

TRB

TEMPLE RESTAURANT BEIJING

BY MICHELLE LYN



Some of the best restaurants can be found in the most unexpected of places, and Temple Restaurant Beijing is no exception. Housed in a 600-year-old temple at the end of a not so-easy-to-find street, TRB as it is known is one of the best restaurants in the city. Number two out of 8,804, according to Tripadvisor, to be exact.

In a sea of bustling hutongs (alleys formed by lines of traditional courtyard residences) selling local produce and meats, taxis eventually make their way to a doorman-guarded temple. A complete juxtaposition of ancient Chinese history and modern gastronomic elegance, TRB envelops you and whisks you away to another world that is insulated from the chaos that surrounded you just moments before.

The warm staff at TRB welcomes you into the backlit bar enthusiastically, genuinely apologizing for the difficulty in finding the restaurant. No matter though, as they spend the next few hours making it worth your while.

In the minimalist dining room, clean lines and modern design reminiscent of a hip New York boîte contrast with the temple's exterior. A glass of Champagne and several amuse-bouches later, you realize you're getting full and you haven't even ordered anything yet.

Homemade bread service, table-side gravlax, palate cleansing granita and a petit fours and truffle cart complement your meal with a touch of whimsy and indulgence. The vision of Ignace Leclair, a Belgian restaurateur who has managed restaurants like Maison Boulud and Daniel, TRB is a shining example of his commitment to world-class standards and complete hospitality.

A hug from your server, a personalized photo printed out before your departure and a gift from the pastry chef reinforce the reason why TRB is consistently ranked a Beijing favorite. Leclair's goal was to "craft an experience that will last from the moment you step in the door until long after you return home," and that he has.

Add this one to your bucket list and start looking for flights to Beijing.

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