

GOING *Sollo*

Brazilian-Spanish chef Diego Gallegos is proving that Michelin-starred food can be sustainable. Rose Dykins learns about fish farming, sturgeon blood and affordable caviar

Diego Gallegos was studying to be a lawyer in Madrid when he took on his first kitchen role during a holiday to Malaga. He'd found his vocation, and remained there to study, subsequently becoming a chef; a good one. A Michelin-starred one. His food at Sollo in Fuengirola is informed by travels to Brazil, Peru, Basque Country, and training in top kitchens.



Tell us a little bit about Sollo...

We opened last March at the Doubletree by Hilton Reserva del Higueron, and received a Michelin star in November. We have 16 tables, and offer a 22-course river fish tasting menu.

Why did you choose river fish?

It's a cultural thing. I'm from Brazil, and in Sao Paulo, they use a lot of river fish and, when I trained there, I learned to cook it. The Spanish eat a lot of meat, not many river fish. People in Malaga think I'm freaky! But I don't care.

What's your favourite species?

Sturgeon – the restaurant name's meaning. I'm working with fish farmers who brought sturgeon over from Italy and reintroduced them here, where they were formerly extinct.

You're passionate about sustainability...

I've always enjoyed nature. I've worked as manager of the investigation of development for a big farm for six years. At Sollo, none of our producers rear their river fish with animal feed. I can guarantee 100 per cent sustainability. We've made a book explaining that Michelin-starred food can be sustainable.

Which dish are you most proud of?

My morcilla - a Spanish version of black pudding. Except at Sollo, we make it with fish blood. You won't find it anywhere else.

You've been dubbed 'The Caviar Chef'...

We're very proud of our organic caviar – we're the only farm in the world to produce it. Our technique affords a six-month shelf life, and we sell it in smaller amounts – 10g for about €20 – so everybody can afford it. For some caviar is status, not food, but I just love the taste!

