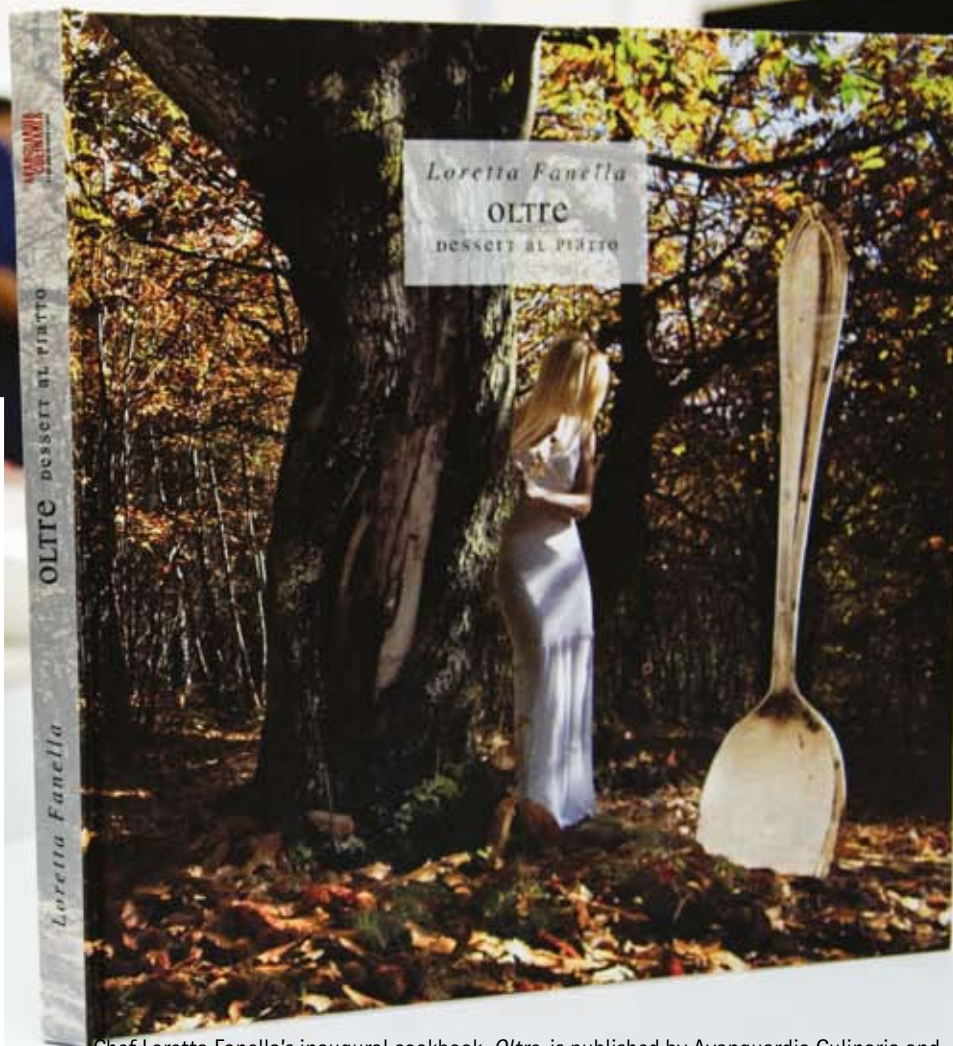


甜品

小册点



Chef Loretta Fanella putting the finishing touches to her dessert, the undergrowth. She presented this dish during the chocolate workshop at this year's World Gourmet Summit to a rousing applause.



Chef Loretta Fanella's inaugural cookbook, *Oltre*, is published by Avanguardia Culinaria and can be purchased at www.avanguardiaculinaria.com. Price available upon request.

Loretta's Game Plan

TAKING A PEEK INTO CHEF LORETTA FANELLA'S COOKBOOK, *OLTRE*, IS LIKE TAKING A JOURNEY THROUGH A MAGICAL WONDERLAND. FILLED WITH DESSERTS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE DESSERTS, CHEF FANELLA IS ONE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN THE CONVENTIONAL. CUISINE & WINE ASIA SAT DOWN WITH THIS TALENTED PASTRY EXTRAORDINAIRE WHO DOES THINGS DIFFERENTLY WHEN IT COMES TO HER DESSERT CREATIONS.

il tetris





Doing something that she loves most, Chef Loretta Fanella is a vision of calm and confidence.

Do a Google search on Chef Loretta Fanella and you will be returned with 22,000 different entries for your perusal, though, chances are more than half of these entries are in Italian. The English speaking world has yet to know this superbly talented pastry chef who has worked with two of the world's best chefs – three-Michelin-starred chefs Ferran Adrià and Annie Féolde. But that will soon change and how lucky indeed for us that she was here for the 14th instalment of the World Gourmet Summit recently. *Cuisine & Wine Asia* caught up with her amidst the flurry of activities.

