

News release

Gastronauts are Go as gourmet menus launch into space

- Servair works with the European Space Agency to deliver menus for Astronauts
- Adamski's team look to honor French cuisine in their cosmic creations
- Many technical challenges overcome to deliver to the gastronomists

ZURICH Glattbrugg, February 3rd, 2021 – Servair, the French and African leader in airline catering and a member of gategroup, has been asked by the European Space Agency, to develop a gourmet menu for astronauts on the upcoming Alpha space mission to the ISS (International Space Station) which will take off on April 22, 2021.

France's Thomas Pesquet will be part of the SpaceX crew in April when he will be embarking on a six month stay on the ISS. Each "gastronaut" on the space mission can take with him celebratory meals that he can share with other members of the expedition. "I've been a fan of Servair since the beginning of my career as a pilot with Air France in 2005, so it was an obvious choice for me to call on their culinary and technical know-how to develop this menu," explains Pesquet.

Throughout the development process, Servair's Corporate Chef, François Adamski (Bocuse d'or, MOF and twice starred) and the French astronaut worked hand in hand to build a menu that honors the country's cuisine while echoing childhood memories and Thomas Pesquet's favorite dishes.

From the ten dishes proposed by the Chef, the astronaut chose:

- Crunchy and creamy small spelt, melting celery and Périgord truffle
- Beef bourguignon, smoked farm breast, mushrooms and small glazed onions
- Crepes flambéed with Grand Marnier and orange zest, Suzette style

To ensure the preservation of taste qualities while guaranteeing their duration through a very long shelf life at room temperature, Servair's engineers, worked in collaboration with the CTCPA (Technical Center for the Conservation of Agricultural Products) and chose a cutting-edge technology: sterilization in flexible bags to deliver the finished meals.

The real challenge was to develop a 'gourmet' product with the constraints of heat treatment but also with reduced sodium and alcohol content, all while delivering a 'dense' texture suitable for consumption in weightlessness. Unlike traditional canning, the flexible pouch technique can provide the original flavors with a very long shelf life.

To help Thomas Pesquet choose the recipes he will take with him into space in space, Servair organized a comparative tasting of the dishes prepared in the sterilized, flexible bags a few weeks before.

"For me, it was essential to preserve the flavors of the dishes, whether they were fresh or in sterilized bags." François Adamski, Servair's Corporate Chef, said "We work diligently to adjust the seasonings every time until we obtained a product that was very close in taste to its non-space version".

The results were very much appreciated by Thomas who is now looking forward to sharing his culinary world with the other astronauts.

Media inquiries

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About gategroup

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