

Romance in the heart of the winelands

Writer: Louise van Niekerk
Photos: backsberg Estate Cellars

February is the month of love, with couples all over the world expressing their feelings for each other with candle-lit dinners, fine wine and music, all in the name of Valentine's Day. *Public Sector Manager* picked up a few ideas from Linda Abrahams, head chef at Backsberg Estate Cellars' restaurant, for a sumptuous three-course meal to savour with a loved one.



Sensational Starter

Ostrich carpaccio and lemon dressing

Ingredients

Cleaned, whole, ostrich fillet
Crushed herbs
Coarse sea salt, freshly ground black pepper
Rocket leaves, rinsed, drained
Mixed baby salad leaves, rinsed, drained.

Dressing:

- 40 ml olive oil
- 20 ml vinegar
- A dash of lemon juice
- A pinch of lemon pepper



Method :

Roll the fillet in a mixture of crushed herbs and seasoning. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and freeze; frozen ostrich fillet is easier to slice. Remove from the freezer about an hour before slicing. Slice thinly with a very sharp knife or electric slicer and set aside for about an hour before serving. When ready to serve, arrange the slices on a plate topped with rocket and mixed baby salad leaves, drizzled liberally with the dressing. Garnish with parmesan shavings and serve immediately.



Memorable main course

Poached salmon with dill mayonnaise

Ingredients

- 500 g salmon, butterflied with head, tail and skin on
- 10 g fresh dill
- Coarse sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Slices of lemon
- 250ml water
- 150 ml Backsberg Chardonnay
- Juice of 1/2 lemon

Method :

Preheat oven to 180 °C

Place a pre-sprayed double layer of foil in a large roasting pan and layer with some fresh dill. Then place the whole salmon on top of the dill. Season the inside of the fish well with salt and pepper, add some dill and sliced lemon. Close the fish.

Pour water, wine and lemon juice around fish. Season outside of fish with salt and pepper. Fold foil to enclose salmon. Seal well.

Bake on the middle rack of the oven for about 40 minutes. Check to see if the fish is cooked through. It should be a

little underdone, as it continues to cook until cool.

Keep sealed until cool.

When cool, pierce the bottom of the foil to drain the liquid.

Peel off the skin of the fish and slide fish onto platter.

Dill mayonnaise sauce

Ingredients

- 125 ml mayonnaise
- 30 ml fresh dill, chopped
- 15 ml lemon juice
- 1/2 pickled dill cucumber, chopped
- 45 ml red bell pepper, finely chopped
- Coarse salt and pepper

Method :

Place all the sauce ingredients in a food processor and chop finely. Pour the sauce over the whole fish before serving.

Garnish with fresh dill and lemon wedges.

It is best to serve this dish at room temperature as opposed to refrigerating the fish, which makes the fish firmer. The sauce can however be made a day or two before and refrigerated.

Can be served with roast potatoes and a selection of vegetables.

*** Best enjoyed with Backsberg Chardonnay**

Decadent dessert

Chocolate roulade

Ingredients

175 g bittersweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces
30 ml cocoa powder, sifted
60 ml hot strong coffee or espresso
6 eggs separated
75 g caster sugar
Pinch of cream of tartar
5 ml pure vanilla essence
Cocoa powder for dusting

Method :

Preheat oven to 180°C. Lightly grease the base and sides of a 39 x 27 x 2.5 cm Swiss roll tin. Line with non-stick baking paper, allowing a 2.5-cm overhang. Melt the chocolate. Dissolve the cocoa in the hot coffee to make a paste. Set aside.

Using a hand-held mixer, beat the egg yolks with half the sugar in a mixing bowl until pale and thick. Slowly beat in the melted chocolate and cocoa-coffee paste until just blended.

In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form. Sprinkle the remaining sugar over the whites in two batches and beat until the whites are stiff and glossy. Then beat in the vanilla essence.

Stir a spoonful of the whites into the chocolate mixture to lighten it, then fold in the rest. Spoon into the tin. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until the cake springs back when touched.

Dust a dish towel with cocoa. Turn the cake out onto the towel immediately and remove the paper. Trim off any crisp edges. Starting at a narrow end, roll the cake Swiss-roll fashion using the towel. Cool completely.

