

*Hélène Darroze*

INTRODUCING  
CHEF HÉLÈNE DARROZE



Lotus





# Hélène Darroze

Born in Mont de Marsan in Les Landes, Southwestern France, Hélène is the fourth generation from a family of chefs. Unsurprisingly, she grew up instilled with a deep respect for her own regional culture and ingredients and immersed herself in the discipline and values of fine dining.

However, it was the operational side of the restaurant industry that first appealed to the young Hélène, and she left school to complete a business degree at L'Ecole Supérieure de Commerce in Bordeaux. After graduation, she relocated to Monaco to work behind the scenes with Alain Ducasse at his three Michelin-starred Le Louis XV in the famous Hotel De Paris. However, it wasn't long before Ducasse realised her innate potential and enticed her – initially part-time – into the kitchen.

In 1995, she returned to her home region of Les Landes, when her father gave her the keys to the kitchen of the family-run, Relais & Châteaux affiliated restaurant in Villeneuve-de-Marsan. This allowed Hélène to refine her culinary style with family support and where she remained for four years. By the time she turned 32, however, she was eager to build a career of her own and broke with family tradition, returning to Paris to open her own venture, Restaurant Hélène Darroze, in the heart of Saint-Germain des Prés on the Left Bank. The restaurant received international acclaim and was awarded its first Michelin star in 2001, followed by a second star in 2021.



# Hélène Darroze

Building on the success of Paris, she opened her first restaurant outside France at the historic hotel, The Connaught in London's prestigious Mayfair, in 2010. Just six months later, Hélène Darroze at The Connaught was launched and awarded a Michelin star, with the second following in 2011. The restaurant underwent a complete refurbishment and modernisation, reopening in September 2019. It was then awarded the ultimate three stars in the 2021 Michelin Guide.

Her earliest inspiration to use the very best in seasonal ingredients remains integral to her kitchen, and she is meticulous in sourcing the finest produce from her native Les Landes, the French Pays Basque and within the British Isles. The very origins of her creativity stem from a respect for those ingredients and her long-term relationship with loyal suppliers.

Dividing her time between Paris and London, Hélène now directs her teams and menus on either side of the English Channel. For her, gastronomy remains the most significant opportunity to deliver the ultimate in hospitality. In her own words, "to cook is to live and to live is to cook."

Hélène's cuisine is an opportunity to share her greatest pleasure with others: creating dishes that are dear to her and her guests. Her creative flair brings self-expression that uses emotion as a starting point and is bound by the common thread of authenticity, resulting in dishes and menus full of instinct and emotion, yet always remaining faithful and sensitive to the absolute quality of their core ingredients. In addition to recognition by Michelin, she has been awarded the Veuve Clicquot Prize for Best Female Chef 2015 from The World's 50 Best Restaurants.

As the mother of two girls, Hélène co-created the charity association "La Bonne Etoile", which helps disadvantaged children and received the Knight of the Legion of Honor rank in 2012.

Hélène Darroze

She has been a judge on the hit French television series “Top Chef” since 2015 and is an author of four books: “Personne ne me volera ce que j’ai dansé” (October 2005; second edition November 2013); “Les Recettes de mes Grands-Mères” (November 2014); “Mes Recettes en Fête” (November 2015); and “Joia par Hélène Darroze” (October 2019). All books were published by Cherche-Midi.

In September 2018, she opened a new venture titled Jòia by Hélène Darroze in Le Sentier (2nd Arrondissement) in Paris. Seven months later, and after an extensive 11-month renovation, she relaunched her flagship restaurant on the Rue D’Assas in the 6th Arrondissement. Named after the capital town in her home region of Les Landes, Marsan by Hélène Darroze heralded a return to Hélène’s roots with an exciting new menu and stunningly redesigned interior.

Most recently, in July 2021, she opened Hélène Darroze at Villa La Coste, in partnership with the grand luxury hotel, Villa La Coste, in Provence, France, where she oversees all food and beverage operations.

