfire Stories, not Hunter's Campfire. Also, morel is a mushroom and lapsang is a tea as I now know from my Google search.

This drink was the worst drink of the night. Mom, Ana, and Aunt Debbie hated it. I didn't think it was terrible, but it wasn't great either. Ana said, "I hate to say this, but this tastes like how Nate smelled." To give a little context, Ana's friend fell into the fire when she went camping with her friends a week before we left for Norway. He was a crispy critter, but he's fine. Hunter's Campfire truly did taste like a campfire and now we know it also tastes like burnt human. I think they used a little too much liquid smoke. Up next was our "main" dish.

Course #11

I think this course was one of all of our favorites. It was very delicious and served with rolls. We were served our plates, again a plate that had no edges just a flat disc. The food looked very good and was nicely presented. Some of the plant vegetable things were prepared as curls. We also had another jelly sheet thing but cut in small circles. Our dish was served with

two sauces, one green one and one reddish-brown. The green was a little thicker than the brown sauce. We did not get to sauce our own filet of meat, but we were given enough to match the dish. Although, I personally would've added another spoonful of the brown sauce.





Ingredients: Roaming Reviere - venison and mountain pig rolled in hay ash
Sauces: beetroot and green peppers
Rolls: 27 layer brioche

Our waiter explained to us how the venison was injected with mountain pig fat, which is what those three little grayish translucent dots are within the meat. I really did a poor job of listening to our waiters as they told us things. Regardless of knowing the "story," this was one of my favorite dishes. The leaves were crispy and roasted perfectly. The meat was tender and cut like butter. The sauces added great flavor and complimented each other. The rolls weren't the best. They were kind of dry and too crunchy for my liking, but I was never a fan of a plain croissant. Pain au chocolate, yes, just a croissant, no. This roll needed some butter and gravy or

something. I only wish we could've had at least two cuts of meat, three or four would've been ideal though if they were going to refer to this as a "main." I did not finish my Hunter's Campfire drink, and the taste of the drink took away from the venison, not add to it like the last drink pairing did, but that could be because I didn't like it.

ROAMING REVERIE

Dry-aged venison, smoky juniper and charcoal-roasted beetroot

Reverie, a dreamlike euphoria of roaming freely in the wild is the essence of a happy animal. In this dish, wild deer and farmed mountain pig embody the joy of untethered life. Dry-aged venison, enriched with smoky juniper and hay ash is married with charcoal-roasted beetroots, coriander seeds and black currant sauce. Each element captures the soul of the wild in a celebration of creatures who thrive under the open sky.

I'm pretty sure the venison and mountain pig weren't too happy and thriving when they got slaughtered to eat, but whatever floats their electric boat.

Drink Pairing #6

The waiters took away our unfinished Hunter's Campfire and brought a much better drink. This was also one of our favorite drinks. This was the new second favorite. It was a pear drink infused with fennel.



Iris description of ingredients: The Spirit of Hardanger – fermented pear, bronze fennel, and umeshu from Snilstveitøy

Another word I have never heard of, umeshu. Umeshu according to my trusty friend Google, is a Japanese plum wine. In this case it was a plum wine from Snilstveitøy. Anyway, we were ready for dessert, or so we thought.

Course #12

Course 12 was an adventure for sure. It was unexpected. It was a journey. It was something. The chef's husband was the one who presented this dish to us, Trash or Treasure. We were presented a black, white, and gray marbled stone block and on top sat a small square with a blue QR code stamped on it. The chef's husband said that this was an ice cream sandwich and that you have to decide if it is trash or treasure. He said, "You can trust us and eat it right away, or you can scan the QR code first before trying." My mom, Aunt Debbie, and I opted to scan first, eat second. Ana chose to eat first.



Ingredients: ice cream sandwich

Ana was gravely disappointed and made a face of disgust and horror and said “eeeeuuuuuhhhhhhh.” This dish had some wild flavors. This was the only dish I could not finish. There was a tartness and sourness and bitterness to it. There was also a sweetness with some kind of mustardy flavor. It was cold and creamy like how an ice cream would be. There were so many things going on in my mouth, none of them good. It wasn’t the worst thing I’ve ever eaten, but this was incredibly not great.

Trash or treasure?

