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Where the Star Chefs Ate—From Robuchon to Strip Clubs

BY KATE KRADER, SENIOR FEATURES EDITOR
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I had big plans to spend as much time as possible at the [StarChefs.com International Chefs Congress](#) earlier this week. After all, they had gathered some of the world's great chefs for the event, including [Joël Robuchon](#) (whom *Gault Millau* called the Chef of the [Last] Century) and Seiji Yamamoto of Ryugin in Tokyo, who is so creative it's rumored that [El Bulli's](#) Ferran Adrià is inspired by him. I didn't get to spend as much time there as I planned, but I did see vegetable-obsessive Andoni Luis Aduriz make the edible potato rocks that he serves at his [Mugaritz](#) restaurant in Erreterria, Spain. (And I heard that Wylie Dufresne of [wd50](#) got the unofficial best attendance award at the conference—he certainly got a lot of shout-outs from the visiting chefs on the stage.)

I did see a lot of the chefs (both presenters and attendees) out on the town, though. It was standing room only at the East Village's [Momofuku Ssäm Bar](#) on Sunday night. Monday night, most of the crowd packed the after-party at pastry chef [Sam Mason's](#) brand-new lounge at Tailor. But [Dani Garcia](#), who's been called the next Adrià and whose Andalucian demo was supposed to be especially good, didn't spend much time there—after eating dinner at [Upstairs at Bouley](#), he had a second meal at [Buddakan](#). (The Spanish chefs love Stephen Starr's other NYC restaurant, [Morimoto](#), too. They're treated like rock stars by the Japanese chefs, who recognize them all from the Japanese food magazines.) But at least a few of the StarChef attendees had Robert's Steakhouse on their list of places to eat. Though they insisted it was for the steaks (which *New York Times* restaurant critic Frank Bruni [said are some of the best in New York City](#)), I suspect that it's because Robert's is better known as the Penthouse Executive Club—a.k.a., a strip club.

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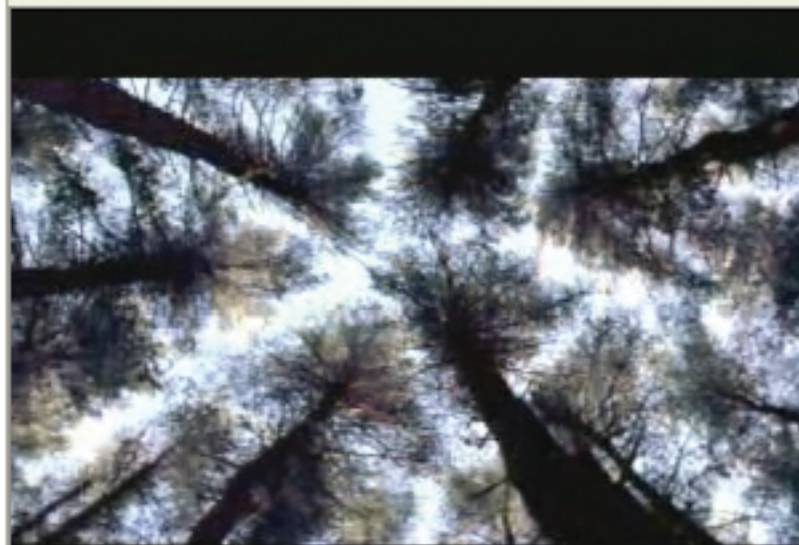
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