Nestled at the heart of the Château La Coste Estate near Aix-en-Provence, the Villa La Coste is a modern-day luxury palace celebrating authentic and exclusive refinement, in total harmony with the artistic life of the surrounding estate. Seduced by the opulence and diversity of the vegetables and fruit from the region, Hélène works alongside her London-based restaurant manager, Mirko Benzo, and Head Sommelier at Villa La Coste, Bernabé Pérez, to create menus reflective of the region and rooted in local.

In addition, Hélène was the inspiration for the character Colette in Pixar Animation Studios’ 2007 blockbuster film Ratatouille. The American toy manufacturing company Mattel also used her as the inspiration for the chef doll in a new concept of 14 different female role models in the Barbie range. The dolls were released in March 2018 to celebrate International Women’s Day and to honour “women who have broken boundaries in their fields and have been an inspiration to the next generation of girls”.



Three Michelin starred Hélène Darroze at The Connaught reopened its doors after a full and extensive, two-month refurbishment and modernisation in 2019. The acclaimed chef's creative vision has been realised in a bold reimagining of the dining room, kitchen and menu, with a stunning new Chef's Table, show kitchen and dedicated Armagnac Room.

The Menu – Passionately obsessive about the quality and origins of her ingredients, Hélène lives by the philosophy that the star of any dish is not created by the chef but by the finest ingredients that make up the plate. Each meal starts with a seasonal consommé to gently cleanse, open the palate and begin the dining experience. Guests can then choose dishes based on the provenance of each key ingredient, such as Crab – Davrik, Cornwall, or Lamb – North of Wales. Menus adapt more frequently to fully embrace the changes in British weather and micro-seasons.

Hélène explains, "Every dish I have ever created is part of who I am – not just of my work and travels, but also of my family and teams, past and present and of the incredible artisanal suppliers I have come to know and respect. Now with just over ten remarkable years in London, I have the opportunity to focus even more on the outstanding quality from some of Britain's greatest producers and suppliers. Over the years, they have become a growing part of the menus at The Connaught and perfectly complement my long-standing relationships with the finest producers from Southwest France. The refurbishment has afforded me a perfect platform to showcase them at their very best."



**Art à la Table** – Presentation too has not escaped her meticulous attention to detail. From the independent ceramicist Ema Pradere, who has been commissioned to supply her hand-crafted, consommé bowls that open each menu, to the iconic Hermès, who provided their Bleu D'Ailleurs tea and coffee service to finish. Hélène was personally responsible for choosing the skilled artisans, ensuring a bespoke sensory experience for each guest.

**The Dining Room** – Keeping with the historical integrity of the hotel, Paris-based interior architect Pierre Yovanovitch has taken cues from the menu and table presentation and placed craftsmanship front and centre. Reinventing the main dining room using deep hues and rich textiles, he has lightened the historical, dark oak panelled walls and created a modern light-filled, refined and cosseted space. Customised flooring adds depth and warmth, while bespoke curved banquettes and chairs exude a flow of tactile colour in shades of soft pinks, tans and greens, upholstered in a mix of velvet and leather. A bespoke chandelier made of hand-blown glass with blue lacquered, wrought-iron adds a contemporary contrast, alongside the individual oak tables with dramatic, red, ceramic lacquered, metal bases. In addition, the two unique paintings by artist Damien Hirst, commissioned by The Connaught, have been reinstalled and sit on opposite sides of the restaurant as guests enter.





**The Chefs Table** – Pierre’s work continues downstairs in the redesigned show kitchen, which now boasts a newly installed Chefs Table. Set within a generous space, the open kitchen reveals pale oak panelled walls with bespoke Matteo Gonet lamps that spotlight the customised pink marble tabletop, set on a terrazzo base and surrounded by plush armchairs. Seating up to ten, guests dine under a cobalt blue fresco commissioned by the artist Rochegaussen. Menus differ from the main dining room based on a sharing concept and offer guests informal interaction with the chefs as they personally present the dishes.

