

Q&A: Emily Roux

Chef Emily Roux on good stress, fine dining, and the Roux legacy

By [Becca Challis](#), Features Editor (2016)
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Image: Issy Croker

How does it feel to be part of the Roux dynasty and working alongside your father?

It's a blessing and a hindrance. A blessing because I love food, and so do all my family! It's literally the only thing we talk about. A hindrance in the sense that people have a preconceived idea of how talented you should be. I was lucky enough to train and work in France where my surname is extremely common, so I worked my way up the ladder without anyone knowing my background. I really enjoy working alongside my father. Although we don't always see eye to eye when it comes to plating food, we definitely agree on what tastes good or not.

What would be your ideal three course meal?

My ideal three course meal would probably be very unconventional. I love food from all over the world so I would probably start off my meal with sushi or nigiri accompanied with freshly grated wasabi and pickled ginger. Roasted eel nigiri is my favourite!

As a main course I would love a traditional carbonara. Made with guanciale (cured pork cheek), free range eggs, Pecorino Romano and lots of freshly ground pepper. No cream or butter needed, just simple ingredients at their best.

Although I don't have a sweet tooth, I can never say no to a mille-feuille. The crunchy caramelised pastry combined with vanilla infused cream is a match made in heaven.

What made you want to go into fine cuisine?

The whole experience delivered by fine dining has always fascinated me. It isn't just about the ingredients on your plate; the chair you are sitting on, the cutlery you're eating with, and the service provided are just as important as the food. All this can only be achieved with excellent teamwork. I love being part of a group who all have the same desire to succeed.

What is your most used ingredient?

The ingredient I use the most is pepper. Freshly ground white pepper goes in everything I prepare – sometimes even in desserts.

How do you deal best with stress and pressure?

I really enjoy the good stress of a service. During those few hours the atmosphere in the kitchen is incredible. Everyone is quiet and concentrated; the only thing you can hear are the pans touching the stove. Managing your time really helps to avoid any added stress, so organisation is key. Whenever I have some spare time I enjoy running and playing squash, you can reflect on your week's work and release any tension.



Image: Issy Croker

What is your favourite memory from your time learning in Europe?

I spent six years learning and working in France. Every restaurant and chef has taught me something different. A funny memory would be from my time spent in Monaco, in Alain Ducasse's pastry section at the Hotel de Paris. The marble worktops were quite high (or I'm quite short) and every time they asked me to temper chocolate I got covered in it. I think my colleagues just enjoyed watching me struggle with litres of liquid chocolate!

What advice would you have for budding chefs?

Keep your head down and work hard. It's not an easy career but if you're passionate and driven you'll definitely succeed.

What is your greatest hope for the future?

My partner and I would love to open a restaurant together. I think all chefs have the same ambition: creating their own food for the world to enjoy.



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