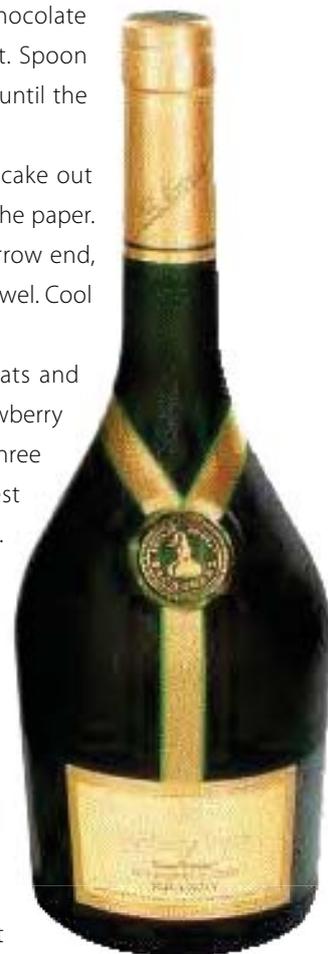
Garnish with a mint leaf, sliced kumquats and drizzled strawberry sauce. To make the strawberry sauce, blend 500 g of strawberries with three tablespoons of sugar. This dessert is best served with ice cream and chocolate sauce.

*** Best enjoyed with Backsberg Sydney Back Brandy**

Valentine's treats at Backsberg Estate Cellars

Celebrate Valentine's Day at Backsberg Estate Cellars, where decadent offerings for breakfast, lunch and supper are available.

For restaurant bookings, e-mail Dalene at dalene@backsberg.co.za or call 021 875 5952.



Revive and relive romance this **Valentine's Day**

Writer: Samona Murugan

Photos: Courtesy Franschoek Country House



In the picturesque Franschoek valley in the Western Cape is an enchanting hotel that offers the perfect setting for a weekend of romance this Valentine's Day.

The Franschoek Country House and Villas is where breathtaking natural beauty and luxury meet good old-fashioned hospitality and warmth.

The property once housed Franschoek's first perfumery and today the restored manor house, together with the newer villa suites, reflects the same elegance and focus on the finer things in life one would expect from a five-star establishment that offers its guests nothing less than the best.

The provincial village theme erupts into a maze of pathways that link the villa suites to the country house. Olive trees and

water features sporadically dot the tangle of lanes, extending across the 12 exclusive villa suites. Each 100-m² villa is unique in its interpretation of the open, French-themed décor that also pervades the country house. It is the inviting cosiness of the villas that has created the most lavish, yet stylishly understated, accommodation anywhere in the valley.

The original Franschoek Country House offers a range of luxury accommodation, including charming standard rooms, luxury rooms and garden cottages. Whichever you choose, it is designed with your comfort and luxury experience in mind.



What make this venue the perfect place to spend Valentine's Day with your loved one are the unique activities on offer for the adventurous-minded or young-at-heart romantics. Rekindle the old spark with a romantic wine-tasting route on horseback and enjoy some of the best wine the country has to offer. Take a slow horseback ride at sunset through the mountains, a romantic bicycle tour through the charming village or a morning hike in the majestic mountains. If you really want to make this a Valentine's Day to remember, enjoy an afternoon hot-air balloon ride or paraglide from the scenic Franschhoek mountains.

The luxurious spa at the hotel offers head-to-toe pampering with a range of treatments, including massage, reflexology, facials, manicures, pedicures and signature treatments such as the Proudly South African Mud Experience, Back Revival, Chocolate Fanatics, African Wood Massage, Complete Renewal, Especially For Men and Top-to-Toe Essentials.

If you would like a romantic dinner for two to end

the perfect day, then look no further than the well-known Monneaux Restaurant. It has received numerous accolades and has also been ranked as a top-10 South African eatery on more than one occasion. Their breathtaking culinary masterpieces will have you savouring every bite.

Nearby is the charming town of Franschhoek, which offers a range of shops, including galleries, boutiques, art shops, jewellery shops, a chocolate factory, the Huguenot Museum and other historical sites as well as a number of golf courses.

A scenic, fairly short drive away are the beaches at Strand and Gordon's Bay. You could also take a day trip to Hermanus. Whichever you choose, there is plenty to enjoy and experience.

Location and access:

Cape Town International Airport is only a 50-minute drive from Franschhoek and it is recommended that the valley be explored by vehicle (which can be collected at the airport or be delivered to the hotel).

Reservations for the Franschhoek Country House and Villas can be made at 021 876 3386 or fax 086 670 8579. E-mail info@fch.co.za, or visit www.fch.co.za 

Add a little colour

This is the year to step away from the neutral colours and add some colour to your wardrobe.