**The Wine List** – This includes some of the finest wines in the world, with a collection of over 3,000 bins and a total of more than 20,000 bottles. This impressive selection was started by the previous Head Sommelier and now Restaurant Manager, Mirko Benzo, and is continued by the present Director of Wine Daniel Manetti. Wines have been chosen explicitly through tastings, monthly trips and visits to the essential wine regions in Europe and worldwide. Above all, the wines reflect the unique and special bond Hélène and her team have with the producers. Armagnac plays a significant role here, too – a distinctive style of French brandy and the oldest French eau-de-vie dating back to 1310. It is also a signature feature of the restaurant. Hélène’s family have been devoted to Armagnac for three generations, and the cellars are now managed by her brother Marc, a trained oenologist. Darroze Armagnacs are considered by spirit lovers as some of the finest available, and today their cellars hold over 250 different Armagnacs from thirty estates and fifty vintages.







Lotus

## FACT SHEET

Address: The Connaught, Carlos Pl, Mayfair, London W1K 2AL

Telephone: 020 3147 7200

Email: [helenedarroze@the-connaught.co.uk](mailto:helenedarroze@the-connaught.co.uk)

Website: [www.the-connaught.co.uk/restaurants-bars/helene-darroze-at-the-connaught/](http://www.the-connaught.co.uk/restaurants-bars/helene-darroze-at-the-connaught/)

Opened: First opened July 2008, re-opened following a refurbishment in September 2019

Cuisine: French

Chef / Owner: H el ene Darroze

Head Chef: Marco Zampese

Pastry Chef: Benjamin Clement

Restaurant Manager: Mirko Benzo

Director of Wine: Daniel Manetti

Opening Times: Tuesday to Saturday

Lunch: 12pm – 2pm

Dinner: 6:30pm – 9:30pm

Covers: Dining Room 60, Chef's Table 12, Armagnac Room 4,

Sommeliers Table 8

Pricing:

Weekday Lunch: £110

Taste of the Season (available lunch and dinner): 5 courses £175,

7 courses £195

## Lotus





Twenty years after her debut on the Left Bank in Paris, H  l  ne returned to her roots, reinventing N  4 Rue d'Assas with her new flagship restaurant, Marsan by H  l  ne Darroze on the original site of her Michelin-starred Restaurant H  l  ne Darroze in the 6th Arrondissement. Named after her home region in Les Landes in Southwestern France, Marsan opened its doors after an eleven-month refurbishment in 2019, presenting an exciting new menu and a stunningly redesigned interior.

Famed for championing her producers, H  l  ne created dishes that lead her guests through a lifetime of global experience and bespoke recipes, "I like people to trust me," she explains. At Marsan, she honours the roots of her culinary odyssey, including the region of her birth – an area of wild Atlantic beaches, lush pine forests opening onto vast, golden cornfields, and a part of France celebrated for its famous duck and Armagnac. These influences of home are a thread through H  l  ne's menu, the inspiration from which she approaches and creates.

Over two decades, H  l  ne has used the idea of home as a basis from which to create and evolve. Her menus have journeyed and developed just as she has, absorbing the influences of the globe and significant life-defining movements, from the tandoors of India and the dashis of Japan to the intricate fragrances of Vietnam, hints of her travels can be found interspersed through dishes, leaning on the finest French produce, where possible.

"I am Basque-Landaise," she adds, "and this plays a vital role in who I am and what I create. I am made from that family and that soil – this is everything I am." She continues, "When I was younger, maybe I tried to free myself more, but over time, I found myself going back and returning home. With Marsan, I wanted to create a restaurant that said everything about me, that shared my story while also being a platform from which I could launch a new chapter."





