

# biotope

PASTORALE - BART DE POOTER

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 | LANNOO



13 MAY 1968

14 MAY 2019

## Introduction

There comes a time in your life that calls for reflection, a time to look back on all of your achievements and to look forward to what the future may hold. With this book I would like to introduce you to my world and live my life with me as a chef, businessman and father. I would like to introduce you to those people and experiences that have taken me to a higher level. You will meet the real stars, those who helped me to turn Pastorale into a reality, but you will also be introduced to the people who made me into what I am and the people I have worked with on a variety of projects. I have learned so much from so many people around me that all I can do now is to express my gratitude. With this book I hope to repay this debt, if only in small measures. Not only am I talking about my career highs and lows, I'm also keen to share what I have learned along the way. My favourite kitchen techniques as well as my own stories and recipes that helped to put Pastorale on the menu, plus my passion for art paired with a gastronomic dining experience.

I can only describe the past fifty years as living life to the full. I have lived throughout these fifty years and sometimes, I was lived by them. But, hand on heart, or rather, one hand on your heart and one on your stomach, I would say that I had a great time and would do it all over again if I had the opportunity. I am still living my life to the full, as I always have, but that's how I like it. Anyone who knows me is aware that with me, work and fun go hand in hand.

Welcome to my story.

Welcome to my biotope.

Bart

# BURGH, PRESBYTERY, PASTORALE

Early 14th century. A pond, located above the hamlet of *Reeth* as it was known, close to Kontich, draws the attention of the Lord of Berckelaer, a vassal to the powerful dynasty of the knights of Berthout. He deems it the perfect location to build a farm. ‘Het Hof’ develops into the rural burgh of *Retergoed* that, in turn, will become the presbytery of Reet. Seven centuries on, this presbytery is at the heart of the multi-starred restaurant that has been blessed with the name of *Pastorale*.

## FROM BOURG TO MEDIEVAL PRESBYTERY

The noble van Berckelaer family settles to the south of the 14th-century hamlet of *Reeth*, nearby Kontich and close to the springs that feed the Molenbeek, or Mill Stream. To strengthen his relationship with the clergy, whose powers are increasing, the Lord of Berckelaer commissions the building of two chapels in the corners of his *Retergoed* estate. One chapel is dedicated to Saint Mary Magdalene and will serve as the village church in later days. The other chapel is now known as the Laarkapel (Laar Chapel). In those days, the *Retergoed* estate with its rural burgh and two chapels on the Laar is strongly anchored in the so-called social-residential relationship between the Church and the Court.

Before the year 1442 the van Berckelaer family makes a gift to the parish of this rural burgh with its gardens and fields. And so it came to pass that the burgh turned into a medieval presbytery, not far from the church. In the mid-15th century the

church, with its new brick-built bell tower, takes up a prominent position in the new centre of the village of Reet.

