CHAPTER 4

Chic cuisine: the impact of fashion on food

Joanne Finkelstein

The consumption of food, like the satisfying of any appetite, has long since ceased to be about nutrition and has come instead to contain myriad social, cultural and symbolic meanings. In the consumer dominated societies of the industrialized era, every conceivable human idea, cultural practice and material substance seems to have been transformed by 'market forces' into desirable commodities to be pursued and possessed. The consumer society puts everything up for sale and food has been no exception. This makes the desire for food not a simple matter of meeting basic nutritional needs, but part of a social discourse in which personal and collective identities are defined and presented. Food has thus been thoroughly transformed into symbol, icon, trope, sign and status.

For example, Bell and Valentine (1997, pp. 1–2) open their book on the geography of food with dialogue from the screenplay of Quentin Tarantino's innovative film, Pulp Fiction. The scene is of two

murderous criminals driving in the streets of Hollywood, California and idly chatting. One has recently returned from Europe and is reporting on the quaint food tastes of the French who transform the McDonald's quarter-pounder with cheese into the exotic sounding royale with cheese and the Dutch who serve french fries with mayonnaise instead of ketchup.

The scene is humorous on various levels, but its appositeness here is as an illustration of how common it is to find the topic of food a focus for popular culture. Food has become a source of entertainment; indeed, it could be argued that from the beginnings of the European restaurant in the seventeenth century, food has always been more about entertainment and fashion than about sustenance.

Toying with food

That food is not food anymore can be seen from its transformation into various and sometimes frivolous amusements such as the Fabergé egg, bananas in Pyjamas, chocolate novelty golfballs, cigarettes, animals, stiletto-heeled shoes and mobile phones. The use of food in a non-edible capacity is not new. Australians are familiar with the actor Barry Humphries as the alter ego of Dame Edna Everidge, the strident housewife from Moonee Ponds who has socially climbed further than most people can imagine. But in the late 1950s, Humphries was a multi-media artist of a different kind, creating objects from unusual materials. One such piece was a highly coloured canvas made from baked cake. It used lamingtons, fruit cake, sponge fingers, rainbow tiara cake, swiss roll, fairy cake and sprinkles of hundreds-n-thousands (tiny fragments of coloured sugar), crafted into a wall-mounted landscape called *cakescape*. This highly textured piece was both a parody of the Australian fascination with landscape paintings and an ingenious crafting of an art form using banal materials.

Playing with food has a long history. The great French chef Antonin Carême (1784–1833) established architectural food as part of his Grande Cuisine. As amusing additions to the meal, he constructed inedible pieces montées with Italian, Turkish, Russian, Chinese, Egyptian and Gallic themes. In a contemporary setting, the Japanese artist, Ryoichi Majima has incorporated

food into sculptural installations as a means of commenting on and critiquing its role in society. In 1995, Majima completed Noodle Boy and Noodle Girl, two separate works which comment savagely on the relationship between food, power and pleasure. Each sculpture consists of a round ceramic rice bowl, about 1.5 m in diameter, which resembles those commonly found in inexpensive Asian restaurants. Noodle Boy is immersed in the bowl, with only his head and shoulders visible above a soup containing large pieces of floating spring onion, bamboo shoots, water chestnuts, bacon and noodles. There is a television floating in the bowl as well, and Noodle Boy, with his mouth stuffed with long strands of noodle and two chopsticks, seems to be watching the television screen. In situ, the TV monitor is hooked into a closed circuit which shows both the gallery space in which the sculpture is being displayed and the spectators as they walk around the piece. The Noodle Boy, sitting in the soup, is a young man about to take his place in society. He has a wide-eyed expression, a trimmed, bleached yellow Mohawk haircut. Any expectations of a bright future ahead of him are undercut by his present situation. He is naked (or appears to be); the tendons in his neck are strained as his mouth is forced wide open to accept an overload of food. The aura of the piece is dark; Noodle Boy himself appears to be a kind of fodder. The complementary piece, Noodle Girl, also gestures towards an alarming future. The Noodle Girl is also sitting in a large bowl filled with soup and floating vegetable matter. Again, there is a television screen, propped between her raised, spread legs. She is positioned for a gynaecological examination. She seems vulnerable; her head is tilted back, her mouth stuffed with noodles and an oversized pair of chopsticks, held by a huge invisible hand, is forcing food down her throat. Her feet, with bright red painted toe-nails, are propped up on the rim of the bowl, astride the TV monitor.

