

# BABEL MENU

*Come rain or shine, we bring you tempting flavours from our bounteous winter harvest.*

*Our warming, early winter bowls have a slight focus on bitter flavours – yet we aim to “un-bitter” this taste, to create the same sensation as that delicious bite of dark chocolate on the palate... Bitter foods are packed with fibre to encourage healthy gut bacteria, which in turn aids digestion and improves the absorption of food into the body. You’ll find our bitter tastes in leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, pak choi, tatsoi and radicchio, combined with herbs and spices such as turmeric, morenga, curry leaves, myrtle berries, rosemary and ginger.*

*Our crop of citrus fruit features newly-picked, fragrant Yuzu - also known as citrus junos - as well as a variety of lemons and limes.*

*Both our fresh wild olive berries and preserved olives are core ingredients in our winter kitchen. We have gathered a small harvest of Amaranth seeds – which happens to be the smallest grain in the world. This ancient, protein-rich grain was favoured by the Aztecs and is making its comeback. Take your time to steal moments of bliss while wandering through our garden...*

## INTRODUCTION

### YELLOW

*Warm root vegetable and citrus carpaccio topped with creamy chervil, turnip, horseradish and Chaste tree peppercorns*

110

*Add spicy deep fried calamari  
With a glass of Babylonstoren  
Chenin Blanc*

40

55

### RED

*Lightly smoked Franschoek trout with grilled radicchio, tree-ripened roasted Nonpareil almonds, a drizzle of spicy peppadew dressing and Babylonstoren extra virgin Frontoia olive oil, topped with dried olive crumbs*

145

*Add Prosciutto crisps*

30

*With a glass of Babylonstoren*

*Mourvèdre Rosé*

50

### GREEN

*Miso and yuzu broth and wilted Asian greens with kohlrabi wrappers, lemon verbena, toasted Amaranth and caraway seeds*

110

*Add 3 seared tiger prawns*

60

*With a glass of Babylonstoren*

*Chenin Blanc*

55

## PROGRESSION

### SOUP (V)

*Cauliflower soup with gorgonzola ice cream, fresh horseradish shavings and lightly smoked mountain rosemary*

160

*Add West Coast mussels and chorizo crumbs*

50

*With a glass of Babylonstoren Chardonnay*

95

### PUMPKIN (V)

*Roasted with fynbos honey and citrus zest paste, served with cinnamon-and-cumin-spiced lentils, and topped with deep fried curry leaves*

155

*Add a double grilled lamb cutlet*

110

*With a glass of Babylonstoren Viognier*

70

### RISOTTO (V)

*Lemon and leek Carnarolli risotto with seared oyster mushrooms and Babylonstoren Nonpareil almond butter*

210

*Add 3 seared tiger prawns*

60

*With a glass of Babylonstoren Chardonnay*

95

### HALOUMI (V)

*Grilled farm-made haloumi steak topped with a green olive relish and a garden bouquet salad*

190

*Add crisp shaved biltong*

45

*With a glass of*

*Babylonstoren Chardonnay*

95

### FISH

*Grilled fish of the day with a bobotie sauce and star anise poached guava*

260

*With a glass of*

*Babylonstoren Chardonnay*

95

### CHICKEN

*Roasted whole baby chicken with a sticky soya and honey sauce and stuffed with a spicy apple and beetroot kimchi*

265

*With a glass of Babylonstoren Viognier*

70

### PORK

*Crisp pork belly with wilted Asian greens and a soy and jalapeno sauce*

210

*With a glass of Babylonstoren Babel Red*

70

### BEEF

*Fillet on the bone, served with a roasted onion and Babel red wine splash, crisp Babylonstoren black olives and fresh wild olive berries*

275

*Babylonstoren salt-room-aged Chianina beef (subject to availability) per 100g*

105

*With a glass of*

*Babylonstoren Nebukadnesar*

190

### LAMB

*Slow-roasted shoulder of lamb Cape Malay curry with cabbage and coconut*

295

*With a glass of Babylonstoren Shiraz*

70

## COMPLETION

### SWEET & SOUR

*Warm citrus fruit salad and honey-comb, Babylonstoren's own ricotta with cinnamon dust*

95

*With a glass of  
Babylonstoren Viognier*

70

### BITTER

*Dark chocolate fondant with lightly smoked Nonpareil almonds and espresso cream*

95

*With a glass of*

*Babylonstoren Nebukadnesar*

190

### BITTER SWEET

*Sticky toffee pudding with rosemary toffee sauce and a sprinkle of myrtle salt*

95

*With a glass of*

*Babylonstoren Babel Red*

70

### SWEET & SAVOURY (vegan)

*Miso ice cream with poached guava and wild olive berries*

95

*With a glass of*

*Babylonstoren Shiraz*

70

# OUR INGREDIENTS

## ROSEMARY

We grow different varieties of rosemary in the healing garden:

- Rosemary officinalis 'Babylonstoren's blue'
- Rosemary officinalis 'Mc Connell's blue' it has a familiar flavour
- Rosemary officinalis prostratus 'Tony' – it has a milder flavour and is good for infusions
- Rosemary officinalis prostratus
- Rosemary officinalis 'Tuscan blue' – this is best for skewers because of the length of the branches
- Rosemary officinalis 'Sissinghurst' – this has a superior, delicate texture and flavour
- Rosemary officinalis – this has a camphorous flavour with good length

## LEMON VERBENA

This herb stretches high into the summer skies. We harvest the leaves to be of good use during the following months to aid sluggish digestion. It also comes in handy for fighting off colds and clearing snotty noses.

