

Top young chef Katlego Mlambo

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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Semi-finalist of the 2015 San Pellegrino Young Chef competition and chef at Ruste en Vrede, Katlego Mlambo chats to us about TV cheffing, food trends and emojis for #YouthMonth.



What was your favourite thing about working as a chef at Ruste en Vrede?

Working at Rust en Vrede was amazing. My favourite part would definitely be the fact that my head chef, John Shuttleworth, was such an inspiration to myself and the team, and an extremely hard worker. The produce that I used to work with was phenomenal, also the fact that we were a small kitchen team made us much closer - my second family.

What has been a career highlight for you?

I've had a couple of highlights in my career:

- I have been nominated for a SAFTA for my cooking show Kasi-licious
- Sunday Times Junior Chef Of The Year 2012 (second place)
- Unilever Junior Chef Of The Year 2013 (second place)
- Semi-finalist for the San Pellegrino Young Chef 2015 competition, representing Africa and the Middle East

What food trends are you currently into?

Food trends that I am currently into at the moment would definitely be farm to table style and I also love foraging. Pickling, smoking and fermentation are also

some of my current favorite food trends.

Can you tell us a bit more about the TV show Kasi-licious, how did this come about?

Well, the concept of Kasi-licious is to showcase that 'Kasi' food (township food) can be extremely delicious if you can just spent a few minutes adding some thought and love to the food you're preparing. It is also to show people that there is so much variety of food in the 'Kasi' and also to show that South Africa has so much flavour. All we need to do is find the right ingredients and cooking methods and we're off to flavour town.

Well, I'm very blessed to have been a part of Kasi-licious - a friend and I were messing about cooking and video recording ourselves and we has the crazy idea of putting our video on YouTube and, well, the rest is history.

Before you know it I was in front of four cameras, reading scripts, having a hair and make-up artist. The whole experience has been amazing.

■ ***Which other local chefs inspire you?***

There are so many local chefs that inspire me the list is endless but here are some of my favorites: John Shuttleworth, Ivor Jones, David Higgs, Luke Dale Roberts, Eric Bulpit, PJ Vendas, and Bertus Besson.

The list is endless, there are so many great chefs in South Africa

■ ***There are so many new career options and paths for young people today. What would be your advice for any youngsters trying to forge their own path?***

My advice would be to the youngsters that the only person that truly has your back is yourself, meaning that if you're truly after something and want it then you need to work hard for it. Life is not meant to be easy, but once you put your head down and do what you have to do, the juice of life is so much sweeter. Another thing I would say to youngsters is that life is an exam, you can't be writing the same answers as your friends.



■ ***Which social media channel is your favourite?***

I am a big fan of Instagram, trying to get around Snapchat.

■ ***What are your thoughts on Generation Z?***

My thoughts on Generation Z are that kids of nowadays are so stuck with being cool with technology, which is awesome, but nothing beats face-to-face interaction and nothing beats being outside and having the sun shine on your skin.

■ ***If you could travel back in time and give a message to your teenage self, what would it be?***

My message to myself would be: Don't be afraid to push yourself till you feel like you can't push yourself anymore, because hard work and dedication pays off. I would say to myself the only person to stop myself from greatness is me, so make sure me is not in my way to success.

🍷 ***If you could only eat one dish for the rest of your life what would it be and why?***

I would definitely eat my granny's pap and gravy with lamb chops, there's just so much love when she makes it that no matter what horrible mood I'm in, it puts a smile on my face. Did I mention how delicious it is and it is so, so simple and that is what I love about it.

🍷 ***What is your favourite emoji?***

My favourite emoji is the one of the cat that is smiling because I'm always a smiling 'Kat'.

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

Ruth is the production manager at Bizcommunity. ruth@bizcommunity.com
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