



L'USINE

**Food of
Saigon**

Journal

no.

03



"There is no
sincerer love
than the love
of food."

- George Bernard Shaw

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Food connects people and places. You could fall in love with a country solely for its cuisines. Some memories are stored in your taste buds, so firmly that one single bite could teleport you to the quaint hometown as you exclaimed “This tastes exactly like back home!”

This third issue of L'Usine journal is our love letter to food and how it was made: from garnish herbs to sourdough breads; from us globe-trotting in search for the next best L'Usine dishes to the ever-evolving experiments in the kitchen.

Hear stories collected from our journey. Peek into our in-house bakery then out to wet markets; and take home recipes of L'Usine best-loved breakfast items.

Bon appétit.

L'Usine Bakery





1. Grapes are fermented in flour in to attract wild yeast that is present in the air. This forms our very own starter dough.

2. Just like kombucha, starter dough lives and it requires daily tender loving care. After removing half of its content for baking needs, we then feed it flour to keep it alive.



The fives of sourdough b r e a d

3. The oldest known starter dough is more than a hundred years old.


4. The dough is always prepared the day before. Prior to resting overnight, it is worked on repetitively for 6 times, each with a 30 minutes interval. It is then stretched, folded and shaped into loaves.

5. After a night's rest, the batch is taken out to proof and voilà, baking begins.





Did you know all L'Usine breads are baked in-house?



With the variety ranging from Vietnamese Bánh Mì to Turkish bread, it wasn't long before we set up an in-house bakery. And we took it like a private lab: long list of breads that are hard to find elsewhere in town like soy & linseed bread; a full month working on sourdough recipes to strike just the right note: soft, light with a hint of sourness...

Presented in the next three spreads are tips and recipes for some of L'Usine Favourites, all of which started from flour and dough on our baker's counter.

Avocado Toast



1 slice	rye bread
2 tbsp	basil pesto
2 tbsp	black quinoa
1/2	avocado, smashed
2	poached eggs
a handful of	edamame
2 tbsp	feta cheese
3 pieces	purple basil leaves (optional)

1. Rinse quinoa in a colander. In a pot, add 2 parts water and boil quinoa for 30 minutes.
2. Add edamame to salted boiling water and cook for 45 seconds. Refresh in iced water, peel then roughly blend in a food processor.
3. Toast rye bread both sides.
4. Place avocado on top, followed by edamame, quinoa and then feta cheese.
5. Drizzle with basil pesto on top.
6. Finish with poached eggs.
7. Garnish with purple basil leaves.



French T o a s t

2 slices of brioche

3 tbsp raspberry compote

1 tsp honey

1 scoop of strawberry ice cream

2 eggs, beaten

2 tsp butter

2 pieces meringue, crushed

edible flowers (optional)

To make raspberry compote:

In a pot, add 1/2 kg raspberry,

1/2 cup sugar, 1/2 cup water and

3 tbsp lime juice. Simmer for 30 minutes.

1. Soak brioche in egg, then pan-fry in butter until golden brown on both sides.

2. Drizzle honey around the sides of the plate, then place toast in the centre.

3. Place scoop of ice cream on top, followed by raspberry compote and meringue.

4. Garnish with edible flowers.

Anatomy of a perfect Hotcake

Whole seeds for the
extra crunchy texture

Richness from
vanilla ice cream

Fresh berries -
a healthy and tasteful
addition to the
hotcake indulgence

Light and fluffy
hotcake as the bedding
for its topping goodness



On growing herbs, finding a home in Saigon and fusing cultures

Nicholas de Gersigny is the type of chef who carries a sachet of basil seeds in his wallet like a well-kept treasure. “It feels great to share a personal connection with the ingredients, to witness them transforming from tiny seeds to the perfect final touch on the plate.” Nicholas mused. Quite naturally, he hacked our vacant rooftop at L’Usine Le Thanh Ton into an urban garden. What started off as nurturing a few basil plants turned into a healthy stock of herbs for some of L’Usine signature dishes.





"Saigon offers the full spectrum of culture juxtaposition - within half a mile's walking you could go from rows of Japanese izakaya to Vietnamese karaoke and then at the end of that alley are Western hole-in-the-wall bars. There is no lack of excitement and inspiration, you are at once an observer and an advocate to Saigon's beautiful chaos. And somewhere between that concoction and a quiet one-bedroom apartment, I find myself at home.

The culinary culture in Saigon continues to grow in exciting directions. Saigon's eaters are open-minded and adventurous, with these new dishes we hope to ignite a shared passion for delicious and wholesome food, which reflects the way we like to eat."



Nicholas combines mellow and bright Australian-style brunch with his own interpretation of Asian dishes. Each locally-inspired dish sent him on a city food tour, in search for the experience and the taste. Yet sometimes, the answer presents itself right within his kitchen.

With decades of cooking experience, Mrs. Thuy contributed her family heirloom recipes for fish sauce and pickles. “Combined with succulent chicken thighs and herb-infused fried rice, the taste is inherently Vietnamese yet eclectic in texture. This delicate blend between traditional method and modern perspective is what we strive for.”



“The secret to a perfect chicken rice lies in its sauce, and I owe it to the wisdom of the Vietnamese ladies in our kitchen.”

“Neither
Vietnamese,
nor
Hainanese.
It’s the
epitome of
Asian
Chicken Rice.”





“Ironically,
I ordered the
Bún Thịt Nướng
for its
spring rolls.”

“A tip to
combat the
Saigon heat:
Crispy Chicken
Burger and
cold craft beer
combo.”

* Half off all wine, beer and cocktails during happy hour.



S a i g o n I n s i d e r s

**1. What's your favourite
Saigon street food?**

**2. Where do you usually buy
Bánh Mì from and
any particular type?**



Tib Hoang - Entrepreneur

1. Bánh Mì, Bánh Cuốn, Hủ Tiếu.
2. I usually buy Bánh Mì Ngọc Sáng. It's a shredded chicken Bánh Mì shop on 199 Lý Tự Trọng, D1.



Chau Bui - Influencer

1. I fly to Saigon for work often and have always been a fan of the local food, especially street food. What I miss most upon returning to Hanoi is Bánh Tráng Trộn & Đá Me - such a perfect combo for sunny Saigon afternoon, no?

2. Bánh Mì is undeniably a national food icon, but great ones are hard to come across. Or am I just too picky? To me, Bánh Mì Huỳnh Hoa has just the right combination of ingredients, fresh herbs and perfect bread crust. The Bánh Mì Pate Trứng Thịt is so delicious it got me thinking of another one on the very first bite. Hard to keep to my diet as it is simply irresistible!

Dominik - Restaurateur

1. My recent discovery is Bánh Cuốn: there is a lady on Nguyễn Khoái street, D4, across Circle K mart where she prepares it freshly in the morning. Fresh chili and fish sauce wake me up too. Another street food I like is Bún Chả Hanoi, at Bún Chả Cô Liên, 23 Nguyễn Khoái, D4. The grilled meat, the noodles, the fresh herbs & pickled vegetables make it great as a street food.

2. I like to get Bánh Mì Heo Quay at Hiệu Bánh Ngân Sài Gòn, 107 Nguyễn Thái Bình, D1. Crispy skin of the pork and bread, pickled vegetable stripes and a bit of butter makes a great Bánh Mì. I do also like a classic Bánh Mì Pate or Ốp-la with some thinly sliced fresh chili.



Le Thanh Ton
Dong Khoi
Le Loi
Thao Dien

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