

NEW FASHION FURNITURE & FOOD FOR MEN

# BUCK

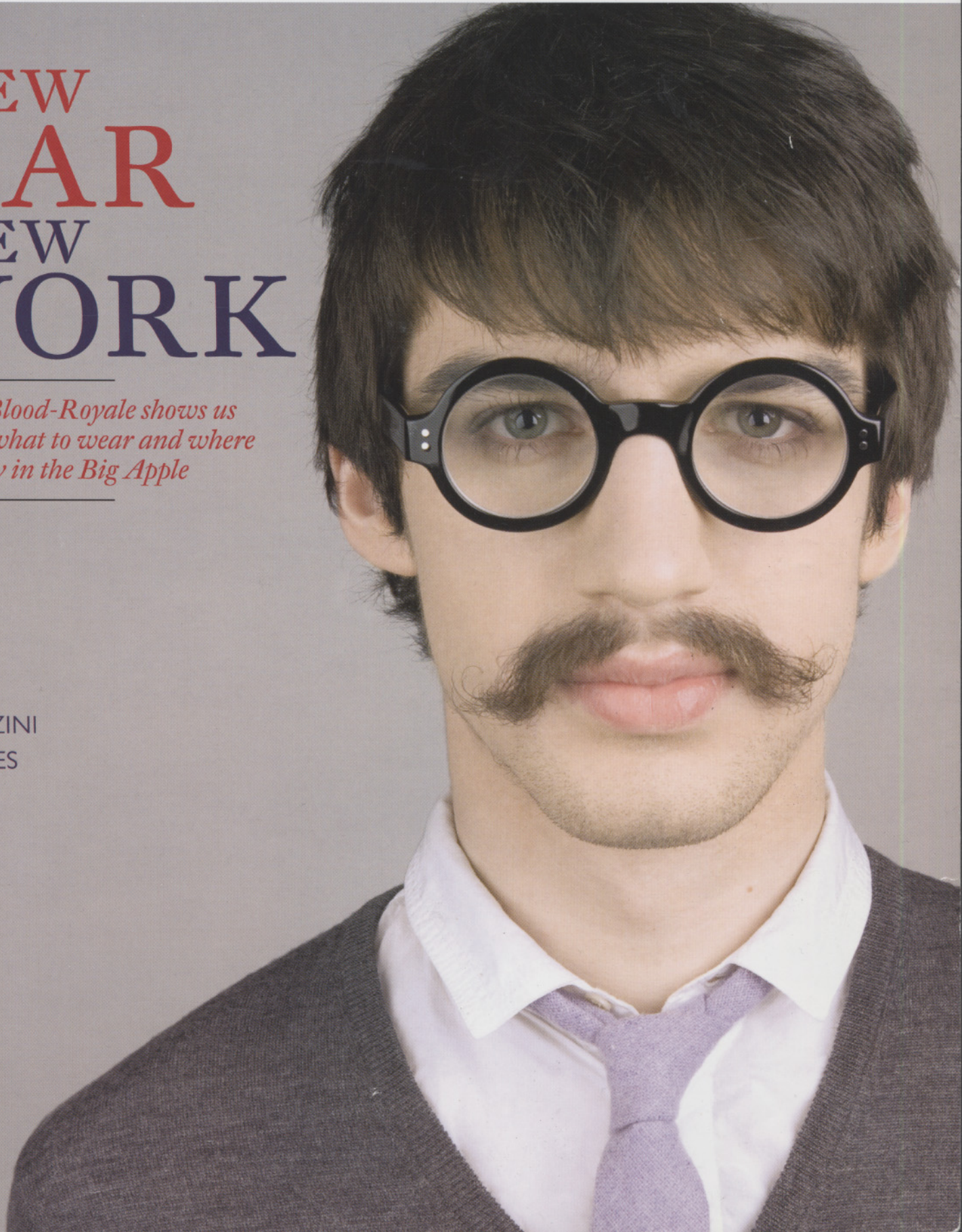
NO. 2  
JAN 2009

£ 3.95  
€ 8.95  
\$ 10.95  
¥ 1900

## NEW YEAR NEW YORK

*Frederick Blood-Royale shows us  
what to eat, what to wear and where  
to party in the Big Apple*

- CHROME0
- STREET STYLE
- STOCKINGS
- JOHNNY IUZZINI
- HOUSE PARTIES
- GOOSE
- COATS
- TREES
- TATTOOS
- MINCE PIES





PHOTOGRAPHER:  
RYAN PFLUGER

# SIGNATURE DISH JOHNNY IUZZINI



We went into the kitchen at Jean Georges, one of New York's best restaurants, and caught up with Johnny Iuzzini – pastry chef, media star and party legend.



