

PETER GORDON

Biography 2018

Renowned for his unique culinary philosophy, Peter Gordon is often credited as the “godfather” of fusion cuisine.

“Fusion can create the most stimulating meal you’ll ever eat. It’s fun and it’s playful. It’s simply one of many cuisines, and it happily sits amongst them like a magpie, borrowing from them all.” – Peter Gordon

Peter was born and raised in the New Zealand coastal town of Whangānui in 1963. In 1981 at the age of 18 he moved to Melbourne to complete a four-year cookery apprenticeship and work as a chef in various restaurants.

His spirit of adventure and culinary curiosity led him to travel through Asia for a year from Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries right through to India. This life-changing experience was to become a major influence on his culinary style, which is now termed ‘fusion’.

In 1986, Peter returned to New Zealand to become the Head Chef at the original Sugar Club in Wellington, where in his three years at the restaurant it became an unprecedented success.

In 1989 Peter moved to London where he gradually introduced his eclectic cooking style at various restaurants and a private members’ club (Green Street). From 1995 onwards he won wide acclaim for his food at the two London branches of The Sugar Club, in Notting Hill and West Soho.

Peter now divides his time between London and Auckland, with restaurants in both cities. The Providores and Tapa Room, in London’s Marylebone, opened in 2001 and continues to impress with its innovative menus, great coffee and a 100% NZ wine list that showcases the largest selection of vineyards of any restaurant in Europe.

August 2013 saw the opening of the fourth Sugar Club restaurant, this time on Level 53 of the Sky Tower in Auckland. Bellota, Peter’s award-winning bar/restaurant opened there in 2006, serving tapas, sharing plates and New Zealand’s largest selection of Spanish varietal wines.

Peter is co-founder of ground-breaking artisan doughnut company Cross-town Doughnuts, which launched in London in April 2014 and now features a solely vegan store, distributing vegan doughnuts throughout their network.

Turned down for a chef apprenticeship when he was 15, Peter is now thrilled to create dishes for one of his country’s most iconic brands,





award-winning national airline, Air New Zealand, that can be tasted across its global network.

Peter has written eight cookbooks, one of which was reprinted in 2018: *Eating Well Everyday* (2018), *Savour: Salads For All Seasons* (2016), *Peter Gordon Everyday* (2012), *Fusion: A Culinary Journey* (2010), *Vegetables: The New Food Heroes* (2006) *Salads* (2005), *A World In My Kitchen* (2003), *Cook At Home With Peter Gordon* (1999) and *The Sugar Club Cookbook* (1997).

His British television appearances include *Saturday Kitchen*, *Sunday Brunch* and *Nigel Slater and Jamie Oliver's Channel 4 food series*. In New Zealand Peter was a guest judge on *New Zealand MasterChef*, and, most recently, was chef presenter for *Fusion Feasts*, followed by presenter and executive producer for *Native Kitchen* (TV3 and Māori Television), a 10-part TV series in which Peter mentored a group of young and aspiring Māori chefs through a 10-day culinary boot camp.

In 1999, Peter was the first to receive the New Zealander of the Year award from The New Zealand Society in London.

Peter is recognised as an ardent supporter of the food industry and of various charities in New Zealand and the UK, notably *Who's Cooking Dinner?* and the *SKYCITY Dining For A Difference* event, which raise funds for Leukaemia & Blood Cancer New Zealand respectively. Peter founded these events, with *Who's Cooking Dinner?* raising £6.7m and *Dining for a Difference* more than NZ\$1.3m to date.

In 2009, Peter was awarded an ONZM (New Zealand Order Of Merit) in the New Year Honours List for services to the food industry in New Zealand, presented by HM The Queen at Windsor Castle.

TIMELINE

- 1963:** Born in Whanganui, New Zealand.
- 1967:** His mother Timmy is impressed that he makes a scrapbook of recipes aged four.
- 1980:** Peter tips a pot of boiling beef dripping over himself in an accident at home, aged seven. He has multiple hospital visits and a skin-graft.
- 1978:** Peter applies to become an apprentice with Air New Zealand. He doesn't get a placement but will work with them many years later as a consultant.



