

# A PLATTER of taste

*The days of classic china in fine-dining restaurants are long gone. Chefs now work directly with makers to create serveware that adds high drama to the story of food* Words EMMA MOORE

Not long ago, the food styling rulebook decreed that to showcase culinary crafts, white tableware was key. Certainly through the 1990s and early 2000s, fine-dining establishments wouldn't risk a cluttered canvas to present their edible artworks. Now you'd be hard pushed to find a white plate exiting the kitchens of our master chefs.

Two food revolutions that have dominated the past 20 years, molecular and New Nordic cuisines, have fed the phenomenon. They are often credited with changing how we eat, but have also upended the tools and trappings of the dining table. Makers and chefs now collaborate closely to create serveware that extends the story told by the food. 'Now it's not just about eating, but to have an experience and enter the world of the chef,' says Michelin-starred chef Hélène Darroze.

An early protagonist in the design of the molecular table is Martin Kastner of Crucial

## **'NOW IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT EATING, BUT TO HAVE AN EXPERIENCE AND ENTER THE WORLD OF THE CHEF'**

Detail. A blacksmith-turned-designer and innovator, he is still inventing for the likes of Tak Room in New York (recently, a custom butter twirler). KH Würtz studio in Denmark, meanwhile, was founded by father and son ceramicists Aage and Kasper Würtz in the early 2000s, when they sensed a renewed thirst for hand-thrown stoneware, and were well placed to answer the call for experimental earthy ceramics from Noma and the New Nordic crew. They set the tone for future chef-maker collaborations.

Chefs often pick and choose work from across a number of studios. Darroze is working with the Israeli ceramicist Noam Rosenberg, as well as Sarah-Linda Forrer. Simon Rogan of L'Enclume, Aulis and now Henrock, is perhaps the UK's most prolific commissioner of bespoke tableware and works with ceramicists across Europe, including Odd Standard. Here, we profile some of the food world's favoured makers.



## *ODD STANDARD*

Perfectly located to feed the New Nordic hunger for bespoke tableware that speaks to the terroir, Stavanger-based Norwegian designers Constance Gaard Kristiansen and Tonje Sandberg (ceramicist and industrial designer respectively; left) formed Odd Standard in 2014, specifically to feed the plating fantasies of chefs. The pair's brilliance has meant their work adorns tables across Scandinavia and beyond. Recent UK collaborations include City Social, Da Terra and L'Enclume.

Their projects see a high degree of customisation. Rest, in Oslo, which opened last year, uses food waste, so they worked with 100 per cent recycled glass. 'The most characteristic piece is a plate with real chicken feet [above] as a comment on the large quantity of hens thrown away each year. The feet have been dried and treated with food-safe black coating,' says Sandberg.

'The design of our products is not finished until the chef has put it to use. It only then transforms with the food.' [oddstandard.no](http://oddstandard.no) ►