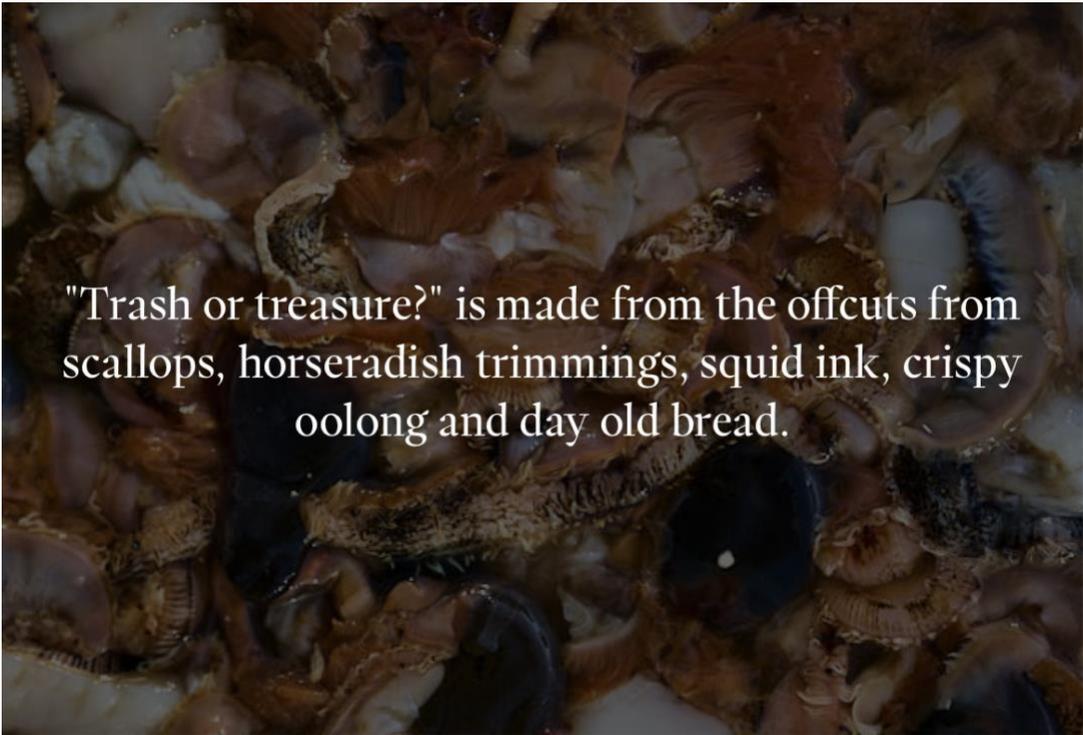
One mans trash is another mans treasure. If your curiosity gets the better of you, press the button below.

?

?

?

I want to know!



"Trash or treasure?" is made from the offcuts from scallops, horseradish trimmings, squid ink, crispy oolong and day old bread.

TRASH OR TREASURE?

Scallop offcuts, horseradish, squid ink & lemon rind

The human mind is easily influenced by external cues. In our complex world, we often rely on simple heuristics to make decisions. This dish plays with the ideas of curiosity and trust. How you perceive it may shift completely once you learn about its ingredients, even though the taste remains the same. So, how often do we let our minds trick our senses and influence our choices? "One man's trash is another man's treasure» - did you scan the QR code or not?

This dish was the least favorite for good reason. The staff knew it wasn't good, but more as a fun shock factor dish. It did display creativity by putting non-ice cream ingredients in ice cream form, but bad in flavor. So bad. I can still taste the bad. It will haunt me.

Course #13

This course was the real beginning of our desserts. Thank the Lord for that. Just like my Uncle Hank, dessert is my favorite. We were brought this bowl with something green in the middle. It was a lumpy mound dusted with green powder. We were about to eat the Mountains of Rosendal. The mound was designed to represent the topography of Rosendal. Our waiter then poured a liquid into our bowls. I guess this was to represent the surrounding sea?





