

INTERVIEW

WILD AT TART

Jemima Jones and Lucy Carr-Ellison of Tart London cater for some of the biggest names in fashion. The key to their success? Hearty, healthy food served with a generous helping of bohemian charm

BY Amy Broomfield / PHOTOGRAPHER Issy Croker



ON JEMIMA, LEFT
Pinko sweater £275 and
Moussy Vintage jeans £280;
ON LUCY, RIGHT Polo
Ralph Lauren sweater
£300 and Moussy Vintage
jeans £305



LEFT Jemima Jones (far left) and Lucy Carr-Ellison of Tart London test many of their recipes in Jones' 300-year-old country home in Somerset; Equipment shirts both £280; **THIS PAGE AND OVERLEAF** (on Lucy) Polo Ralph Lauren sweater £300, Moussy Vintage jeans £305 and Hunter Wellington boots £95; (on Jemima) Pinko sweater £275 and Moussy Vintage jeans £280

Fashion Editor Poppy Rock; Hair & Make-up Salina Thind at Untitled Artists using Philip Kingsley & Suqq; Digital Operator Stephanie McLeod

Womenswear, First Floor; Fashion Lab, Fourth Floor; Xxxxxx, Fifth Floor; and harrods.com



“A great deal of thought went into each dish so there would be something zesty, something crunchy, something a bit naughty”

Few of us match up to the lives our Instagram feeds depict. But when it comes to Lucy Carr-Ellison and Jemima Jones, their online images are, somewhat enviably, a truthful reflection. The founders of Tart London are a cool, female foodie duo who seem to have it all: model good looks, bright ideas, and a successful business based on two of life's biggest joys: food and travel.

The pair first met in New York in 2008 when Carr-Ellison, then a photographer, was introduced to Jones, a model who was working as a fashion intern at *Vanity Fair*. They discovered a shared affinity for good food and met regularly to try out restaurants and exchange ideas. “While our friends were all at home curing hangovers with oversized pizzas, we’d be at foodie markets,” Carr-Ellison says. “We’d sit and daydream of having our own restaurant, our own herb garden or, ooh, maybe our own chickens.”

“What if we *did* have chickens?” Jones chimes in excitedly. “We could put them on the roof with a beehive and make our own honey...” Suddenly the pair are off and running, with one idea sparking another, and then another, providing a glimpse into their dynamic. “I think we just share a huge love for being greedy,” Jones says.

Tart began in 2012, after Carr-Ellison moved back to the UK and began helping out at a friend’s location house in her native Northumberland. But instead of assisting on shoots, she found herself doing all the cooking. Jones joined the business and, due to their experience in the fashion industry, they knew the type of catering required – from hearty, healthy meals to occasional diva demands. (“The worst was thinly sliced turkey

and low-fat cottage cheese,” Jones says. “I mean, seriously? That’s what you’re ordering?”) Soon, they were sought out by the likes of *Vogue*, Saint Laurent and Mulberry, and began cooking for celebrities including Kate Moss and Cara Delevingne. “We had such a fun time cooking in hot little London studios,” Jones says nostalgically. “Everything we made was seasonal. A great deal of thought went into each dish so there would be something zesty, something crunchy, something a bit naughty... it was a huge spread.”

“We’ve never been faddy with anything,” adds Carr-Ellison. “There was always a long buffet that would suit any requirement. We looked at colour and flavour to make things exciting, because we were cooking for the same crews every day – but essentially we made things we would want to eat.”

Beyond the food, Jones thinks part of their success was down to tapping into a market that was tired of immaculate white tablecloths and artfully plated food. “Six years ago, we were doing a lot of work with [fashion photographer] Tim Walker,” she says. “Lucy used to raid her grandmother’s china collection, and we’d serve the food on mismatched plates. There was a slightly messy vibe, with lots of edible flowers and herbs. But it would always look beautiful when it was brought together.” And it was while working with Walker that the name Tart came about. “Sometimes I’d wear little shorts and he’d say, ‘Here comes the kitchen tart,’” Lucy says with a laugh. “We’re both still quite tartly!”

