

[Sign in](#) | [Register](#)

Go to: [Guardian Unlimited home](#)



[guardian.co.uk](#)

Search:  [guardian.co.uk](#)

[News](#) [Sport](#) [Comment](#) [Culture](#) [Business](#) [Money](#) [Life & style](#) [Travel](#) [Environment](#) [Blogs](#) [Jobs](#) [A-Z](#)

[Life & Style](#) [Home](#) [Fashion & Beauty](#) [Food & Drink](#) [Homes & Gardens](#) [Health](#)

[Home Shop](#) [Fashion & Beauty Women](#) [Food & Drink Book a table](#) [Homes & Gardens Garden shop](#) [Health Eat right](#) [Family & Relationships Soulmates Dating](#) [Ethical living Eco store](#)



[Food & drink](#)

## Table talk

Giorgio Locatelli on the best way to woo a chef, why he ate the pulsing heart of a snake, and his frustrated passion for motorbikes

Search Life & Style

### Services

- Restaurant booking
- Eat right
- Find a job
- Eco store
- Find a car
- Garden centre
- Property search
- Rent a DVD
- Reader offers
- Shopping
- Soulmates

### Regulars

- Ethical fashion
- Fashion galleries
- Guides
- Nibbles
- Horoscopes
- Our experts
- Sites we like
- Restaurant reviews
- Private lives

### Columnists

- Jess Cartner-Morley
- Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall
- Hadley Freeman
- Mariella Frostrup
- Dan Pearson
- Nigel Slater
- Our experts

### Feedback

- Email us

### Jobs from our site

- ITN MARK EDUCATION: [Geography Teacher](#)
- BADENOCH & CLARK: Resident [Involvement Worker](#)
- ITN MARK EDUCATION: [Teacher of English](#)

[Search all jobs](#)

**Rachel Dixon**  
Tuesday May 6, 2008  
[guardian.co.uk](#)

### What would you have for your last supper?

- Risotto with white truffles, which means I would have to be reprieved until autumn. You can have as much money as you want, but you can't buy truffles if they're not in season. The rhythm of food is the rhythm of who we are.

### What foodstuff would you put in Room 101?

- Get rid of a food forever? That's terrible! It's a big decision ... OK, farmed prawns. There's still time to reverse the misery the industry causes, unlike the chicken industry, where it's too late. That's why those TV programmes about chickens were ridiculous.



Giorgio Locatelli.  
Photograph: Richard Saker

[Article continues](#) ▾

The Guardian Weekly Podcast.  
Listen now >>  
[theguardianweekly.co.uk](#)

What's your favourite table?

Table 11 at Locanda - we built the restaurant around that table. You could be the most powerful person in the world, but you couldn't have that table if I didn't want to give it to you.

**What's your poison?**

Peroni Nastro Azzurro, of course.

**Which book gets you cooking?**

The Science of Cooking and the Art of Eating Well by Pellegrino Artusi, a 19th century Italian cookbook that has also been translated into English. We base our research for the restaurant on old Italian recipes. Also, the [Oxford Companion to Italian Food](#) is one of the most important books I've ever read in my life.

**What was your childhood teatime treat?**

Pasta. All we wanted was pasta with tomato. We had it twice a week, but we wanted it every day.

**What would you cook to impress a date?**

I didn't cook for my wife when we met. I wanted to do so many things to her, but none of them was cooking! She cooked for me - that's the way to get a chef.

But I have used cooking many times in the past to make friends and impress girls. My trick is to get the dish on the table so quickly - blam! It wows people, but it takes many years of practice.

**Who would you most like to cook for?**

My grandmother. I cooked very little for her. I was just a young man, and she died believing in me, but worrying about me. It would be lovely to show her what I can do.

**What was your most memorable meal?**

Fish soup in Sicily with my wife and no kids. I can never forget that night.

**What was your biggest food disaster?**

I have hundreds, every single day. Disasters are cool - you struggle, you laugh, and you learn.

**What's the worst meal you've ever had?**

Plane food, so now I take my own: muesli, fruit, chocolate. I always eat what I want, and I never eat what I don't like, but on a plane I can't get away. In a restaurant, if I don't like the food, I make up an excuse and leave. But I don't have a snobbery about food. I like the nice, plain fish at [Scott's](#). I used to love seeing other chefs' food, but now it's useless to me. Now my inspiration comes from ingredients.

**What's the most outlandish thing you've ever eaten?**

I have almost a mission to taste every ingredient I come across. I've eaten the pulsing heart of a snake, I'll eat anything.

**Who's your food hero/food villain?**

Carlo Petrini [the founder of [Slow Food](#)]. The villains are the conglomerates: Nestlé, Del Monte ...

**Vegetarians: genius or madness?**

It's definitely not madness. So much energy is needed to produce meat. Vegetables have had a bad press in Britain for so many years - Italians eat them all the time. You don't need to have a burger or steak and chips every night. It's very important to have a balanced diet.

**Muesli or fry-up?**

Definitely muesli - and porridge! I learned to eat it when I worked in the Savoy in 1985. Now I have it one, two, three times a week - I had it this morning!

**Fusion food or Best of British?**

Definitely, definitely Italian food. Though in my eyes, what I do is fusion, because 75% of the ingredients at Locanda come from England. I use English produce to create Italian food.

**What would you do if you weren't a chef?**

I'd be a motorbike racer! I really love riding motorbikes, and I can't imagine having a job I don't love. I've got a lot of motorbikes, but after I had an accident last year I can't ride them, because my wife has taken my insurance away. The insurance man won't take my calls!

**Make a wish**

That everybody in the world could have some healthy food for one day. We produce a lot of food, so it's achievable, but there's no interest in doing it.

*Giorgio Locatelli is chef-patron of [Locanda Locatelli](#). He is working with Peroni Nastro Azzurro to launch a range of bite-sized Italian dishes to accompany drinks. L'Aperitivo di Peroni will be available in a selection of bars and restaurants across the UK; see [peroniitaly.com](#) for more details*

---

[Printable version](#) | [Send it to a friend](#) | [Clip](#)



[Privacy policy](#) | [Terms & conditions](#) | [Advertising guide](#) | [A-Z index](#) | [Inside guardian.co.uk](#) | [About this site](#)  
[Join our dating site today](#)

guardian.co.uk © Guardian News and Media Limited 2008