

Spoil yourself at one of Tshwane's fine-dining restaurants

30 January 2017 — Sue Blaine



Life is full of special occasions, and a phenomenal dinner out is an event in itself. Pretoria is home to lots of fine-dining restaurants, some of which are among South Africa's best. Here is a selection:

Restaurant Mosaic

Lynwood, Pretoria

Executive chef Chantel Dartnall – South Africa's 2014 San Pellegrino Chef of the Year – trained in Michelin-starred restaurants abroad before bringing her expertise to the beautiful banks of the Crocodile River in eastern Pretoria. Mosaic's (<https://www.restaurantmosaic.com/>) chic menu is a multi-course degustation (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Degustation>) experience, and vegetarians are catered for, as are those who don't drink alcohol. The establishment has won too many awards to list – just go and experience Dartnall's quest to “involve all the senses and transform the act of eating”.



Award-winning Mosaic chef Chantel Dartnall's Mousse de Mer. (Image: Restaurant Mosaic (<https://www.restaurantmosaic.com/>))

Hemingway's Restaurant and Wine Cellar

Centurion

With a warm brick-and-white-cloth interior, Hemingway's (http://www.leriba.co.za/leriba_hotel/wining-dining) exudes old-world charm. The menu is contemporary, drawing on South African and French Provençal inspiration. The restaurant is at the Leriba Hotel and Spa on the banks of the Hennops River. In summer, dine outside, with the gorgeous, indigenous gardens as a backdrop. Hemingway's was awarded Overall Best Restaurant in South Africa in the 2011 Welcome Awards, and Best Fine Dining Restaurant in South Africa in 2011 and 2012.



Hemingway's warm brick-and-white-cloth interior exudes old-world charm. (Image: Hemingway's (https://www.leriba.co.za/leriba_hotel/wining-dining))



There is no written menu at Belgium-born chef Daniel Leusch's La Madeleine – he visits each table personally to discuss what is freshest and best. (Image: La Madeleine (<http://www.lamadeleine.co.za/>))

La Madeleine

Lynnwood Ridge

Belgium-born chef-patron Daniel Leusch presides over La Madeleine (<http://www.lamadeleine.co.za/home.html>), the winner of multiple awards. There is no written menu at this high-end bistro. Instead, Leusch visits each table personally to discuss what he has in his kitchen and how he will be preparing it. Only the best and freshest will do. Trained in Lausanne, Switzerland, Leusch has been in South Africa since 1974. He strives for classic French and Belgian *cuisine de terroir*.

Black Bamboo Restaurant

Menlyn

Black Bamboo's (<http://www.theblackbamboo.co.za/>) international take on local delicacies is expressed in an ever-changing menu created by chef Pellie Grobler. The restaurant, at the Menlyn Boutique Hotel, supports local business as much as possible, so produce is most often seasonal and from the area. The establishment also showcases carefully selected rare and distinctive South African wines, beers and other drinks. Grobler is always present and his work is hands-on.

La Pentola

West City Centre

Expect South African cuisine with French, Italian and Mediterranean influences at Shane Sauvage's chic, modern restaurant, La Pentola (<http://pretoria.lapentola.co.za/>). Sauvage is big on fresh, full-bodied flavours. Game is an important part of the menu, but vegetarians will absolutely not feel short-changed. Sauvage and his team are also willing to cater events, from private dinner parties to weddings and birthday parties.



La Pentola chef Shaun Sauvage is big on fresh, full-bodied flavours. (Image: La Pentola (<http://pretoria.lapentola.co.za/>))

The Prue Leith Restaurant

Hennops River

Voted one of Gauteng's top 10 restaurants (<http://www.prueleith.co.za/article/top-restaurant-in-centurion/>), Prue Leith's (<http://www.prueleith.co.za/restaurant/>) is a fascinating achievement – the eatery is where students from the culinary school that carries the name of one of South Africa's most famous exports earn their stripes, under the watchful eye of a professional chef. Open to the public on Wednesdays through to Saturday nights, the restaurant is set in gorgeous gardens.