Majima's sculptures comment on the epicurism that dominates the modern food market. Noodle Boy and Noodle Girl along with his many other food installations provide a commentary on our desire for food, on fashionable tastes and the exaggerated interest we appear to have in food. The foodstuffs we encounter in fast-food outlets, elegant department stores, on grocery shelves, in galleries and art exhibitions, at street

stalls and so on, are loquacious objects. Situating food as the subject of so much commentary draws attention to the fashionable and appetitive cycles that direct our tastes. The early nineteenth century food philosopher Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin offered the now famous aphorism, we are what we eat, which suggested, among other ideas that the plasticity of food and our enthusiasm for toying with it is a fundamental element of human society.

Social role of food

Irrespective of a society's economic organization as agrarian, feudal, capitalist or communal, food is always part of an elaborate symbol system that conveys cultural messages. Mundane personal attributes such as status, gender, age, sexuality and ethnic identity become visible in the food that is selected and served. Food is also capable of representing ephemeral personal qualities such as élan and sangfroid. Tastes for specialized items such as squid, squab pigeon, oysters, raw tuna and offal speak of such claims. In various ways, food is deeply associative; Peter Mayle's (1991) best selling travel novel offers the local cuisine to the reader as part of the process of self-discovery; Alphonso Lingis (1994) provides a philosophy of appetite that includes an explanation of such exotic habits as that of the Incas who dined alone with a spread of gold and jewelled utensils; Freud (1900) has provided a memorable interpretation of a dream about smoked salmon that is less about food and more about sexual anxiety and social respectability. Mary Douglas (1970) has developed taxonomy of foods based on whether they are pure and edible or unclean and polluting. This classification is not just about specific cultural knowledge, it is as well a theory of human subjectivity. She presents an argument that explains why individuals cannot afford to consume 'unclean' foods or cross cultural barriers by tasting novelties, because in so doing they incorporate the 'foreign' into the human body and are thereby exposed to attacks on their vital essence. Accordingly, Douglas (1979) deciphers a meal in terms of idiosyncratic cultural practices as well as a cosmology of subjectivity. Food has the capacity to encapsulate a variety of meanings that extend its social value beyond the obvious.

Food can be thought of as both an empty and over-determined signifier which functions as a text through which much of modern social life becomes intelligible. For instance, where and what we eat, with whom, at what time of day or night, are directly influenced by a variety of everyday factors such as age, gender, social status and income. Bell and Valentine (1997, p. 3) have noted that 'every mouthful, every meal, can tell us something about ourselves, and about our place in the world'. Food is at once universal and mundane, yet vividly revealing of specific cultural habits.

In every society, the nature of food and its distribution are directly influenced by a range of seemingly remote economic, technological, political, cultural, historical and sociological factors. In the consumer society, these influences arise from a variety of sources; for example, the mass production of the motor car, the development of the supermarket, the arrival of television and commercial advertising, factory farming techniques and so on. Each of these, and many others, have been significant in shaping patterns of food consumption and creating the general view that food is a modern amusement and part of contemporary popular culture. Of further influence has been the popularity of the restaurant and the rise of the hospitality industries and tourism. The architecture of modern cities also contributes in so far as most major cities boast a huge variety of cuisines which sometimes give name to specific neighbourhoods such as 'little Italy', 'Chinatown', 'the French Quarter' and 'the (fast food) strip'. These fashions in food have a further influence on satellite industries such as television cookery programs, new styles of food packaging, the publication of cook books, the growth in boutique vineyards and so on. As part of the tourism and hospitality industries, food has become a site of multifarious entertainments shaped in large part by culinary internationalism and cultural migration. It is the very ordinariness of food itself that has enabled it to be written over by a multitude of cultural practices and values.

In the industrialized societies where consumption of goods and experiences is taken for granted, food has been altered from an appetite to a form of renewable desire. It has been long divorced from its function as a source of nutrition and redefined as a source of innovative pleasure. Marion Nestle (2002, p. 5)

tells us that 'people throughout the world eat many different foods and follow many different dietary patterns…' This diversity supports the idea that food is highly distinctive yet characteristic.