R399
Trenery

R1 295
Campo Marzio

R160
Lulu Belle

R1 299
Trenery

R2 300
Extreme
Eyewear

R385
Campo
Marzio

R75 each,
Lulu Belle

R580
Thomas &
Benno

R775
Campo
Marzio

Make a bold start

Spice things up with a bold colours



R6 200
Extreme
Eyewear

R475
Campo Marzio

R795 Spitz

R295
Robert
Daniel

R290
Campo
Marzio

and Stule



R1 295
Campo
Marzio



R995
Robert
Daniel

R975
Thomas
& Benno

R655
Campo
Marzio

GETTING THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK!

Writer: Ashref Ismail*

The holidays are over. The New Year, with all its fickle and unrealistic resolutions, is already a thing of the past. What now stares you in the face is the fact that bank balances have shrunk and the all-round depressing state of the global economy seems to be at the order of the day.

For some, buying a new car may still be one of those special, “look-forward-to-it” experiences. However, all indications are that belt-tightening will have to be the norm. So, what do you choose and what compromises do you make if you have to “buy down”?

Your reasons to buy may vary from replacing the car your Senior Management Service package will allow, to buying a little run-about for your daughter; or perhaps spoiling yourself with that sport-utility vehicle that you have been hankering after for some time now.

Many would argue that now is the best time to buy a new car – prices have not really gone up that much; interest levels are rather static, motor companies are offering excellent deals; and the choice, for a relatively small market such as ours, remains bewildering.

To help you along, I’ve picked my value-for-money favourites that represent excellent value in terms of the overall package, including style, image, performance, safety features, economy, comfort, space



Hyundai i10

and resale value. After-sales service is an additional factor that also needs to be taken into account.

Favourite budget-beater: Looking for a city car that is economical, stylish and practical? The choice is wide and no longer does small have to mean boring. The Hyundai i10 GLS, priced at R110 000, is a baby car with great specifications, coupled with a solid reputation and backed by equally impressive quality. Customer service



Ford Ranger

Favourite double-cab: Hands up all those who think the Hilux is the coolest bakkie around. Thought so – but the biggest seller is also among the most boring. Go for any Volkswagen Amarok or Ford Ranger. Please, Toyota fans, there is life after Toyota. Try it, you will like it.

and resale values remain top-notch. **2nd choice:** A scooter with a breadbasket.

Favourite sub-compact: No, I'm not on Hyundai's pay-roll, but this Korean manufacturer, together with its first cousin Kia, has really moved from a seller of reliable appliances to stylish cars you would want to own. Here the obvious choice is the 110 kilowatt (Kw) Hyundai Elantra. It is so accomplished that if you do not include this car on your shortlist, you will really be doing yourself a great disservice. **2nd choice:** Take the Gautrain.

Hyundai Elantra



Public Sector Manager February 2012



Mercedes-Benz C-Class

Favourite compact executive: With its recent facelift, the Mercedes-Benz C-Class remains the best-selling range, with the obvious competition (Audi and BMW) seriously in need of makeover. (A new 3-Series BMW is on its way in 2012.) The C180 CGI BlueEFFICIENCY remains the pick of the bunch. Dynamically exciting, visually appealing and with quality that is high-grade, the 1,8-litre petrol at R375 000 makes a lot of sense, especially as its resale value is excellent. **2nd choice:** Wait for the new 3-Series BMW.



Golf GTI

Favourite hot hatch: Do you want practicality, performance, quality and good resale value? Even though it is no longer the fastest, it still offers the best overall package and remains one of the most respected aspirational cars out there. Although there was not much improvement from the previous model's 147Kw, the Golf GTi still manages to run with the big dogs. Its secret lies in its elegant evolutionary approach, which has made it a legend in its own time. If the cops believe in them, who are we to argue? R346 000 will park the GTi in your garage and put a permanent grin on your dial. **2nd choice:** The BMW 1-Series M coupé.

Favourite sport - utility vehicle: We did say value for money, right? Then that rules out Land Rover's Discovery 4. I would settle for the Land Rover Freelander SE Diesel. At R453 000, it is not cheap, but you get a car that is so superior both on and off the road that it forgets it is a soft-roader; not to mention the snobbish heritage and the unmistakable Land Rover icon. Disregard all the old jokes about quality and reliability. The Land Rover of today (under Tata's management) is a far cry from those of yore. **2nd choice:** The Toyota Fortuner 2,5 High Raider.

Favourite multi-purpose vehicle (MPV): Call me what you want, but I have to admit that when it comes to an MPV, nothing beats the cossetting comfort of an American car. They know how to do luxury in a big way. When I retire, I am gonna get me one of 'em Chrysler Voyager 3,8 Ltd Automatics. That's right, the petrol version, so I'll bust my pension on travel costs! At least I will go down smiling. **2nd choice:** The Nissan Qashqai 4x4.



