



Forget the rule about not swimming after a meal and explore The Pearl

The newest restaurant experience to make a splash in Brussels? That would be the world's first 'fine diving' experience. Tethered five metres below the surface of the swimming pool at Brussels diving centre Nemo 33, spherical 'deep dinner' venue The Pearl resembles a lunar landing module. Customers – who must have diving certificates – don air tanks and flippers before swimming up into the watertight two-metre-wide pod. A diver-waitress then arrives bearing a suitcase with foie gras, caviar, lobster salad and champagne.

When it opened a decade ago, Nemo 33 housed the world's deepest indoor pool. "I wanted to construct something which gave a better image of diving," says founder John Beernaerts. "When I first had the idea, the sport had a terrible image. The stories in the news were about divers disappearing."



Dive in: The Pearl has a four-seater table and 20 portholes

The idea for The Pearl was drawn from Dinner In The Sky. "I said to myself, if you can eat in the air, then maybe you can eat underwater too," says Beernaerts. The sphere, which houses a four-seater table and 20 portholes, took a year to fine-tune, with tests to ensure that it was safe and sufficiently bright enough.

The one-off concept has already proved a hit. "It works well because it's original and the price is very reasonable – a little under

€100," says Beernaerts. "Guests can dive in the deep pool for 45 minutes if they like and finish the dive with the meal."

As Beernaerts also points out, while there are other underwater restaurants – the Maldives and Dubai host several splashy glass-walled affairs resembling aquariums – at most you won't even get your feet wet. "Here you actually have to dive, enter the sphere and sit down, so you've merited the meal." nemo33.com