Shifts in contemporary tastes are frequently linked to marketing cycles which are further connected to supply chains in related industries where there are influential technological innovations in manufacture and distribution. Developing tastes for certain products is part of food marketing. Nestle (2002, p. 1) has pointed out that on a global scale, 'food companies must convince people to eat more of their products…' They are active in developing fads and fashions in consumer tastes in order to promote their business. While the popularity of snack foods may appear directly connected to changed methods in advertising such as product placement in films, music video clips and so on, other conditions such as agricultural practices and technological advances in manufacture are also part of creating novel taste habits. The popularity of food items such as sweetened drinks, ice cream, baked biscuits, pre-prepared and frozen meals, are all part of a process that attempts to cultivate and control certain desires for food. In no small part, the restaurant has played a primary role in the processes that change and cultivate new food desires, and as such, it can be thought of as a social laboratory with the capacity to commodify foods and change consumer tastes.

The importance of the restaurant

The term 'restaurant' takes on its modern form in the nineteenth century as a place where meals can be purchased at various times of the day and night. The original meaning of the word refers specifically to a French health fashion to imbibe a medicinal soup, consommé or nourishing juice, prepared for sickly individuals (see Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel*, 1708). The transformation of the term *restaurant* from its eighteenth century original meaning as a restorative bouillon to its current meaning as a fashionable and convenient place to eat and drink has become a fertile area of scholarship in cultural theory and history principally because it parallels and encapsulates much of the modernizing experience that characterizes western society.[1]

The idea of the restaurant (as a place of nourishment) begins in different forms in different locations without an agreed or necessary originary point. The restaurant and its antecedents can be linked to the 'cook shops' of the medieval city which prepared foods for those without home cooking facilities, which was most people. It is associated with the seventeenth century coffee houses that arose in London as purveyors of coffee and tobacco which also provided a vibrant meeting place for the exchange of information about business activities in the city, parliament and at the docks. In various parts of Europe and Asia, elements of the modern restaurant were to be found in markets, bazaars, travellers' inns, village kitchens, wineshops and taverns. All of which were rudimentary restaurants insofar as they met the appetitive needs of paying customers.

From its modern origins in a small cup of bouillon, the restaurant has been recognized as part of the complex transformations that have produced the contemporary liberal era. The restaurant has been associated with changes in sensibilities and pleasures; it has been seen as influential in the democratization of luxury and the dissemination of fashionability; it has functioned as both a symbol of civility and a mechanism for spreading the civilizing process (Elias, 1978). When the restaurant became a place where women and men could display themselves in public, it was immediately important as a site where experimental styles of human exchange and play were negotiated and practised. The restaurant made evident the complex interdependencies between individuals and their socio-economic circumstances, and in these ways became the background against which individuals learned to disport themselves and dissemble, to gain social advantage. This atmosphere constructed the restaurant as a form of spectacle in which the objects on display included both people and foodstuffs. The restaurant contributed to the visibility of self-identity and to the creation of celebrity by being a site where the famous could be seen by the not famous, and where celebrity chefs and restaurateurs could make their reputations.[2] In short, the modern restaurant was (and remains) an eloquent signifier of sociability and a mechanism for status competition and fashionability.

From its earliest incarnation, the restaurant has been intricately involved with various social influences and in particular

with the emergence of modern fashion. Despite appearances, the restaurant was not simply a commercial enterprise where goods and services were systematically exchanged; it was always a crucible in which a variety of appetites and desires were cultivated, and where the processes of generating new social experiences were constantly being manufactured. Food is about sustenance and appetite, both physical and symbolic, and the distribution of food is about the organization of a society and the display of status and power. Thus, to take note of who eats what with whom and where, is to cast light on a host of political, economic and cultural practices. As Terry Eagleton (1998, p. 204) has summarized, food is 'endlessly interpretable, as gift, threat, poison, recompense, barter, seduction, solidarity, suffocation'. However, it is not as much the plasticity of foodstuffs that explains the social value of the restaurant as it is the variety of human activities that have come to circulate around food and which have made the restaurant more than its origins ever suggested.

