

## Newbie is a taste sensation

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Makaron restaurant in Stellenbosch is into the swing of the summer season with a lighter, fresher approach to its menu that is not only right on trend but ideal for the hot weather ahead.

Under the direction of head chef Tanja Kruger and with the front-of-house expertise of sommelier Josephine Gutentoft, Makaron is fast developing a following amongst discerning food and wine lovers.

The beautifully appointed restaurant is at the heart of the Majeka House experience, offering sophisticated dining complemented by luxurious rooms and a spa on the famous Stellenbosch wine route.

Makaron has been nominated as one of 20 finalists vying for one of the Top 10 places in the Eat Out DStv Food Network Restaurant Awards 2012, to be announced on 25 November 2012. Of the 20 restaurants nominated, seven of them are located in Stellenbosch – a region clearly gaining recognition as the gourmet gold standard in the Cape.



### A locavore to the core

Inspired by chef Kruger's recent stint at Michelin-starred L'Arpege restaurant in Paris, Makaron's summer menu is a lively showcase of fashionable farm-to-fork eating. Sourcing seasonal and, where possible, organic ingredients, is a passion of the locavore-leaning Kruger, who delights in local suppliers knocking on her kitchen door with homegrown offerings of superior provenance for her to try. One of her favourite suppliers is Angus McIntosh, who farms pasture-reared chicken and beef and truly free-range eggs on the Spier estate in Stellenbosch.

The current menu features Farmer Angus's pasture-reared beef "cut of the day" served with sautéed fine beans, onion rings and bearnaise with sommelier Josephine's suggestions for the perfect wine and beer pairings – an ideal meal-in-one to be enjoyed as a casual supper on Makaron's terrace.

The a la carte menu includes SASSI green-listed fish of the day with tomato quinoa, smoked tomato agar ravioli and bacon espuma; and Grilled prawns in a laksa curry sauce with coconut and sesame basmati rice, pineapple salsa, and pearl vegetables. For dessert, there is the likes of lemon tart with lemon and lime meringues; a heavenly strawberry mousse-filled éclair; and caramel and banana 'trifle' with honeycomb and rum ice cream.

Makaron's menu also features a six-course tasting menu, each course superbly paired to both wines and beers. Experienced sommelier and restaurant manager Gutentoft is constantly revising and refining the Makaron wine list, balancing big-name labels with lesser-known, boutique bottles, with wines of Stellenbosch origin always taking pride of place.

Creating menus from the perspective of what's available on a daily basis is exactly the kind of challenge that appeals to Kruger, who is responsible not only for the a la carte and tasting menus for Makaron but also for the substantial breakfasts for which Majeka House is well known.

"Working under Alain Passard at L'Arpege was a revelation," says Kruger. "His menu changes daily, depending on what is sourced at the market that morning!"

Everything from scratch

While Kruger's talented kitchen team is relatively small, they pride themselves on producing almost everything from scratch that's served at Majeka House, whether it's handmade marshmallows, toffees and fudge for a sweet nibble late at night or delicate French pastries, organic fruit preserves, muesli and yoghurt served as part of the breakfast feast. Even the bacon is home-cured.

A lounge menu of pared-down tapas or "floating food", as Tanja calls it, echoes the same farm-to-table philosophy evident in Makaron. It is a menu of small plates designed for sharing and snacking, and can be ordered in M Lounge (an intimate lounge bar), the spa or in the garden anytime between 11am and 9pm.

Prawn cocktail and avocado éclair; hot smoked Lourensford salmon trout with herbed mayonnaise and seed bread; a salad of rocket, Parmesan and pine nuts drenched in a geranium oil-infused dressing; and fresh asparagus with Hollandaise, are typical plates priced between R20-R40.

It's worth noting that Majeka House has various summer accommodation packages, offering exceptional value for money in both the restaurant and spa, valid until April 2013 (subject to availability, of course). For lunch and dinner reservations in the 40-seater Makaron, booking is advisable.

For table and room reservations or for further information call Majeka House and Makaron Restaurant on (27) (21) 880 1549; email [reservations@majekahouse.co.za](mailto:reservations@majekahouse.co.za); or visit [www.majekahouse.co.za](http://www.majekahouse.co.za).