- 1981: Moves to Melbourne, and completes a four year cookery apprenticeship, cooking in restaurants and attending college. He graduates at Top Theory Student from William Angliss College in 1984.
- 1985 – 1986: Travels throughout S.E. Asia, India and Nepal discovering the wonders of the regions' food and flavours, and begins to understand how cultural, religious and climatic differences affect the foods people produce and eat.
- 1986: Arrives in London briefly then heads to Wellington to set up the kitchen at the original Sugar Club restaurant.
- 1989: Moves to London.
- 1990–1995: Helps set up the kitchen at First Floor Dining Room on Portobello Road. Over the next years he cooks at various restaurants including Green Street Private Members Club, receiving fantastic reviews for his newly emerging style of Cuisine.
- 1995: Travels to Australia to donate bone marrow for his sister Tracey who has been diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia. The operation is successful and will lead to a series of fund-raising dinners in the UK and NZ. He also is the home economist on a book for Keith Floyd – Peter's first experience with food photography.
- 1995: Sets up the kitchen at The Sugar Club in London's Notting Hill.
- 1996: The Sugar Club (Notting Hill) wins a Time Out award for Best Modern British restaurant and an Eros award from the Evening Standard for Best Pacific Rim restaurant. Peter begins writing a regular column for New Zealand House & Garden magazine.
- 1997: The Sugar Club Cookbook is published, this is the first book of many that Peter self-authors. Previous to writing the book he had never used a computer.
- 1998: Launches The Sugar Club in Soho.
- 1999: The Sugar Club (Soho) voted Best Central London Restaurant in Time Out Restaurant Awards.
- 1999: Cook At Home is published. Peter also creates a range of foods for M&S – all based on his Fusion Cuisine.
- 1999: Who's Cooking Dinner? is created and founded by Peter. The inaugural fundraising dinner for the leukaemia charity Leuka is held at The Berkeley Hotel where twenty chefs each cook a different four-course dinner party for tables of ten guests.
- 1999: Changa restaurant in Istanbul opens, owned by Tarik Bayazit and Savaş Ertunç, with Peter as their consultant chef.



- 2001: Opens The Providores and Tapa Room in London's Marylebone, with business partners Michael McGrath, Anna Hansen and Jeremy Leeming.
- 2003: The Providores and Tapa Room wins Best Newcomer Catey award.
- 2003: A World In My Kitchen is published.
- 2005: Salads – The New Main Course is published.
- 2005: Müzedechanga opens in Istanbul, Peter as consultant (same ownership as Changa).
- 2005: dine by Peter Gordon opens at the SKYCITY Grand Hotel, Auckland.
- 2005: Makes TV show on the food of China's Guangdong region for Planet Food.
- 2006: Bellota, Peter's tapas bar and restaurant opens at SKYCITY, Auckland.
- 2006: Vegetables – The New Food Heroes is published.
- 2007: Müzedechanga is awarded the title of Best New Restaurant in the World at the Wallpaper* Design Awards.
- 2007: The inaugural SKYCITY Dining For A Difference is held in Auckland, based on London's Who's Cooking Dinner?, raising money to fight leukaemia for Leukaemia & Blood Cancer New Zealand.
- 2008: Peter is created an ONZM (Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit - the New Zealand equivalent of an OBE) in the 2009 New Year Honours List for services to the food industry. Presented to him by HM The Queen at Windsor Castle.
- 2009: Fusion: A Culinary Journey is published.
- 2010: Peter heads a culinary tour of the Pacific Kingdom of Tonga with Heilala Vanilla and chef and author, Natasha McAller, exploring local food and cooking a feast with local communities and producers.
- 2010: Kopapa opens in London's Seven Dials area of Covent Garden.
- 2012: Peter Gordon Everyday is published.
- 2013: The fourth incarnation of The Sugar Club opens, on level 53 of The Sky Tower, Auckland.
- 2013: Fusion Feasts, 8-part TV series, airs in NZ on TV3: Peter is Chef and Presenter. The show visits 8 marae around New Zealand including Peter's own in Papawai, Wairarapa.
- 2014: Fusion Feasts airs in NZ on Māori TV.

- 2014: Filming of 10-part TV series, “Peter Gordon’s Native Kitchen” in New Zealand takes place: Peter is Executive Producer and Presenter. Peter channels his “inner Māori” as he mentors a group of young would-be chefs, filmed in Rotorua.
- 2014: Launch of London-based gourmet doughnut company Crosstown Doughnuts, of which Peter is a co-founder.
- 2015: Broadcast in NZ of 10-part TV series “Peter Gordon’s Native Kitchen” on TV3 and Māori Television.
- 2016: Savour - Salads For All Seasons is published.
- 2017: Peter organises and cooks various catering events for the Patrons of New Zealand at the Venice Art Biennale. This includes a dinner for 200 at the Italian Navy’s Petty Officers’ Club, a food tour to Burano, and a dinner for 330 on the island of Certosa.
- 2017: Peter leads a tour to the tiny Pacific Island of Niue – exploring the local food and some of the emerging producers. He creates bread-fruit and birds nest fern frittata, and eats fruit bat.
- 2018: Peter designs and cooks a menu for former President Barack Obama and 800 guests in Auckland, on the President’s inaugural visit to New Zealand.
- 2018: Eating Well Everyday is published (a reprint of 2012’s Everyday) due to popular demand.