Ingredients: pear salad, jasmine ice cream, lemon syrup

I was excited for the jasmine ice cream; jasmine is my favorite flavor of macaron. If you ever find yourself at Pierre Hermé, I recommend getting jasmine, pistachio, and hazelnut macarons. The Mountains of Rosendal was what I gathered from the name since I don't know Norwegian and there was no way I was going to remember Malm & Melder especially when I only listened to maybe 30% of what was said and on top of that I could only clearly understand half of what I caught. Malm and Melder are the names of the mountains within view of Iris. So, they are mountains of Rosendal. Regardless of the name, this dessert was "spectacular, give me 14 of them." The ice cream was what you expect of ice cream, real ice cream, not ice cream full of lies. This was sweet with a bit of sour from the lemon syrup but not so much that the dessert was sour just added a layer of citrus flavor. It tasted amazing. The chocolate shell added a bit of crunch, and the pears were fresh and crisp.

MALM & MELDER

Jasmin tea, Hardanger pears and cardamom brioche

A tribute to the two great mountains that can be seen from the Iris dining room in clear weather. Here served as a jasmin icecream, gooseberry sorbet, dried pear and caramelized cardamom brioche and hazelnuts. Accompanied by a pear salad with lemon verbena and fresh pear juice.

This was one of my top five favorites. It had to be, it's a dessert.

Drink Pairing #7

Drink #7 paid homage to the Chef Anika's and her husband's home, Copenhagen. It is produced by a Danish company, and they save it for the end. The drink is called Passing Clouds made by Muri. It was a Copenhagen kifer made with elderflower and gooseberry and toast. I enjoyed this drink. It was much better than the Hunter's Campfire, but not as good as the Spirit of Hardanger.



Iris description of ingredients: fermented gooseberries, quince kefir, and geranium kvass

I do not know what quince is or what kefir is, nor do I know what geranium kvass is. According to Google, quince is a pear like fruit, but not pear like at all in flavor. Kefir is a fermented milk apparently, made with kefir grains. Geranium is a flower, I know that, but the kvass part is the unknown. Again, according to Google, kvass is a fermented cereal-based, low or non-alcoholic beverage.

Course #14

Dessert #2. This dessert looked pretty but also interesting. It was served in a beautiful glass bowl of the abstract variety. It was a small pastry cup with a chocolate dome printed with a space pattern on it. It was very appealing to the eye with the blue and green colors. There was also a ring of caviar surrounding the dome. The caviar is what throws off your expectations. Spruced Up was a positively surprising dessert.



Ingredients: pickled pine needles, brown butter ice cream, white chocolate dome, caviar

You might be thinking, "Caviar?! Pine needles?! With ice cream and chocolate?!" Why yes! Caviar and pine needles with ice cream and chocolate. The chocolate dome didn't have an overpowering white chocolate taste. The brown butter ice cream was sweet and creamy almost kettle corn like flavor less the corn. The pastry cup was flaky and the pickled pine needles seemed more like candied pine needles. The caviar worked well with the other flavors, adding a slight saltiness, creating a salted caramel taste. This dessert was not as sweet as the Mountains of Rosendal, but it was just sweet enough.

SPRUCED UP

Crispy tart, spruce, brown butter and Caviar

The spruce tree is Norway's national tree and we wanted to showcase the fine aromatics of the pine shoots. A tartelette filled with pickled spruce shoots underneath a brown butter ice cream, topped with Rossini Oscietra caviar

Spruced up was our last dish in the main dining room. We were then invited to the roof. We were told it was a bit chilly, but they had windbreakers you could use. There was a staff member at the ready at the top of the stairs to fit you with a jacket. Mom and Aunt Debbie opted for a jacket, but Ana and I did not. The roof had a panoramic view of the surrounding area, and it wasn't that cold for just being out there 5-10 minutes. The view was gorgeous and would be even better on a sunny day.





Once we felt we spent enough time on the roof, we were guided to the lounge area. The projection had changed to a fire theme.