The restaurant à la mode

Nineteenth century Paris has been described as having a restaurant on every corner. They provided for every conceivable taste and became the well-recognized icons of the city. These bustling eating and drinking establishments, incorporating many of the habits of the earlier seventeenth and eighteenth century coffee houses, played a significant part in shaping the character of the modern era by bringing people together from various social strata in an unregulated mix that created opportunities for new ideas, tastes and values. In this way, they acted as a social barometer, sensitively recording and nurturing the various influences and undercurrents that were invisibly creating the fabric of the future society. Rebecca Spang has argued that much of the importance of the restaurant lies with its contribution to modern cosmopolitanism. Diners in the restaurant were making history by producing new forms of sociality: 'to be conversant with the protocols, rituals, and vocabulary of restaurant going was to be quintessentially Parisian and supremely sophisticated' (Spang, 2000, p. 172).

Of its various functions, the role of the restaurant in the shaping of modern social manners is perhaps most interesting.

From its beginnings, it was a site where the individual's repertoire of claims for identity and social status could be tested and displayed. For men initially and then for women, it provided a stage setting where techniques of sociability could be developed and demonstrated. The restaurant itself contributed to this dramaturgy by augmenting the individual's social presence in much the same way that the domestic sphere came to extend and make visible the sensibilities of the nineteenth century bourgeois woman (Felski, 1995). The restaurant was (and remains) a structuring element in the long-term experimentation with social relations that underpin modern, mercantile society.

Sennett (1994, p. 345) has given an interesting account of how the restaurant was directly responsible for creating certain manners of decorum and rules of sociability. He gives the example of the eighteenth century English coffee house which encouraged, for the first time, the intermingling of different classes of men (not women) all motivated by interests in public news and gossip about business, trade opportunities and local power alliances. From this swill of talk, the benefits of crossing class barriers in a public meeting place were quickly learned. In the cafés of Paris of the ancient regime, and prior to the dramatic events of the French Revolution, political groups were able to congregate. The café provided a safe public space from which to recruit members and generate solidarity through open discussion. The café provided a new domain where strangers intermingled, and where for the price of a drink, any individual was physically positioned in close enough proximity with others and could thus initiate a conversation with whomever they chose. Providing this democratic space where great varieties of people literally brushed up against one another proved to be an important factor in the fashioning of the modern manners required for metropolitan life. Most obviously, the café society required the individual to develop a greater sense of trust and acceptance of the stranger who seemed always to be standing nearby.

Fashioning the modern restaurant

From these experimental spaces in sociability, new styles of restaurants quickly developed. The small street cafés, or cafés

intimes, had become immediately popular as meeting places for those aspirants who required a sequestered space to plot political activities and hatch out schemes for transforming society. In a short space of time, these dark corners gave way to cafés with tables and chairs placed outdoors, in full view of the grand boulevards of Paris. This relocation to a different streetscape destroyed the privacy needed by the revolutionary, and replaced it with a larger and more theatrical setting, where passers-by could watch those seated at tables as if they were on a stage, and in turn they themselves could be watched by strollers-by. This change in spatial arrangements had an immediate effect on the style of sociality in the restaurant. The outdoor café required people to stay seated at the one table, unlike the sequestered coffee house where individuals moved freely from group to group, or one argumentative cluster to another. The outdoor café appealed to a different clientele – the middle and upper classes. These larger cafés provided slower waiter service in comparison to the speedy bar service of the bustling coffee house and became, instead, a quiet resting place where individuals could sit in public undisturbed, for lengthy periods of time and yet still be entertained. Sennett (1994, p. 346) quotes nineteenth century traveller Augustus Hare on the charms of the café terrace, separated from the bustle of street life: 'Half an hour spent on the boulevards or on one of the chairs in the Tuileries gardens has the effect of an infinitely diverting theatrical performance'.

