



ouissance

*Bacon, Maple, Avocado
Bliss Bites*

Elizabeth White



Jouissance?

Jouissance is desire and bliss, pleasure and pain. It is the movement towards the object of desire, an encounter that ruptures subjectivity; an encounter that demands one's deterritorialization, one's temporary remove from the world, and a temporary dissolution of that world. *Jouissance* is, and demands, a release from the binds of cultural convention, of well-formed concepts of self, of ossified ontology and epistemology, of being and comprehension. The process of these removals, deterritorializations, dissolutions, ruptures of subjectivity are uncomfortable, painful, but release into what some call bliss.

Jouissance is not only part of physical, sensual, sexual events. It is present in mediums of expression; in forms of writing that defy convention. And this defiance causes the consumer/audience discomfort until they let themselves shake loose from what is known, felt, and reified as normal or definite.

Jouissance is the power in, and qualifier of, a writerly text, according to Barthes (*Pleasure of the Text* 1973) and is distinguished from (or a large leap beyond) *Plaisir*. Consider this:

"*Plaisir* results [...] from the operation of the structures of signification through which the subject knows himself or herself; *jouissance* fractures these structures." (Middleton, 1990). *Jouissance* is not only beyond pleasure, but also beyond the self and in a territory where subjectivity and consciousness break down. *Jouissance* is part of deterritorialization, an impetus of deterritorialization

Pain is a feature of *jouissance*. The lure and ephemerality of *jouissance* cause distress, but so does its excess. The subject-rupturing experiences of *jouissance* cannot be sustained - one cannot hold coherent subjectivity or any sort of territorialization while in *jouissance*. There is pain in excess of pleasure, a surplus that is also unsustainable. There is pain in the discomfort of entry into *jouissance*, and pain in the loss and longing of departure from it. As Marc de Kesel (2013) reminds us, "Desire is unrest because it is not where it longs to be, because it is not enjoying the source of its being, and of being as such." The lure and the entry into, and departure from and longing for *jouissance* causes that very unrest.

Stephen Heath, translator of Barthes' *Image, Music, Text* (1977) reminds us that the English language lacks an equivalent to '*jouissance*' (p. 9). We have no single word to hold the concept. It seems Anglo-European and Anglo-American cultures have resulted in linguistic mores that French philosophers, psychoanalysts, and intellectuals would better describe as limitations. Without a terminological counterpart in English that almost intuitively conveys its essence to the recipient, we must apprehend *Jouissance* through descriptions, qualifiers, equivalences, differences, and negations. Contemporaneous to Lacans', Freuds', Barthes', and poststructuralism's attention to *jouissance*, there was likely a strong divide between British cultural taboos and those of Romance-speaking cultures (Latin-Europe, e.g. France, Spain, Portugal). Today, we may find the concept of *jouissance* less taboo than at the time of its discussion in linguistics and psychology (thinking to what is implied in much of the soft-porn-esk popular media). But still we lack a concept to encapsulate the spirit of *jouissance*, therefore translators of texts such as Barthes' *Image, Music, Text* avoid translating the word to English.

Gustatory Immersion

This multisensory gustatory immersion intends to amplify the experience of eating—to push it beyond the limits of passive, conventional, or all too often hasty consumptive experiences. It is also ripe with elements of discomfort, or features that are unusual and unsettling, intended in fact to unsettle the subjecthood of the taster. This immersion desires to take you, the taster, beyond gustatory conventions and their limitations on experiencing taste, textures, and flavour combinations, and on the body in the act of oral exploration. The limitations you will encounter in the immersion also intend to prompt the desire to push past the 'pleasure principle', to and mimic the limitations of *jouissance's* sustainability. The multiple components of this experience model what Barthes discusses of writerly texts' qualities: the mishmashed intersection of literary techniques that, in their mixing, subverts their conventions. The writerly text concept also inspired the ingredients for *Jouissance*—the combination of foods is eclectic and uncommon (though, I am sure, increasingly common in Canada's growing fusion cuisines) but not thought of as typical North American flavour combinations. The immersive environment and flavour combinations are meant to jolt you into gustatory pleasure, or perhaps simply a new gustatory experience that may not be to your taste.

The following is a dismantled version of the 3-dimensional **Bacon, Maple, Avocado Bliss Bites** recipe exhibited at the ABeCedarium feast. Each ingredient in the Bliss Bites is represented by two images and a provocative narrative about the ingredients' origins and life—cultural, political, and culinary. The cover of each ingredient card is a photographic analogue of the respective ingredient. Each card opens to a short text and a second image, both doing connotative work for the ingredient's representation.

