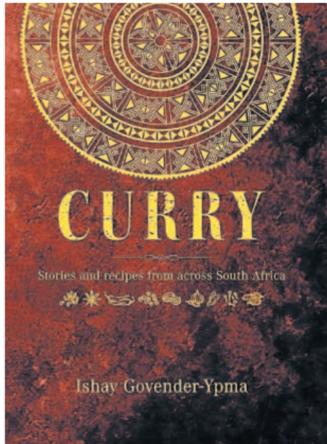
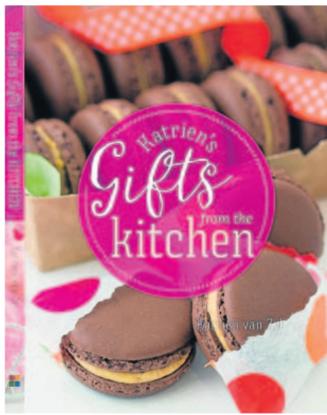
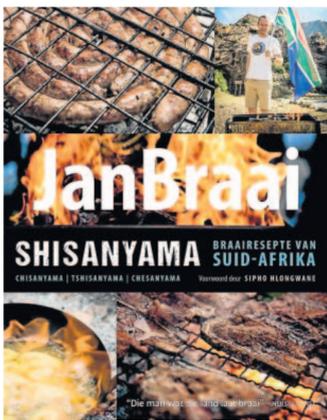


Mzansi on the menu



Stuck for Christmas present ideas? **Louise Liebenberg** shares her pick of five 'lekker' titles celebrating local cuisine and gift-giving

SHISANYAMA: BRAAI RECIPES FROM SOUTH AFRICA by Jan Braai, published by Bookstorm, recommended price R343, also available in Afrikaans.

SOUTH Africans do love lighting their fires, so it's no wonder there's been a proliferation of braai books in recent years. For *Shisanyama Jan Braai* asked the public to send him their best fireside recipes. He added in some of his own, made sure everything was fool-proof, then put them together in this book. It's not all boerie and chops, mind you: The instigator of National Braai Day, like my other favourite braai guru, Justin Bonello, always has solid ideas for something a little different or special to stick on the coals! This summer I will be trying the pork neck souvlaki on P182 and the cornbread on P156.

BOEREKOS MET 'N TWIST by Annelien Pienaar, published by Human & Rousseau, recommended price R330.

FOOD scientist Pienaar and her husband are pecan nut farmers and owners of a guest farm at Skeerpoort (near Hartbeespoort) from which she also operates a cooking school and the hit blog, *BoereKosTwist*.

In this book she has taken 140 South African family favourites and given them a refreshing update. The recipes are mostly very easy and she promises you won't get stuck having to hunt for weird ingredients.

It's described as a compact, 21st century "Kook en Geniet/Cook & Enjoy" for busy folks – there's nothing pretentious or intimidating here, just deliciously doable dishes that taste of home.

KATRIEN'S GIFTS FROM THE KITCHEN by Katrien van Zyl, published by Metz Press, recommended price R265.

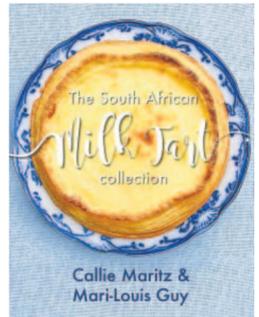
WITH just more than a week to go before Christmas, and presuming you do now have a bit of time on your

hands, there is still time to rustle up some impressive-looking home-made gifts from the comfort of your own kitchen.

This accessible book not only has mouth-watering recipes for edible presents. Van Zyl also provides loads of inspiration for attractive presentation.

For baking newbies she also includes advice on how to line baking tins and the like to achieve best results.

There are recipes for every level of skill and/or industriousness. I am not



quite ready to attempt petit fours or macarons (despite promising myself every year that I'll give macarons a crack), but the brownie cookies and lemon curd look very doable.

There are 49 recipes in total, including a good few at the back for people on special diets.

CURRY: STORIES & RECIPES ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA by Ishay Govender-Ypma, published by Human & Rousseau, recommended price R395.

FOOD and culture journalist Ishay Govender-Ypma criss-crossed South Africa for one year to round up treasured curry recipes from all communities and walks of life.

Curries for the purists find their

place alongside good old *kerk-basaarkerie en rys* in a poignant celebration of South African cuisine.

Just as Mzansi folks like to bond over a braai so, too, we are united by our love of spices often going back generations.

There's a chapter for each province and, in the Eastern Cape section, residents from Qunu, Port Elizabeth, East London, Queenstown, Mthatha, Grahamstown and Alice also get to share their most special recipes.

