

Tokara Deli-cious



By Eugene Yiga

11 May 2015

The first time I went to Tokara, a wine estate somewhere between Stellenbosch and Franschhoek, was for an outdoor wedding overlooking the mountains, vineyards, and olive groves. But when I went to Tokara Deli, it wasn't for the love of people (although 60-seater bistro is available for small weddings and private functions) - it was all for the love of food.

Anne-Marie Ferreira first opened the deli in October 2009 to create a more informal venue that would showcase all that the estate had to offer. Indeed, there's something casual and relaxing about walking into that bright, open space. It's the perfect spot for a laidback meal, complete with spectacular views.



With Ferreira choosing to spend more time with her family (the estate is named after her children Thomas and Kara), the deli is under new management - and new management means exciting new changes, including pizza, burger, and craft beer evenings on Friday and Saturday nights.

"I wanted a capable team to take over and, as you can see, they are doing a fantastic job," she says. Under the guidance of Richard Carstens (former Chef of the Year at the Eat Out Awards and creator of terroir-focussed contemporary cuisine in the main restaurant), the food from deli head chef Christine Claasen is top notch.



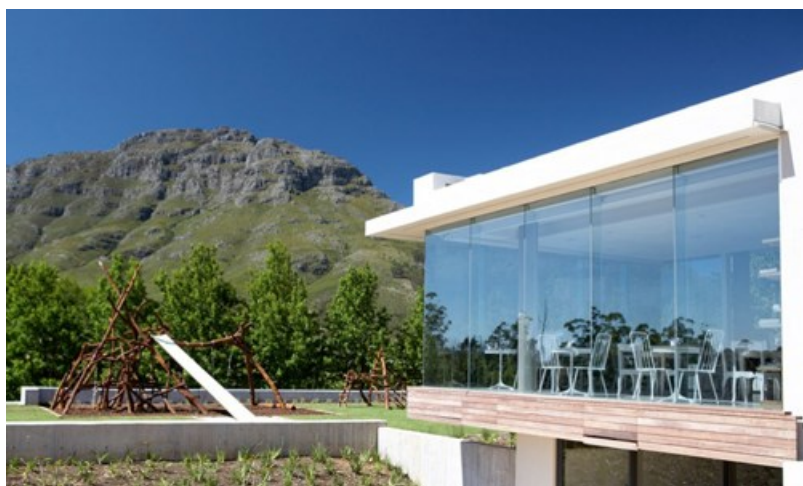
Our lunch began with a mixed platter for two: chef's selection of prosciutto, salami, chorizo, bresaola served with caper berries and freshly baked bread. It was such a tasty spread that we feared there might not be enough room for the rest of the meal! But we pushed on.

My friend had a spiced calamari and papaya salad (with pickled red cabbage and spiced lemon dressing), an unusual combination that worked well. Meanwhile, I had the smoked salmon pizza (with buffalo milk mozzarella and mascarpone), which came straight from the new wood-fired oven and had a light, crusty base that compelled me to finish the whole thing.



Somehow, we still had room for sorbet - papaya and mint for him, lemon basil for me - although only after we took a post-lunch walk. First, we dodged a few kids, climbing a jungle gym that looks like a piece of contemporary art. And there were endless photo opportunities in the Sculpture Garden, a collaboration with the Ilse Schermers Art Gallery that features an impressive collection of local works representing South Africa's established and emerging talent.

The day ended with a visit to the Deli Shop. It features a tempting array: from breads and cheeses to handmade chocolate truffles and imported charcuterie. You can even enjoy a complimentary tasting of the olive oils and olive paste before you buy some to take home. They're the perfect gifts for loved ones who will love you even more!



Eugene Yiga was a guest of Tokara Deli (Helshoogte Pass, R310, Stellenbosch). The restaurant is open from 9am to

5pm, Tuesdays to Sundays, for breakfast and lunch. Phone: +27 (0)21 808 5950, email deli@tokara.com or go to www.tokara.com.

ABOUT EUGENE YIGA

Eugene graduated from the University of Cape Town with distinctions in financial accounting and classical piano. He then spent over two-and-a-half years working in branding and communications at two of South Africa's top market research companies. Eugene also spent over three-and-a-half years at an eLearning start-up, all while building his business as an award-winning writer. Visit www.eugeneyiga.com, follow @eugeneyiga on Twitter, or email hello@eugeneyiga.com to say, um, hello.

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