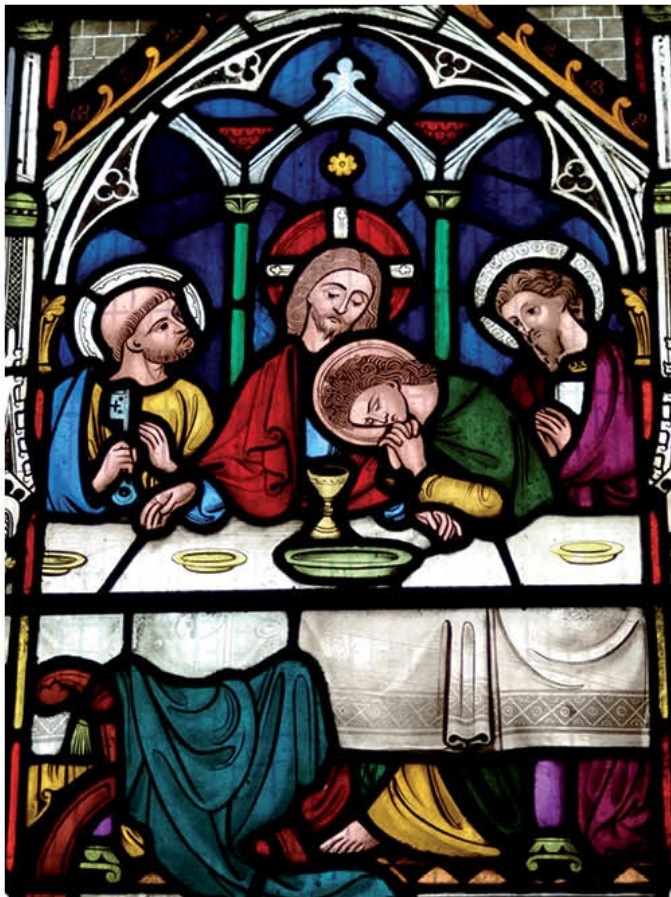


# THE LAST SUPPER

Meals so heavenly, they're to die for.



It is prudent never to rest on one's laurels, as the only certainty in life—apart from death—is uncertainty. And whilst most of us will dodge the dubious honour of being privy to the proverbial last meal, there are a very few amongst us who won't, which beggars the question: on the penultimate day of your life, wouldn't you choose to exit stage left on something a little more satiating to the palate than McJunk Food—specifically a cheeseburger and fries—reportedly the most popular choice of final meals among inmates on death row?

Holocaust genocide mastermind Adolf Eichmann eschewed food in favour of a bottle of Israeli wine, the choice of which leads one to wonder if he was making the ultimate ironic statement. In a not dissimilar gesture, condemned Texan Lawrence Russell Brewer's final act of perversion—he ordered a mammoth meal which included two chicken-fried steaks, a triple patty bacon cheeseburger, one pound of barbecued meat, and a meat lover's pizza, and



BY FAY KHOO

of egg and tartufo in goose fat with chorizo and dates. Call me greedy, but a little bird is hardly likely to give me the satisfactory sendoff that is demanded of such a momentous occasion. Because I, like said chefs, am guilty of concocting images of my last meal in my mind, if only to vicariously enjoy good food all the time, when it comes my turn to be summoned, I know I will be feasting on a multi-course meal that will include a foie gras terrine, sea urchin cappellini, panfried foie gras, aromatic duck pancakes, fried mushrooms from my favourite vegetarian restaurant, and at least one serve of the crispiest pork ever made. I may die with severe indigestion, but at least I know I will be leaving with a big oily smile on my face. And in the final reckoning, that's as much as anyone can hope for.

then elected not to eat it—led to the abolition of special last meal requests in Texas.

Out of the prison context however, 'last meals' in general tend to be rather more lavish. Five-time best restaurant winner El Bulli (according to *Restaurant Magazine*) concluded its final season with a bang rather than a whimper, serving diners a 40+ course dinner that included pistachio ravioli with mimetic peanuts, oyster and bone marrow tartare, and Parmesan frozen air. And because, unlike El Bulli, most of us will not know when it's our turn to go gently into the good night, it is my unwavering belief that we should always inasmuch as possible dine as if it's our last meal. Stomach space that is wasted on fast food is a crime that should be punishable by starvation. And if, indeed, 2012 spells the end of the world, we should all already have embarked upon eating our way through our gastronomic bucket list.

In the book *My Last Supper*, famous chefs play their favourite game of listing their last meals. Juan Mari Arzak cites his perfect last meal as one which includes ortolan and a flower

## LAST MEALS



**Sarimah Ibrahim**

"Lobster thermidor, ayam madu, crème brulee."

**Jit Murad**

"From a Valentine's dinner that I remember to this day: magisterially

perfect beef Wellington with red cabbage and parsnip mash in red wine sauce, and crystallised orange, spiked with Grand Marnier and brandy snaps. Rare is a meal this dignified, ungimmicky and just confidently delicious. Throw in my date from that long ago night and I'd walk up to the gallows replete and ready to meet my maker."



**Sonny San**

"Stir-fried clams in a soy-garlic-chilli sauce garnished with fresh Thai basil, the signature dish at Fong Lye, Jalan Imbi."

**Harith Iskander**

"My wife is becoming such an excellent cook that my last supper would be something she has prepared: kedgeree, followed by banana and peach crumble."



**Maya Karin**

"My last meal would be Fatty Crabs' chilli crabs and Sydney rock oysters au naturel."

**Stephanie Chai**

"Crab cakes, steak and a nice glass of wine at Mortons."