When you arrive at the restaurant, you immediately notice the exterior rich in symbolism for her beloved Les Landes. Indeed, such is her connection to the space that H  l  ne not only poured her imagination into creating new dishes that evoke a nostalgic nod to home but also invested emotionally into every detail of the building, working with the acclaimed French architect Patrice Gardera to bring her dreams to reality. Oak wall panelling seamlessly links the spacious reception with the light-filled, first-floor dining room, and on the ground level, two private dining options. The first seating 22 guests around a specially commissioned, six-meter long 'table commune' surrounded by enticing views into some of the restaurant's impressive wine collection, and the second more intimate and enclosed, seats six around a circular, slate grey table. From the interiors to the crockery and pottery right through to service and the design of staff uniforms, H  l  ne exercised a hands-on approach, part of the process from inception right through to delivery.

As guests ascend the stairs into the main dining room, they are greeted by the restaurant's dramatic kitchen with a dedicated six-seat Chef's Table. Past a display dresser that has been created to pair with the light oak panels of the walls, H  l  ne displays some of her most personal items, including photos of home – with her two daughters Charlotte and Quiterie, and as a young child playing with her brother Marc – and of the Darroze family inn, the Hotel des Voyageurs in Villeneuve-de-Marsan. She has also included silver dishes and birds that adorn the tables, and there is a wine list from her beloved grandfather Jean and the recipe book of her grandmother Charlotte, an old family daubi  re and an assortment of chef books. All offer snapshots into the life of H  l  ne Darroze. Finally, the simple, stripped-back table settings with their bespoke ceramics encourage diners to touch and admire the crockery on display, preparing them for the theatrical offering each diner experiences at Marsan by H  l  ne Darroze.





Lotus



## FACT SHEET

Address: 4 rue d'Assas, 75006 PARIS

Telephone: 01 42 22 00 11

Email: [reservation@helenedarroze.com](mailto:reservation@helenedarroze.com)

Website: [www.marsanhelenedarroze.com](http://www.marsanhelenedarroze.com)

Opened: July 2019

Cuisine: French

Chef / Owner: H el ene Darroze

Restaurant Manager: Paul Godwin

Head Chef: Paul Genthon

Opening Times:

Monday to Friday, 12.3pm – 2 pm, 7.3pm – 9.30 pm

Closure: Saturday and Sunday

Covers: Dining room: 30, private kitchen table: 6, special table

looking onto creation studio: 22

Pricing: Menus for lunch: 95 €

Tasting menu for dinner:

6 courses 175 € or

9 courses 225 €

Lotus





## Hélène Darroze at Villa La Coste, Provence

July 2021 heralded a new chapter for Hélène Darroze when she announced her partnership with the grand luxury hotel, Villa La Coste, in Provence, France. Nestled at the heart of the Château La Coste Estate near Aix-en-Provence, the Villa La Coste is a modern-day luxury palace celebrating authentic and exclusive refinement, in total harmony with the artistic life of the surrounding estate.

Here, Hélène orchestrates the entire food and beverage operations, offering a cuisine in her image, imbued with emotion, sincerity and authenticity. Seduced by the opulence and diversity of the vegetables and fruit from the region, she chose to award them the leading role on the menu, allowing the products from the region to take centre stage. From appetisers to end-of-meal delicacies, they lead the dance from beginning to the end.

In the fine dining restaurant, the “Walk in the gardens of Provence” menu - developed by Hélène alongside Marco Zampese, her Head Chef from Hélène Darroze at the Connaught in London, Thomas Pézeril, Executive Chef at Villa La Coste and her great pastry chef Kirk Whittle - takes place in eight acts. It will evolve and modify naturally according to the harvests and seasons.