Never Judge A Book By Its Cover

It may be a cliché but this old English adage speaks volume of Chef Loretta Fanella. Chef Fanella said of her looks, "It's definitely very deceiving. I may have an angelic face, gentle manners, blue eyes and long golden hair but I'm a very determined person. It just takes one look for my assistants to understand that I want things to be done in a perfect manner." A very meticulous person indeed, she is one who takes her work seriously, constantly putting pressure on herself. According to Chef Fanella, guests may not see any mistakes on the plate of dessert that they are served, but if she knows that something's amiss, she'll take it very hard on herself. Now that's someone who is truly a perfectionist. She shared a similar situation, "When I was working for Chef [Annie] Féolde at Enoteca Pinchiorri, my parents came to dine one evening. And because of the humid condition, my desserts didn't turned out the way I want them to be. But my parents couldn't tell the difference and kept complimenting me. I felt bad, disappointed with myself."

The chef profession is one that is very challenging and involves long hours and extreme working conditions. More often than not, whenever they have the time, chefs will take the opportunity to

unwind and just forget about their work for a moment. And the same goes for Chef Loretta Fanella. When she's not in the kitchen whipping up glorious desserts that will make even the most discerning palates salivate, she enjoys running (particularly during wintertime!), working out in the gymnasium and swimming laps in the local pool. She revealed secrets to her active lifestyle, "It's a way for me to wind down. When I'm most active during my exercise regime, I feel as free as a bird."

Why Didn't I Think Of That?

Tetris, the field, the sun, the daisy, the zen garden and time for cake. No, these are not what make your summer but the names of some of Chef Loretta Fanella's most amazing creations, all taken from the various pages found in her cookbook, *Oltre*. Incidentally, she also has one that pays tribute to summer (page 12). Usually, when we think of desserts, we'd think of crème caramel, tiramisu, chocolate lava cake and many others but not Chef Fanella. She takes it to a whole new level, turns ordinary ingredients into extraordinary masterpieces and makes you ask, "Why didn't I think of that?" "I believe a dessert must remain in the memory of whoever eats it, both for its look but especially for its taste," she opined. And because of this, she has created these works of art, enjoyed and admired by so many. It's her sheer talent and creativity that sets her apart from the rest and puts her in the same league as legendary pâtissiers, chefs Pierre Hermé and Oriol Balaguer, so much that even the world's best chef, three-Michelin-starred Chef Ferran Adrià, sings her praises, "[Chef] Loretta Fanella is someone out of the ordinary. She is a beacon in the world of fine dining, both now and in the future."

"A dessert must be soft, crunchy, tart and sweet. Part of it must be cold; another part must be aromatic, all carefully put together with a purpose, without exaggerating or lacking balance."
Loretta Fanella

Defying Conventions

Not content with creating simple desserts, Chef Loretta Fanella defies conventions and shakes things up a little. Take for example, tetris (page 124), her culinary tribute to the famous game many of us grew up playing. The recipe just states that it's a combination of blueberry panna cotta, raspberry gelatine, natural orange sorbet, mango semi freddo and pistachio mousse. But in reality, when it's plated, it's a burst of wondrous colours, textures and tastes, all taking the forms of tetris shapes. Now whoever said the countless hours spent playing games



la macchia (the stain)

Saffron Ganache

180g	fresh cream
2g	toasted saffron pistils
200g	white chocolate
35g	butter, softened

- Heat the cream on low heat in a saucepan until reduced by two-third. Remove saucepan from the heat and add in the chestnut honey. Mix well and set aside. Remove the chilled figs from the refrigerator and fill them with the cream and honey mixture. Freeze the stuffed figs in the chill blaster at -20°C.
- For the saffron syrup: Heat 300ml water with the sugar in saucepan until sugar has dissolved. Add in the toasted saffron pistils and place the mixture into the refrigerator to macerate.
- For the jellied figs: Heat the saffron syrup with the vegetable gelatine in a saucepan until gelatine has dissolved. Remove stuffed frozen figs from the refrigerator and immediately dip the figs into the saffron syrup twice and place into the refrigerator again to temper the filling.
- For the saffron ganache: Slightly heat the fresh cream in a saucepan and then add in the toasted saffron pistils to infuse for about 10 minutes. Once the infused cream reaches a temperature of 35°C, pour over the white chocolate and stir well. Add in the softened butter and set aside for 4 hours. Store at 6°C.
- Place a jellied fig onto each serving plate and garnish with a candied violet. Add a splash of saffron ganache.

500g	cream
50g	chestnut honey
4	ripe figs, cut horizontally half way through, pitted and chilled
8	candied violets

Saffron Syrup

300ml	water
180g	sugar
1.5g	toasted saffron pistils

Jellied Figs

300ml	saffron syrup (see recipe above)
15g	vegetable gelatine

il tetrís (page 88)

Blueberry Panna Cotta

250g	fresh cream
75g	sugar
4g	fish gelatine
80g	blueberry purée

Raspberry Gelatine

200g	raspberry purée
100g	sugar
3g	agar agar

Natural Orange Sorbet

300ml	fresh orange juice
50g	sugar
0.5g	sorbet stabilizer
	Liquid nitrogen

Mango Semifreddo

130ml	water
100g	sugar
15g	fish gelatine
300g	mango purée
300g	semi-whipped cream

Pistachio Mousse

45g	egg yolks
90g	sugar
15ml	water
3.5g	fish gelatine
25g	green pistachio paste
175g	whipped cream

- For the blueberry panna cotta: Heat the fresh cream and sugar in a saucepan. Add in the fish gelatine and stir until gelatine has dissolved. Add in the blueberry purée and pour the mixture into tetrís shaped silicon moulds. Place the moulds into the chill blaster at -25°C and freeze.