This recipe form plays with the quality of a writerly text and its potential for *jouissance*. It does so by transgressing the literary conventions of recipe writing and form, and by (whereby) unsettling the reader's subjectivity through a provocation that demands an expanded and deepened encounter with the ingredients and their unlikely *ménage à trois*. This recipe form both mirrors and works in tandem with the Bliss Bites immersive consumption experience (wherein each eater is blindfolded and listens to an ASMR recording for the time it takes to consume the Bliss Bite): the images and text desire to move the reader past mere consumption of an ingredient list and cooking directives and into an unsettling literary encounter; the eating immersion desires to further unsettle the individual by entering them into a state where discomfort, longing, and beyond-pleasure co-exist (into gustatory *jouissance*).



You know, I've seen many things since coming out of my mother's stomach. I grew up in a factory and was raised in very close quarters with my siblings and kin. We had more room than the pregnant sows, though. I think they could only walk backwards and forwards, not even turn around! We piglets of the same age moved together from stage to stage in this factory -- a well-choreographed enterprise. I always wondered what it was like, and what it would have been like, to live as my cousins do out in the world, on farms among other beasts with room to roam. Does this factory make my fatty flesh taste better, though? If the owners and operators are so keen on this way of raising us, it must be sweeter, richer. Is it? And for whom? Let me know after you take a bite. In my lifetime I only tasted the flesh of my mothers' teat so I have no reference point. But all this maple syrup may sway your opinion.



I know you're used to the taste of my distinctively nutty flesh. I'm Hais, one of the most common commercial avocado species. But there are so many clones, in whose taste, whose shape, whose skin and flesh are so distinctive but unknown. It's a shame that I am likely the one type you've ever tasted. You know, my ancestors used to grow from trees planted as protection for political crops. But now we are part of a monocropping culture—the commercial labour and industry that, much like other global industries, takes advantage of mutual labourers, environmental regulations in foreign countries, and of course the local populations of labourers from a family embedded not only in international politics, but I suspect, Mexico's local ones too. Lately police have been guarding my family's plots. Why? Because drug cartels have demanded blood money from avocado farmers, killing those that refuse to pay. We are sometimes known as blood avocados. Oh, but, don't worry, I am not actually bloody. And I don't bring any danger to your local grocers, your homes, your dishes.

You can leave these problems of questionable politics, questionable labour and environmental practices at the border. The only danger here is the knife you used to cut into my fatty flesh, and the teeth that grind me to a puree and smash against your tongue.





Elizabeth White



Ube? Cristal Ube Doughnut?

Ube is a purple yam that originates in Austronesia and ranges from common to staple in the regions' cuisines. While in its places of origin, Ube finds itself eaten boiled or baked, or incorporated in simple desserts, being swept into North American luxury cuisine has expanded its culinary role. Encountering North America's iconographic deep-fried sweet, the doughnut, as well as the creativity of Asian-American fusion cuisine (notably in this case, Chef Bjorn Delacruz), and the extravagant desires of upper-class diners upper-class Miami-Dade, chef Delacruz turned Ube into a gold-encrusted, Cristal champagne drenched luxury that sells for \$1200USD per dozen, or \$100 each. He makes them on special order at his Miami bakery, *Enter through the Doughnut Shop*.

Recipe A

- **Prep time:** 48 hrs
- **Cook time:** 12-15 hrs
- **Yield:** 1 doughnut
- Ingredients:**
- Chef Bjorn Delacruz's contact information for special order of Cristal Ube Doughnut
- Flight to Miami International Airport
- Transportation to *Enter Through the Doughnut Shop*
- \$100 minimum spending cash

Directions A

- Contact *Enter Through the Doughnut Shop* and pre-order your Cristal Ube Doughnut
- Travel to YUL airport.
- Board flight to Miami International Airport.
- Commute from Miami International Airport to 1330 18th St, Miami Beach, FL 33139, USA (*Enter through the Doughnut Shop*).
- Pay for your Cristal Ube Doughnut
- Somehow bring yourself to eat this \$100 treat.
- Make your way back to Montreal.