As we were waiting for our final course, we ordered some tea. Well, Aunt Debbie, my mom, and I got tea; Ana did not get tea. From our seats you could hear the conversations in the kitchen. I assume they would chat while they prepare and also talk about the food and what not. One of my favorite moments of the evening was when I overheard,

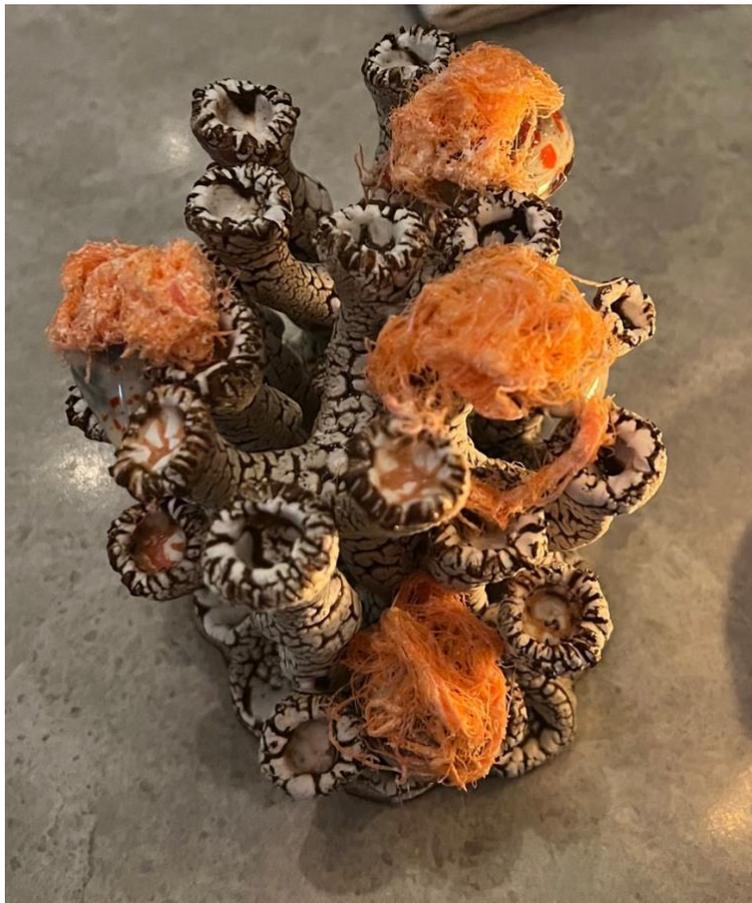
"Fuck yeah! 3? Oh, fuck yeah!"

"Toby, don't say the f word." *followed by hushed whispers*

Poor Toby was just excited about the food I assume, and then he got lectured to not say bad words in a fancy restaurant while patrons are present. Little Toby forgot that people could hear his unprofessionalism. I apparently was the only one who heard this though since my mom and Aunt Debbie can't hear anything and Ana wasn't paying attention.

Course #15

Our final dish was presented on a coral figurine sculpture thing. It looked kind of like the ceramic corals you can buy at the aquarium or just at Walmart in the bathroom décor section. We were told that this dish was to touch on the fact that fishing nets cause ocean pollution and are a threat to our world's coral populations. This dessert was to show the "entanglement" of the natural ocean and human interference and thus named Entangled.





Ingredients: cold water coral, hazelnut marmalade, French nougat

The “coral fishnet” was kind of like thicker cotton candy. If you know what dragon’s beard is, then this was similar. It was stringy but chewy, kind of like if you were to take taffy and stretch it and pull it and fold it continuously until it looked stringy. We all liked this dessert. It was sweet, chewy, nougaty, crunchy, and hazelnutty. Again, wishing they would’ve given us more than one.

ENTANGLED

*Edible fishnet, montélimar nougat with sunflower-
& pumpkin seeds*

Our oceans are full of life but also the remnants of human activity. Fishing nets, ropes, and tools—once essential for survival—are now among the greatest threats to marine ecosystems. These “ghost nets” drift through the sea, ensnaring wildlife and damaging fragile habitats. This dish represents that entanglement, both visually and symbolically. Hidden beneath an edible sugar net, our rendition of montélimar nougat, reminding us that what lies beneath the surface can be obscured by harmful waste.

