



## A look inside the most world's most expensive restaurant: Levitating food, light shows and waitresses dressed as air stewardesses - for just £1,250 per head

- MailOnline Travel gets a sneak preview into the most expensive restaurant in the world - Sublimotion, in Ibiza
- Pioneered by two-Michelin chef Paco Roncero who is championed as Spain's own Heston Blumenthal
- Twenty exquisite courses are served up by 27 members of staff over a two hour 'performance'
- Highlights include test tube Bloody Mary cocktails, Nitrogen-frozen olive oil and spinning, levitating plates

By SARAH GORDON

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I am standing outside an innocuous white door set in an entirely white building on the island of Ibiza.

It hardly seems the setting for the most expensive restaurant in the world. But I am told it is the magic inside that justifies Sublimotion's £1,250 per head price tag.

This is the newest restaurant from two-Michelin star Spanish chef Paco Roncero - Spain's version of experimental chef Heston Blumenthal - and I am among the first people in the world invited to sample its unusual concept.

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**A work of theatre: Sublimotion is part of the brand new Hard Rock Hotel in Ibiza, which celebrated its grand opening this weekend with a huge open-air beach concert**

The meal is like an immersive theatre experience and the food hugely enjoyable. The owners stand by the price, they say the cost of setting up the restaurant, the quality of the food and the 27 staff for a dozen diners explains the price. The also know that people will pay that for the latest dining experience in Ibiza.

The eatery - which seats just 12 people at a time - is part of the brand new Hard Rock Hotel, which celebrated its grand opening this weekend with live performances at its open-air, beachside concert space from disco king Nile Rodgers and garage stars Masters at Work.

We are promised that our taster at Sublimotion will be a work of theatre - appealing to every one of our senses and transporting us to another world.

While some may shudder at the price tag, celebrities and wealthy holidaymakers are already queuing up for bookings. After a special coded knock, we are invited through the white door to a tiny room, with little more than a few artfully-placed boxes and a giant nitrogen tank - a key ingredient in many of Roncero's dishes.



**Roncero's rose: Food is served with a flourish, one course even sees diners making their own Bloody Mary cocktails using test tubes**

In a flash, the opaque window in front of us becomes transparent, giving us a glimpse of the 27 staff working in the kitchen to create the 20-course meal that is served up over a two-and-a-half hour 'performance' in the restaurant. Then all goes dark.

We are led into a old metal lift that - with the help of screens, lights and simulators - gives us the impression of plunging down below ground as music blares all around us. It feels a bit like a Disneyland ride, guests giggling nervously, wondering what on earth comes next.

We emerge into an all-white room with a white table and padded white chairs, with our names are beamed onto the table as place settings.

**Take a look inside Sublimotion. World's most expensive restaurant**



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Beautiful backdrop: Light and laser effects create different worlds, including this one featuring Paris' Arc de triomphe, to accompany each dish



Ambiance: The temperature in the room, the humidity and even the smells can be altered to suit each dish, along with the musical accompaniment

Two waitresses are dressed as air stewardesses, there is a compere who will introduce our dishes to us and light and laser effects create different worlds to accompany each separate dish.

Roncero wants the exact tricks of the trade to remain a secret, but needless to say, the white surfaces of the room don't stay white for long as different settings and videos are beamed onto them, creating a backdrop for the plates and other unusual crockery put in front of us.

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Food is served with a flourish. We make our own Bloody Mary cocktails using test tubes presented to us in a giant book.

Nitrogen-frozen olive oil is added to bread and tomato in an unusual modern twist on the traditional Spanish dish pan con tomate, and separate olive oil parcels are presented to us suspended on a mini washing line - complete with pegs.



**Presentation is everything:** As well as serving up food in nitrogen clouds and novelty crockery, the ever-changing decor takes diners to another level

My favourite dish is a sweet dessert served up on a spinning, levitating plate, which eventually slows down enough to allow me to eat it.

So out there is the presentation of the food, all wispy nitrogen clouds and bizarre concoctions that mean you don't know what you're eating until it is in our mouth, that I keep half an eye on the door expecting Roncero to make an appearance dressed as Willy Wonka, the deranged chocolate producer in Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Roncero later explains to me that while he has always been interested in what's on the plate, he wanted to explore diners' surroundings and complete the meal experience appealing to every one of our senses.

The temperature in the room, the humidity and even the smells can be altered to suit each dish, along with the musical accompaniment. Our 12-person party switches from awed silence to stifled giggles and even applause as our food is presented.



**Worth £1,250?** The owners say yes, but it will probably be a haunt for celebrities and playboys rather than the average Ibiza holidaymaker

I am not lucky enough to be treated to all 20 dishes, but even my six-dish taster takes almost an hour to 'perform', before we spill out onto a sunny terrace to remind us that we are indeed in Ibiza and not underground in a crazy science laboratory.

Just hours after my experience, the restaurant is fully booked by millionaire racers from the Gumball Rally, which has just finished its 3,000-mile odyssey across the globe from Miami, via New York, Edinburgh, London, Paris and Barcelona.

Is it worth the £1,250 price tag? Spend 10 minutes talking to Roncero and you will say yes. His passion and explanations about the food and how it is prepared are inspiring. He truly is Spain's Heston Blumenthal.

But this restaurant is hardly going to be attracting the average Ibiza holidaymaker. Set in the five-star Hard Rock hotel - the largest luxury resort on the island - on the beach Playa d'en Bossa, which has become synonymous with Europe's millionaire party scene, I predict Sublimotion will be packed out with celebrities and playboys for most of its summer season.

Thankfully, Roncero has another restaurant - Estado Puro - at the same hotel. With inventive tapas dishes priced from eight euros each - try the spanish tortilla that is liquified and served up in a cocktail glass (surprisingly tasty) - it is somewhat easier on your bank account.



The man with a vision: Super chef Paco Roncero says that he is interested in diners' surroundings as well as what is on their plates

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Easier on the wallet: Paco Roncero also operates out of the Estado Puro restaurant, also at the Hard Rock hotel, which serves more reasonable Tapas dishes