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September 27, 2009

## Taste of the Week - September 20-26



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With so many great restaurants and tastes experienced over the past week, it has been nearly impossible to choose a single Taste of the Week. However, there was one taste that was so seminal and unusual (not to mention very, very good) and so unlikely to ever have again, that it must get my nod. That would be the tuna vertebral disk jelly prepared and served by **Dave Arnold** and **Nils Noren** during their demonstration at the Starchefs ICC this past Tuesday. The flavor was distinctly of the sea and fresh, though it wasn't particularly salty or fishy. It was unlike anything I had ever had before. A close runner up would be the black sea bass sashimi served by Arnold, Noren and finished by Asbel Reyes from the same presentation. The texture of that fish, firm and actually somewhat crunchy was unlike any other fish I had ever had. The only thing that put the disk jelly was that the likelihood of having something similar again is significantly higher for the sashimi than for the jelly. What allowed for the sashimi texture was the absolutely stressless way the fish was dispatched and dissected. Arnold used a food-safe fish anesthetic derived from clove oil and poured into a large seawater filled holding tank, to make the fish senseless, then quickly killed it with the relatively stress-free Japanese technique of Ika Jime, essentially eliminating a stress response and delaying the start of decomposition. The result was truly remarkable.

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