

Amelia by Paulo Airaudo Opens at Hotel María Cristina, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Sebastián

Paulo Airaudo's two-Michelin-starred restaurant begins a new chapter in San Sebastián within the iconic Hotel María Cristina



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San Sebastián/Donostia, May 5, 2026.- Amelia by Paulo Airaudo has officially opened its doors at Hotel María Cristina, a Luxury Collection Hotel, bringing to completion the project announced in 2025 and marking the beginning of a new chapter for one of Spain's most acclaimed contemporary fine dining restaurants.

Located in a unique setting within the hotel, the restaurant fully integrates into the universe of Hotel María Cristina, reinforcing its position as one of Europe's leading destinations for haute cuisine.

Built by the Sociedad de Fomento de San Sebastián and inaugurated on July 9, 1912, Hotel María Cristina was named in honour of Queen María Cristina of Habsburg-Lorraine, a devoted admirer of the city who was named honorary mayoress in 1926. Municipally owned through the Sociedad de Fomento and managed by Marriott International under its Luxury Collection brand, the hotel has stood for more than a century as a symbol of elegance and hospitality.

With the opening of Amelia, Hotel María Cristina completes its gastronomic offering and further strengthens its position as one of Europe's leading references in luxury hospitality and fine dining.

Amelia's arrival represents the union between the hotel's timeless elegance and the culinary vision of Paulo Airaudo, the Argentine chef of Italian heritage who has called San Sebastián home since 2017.

With eight Michelin stars across his portfolio and restaurants in cities such as Barcelona, Hong Kong, Florence and Bangkok, Airaudo is today regarded as one of the most influential names in international gastronomy.

The restaurant occupies a space designed by architect Javier Orduña of Biarkio Arquitectura, conceived as an elegant, sophisticated and highly intimate environment. The project centres around an open kitchen surrounded by a counter seating twelve guests, along with two additional tables, creating a close and direct interaction between kitchen and dining room.

The gastronomic proposal is built around the concept of “Italian omakase”, where guests place themselves in the hands of the chef and his team for a unique culinary journey. Airaudo presents a personal cuisine rooted in his Italian heritage and shaped by an open, contemporary vision, with a particular focus on seafood and a carefully selected range of ingredients that reflect his understanding of produce beyond geographical limitations. The result is an experience that combines technical precision, elegance and emotion within a constantly evolving menu.

This opening is part of the collaboration between Paulo Airaudo Group and Hotel María Cristina, supported by the Sociedad de Fomento de San Sebastián as part of its strategy to promote gastronomy as a key sector for the city. Amelia is also one of the projects selected for the EKINN+ Gastro acceleration programme, aimed at fostering talent, generational renewal and the international projection of Donostia/San Sebastián as a gastronomic capital.

About Hotel María Cristina, a Luxury Collection Hotel, San Sebastián

Opened on July 9, 1912 and named after Queen María Cristina, who enjoyed long stays in San Sebastián, Hotel María Cristina is a true icon of the city. Managed by Marriott International under its luxury brand The Luxury Collection, the hotel has, over the past 113 years, had the privilege of hosting some of the most distinguished personalities of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, from royalty and aristocracy to leading figures from the worlds of culture and cinema, thanks to its close relationship with the San Sebastián International Film Festival.

Every year since 1953, the hotel has become the home and headquarters of internationally renowned stars, including Elizabeth Taylor, Gregory Peck, Alfred Hitchcock, Steven Spielberg, Sophia Loren, Bette Davis, Susan Sarandon, Mel Gibson, Pedro Almodóvar, Woody Allen and Brad Pitt. A landmark venue for the city’s social and family events, Hotel María Cristina continues to play a prominent role in San Sebastián’s social and cultural life.

About Chef Paulo Airaudo

Born in Argentina into a family of Italian heritage and a resident of Donostia/San Sebastián since 2016, Paulo Airaudo is the founder of Paulo Airaudo Group, headquartered in the city. The group currently encompasses ten restaurants, eight Michelin stars and operations across Spain, Italy, Hong Kong and Thailand. Airaudo’s projects range from fine dining restaurants to casual concepts and traditional taverns.

In 2017, he launched Amelia in San Sebastián, his most personal project, now awarded two Michelin stars. Since 2019, he has expanded his gastronomic universe with projects such as IBAI (one Michelin star), the trattoria and pizzeria La Bottega de Filippo, and Egosari, a pintxos bar and traditional Basque restaurant in the heart of the Old Town, all located in San Sebastián; Aleia in Barcelona (two Michelin stars); NOI at the Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong (two Michelin stars); and Luca’s at Hotel La Gemma in Florence (one Michelin star).

Over the past year, he has also launched three new international fine dining restaurants: Sartoria at Empire Tower in Bangkok; Da Lorenzo at NH Collection Venezia Grand Hotel Palazzo dei Dogi in Venice; and Belén at the InterContinental Hotel in Chiang Mai, northern Thailand.



amelia
by Paulo Airaudó

For more information:

Marriott international

Marta López de Cervantes Villarrubia

Marta.lopezdecervantes@marriott.com

M: +34 627 203 850

Paulo Airaudó Group

Daniel Arbós Basco

daniel.arbos@inbesting.es

M: +34 678 607 398