

Last meal

If you could place an order for your final bite to eat, what would it be?
Actor **MELISSA GEORGE** talks us through her choice.



Choosing my last meal is tough – I can't decide between two.

There's a place in Paris called Kodawari. It's a ramen place in the second, decorated like a Japanese fish market. There are speakers in the walls and you can hear the sounds of trucks delivering fish and people yelling in Japanese. There are boxes of fake fish. The place is extraordinary. But what makes it really special is their sardine ramen – the bouillon is made out of sardines and it comes with noodles, egg, pork cheek, spring onions and big sardines. There are no words for it. It's ridiculous. You come out with so much omega-3 in your body. I go there probably once every two weeks, and when I'm travelling, it gets a little hard to be away from it.

My other one is just two ingredients.

I discovered it when my family were visiting from Australia and we went to stay in Marseille. Justine Pruvot, who's an extraordinary chef from the area, came to cook for us. We were in the garden and she brought out a tray of oysters with thinly shaved cumquats on top. The bitterness of the skin, with the sweetness of the fruit, and the salty oyster... this has marked me for life. I've forgotten the rest of the meal because it was so good.

I often go and stay with a friend of mine, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, who directed *Amélie*, in Luberon. He'll always put in the effort to make a salt-baked salmon. That's his signature. I don't know his



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recipe. The sauce is a bit of a mystery still, which I'm bummed about. I'm always in the kitchen, looking over his shoulder while he cooks.

Being a Perth girl, the big thing when I was growing up was having barbecue breakfast. My father would make these little metal rings for the eggs, so they would be perfectly round. We'd have beautiful bacon, and fried tomato, and

bread cooked with butter on it. It's still a highlight when I'm back in Australia, when it's hot and you're by the pool. The other thing I would have after school was salt and vinegar chips in a white roll with butter and chocolate milk. It's so bad for you. I liked the sound of the crunchiness inside the bun. And fish and chips on Cottesloe beach, with chicken salt, a slice of lemon, wrapped in paper. I lived my childhood on the beach with that kind of food. I don't go back so often but for my last job, *Ms. X*, I was filming in New Zealand and the cuisine is similar. It was nice to be back there; not quite home but kind of home-adjacent.

My children have been raised on spicy food. I do a lot of Thai curries. Last night I made a sage and butter gnocchi with goat's cheese, and Madagascan pepper, which was absolutely through the roof. They loved it. I want them to have good food. I think if their tummies are happy, they'll have good memories of Mum's food.

Living in Provence, boulangeries are everywhere.

There's chaussons aux pommes with the apple inside, pains au chocolat, croissants – but having those is a rarity for me because otherwise I'd be the size of a house. It's nice to go past at the end of the day when they do their second batch of baguettes. A fresh baguette with French butter and a slice of ham is just one of the best meals in the world.

Ms. X airs on Showcase. Stream it on Binge and Foxtel On Demand.