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BLQ FOOD

MOSAIC



Nestled within the lavish Orient Boutique Hotel, Mosaic has become known throughout South Africa, and internationally, as unabashedly seductive, unashamedly opulent and marvellously magical in a setting where ancient Persia meets Art Nouveau in a culinary feast for the senses. With award-winning Chef Chantel Dartnall at it's helm, Mosaic offers nothing less than culinary art.

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hef Chantel has serious credentials; last year, she was named the world's Best Female Chef at The Best Chef Awards in Warsaw, Poland, and was also placed at number 32 in the Best Chef Awards Top 100 list, ahead of luminaries such as Spain's Elena Azark at 33, France's Sebastien Bras at 35 and celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal at 37. Trained here in South Africa, she has worked in some of the UK's finest establishments.

Chantel has never been one to rest on her laurels. Her autumn/winter degustation menu is called Samsarana—from the ancient Sanskrit text depicting the ever-continuous cyclicality of life — and is her visually stimulating and mouth-watering take on the universe as a living organism.

Mosaic's dishes are part of a journey and this is reflected in the tableware. Specific plates — many hand-painted and made to order — are chosen for each course. There is a selection of tantalising amuse-bouche — miniature taste explosions and bite-sized works of art followed by a prelude of first courses.



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Chantel explains the concept behind Fishkraal, Senegalese sole served with citrus velouté: "My inspiration was found in the centuries-old tradition of the ancient Vatsonga people, dating back some 1000 years, who built fish traps to trap fish moving in and out of the estuary with the tide — a daily practise still continuing today."

As a homage to The Orient's Moorish architectural style, there's Tajine du Maghreb; a goat terrine served on the scapula (shoulder blade) alongside a goat tajine with a deep yet slightly sweet sauce made with prunes and Argan oil. Indochine Fragrance is suckling pig served with fragrant coconut curry and hints of star anise. Ancient Grains, which includes rabbit and tamarind, takes its inspiration from sorghum, better known in South Africa for the local beer umqombothi. The Road to Rocamadour is a chocolate and passion fruit delight that resembles art on a plate and is named from memories of a trip to the small clifftop village in south-central France, after which it is named. And the almond, snowflakes and vanilla creation that is Heffalumps and Woozles? "It was one of those 'Can you remember?' days, sitting outside on the porch high up in the Italian Dolomite Alps in Alta Badia, watching the falling snow slowly covering our footprints in the powdery white landscape, sharing stories and laughing until your tummy hurts. It also takes me back to my favourite childhood characters Winnie the Pooh and Christopher Robin. I just could not resist and had to recreate his wellies leaving footprints in the snow."

Mosaic is known for its cheese trolley and you can opt for this or the 36-month matured Charles Arnaud French Comte. This fine dining establishment has one of the most comprehensive wine cellars in Africa, with more than 75 000 bottles of wine under 5 500 different local and international labels. The selection of brandies, including an extensive range of Armagnac and Calvados, is unmatched anywhere else in South Africa. Sommeliers include Moses Magwaza who is the recipient of the coveted Wine Service Award at the 2017 Eat Out Awards; Taryn Nortje, formerly of Marble, who is preparing to join the Court of Master Sommeliers; Eric Welile Botha, who has worked at top establishments including Durban's The Big Easy, all expertly managed by Mari Dartnall, who also picked up the Eat Out Service Award last year. Together, they and the brilliant chef Chantel provide an unparalleled food and wine experience.

Restaurant Mosaic is located in the Orient Boutique Hotel in the Francolin Conservancy. **B**

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