Back then, when I first moved to New York City at the age of 17, I was making \$8 an hour – it's kind of hard to pay rent on that. A lot of people take the easy route out and go and work in hotels and mediocre restaurants for more money. I didn't want to do that. My biggest drive in my whole life is to avoid mediocrity and I vowed not to do the same thing. If it's not me, I'm not going to do it. I figured out a way to make more money – I wasn't a drinker, I don't smoke but I love clubs. We'd go to these clubs after work and I'm a social guy and know a lot of people, so they decided to start paying me to go because I could draw a lot of people along.

I ended up doing the door, dancing and other stuff. I was making more in two nights in a club than I could working six days a week in the restaurant. I did that for a year and ended up making myself physically ill: I caught pneumonia. In the club world, you can be whoever you want to be, whereas I'd go into the restaurant and hear "oh you're a stupid American, you're a piece of shit," be the lowest man on the ladder every day and get my teeth kicked in. You go to a club and you're a rock star – people want to talk to you, dance with you and buy you drinks.

I reached a crossroads where I had to ask who I wanted to be. I could go to the clubs and make a lot of money, but was it really an honest thing? So I quit both jobs, spent seven months backpacking around the world and I kept finding myself gravitating back to the kitchen, working for free in Paris, Monte Carlo and Spain, and came back more focused than I ever had been before.

I came from a certain background, the old-school style of cooking, where people did things that nowadays they wouldn't be able to get away with, because of the lawsuits. I've seen the chef next to me get kicked and have seen plates smashed in people's faces. It's on the way out now, fortunately. However, this taught me a sense of discipline and a sense of pride. There was no cutting corners. You were a man: if you did something wrong, you'd own up to it and take your beating.

I choose not to run my kitchen that way, but that determined a lot of who I am now. I tell all my guys: "See what I do, see who I am, suck it up and slingshot past me". Take the best and understand the worst of everyone you ever work with and then move on.





I don't really have any one signature dish. It's one of the philosophies that I believe in: at my age and where I am in the game, I'm too young to have just one. In Jean Georges, we have 16 different desserts on the menu. When you come to taste them, each is made of three or four different components. And then each component can have three or four more separate components. A table of four people could really be eating 16 different desserts at one time. When it comes to the menu, I don't want one signature dish on there because it's one thing that I can't change. I believe that our menus have to be fluid and keep changing – and I think that my style keeps changing. The food needs to reflect that.

It's important to have signature dishes later in life. My colleagues do. But these guys have been around for a lot longer than I have and they aren't cooking every day. They can go through what they've done and pick the best bits – their greatest hits. In my position, after a season, I'm over it. I can't wait to change the menu. The only one thing which will stay on the menu is Jean Georges' chocolate cake, which he built up in the 1980s.

When I start writing a recipe or working on stuff, I don't think about which technique I'm going to use. It's more a case of asking myself which flavours I want to work with. I'll come up with four or five flavour styles that I want to use – like rhubarb, yoghurt, blackberry, whatever else I want to put in it. Then, what form do I want these flavours to come in? Which is going to give me the best flavour transfer, the best release?

Some things I don't want to mess with so much, because they're so delicate and fragile. You barely want to manipulate them because you don't want to lose any of their qualities or freshness. Other flavours are a little bit stronger and so you can play with them a little more and do different things with them. I don't have an image of what a plate looks like before I actually come to putting the ingredients on it. I'm not one of those people who draws pictures of food. It comes from a list of flavours, a list of textures. Anything that's in season.

Then it's a question of asking what, say, squash reminds me of. When I was a kid and my mom cooked it, she would sometimes put a marshmallow fluff on top. From this kind of thinking comes a second list – what could go with that? I make columns, and then connect the dots. I try never to repeat from year to year or season to season. Next year, when it's fall again, I'll pull out my 'fall' folder from last year and see what worked, and then try and build on that.

The Michelin guide came out recently and we got our third star for the third year in a row. As many other projects and events as I have going on, I still spend 12 hours a day in the kitchen. I use my free time as much as possible for all of those other things that I do, trying not to let it eat into my work time. I'm still the creative force here, and I'm lucky to have a young team, but I don't have anyone who can take over the cooking for me. I have been working on a lot of things and it's important to do things outside of the kitchen but to spend all my time on it and give up being a chef for side projects and the media – that's not the way to go.

This may be my last job as a pastry chef. As a young chef, I've achieved a lot – everything I wanted to. Working my way up, making no money, and then being at Jean Georges for the last six years. I've worked at some of the best restaurants in the world and I'm really happy with what I've accomplished. Do I want to be a pastry chef for the rest of my life? Do I want to open my own kitchen? Not really. I'm a big fan of cocktails and technology, so what if I applied what I learnt as a pastry chef to the cocktail industry? Thinking about carbonation, compression, freshness of ingredients, flavours and applying everything I know as a chef to a bar. I have way too much energy to be trapped in someone's basement. There are always only four three-star restaurants in the US and this place requires so much of me – I don't think I could do what I want to do and maintain my post here for the next few years.

