

Shifts in the food industry

Meet Chef Janine Fourie, the head chef at Big Easy Durban, who will provide Bizcommunity readers with a monthly preview of trends in the food industry. She's a bubbly chef who is passionate about her world - the kitchen, the food and the possibilities that spark her creativity and her constant experimenting with new dishes and menus.



Chef Janine Fourie

Since deciding to pursue a career as a chef and completing her studies, Chef Janine has travelled the world and cooked and tasted a multitude of meals in the nearly 20 years of her culinary career.

She has worked in Nigeria (where she tasted cane-rat stew), the Maldives, Cambodia (where she ate crickets), and the Philippines (where she ate Balut - a developing chicken embryo which is boiled and eaten from the shell). She has also visited countries in Asia, South America, Europe and even Antarctica during three years working aboard a luxury cruise liner.

She has been at the helm of Big Easy Durban since it opened in 2015 and was involved with the restaurant from the planning stages through to its grand opening. In her role, she constantly challenges herself - tweaking menu standards, using the freshest of local ingredients and adding her own flair. The menu at Big Easy Durban is tweaked at the beginning of every season to match the change in weather and the availability of seasonal produce.

In this first installment, Chef Janine highlights some trends to look out for in 2017:

Changing climate will affect supply and demand in the food and hospitality industry

Chef Janine believes climate change will affect supply and demand in the food and hospitality industry.

“Our country is suffering a severe drought which is affecting our produce supply. This will definitely impact food prices and influence shopping habits in the coming months. People will progressively become more self-sustainable and start growing their own herbs and salad ingredients – even if they live in the city in a small apartment and nurture them in flower boxes on their windowsill.

“The current situation is causing many consumers to reevaluate their approach to eating and stocking the grocery cupboard,” says Chef Janine. “I think they will definitely be shopping more cleverly in 2017.”

Reinventing traditional cooking

“There seems to be a return to rediscovering, modernizing and/or reinventing traditional cooking methods. At Big Easy Durban we adapt and tweak traditional dishes, for example by using offal in a lamb liver dish.”

Inventing meals out of food waste

Creating meals out of food waste – like tossed-out stems, skins, and rinds from fruit and veggies – will see chefs becoming inventive. “Big Easy Durban re-uses all vegetable trimmings in stocks to prepare soups and sauces.

A shift to plant-based foods

“There also seems to be a shift to a plant-based way of eating with diners maybe not wanting to eliminate meat completely but eating it less frequently.

“Trends definitely change depending on shifts in consumer behaviour and the economy,” she adds. “One thing’s for sure – people will always connect with and over food – it is a definite means of engagement.”

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