I'm eager to try the one for chicken and banana kebab curry shared by retired Bay speech therapist Raj Balkaran, who remembered a time when North End, where she grew up, was still a mixed area.

She learnt to cook at the knee of her mother, a vegetable vendor, who raised five children alone after the death of Raj's dad.

Nostalgia-heavy and with wonderful family anecdotes like Raj's, this book could well go on to become a classic in this country.

It certainly made me want to roar off to Lalla's or The Spice Shop to stock up on fragrant pastes and spices!

THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILK TART COLLECTION by Callie Maritz and Mari-Louis Guy, published by Human & Rousseau, recommended price R280, also available in Afrikaans.

THE fabulous foodie siblings' newest book first appeared in February, but will surely still find its way into many Christmas stockings.

Who can resist a well-made milk tart, after all? It's the ultimate comfort food on the sweet side of the South African culinary spectrum.

Everyone has a family recipe and every culture in South Africa has embraced the once humble milk tart in some or other form.

Here you'll find a milk tart for every occasion and in every guise.

This Christmas I'll be trying the "liquid milk tart" on P133 for an ingenious local version of eggnog.



CHRISTMAS FAVOURITE: The recipe for this berry and cream pavlova is included in 'Boerekos met 'n Twist', by Annelien Pienaar. The book makes a lovely gift or you can dip into it to create a deceptively simple show-stopper like this one for your festive table



PRICED RIGHT: Grande Provence in Franschoek is the stately home of Angels Tears wines

Budget, yet drinkable wines for Xmas table

"WHAT's drinkable but won't break the bank?"

If I had a rand for every time I've been asked that question... Let's just say I wouldn't be worrying about the price of wine!

While we all want to wind the year down with summer fun, including sharing good food and wine with family and friends, not many can afford to splash out while ignoring the bank balance.

At the top of my list for good quality – at a very pocket-friendly price – is the Angels Tears range, the "second label" of Grande Provence, more well-known as the home of some seriously superior wines.

The range, which includes a sauvignon blanc, a dry rosé, a semi-sweet Moscato Chenin, and juicy, fruity red blend, is made for uncomplicated, easy everyday enjoyment.

The Cinsaut-based rosé is a vibrant pink, bursting with strawberries and berries; very slightly off-dry, although with fruit sweetness rather than sugariness. It's a great value, easy summer-sipper, with a tad more substance than you'd expect at this price point.

There's no need to get bogged down in technical descriptions and tasting notes on the sauvignon blanc. It just is what it is, a fresh, crisp white wine, with well balanced fruit and acidity, and no element over-intruding. Happy effortless summer drinking.

They're R40 from the cellar door and currently a steal at R29.99 from Preston's.

Also under R30, the Boland Cellar Five Cimates is another one to look out for on the cheap shelves for a soft and flavourful chenin blanc.

Heading slightly upwards in price, Alvi's Drift wines are also a good call for reliable quality at around the R40 mark for his "signature series" – a wide range offering most well-known cultivars.

Similarly, Ken Forrester's wide range of "Petit" wines – especially the Petit Chenin from the "King of Chenin" who makes several premium examples – are great wines for everyday drinking, in the R50 bracket.

And do have a look at Fairview's cheerful row-topped La Capra range in the R50 department too, particularly their more unusual, and usually higher priced, cultivars – fresh Italian Pinot Grigio and juicy Sangiovese, as well as a good Malbec.

Lastly, the vexed question – to do The Box, or not to do The Box? Box wine is a super convenient option for crowds of guests, summer parties, camping and picnics, and the foil "sack" does help to keep the wine fresh.

So if box you must, my reliable choices for decent quality, drinkable crowd-pleasing wines would be any of the whites from Robertson Winery (round R70-R90 for a 3-litre box) or the Du Toitskloof Chenin Blanc – where they put the same wine in the box as they do in the bottle, but the box offers better value at under R100 for three litres.



A VINE TIME
SAM VENTER

Cognac and chocolate launch chef's brand

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A SUNNY Sunday afternoon spent looking over the sea while sipping French cognac paired with artisanal Belgian chocolate was a Bay chef's interesting manner of introducing himself to local foodies last weekend.

After five years of experience working in various Port Elizabeth and UK kitchens, Samkelo Mthiyane, 30, launched his private brand in style at the Port Elizabeth harbour's Dockside on Sunday.

Mthiyane treated guests to a tastebud-tickling educational session of Camus Cognac, for which he is an ambassador, with Belgian chocolate brand Sjukla chocolates, proudly based in Port Elizabeth.

"Pairing is about educating people on how to pair certain drinks with certain types of

food," Mthiyane said.

The guests were educated on what Camu cognac was about, how to drink it and what type of chocolate was best to pair it with from three types of Sjukla chocolates.

