

# Harbour hotels offer Trade Route promotion as bait

By  Brian Berkman: contributing editor, travel 10 Aug 2012

V&A Waterfront hotel restaurants have joined The Masters of the Trade Route promotion aimed at getting local diners out of our duvets and into restaurants despite cold and wet conditions - something we Capetonians dislike more than having our beaches crowded by out-of-towners in December.



Willoughby & Co's 'The Bomb' fusion maki roll combining tempura prawn, chilli seared tuna and avocado.

Twenty five of the Waterfront's fine dining restaurants are involved in a promotion that not only delivers excellent value for money but also plays on the harbour's historic role in bringing far flung flavours to the Cape.

Signal at the Cape Grace Hotel has put forward a sensational dish that plays on our heritage in its name and key curried flavours but also stands elegantly on its own. I recommend the deconstructed springbok bobotie by Signal Restaurant's executive chef, Malika Van Reenen. "Our menu for the Signature Challenge is traditional South African, Cape Malay cuisine with a modern twist. Dishes and flavours are traditional but prepared and presented using modern cooking methods and techniques. Our produce is predominantly locally sourced and our spice blends are homemade which influences the authentic South African flavours," she says. I loved the dish, and what's more, felt that for R90 it was outstanding value. Call +27 (0) 21 410 7080.



I also got to try the Butter Chicken Pizza which Balducci is offering for R69 including a glass of house wine. Theirs is topped with fresh chicken prepared in a traditional Indian way with tomato and cashew nuts in a light cream sauce which is their twist to the traditional curry sauce. It gets even more Indian juju as it is served with cucumber raita and fresh sliced onion. Call +27 (0) 21 421 6002.

The Portwood Hotel's dish seems more like con-fusion than fusion with Indian, Italian and French influences. They're serving an Aklie masala marinated lamb shank with a creamy gremolata-pomme puree, steamed seasonal vegetables, onion bhaji and gravy also for R90. Call +27 (0) 21 415 1144. While Dash at the fabulous recently opened Queen Victoria Hotel delivers duck breast, pan seared and served on a spiced Elgin pear puree with sage and quinoa for R98. Call +27 (0) 21 418 1461.

Diners are asked to score their meals, using criteria such as value for money, innovative creative flair and use of seasonal ingredients. When the votes are counted in August, the restaurant with the most popular dish will win the People's Choice Award. Promotion continues until 31 August 2012.

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