In 2001, there was a total solar eclipse on the Earth, and this gave us the opportunity to invent a “dish for the eclipse”. Here is the recipe, based on the idea that compounds are differently released by solutions, emulsions, gels ... This idea is indeed an application of the ideas that are developed in the chapters on disperse system formalism (DSF), matrix effect and bioactivity, and it is certainly based on this important picture of the ranking of interaction energy (Figure 119.1).

1. To begin, the appearance has to show the eclipse: a white disc with a dark crescent. How to make it? It was proposed to use squid ink on a clear pasta disc. For example, use 200 g flour, 4 egg yolks, a spoon of olive oil and 5 g salt, and knead. When the dough is smooth, make two thin discs that you cook in boiling water for about 3 min. Then paint the eclipse appearance.

2. But this is too simple, and we want also to make an eclipse of flavour. In particular, an eclipse means that something familiar (the sun) is losing part of itself. Indeed, we shall use garlic, which has a strong flavour, but boiling it five times will make it lose its strong flavour. A purée made of it will be unusual.

3. But the eclipse is also associated with cold temperatures, and we shall play with that. The two pasta discs will be hot, and they will hide, in between, big cold shrimps (langoustines): in a frying pan, cook the langoustines in very hot oil, so that smoke appears. The shells have to turn brown. Then let them cool, remove the shells and keep the meat. In a pan covered by a lid (to keep in the odorant compounds), cook the shells with onions, carrots, tomato and oil; flambé with Pastis, add half a litre of white wine, and cook with a lid on for one hour. Then grind, filter, season with salt and pepper, and emulsify a large quantity of butter (an ultrasonic probe is very useful for this).

4. Now, we make a flavour that is eclipsed, i.e., that disappears and appears again. We use the fact that odorant molecules are often hydrophobic and volatile. Such molecules are easily released when pure and hot, but they are released less when they are “trapped”. For example, let us use chervil, which we grind in order to make a purée; part of it is spread on the black part of the hot discs of pasta, and the other part is macerated with oil for some hours. Then, this oil is used to make an emulsion using the langoustine stock and gelatine (this system is called a “liebig”). Put this emulsion in the middle of the cold langoustines, and it will jellify.

You are now ready to taste an eclipse.