

MY LAST MEAL Gregory Crewdson

# Art of dining Great **Barrington**

## Preface

Artist Gregory Crewdson's studied compositions of American life are famed for their intricacy. But for his last meal the photographer opts for comfort and charm.

Writer Ed Stocker

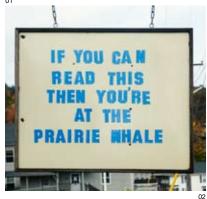
Photographer Tony Luong

"This area around Great Barrington, Massachusetts, has always been important to my life and work. I grew up in Park Slope in Brooklyn but used to come here on weekends and holidays. My family had a cabin in the nearby town of Becket, two miles down a dirt road. I have early memories of my younger brother and me picking mushrooms in the forest, followed by family meals around a long table. We ate rustic meals but there are key elements from those times - my love of salmon and grilling – that have stayed with me.

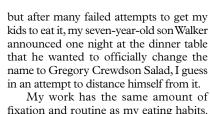
I was excited when I discovered that Mark Firth, who helped build Diner in Brooklyn, was going to open a restaurant here. There is a sense of connection when I walk in the door at Prairie Whale and I have my own table. I don't eat pork – and but after many failed attempts to get my Mark raises pigs – but there's a lot of other stuff on the menu. I think the steak that I'm choosing for my last meal is the best I've ever had, honestly.

They serve comfort food here and if I'm going to die I want to eat something comforting. I'm a routine-driven person and there are things I eat and drink every Itry not to make big distinctions between day. I always have the same cup of coffee my life and work. I prefer to blur the line from Fuel, a café down the street. My girlfriend Juliane and I normally run every morning; I'm also a big open-water swimmer. My favourite thing to eat is called – well, I'm a little embarrassed to say this - a Gregory Crewdson Salad. I make body of work, Cathedral of the Pines, is a large bowl at the beginning of the week and it's my dinner for a few days: greens my most iconic photos is called "Sunday grown by a friend, local duck confit, fresh tortellini and locally made kale pesto. I originally named it the Crewdson Salad mother in front of a slab of bloody beef.









fixation and routine as my eating habits. where art ends; it's a sort of mantra. I always loved storytelling and the movies. The pictures I create are in some ways fictional but I keep on getting drawn back to the scenery here. My most recent inspired by the town of Becket. One of Roast", a picture I made on a big stage set: a young boy sitting with his grand-



## **Profile**

Photographer Gregory Crewdson's surreal and elaborately staged images create filmic, dream-like recreations of suburban life in the US. Producing a single image can busy teams of 30 people for weeks at a time and the resulting pictures grace the world's leading collections. Beneath the Roses - a series of 56 colour photos - ranks among his most acclaimed work; his current project Cathedral of the Pines will be shown at Gagosian Gallery, New York, in January 2015.

## Venue

Housed in a former residence dating from the 1850s. Prairie Whale opened in 2012. It is the vision of Mark Firth, co-founder of Brooklyn restaurants Diner and Marlow & Sons. Firth moved from the city to a cattle-raising farm near Great Barrington in 2011 and provides much of the pork: the rest of the food is sourced from local producers and Prairie Whale's own garden.

## Menu

### To start

Caesar salad with mustard greens, fried green tomato croutons, piave cheese and marinated anchovies; or fettuccine with kale pesto, egg yolk and grana padano

## Main

Rib-eye steak on the bone with romanesco cauliflower, duck-fat potatoes, bordelaise sauce and shallot butter

## To drink

Carafe of sparkling water and Les Champs Libres crozes-hermitage foufoune 2010 red wine

### To finish Coffee and cookies



## Recipe

Fettuccine with kale pesto, egg yolk and grana padano cheese Serves 6

# Ingredients

pinch chilli flakes 115g-170g chicken stock 6 egg yolks Extra virgin olive oil, dash Grana padano, grated,

to taste

- for the kale pesto, add all ingredients to taste.
- and serve al dente.
- stock and bring to the boil, then add chilli flakes
- 6 Drain pasta and add to pan, cooking on a
- 6 Place pasta in a bowl middle for egg yolk. Sprinkle the cheese and season to taste



## 560g fresh pasta Pesto

2 cloves garlic, sliced bunch kale, chopped ½ cup grana padano, grated

2 cup olive oil Salt and pepper to taste

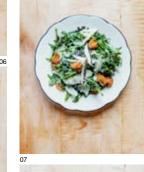
## Pasta sauce 1 clove garlic, sliced

## The method

- into blender then the olive oil until it has a smooth consistency. Add salt and pepper
- 2 Add pasta to wellsalted boiling water. Cook for 2-3 minutes
- 3 While pasta is cooking, sweat garlic in a pan with olive oil until
- 4 Mix pesto with chicken
- and make a nest in the







Gregory Crewdson

Front dining area

05 Fettuccine with pesto

06 Rib-eye steak on the

cauliflower

Caesar salad

09 Duck-fat potatoes

10 View from the bar

12 Coffee to finish

11 Les Champs Libres

egg yolk and cheese

bone with romanesco

Post-dinner cookies

crozes-hermitage wine

02 Unless you're looking at

a photograph, of course

The restaurant's main bar



I don't really eat during production because I'm too nervous but it is more important to keep the crew happy. Doug Trumbull, the special-effects guy who was responsible for movies such as Close Encounters of the Third Kind and Blade Runner, lives near here and his wife's sister does the catering for us.

I'd want Juliane and all of our children at my last meal, of course. But it would also be great to have artists and photographers around the table such as Walker Evans, Edward Hopper and John Cheever. Back in reality, I'd invite two of my closest friends: Wes Anderson and Noah Baumbach. It's always special when we get together but it usually happens in New York. Noah and I have dined together in Great Barrington but not Wes. It just won't happen. Well, maybe if it were my last meal." — (M)