Much of the testing for Tart’s recipes takes place in Jones’ extended 300-year-old country home in Bruton, Somerset, that she shares with her



financier husband, Ben Goldsmith, and their two children. It’s the kind of house that exudes effortless style: parquet floors covered in flatweave rugs, oversized sofas piled high with embroidered cushions, a worn straw sunhat on a vintage coat stand, and antique cabinets adorned with a dozen framed photos of happy, smiling people. The home’s expansive grounds include a large vegetable garden, wildflowers and a greenhouse filled with creepers bearing ripe fruit. Do they find inspiration in what they grow? “If I say I do, does that make me sound really wholesome?” She asks, laughing. “Honestly, though, our ideas usually come from eating.”

On the lawn at the back of the house is a blanket strewn with toys, while various dogs poke around looking for someone to play ball. It was in this idyllic setting that the Tart ladies wrote their first cookbook, *A Love of Eating*, which is filled with recipes for sharing dishes inspired by their travels. The collection references the Middle East, India and Southeast Asia as well as their very different backgrounds. “My favourite food memory would be something like roast chicken and potatoes,” Carr-Ellison says, “whereas Jemima’s would be spicy Vietnamese noodles. I don’t think I had anything spicy until I was about 12.”

An eclectic mix of cuisines will be on the menu at their first restaurant, Wild by Tart, in Belgravia, which launches this autumn. “It’s not your normal restaurant,” Carr-Ellison explains. “There will be an all-day-dining restaurant, a deli, a smoothie bar, a photography studio and a shop that will sell crockery we’ve designed. We’ve called it Wild because there might be a few wild parties,” she adds with a grin. Count us in. >

COOKING THE SEASON'S HARVEST

"Autumnal veg is great for using in different ways, at different meals," Jones says. "For instance, for breakfast we have a recipe for sweet-potato cakes, which go brilliantly with spicy avocado salsa. We also love making pumpkin muffins."

"Lately we've been doing a lot of cooking on an open fire," Carr-Ellison adds. "It's good to learn how to cook with embers, how smoke affects food, and what type of woodchips to use. A lot of autumn veg is great for grilling, because the sugars in them caramelize over a high heat, and you don't have to boil them first."



Tart London's caramelised butternut squash carpaccio

TART LONDON'S CAMELISED BUTTERNUT SQUASH CARPACCIO *Serves 6*

Deep, powerful flavours with vibrant and vivacious colours make this dish really stand out. The butternut squash turns almost to caramel as it chars in the hot oven. Balanced with fresh green salsa and tangy crème fraîche, the squash seems to sing. You will definitely be asked for the recipe.

1 butternut squash

For the marinade

*2 tbsp butter
1 tbsp olive oil
Generous squeeze of honey
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp grated nutmeg
1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
Few sprigs of thyme
Salt and pepper*

For the salsa

*30g parsley
30g basil
1 garlic clove
5 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
Juice of 1 lime
5 spring onions*

Butternut squash, pumpkin, sweet potato, courgette and other autumn vegetables are all available from Food Halls, Ground Floor

To serve

*60g pumpkin seeds
1 tbsp crème fraîche or sour cream
1 large red chilli, deseeded and sliced*

1. Preheat the oven to 220°C/425°F/Gas 7 and line two baking trays with baking paper.
2. First, make the marinade. In a small pan, heat the butter and olive oil, then add the honey, cinnamon, nutmeg, cayenne pepper and thyme. The moment it begins to bubble, remove from the heat and season well.
3. Give the squash a good clean. You don't need to peel it for this recipe (always a relief); but you do need to chop it up. We find it easiest to cut it about halfway down, at the end of the round bit. Cut both pieces in half and scoop out the seeds from the rounded part. Then, use a mandolin or sharp knife to cut into thin slices. Put these pieces in a large bowl, pour the marinade over and massage through with your hands. Season with salt and pepper and leave for at least 10–15 minutes.
4. Make the salsa by blitzing everything together in a food processor; taste and adjust the seasoning.
5. Place the squash on the prepared baking trays in a single layer. Roast in the oven for 10–15 minutes. To make it extra crisp on top, it's nice to place it under a hot grill for a few minutes at the end. When the squash is out of the oven, place the pumpkin seeds on another tray and roast in the oven for no more than 5 minutes.
6. To serve, scatter the squash over a serving platter, drizzle over the green salsa, blob with the crème fraîche and finish by sprinkling over the toasted pumpkin seeds and red chilli. You can make this in advance and serve at room temperature – just assemble when you are ready to eat.

Caramelised butternut squash carpaccio by Tart London Laura Edwards