



(From left to right) Logan Lerman, Masi Oka, Hiroiyuki Sanada, Brian Tyree Henry, Bad Bunny, Brad Pitt, Joey King, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Zazie Beetz, David Leitch, Kelly McCormick and Andrea Munoz attend the Los Angeles Premiere Of Columbia Pictures' 'Bullet Train' at Regency Village Theatre in Los Angeles, California.— AFP photos

# BULLET TRAIN REVIEW: BRAD PITT PROVES TO BE A WRY AND SMART COMEDY STAR

By Sahar Moussa

**B**ullet Train tells a story about five assassins aboard a fast moving bullet train who find out their missions have something in common. Brad Pitt is an unlucky assassin determined to do his job peacefully after too many gigs gone off the rails.

Fate, however, may have other plans, as Pitt's latest mission puts him on a collision course with lethal adversaries from around the globe with connected, yet conflicting, objectives on the world's fastest train. Brad Pitt himself, in goofy bucket-hat, nerdy glasses and superannuated surfer dude gear, plays a laid-back hitman codenamed 'Ladybug' whose handler (Sandra Bullock) gives him an easy job, to ease him back into the game after an uproarious series of calamities in previous missions.

In this movie, Pitt proved that he is not only charming, but also a wry and smart comedy star. His role allowed him



to show his flexible physicality, while also firing off jokes. But the most outstanding characters in the film are Lemon and Tangerine - 'twin' hit men, played brilliantly by Brian Tyree Henry and Aaron Taylor-Johnson.

'The Princess' wedding crasher Joey King (known as the Prince) is a cunning

killer who can fake cry on command. There is another killer on the train called the Wolf (Benito A Martinez Ocasio) with a grudge against Ladybug. Also, there is another killer called Hornet (Zazie Beetz). Towering over everyone in legendary evilness is the White Death (Michael Shannon) waiting on the plat-

form at Kyoto.

The movie also features Japanese movie legend Hiroiyuki Sanada in a standout supporting role as the sword-wielding Elder, who gives Ladybug few things to ponder, heading into the movie's final act. The whole journey from Tokyo to Kyoto takes about two hours and 15 minutes. It is full of action where half a dozen assassins shoot, stab and punch each others' faces in pursuit of a briefcase stuffed with cash.

Director David Leitch and screenwriter Zak Olkewicz had rich source material to plunder when they chose to bring Kotaro Isaka's satirical novel Maria Bitoru to the big screen. Bullet Train, the cartoonish neon-soaked action flick, is funny and fast-paced and in my opinion is one of the most entertaining and flashy films of 2022.

The movie appears to come from the same brain as 'Snatch', wearing its pop style on its sleeve and a 'Kill Bill' level mix of martial arts and manga influences. The end of the line is just the beginning in this non-stop thrill-ride through modern-day Japan. Bullet Train



Japanese actor Hiroiyuki Sanada attends the Los Angeles premiere of "Bullet Train".

premiered in Grand Cinemas, Al Hamra Tower in a special screening for the media. It is screening now in all theatres in Kuwait.

Rating: R (Pervasive Language/Brief Sexuality/Strong and Bloody Violence)  
Genre: Action, Mystery & Thriller  
Original language: English  
Director: David Leitch  
Writer: Zak Olkewicz  
Runtime: 2h 6m



(From left ) Brian Tyree Henry and Aaron Taylor-Johnson attend the Los Angeles Premiere Of Columbia Pictures' "Bullet Train".



The mysterious mascot named Momomon attends the Los Angeles premiere of "Bullet Train".

## Beyond hummus: Palestinians cook up new food trends

**F**rom the ancient alleys of Jerusalem's Old City to kitchens around the world, Palestinians are stirring new trends in cooking while abiding by traditions. The trend has whipped up a growing appetite for specialized books and food tours. "It's changing for the better, I think. Many Palestinians are keen on promoting their foods," said Nassar Odeh, as oven aromas wafted over a Jerusalem street. The Palestinian entrepreneur has spent the past few months watching gourmands drift in and out of his new eatery,

Taboon, named after the traditional clay oven.

Customers are tucking into dishes such as Armenian lahmajoon, a thin pizza with ground meat and spices which Odeh remembers being sold to hungry crowds in the Old City decades earlier. "Armenian dishes are part of the Palestinian culture," said Odeh, from the occupied West Bank. "This is extremely important because this emphasizes the Palestinian presence and the entrepreneurship," he said. "We need to be proud of our products."

### 'New concept, new ideas'

Opened last year in what was once the family's souvenir store, Taboon is part of a string of new Palestinian bars, cafes and restaurants. Beyond those within the Old City walls, they have sprung up in other areas of annexed east Jerusalem such as the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, or further afield in Ramallah in the West Bank. They range from a fine dining experience to fusion

menus, blending Palestinian ingredients with European dishes, according to Izzeldin Bukhari, who runs Jerusalem food tours and cooking classes.

"It's a great start; we're really in the beginning," said Bukhari, who plans to offer consulting services to business owners wanting to revitalize their restaurants. "Everyone was doing kind of the same thing, but lately I see people stepping up and doing a new concept, new ideas," he said.

Showcasing the breadth of Palestinian dishes and produce remains central for Dalia Dabdoub, who manages Taboon and owns bars in the West Bank cities of Bethlehem and Jericho. "We want to change the industry, in doing more food that people don't know," she said. A variety of aubergines renowned locally which come from Battir, a village in the Bethlehem area, will soon be hitting the Taboon menu, while some produce is imported from Gaza.

"I always try to choose the tomatoes;

when they come from Gaza they're really red and they're tastier," said Dabdoub. Gazan green chillies, meanwhile, are particularly fierce. The advent of new eateries builds on the Old City's history of hole-in-the-wall spots, specializing in a single dish like falafel. Palestinian chef Sami Tamimi grew up with home cooking, such as school packed lunches of cauliflower fritters stuffed in pita, and went out for certain foods. "I remember carrying a plate and going to the hummus guy," said Tamimi, talking avidly about beloved dishes including stuffed vine leaves and courgettes.

Such traditional foods and contemporary takes were compiled in the chef's 2020 cookbook: 'Falastin'. "Just 10 years ago, if you went to a publisher and said I want to publish a book about Palestinian food, they would say 'Who's going to buy it?'" said Tamimi, who moved to London more than two decades ago.—AFP



Nassar Odeh holds a vegan version of the "lahmajun" (meat on dough) popular Middle Eastern flatbread, while posing for a photo at his venue in the Old City of Jerusalem.



A cook prepares plates of hummus to be served to clients at a restaurant in the Old City of Jerusalem.



A cook prepares to serve plates of hummus, fava beans, and falafel to be served to clients at a restaurant in the Old City of Jerusalem.



Tourguide Izzeldin Bukhari (center), who runs Jerusalem food tours and cooking classes, presents dishes to tourists at a restaurant during a guided tour in the Old City of Jerusalem.



A cook holds a tray of vegan "lahmajun" (meat on dough) popular Middle Eastern flatbread next to a stone oven in the Old City of Jerusalem.— AFP photos