



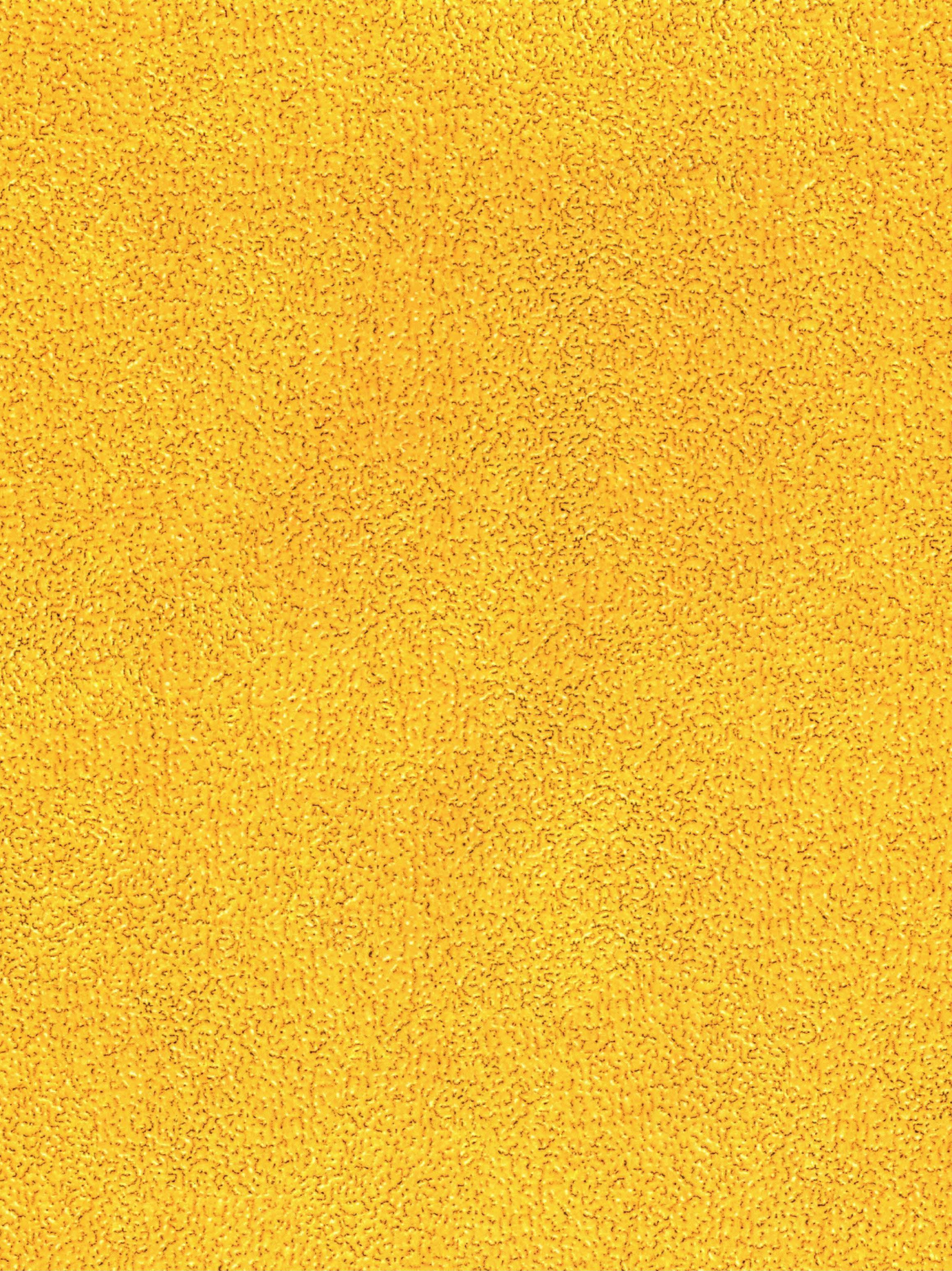
GÉDRIC GROLET

FRUIT

THE ART OF PASTRY







THE TREE

GEDRIC GNOLET



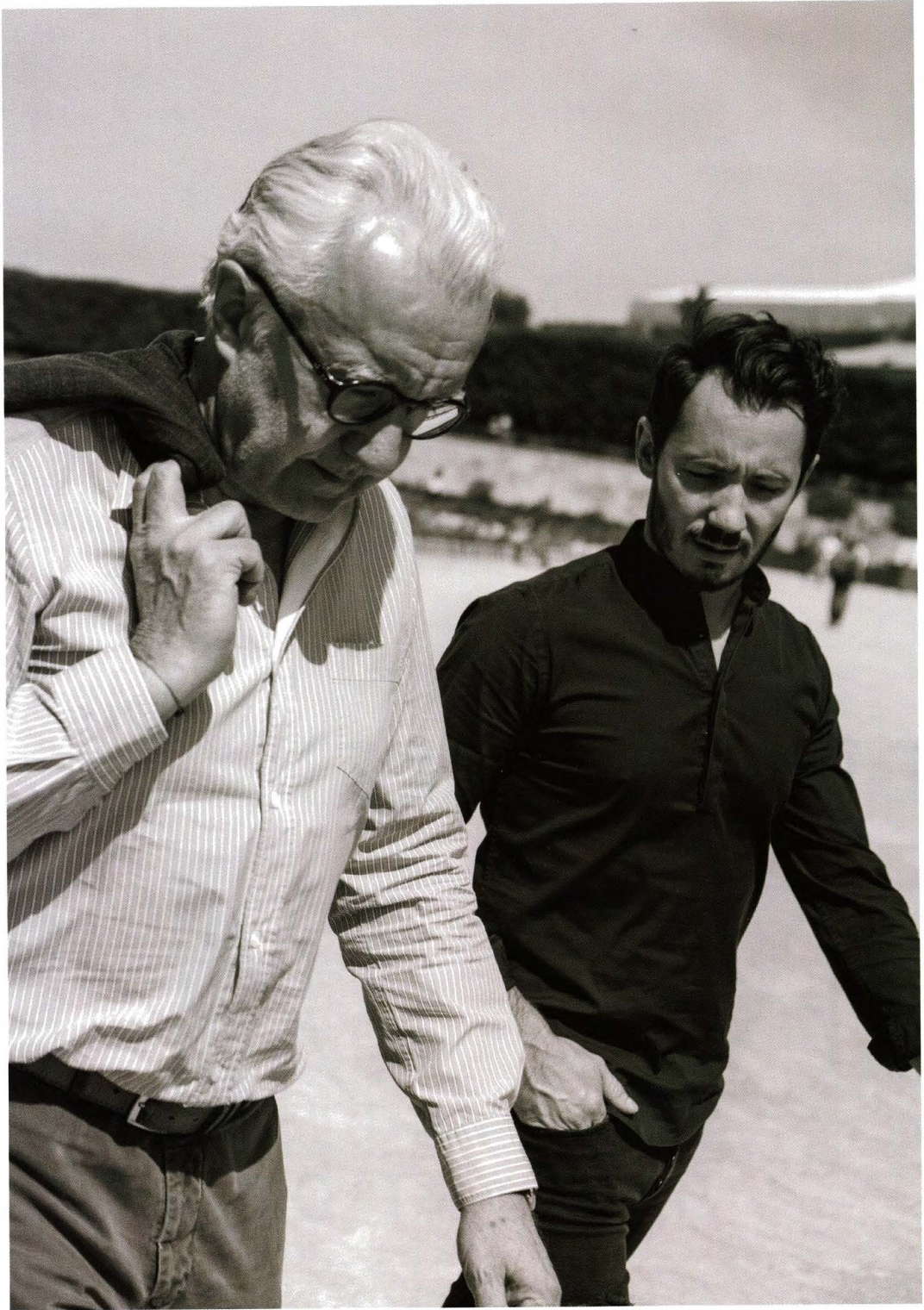
MY INSPIRATION

FRUITS

GEDRIC GROLET

FRUIT

THE ART OF PASTRY



FOREWORD

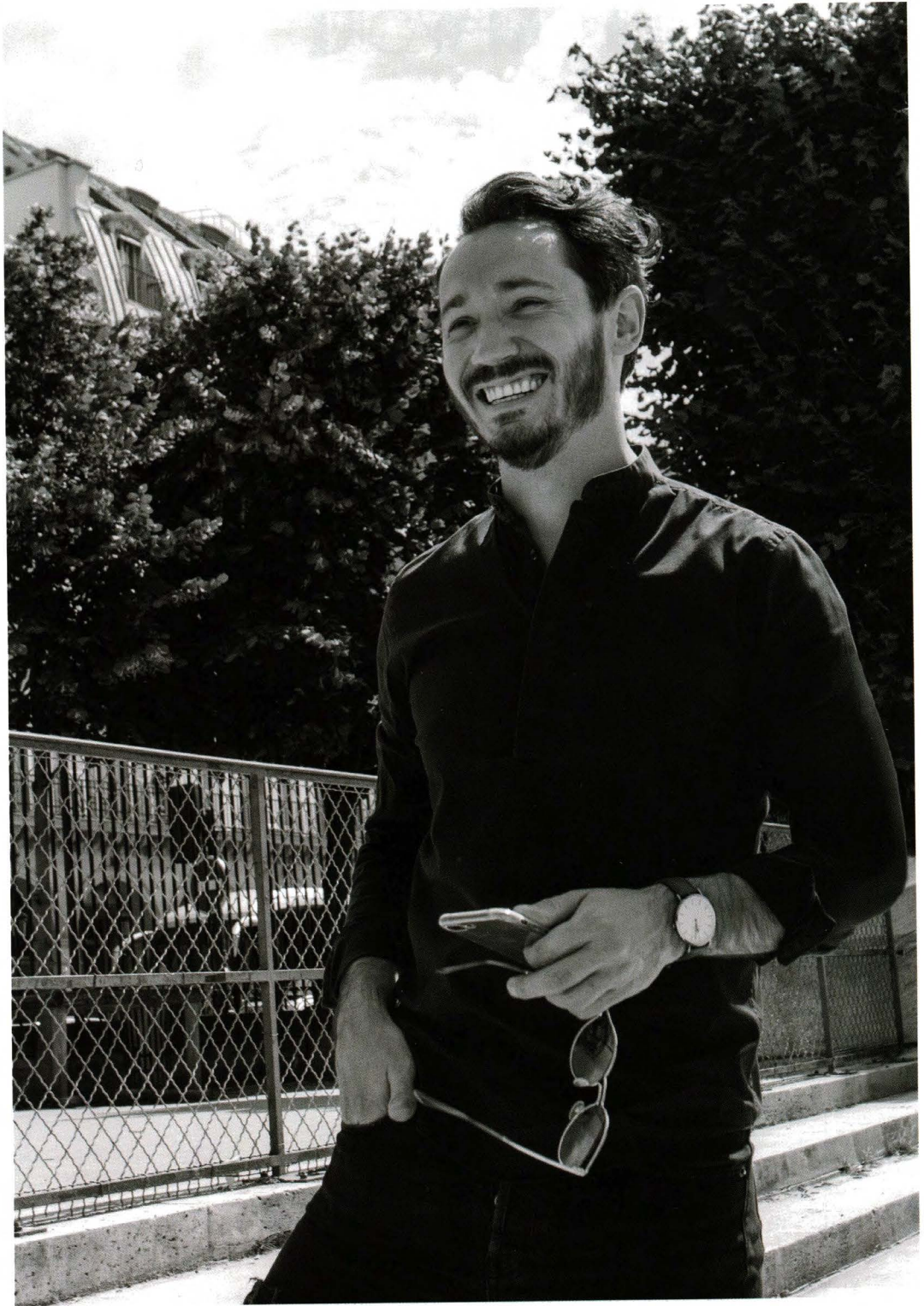
I could sing Cédric Grolet's praises here. There would certainly be enough accolades for this thirtysomething who has spent half his life accumulating awards and distinctions. But because Cédric is the pastry chef at l'Hôtel Le Meurice in Paris, I would doubtless be suspected of bias. I could also tell the food lover reading this book that the recipes presented here are as good to eat as they are beautiful to look at. I would know: I've tasted them all, and they have all seduced me with their absolute precision. But I prefer to leave this delicious surprise to each reader.

So I must discuss the only topic left: Cédric Grolet's extraordinary vision.

Cédric is guided by two requirements. First, simplicity — and everyone knows that this is a complex goal to reach, because it means giving up on ease, pruning away unnecessary things, and keeping only the essential. Second, to be inspired by nature. In the world of confectionery, this ambition opens up new and promising fields. You have only to see Cédric choosing the lemon that has the acidity and texture that will best suit his project, or weighing up the merits of cream matured by one producer or another. Placing the product at the center of his work is a radical perspective shift that leads him to redefine the work of his profession. No pastry chef before him has ever borrowed the techniques of cooking, such as reduction, concentration, and even roasting, with such intelligence.