Recipe B

Prep Time: 25 minutes
Cook Time: 15 minutes
Yield: Approximately 12 doughnuts

Ingredients:

- Dough:**
- 2 cups all purpose flour
 - 10 oz. purple yam, boiled, peeled and mashed (boil in their skins so that they retain color)
 - 1/3 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 2 eggs
 - 1/4 cup coconut milk
 - 2 tablespoons butter, melted
 - 1/2 cup Cristal Champagne
 - Canola oil, for frying

Filling:

- 1 tbsp Ube powder
- 1 tbsp gelatin powder
- 1 tbsp hot water
- 1/4 cup Cristal Champagne
- 1/2 cup whipping cream

Glaze:

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup Cristal Champagne

Topping:

- Edible 24 karat gold leaves – pack of 50 minimum.

Directions B

Dough:

- Boil Ube (purple yams) in skin until tender. Once cooled, peel the skins. Mash or pass through a potato ricer.
- Whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl.
- In a stand-mixer bowl, add the granulated sugar, eggs, coconut milk, and butter. On low setting with paddle attachment, mix until smooth. Add the prepared yams and mix until well combined. While mixing, slowly add the 1/2 cup Cristal champagne. Pour a glass for yourself. Might as well.
- Once the wet ingredients are well combined, add the wet ingredients while mixer continues on low. After well combined, allow the dough to rest for 10 minutes.
- Using a deep fryer or deep cast-iron pan, begin heating oil to 370 degrees.
- On a floured surface, pat down the dough until it is 1/2 thick. Cut out doughnuts using a doughnut cutter.
- Fry doughnuts in batches, 3-4 minutes each. Let cool and cut in half horizontally, like a bagel. Place pieces of gold on one half of the doughnut. Dip pieces of gold into your Cristal glass. Why not.

Filling:

- Mix gelatin with hot water until well combined. Combine with Ube powder. Whisk in Cristal Champagne to combine. Top off your glass. Finish by combining with whipping cream.
- Spread or pipe filling over the gold-covered half of doughnuts. Place other half of doughnut on top.

Glaze:

- In medium bowl, whisk together the powdered sugar and Cristal Champagne. Add more sugar or liquid until you reach desired consistency.
- Dip doughnuts in glaze. Set on wire rack.
- Peel off gold leaves from backing. Completely cover each doughnut with gold leaves.
- Serve with Cristal Champagne...again.

Cristal Brut Vintage Champagne
 750 mL bottle | VINTAGES# 268755

\$311.95

An iconic luxury Champagne that has consistently scored 92 or higher in top critic Robert Parker Jr.'s Wine Advocate. The last four vintages scored between 95 and 98. Deserves only the finest - sip it with caviar or roasted lobster
 or deep-fried, gold-encrusted yam dough.

QUANTITY

- +

The Doughnut as Recipe for the Virtual

The Cristal Ube Doughnut is not expressed in the physical today. In the context of our feast, this doughnut is virtual. But the doughnut is a possibility. It can exist, it can be produced or acquired, and it is real and has been real. But on account of a temporary lack of resources (both temporal and financial), I wasn't to create this donut for you and it would be taxing for any of us to visit Chef Delacruz in Miami and spend \$100 on this deep-fried ube treat. Therefore, in Montreal on April 23, 2019, the Cristal Ube Doughnut is not actual. It is non-discursive, unmanifest potential. By some psychoanalysts it would be considered a partial object, particularly if it sparks in you desire and longing. Fully formed or in its individual (and pricey Cristal champagne and 24 karat edible gold) components, the doughnut exists out there, somewhere, but not here. It is possible for it to be here, but it is not here today.

The beauty of the virtual doughnut, and the virtual as a concept, is its home in the realm of the possible. While today the doughnut is unmanifest, it could become actual. And perhaps the possibility of such an absurdly extravagant vision as \$100, gold-encrusted, champagne infused, deep-fried yam dough inspires more radical dreams. Perhaps the virtual doughnut prompts similar questions to those brought by 'virtual ecology' or the 'virtual aesthetic': how and in what ways we can radically envision our social, psychological, and environmental/natural worlds? How and in what was can we create, or recreate, these radical visions? This virtual doughnut is not entirely tongue-in-cheek. It is also a muse.

	Expression actual (discursive)	Content virtual enunciative nuclei (non-discursive)
possible	Φ = machinic discursivity	U = incorporeal complexity
real	F = energetico-spatio-temporal discursivity	T = chaomic incarnation

From *Chaosmosis* (1995), Guattari's four ontological functions.