Artisanal chocolatier Elva van Coillie Vosloo crafts these fine chocolates by hand, having learnt the art while living in Belgium for some years.

Mthiyane said it was best to pair Camu VSOP Cognac, higher in minerals than the VS, with Sjukla's Belgium Speculoos flavour.

The Capsicum Culinary Studio alumnus ventured into self-employment after working for Sun International at the Boardwalk, Tilting Heads Taco Cafe and Margarita Bar in Stanley Street, and being head chef of the recently closed Zest Urban Cafe in Walmer.

How did he become a head chef in such a short while, you

might wonder, but Mthiyane credits his job-hopping for the accumulated experience.

"It's been beneficial because it's how I got the skill and learned all that I've learned so quickly," he said.

While working for Tilting Heads Mthiyane was commended by South African celebrity chef Reuben Riffel for his El Pollo Taco, a moment which Mthiyane holds as the high point of his career so far.

"A man of his calibre coming into my kitchen [on two occasions] to ask who had made the food and holding my hand to say 'good job' was a highlight," Mthiyane said.

The versatile chef, who likes to leave a unique taste in the mouth with his food, offers catering for business lunches, dinner parties and pop-ups all over the Eastern Cape, with future plans to open his own restaurants.



PERFECT PAIR: Chef Samkelo Mthiyane launched his private brand with a chocolate and cognac pairing at Dockside at the Port Elizabeth harbour PHOTOGRAPH: FREDLIN ADRIAAN

Feast on seafood at iconic J'Bay spot

Louise Liebenberg

IT'S become a landmark of Jeffreys Bay's Marina Martinique, a beloved gathering place, year after year, for visitors from every corner of the country and beyond who've earned the chance for some much-needed seaside R&R.

Of course Die Walskipper, founded by Grace and Philip Koornhof 21 years ago, is also a firm favourite among the locals.

At this super-chilled spot right on Clapton Beach they can feast on seafood, braai meat and hearty South African oxtail and other mouth-watering fare while the kids play in the sand right by their feet.

"You really cannot get any closer to the beach," chuckled Grace who, with Philip, designed and built the restaurant "from nothing" in 1996.

The couple had moved to J'Bay from Delmas as Philip, a commercial pilot, was doing crop-spraying in the area. But they always dreamed of having their own beach restaurant and so, with Grace by then having run a flourishing takeaway business for 6½ years, finally



TIME-HONOURED TRADITION: Die Walskipper restaurant at Jeffreys Bay's Marina Martinique has been delighting holiday makers and visitors for the past 21 years

took the plunge. "We were on the beach, on the actual spot where Die Walskipper is today, when a [live] bronze bream washed up in front of us."

"We put it on the braai and took it as a sign that this was where our restaurant was destined to be," Grace re-

called. What also contributes to making Die Walskipper special and different is that most of the food is prepared on open fires, traditional gas cookers and in trusted cast-iron potjies.

Many of the 25 staff members have been around at least for the past 15 years;

Grace says those who've moved on frequently make a point of popping round to say hello whenever they are in town.

Guests are seated on wooden benches, with food and drinks served in enamel plates and cups, and in no time they will have kicked

off their shoes to dig their toes in the sand.

There's a real focus on authentic, home-cooked South African cuisine (they also serve my favourite – tripe!) and this is what keeps patrons coming back again and again, she added.

Though the braai meats are always a hit, it is seafood for which Die Walskipper is rightly famous. This is one of the few places where you can order crayfish and even perlemoen on the braai.

The seafood pan for two is a stunner of a dish – and irresistibly Instagrammable!

Complimentary crusty, home-baked bread with paté and preserves is another trademark touch.

The "local is lekker" theme continues with koeksisters, malva pudding and the like for dessert, all washed down with delicious *moerkoffie* straight off the old Esse cast-iron stove that providing a reassuring glow at the centre of the restaurant.

● In season Die Walskipper is open daily from noon, with the kitchen closing at 8pm. Bookings are on (042) 292-0005.

WIN With Walskipper

ONE lucky reader will get to share a seafood pan, Die Walskipper's most popular dish, with a partner. The prize is valued at R700. To stand a chance to win this meal, SMS the word WALSkipper to 41893 before noon on Monday. The winner will be drawn electronically and notified telephonically on Monday. SMSes cost R1.50 each, errors and omissions are billed, and free SMSes don't count. Other Ts and Cs may also apply.

Tiso Blackstar employees and their families may not enter.

The prize can only be claimed after January 15 and it expires at the end of May 2018. It is subject to availability and booking, and the winner will need to make his or her own way to Marina Martinique and back.

The prize is for the seafood pan to share only – all other menu items, including alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, will be for the winner's own expense.