The significance of these different styles of restaurant and café demonstrates how new sensibilities and pleasures were being cultivated in individuals. The restaurant was the site where novel forms of association were being enjoyed and where the situational tensions between spatiality and sociality were being mediated. The nineteenth century sociologist, Georg Simmel (1950) observed, in his prescient analyses of modern metropolitan life, that the physical proximity of strangers in places like restaurants, public parks, railway carriages and theatres, created the circumstances in which individuals developed new ways of thinking and seeing as well as new emotions and manners of behaving. Simmel made a point of comparing the theatre and railway carriage as sites where the architecture shaped the interior sensations. Both these places required people to sit

together in silence, for long periods of time, often with little else to do but stare ahead, into open space. Sitting in public in this way was a new experience. The modern railway carriages arranged their seating with everyone facing forward, unlike the previous mode of transport, the horse-drawn carriage, which positioned individuals opposite one another. Simmel theorized that the advent of mass transport, along with mass entertainment in theatres, parks, cafés and so on, proved to be the material circumstances that created the blasé attitude. For Simmel, metropolitan life trained individuals in the blunting of affect; it required them not to respond to others or acknowledge their circumstances, but to appear bland even oblivious at all times. This mien was a form of protection from the raucous intrusion of ungoverned street life. The blasé attitude blunted the unwanted assaults or demands from the noisy, visually stimulating street life of the city; it cultivated that particular capacity, so common in the modern world of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, of being surrounded by life but remaining detached from it.

The popularity of the modern restaurant has depended precisely upon the cultivation of this new psychological reserve which allowed individuals to enjoy the entertainment of being in public and come under the scrutinizing gaze of the stranger but, at the same time, feel unthreatened as if they were merely another element in the broad panorama of the spectacle itself. The diner enjoys the entertainment and is also part of the entertainment itself. Throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, the numbers and varieties of restaurants in the metropolitan centres of the industrializing world have continued to grow in popularity and social utility, and have continued as well to contribute to contemporary cosmopolitanism.[3] As Spang (2000) noted for the eighteenth century, a city's restaurants measured its vibrancy and sophistication. The areas of a city where restaurants concentrated, such as the Palais-Royal and Latin Quarter in Paris and Covent Garden in London, have become fashionable locations. Travel guides from the nineteenth century onwards commonly referred to restaurants as part of the local colour. Restaurants had become the trope through which to understand the distinctiveness of particular ways of life.

A century or more later, the restaurant has assumed multifarious forms. It is now part of a global multi-billion dollar industry, a tourist attraction, luxury entertainment and social convenience. It has extended beyond its early functions as a crucible for the revolutionary, innovatory and recreational, to become, in the twentieth century, part of the industrialized society's large scale economic structure and international position. Yet the restaurant retains a human scale insofar as it is often used by the individual as a personal totem to indicate private values. For example, a favourite vegan restaurant might reflect an individual's personal attitudes toward health and the environment. It might represent the diner's strong attitudes to food including the ethical concerns around animal farming and livestock for food. It might also suggest a concern with genetic modification of grains, vegetarianism, organic foods, health foods, laboratory manufacture of smart foods, nutriceuticals and so on. In short, the attractions and pleasures of the restaurant and the cultural habits around dining out can transform the diner into a stakeholder who oftentimes takes a strong interest in the complex public discourses on the morality and fashionability of different food styles and practices.

In these various guises, Spang (2000, p. 3) has argued the restaurant is and has always been the site for complicated histories of numerous social, economic and political innovations. Its own history of evolution from a small cup of soup to a political and social crucible of radical thought and then to a diversionary refuge and haven closely allied with the entertainment industries, mirrors many of the complex changes that have shaped industrialized societies over the past 200 years.

Consumer fashions

The restaurant does not have a singular character yet it is a popular site for the satisfaction of various appetites. In this sense, its most basic function, that of delivering food at the request of a paying customer, provides a minimal definition. Now, in its myriad forms, it houses new political activities including postcolonial claims of identity, innovative medical regimes and health fads, and experimental social engagements that cross the divides of class and gender. Its proliferation has not obeyed

definable and orderly principles; its success is tied to the explosion in human tastes and social activities that characterize the modern, liberal era.[4]

The similarities and differences between restaurants as diverse as the McDonald's fast food outlet, Terence Conran's massive *Mezzo* with its 700 tables, *Windows on the World* at the 107th level of New York's now vaporized World Trade Center and the legendary *Tour d'argent*, are useful devices to focus attention on the complex social relations that occur in that particular sector of the modern public domain.

Much of the driving force beneath the proliferation of the restaurant is related to the expansion of the consumer economy. As Marion Nestle (2002, p. 300) has noted of the food industries in general, '… new products [are] the key to expanding sales …'. The earliest restaurateurs understood this modern economic principle. César Ritz, who opened the opulent dining room at London's Savoy Hotel in 1889 knew that his bourgeois patrons were most interested in the theatricality of the restaurant, and especially the opportunities it offered to disport themselves, to play act, dissemble and to occupy the extravagant and opulent settings of the dining room as if it were their own.

