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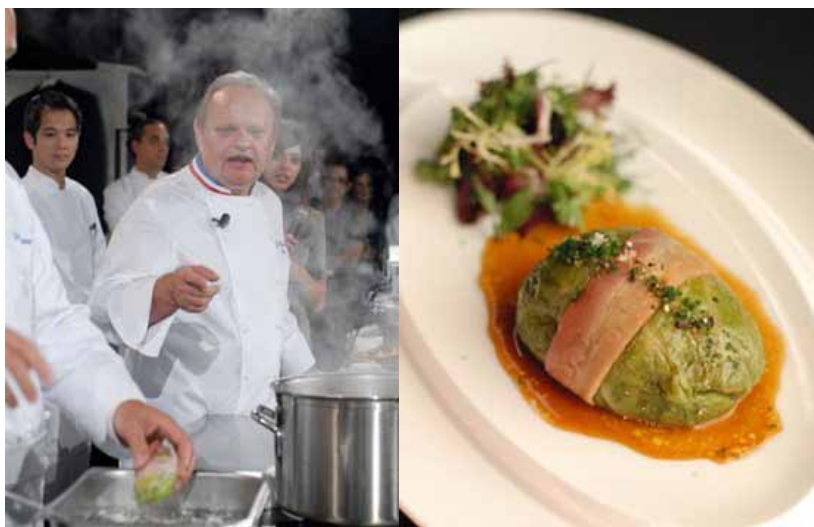
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by Lourdes Castro

Chefs aren't the only ones who feel pressure in the kitchen. Food is taking its fair share of the stress as well. *Sous vide* (pronounced *sue veed*), a technique that until very recently was banned in all New York City kitchens, does just that. French for “under vacuum”, *sous vide* is the process of vacuum packing ingredients in a plastic bag under 20 pounds or so of pressure (think cryovac) and then cooking it in a water bath that has been maintained at a constant temperature.

Sounds like the food is getting cooked and there doesn't seem to be any ethical issue at play – so why the ban? Because the water temperature used to cook the food is low. So low in fact (about 130 degrees Fahrenheit – think your warm bath), that if executed incorrectly, *sous vide* will leave the food in the perfect state for bacterial growth - particularly *Listeria* and *botulism*.



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Robuchon demonstrating the sous vide technique. The dish: Duck Breast topped with Foie Gras and wrapped in Cabbage.

However, despite this the city's best chefs are working with the Department of Health and industry experts to win back permission to cook using this technique. The results of *sous vide* are so impressive to them – **consistently succulent meat, intensely flavored vegetables, incredible textures** – that they are willing to meticulously log their daily food handling, include temperature recordings, and account for all food that enters the kitchen just to be able to cook even one menu item using the *sous vide* technique.

So far Eleven Madison Park, Per Se, Le Cirque, and 5 others have city permission to use the technique. Recently, famed chef Joel Robuchon, who has been using *sous vide* for over 20 years, spoke about the technique at the Star Chefs International Chef Congress here in New York City and demonstrated how he is able to cater an event for 5000 guests and deliver a perfectly cooked piece of duck. When one can take a piece of foie gras, place it atop a piece of duck breast, wrap it in a cabbage leaf and cook both proteins, which have different cooking times, to perfection using this technique – you know they have to be on to something.



Daniel Boulud and David Bouley still a wannabe chef.

Daniel Boulud ... A Chef's Chef

New York chef **Daniel Boulud** was presented with the **2007 New York Rising Stars Mentor Award**, an award voted on by the New York Rising Star chefs, honoring the mentor chef who does the most to support young chefs in his local industry, and help them succeed.

This award was given at the Star Chefs International Chefs Congress that took place September 16-18. So encouraging is Mr. Boulud that he called up **David Bouley**, who had been watching from the wings as he had just finished his presentation, to join him. The two joked a bit – with Boulud saying... *I knew him when he was*

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An advertisement for 21 Club. At the top, there is a logo with the number '21' and two stylized figures. Below the logo is the phone number '(212) 582.1400' and the website 'www.21club.com'. The main part of the ad shows a photograph of a restaurant interior with round tables set with white tablecloths, silverware, and floral centerpieces. At the bottom of the ad, it says '10 Private Party Rooms for Celebrating Life's Special Occasions' and '21 West 52nd Street New York City'.

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