

Home grown ingredients spice up BBC Food

Sexy, adventurous South African food writer Justine Drake is soon to have her own series on BBC Food (August 10, DSTV Channel 70) – and it's all about the delicious variety of styles and tastes that make up South African cuisine. It is the fourth made-in South-Africa series on BBC Food since its launch just under two years ago.

"Just In Africa" starts in August and each week explores food from a different area of the country. Wherever she goes, Drake talks to the people who are involved in creating the dishes – whether by producing the ingredients or cooking them – as well as demonstrating mouth-watering dishes of her own, using local flavours.

"This is a fantastic way to demonstrate that there is a lot more happening on South African stoves, hobs and open fires besides braaing boerewors or mixing pap," says BBC Worldwide Director of Channels Wayne Dunsford. "I don't think people – not even some South Africans – realise that there is such a rich cuisine in this country. It's a great reflection of the diversity of this great nation and one way of learning about the people around us is to share their food. And with her sense of adventure and infectious enthusiasm, Justine is a perfect presenter for this series. I think she's going to be a star."

Drake starts the series on the pristine West Coast where she encounters a crayfish diver in a camouflage wetsuit and cooks a mouth-watering kabeljou. It moves up to mopani worms and pecan nuts (not together) on the Panorama route, takes in some fabulously spicy feasting in Soweto, trout and mampoer in Dullstroom and then Asian-African fusion in Durban – no mention learning how to brew sorghum beer. The series concludes with venison in and out of the pot, in the Waterberg and finally breakfast in the Magaliesburg – where Drake also talks herbs with South Africa's leading authority on the subject, Margaret Roberts.

Justine Drake started her food-writing career with Fair Lady – where her 'Busy Cook' column and cookbook were a runaway success. She joined Men's Health as food editor in 1997 and produced another hit cookbook 'eat' – for them in 2000. She is now food editor for Men's Health, Shape and Discovery and her latest book – 'flavour' – has just been published. She's a prolific writer and a frequent guest in various TV and radio shows. This is the first time she is presented her own show and she is thrilled by the opportunity:

"I'm passionate about South African food so the chance to explore so many different aspects of it was incredible. Food is a constant source of delight and I certainly discovered some serious delights along the way – not just the food, but the place and people too. I hope the viewers will be as captivated and inspired by the ingredients and dishes, both old and new, as I was."

Just in Africa starts on BBC Food on 10 August at 20:30. It runs for 7 weeks.

Editorial contact

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