## CHASTE TREE BERRIES

Also known as 'monk's pepper', this tree has been a symbol of chastity since ancient times. The berries were called 'monk's pepper' due to being considered helpful to medieval monks in keeping their vow of celibacy. In contradiction to this belief, modern times have proven Chaste tree berries to be the most popular herb in treating infertility.

## CHERVIL ANTHRISCUS CEREFOLIUM

One of the earliest herbs introduced by Jan van Riebeeck to the Cape. It thrives best in the cooler days of winter adding a fresh bounce to your step. This herb has a sweet, slightly aniseed flavour that may improve the flavour of other herbs when used in small quantities. It has blood cleansing properties and acts as a diuretic and digestive.

## HORSERADISH

A powerful, pungent plant connected with a variety of health benefits, horseradish is a member of the Brassicaceae family and closely related to wasabi, mustard, cabbage and broccoli. The white root is the active ingredient and releases a pungent mustard oil.

## CITRUS

**Oranges** - Navel oranges grow in the sheltered lane along the garden boundary. Recognisable by the prominent bellybutton protruding at its base.

**Naartjies** - Satsuma Nules, we managed to quickly get in a harvest before our recent drought could cause any more damage. The fruit are much smaller this year, but the sweet, juicy flavour compensates for this.

**Lemons** - Eureka fruits grow almost all year round, but the in the winter months the trees churn out fruit like factories. These are such hard working trees. The orchard can be seen from the Babel courtyard, and below the trees we grow leguminous crops that act as green manure to restore soil nutrition.

**Lemons** - Lisbon is a lemon grown on South African cultured rootstock that is selected to cope specifically with our native soil conditions. Citrus are notoriously fussy, but when all factors are considered, immensely rewarding.

**Limes** - Bears lime, or Tahiti lime, are one of the earliest citrus to ripen.

**Grapefruit** - Our Marsh and Ruby grapefruit have not been doctored – although they taste sweet and modern, they still have a bite to them that makes you feel they must be good for you.

## OLIVES

Mission, Calamata and FS17 cultivars are grown for preservation purposes. High in anti-oxidants, olives are exceptionally healthy foods. Some of our olive trees are over 100 years old, imparting that vigour to us. Olives bedeck our trees like jet beads draped over a mourning Queen Victoria. While beautiful to the eye, not even a hungry bird would eat them fresh. This is unlike our tiny native olive berries, which the birds feast on - and we have followed suit, even discovering which trees provide the sweetest berries.

## PINK OYSTER MUSHROOMS

Mushrooms usually pop up three days after the first autumn rains, but this year's drought has not been obliging. Luckily, within the insulation of our mushroom room, we grow grey and pink oyster mushrooms. It's fascinating to watch these organisms emerge; neither plant nor animal, but one of the most detoxing foodstuffs. However, it is good to take note that they are only digestible when cooked.

## WILD OLIVE

A perennial plant that is indigenous in some areas, the wild olive is a small and neat evergreen tree with a dense crown of glossy grey-green to dark leaves that is silvery underneath. It bears sprays of lightly scented flowers in summer, followed by small, thinly fleshed fruits, either sweet or sour, which ripen to a purple-black colour.

## TREE-RIPENED ALMONDS

The main cultivar we grow is Nonpareil, known to yield a large harvest of the best quality nuts. We also grow two other cultivars, Peerless and Ferragness, which are cross-pollinators. Each cultivar is picked and roasted separately. Our first season's harvest will be around 600kg and we will be using the almonds in all kinds of deliciousness, from almond milk to baking and everything in between.

## KOHLRABI

The name says it all:

*Kool-raap* = cabbage-turnip!

Like most of the cabbage family, Kohlrabi grows best in the cooler months when the plants don't bolt into bloom prematurely, but rather set out into swelling bellies. We grow the Vienna white and purple varieties. We enjoy them fresh, sprinkled with salt, just as they do in the plant's native country, Cyprus. In other parts of the world, the bellies and leaves are sometimes cooked.

## GUAVA

Hats off to our Faan Retief guava trees that stand like sentries along the avenue leading towards the hill that is our namesake. Above their smoothly sculptured trunks canopies laden with fruit will provide us with the vitamin C our bodies need all winter. These trees are already 80 years old; the oldest of which we sourced from our district to give instant character to a young garden. Now 10 years down the line, the younger trees have taken on the challenge, providing their own characters in this unfolding story.



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