The chef's husband came and dropped off little menus that detailed what we had that evening. It was a nice little envelope and I'm glad they provided us a menu so we could remember what we ate. Then it was time for business. Paying. I left my wallet in my bag downstairs and was escorted to where they were being kept. The ramps inside this restaurant are very steep and you can feel it in your knees. We weren't sure what to do tip wise. I had the plan to not tip at all since we were in Norway. Aunt Debbie went and asked the Latvians what they were thinking of doing and they said what was expected that tipping isn't normal and only if we really liked the service do people round up. I left a small tip, but it was nowhere near what I would normally. Uncle Allen would be ashamed. When the Latvians were paying, they were surprised when they saw the bill, so much so that the woman said "oh, no, no, no, no!" They definitely did not tip. Once everyone was paid up, we made our way downstairs to our coats. Of course, the staff was at the ready to hand us our jackets and help us with our life vests. Before we boarded the boat back to Rosendal, we needed to get pictures with Chef Anika (and her husband).



The conversation on the boat ride back was a little livelier. People were drunker, fuller, and happier. After all, we survived the night! Tipping was a big point of conversation as we all sat on the boat waiting to depart. The one American couple staying at our hotel asked about tipping. The other American couple shared they tipped some, the European couples said they

did not. Aunt Debbie asked me if I tipped, “20%?” To which I replied, “Aunt Debbie 20% would’ve been \$\$ bucks! I tipped a little but not that.” She was shocked at the amount and said, “oh no, no, that’s good.” The couple that asked said they tipped what they would in America. There was a moment of silent judgement when the woman said that. I don’t think any of us thought tipping 20% was good practice in Europe, even at a Michelin restaurant. The woman I think sensed the judgement and tried to explain that it was because they thought the staff did an amazing job and that the whole experience was one of their favorites.

The richy rich 20% couple asked our captain, Tobias, Toby probably, if he knew how the chef and her husband met. He said that he (the husband) actually used to be her boss at a fancy restaurant in Denmark, then she quickly surpassed him in the restaurant chef hierarchy. They also asked what they (the staff) do when the day is over. Toby said the staff gets together and drinks, but that on their days off, they often go into Bergen. Just what I thought. We were now passing the “low speed no mooring” sign, and one of the dudes points and says “fart” with a little chuckle. I made the same joke going. We don’t grow up; we just grow old.

We arrived safely back at the dock in Rosendal. We were all pleased with our experience. We thought we had tasty food and good service. We were happy little campers ready for bed. Would I visit again if I had the means? Yes, I think I would. Do I think it was a bit overpriced? Oh, for sure. Do I think it was a little pretentious? 100 percent. Will I do something similar in the future? I certainly hope so! I thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Iris Expedition, and I highly recommend going if you can. All I need to do now is eat at other Michelin restaurants so I can compare value more accurately, for research purposes of course. All in all, this was fantastic, and I can’t wait for my next dining adventure!

Rankings – based on taste:

