

100 years on: Remarkable stories behind Michelin stars

- A Monitor Special

Date: 01 April, 2026



Dhaka : A century after the first Michelin stars were awarded, the prestigious accolade continues to recognize the world's finest culinary talent. From elegant French dining rooms to bustling Singaporean street-food stalls, Michelin has become the benchmark for quality, creativity, and consistency in the culinary world.

Over the decades, the Michelin Guide has evolved far beyond its original purpose. What began as a small booklet for motorists in France-offering maps, car tips, and restaurant recommendations-has transformed into a global authority on gastronomy.

Today, Michelin stars highlight not only technical skill but also innovation, sustainable practices, and the cultural richness of regional cuisine. For chefs, earning a star can elevate their careers, bringing international recognition, while diners often travel across continents to

experience these celebrated meals.

Longest-standing Michelin-starred restaurant

In the small town of Vonnas in eastern France, Georges Blanc has held at least one Michelin star for nearly as long as the award has existed. Originally founded as La Mère Blanc, the restaurant gained its first star in 1929 under chef Éliisa Blanc, the grandmother of current owner Georges Blanc. Georges took over the restaurant in 1968 at just 25 years old and earned the third star in the early 1970s, retaining it until 2025.



Paul Bocuse served as the inspiration behind Chef Gusteau from Ratatouille

Georges Blanc is renowned for its seasonal French cuisine, emphasizing local ingredients from the surrounding Rhône-Alpes region. Signature

dishes include scallops marinated with Roscoff onions, herbs, and Chardonnay, as well as Bresse chicken baked in a salt crust and served with black truffles. Over generations, Georges Blanc has maintained its reputation as a beacon of classical French cooking while continuously innovating its menu.

Most affordable Michelin-starred venue

Singapore's hawker stall Hill Street Tai Hwa Pork Noodle has earned fame as one of the most accessible Michelin-starred eateries. Originally opened in 1968, this humble stall serves flavorful pork noodles for just MXN 58 (GBP 2.45), making it a rare example of world-class food at an extremely low price.

The stall's enduring popularity stems from its dedication to quality and consistency. Noodles are freshly prepared, while homemade sauces are crafted daily.

Longest-held three stars

France's culinary icon Paul Bocuse held three Michelin stars at his restaurant for a remarkable 55 consecutive years - from 1965 until 2020. Bocuse, often called the "Pope of Gastronomy," revolutionized French cuisine by pioneering nouvelle cuisine, a style that emphasizes lighter sauces, fresh ingredients, and artistic presentation.



Seven Swans in Frankfurt was the first vegan restaurant to receive a Michelin star, thanks to its Welsh-German chef Ricky Saward

His restaurant near Lyon remains an institution, with white tablecloths, crystal chandeliers, and an atmosphere steeped in tradition. Classic dishes such as Bresse guinea fowl flambéed tableside, truffle-infused sauces, and delicate desserts continue to attract gourmets from around the globe. Bocuse's influence shaped generations of chefs, many of whom have gone on to earn Michelin stars themselves, and his legacy continues even after the restaurant was reduced to two stars posthumously.

Fastest awarded star

London's Behind restaurant made history by receiving a Michelin star just 20 days after opening in 2021. Despite operating briefly during two

national lockdowns, the intimate 18-seat restaurant impressed inspectors with a carefully curated tasting menu.

Chef Andy Beynon and his team showcase inventive dishes like roast hake with cockles and sherry, and peas with smoked pike and trout roe, served in a modern space designed to maximize interaction between chefs and diners.

First vegan Michelin star

In Frankfurt, Seven Swans became the first fully vegan restaurant to receive a Michelin star in 2020. Initially earning a star with a menu that included meat and fish, the restaurant transitioned to a completely plant-based menu under chef Ricky Saward in 2019.

Housed in a seven-floor narrow building with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the River Main, Seven Swans uses vegetables grown on its own permaculture farm, complemented by house-made pickles and ferments. The restaurant exemplifies sustainable gastronomy and innovation, demonstrating that a Michelin star can celebrate environmental responsibility as well as taste and technique.