- For the raspberry gelatine: Heat all the ingredients in a saucepan until boiling. Pour the raspberry mixture into tetrís shaped silicon moulds and place into the refrigerator to set.
- For the natural orange sorbet: Pulse all the ingredients in a food processor for a minute. Chill the mixture in the refrigerator for about 4 hours. Transfer the chilled mixture into a metal container and gradually add in the liquid nitrogen whilst stirring with a whisk until it reaches a smooth texture. Pour the sorbet into tetrís shaped moulds and store in the freezer at -25°C.
- For the mango semifreddo: Heat 130ml water and sugar in saucepan. Add in the fish gelatine and mix thoroughly. Add in the mango purée and cool the mixture in the refrigerator for about 10 minutes. Gently fold in the semi-whipped cream and chill in the refrigerator at 4°C.
- For the pistachio mousse: Beat the egg yolks with a pinch of salt. Heat 15ml water with the sugar to 110°C and gently pour over the beaten egg yolks and set aside for about 10 minutes. Heat the green pistachio paste and dissolve the fish gelatine in it. Add the mixture into the egg yolks and fold in the cream at the end. Pour the mixture into tetrís shaped silicon moulds and chill in the chill blaster at -25°C.

do nothing for our imagination? Chef Fanella disclosed her culinary secrets, "A dessert must be soft, crunchy, tart and sweet. Part of it must be cold; another part must be aromatic, all carefully put together with a purpose, without exaggerating or lacking balance. The proportions between ingredients must be just right to make it an unforgettable dish." A perfect specimen of this principle would be her ode to the biggest star in our solar system, the sun (page 36). The soft and the tart comes from the red peach mousse, the crunchy is crispy mango rays, the sweet is the mango water and mango sauce; as for the cold, it's the semi sphere of cold sun (a mixture of meringue, chocolate cream and crunchy sugar granules, frozen to perfection).

When it comes to enjoying Chef Loretta Fanella's desserts, nothing is what it seems. Her creations are depictions of what we're familiar with. She mentioned that not only must desserts be delicious and light, it must remind us of a video game (Tetris), a scene (spring is coming, page 8) or a moment (the stain, page 136) from our daily routine. She expressed, "It shouldn't merely be a lump of ice cream alongside a wafer and a sauce but something more tangible that takes shape as might an artist's canvas." This is interpreted suitably well in a dessert of lemon sorbet, blackberry pearls, lemon marshmallow and blackberry sauce called the spiral (page 108). One look at the dessert and you'd have thought that the sphere that stands regally at the centre of the dessert is an oversized blackberry but looks indeed can be deceiving. The sphere is actually lemon sorbet coated with blackberries that have been frozen and broken into smaller pieces. Instead of drawing her sauces in archetypal straight lines, she had her lemon marshmallow and blackberry sauce as intertwining spirals. And how can one even forget the tricolour apple (page 88)? It may be a dessert made with apples but in all honesty, it's truly more than just apples. Slices of golden delicious apples are macerated in raspberry sauce, vanilla syrup and mint water, giving each slice its distinctive colours of red, green and white. These are then served with freeze-dried raspberry powder and caramel powder that has been baked in the oven to form apples.



il sole (the sun)

"Inspiration has to come from within us. I derive the satisfaction to always go ahead because of my passion." Loretta Fanella



*la mela tricolore
(the tricolour apple)*

Going Forward, Beyond Expectations

When Chef Loretta Fanella first started out in the culinary world, she already knew deep down in her heart that she wanted to leave an indelible mark in the world of desserts and pastries, all at the tender age of twenty. It takes an insurmountable amount of courage, creativity, talent, time, tireless sacrifice and the constant strive to go forward and beyond expectations to succeed in one of the toughest industries in the world. But Chef Fanella has succeeded so gracefully and she's only just turned thirty. It's no wonder that her inaugural cookbook is called *Oltre*, Italian for going beyond. And when asked what going beyond meant for her, she revealed, "It means overcoming the line where everybody stops." Now this is truly inspirational! So, just who or what inspires this lady who once bought a mould from Ikea to create her dessert, a floral puzzle (page 120)? "Inspiration has to come from within us. I derive the satisfaction to always go ahead because of my passion," she divulged.

In the words of the culinary god, Chef Ferran Adrià (read our exclusive interview with him on page 25) himself, Chef Loretta Fanella is the reflection of her desserts. He said, "We are as we cook and we cook as we are. This could be [Chef] Loretta [Fanella]'s manifesto." Or it could well be her game plan. JS