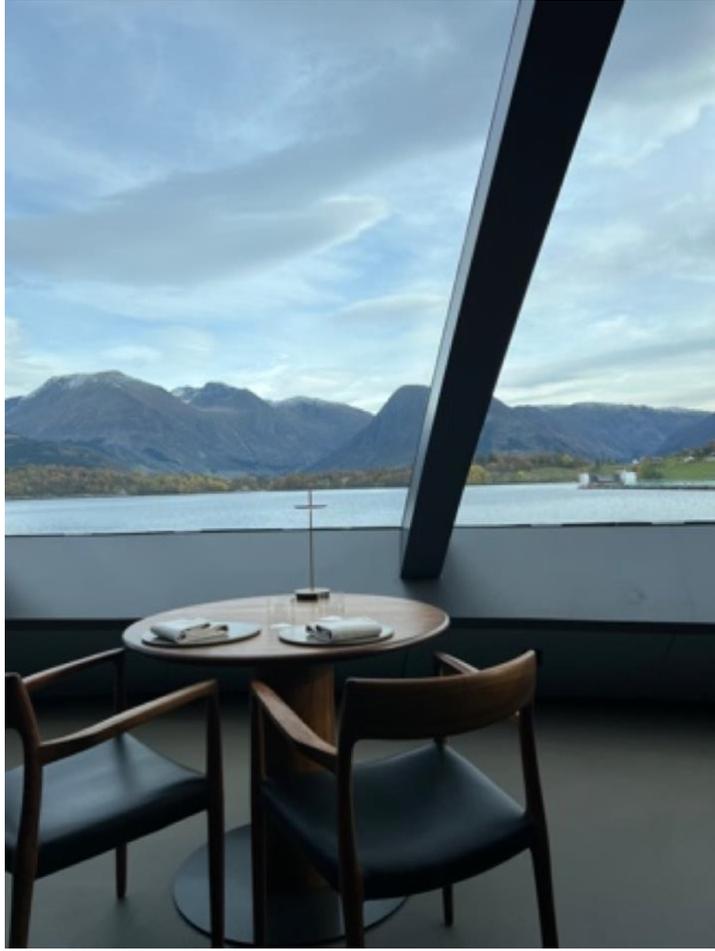
Courses

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Roaming Reviere | 6) Entangled | 11) 500 Meters |
| 2) Coastal Harmony | 7) Next-Level Neighbors | 12) Weeds of the Sea |
| 3) Malm & Melder | 8) Slave to Nature Pt. 2 | 13) Feeding the Future |
| 4) Change of Heart | 9) Coat of Arms | 14) Cone of Plenty |
| 5) Spruced Up | 10) Slave to Naure Pt. 1 | 15) Trash or Treasure? |

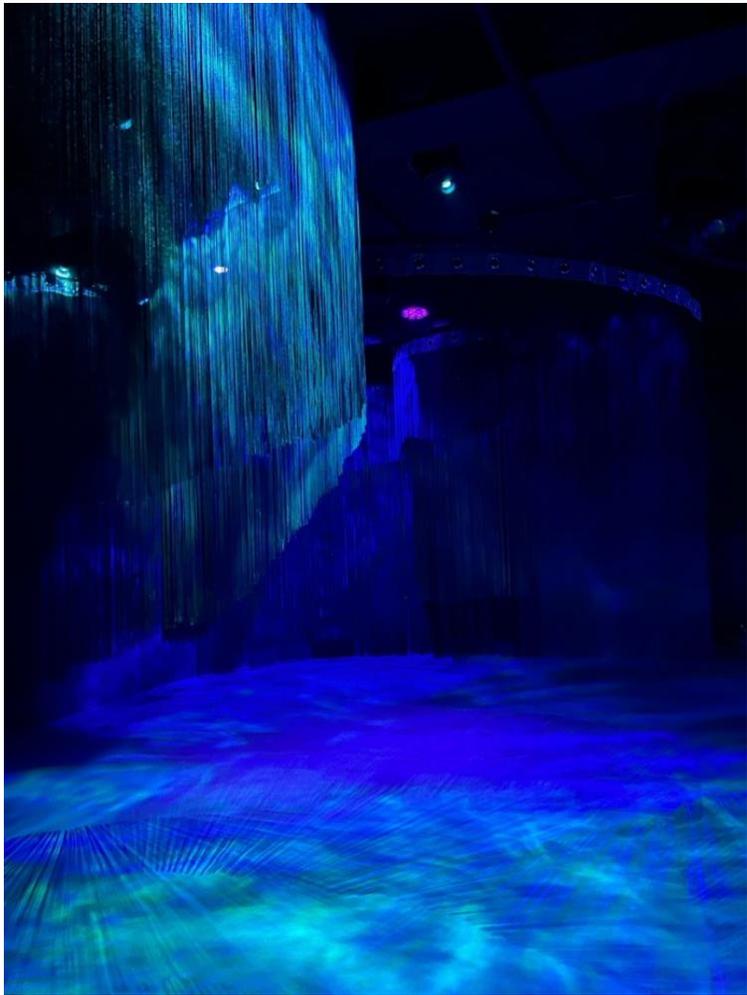
Drinks

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Heksebrygg | 5) Passing Clouds |
| 2) The Spirit of Hardanger | 6) Skog |
| 3) Sáwábery | 7) Metode Tradisjonell |
| 4) Moonbrew | 8) Campfire Stories |











Links:

Iris: <https://www.restaurantiris.no/>

Iris booking: <https://www.exploretock.com/iris/>

Gastro Unika caviar: <https://gastrounika.com/>

Gastro Unika caviar info sheet: https://gastrounika.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Gastrounika_Infosheet_RBC_2020_EN_1.pdf

Michelin: https://guide.michelin.com/us/en/vestland/rosendal_2258329/restaurant/iris

Article about Chef Anika and her reason to open Iris (dated prior to opening):
<https://www.foodandwinegazette.com/17648>