Range Rover Freelander SE Diesel

Favourite off-the-wall vehicle: Undoubtedly the stupendously sexy Peugeot CRZ. No contest. Okay, if I have to, then any Citroen DS3. Who cares about after-sales service (which is improving significantly) or resale value (why would you want to sell either of them?). Let it become a true vintage classic in 20 years' time!®

***Ashref Ismail is a member of the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists and presenter of Bumper2Bumper. His contact e-mail is Ashrefi@rtmc.co.za.**

Chrysler Voyager 3.8





Boot

those extra kilos into touch

Writer: Bob Russell*
Photographer: Siyabulela Duda

With summer in full swing, boot camps are essential to show you how to burn fat, shape up and get fit fast. Boot Camp uses unique results-driven training and motivational techniques with amazing results.

Whether you're a couch potato, an elite athlete, or somewhere in between, there are various types of boot camp designed to challenge your individual level of fitness.

To keep you motivated and engaged, Boot Camp guarantees that you will never experience the same training session twice, no matter how long you train. Incorporating a broad range of sports-inspired activities and exercises, your workouts will never become tedious and boring.

What is a boot camp workout?

Boot Camp is an exciting way to work out and get fit! It is an intensive training programme designed to achieve your personal weight loss and fitness goals.

It is usually conducted three times a week, each having a particular fitness goal. When you join a boot camp, this will normally be coupled with an eating plan.

What does it involve?

A Boot Camp workout does quite a bit for your body and fitness. It entails a variety of exercises which make each class unique and interesting. There are a broad number of activities and exercises:

- strength training
- muscular flexibility
- abdominal workout
- cardiovascular exercises
- circuit/exercise training.

The benefits of exercise

- Increased energy levels
- Reduced risk of disease

- Increased physical work capacity
- Increased cardiovascular and respiratory efficiency
- Changes in metabolism
- Weight management
- Delaying the effects of ageing
- Stress relief
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased workability of joints and muscles
- Social interaction.

Exercise and stress

Stress results from situations that cause anxiety and emotional distress. Chronic effects of stress can pose many health risks and have been linked to cancer, ulcers and heart disease.

Research has shown that aerobic exercise for as little as 15 minutes every day can reduce stress for up to an hour after the exercise. Aerobic exercise over extended periods may have permanent effects on reducing stress.

Here are a few examples of different types of exercises that you might expect at Boot Camp:

Suicide bear crawls

Ever heard of suicide lines? This is when trainees run from the starting point to a line that is about 20 metres away, then back to the starting point, then out to a line around 40 metres away, then returning to the starting point until they have run and touched each and every line.

You may also have heard about bear crawls, in which individuals walk around on all fours (hands and feet) just like a bear. This Boot Camp drill brings together these two great exercises. Rather than sprinting to the lines, boot camp trainees will alternate sprinting and bear

crawling. As an example, you could bear crawl out to the lines, and then sprint back.

Drag runs

This is an excellent Boot Camp drill to develop speed and strength. Additionally, it can be used as a team-building exercise.

Here's how it's done –A heavy tyre is placed on a rope with a harness. One of the Boot Camp trainees drags the tyre while all others jog behind. Once the whistle is blown, the next person in line must quickly seize control of the tyre and begin dragging it. That means all team members get a minimum of one turn dragging the tyre. The goal is for the team to reach a particular destination within a certain amount of time.

1 000 reps (This one is only for the very fit!)

100 jumping jacks or jump ropes

25 close-grip push-ups

25 jumps

25 pull-ups

100 squats

25 shoulder push-ups

50 bicycle crunches

100 push-ups

50 walking lunges

50 tri pods (25 each)

50 90/90 crunches

100 bicycle crunches

50 decline push-ups

25 incline push-ups

50 mountain climbers

50 squats

25 diamond push-ups

100 jumping jacks or jump ropes

Before you undertake any exercise programme, ensure you complete a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q) test:

Being physically active is very safe for most people. Some people, however, should check with their doctor before they increase their current level of activity.

The PAR-Q has been designed to identify the small number of adults for whom physical activity may be inappropriate or who require medical advice concerning the type of activity most suitable for them.

Answer yes or no to the following questions:

1. Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor? Yes/No
2. Do you feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity? Yes/No
3. In the past month, have you had chest pain when you

were not doing physical activity? Yes/No

4. Do you lose your balance because of dizziness or do you ever lose consciousness? Yes/No
5. Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by a change in your physical activity? Yes/No
6. Is your doctor currently prescribing drugs (for example, water pills) for your blood pressure or heart condition? Yes/No
7. Do you know of any other reason why you should not do physical activity? Yes/No

If you answered "yes" to one or more questions, are older than age 40 and have been inactive or are concerned about your health, consult a physician before taking a fitness test or substantially increasing your physical activity. You should ask for a medical clearance along with information about specific exercise limitations you may have.