When I started cooking, I loved the idea of being in a kitchen but hated the idea of butchery. I got myself a job where I used to be able to go and watch the pastry chef making desserts – butterflies out of chocolate and so on. I loved the precision and the accuracy and so I made the switch. If you take five cooks and ask them all to make a soup – giving them the ingredients and the recipe – you're guaranteed to end up with five different soups at the end. If you take my guys in the restaurant, we work to a 10<sup>th</sup> of a gram. Sure, there will be a slight variation in the finished product but overall, it's going to be pretty fucking consistent.

When I was in a place called The River Café in Brooklyn, the pastry chef would do all of his chocolate work in a barn outside. He'd make chocolate filigree bridges that he'd put at either end of a long rectangular cake to make the Brooklyn Bridge, which the restaurant was under. I told him that I wanted to learn how to this and he said: "You're just a cook, you don't want to learn, you're stupid and you're American." So I used to work all of my shifts in the restaurant as a cook and then I'd go and work all night for him. I proved myself, and went to work for him.





## JOHNNY IUZZINI CARAMEL TASTING



Here, we present one of Johnny's recipes – or rather a quarter of it. The ingredients and method describe how to make a section of one of the components of the *caramel tasting* pictured. Namely, the bottom right quarter of the dish. It looks complicated, and it is. But it's world-class cooking and gives you some insight into the kind of effort and expertise that goes into creating dishes in a three michelin star kitchen.

### CARAMEL FLEXI CURD= 1/4 TRAY

200g	Cream
100g	Water
50g	Sugar
5g	Salt
1g	Kappa carageenan (0.12%)
2.6g	LT 100 hi ac gellan (0.3%)
3.4g	Agar (0.4%)
8.6g	LM Pectin 104 AS only
100g	Butter
400g	Liquid caramel

Combine the sugar, salt and gums together well. In the thermomix, blend the cream and water in the machine on number 2. Shear in the gums. Once the mix is warm, stream in the melted butter, cook to 190°C, add the liquid caramel then cook to 212° and cook for 30 seconds. Pour into a plastic wrap lined quarter sheet pan. Allow to set on a level surface at room temp before refrigerating with plastic directly on the surface. Once set cut into thin strips and reserve in the fridge.

### CARAMEL POWDER

750g	Sugar
60g	Nougasec

Mix sugar and nougasec with enough water to make a wet sand. Cook sugar to an amber caramel. Pour out onto a silpat-lined sheet tray. When cool, grind into a powder. Keep in an airtight container with dry packets until used.

### ROASTED PINEAPPLE SORBET

Tt	Roasted Pineapple puree
As needed	Sorbet syrup

Place a strip of caramel flexicurd on the plate in an artistic way, crumble some dehydrated sponge in a mound for the sorbet to sit on. Leave some larger chunks of dehydrated sponge around the plate. Place a couple shards of the chocolate tuile leaning against the curd. Place

some dice of fresh pineapple around the curd. Quenelle the sorbet and place on the mound of caramel powder. Serve immediately.

### CARAMEL SPONGE- DEHYDRATED

2l ea	Eggs
500g	Caramel powder
360g	AP flour
270g	Corn starch
6g	Salt
90g	Butter, melted, hot

Combine the caramel powder, eggs and sugar and whip over a bain marie until 50°C. Then whip to room temp on the kitchen aid. Sift the starch and flour two times. Melt the butter. Fold the dry into the eggs and then the butter. Bake at 325°C in greased and floured loaf tins for nine minutes on each side. Check doneness with a cake tester until it comes out dry. Invert immediately. Cool and dehydrate. Once dehydrated, break into irregular pieces.

### GARNISH - DICED FRESH GOLDEN PINEAPPLE

Place a strip of caramel flexicurd on the plate in an artistic way, crumble some dehydrated sponge in a mound for the sorbet to sit on. Leave some larger chunks of dehydrated sponge around the plate. Place a couple shards of the chocolate tuile leaning against the curd. Place some dice of fresh pineapple around the curd. Quenelle the sorbet and place on the mound of caramel powder. Serve immediately.

### CHOCO-CARAMEL SHEETS

350g	Fondant
150g	Glucose
75g	Cacao paste, melted
75g	Almond flour, toasted

Cook the fondant and glucose to 160°C. Chop the chocolate fine and add with the almond flour. Mix well and quickly turn out onto a silpat and allow to cool. Once cool, grind fine in a food processor or spice grinder. Sift evenly onto a silpat baking sheet and bake until it re-melts together. Cool. Crack into shards and reserve in an air tight box with dry packets.