Lotus

## FACT SHEET

Address: Villa La Coste, 2750 Route de la Cride 13610 Le Puy-

Sainte-Reparate, France

Telephone: +33 (0) 4 42 28 35 59

Email: [helenedarroze@villalacoste.com](mailto:helenedarroze@villalacoste.com)

Website: [www.villalacoste.com/restaurant-provence/](http://www.villalacoste.com/restaurant-provence/)

Opened: July 2021

Cuisine: French

Chef / Owner: H el ene Darroze

Executive Chef: Thomas Pezeril

Pastry Chef: Marion Desmasures

Restaurant Manager: Donato Caldarelli

Director of Wine: Bernabe Perez

Opening Times:

Thursday to Sunday, closed Tuesday and Wednesday

Lunch: 12pm – 2pm

Dinner: 7pm – 9pm

Covers: 55

Pricing:

3-course lunch menu, 85 Euros, 5-course lunch menu, 138 Euros,

Dinner menu, 170 Euros

## Lotus





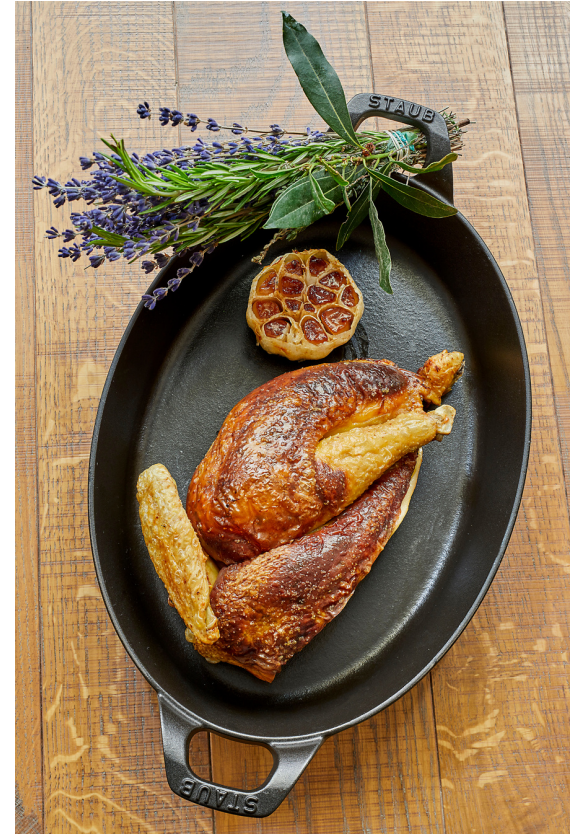
Located in a building rich in architectural detail and within the heart of Paris' 2nd Arrondissement, Jòia is the latest venture from Chef H el ene Darroze.

Opened in September 2018, the restaurant boasts a stunning lounge with a drinks and cocktail bar on the first floor and a contemporary restaurant with a takeaway at ground level. It is a welcoming, light-filled space with the bustling ambience of a modern, neighbourhood Parisienne bistro.

Collaborating closely with Head Chef Thomas Piat, H el ene has created relaxed, flavour-packed dishes that combine the traditional recipes from her childhood home in Southwest France, with inspiration drawn from the tastes and flavours of her global travels. Her ethos, however, remains rooted in her relentless sourcing of the finest local ingredients, evident across the menu at J oia. The result is a restaurant with a true sense of time and place, where friends and family can gather throughout the day, evoking the feeling of being welcomed into the home of internationally-celebrated Chef H el ene Darroze.







Lotus



## FACT SHEET

Address: 39 Rue des Jeuneurs, 75002 Paris

Telephone: +33 1 40 20 06 06

Email: [reservation@joiahelenedarroze.com](mailto:reservation@joiahelenedarroze.com)

Website: [www.joiahelenedarroze.com](http://www.joiahelenedarroze.com)

Opened: September 2018

Cuisine: French

Chef / Owner: H el ene Darroze

Head Chef: Fulvio Piscedda

Opening Times:

Monday to Saturday: 12pm – 2.30pm, 6 – 10.30pm

Pricing: Average 60 Euros

Lotus



*Hélène Dauvoze*

THANK YOU

+44 (0)20 7751 5812  
[www.lotusinternational.net](http://www.lotusinternational.net)

Global branding and communications agency  
for chefs, restaurants and more



Lotus