



FOOD & WINE PAIRING

Pure at the Hout Bay Manor tantalises palates with its food-and-wine pairing

WORDS TRACY LYNN CHEMALY PHOTOGRAPHS EVERT THERON



Although chef Alex Müller has always loved food, as a professional cross-country skier in Germany he never thought he'd turn his culinary passion into a career. Forced to study after injuring himself on the slopes, he opted for hospitality management. His apprenticeship started in a kitchen and he hasn't looked back since.

Since moving to South Africa last year, I've enjoy combining my way of cooking with local influences. My mielie-pap soufflé with kingklip is a great example.

I'm not a person who creates special tastes in order to be different. If someone tastes an ice cream with bacon and says it's nice but they'd prefer vanilla ice cream, then the chef has failed. Chefs must work for their guests.

My food philosophy is 'a fusion of purity'. People shouldn't be allowed to redevelop the wheel every day. A soup with decent ingredients can be made the way it was done 100 years ago. A pure, tasty product can't get better by adding foams to it.

When I entertain at home, I like preparing a chicken with vegetables, potatoes, garlic, herbs and some olive oil in advance,

and popping them all into the oven when guests arrive. This allows me to join in the dinner party.

When pairing food and wine, don't go from a wooded chardonnay to a young sauvignon blanc, or from a sweet wine to a dry wine because you won't be able to taste the flavours of the second wine.

In Europe, 60-70 percent of diners will order the tasting menu, whereas South Africans prefer to order a starter, main and dessert. I encourage guests to try our tasting menu at Pure. Instead of ordering a bottle of wine to share between two people, that might not match all the courses, we have a menu that has great wine pairings.

My biggest challenge comes at Christmas time. I'm so used to winter Christmases with rich, heavy foods and ingredients like star anise and cinnamon. Now I have to work with summer ingredients.

Pure is decorated in a neutral palette that makes the colour of its food stand out. People love our restaurant because of its genuinely friendly staff. Team effort is very important. I might create nice dishes but I can't send them out on my own. ■

Menu

Variation of quail with nectarines (breast, quail cherrie and galantine)

Simonsig Gewurztraminer 2008

Langoustines with asparagus and grapefruit beurre blanc

Sterhuis Chenin Blanc 2007

Three times tomato soup

Pierre Jourdan Belle Rose 2007

Strawberry risotto with smoked duck breast

Jordan Chameleon Rose 2007

Kingklip on mielie-pap soufflé and Mediterranean marinade

Fryers Cove Pinot Noir 2006

Venison in three ways (smoked, seared and fried)

Eagles Nest Shiraz 2006

All About Lemon (marshmallow, mousse, ice cream and crème brûlée)

Waterford Heatherleigh Noble Late Harvest

ENJOY A DELICIOUS
TOP BILLING/SABC3
food-and-wine-pairing special
Pure at the Hout Bay Manor in Hout Bay
will host a feast of its favourite dishes

and wines. *Top Billing* readers can book for this dinner on a first-come basis. To secure your place, call Nicky on 021-700-1020 or email nicky@topbilling.com.

DATE 22 January 2009
TIME 19:00 for 19:30
COST R350 (price includes a 12-month subscription to *Top Billing* magazine)