## FROM EARLY BAROQUE TO BUILDING A PRESBYTERY IN THE STYLE OF THE HIGH BAROQUE

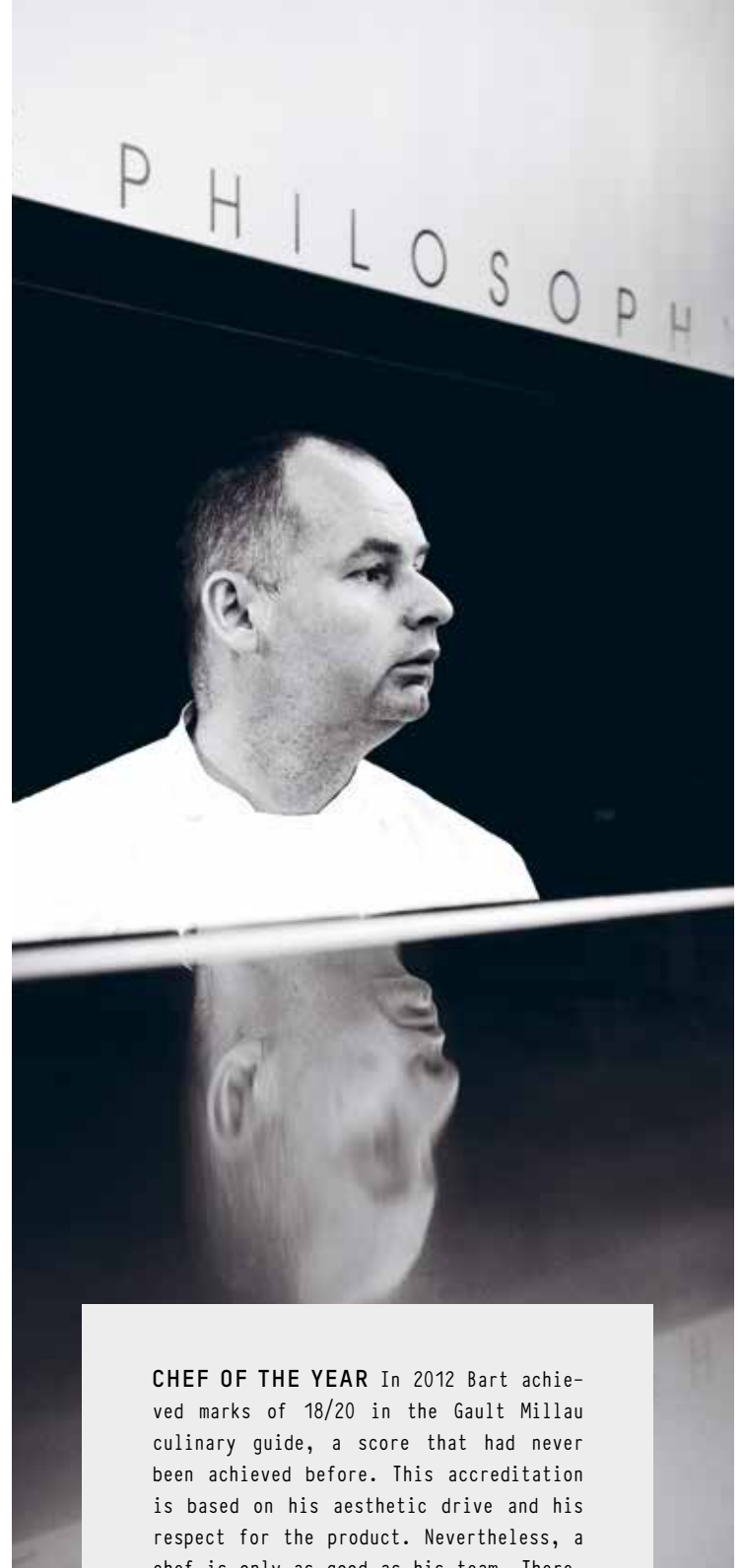
In the 17th century the feudal ‘*curestede*’ – the name then commonly used to denote a timber-framed parsonage – enjoyed the benefits of a brick tower, a thatched roof, two gardens, a walled arbour on a hill that was locally known as ‘kneukelenberg’ plus an orchard and two fields. The presbytery and its grounds undergo many changes. In 1661, at the rear of the old homestead, a detached longhouse is built. To the left of this, the parish priest commissions a new timber-framed presbytery, which will be erected between 1665 and 1668, the cost of which he bears himself.

When in 1714 – after the War of the Spanish Succession – knight Corneel vanden Branden



**BART:** So many young people flock to Pastorale. All of them, without exception, experience a huge amount of growth. I am not just talking about artists – that is a given – but it also goes for our kitchen chefs. At Pastorale we give them plenty of opportunities to grow. I have often met parents who wanted to thank me in person. Yes, I have played a role in this, but more importantly, so has the entire team. Credit where credit is due. Pastorale is not just Bart De Pooter. Pastorale is an entire team comprised of people that, on an individual basis, are very good at what they do, but are totally committed to working as a team and want to do better every single day. There is a slogan above the kitchen extractor that is a beautiful summary of our attitude:

ONE TEAM.  
ONE PHILOSOPHY.  
ONE TARGET.



**CHEF OF THE YEAR** In 2012 Bart achieved marks of 18/20 in the Gault Millau culinary guide, a score that had never been achieved before. This accreditation is based on his aesthetic drive and his respect for the product. Nevertheless, a chef is only as good as his team. Therefore, Bart refuses to be the only player in the video that is made of him. He decides to cut pictures of his team members into long strips to form a type of super-human.