If you answered "no" to all the PAR-Q questions, you can be reasonably sure that you can exercise safely and have a low risk of having any medical complications from exercise. It is still important to start slowly and increase gradually. It may also be helpful to have a fitness assessment with a personal trainer or coach to determine where to begin.

When to delay the start of an exercise programme:

- If you are not feeling well because of a temporary illness, such as a cold or a fever.
- If you are or may be pregnant, talk to your doctor first.

Tips to train SAFELY!

1. It is very important to train conservatively and not overdo things.
2. Don't do any exercises that you aren't sure how to do. Always get personal instruction from your trainer.
3. Don't do anything that hurts or "doesn't feel right". There are plenty of alternative exercises for every movement.
4. Whenever you start a new programme, only complete one set per exercise.
5. If you need extra recovery within the workout or between workouts, don't hesitate to take it.
6. Leave your ego at home and start with easy exercises even if you have exercised in the past.
7. Never skip a warm-up. Do general bodyweight warm-ups and specific warm-ups.
8. If you want to start a boot camp, but think you have an injury, get medical attention and have a professional therapist rehabilitate your injury before starting an exercise programme.
9. Check with your doctor before starting any new exercise or diet programme.
10. Always remember, safety first!

*** Bob Russell is the sports massage therapist to the Sharks, personal fitness trainer and Boot Camp instructor for over 10 years.**

BB fans get ready to take their tablet

Writer: Helen Ueckermann

BlackBerry's new PlayBook tablet, which has recently hit our shores, promises to transform the way you work and play.

The PlayBook is used by about 700 000 people worldwide, which is considerably fewer than the millions who bought iPads or the millions more who went for one of the many different flavours of tablet computer that come with Google's Android operating system.

However, Rui Brites, Director of Product Management for Africa at Research in Motion, says the BlackBerry PlayBook tablet will enable business customers to take communications and productivity to the next level.

The PlayBook features an ultra-portable design and delivers industry-leading performance, uncompromised web browsing with support for Adobe Flash, true multitasking, high-definition multimedia, advanced security features, out-of-the-box enterprise support and a robust development environment.

According to Simon Camerer, Cell C's Executive Head of Marketing, in addition to its many benefits for business users, the PlayBook offers an exceptional multimedia and web experience.

Public Sector Manager asked two users of the PlayBook to share their experience of the new gadget.

Miriam Mannak, executive member and Western Cape chairperson of the Southern African Freelancers' Association, says the good thing about a Playbook is that, if you have a BlackBerry, you can use your phone's Internet connectivity.

"You connect to the Internet by syncing your PlayBook and phone via Bluetooth. No need for an extra simcard, no extra Internet bills, nothing.

Awesome!

"This gives you access to all of your contacts, e-mails and everything else on your BlackBerry and vice versa".

"When you disconnect your Playbook from your Blackberry, you disconnect your Playbook's access to the files on your Blackberry (and vice versa). This makes the PlayBook perfect for sharing without the other person having access to your files. And as a result, your internal memory goes a long way."

She also likes the interface and the fact that it is smaller than an iPad (half an A4 size).

"All in all, I like using it. Unfortunately, my boyfriend has taken it on his business trip. I'm missing it already!"

Journalist and columnist Paddy Hartdegen has had a PlayBook since its launch in the United States (US).

"It's a great device, lighter than the iPad and really useful in some respects, although it doesn't have an embedded e-mail application and has to use BlackBerry Bridge to access mail, unless you go

via a webmail service.

"It has no 3G connection capacity and the list of available applications is rather limited. Graphics are great though. I also find that its battery life is rather poor".

She says there are a few more frustrations, more niggling than condemnatory:

- the poor-quality camera means that the great graphics don't translate into useable pictures
- the operating system is rather clunky and unfriendly
- working on the PlayBook takes a while to master because it is not an intrinsically user - friendly device.

Would Hartdegen pay the local price? "Certainly not when a 16GB PlayBook costs R4 999 or more locally, and the identical device is just \$199 (R1 695) in the US. That's the right price for a PlayBook and, at that price, it's worth every cent."

There you have it – different views about a tablet dubbed the world's first professional-grade tablet. You make the choice.

The BlackBerry PlayBook is available in three Wi-Fi models from Cell C, featuring 16 GB, 32 GB or 64 GB of memory storage.®

