

DIMENSIONE CHI WING LO®

MADE IN ITALY BY MARONI



Project : Tour d'Erable, April 2020

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Tour d'Erable

I seldom use first person singular to write about design. Perhaps I have been leaning on the thought that keeping design objective could extend its relevance to embrace us all. In that way, design could be more about what we aspire to, beyond the satisfaction of what I like.

...But when design is associated with food, how it is prepared, set on a dish, placed in front of us; then the table that connects us, the chairs we linger on, the light that catches the sights of the viands and the happy faces around, the cabinet that put in store the utensils for what could be expected in the coming courses; the room that keeps such aroma, like a huge pot with a tight lid, and when it comes the right moment to be lifted, what will be the “food” beyond food ; I mean the sun, the rain, the fog, the snow... to which this centrifugal ritual of food endlessly reaching out, and how each of these special flavors from nature could be infused in food to create, even if it is for a fleeting moment, a bite to eternity... I find it utterly irresistible in the context of food and want to taste everything, edible or otherwise, surrounding this very essence of gastronomical fulfillment. Should I say, taste is not only a sense from the tongue; how often I taste with my eye, my hand, my nose, my skin; and those memorable moments, to sip, savor and chew with my heart.



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This past winter had sent us all to a long facultative hibernation. We all slowed down, taking an unprecedented break all together. The world too, exhausted by our exploitation, took a good rest as well, so were the sky, the sea, the mountain, and every living thing that has grown and walked on this planet. Like all of you, I too had carved out my own little nest in the anticipation of the unknown. Strangely, I was supposed to slow down, but finding myself more prolific; I was hoping to conserve my energy, but finding myself to have harnessed more. One of these works, TOUR D'ERABLE, which I had dreamed of in many different forms in the past, came to my rescue, elevated me for a season at this uncertain time...



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Spring always comes, no matter how much it is delayed by pandemic or late snow. I will have my favorite asparagus, especially the white ones. Grown in the dark, risen from a mound of dirt, yet so virtuous, so sweet, our botanic Rhodopis, adorable Cinderella! How could she, be so deprived of light, find herself so full of optimism? Silent and buried all her youth, she waits for spring to discover her, for the fresh green trees and grass to celebrate her spirit, one that is pure and white as driven snow. I need no butter or oil, to soften more her tender soul; nor I want zing or salt, to stiffen more her slender prop...

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Simple pleasure, I like to have corn marinated with a spoonful of Sun, letting the brilliance soak in, to peel its husk and to grille its kernels to gold. Like a bird, with a seed in the beak, flying high and away, I would nest somewhere between heaven and earth, doing nothing but to enjoy every kernel at its full glory. Perhaps under the shadow of a giant umulonimbus, at this height, if it could saturate, cascading down as water, as wine, to quench my thirst at this patch of remaining summer...

Will this corn be more divine than the same corn but pierced by a wooden stewer, taking out from a steamer, always overcooked, its sweetness has all lost to starch, nothing like the juicy picture above the cashier?



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Remember the first year in Canada, school just started a month or so, it was my first experience of the first snow, while most of the leaves were still hanging on in every maple. I could have taken that special moment as a starter for the winter or a dessert for the summer, like a vanilla snow. Somehow these white flakes, however unhurried, never intended to take away the colours or their exuberance from this unforgettable autumn. If I were melancholic about maple, I must recall the marvel and bias I had some decades back in Italy: *"Among the numerous species of perennial trees, I have developed a fondness for the family of maple; to an extent that when I speak of wood, I mean the intricate curly vein, the dense xylem, the sparsely deviated tissue, the light fresh ochre, the sweet sap, the soft hardness, the crispy sound, the grand stature, the good health, and the lasting modesty of maple."*



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If I were to work out a recipe, first thought could be that I would not be so keen on a sauce, or using one ingredient for the purpose of covering up the taste of another. With all the recent developments of gastronomy aside, I think what is still the most challenging today for any cook, professional and amateur alike, is how to prepare, for instances, every grain of plain rice delicious by themselves, every leaf of vegetable that could impress on our memory its authentic texture and fragrance. In cooking, and as much in design, there are two obvious schools of thought. One is to excite the taste buds, the other is to cultivate the genuine taste of individual ingredient. Much effort in design today is directed to this wow factor which often fades away the moment after its first impact, and because it is quickly consummable, we must continue to look for an even more wow design.

How wow can it be when we have suffered from design fatigue, most of our sensory axons have been worn by repeated exposures to overdosed stimulation?

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TOUR D'ERABLE is a private restaurant in a natural reserve, with four special rooms furnished with the 2020 collection of DIMENSIONE CHI WING LO. The restaurant opens at sunrise and closes at sunset in the months of February, May, August and November, serving a cuisine using fundamental ingredients such as the four seasons, architecture, interior, furniture, objects, lighting, tableware, cutlery, and cooking them together with simple food, as a way to rediscover and to celebrate the essential taste of life.



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