This book will have a place in history.

Alain Ducasse



PREFACE

When my customers ask me “Why fruit?” I tell them that this focus comes, above all, from the simple way my parents raised me. When I went to school, I took fruit plucked from the tree as a snack. I could tell a long tale of snacking on fruit like this.

For me, the key goal of this book is emphasizing the importance of fruit and the fundamental role it plays in confectionery, whether it comes from our own gardens or the other side of the world. I’m constantly asking myself how to pay homage to it in the best possible way. For this reason, I never forget that every fruit is unique, and that its flavor should be underlined in a specific way. Citrus fruit, for example, shows off all its strength in fresh preparations, while the taste of strawberries is best distinguished when they are cooked simply, warm with a little sugar and a drizzle of olive oil.

This book isn’t written for any reader in particular. I would love it if everyone — professionals, seasoned pastry chefs, and everyday home cooks — could make one or another of my recipes. There are many fruit tarts, cookies, and plated desserts that can be easily done at home and are relatively quick to make. Others,

such as fruit sculptures — which I do without using a mold and which, in my view, require highly developed skills — are more specialized and difficult to do at home. All kinds of readers can find their level here.

Generally speaking, I love to do and talk about simple things. For this reason, fruit is a perfect subject for me, because everyone loves it. The important thing is that people understand that fruit is for eating. Let’s turn, therefore, to the selection of the best possible fruit: Is it good as it is, without any further preparation? Is it ripe enough? Is it in season? Respecting the unique nature of a fruit is the first step toward making an excellent dessert. Next, one must think of a seasoning that will highlight its character and elevate it, generating real emotion and evoking memories. Certain fruit is naturally good as it is, but it can be even better when its flavor is concentrated, reducing it to its essence. I’m not really satisfied until a dessert I’ve prepared surpasses the goodness of the original fruit.

I could spend hours talking to you about a fruit and telling you its story!

— **Cédric Grolet**

All Cédric Grolet creations can be found on his Instagram account @cedricgrolet. And you can share your photos with us using #cedricgrolet and #CGfruits.

I began making confectionery when I was thirteen years old, working alongside my grandfather, who had a big hotel where he did the cooking. What attracted me, really, were the sweet things. Therefore, I began my first training course in confectionery at the age of fourteen, as well as a professional two-year confectionery course. I remember that as a student, I couldn't sit still. Making confectionery helped me mature and really let me thrive. And it's let me continue to grow and thrive ever since. Driven by my participation in a number of competitions, I signed up for another two years of study at a technical school in Yssingeaux. Then came the great leap. I plucked up my courage and went to try my luck in Paris. The idea was to take a step toward meeting the greats. The first stop on this initial voyage: Fauchon. I built my range at the heart of this iconic establishment alongside three extraordinary chefs, each of whom, in his way, influenced the philosophy I have today. Christophe Adam taught me creativity, Benoît Couvrand provided me with structure, and Christophe Appert led me to caprice and dynamism. They really thought of me as their little pastry-chef-to-be, and I threw myself into all the different jobs I took. This gave me the opportunity to experiment with a lot of things, to see the whole world and expand my horizons considerably. However, after five years, I felt that I'd gotten all I could, and told myself that it was time to move on to new pastures. At twenty-five, I joined Yannick Alléno and Camille Lesecq

at Meurice. It was a slap in the face. The level of performance demanded was like nothing I'd ever seen, and I was uneasy, lost. I realized that I desperately needed to understand flavor, and I was supported in this quest by Alléno and Lesecq. When they left in 2012, I took over the role of pastry chef. It was at this moment that Alain Ducasse arrived, with Christophe Saintagne at his side, and it would be a turning point in my career. Even if there were some bumps at the beginning, Alain Ducasse, with his distinctive identity, held the keys to my success. He was hard, firm, and fair. "Stop making pretty things, work on taste," he told me. With Saintagne in the kitchen, I spent an entire year questioning myself; this was the most important driving force in my journey. Every day, he told me about taste, seasoning, boldness, association, texture, and so on, never letting me catch a breath until I had begun to understand. I was sad to see him leave Meurice, because we'd become a good pair. Fortunately, I recaptured the same balance with Jocelyn Herland, who took up the reins in the kitchen.