As restaurateurs have long known, a smart decor can give a decisive edge over the competition. This knowledge underscored César Ritz's stylization of the grand dining room at the Savoy as a promenade for the bourgeoisie. Other restaurateurs have employed various gimmicks to enhance the drama of dining out, giving their establishments names that are meaningless but arresting (*The Quilted Giraffe*, *Liquidity*, *Planet Hollywood*) or offering distinctive styles of cuisine, and remarkable uniformed apparel for the staff. They have used the location of the kitchen, size of the wine glasses, design of the crockery, colour of the décor and cost of service as gimmicks and affectations that can distract the diner from the quality of the food: as the nineteenth century chef Antonin Carême knew well. He popularized the gimmick of food sculptures for precisely this reason. He made ornamental sculptures from spun sugar which could stand 4 and 5 feet in height and were shaped into bucolic scenes that included exotic pagodas, fountains and elaborate temples with cherubs adorning every possible nook and cranny. The purpose

of these confectionaries was to make the expense of dining out more akin to the purchase of a nebulous marvel, an experience that exulted the individual above others. It was, in short, conspicuous consumption as a claim for social superiority.

The early nineteenth-century commentator Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1825/1970) regarded restaurants as tableaux of bourgeois life. He claimed that one could always find in them an array of interesting characters: the lone male diner who orders his food in a loud voice, waits impatiently and eats quickly; families who delight in being out of the home; married couples who do not have much to say to one another but are quietly engrossed in watching the scene about them, and lovers who relish the constraints placed upon their ardour by being in public. He saw in restaurants the diners who acted as if they were regulars, who engaged the waiters with ostentatious familiarity, and the tourists who knew they would never return and so exploited their anonymity by unselfconsciously over-indulging. A hundred and fifty years after Brillat-Savarin, the restaurant is still a theatre, a scene worth observing, a public place full of possibilities but one which is at the same time familiar, reassuring and reliable (Finkelstein, 1989).

Restaurant architecture

A restaurant's décor and ambience symbolize the dining experience. Certain elements in the architecture of the restaurant convey information about what is being offered – the style of furniture, napery, lighting, floor covering, dress codes and so on, convey messages about luxury taste and the authenticity of the dining experience. Sometimes these codes are undercut by the exercise of fashion. For example, drinking a good wine can be made more difficult and hence less pleasurable if served in awkwardly shaped or out-sized glasses. Eating from a larger platter can be a source of irritation if the dining table is too small and the plate repeatedly clunks against crockery. The comfort of the seating, the level of lighting and noise, the colours and texture of the walls and ceiling are elements of dining that directly impinge on the diner's pleasure. These physical elements have little to do with the menu and comestibles themselves yet they exert a noticeable affect. In this way, the fashions in restaurant

décor, cuisine and house style, all constitute important aspects of the dining experience.

Indeed, there is hardly an element in the dining experience that resists the influence of fashion. How the waiter behaves, his or her physical appearance and demeanour, the architecture of the restaurant, type of cuisine, hours of operation, size of the dining table, the location of the kitchen, the backstage services such as toilets, coat room, food storage system, are all subject to the vagaries of fashion. The restaurant is crowded with eloquent signifiers that shape the diner's pleasure, and all restaurants, whether they are the spectacular tourist attractions celebrated the world over or the local family bistro at the heart of a suburban community, are in the business of creating a particular atmosphere that is controlled through its immediate physical environment. The success or otherwise of these efforts is an intrinsic part of the fashionability and theatricality of dining out.

There are places to eat where the setting is much more important than the food. *The Four Seasons* in New York is celebrated for its décor, its famous art works, marble fish pond, gigantic chandelier, heavy silver service, and the menu which changes seasonally. The restaurant has been part of New York's cultural scene for years, not only as a trendsetter with cuisine and service but with its exclusive monthly wine tastings that bring together a select grouping of that city's elite (Trillin, 2002, p. 145). There are other restaurants which trade on their spectacular physical locations such as *La Tour D'Argent* overlooking the Seine in Paris, which also boasts being the original modern restaurant; *The Village Green* in New York with its English gardens, and *Bilson's* on Sydney's Circular Quay.