**My home. My house.  
My stilthouse. 2008**

For *My house*, created by Arne Quinze, they really went the extra mile. To create this project, part of the restaurant was stripped down completely. The ceiling was adjusted and all of the radiators were removed. The restaurant closed down for a total of twenty days, three of which were spent by Arne to work on his sculpture, before it was revealed at the grand opening.

The artist was given carte blanche and magically transformed Pasturale into his own personal atelier, where he produced an installation with wooden slats, some of which were painted in a fluorescent orange. With this installation made of wood, Arne Quinze, the artist, connects the various dining rooms that are all on the same floor, engages in a dialogue with other floors and melts them into one single whole. The numbers on the slats personify addresses and the lattice structure symbolises the virtual connections between these addresses: a symbolic internet, as it were, that connects things.

With this work of art, Quinze has primarily strengthened several elements that were already present: feeling at home, transparency, working with shadows, the use of natural materials, wood in various colours and of various thicknesses. Transparency, tension, a variety of textures... All of these are components that are essential to the creation of a good dish. This is









## POSTUUR

Bart's New York experience inspired him to set up a *fast good food* business in Belgium. ABCVegan and Chopt really fired his imagination to the extent that he felt that this particular concept would be successful in Belgium as well. Bart didn't hang about. When he had the chance to set up a genuine 'lunch room' at the Post X building in Berchem, he jumped at the opportunity. The concept was considered in depth, designs were drawn up and architects were consulted. It took many steps, some of them placed in the very concrete the building is made of, but eventually, POSTUUR saw the light.

## Croquants, caramels and similar

<b>Croquant of beef</b>	500 g 125 g 85 g 14 g 6 g	beef brisket soy sauce fish sauce sugar salt	Cut the brisket of beef into cubes measuring 8 x 8 centimetres. Vacuum with the soy sauce, fish sauce, sugar and salt. Chill and marinate for 48 hours. Remove the meat from the bag and pat dry. Cook in the microwave until completely dry and ready for use. Pull apart until you are left with only very thin fibres and deep-fry them at a temperature of 180 °C. Add salt to taste.	117
<b>HIT ME Croquant of Isomalt</b>	600 g 300 g 300 g 20 g	fondant (mix of sugar, glucose syrup and water) glucose syrup Isomalt dried blackcurrant, ground	Boil the first three ingredients up to 165 °C. Pour into a silicone baking tray and allow to set. Chop roughly, then pour into the Thermomix to produce a fine powder. Add the ground blackcurrant. With the use of a sieve, spread a layer of this powder onto a silicon baking tray and return to the oven, at 200 °C, until the sugar melts again. Once firm, store in a dry and tightly sealed container.	63
<b>Truffle meringue</b>	150 g 30 g 50 g	egg white sugar winter truffle, finely chopped	Pre-heat the oven to 75 °C. Whisk the egg whites with the sugar to form peaks. Fold the truffle pieces into the mixture and spread out thinly onto a silicone baking sheet. Dry the meringue in the pre-heated oven for approx. 5 hours, or until dry.	

## Jus, infusions, bouillons, fonds, sauces

<b>Mole with dark chocolate</b> This sauce is based on plain chocolate which accounts for its deep and dark character.	2 g 9 0,5 g 2 liter 400 g 200 g 75 g 200 g 20 g 20 g 42 g 3 g 10 g 5 g 5 g 5 g 5 g 50 g 500 g 50 g 15 g	mace sticks of cinnamon cloves water butter onion pecan nut plain chocolate pumpkin seeds garlic salt dried chili peppers, de-seeded sesame seed cumin coriander savory (herb) thyme tomato paste potatoes, peeled cornflour black garlic	Place the mace, cinnamon and cloves in a cheese cloth and tie with string so the spices can easily be removed from the casserole after cooking. Place the bag, together with the other ingredients, in a large casserole on the hob and bring to the boil. Thicken for 4 to 5 hours on low heat. Remove the bag with the spices from the casserole. Finely blend into a sauce and sieve before use. Perfect in combination with lamb.	141
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## Colophon

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© Lannoo Publishers, Tielt, 2019

D/2019/45/423 - NUR 440

ISBN 978 94 014 6265 5

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