Now, I'm working directly with Alain Ducasse. He knows who I am, respects me, and gives me my freedom. Not a day passes when he's not interested in what I'm doing, what drives me to search for boldness and perfection. I'm a great admirer of this visionary chef, and I'm very lucky to have this relationship with him. It is important to me to have reached this point, but I could never have done it without my collaborators. I have always been

taught that you must know how to choose those around you. I have a formidable team behind me, working day in and day out to help me push toward perfection. My two sous chefs, Yohann Caron and Thibault Hauchard, have an important role. I give them more and more freedom; they are very good pastry chefs and, thanks to them, I can give myself over completely to creation. These days, my process is simple: I step back, I sketch broadly, and I reflect. I think in terms of season, form, and boldness, associating between them to come up with my desserts. Then my chefs take the baton and, following my directions, propose different trial versions. I taste any number of things, but always with a fresh palate — when I'm not hungry. If a dessert doesn't completely satisfy me, I send it to be remade. It is not until I've begun to find the right flavor that the construction of the dessert in its final form can begin. Then, when everything is perfect, and not a moment before, we put it on the menu. At that point, I gather the impressions of the customers. Thanks to their feedback, my palate expands even more. My current goal is to enrich my confectionery through travel, as I see Alain Ducasse doing. I go all over the world to share my knowledge, and it's fascinating. In every country, people ask me different questions, derived from their cultures and their tastes, and their reactions are never the same. This makes me grow.

This book, which is my first — and which is a dream come true for me —

is very important in this way. It lets me examine things from all angles, to step back and gain perspective and to see what I can still improve. I see this as a new way to grow; it makes me question myself. Indeed, what is confectionery but a perpetual process of questioning? If a dessert is pleasing today, it must also be pleasing tomorrow.

GÉDRIC GROLET

A FEW DATES

2000

began his professional training
as a pastry chef

2006

began working at Fauchon

2011

became sous chef at Meurice

2013

became pastry chef at Meurice

2015

named Pastry Chef of the Year
by *Le Chef* magazine

2016

received the Pastry Chef
of the Year Excellence Award
from Relais Desserts

2016

received the Pastry Chef
of the Year trophy from
Les Toques Blanches

2017

named Pastry Chef of the Year
by Omnivore







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Fit
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W U S

J I I

CITRUS FRUIT

BERGAMOT

In season

January and February

Choosing fruit

the fruit should have a smooth skin without any brown blemishes

Average weight

between 3¼ and 6¼ ounces
(90 and 180 g)

Storage

at room temperature for 1 week,
in the refrigerator vegetable
drawer for 2 weeks

Flavor pairings

Mirabelle plums, cream cheese, raspberry



LEMON

In season

year-round, according
to the location of origin

Choosing fruit

ideally organic or pesticide-free;
the fruit should be bright yellow,
heavy, and firm

Average weight

4¼ ounces (120 g)

Storage

at room temperature for 8 days,
in the refrigerator vegetable
drawer for 10 days

Flavor pairings

pepper, honey, verbena



DRIED LIME

Fruit source

lime dried until it blackens

Storage

in a dry place in an airtight container

Flavor pairings

peach, Timut pepper (Sichuan peppercorn), strawberry



LIME

In season

year-round, according to the location of origin

Choosing fruit

the fruit should be firm and a bright, brilliant green

Average weight

3½ ounces (100 g)

Storage

in the refrigerator vegetable drawer for 15 days

Flavor pairings

tarragon, shiso, mint





CLEMENTINE

In season

November to January

Choosing fruit

the firmness of the fruit is more important than its color, as is its aroma

Average weight

2½ ounces (70 g)

Storage

at room temperature for 6 days,
in the refrigerator vegetable
drawer for 10 days

Flavor pairings

chocolate, quince, walnut

KUMQUAT

In season

November and December

Choosing fruit

the fruit should be a bright, unblemished yellow, and give when squeezed gently

Average weight

½ ounce (15 g)

Storage

at room temperature for 4 days,
in the refrigerator vegetable
drawer for 2 to 3 weeks

Flavor pairings

lime, cinnamon, pepper