Conclusion

In a sense, the restaurant is a forerunner of the contemporary entertainment industry, which is in the business of marketing desires and constructing appetites. During its history it has enticed the social classes to imitate one another, it has been the arena in which class divisions have been safely breached, and where diverse human exchanges such as business deals,

seductions, family quarrels, etc. have taken place. It is where displays of social pretension, guile and the dictates of fashion have all been in evidence. The diner can pretend to be rich, urbane and powerful. S/he can play the role of gastronome, bon vivant, good father, benevolent mother, ardent lover and so on without any fear that the subterfuge will be exposed. In these many ways, the restaurant keeps abreast of shifting styles in tastes and behaviour, at the same time that it also fashions desires for many more pleasures than the prepared comestibles.

End notes

1 In Paris, in 1782, a take-out shopkeeper named Beauvilliers is credited with the establishment of the first in-principle restaurant. That is, he included in his shop, La grande Taverne de Londres, a number of small tables and chairs and served customers with a variety of dishes cooked on the premises. By serving these foods on the premises, Beauvilliers was functioning as a restaurateur and thus can be credited with the original concept. However, these originary moments evolve from a variety of preceding circumstances. Two decades before, in Paris, a soup vendor named Boulanger provided a place for the consumption of his restoratives (the original meaning of the term restaurant). In the 1760s, in New York, Samuel Fraunces opened a public house in lower Manhattan (not yet so named) where he sold beer and food, and hence, could be regarded as a restaurateur. In the 1680s, in London, there were the very popular coffee houses, and these too can be seen as forerunners of the modern restaurant.

2 Antonin Carême (1784–1833) is frequently cited as the original celebrated chef. As well as being famous for producing elaborate centre-pieces spun-out of sugar that decorated the dining table, he wrote on gastronomy, codified recipes and travelled widely to the great aristocratic kitchens of Europe.

3 Present day Tokyo, with its estimated 200,000 eating establishments may well be the twenty-first century equivalent of nineteenth century Paris.

4 The annual statistics produced by government agencies in France, Canada, Japan, Australia, Sweden, Germany, USA

and so on, each indicate rates of consumption in cafes, hotels, restaurants and the like. From the late 1960s onwards, these statistical portraits show rates of food and beverage consumption on an ever increasingly upward steep curve. The food industries have become one of the largest sectors in the national economies of industrialized societies (Nestle, 2002).

Bibliography

Bell, D. and Valentine, G. (1997). *Consuming Geographies*. London: Routledge.

Brillat-Savarin, J.A. (1825/1970). *The Physiology of Taste*. New York: Liveright.

Counihan, C. and Van Esterik, P. (Eds) (1997). *Food and Culture*. New York: Routledge.

Douglas, M. (1970). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Douglas, M. (1979). Les structures du culinaire. *Communications* **31**, 145–170.

Eagleton, T. (1998). In *The Eagleton Reader* (S. Regan, Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Eco, U. (1973). Social life as sign. In *Structuralism* (D. Robey, Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elias, N. (1978). *The Civilizing Process.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Felski, R. (1995). *The Gender of Modernity*. Camb. Mass: Harvard University Press.

Finkelstein, J. (1989). *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Freud, S. (1900). The Interpretation of Dreams. In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (James Strachey, trans and Ed.), 24 Vols. Hogarth Press, Vol. 4, 1952–1974, p. 147.

Furetière, A. (1708/1978). *Dictionnaire Universel*. Paris: Parmentier.

Griffiths, S. and Wallace, J. (Eds) (1998). *Consuming Passions: Food in the Age of Anxiety*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Levenstein, H. (1988). *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lingis, A. (1994). *Abuses*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Mayle, P. (1991). *A Year in Provence*. New York: Random.
Nestle, M. (2002). *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Pillsbury, R. (1990). *From Boarding House to Bistro: The American Restaurant Then and Now*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.
Sennett, R. (1994). *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization*. London: Faber and Faber.
Simmel, G. (1950). *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Spang, R. (2000). *The Invention of the Restaurant*. Camb. Mass: Harvard University Press.
Trillin, C. (2002). The red and the white. *The New Yorker Food Issue*. August 19–26.